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# Developing core coaching competencies using theatre-based techniques

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# DEVELOPING CORE COACHING COMPETENCIES USING THEATRE-BASED TECHNIQUES

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**A research report submitted to the University of the Witwatersrand, faculty of Management, in partial fulfilment of the degree Masters in Management in Business Executive Coaching**

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## Abstract

Leaders in the 21st century face many challenges. To be effective they need to be visionaries and leaders of change, who realise their visions and goals through others. To do this they need to know who they are, be confident of their own abilities and lead with integrity and conviction, maximising the capabilities of their followers to realise their potential while achieving company goals. A coaching style of leadership could help them to do this. However, coaching does not necessarily come easily to leaders and coaching skills may need to be developed.

This research explores the use of theatre-based techniques to develop core coaching competencies in leaders who coach. These techniques, founded on the rigorous training that actors have to undertake, are simple, fun and engaging, yet provocative and transformational. They could help leaders to improve their communication skills, build their emotional intelligence and develop the trust and integrity needed for an authentic, credible presence, which is necessary in leaders who coach.

To determine whether theatre-based techniques do develop coaching competencies in leaders who coach, several international and local experts, who use these techniques in training leaders and coaches, were interviewed. In addition, theatre-based workshops were observed and feedback was obtained from delegates. Findings were analysed, using inductive content analysis, and these findings were compared to the relevant literature and to the coaching competencies outlined by international coach federations, to determine the relevance of theatre-based techniques for coach education.

The findings from this research show that theatre-based techniques develop key coaching competencies such as presence, emotional intelligence, effective expressive communication, trust and integrity, development and transformation, and creativity in leaders who coach and coaches. It is concluded, therefore, that theatre-based techniques do have a role to play within the context of coach education, and combined with other more formal methods of training that include coaching models, could be useful in developing core coaching competencies in leaders who coach and coaches.

## Declaration

I, Arlene Ketz, declare that this research is my own original work. Any technical assistance has been acknowledged. This research report is submitted in partial fulfilment of a Masters in Management degree in Business and Executive Coaching at the University of the Witwatersrand Business School. No part of this research report has been submitted to this or any other institution for this or any other degree. The work of others has been referenced in accordance with the university's standards.

## Dedication

**This dissertation is dedicated to my grandson Jake**
**who has taught me the meaning of presence**
**the meaning of understanding from the deepest heart place**
**whose language means far more than the spoken word**
**whose spirit soars beyond this little place I know**
**and who has taught me the meaning of love**

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# CHAPTER 1

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of theatre-based techniques (TBTs) in developing core coaching competencies in the leader-as-coach, and the relevance of these techniques in contemporary coach education.

In doing so this research paper describes:

- Theatre-based techniques and their use in management education;
- The experiential theory that underpins theatre-based techniques;
- The core competencies of coaching that are developed through theatre-based techniques; and
- The relevance of theatre-based techniques in contemporary coach education.

## 1.2 Context of the study

In the past two decades, business and executive coaching has become instrumental in leadership development and transformation. Consequently, organisations and academic institutions are searching for more effective and productive ways to educate their leaders to acquire core coaching competencies. This has been motivated in part by changing attitudes to authority and a need for diverse leaders with more collaborative skills in senior positions in organisations (Drucker, 1993; Handy, 2002, in Cox, Bachkirova, & Clutterbuck, 2009).

Transformation of leadership demographics and values in both corporate and public life is something that South Africa has grappled with since its metamorphosis into a free and democratic state in 1994, with one of the most liberal constitutions in the world (Assembly, 1996). If South Africa is to meet its growth and transformation challenges, it is essential that a diverse group of

innovative, trustworthy, capable, authentic and values-driven leaders, who care about and are instrumental in the development of their people, are nurtured.

In 2010 Dr. Sunny Stout-Rostron interviewed leaders in South Africa and internationally, who stressed the "vital need for bold, visionary leadership that will shape our future; not just the future of organisations and institutions, but also of our increasingly complex and inter-dependent cultures and societies'' (Hames, R. [pers. com 2010] cited in Stout-Rostron, 2011:3-4).

Theatre-based techniques, which are founded on the rigorous, experiential process that actors have to undertake, could assist leaders to prepare themselves for the challenges they face and the diversity of roles they have to play in their organisations and in society (Rittenberg, 1994). These roles include leading change, creating a compelling vision, and inspiring and motivating others, all the while fostering teamwork and coaching and mentoring their followers to achieve results for their organisations (Lothian, 2006). In many organisations today, the style of leadership has changed from that of commanding, directing and motivating, to a more consultative style, which involves collaborating with teams and empowering them to take independent actions that are aligned with organisational goals (Lothian, 2006). This coaching style of leadership requires leaders to build self-awareness, to be accountable for their own actions and to reflect their values in what they say and do authentically - and to help others do the same - in order to enhance business performance (Cox, et al., 2009).

Through theatre-based techniques such as personal storytelling, leaders are able to come to terms with their own history and that of their country, and through rehearsal of new, more desired scripts they can reshape their future (Freire, 1973). Storytelling and performing, which are integral theatre-based techniques, are ways of taking who we are and creating something new (Vygotsky, in Holzman, 2008). In the same way that a story-maker can move characters from an immobilised, negative state to new positive, desired one, so too can coaches help their coachees to reconstruct their stories to facilitate a process of transformation (Janse van Vuuren, 2012).

Theatre-based techniques, such as improvisation, are also being used to assist leaders to cope with the unexpected and work effectively in teams that can adapt to constant change (Koppett, 2012). Pink (2010) believes that "the future will belong to those who can flex, adapt, empathise, tell stories, and create" (Pink, 2006, in Koppett, 2012, p. 2). This is essential in today's challenging

business environment, where, in order to compete, leaders need to create an environment in which individuals and teams feel safe to experiment and innovate (Koppett, 2012).

Although some leaders in South Africa might resist the use of actor's techniques of training, such as storytelling, these techniques may resonate with black leaders, where "Ubuntu" or collectivism is a predominant philosophy and oral tradition has a strong history (Hofstede, 2005: ix). According to Charles Mudiwa, Managing Director of Stanbic Bank in Malawi, "If we don't tell our stories we cannot pass on our heritage. African stories are part of our culture, and all of our learnings are about culture. It's a typical African tradition, and all of our major breakthroughs were around storytelling" (Mudiwa, C. [pers. com. 2010], cited in Stout-Rostron, 2011).

In this research study various theatre-based techniques, such as storytelling and improvisation, have been examined to determine their efficacy in developing core coaching competencies in leaders and their relevance in contemporary coach education. In doing this, reference has been made to the credentialing competencies that have been published by coaching federations such as the International Coach Federation (ICF) and the World Association of Business Coaches (WABC). This research will provide insight for those institutions, companies and leaders who wish to use creative theatre-based methods to extend their leadership coaching competencies.

## 1.3 Problem statement

According to Eddie Obeng (2011), "we are already living in the world after midnight" - a world that changes while we sleep. In order to cope in this new world to which we awaken each day, leaders need new skills (Taylor, 2012, 26 January); they can no longer depend on their own abilities to see the future, determine the direction for their organisations and implement strategies to effect these visions on their own. They need to capitalise on the talents and abilities of all of their people to help them formulate a vision for their organisations and to realise this. For this to happen they need to create an environment in which people feel safe to experiment and make mistakes in the interest of innovation (Crossan, 1998). This type of climate is one in which individuals and teams collaborate with one another. For collaboration to happen, people need to be attuned to each other's needs and this requires emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2000).

To establish this sort of climate in an organisation, leaders need to develop an insight into their own values and beliefs, strengths and weaknesses, and learn to project these authentically in what they say and do. They also need to be in touch with how others think and feel in order to capitalise on their strengths and motivate them to achieve their own objectives and those of the organisation (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

The techniques of the theatre could be valuable in assisting leaders to develop a style of leadership that maximises everyone's contributions for their own good and the good of the organisation.

### 1.3.1 Main problem

Based on this context it is the aim of this research study to:

Assess how effective theatre-based techniques are in developing core coaching competencies in the leader-as-coach, and to determine the relevance of these techniques in contemporary leader-as-coach education.

### 1.3.2 Sub-problem 1

The first sub-problem describes the core competencies of coaching that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach.

### 1.3.3 Sub-problem 2

The second sub-problem describes the relevance of theatre-based techniques in contemporary coach education.

## 1.4 Significance of the study

This study is of relevance to the researcher, the researcher's supervisor, academic institutions, coach education institutes, the organisations that use their services and business leaders, managers and coaches.

As business executive coaching is a relatively new field, having only come to the forefront of leadership development in the 1990s (Stout-Rostron, Van Rensburg, & Sampaio, 2009a) it is still in the process of determining the criteria for professional development. Accepted competencies of coaching are still in the process of being determined and as a result educational requirements are still in the process of being formulated (Stober & Grant, 2010). Whilst local and international coach federations have determined criteria for accrediting members, a body of knowledge is still being gathered to give credence to the professional development of coaches (Stober & Grant, 2010). Minimal research has been conducted into the efficacy of contemporary theatre-based techniques as a tool for training the leader-as-coach or coach in South Africa and internationally. Despite this, prestigious schools such as the Haas School of Business at the University of California at Berkeley; the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, Illinois; Olin Business School, Washington University, St Louis (Stout-Rostron, S. [pers.com, 2011] Ketz, 2011); the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) Business School and the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) Business School in South Africa, all use theatre-based techniques to develop presence and other core coaching competencies in leaders and coaches (Stout-Rostron, 2011). Although theatre-based workshops have been conducted in South African organisations, such as Kelly, Avis and Transnet (Katz, K. and Stout-Rostron, S. [pers. com. 2011] Ketz, 2011), there does not appear to be much literature on the core competencies of coaching that this methodology develops or its relevance to contemporary coach education.

The study will provide guidance to:

- Business schools and other educational institutes on the efficacy of theatre-based methods for building presence and other core competencies in the leader-as-coach;
- Leaders who want to attend training that will equip them with competencies such as strong personal presence to coach their subordinates effectively; and
- Business executive coaches who need to build their own coaching competencies.

## 1.5 Delimitations of the study

This research study focused specifically on examining the following theatre-based techniques:

- **Active Communicating**, **theatre-based** original methodology developed by Mark Rittenberg and Penny Kreitzer of Corporate Scenes; with contemporary development by Belle Halpern and Kathy Lubar of the Ariel Group;

- **Improvisation theatre-based techniques** used by Kat Koppett of Koppett + Co and Burgert Kirsten of the Playingmantis group; and

- **Hero's Journey storytelling techniques**, of Petro Janse van Vuuren at the Playingmantis group.

Interviews were conducted with several specialists in the areas of expertise listed above, as well as with facilitators of those theatre-based techniques, who have conducted training with corporate clients and in academic institutions in South Africa for a minimum of five years. In addition, an interview was held with the executive of a company that had the sole licence to conduct Corporate Scenes' Active Communicating workshops in South Africa, and a director of company specific programmes at a business school in South Africa.

Due to time limitations and the geographical disparity of these theatre-based companies, practical observation of the following four theatre-based workshops took place only in South Africa:

- A theatre-based workshop conducted by Mark Rittenberg, assisted by Caryn Katz, for facilitators and coaches in Johannesburg;

- Two improvisation workshops conducted by Burgert Kirsten for coaches at Wits Business School and GIBS Business School in Johannesburg; and

- A storytelling workshop – *The Hero's Journey* - conducted by Dr Petro Janse van Vuuren for facilitators and coaches in Cape Town.

Feedback reports were obtained from delegates who attended the improvisation workshop. This feedback was reviewed and analysed to explore delegates' assessment of the coaching

competencies that they acquired, the processes that were used and the relevance of the workshop to coach education.

## 1.6 Definition of terms

The following definitions are pertinent to this study.

### 1.6.1 Business Executive Coaching

The International Coach Federation (ICF) defines coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" ((ICF), 2012). Business coaching is defined by the World Association of Business Coaches (WABC) as the "process of engaging in regular, structured conversation with a 'client': an individual or team who is within a business, profit or non-profit organisation, institution or government and who is the recipient of business coaching. The goal is to enhance the client's awareness and behaviour so as to achieve business objectives for both the client and their organisation. This dual focus on the coachee and the organisation distinguishes business coaching from other types of coaching. The business coach helps the client discover how changing or accommodating personal characteristics and perspectives can affect both personal and business processes. Successful coaching helps the client achieve agreed-upon business outcomes as an individual or team within the context of an organisation" ((WABC), 2012).

According to Kahn (2011), the success of a business coaching intervention is based on the "quality of the coaching relationship and the degree to which it successfully integrates and aligns with the sponsoring organisation" (Kahn, 2011: 195).

WABC adds that "Business coaching establishes an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, safety, challenge and accountability to motivate both the client and the coach. To that end, the business coach must conduct an ethical and competent practice, based on appropriate professional experience, business knowledge and an understanding of individual and organisational change" (WABC, 2012).

### 1.6.2 Leader-as-coach

Leading as a coach involves nurturing the capabilities of one's followers so that they can realise their potential while accomplishing the organisation's vision. "Coaching leaders help employees to identify their unique strengths and weaknesses and tie them to personal and career aspirations" (Goleman, 2000: 9). Coaching happens from "the inside out", so leaders who coach need to be clear about their own values and reflect these authentically in their relationships with others (Cox, et al., 2009). By modelling the values they wish to see in others, they set a standard of what they expect. As leadership is vested with power (French and Raven, 1959, in Christierson, 2012; Stokes & Jolly, 2009), leaders who coach need to develop emotional intelligence and effective communication skills to build rapport and break down possible power-distance barriers that may impede their ability to relate to and coach their followers (Lothian, 2006). Coaching conversations can be used by leaders to tutor, mentor, facilitate learning and thinking and counsel their followers. Through this dialogue they contribute to growth of self-awareness, development of talent and improved performance and business results (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006).

### 1.6.3 Theatre-based techniques/drama-based techniques (used interchangeably)

"Experiential actor training techniques such as improvisation, role-play, storytelling, movement, mime, breathing, voice work and meditation to gain heightened expressiveness of voice and body to communicate with others" (Rittenberg, 1994: viii).

### 1.6.4 Presence

Presence is defined as the ability to be in the present moment - in the here and now - both physically in terms of attendance, and psychologically in terms of the entirety of consciousness (Topp, 2007). This heightened consciousness is attained through openness, awareness and accessibility and enables one person to relate authentically and deeply in the immediate moment to another (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Rittenberg, 2007; Rock, 2006; Silsbee, 2008; Topp, 2007).

## 1.7 Assumptions

The following assumptions were made regarding the study:

- Specialists in theatre-based techniques would be available and willing to be interviewed as this was critical to the validity of the study.
- The respondent sample would reflect the required expertise in the field of theatre-based techniques as non-representative views would distort the results of the study and lessen its validity.
- The total number of respondents would be sufficient to gain the data required for the exploratory research as an insufficient number of respondents might impact on the validity of the study.
- The time allocated for face-to-face, Skype or telephonic interviews would be adequate to elicit the information required as insufficient data would impact on the validity of the study.
- Theatre-based workshops would be conducted in South Africa within the research period and that the researcher would be permitted to observe these and obtain feedback from delegates on their perceptions of the:
    - processes used;
    - competencies acquired; and
    - relevance of the workshop to coach education.
- Workshop attendees would be willing to complete comprehensive and honest feedback reports on the efficacy of the workshop in building core-coaching competencies.

## 1.8 Structure of report

This research report includes the following chapters:

- Chapter 1 introduces and contextualises the research. It outlines the purpose, context and significance of the study and delineates the delimitations, assumptions and definitions that are relevant to this study.

- Chapter 2 outlines the two research questions to be answered in this research study and provides a detailed review of the literature in the areas of theatre-based techniques; their use in management and coach education; the competencies that they aim to develop; and their relevance in coach education.

- Chapter 3 specifies the theoretical research methodology undertaken for this study, detailing how the research and analysis were carried out practically.

- Chapter 4 presents the findings for each research question based on the interviews conducted; the workshops observed; and the feedback obtained from delegates.

- Chapter 5 analyses and discusses the research findings, aligning these findings to the literature reviewed and to the competencies listed by international coach federations. This analysis makes inferences and links the results which emerged.

- Chapter 6 concludes the research report and includes recommendations and suggestions for further research.

- The list of references follows chapter 6.

- The respondent letter, interview questions, ICF and WABC competencies are in the appendixes.

- The transcripts are included in the attached CD.

# CHAPTER 2

# 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

This section includes a literature review describing the key themes pertaining to this study. The first area describes theatre-based techniques, the experiential nature of these techniques and the core competencies of coaching that these techniques develop in the leader-as-coach, with particular emphasis on the dimension of 'presence'. The second area examines how relevant these techniques are in contemporary leader-as-coach training. This section concludes with an overview of the key learning that emanates from the literature.

## 2.2 Paradigm or conceptual framework

### 2.2.1 Paradigm

Sometimes referred to as interpretivist research, qualitative research is as a way of understanding complicated human and organisational behaviour, that is increasingly being used in business and management studies (J.W. Creswell, 2007). An inductive, qualitative approach was used in this exploratory study. A select group of theatre-based specialists were interviewed to explore their methods of working and their views on the outcomes and relevance of theatre-based techniques for coach education. Observations of workshops and workshop material took place to gain an understanding of the processes used and outcomes attained. In addition, delegates' feedback from one of these workshops was analysed to determine perceptions about the relevance of the workshop for coach education and the competencies deemed to have been acquired. An inductive approach was used to analyse the content that emerged from the interviews, observations and feedback, thematically. The researcher worked with detail before making limited generalisations, which are outlined in the analysis of the findings of this study (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 19).

### 2.2.2 Conceptual framework

The main research problem in this study was to determine the core coaching competencies that are developed through the use of theatre-based techniques and to establish the relevance of these techniques in contemporary coach education.

In order to fully address this problem, exploratory interviews were conducted with specialists in the field, workshops were observed, workshop material perused and feedback obtained from workshop attendees. All of this information was analysed using an inductive, interpretivist, qualitative approach to gain an understanding of the process used, the competencies developed and the relevance of these methods. The competencies developed were compared to those stipulated by international coach federations such as the ICF and the WABC for coach credentialing.

The conceptual framework in figure 1 below graphically outlines the key coaching competencies such as emotional intelligence, effective communication, authentic expression and presence, which appear from the literature to be developed through theatre-based techniques. The model suggests that theatre-based techniques are underpinned by experiential learning theories and are contextualised within contemporary coach education.

Presence sits at the top of the diagram as, according to the literature, it appears to be a primary outcome of theatre-based workshops for leaders who coach. From the literature, it appears that presence is contingent on the development of core coaching competencies such as emotional intelligence and authentic communication and expressiveness, and is interdependent with creativity. Theatre-based techniques appear to use a process of experiential learning and these techniques are used within the context of contemporary coach education to develop the competencies of leaders who coach.

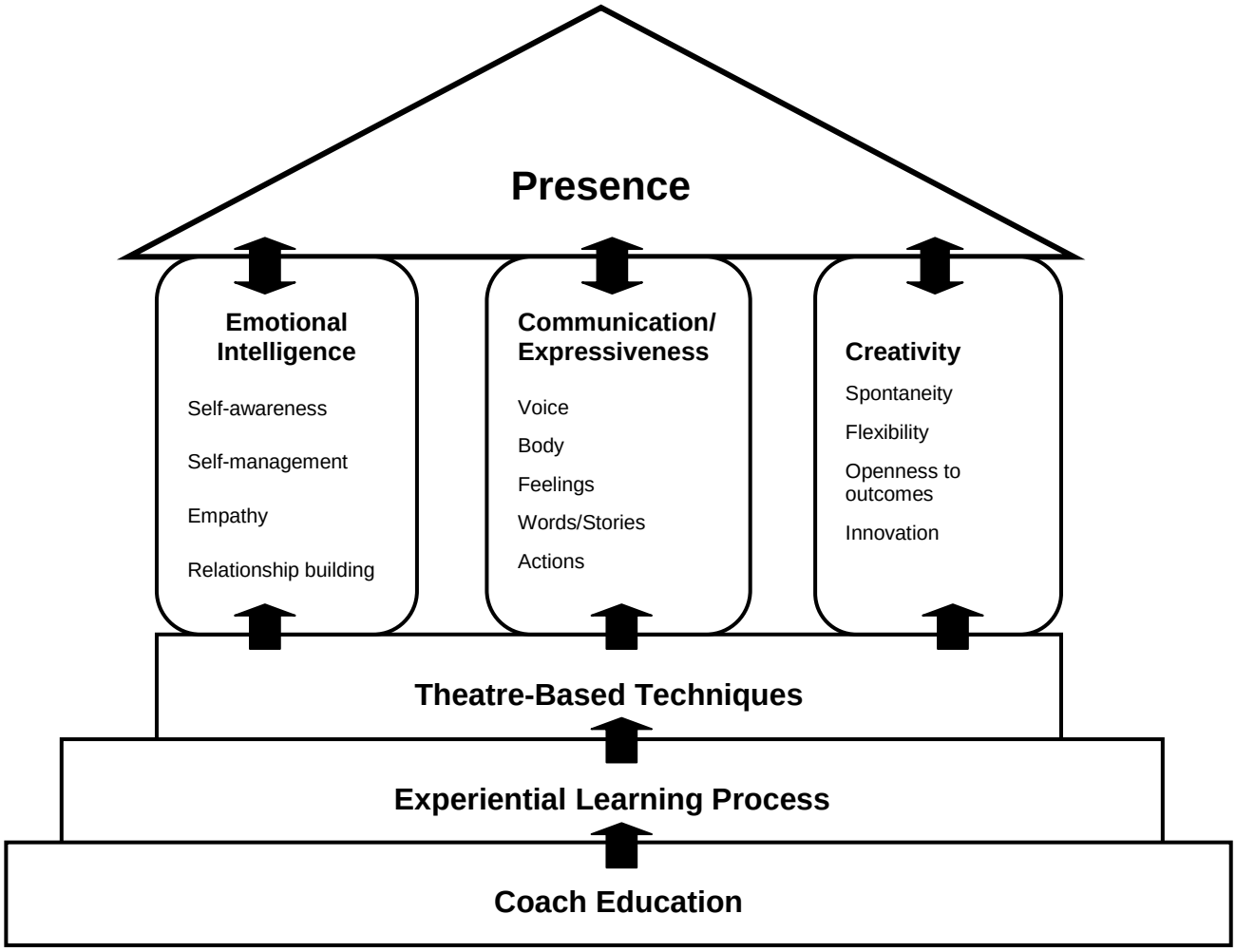



**Figure 2: Conceptual framework**

#### *2.2.2.1 Presence*

According to Cox (2009), our presence emanates from our way of being and acting in the world and either attracts or repels others. Our presence is influenced by our "life experiences; intellectual repertoire; particular skills or strengths as well as weaknesses or vulnerabilities; spiritual values and beliefs and our physical demeanour" (Siminovitch & Van Eron, 2006: 51).

From a Gestalt perspective, coaches inevitably bring their presence into the coaching relationship. As they begin to understand their own presence they can develop more assurance and creativity in their coaching interventions (Cox, et al., 2009: 88).

According to the writings of some of the theatre-based specialists who were interviewed in this research study, it appears that effective presence is one of the primary outcomes of theatre-based techniques in the development of leaders who coach (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Rittenberg, 2007). As presence is seen as a key dimension emanating from theatre-based techniques it has been placed at the top of this conceptual framework.

#### *2.2.2.2 Core coaching competencies developed through theatre-based techniques*

Meyer (1996) defines competency as being inclusive of skills, knowledge and attitude. The competencies that we display as a coach - what we say and do - reflect our "values, passion, creativity, emotions and discerning judgement" (O'Neill, 2000: 19).

The skills that are developed through theatre-based techniques are illustrated in the pillars in figure 1 and are shown to influence and be influenced by our presence. These include:

- Emotional intelligence: the ability to understand and manage oneself and relate to others empathetically through effective communication, deep listening and incisive questioning (Goleman, 1996);

- Authentic communication and expression: the ability to express oneself congruently through our words, voice, body language and deeds (Halpern & Lubar, 2004: 165);

- Creativity: the ability to respond to challenging situations thoughtfully, flexibly and with an open mind (Rittenberg, 2007: 9).

Embedded in each of the skills is the need for an attitude of openness and honesty; insight and acceptance of one's own stereotypes (Ting & Scisco, 2006: 89), and knowledge of how one's own value systems can influence the coaching relationship (Zeus, 2002: 124 in Cunningham, 2010: 6).

#### *2.2.2.3 Theatre-based techniques*

Theatre-based techniques, used to develop the leader-as-coach, are based on the stringent training actors receive. As Rittenberg states, "actors constantly train in voice, body movement, and the ability to use expressive language. In fifteen hour days at theatre schools, actors learn to concentrate, listen, maintain a high energy level, express emotions both verbally and physically,

and create presence" (Rittenberg, 2007: 4). As several of these skills are foundational to leadership communication and coaching, it is extrapolated that theatre-based techniques could assist in developing core coaching competencies in leaders who coach.

These theatre-based techniques are shown in figure 1 to be the foundation on which the pillars, listing the core coaching competencies required by the leaders who coach, rest.

#### *2.2.2.4 Experiential learning process*

Theatre-based techniques are experiential in nature and are based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle: "concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation" (Kolb, 1984: 101) to develop core coaching competencies in leaders.

These participative, experiential theatre-based exercises are used to challenge leaders' beliefs and values (Mockler, 2002: 575) and transform them. Leaders are encouraged to reflect on their experiences through debriefing discussions. The process invites generalisation of the concepts that emerge to life, coaching and leadership, and encourages application of the lessons learnt to the business and coaching environment.

#### *2.2.2.5 Coach education for leaders*

Although competencies for coaches have not been generally agreed on (Brotman, Liberi and Wasylyshyn, 1998; Ennis et al., 2005; Bennet, 2006, in Cox, et al., 2009: 411), local and international coach federations such as COMENSA, the ICF and the WABC have outlined competencies against which coaches may be accredited. Many training companies offer courses to meet the requirements of these coach federations. Amongst these are companies who use theatre-based techniques for coach education. The focus of these programmes ranges from self-management to managing others: all core coaching competencies.

Some tertiary institutions such as the Haas School of Business of the University of California at Berkeley; the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, Illinois; and Olin Business School, Washington University, St Louis (Stout-Rostron, S. [pers.com, 2011] Ketz, 2011) use theatre-based techniques for leader and coach development.

It is the intention of this research study to assess the efficacy of these theatre-based techniques in building the core coaching competencies and to evaluate relevance of these techniques in contemporary coach education for leaders.

## 2.3 Background discussion

In order to describe the core coaching competencies that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach and to determine their relevance in contemporary coach education, it is important to gain an insight into what these experiential learning techniques are; their historical role in general and management education and in leader-as-coach education; and to understand the learning theory that underpins them.

### 2.3.1 Theatre in education

"Since the beginning of human culture, theatre as an art form has been a crucial element in the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual life of cultures world-wide" (Rittenberg, 1994: 7). For centuries theatre has been used to educate, inform and to "explore the human condition" (George, Schwager, & Canavan, 1998: 16).

Philosophers such as Plato encouraged learning through improvisation and dance. Hrosvitha, a tenth century nun, wrote plays on moral issues, while the actors of the Commedia dell'arte reflected social issues in dramas in Italy in the late middle ages (George, et al., 1998: 16).

Although Shakespeare wrote plays in the Elizabethan era for many reasons, according to Rittenberg (2007: 7), one of his primary aims was to engage and educate the masses on various moral and ethical issues such as rivalry and betrayal. Today, institutes such as the Aspen Institute use the Bard's plays as a medium for leadership development, while the Cranfield School of Management makes use of the revered Globe Theatre to draw from Shakespeare's wisdom on management practice (Nissley, Taylor, & Houden, 2004: 818). In the early 1900s, the psychologist and psycho-dramatist, Jacob L Moreno, demonstrated that dramatic enactment could result in constructive behavioural change in adults. In 1933 he conducted training workshops on employee relations in business, the first workshops of their kind (George, et al., 1998).

In recent years, theatre-based techniques have begun to emerge as a methodology to educate leaders and coaches, which is becoming more widely used. This research will explore to what extent this methodology is being used in South Africa and internationally, and how successful it is in developing the core competencies that leaders need to coach their direct reports and colleagues.

### 2.3.2 Use of theatre-based techniques in management education

Theatre-based techniques such as theatrical performance (plays), role-play and film have been used to teach a diversity of topics in management education, and management educators have begun to notice and comment on these (Boggs, Mickel, & Holtom, 2007; Moshavi, 2001; Nissley, et al., 2004; Yanow, 2001).

The aspects of management covered by these techniques include: "business ethics (Brown, 1994); decision making (Boggs, et al., 2007); organisational change (Varney & McFillen, 2000), negotiations (Weiss, 2003) organisational behaviour (Golden-Biddle, 1993); environmental awareness (Tucker & Tromley, 2005); multi-stakeholder decision making (Egri, 1999); emotional intelligence (Morris, Urbanski, & Fuller, 2005); and general management (Boggs, et al., 2007; Crossan, 1998; Mockler, 2002; Monks, Barker, & Mhanacháin, 2001; Moshavi, 2001)" (all cited in Boggs, et al., 2007: 834).

Plays written, produced and acted by professional actors and targeted at large in-house audiences are used to deal with organisational issues such as diversity management, sexual harassment and affirmative action. These plays, referred to as low-impact drama, are largely passive and might engage the audience in question-and-answer sessions after the performance (George, et al., 1998).

Plays that involve the audience in more analysis of the action and that include some audience participation are referred to as medium-impact drama. Actors might even incorporate the audience suggestions into the performance to give them a chance to see the corrected behaviours in action. Employees may be asked to role-play the scenarios, and interactive exercises and discussions in small groups might take place (Huffaker & West, 2005: 3).

The acting out of real business-case scenarios by trainers and trainees is referred to as high-impact drama (George, et al., 1998), and is rooted in unscripted, improvisational theatre. It draws on improvisational techniques (Johnstone, 2008; Spolin, 1999), improvisational storytelling (J. Fox,

1994; Salas, 1996), and Augusto Boal's (1985) ideas of 'Image' and 'Forum' Theatre (Boal, 2000; Nissley, 2002: 820). These improvisational theatre techniques are used to build communication, creativity and innovation in organisational training (Moshavi, 2001: 3).

Role-playing is used extensively in management education, particularly in communication skills training and conflict management, where participants are required to act out roles to practise resolving challenging interactions. For example, role-plays were found to be useful in increasing environmental awareness and helped students understand the conflict between those with competing interests (Tucker & Tromley, 2005: 512). Role-playing in patient care simulations for nurse training was found to improve clinical skills and enhance critical thinking (Comer, 2005: 358).

### 2.3.3 Theatre-based techniques for leader-as-coach development

Theatre-based techniques are being used to train leaders in coaching skills in active, participatory workshops at institutes such as the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) and the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) Business Schools in South Africa; the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley; the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, Illinois; and Olin Business School, Washington University, St Louis, among others (Stout-Rostron, S. [pers. Com. 2011] Ketz, 2011).

These workshops focus on teaching leaders "to walk on the stage of everyday life, with strong communication skills that project energy, confidence, clarity of thought, and physical and vocal expressiveness….This translates into a quality of presence that is powerful in its ability to communicate consistent values of respect, trust, credibility and integrity" (Rittenberg, 2010: 29).

These active participatory workshops make use of theatre-based techniques such as:

- Stories, which are at "the heart of theatre and the heart of communication" (Koppett, 2002: 99) and central to coaching. Storytelling reflects our lived experience, our responses to this and options for change (Drake, 2007: 284). We grow as we gain a sense of coherence, continuity and purpose through our stories. Through the construction of life stories, leaders develop their self-concept and self-awareness, with their authenticity being gauged by the extent to which

they act in accordance to the meaning provided by their life story (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). By reframing their stories leaders can reshape their personal and leadership destinies.

- Performance, which is an actor's trade. Acting out our life stories assists us to understand where we have come from and gain insight into the perspectives of other parties with whom we have interacted (Drake, 2007). Acting out the stories of great leaders in history allows us to integrate their lessons of leadership and to practise new ways of 'being' as a leader and as a coach (Olivier, 2001 : xxiii).

- Voice and body work, which focuses on deep breathing, centring oneself and projecting a positive energy and powerful presence through one's voice and body (Rittenberg, 1994; Silsbee, 2008). The ability to project a powerful personal presence is seen as being central to leadership communication, and being centred, focused and present is fundamental to the coaching relationship (Cox, et al., 2009).

- Improvisation, which is seen to be fundamental to all drama, is a form of theatre that does not use a script or predetermined idea. In improvisational performance, the actor embodies an idea, character or passage instantaneously, without forethought (Frost & Yarrow, 1990), through acting, singing, dancing or speaking. This impromptu response, in the moment, to stimuli in the environment can lead to new ways of acting and reacting and promote innovative thinking and creative performance, which is vital in dynamic business environments (Encarta Dictionary, 2012). In the same way that leaders need to improvise in order to cope with their changing environments, so too do they need to flex their performance in the moment, to deal with multiple roles they play (Koppett, 2012), including that of coach.

- Artful methods, which use metaphors, images, body movement, sculpturing using the body and movement in tableaus, posture, kinaesthetics, voice, self-narratives, music and artefacts to improve learning and bring one's whole self to coaching (Palus & Horth, 2005: 259).

- Play-back, which uses dramatic enactment of people's stories to reflect their ideas, thoughts and feelings accurately. For example, static or moving body sculptures may be used to represent someone else's mood or feeling about an experience (Boal, 2000). After enactment, check-back with the teller of the story takes place to check the accuracy of the portrayal (H. Fox,

2007: 7; J. Fox, 1994). This technique is also used as a listening and reflecting tool (Rittenberg, 2010: 28) as is used in coaching.

- Drama games, which encourage active participation, stimulate imagination, focus attention and allow one to reflect on the process and gain insight into what one has learnt. Games encourage spontaneity, flexibility and expressiveness. They promote sensitivity and break down inhibitions in a group, enabling individuals to trust each other and feel comfortable (Jones, 1996: 58). The game structure develops interaction and a sense of group play, creates trust and bonds in a group and provides a safe place to experiment and express feelings. Drama games can be used, for example, in coaching to encourage relaxation, visualisation and expansion of ideas and to engage emotions (Dayton, 1990).

In support of these theatre-based methods for training leaders to coach, Rittenberg (1994) states that leaders need to undergo the same rigorous process of training as actors do: training in "voice, body movement and the ability to use expressive language; to concentrate, listen, maintain a high energy level, express emotions, both verbally and physically and create presence" (Rittenberg, 1994: 8). He maintains that this is essential if leaders are to communicate effectively, nurture relationships and coach others.

### 2.3.4 The experiential nature of theatre-based techniques

Theatre-based techniques, such as warm-up activities, breathing and voice work, improvisational theatre activities and personal value-forming stories are a natural vehicle for the experiential learning of social and emotional skills required by leaders in organisations, and so have become part of the repertoire of trainers and training companies within the business environment (Blatner & Wiener, 2007; Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Koppett, 2012; Olivier & Janni, 2004; Rittenberg, 2010).

Experiential learning techniques, like these, encourage behavioural change as they engage participants actively on many different levels. When participants experience something for themselves, they are more likely to remember the experience and learn from it (Cox, et al., 2009).

In his book *Democracy and Education* (1930), the US educator John Dewey states that "education is not an affair of telling… but an active constructive process" (Dewey, 1930: 46), and that "learning is

the accompaniment of continuous activities, which have a social aim, and use the materials of social situations" (Dewey, 1930: 41). In this way he advocates "learning by doing". His theories were built upon by Freire (1970), who, like Dewey, criticised the role of education in reinforcing the status quo in society. In his renowned exposition, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) outlined the need for educators and students to work together critically in order to perceive the way they exist in the world, to challenge existing norms and to break the bonds of their oppression (Freire, 2004). Through "problem-posing" experiential education, he believed that the oppressed could transform their reality. Central to this philosophy of conscientising the learner is dialogue – an authentic conversation around how the world experience of the learner is interpreted and made meaning of. Insights that learners glean from reflections on their personal and communal experiences are fundamental to their moral and intellectual development (Dale & Hyslop-Margison, 2011).

The approach of learning from one's own experiences and those of one's society is strongly supported by the experiential learning philosophy of Kolb. Kolb's Learning Cycle is made up of four elements: "concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation; and active experimentation" (Kolb, 1984: 101).

Although Kolb describes learning as a continuous spiral which could start at any point in the cycle, he maintains that this cycle usually starts with someone carrying out a task and observing the results of their actions. By reflecting on and understanding the specific outcomes of their actions in a particular situation, he believes that one may be able to anticipate what might happen in similar circumstances. Practicing and observing one's behaviour in similar situations allows one to generalise the principles and extrapolate these in new situations (Kolb, 1984).

Drama, which is seen to be high in structure and high in participation, is especially suited to experiential education (Janse van Vuuren, 2012). It is a powerful medium that can draw leaders into an experience and transform them (Bolton, 1979, Watkins, 1983, Boal, 1995 in Voss-Price, 1998). It encourages reflection on these experiences through debriefing discussions; generalisation of the concepts learnt to life and leadership; as well as application of the lessons learnt to the business and social environment.

"It is a tool to help move the management experience from the lecture platform into the interactive, participative doing phases" (Mockler, 2002: 575). As these experiential techniques, become more popular with management educators, the use of drama as a teaching tool is growing (Nissley, 2002). The value of applied drama in the workplace has become increasingly recognised and besides focusing on improving expressive communication and building spontaneity and creativity, the work has begun to deepen, focusing on stories of leadership and personal, organisational and societal transformation (Blatner & Wiener, 2007; Boal, 2000; Olivier, 2001).

Kolb's model can also be applied to coaching, where the focus is on the client's subjective experience, often uncovered through their retelling of their life story. In her book, *Business Coaching: Wisdom and Practice* (2009), Stout-Rostron outlines "how the coaching conversation helps to transform the client's experience into workable knowledge; learning then becomes an emergent experience within a cycle of continuous learning" (Stout-Rostron, Van Rensburg, & Sampaio, 2009b: 118). So coachees are encouraged by coaches to learn from their own experiences and from the experiences of others and to redefine who they are as individuals and leaders.

Both skills and performance coaching (SPC), which assists leaders to make incremental changes to their performance, as well as developmental coaching, which facilitates a shift in the beliefs and attitudes that underpin performance, make use of experiential techniques (Hall and Duval, 2004a, in Cox, et al., 2009). Stories, which are a key tool of theatre-based techniques, are used to reframe leaders' attitudes and behaviour through co-creative conversations. Powerful questioning and mindful, non-judgemental listening assist the coach to elicit the key themes from their coachees' stories, and the coach's empathy helps the coachee to strategise for more efficacious performance (Tschannen-Moran, 2009, in Cox, et al., 2009).

## 2.4 Core coaching competencies that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach

### 2.4.1 Research Question 1

What coaching competencies do theatre-based techniques of training develop in the leader-as-coach?

### 2.4.2 Core competencies needed by leaders who coach

Meyer (1996) describes competency as skills, knowledge and attitude. Although there are no generally agreed on competency models for coaches (Brotman, Liberi and Wasylyshyn, 1998; Ennis et al., 2005; Bennet, 2006, in Cox, et al., 2009: 411), a list of the competencies that are required for credentialing of professional coaches has been published by local and international coach federations. These competencies generally fall into the following categories:

- Ethical standards of practice;
- Establishing the coaching relationship and its boundaries;
- Promoting growth and transformation in the coachee; and
- Continuing development for the coach in the area of practice (Business Executive Coaching) (Stober, 2009, in Cox, et al., 2009).

The ICF (2012) has incorporated the above competencies into the following four sections:

| | |
|---|---|
| **A. Setting the foundation** | 1. Meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards<br>2. Establishing the coaching agreement |
| **B. Co-creating the relationship** | 1. Establishing trust and intimacy with the client<br>2. Coaching presence |
| **C. Communicating effectively** | 1. Active listening<br>2. Powerful questioning<br>3. Direct communication |
| **D. Facilitating learning and results** | 1. Creating awareness<br>2. Designing actions<br>3. Planning and goal setting<br>4. Managing progress and accountability |

The WABC (2012) has outlined its business coach credentialing competencies under the following categories:

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. Self-Management – Knowing Oneself and Self-Mastery** | 1) Knowing yourself – self-insight and understanding<br>2) Acknowledging your strengths and development needs<br>3) Self-mastery – managing your thoughts, feelings and behaviours in ways that contribute to career and organisation success |
| **2. Core Coaching Skill-Base** | 1) Creating the Foundations for Business Coaching<br>2) Developing the Business Coaching Relationship<br>3) Promoting Client Understanding<br>4) Facilitating the Personal Transformation<br>5) Professional Development |
| **3. Business and Leadership Coaching Capabilities** | 1) Alignment<br>2) Leadership Knowledge and Credibility<br>3) Coach as Leader and Developer of Own Business<br>4) Creating and Maintaining Partnerships with all Stakeholders in the Business Coaching Process<br>5) Understanding Organizational Behaviour and Organizational Development Principles<br>6) Assessment<br>7) Having Respect for and Knowledge about Multicultural Issues and Diversity |

(See appendices E and F for a detailed list of the competencies listed by the ICF and the WABC).

Many coaching specialists have reinforced the need for the coaching competencies that have been listed by these coach federations for leaders who coach (Cox, et al., 2009; Doyle, 1999; Goleman, 2006; Grant, 2007; Hunt & Weintraub, 2010; Stout-Rostron, et al., 2009b).

Although leaders cannot depend on one style of leadership only, a coaching style of leadership has been proven to assist leaders to achieve organisational objectives through dialogue and engagement with others (Goleman, 2000). A coaching style of leadership is consultative and involves collaborating with teams and empowering them to take independent actions that are aligned with organisational goals. Through collaboration with their teams, leaders are better equipped to initiate and manage personal and organisational transitions - a key element of leadership. A vision for the organisation that is co-created with team members is more compelling than one that is formulated by the leader alone. By communicating with emotional competence, leaders are more likely to inspire their teams to maximise their own job satisfaction and motivation for improved individual and organisational performance. By capitalising on the diverse skills and

knowledge of team members, and giving teams the autonomy to take decisions, leaders can foster high functioning independent teams. Through regular coaching conversations and mentoring meetings based on the needs of their coachees, leaders are better able to facilitate development and retention of talent. By attending to their own development, modelling what they expect from others and availing their followers of opportunities to develop themselves, followers are more likely to emulate the leader's example. By nurturing a creative thinking and problem solving environment in which thought leadership is displayed, innovation could be promoted. Leaders, by being results orientated, delivering with integrity and commitment and encouraging this in others, are more likely to ensure that an organisation delivers on its promises. All of these are key elements of leadership that are best effected in a consultative style (Lothian, 2006).

In order to develop a coaching style of leadership, leaders need to understand themselves and project their values authentically and with integrity in everything they say and do. They also need to listen and learn from others and show a genuine desire to develop long term strength in others to improve performance (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cox, et al., 2009; Doyle, 1999; Goleman, 2000; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Stout-Rostron, et al., 2009b).

#### *2.4.2.1 Communicating authentically*

From the interviews that Stout-Rostron (2010) held with eminent consultants, leaders and practitioners who use coaching to manage and develop people, a picture emerges of the need for leaders to listen and learn from others and to be true to their own values, such as authenticity and integrity, which are key to upholding ethical guidelines (Stout-Rostron, 2011).

Doyle (1999) asserts that in order to be effective, leader-coaches must have the competencies that inspire their subordinates and team members to grant them the authority to coach them. He states that leaders need to be good communicators and listeners, asking relevant and probing questions; and giving and receiving feedback, in order to coach their subordinates (Doyle, 1999: 54). For skills, knowledge and attitude to be aligned in the leader-as-coach, Doyle maintains that "the head and heart (should be) aligned" in charisma, charm, leadership presence and authentic caring (Doyle, 1999: 47).

#### *2.4.2.2 Establishing rapport*

Silsbee (2008) also refers to the need for coaches to align their minds, bodies and hearts in order to be present and in tune with their coachees. Through an attuned, co-creative coaching process, coachees optimise their performance; extend their competencies; and generate new ways of seeing, thinking, feeling and behaving, to achieve personal and organisational goals. Optimising the wellbeing and performance of their followers is seen to be key to organisational effectiveness and for this to happen leaders need to build emotional intelligence.

#### *2.4.2.3 Emotional intelligence*

Daniel Goleman (2003) describes emotional intelligence (EI) as the kind of intelligence that our heart or emotions have, which is shown through self-awareness, self-control, the ability to respond to the emotions of others and be empathetic (Zohar, 2005). According to Goleman (2003), outstanding coaches are emotionally intelligent. They are aware of their own values and emotions; are able to regulate their emotions and behaviour; have an internal locus of control; are able to self-motivate; and are empathetic. This enables them to get inside the heads of their coachees, to give effective feedback and to motivate their coachees to better performance. Empathy and social skills that are nurtured through EI assist in building rapport, which is essential for leaders to interact authentically in a coaching relationship and manage broader relationships (Goleman, 2003).

#### *2.4.2.4 Trustworthiness*

Hunt and Weintraub (2010) maintain that leader-coaches need to demonstrate self-awareness and a desire to promote learning among team members and display an attitude of trustworthiness, helpfulness and empathy (Hunt & Weintraub, 2010: 99,100): all components of emotional intelligence and essential for building rapport. This is supported by Riddle and Ting (2006), who maintain that successful leader-coaches need to be self-aware and to model the behaviours they coach in a safe, enabling environment in which learning is encouraged (Riddle & Ting, 2006). This environment is created when leaders are perceptive to the emotions of their followers; are challenging, supportive and positive; and tolerate mistakes in the interest of creativity and innovation (Goleman, 2003; Phillips, 1996).

#### *2.4.2.5 Intuition*

Being perceptive to underlying needs, according to Eileen Murray (2004), takes intuition - "a speedy, creative and subconscious process that can get to the truth of things without reasoning or analysis" (Murray, 2004: 203). Although intuitive insights encompass risk taking, she maintains that these insights are fundamental to holistic thinking and innovation and, therefore, she advocates an intuitive approach to coaching, for growth and development (Murray, 2004).

Grant states that "leadership, emotional intelligence and good coaching skills are inextricably interwoven" and that effective training in coaching skills may enhance the emotional intelligence of leaders and improve their performance and consequently the quality of organisational life (Grant, 2007: 8).

In order to nurture the skills that leaders need to coach their subordinates, Rittenberg (2010), believes that leadership development programmes must focus on developing leaders "who will truly be leaders of the people…using EQ (Emotional Quotient), IQ (Intelligence Quotient) and SQ (Social Quotient) to run the organisation" (Rittenberg, M. [pers. com. 2010] cited in Stout-Rostron, 2011).

In the next section, the researcher will explore how theatre-based techniques could be helpful in assisting the leaders to acquire some of the core coaching competencies they need to coach their followers to achieve their objectives within the framework of those that are important to the organisation.

### 2.4.3 Core coaching competencies developed through theatre-based techniques

From the above literature it is clear that leaders who coach need to adopt a flexible, person-orientated approach to developing their direct reports (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006).

In order to do this they need a diversity of skills, such as:

- Communication skills
- Presence
- Emotional Intelligence

- Openness, flexibility, spontaneity
- Trust

In his *Active Communicating Survival Kit* (1994), Rittenberg advocates using theatre-based techniques to build the following ten active communicating skills leader-coaches require: "energy, physical expressiveness, relaxation, eye contact, spontaneity, breathing, voice, listening, focus and concentration and awareness" (Rittenberg, 1994: 21). All of these communication skills are seen to be key for leaders who coach, as they facilitate better performance in an organisation (Cox, et al., 2009; Ellinger, Ellinger, & Keller, 2003; Phillips, 1996).

Rittenberg (1994) states that these skills are essential attributes of leadership presence and draws a direct link between presence and creativity, which requires spontaneity and imagination to respond to challenging situations with openness and flexibility. He notes that "the more present we are the more creative we can be" (Rittenberg, 2007: 9).

In their book *Leadership Presence,* Lubar and Halpern (2004) promote the use of theatre-based techniques to build the following core competencies in the leader-as-coach:

- **Emotional Intelligence**: self-knowing, self-reflection, reaching out to others, empathising and building relationships by sharing stories, hearing others and seeing feelingly (Halpern & Lubar, 2004: 87);

- **Expressiveness**: expressing emotions authentically and passionately through the appropriate use of voice, body and story (Halpern & Lubar, 2004: 142);

- **Flexibility**: being open to outcomes, adapting to reality and being generous with others through improvisation and playing different roles at different times (Halpern & Lubar, 2004: 65).

Richard Olivier's company, Mythodrama, uses a cross-disciplinary approach which combines experiential theatre-based techniques with great mythological stories, psychology and organisational development techniques to build leadership competencies. Olivier believes that "business needs what the arts have to offer in order to survive: creativity, imagination, flexibility, adaptability, effective communication and vision" (Olivier, 2001: xix). Through lessons from

Shakespeare's great leaders, participants explore and rehearse elements of physical, emotional, mental and inspirational leadership to help them meet future challenges.

Applied improviser, Kat Koppett (2012), believes that Corporate America, today more than ever, needs improvisational skills, as their business script is continually changing. In order to cope in the current discontinuous environment, she recommends that business leaders develop the following skills that she perceives to be fundamental to improvisation:

- Trust, which is at the heart of collaboration and is core to the coaching relationship;
- Spontaneity, which is essential for creativity in leaders and in coaches;
- Accepting offers from others, which is fundamental to growth and co-operation;
- Listening and awareness, which enable leaders to hear and harvest their followers' ideas and communicate effectively;
- Storytelling, which underpins all communication and is a tool for self-discovery and narrative reconstruction; and
- Presence, which requires an alignment between the body and mind for heightened awareness.

It appears, from the sources above, that all of these skills are essential for effective leadership and some of these are foundational for leaders who coach. In this study, the researcher intends to examine how effective theatre-based techniques are in building core coaching competencies. She will also examine if these competencies underpin the dimension of leadership presence, which appears to be a core competence of the leader-as-coach.

### 2.4.4 Presence: a primary competency developed through theatre-based techniques

#### *2.4.4.1 Presence*

Presence is defined as the ability to be in the present moment (in the here and now) both physically, in terms of attendance, and psychologically, in terms of the entirety of consciousness (Topp, 2007). This heightened consciousness is attained through openness, awareness and

accessibility, and enables one person to relate authentically and deeply in the immediate moment to another (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Rittenberg, 2007; Rock, 2006; Silsbee, 2008; Topp, 2007).

In his *Active Communicating Survival Kit,* Rittenberg (1994) describes 'presence' as what we reveal to others about ourselves through our body, thoughts, feelings and words. It is something that begins inside of us – 'our essence, charisma and vitality' – that spirit that famous actors have, which captivates and transports us to different realms of experience (Rittenberg, 1994: 9). It is easy to see from this description that presence is a core competency for actors who need to hold their audience's interest. However, presence is also seen to encapsulate the essence of what leaders need in order to be able to relate effectively to others (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; O'Neill, 2000; Rittenberg, 2007; Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, & Flowers, 2005; Silsbee, 2008).

Halpern and Lubar (2004: 3) believe that the ability to be present is a fundamental competency for leaders, as it allows them "to connect authentically with the hearts and minds of others – their teams, their organisations, their clients – to motivate them or inspire them toward a better future". O'Neill, in her book *Executive Coaching with Backbone and Heart* (2000), emphasises that leaders, through their presence, reflect their values, passion, creativity, emotions and judgement in everything they say and do (O'Neill, 2000: 19). In order to coach effectively, leaders require self-awareness and awareness of others, and an ability to express themselves authentically.

The International Coach Federation defines *Coaching Presence* as "the ability to be fully conscious and create a spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident".

Silsbee (2008) alludes to this heightened sense of consciousness when he defines presence as "a state of awareness in the moment, characterised by the felt experience of timelessness, connectedness and a larger truth" (Silsbee, 2008: 20). He contends that presence is fundamental to enduring human change and development and is, therefore, an essential element of coaching. He believes that being present is the antithesis of acting habitually, as it forces one to be aware of one's habits and generate new possibilities and actions for change (Silsbee, 2008: 25).

In order to awaken this intense awareness in the present moment, Angeles Arrien (1993), in *The Four Fold Way***,** advocates that we use all four of our intelligences: mental, physical, emotional and spiritual. To attain this state of presence she proposes implementing the following four principles:

- "Show up and choose to be present" (be aware and attentive to what you do - flow);
- "Pay attention to what has heart and meaning" (be mindful);
- "Tell the truth without blame or judgement" (be honest and authentic without being critical); and
- "Be open to outcome but not attached to outcome" (be open and flexible) (Arrien, 1993: 7-8).

Senge, Schwarmer, Jarworsky and Flower (2005) indicate that leaders who coach need core coaching competencies of deep listening and awareness. They state that "we first thought of presence as being fully conscious and aware of the present moment. Then we began to appreciate presence as deep listening, of being open beyond one's preconceptions and historical ways of making sense..... Ultimately we came to see all these aspects of presence as leading to a state of "letting come", of participating in the larger field for change" (Senge, et al., 2005: 13).

In the book *Leadership Presence* (2004), the importance of emotional intelligence and authentic expressiveness to presence is also stressed (Halpern & Lubar, 2004: 3).

From the above literature it appears that many of the skills that leaders need to coach others underpin presence. These include heightened awareness, empathy, rapport, deep listening, paying attention and being open to the desired outcomes of the coachee.

Silsbee believes that presence is the most important "work we can do as human beings" and that this quality is central to the professional efficacy of coaches (Silsbee, 2008: 20). Therefore, he advocates that coaches develop presence themselves, before coaching others.

#### *2.4.4.2 Theatre-based techniques that develop presence*

In his book *Presence-Based Coaching*, Silsbee (2008) advocates the use of experiential exercises, similar to those used in theatre-based work, to open the doorways to presence:

- The awareness of the mind - through deep breathing, relaxation and visualisation exercises that build self-observation;

- The somatic awareness of the body - through centring exercises to stimulate energy and to find balance and depth; and
- The intelligence of the heart - by reframing thinking and extending compassion to build connections.

Rittenberg says that "powerful actors know what it takes to focus and bring their most authentic presence to the moment. They incorporate energy, stamina, language and powerful listening skills to engage audiences and convey core messages. These same skills are essential for leaders to connect, communicate, empower, motivate and inspire their organisations" (Rittenberg, 1994: vii). In order to build presence in leaders who coach, Rittenberg (1994) designed Active Communicating theatre-based activities such as storytelling; actor's breathing techniques; voice and body work; movement and stillness; improvisation; spontaneity; playback; music; and poetry (Katz, K. [pers. Comm. 2011] Ketz, 2011).

In Adam Blatner's book, *Interactive and Improvisational Drama* (2007), Joel Gluck describes creative theatre-based exercises, based on business rationale, that are used to enhance leadership presence and enable leaders to access their own passion and connect to others on a human level. The activities include:

- Warm-up exercises, relaxation, deep breathing and voice work to assist leaders to be present and flexible, and to handle fear, distraction and pressure;

- Theatrical exercises that align the use of voice, body, energy and emotions to convey clear, compelling messages with expression and passion;

- Personal value-forming stories that build awareness of deep underlying values and beliefs and strengthen relationships through shared understanding; and

- Acting out of coaching and presentation situations to stretch corporate leaders out of their comfort zones and help them to build communication and leadership presence (Blatner & Wiener, 2007: 131).

Koppett (2012) also outlines practical improvisational theatre techniques to align the body and the mind in her book *Training to Imagine*, to enable presence in a coaching relationship. According to improvisational experts such as Kirk Livingston, former artistic director of BATS Improv "the body is always in the present while the mind floats around in the past and the future" (Koppett, 2012: 105). Thus it is important to align the two in order to be congruent as a leader and as a coach. Through improvisation exercises such as mirroring of another's moods, words and body language, one can learn to be present in the moment physically, mentally and emotionally. This is also practised in story exchange activities where one party reflects another's personal story in the moment, as if it were one's own story (Koppett, 2012).

Relaxation is seen to be core to being present physically, emotionally and intellectually. Relaxed alertness can be attained through deep breathing, grounding or centring yourself, and through dual attention exercises that focus on your inner and outer world (Olivier & Janni, 2004).

These are a few of the theatre-based exercises proposed for leaders who coach to build presence. It is the objective of this study to evaluate whether theatre-based methods of training are an effective way for leaders who coach to acquire presence and if presence is indeed a core coaching competence.

## 2.5 Relevance of theatre-based techniques for leader-as-coach education

### 2.5.1 Research Question 2

What relevance do theatre-based techniques of training have for contemporary coach education for leaders?

It is the purpose of this research report to investigate the relevance of theatre-based techniques for the development of core coaching competencies in the leader-as-coach.

### 2.5.2 Relevance of coaching to contemporary models of leadership

To address the need for visionary, values-driven leadership, organisations are turning to coaching as a primary tool to fast-track their managers into executive positions in every field of industry, government and education (Stout-Rostron, et al., 2009b).

According to Grant (2007), coaching skills are central to many contemporary models of leadership, such as transformational, authentic and transcendent leadership that are contingent on visionary, values-driven leadership.

According to Alvolio and Bass (2002), transformational leaders act as mentors and coaches to their followers by giving them personal attention based on their individual needs (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004); they listen effectively and use two-way communication to maximise potential and performance for the good of the organisation and society. Transformational leadership bases interactions on a compelling, shared vision and strong values and induces immediate followers to deliver beyond expectations through inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation (Bass, Bass, & Bass, 2008).

Authentic leadership is based on "self-awareness, self-regulation and positive modelling" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005: 317). Authentic leaders foster loyalty and commitment in their followers through trust-based authentic relationships, which develop authenticity in followers and contribute to the follower's well-being and sustainable performance (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005).

Transcendent leadership is based on leadership of self, of others, of the organisation and of society. Transcendent leadership is inclusive, trusting, sharing of information and is founded on dialogue and collaborative decision making. It maximises talents and energies for personal and organisational and global benefit (Gardiner, 2006).

When one examines the above theories of leadership, certain commonalities emerge. Each of these leadership models is values-based and contingent on self-awareness, self-regulation and caring and trusting relationships between leaders and followers, which focus on developing improved individual and organisational performance. Constructive coaching relationships are contingent on these competencies (Goleman, 2000).

Coaching skills have also been found to be linked to enhanced organisational performance at a managerial (Graham, Wedman, & Garvin Kester, 1994) and supervisory level (Ellinger, et al., 2003). This is supported by research by Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006), which highlights the benefits of coaching at all levels in organisations.

As a result, organisations are investing in training to develop the coaching skills of their managers and leaders (Grant, 2007:258; Wright, 2005) and should determine which methods of training best develop the coaching competencies that leaders and managers need.

### 2.5.3 Relevance of theatre-based techniques for contemporary leader-as-coach education

Even though coaching is a relatively new profession, coach education programmes are offered at a number of select universities and business schools internationally and in South Africa, for example the University of the Witwatersrand's School of Business, the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business, the Da Vinci Institute, and the University of Stellenbosch's Business School. From the literature it appears that the focus of these graduate schools of coaching is predominantly on how theory informs the practice of coaching and on research-based approaches to coaching (Stein & Page, 2010).

In addition to this formal coach education, certain reputable business schools internationally have introduced arts-based leadership development programmes, some of which train leaders as coaches, to cater for the changing needs of organisations in the 21$^{st}$ century (Adler, 2006; Austin & Devin, 2003).

Adler (2006) maintains that these are necessary, as leaders are being called on more frequently to improvise: traditionally the domain of artists, but more recently acknowledged as an important leadership skill (Austin & Devin, 2003). Because of the increasing unpredictability of threats and opportunities, traditional methods of planning for the future no longer work. As a result, leaders need higher levels of inspiration and creativity, and could benefit from seeing the world through an artist's eyes: realistically yet imaginatively (Adler, 2006).

To cater for the need to nurture creativity in leaders, leading business schools worldwide have added arts-based programmes to their curricula. These include:

- Wharton, where their MBA includes a compulsory workshop called "Leadership Through the Arts" which explores movement, improvisation and collaborative choreography;
- MIT, where three of the Sloan Leadership courses had arts-based components in 2003/4;
- The University of Chicago, where MBAs are required to write, produce and showcase a film;
- Oxford University, where executives are offered Leadership as a Performing Art courses; and
- Cranfield University, where leadership development courses based on Shakespeare are offered (Adler, 2006: 488).

Recently, Dr Mark Rittenberg launched the Executive Coaching Institute at the Haas School of Business of the University of California at Berkeley for the development of leaders as coaches. In addition to this, he is a guest professor at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, Illinois; and Olin Business School, Washington University, St Louis. At these institutions he uses theatre-based techniques to equip leaders and coaches "to build their emotional, spiritual and relational quotient, to stretch their muscles of communication in a process that encourages spontaneity, an ability to improvise and innovate, and a generosity of spirit" (Rittenberg, 2010: 4).

Rittenberg's theatre-based work with leaders began after he had won an award for a play, *Life or Theatre*, at the Jerusalem Festival in 1984 and was invited to Harvard University, where he recast the play with Harvard students, including MBAs. One evening the students called him aside to tell him that "this was the most profound leadership development they had ever undergone", despite their rigorous schedule. "Their request was that I do similar theatre-based work with their peers and colleagues at the Harvard Business School, as for them this work was really about authentic leadership". The students liked the idea of being coached as actors in voice, body, and the holistic area of an individual's leadership. They said to Rittenberg, "You're not afraid to go deep, yet somehow you create a safe space for each individual to find their own authentic, true voice. We have all changed as a result of being in this rehearsal process, and believe that this work will have great impact on leaders who want to be more authentic, to motivate and be inspirational leaders for their work groups." (Rittenberg, M. [pers. com, 2010] cited in Stout-Rostron, 2011: 6).

Nick Craig, Head of The Authentic Leadership Institute based at Harvard, says that the programmes he and Carol Kauffman, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Head of The Institute of Coaching

based at Harvard/Mclean Medical School, engage in with large corporate leaders take them to an extremely deep level within a couple of days. “Each group of six has a coach with them and they tell stories they have never told anyone in their life.” He says that within two days of this “deep-dive” coaching work, each individual is at a place where they would be up to after a year of “traditional” coaching (Craig, N. [pers. com, 2010] cited in (Stout-Rostron, 2011). Although he does not profess to use theatre-based techniques, the storytelling that he describes is a fundamental tool of theatre-based training.

In addition to formal coach education for leaders at universities, many training companies offer courses that meet the requirement and competencies of local and international coach federations. The International Coach Federation (ICF); the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches (WABC); the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC); and Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA), all offer registered training courses for coaches and leaders-as-coach. The focus of these range from self-management to managing others: all core coaching competencies (Stout-Rostron, et al., 2009b).

Some of these companies, such as the Ariel Group, use innovative theatre-based techniques and have also worked closely with Harvard to develop a practical, relevant, yet unconventional workshop that has created a profound learning experience and met the exacting standards set by the Harvard faculty. This workshop has helped delegates develop their unique leadership presence; gain greater understanding of their individual leadership styles; and experiment with behaviours that have increased their ability to take charge, motivate and inspire others (http://www.arielgroup.com/2011).

In addition to their work at Harvard, the Ariel Group have used theatre-based techniques in experiential, interactive workshops to build the emotional intelligence of senior leaders and to develop the leadership and coaching skills necessary to drive employee engagement (http://www.arielgroup.com/2011).

Daniel Pink (2006) contends that the future belongs to people who are able to empathise, make meaning and create; people who think like “artists, inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers,

consolers and big picture thinkers" (Pink, 2006: 1). Adler is convinced that "the time is right for the cross-fertilisation of the arts and leadership" (Adler, 2006: 487). Business and the arts are seen as part of the same creative process, rather than different fields, by management consultant and opera singer, David Pearl. He gives an example of Shakespeare, who used his artistic talent to write plays in addition to running a successful company (Austin & Devin, 2003).

It is not surprising then, that British Theatre director, Richard Olivier, uses Shakespeare's Henry V and not a random set of motivational theories, to coach and inspire senior executives. Olivier sees Henry V as "Shakespeare's greatest leader – inspired and inspiring, visionary yet pragmatic, powerful yet responsible" (Adler, 2006: 488, 496). The story of Henry V is applicable in a modern business context as it highlights the need for leaders to assess the past, create a vision for the future, identify and maximise their strengths and deal with challenges, motivate and inspire their followers and sow the seeds of sustainable development in an organisation. Olivier has used these programmes to assist leaders and managers of Fortune 500 companies to strategise, manage mergers and coach their reports effectively (Olivier, 2001).

These examples of the cross pollination of the arts and business may support the relevance of the use of theatre-based techniques of training for leaders who coach. Testimonials on websites of the companies listed above that use theatre-based techniques of training, indicate that participants have viewed these programmes positively and believe that they have attained their goals. Nevertheless, it is important to examine these claims and to research the efficacy and relevance of these techniques for coach education for leaders.

## 2.6 Conclusion of literature review

It appears from this literature review that theatre-based techniques of training, which draw on the actor's training for the stage, are experiential in nature. From the reviews and stories that have emerged, the creative and present-centred process that theatre-based techniques use seem to engage participants by allowing them to experiment and reflect on their experiences. In this way learning takes place emotionally and not just intellectually. This encourages a transformation of problems into insights, habits into new sets of behaviour, and plans into corporate action (George,

et al., 1998: 19). All of this is essential in a world that is constantly changing and where leaders may often need to adapt and improvise to meet the challenges that this presents.

From the literature it is also apparent that theatre-based techniques of training are being used in a variety of ways in management and leadership training, from developing emotional intelligence and communication skills, to managing conflict and diversity, building leadership presence and nurturing creativity. All of these competencies are seen to be essential for leaders to support and guide their subordinates, peers, and sometimes superiors, in a coaching relationship.

It is not clear from this literature review, however, that theatre-based techniques are more effective or relevant than any other form of experiential training that focuses on building core competencies such as questioning, listening and rapport in leaders who coach others. In order to assess this, further research needs to be undertaken into the methods that are being used to train leaders-as-coaches and the efficacy of these methods in developing the core coaching competencies of leaders.

It is the intention of this research study to assess how theatre-based techniques are currently being used in leader-as-coach training, what dimensions of leader-as-coach development they focus on, and how successful and relevant these techniques are in building core competencies of the leader-as-coach in South Africa and internationally.

### 2.6.1 Research Question 1

The first research problem examines the core coaching competencies that theatre-based techniques focus on developing in leaders-as-coach, with an in-depth focus on the dimension of presence in the leader-as-coach.

### 2.6.2 Research Question 2

The second research question assesses the relevance of theatre-based techniques in contemporary coach education for leaders.

# CHAPTER 3

# 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 describes the methodology that underpins this research. The methodology is discussed and the research design, sampling techniques and research instrument are outlined. The methods of data collection that were used, in line with the relevant research methodology and the methods of data analysis that are pertinent to this research study, are all detailed in this chapter.

## 3.1 Research methodology

The nature of this research is interpretivist and constructivist in nature, so a qualitative approach was deemed to be appropriate for this study. The aim of qualitative research is to explore the phenomena being studied as they are perceived by those that have an in-depth understanding of these phenomena (Elliott, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999) and to interpret their personal experiences and perceptions, rather than gaining an objective statement of reality (Smith Flowers and Larkin (2009) in Cunningham, 2011). Just as the participants' reality is constructed from their own experiences and background and this impacts on the meaning they attribute to objects and experiences, so too is the researcher's (J. W. Creswell, 2012). As it is not possible to set aside one's own perspectives entirely in qualitative research (Elliott, et al., 1999), it is often referred to as interpretive research (J. W. Creswell, 2012). The purpose of qualitative research is to gain a perspective from the researcher's point of view (Remenyi & Money, 2004). To gain insight into the phenomena being studied, a small sample that is specifically selected and based on set criteria is advisable. In order to obtain the rich information that is being sought, close contact between "the researcher and the subject being studied is required" and "analysis is open to emergent concepts and ideas"(Remenyi & Money, 2004: 62).

This study was exploratory in nature as little or no research has been undertaken to determine the efficacy of theatre-based techniques in building core coaching competencies and their relevance in contemporary coach education. For this reason, a purposive sample of experts in the fields of Active Communicating, improvisation and storytelling, were chosen to be interviewed. The

researcher engaged in participant observations of theatre-based workshops to ensure that what was being said by specialists was experienced (Becker and Geer, 1970, in Patton, 2001). In this way, through interviews of a selection of specialists; perusal of course material; feedback from delegates who attended a theatre-based workshop and participant observations of training sessions in institutions, an in-depth perspective of the phenomena being studied was obtained (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 75). This assisted in establishing the trustworthiness of this study through exploration of multiple sources of data (Tellis, 1997).

A conventional approach to content analysis was used in this study, as the research on this specific topic is limited. The researcher "avoided using preconceived categories, instead allowing the categories and themes to emerge from the data" (Kondracki and Wellman, 2002, in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1279).

## 3.2 Research design

This exploratory research was designed to capture information from multiple sources of information including interviews, observation, feedback and perusal of relevant documents in order to generate useful and credible qualitative findings (Patton, 2001).

Semi-structured interviews with open ended questions (Burke, 2005) were conducted with the developers of course material; facilitators of theatre-based techniques, the CEO of a company that is licensed to conduct theatre-based training in South Africa, and the head of a corporate division of an academic institution who is a TBT specialist. These were in-depth interviews which lasted 60 to 90 minutes, which focused on exploring the rich experiences and perceptions of these specialists (Mack, 2005) and were held face to face or conducted over Skype. The responses from these interviews were captured in writing, or in most cases, recorded.

In addition, detailed analysis of feedback from delegates who attended a theatre-based improvisation workshop was obtained. Theatre-based training manuals were reviewed and practical observation of theatre-based techniques took place (Yin, 2009: 101) to combine what interviewees had said with what the researcher saw (Patton, 2001).

Once the information had been collected and collated, the researcher reflected on the data presented, coded data inductively and was sceptical about the information presented (Stake, 2010). As this was a limited research study, only limited generalisations can be made from the research findings.

## 3.3 Population and sample

### 3.3.1 Population

The population for this exploratory research was recognised professionals in the field of theatre-based techniques, experienced facilitators, and delegates who attended a theatre-based workshop.

### 3.3.2 Sample and sampling method

A purposive sample of specialists, programme developers and facilitators from the following fields of theatre-based techniques were selected to be interviewed:

- Active Communicating theatre-based techniques; and
- Improvisation theatre-based techniques.

#### *3.3.2.1 Specialists*

All of the five specialists were selected because they have a background in theatre. Several have masters or doctoral degrees in coaching or industrial psychology. All of the specialists interviewed work in the field of applied theatre in business using high impact theatre-based techniques to effect changes in leaders, and many run their own businesses. Most are originators or developers of their own theatre-based material. They have all written books, published papers or developed course material for leader and coach development in their areas of expertise. Although developing coaching competencies in leaders was not the primary focus of their work, it has become one of the focal areas that these specialists are engaged in, as several of these specialists are master coaches, who coach senior executives and government leaders. All of the experts that were interviewed are passionate about theatre and the impact that theatre-based techniques have had on business leaders and their organisations. One such specialist maintains that her company, using theatre-

based techniques in their leadership and coach training, has “enabled over thirty thousand senior executives in fourteen countries of the world to effect personal transformation” (Halpern & Lubar, 2004:xviii).

#### *3.3.2.2 Facilitators*

In addition to the five specialists, four facilitators of Active Communicating theatre-based workshops were interviewed. All of them have received training from the originator of the Active Communicating methodology and have spent a minimum of five years facilitating these techniques in South African corporations.

#### *3.3.2.3 Executives*

Other interviewees included two senior executives who run divisions that have used theatre-based techniques in leadership and coach development in the corporate world. The first was the COO of a consultancy that supplies Active Communicating workshops to the corporate world. The second, the head of corporate leadership development at an academic institution, who is theatre trained. These executives were interviewed, to determine the efficacy of theatre-based techniques in building core coaching competencies in leaders who coach.

In South Africa, interviews took place face-to-face in a suitable corporate environment. International specialists were interviewed on Skype. Most of these interviews were recorded and transcribed; others were handwritten (See attached CD).

### 3.3.3 Ethics

Ethical issues in this research included gaining informed consent from interviewees, programme directors, facilitators and delegates to participate in this study, and assuring confidentiality in all sensitive matters. No covert activities were entered into and no requests were made that went beyond social norms (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 141). Permission was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand Ethics Committee to proceed with this research.

- Informed consent: participants were informed from the outset of the purpose and nature of the study, and consent of individuals and organisations to participate in the study was gained through a letter that was compiled for this purpose and sent to participants (attached in appendix A) (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 142).

- Confidentiality: The issue of confidentiality in this research was stressed. Although experts and authors did not express the wish to remain anonymous, certain information they revealed about clients was private. Permission was obtained from most of the facilitators and executives who participated in this process, to use their name rather than a pseudonym. In one case a pseudonym is used. Participants in the workshop were assured that the research would represent a "composite picture rather than an individual one" (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 141).

## 3.4 The research instrument

The semi-structured interview schedule that was used for this research study is provided in appendix B. This semi-structured interview technique allowed for flexibility to explore interesting insights as they emerged. A covering letter to the potential respondents motivating them to participate is attached in appendix A.

A table was drawn up to assist the researcher to document observations during the workshop, which is included in the CD at the back of this report. A feedback form was given to participants to record their responses to training and their key learnings from the workshop. This feedback form is included in appendix C and the composite feedback is included on the CD.

## 3.5 Procedure for data collection

The research procedure included obtaining data from multiple sources to ensure the reliability of the study (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). This included a review of workshop material; observation of workshops (Tellis, 1997); analysis of feedback from delegates; and pre-arranged interviews with select theatre-based specialists, facilitators and executives:

- Leading specialists and programme developers in the field of theatre-based techniques in South Africa and the USA. Interviews took place in a suitable corporate environment, on Skype or telephonically. These interviews were recorded and transcribed.

- Facilitators of theatre-based workshops who were based in South Africa. A suitable venue was chosen for these interviews and they were recorded.

- Executives who were involved in companies or institutions that use theatre-based techniques for leadership development. This interview was held at their corporate office and was recorded.

Observation of four theatre-based workshops took place at academic institutions and at private training venues in South Africa. Prior to the workshops, the training material and process was perused by the researcher where possible.

During the workshops, extensive notes were taken to assist the researcher to capture and sort information into categories such as: content, process, outcomes of the training and competencies observed to have been acquired. Delegates' verbal and non-verbal responses to the training processes and the dynamics in the group were noted. After the improvisation workshop, feedback was collected from participants using detailed feedback forms, and this feedback was collated to assess responses to the training methods, perceptions of the learning that took place and the competencies that were perceived to have been acquired.

This procedure followed the careful observation, documentation and measurement of phenomena such as people and processes (Christensen & Carlile, 2009).

### 3.5.1 Data analysis and interpretation

Data from interviews, observation of workshops and feedback from delegates was analysed inductively into codes, categories and themes, using conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). These themes were then assessed against the literature and competencies outlined by international coach bodies such as the ICF and WABC.

Conventional content analysis is usually appropriate when existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited, as in this study. The researcher avoided using preconceived categories (Kondracki and Wellman, 2002, in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1279) and instead immersed herself in the data to allow new insights to develop and the categories and names for categories to emerge. This is described as inductive category development (Mayring, 2000). Many qualitative methods share this initial approach to study design and analysis.

The advantage of the conventional approach to content analysis is gaining direct information from study participants without imposing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives (J. W. Creswell, 2012). This research study depicts a research question which is appropriate for this approach. Knowledge generated from the content analysis is based on participants' unique perspectives and grounded in the actual data. Sampling techniques were designed to explore diverse perspectives and the analysis was structured to capture these (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Reasoned debate should emanate from the findings and analysis of qualitative study (Shuttleworth, 2008).

In this qualitative research study, the following methods suggested by Creswell (2009) and Heish and Shannon (2005) were employed. In the analysis process the researcher:

- Created and organised files for data;
- Read through all the transcripts carefully many times to ensure understanding;
- Chose one text to go through in detail and made notes in margins;
- Repeated this process with all of the texts;

- After having gone through several transcripts and made notes in the margins the researcher made a list of all of the topics that emerged and thought carefully of how to label these into codes. This was repeated for all of the transcripts;
- Preliminary codes were written next to each segment of data;
- Codes were then grouped into meaningful categories;
- These categories were checked against the data several times, keeping the research question in mind;
- A relationship was drawn between categories and themes were elicited from these;
- Material belonging to each theme was grouped together, resulting in eight themes;
- Exercises from the workshops observed were described and the purpose of these delineated. Observed outcomes were listed and the stated and observed competencies coded, categorised and separated into themes;
- A table of the exercises, their purpose and outcomes, and the key coaching competencies that were perceived to have been developed by these techniques, was sent to the facilitator for corroboration of these findings;
- Feedback from delegates who attended the improvisation workshop was collected and collated according to questions posed on the feedback sheets. The responses were coded, categorised and divided into themes;
- The information that was obtained from observation of workshops and feedback from participants was used to corroborate or compare with the findings that emerged from the interviews;
- This process resulted in 605 statements that were analysed and reflected on in the findings;
- The findings were written up accordingly;

- A research report detailing the findings using prose, tables and figures (Yin, 2009: 176) was written up. Authentic citations were used in the report to allow the experts to use their own voices (J. W. Creswell, 2012) to verify information and increase the trustworthiness of the research (Patton, 1990, Sandolowski, 1993, in Elo and Kyngas, 2007).

## 3.6 Limitations of the study

- Access to observation of a theatre-based workshop in a corporate environment was not possible, which precluded the use of a case study methodology. Nevertheless, leaders and coaches were observed in a workshop in an academic environment, making limited deductions from this qualitative research possible for leaders who coach and coaches.

- Although observation of four workshops took place, these were each one day workshops, using the theatre-based techniques outlined in this study. Ideally, observation should have taken place over a longer period of time to draw accurate conclusions about the efficacy of theatre-based techniques in developing core coaching competencies.

- Feedback was only obtained from the group of leaders/coaches who attended the improvisation workshop and not from delegates who attended the Active Communicating workshop or the storytelling workshop. However, the researcher interviewed several Active Communicating specialists and facilitators, and observed an Active Communicating workshop, as well as a storytelling workshop, and interacted closely with participants to these workshops.

- Several of the experts interviewed have at one time or another worked together and although this may be a strength, it may also be a weakness, as their common values may skew the findings. However, as the experts interviewed represented different theatre-based methods, this may be a strength.

- The researcher has a background in training and development and in theatre, and although this may be seen as an advantage, it may lead to bias in the analysis of the findings in this qualitative research study. Researchers with a dissimilar background may reach a different conclusion.

Due to the limitations outlined above, it may not be possible to generalise the findings of this study to a general population of leaders who coach.

## 3.7 Validity and reliability

Validation in qualitative research is an attempt to assess the accuracy of findings as described by the researcher and participants. This is a strength of qualitative research as much time is spent in the field, on detailed descriptions and in close proximity to participants (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 206).

In order to be valid and reliable, this research has been thorough and note taking has been meticulous and systematic (Shuttleworth, 2008).

### 3.7.1 External validity

As the data is evidence of the main assertion in this research study, external validity was checked by:

- Checking assertions and looking at the information gathered several times (Stake, 2010: 124) through multiple sources of information. In this case study, triangulation took place through interviews with experts in theatre-based techniques who had designed their own course material; facilitators; and participants. In addition, observation of theatre-based workshops took place and resource/training material and process notes were studied. As the expert developers of the methods were present and involved in the facilitation of the workshop, they were able to verify data presented by the facilitator.

- Ensuring that the research process and data were reviewed by the supervisor (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 208). The supervisor in this research project is an expert in theatre-based techniques and is a master coach, therefore she was well-qualified to check the process and data of this exploratory research.

- Allowing participants to check the findings and interpretation of the study (J.W. Creswell, 2007: 208). Certain interviewees were asked to check the information recorded in the interviews and

the recorded observations of workshops were sent to the facilitators to check for accuracy and validity (Stake, 2010).

- Acknowledging researcher bias, to be clarified from the outset (Merriam, 1988: 99). In this case, the researcher has a background in communication skills training (which encompasses many of the communication skills listed as prerequisites for coaching on COMENSA's website). Her knowledge of experiential techniques of training; her drama background; and her experience in critical analysis of course material and feedback reports may have made her sympathetic to or overcritical of the process, and comparisons with other methods of training may be made.

### 3.7.2 Internal validity

Internal validity is the extent to which conclusions are unambiguously drawn from data collected and plausible alternative outcomes are ruled out (Christensen & Carlile, 2009). Internal validity ensures that the method of data collection is consistent throughout the study. Although semi-structured interviews took place allowing for flexibility, the same interview structure was used for each respondent. Multiple sources contributed to internal validity. Triangulation with other sources, i.e. the expert originator of the methodology; the facilitator of the workshop and the participants of the workshop, further supported the internal validity of the study (Golafshani, 2003).

### 3.7.3 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which research findings can be replicated. This is not easy in the social sciences as human behaviour cannot be replicated and any experiment that uses human judgment is always going to come under question (Merriam, 1988: 220). Reliability is rather determined through a consistency of findings with the data collected (Merriam, 1988: 222). To ensure reliability, records of research processes and data were kept (Richard, 2008:124).

# CHAPTER 4

# 4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

## 4.1 Introduction to the research findings

The findings of this research will be presented in the following order:

- Research question 1: What are the core competencies that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach?
- Research question 2: What relevance do theatre-based techniques have for contemporary coach education for leaders?

## 4.2 Providing evidence through interviews, observation and feedback

In order to provide evidence on the topic "The use of theatre-based techniques in developing core coaching competencies in the leader-as-coach" a process of triangulation was used in the form of:

1. Interviews with theatre-based specialists;
2. Observation of workshops; and
3. Feedback from delegates who attended a theatre-based workshop.

The process used and findings from interviews, observations and feedback will be described briefly in this section of the report under the headings 4.2.1: interviews; 4.2.3: observations; and 4.2.3: feedback. The themes that emanated from this research will be elaborated on in section 4.3: composite findings for research question 1, which details the core coaching competencies developed by theatre-based techniques. The findings for research question 2, on the relevance of theatre-based techniques for coach education, will be discussed in section 4.4. Section 4.5 concludes this chapter.

### 4.2.1 Interviews

#### *4.2.1.1 Respondent demographics*

As little or no research has been done into the core coaching competencies that are nurtured by theatre-based techniques, a sample of five international experts, who have specialised in using theatre-based techniques in leadership and leader-as-coach education, was chosen to be interviewed. In addition to these specialists, four facilitators of Active Communicating theatre-based techniques were interviewed. Interviews were also conducted with two senior executives who operate in the corporate world and use theatre-based methods in leadership development. A professional profile of these respondents can be found on the next page in table 1.

#### *4.2.1.2 Interview questions*

The following four questions were asked of theatre-based specialists, who use these techniques in a corporate context, with specific reference to training leaders-as-coaches:

1. How and where are you using theatre-based techniques to develop the leader-as-coach?

2. How would you describe the theatre-based techniques that you use in leader-as-coach development?

3. What are the core competencies of coaching that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach?

4. How relevant are these techniques in leader-as-coach and coach education programmes?

As semi-structured interviews were conducted, the questions were adapted and expanded on for each interviewee. The questions centred around the work that these specialists had done with leaders, and particularly leaders who coach, and explored their perceptions of the core coaching competencies that are developed through theatre-based techniques. The relevance of these techniques for coach education was also investigated.

**Table 1: Professional Profile of Interviewees**

| Expert | Area of specialisation | Qualifications | Profile | Businesses |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mark Rittenberg | Originator of Active Communicating theatre-based methodology<br>Master coach | Doctorate Education from the University of San Francisco: M.A. and from the University of California-Berkeley | Actor; Director; Fulbright Senior Scholar Award in 1994 to travel to post-apartheid South Africa build confidence in black communities. Cultural conflict resolution in Middle East, youth, 1999. Author Active Communicating Handbook and Leader communicator/coach Training manuals | CEO Corporate scenes; CEO of Coach institute UC; Berkley; Kellogs teachers middle east |
| Kathy Lubar | Contemporary development of Active Communicating and other theatre-based methods in leadership development | A graduate of Stanford University | Co-author of *Leadership Presence*. Acted professionally for 15 years in New York and Boston, and playing leading roles in a number of national tours | CEO and co-founder of the Ariel Group; Co-founder of the Boston New Repertory Theatre |
| Sunny Stout-Rostron | Active Communicating and Thinking Environment specialist; author and master coach | D Prof at Middlesex University London | Author of seven books i.e. 'Business Coaching Wisdom And Practice', 'Accelerating Performance, Powerful New Techniques to Develop People' (Kogan Page 2002) and 'Managing Training,' (Kogan Page 1993). Contributing author to Sharing the Passion, Conversations with Coaches (AHT, 2006). Executive Coach Chair of the Research Agenda for the Global Coaching Convention. President Emeritus and Founding Chair of COMENSA aligned to the EMCC and WABC. | Executive Director: Sunny Stout-Rostron Assoc. |
| Kat Koppett | Improvisation and storytelling specialist and coach | B.F.A. in Drama from New York University and an M.A. in Organizational Psychology from Columbia University | Author of Training to Imagine: Practical Improvisational Theatre Techniques to Enhance Creativity, Teamwork, Leadership, and Learning, 2012. Published articles in Thiagi's newsletter. Instrumental in creating the corporate training wing of Freestyle Repertory Theatre, New York. 10 years as a performer, head coach and Corporate Division Director of BATS Improv, | Kat Koppett is the eponymous founder of "KopCo" and CEO of Koppett & Co, |
| Burgert Kirsten | Improvisation and coaching skills. | Master's degree in Industrial Psychology from the University of Stellenbosch in 2008 Improvisational theatre. Actor/coach. | Conducts workshops using his unique improvisational methods. Presents improvisational coaching skills workshops at business schools and at International Coaching Federation Conferences. | Co-owner Playingmantis |

| Facilitator | Area of expertise | Years' experience | Background | Education | Nationality, race and gender |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caryn | Actress, teacher, voice-over artist, facilitator of Active Communicating and other training methods | 10 | Trains individuals in how best to use voice, movement, breath, thought to inspire confidence and credibility in leaders | BA honours Dramatic art WITS | South African White woman |
| Amon | Lead facilitator for Active Communicating and other people development and change strategies. | 10 | Leadership development; coaching; and transformation work: job acceleration project for South African youth - Harambee. Ranked as "very inspirational" | Active communicating "actors" methodology Advanced coaching Certification: UCB USA | South African Black male |
| Mot | Actor and Active Communicating facilitator | 10 | Award winning actress, playwright and Active communication consultant to SA companies | Speech and Drama UCT; Public relation PRISA; voice training Royal National Theatre | South African Black woman |
| Des | Trainer and Active Communicating facilitator | 16 | Trainer and change management consultant and manager | BA Hnrs Industrial Relation; MBA Pretoria University | South African White woman |
| **Executive** | **Area of expertise** | **Years' experience** | **Background** | **Education** | **Nationality, race and gender** |
| Steven | Management and leadership. Responsible for finance; IT; HR; facilities and legal matters in consultancy using Active Communicating methods amongst others. | 5 COO<br>10 senior manager | Chief Operating Officer of change management consultancy offering "activities, products, processes and advisory services to shift, change or engage the mindsets of employees to the company's change & vision" | MBA at Milpark Business School | South African White male |
| Lucy | Arts in management education; management and leadership development | 10 senior manager<br>20 leadership development | Director company specific programmes at Business School; passion for playful creative learning | Dr Philosophy: Griffith University Australia | South African White female |

#### *4.2.1.3 Brief overview of findings from interviews*

Figure 2 below provides an overview of the findings in terms of the competencies that emerged in response to the interview questions around research question 1 "What are the core coaching competencies that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach?"

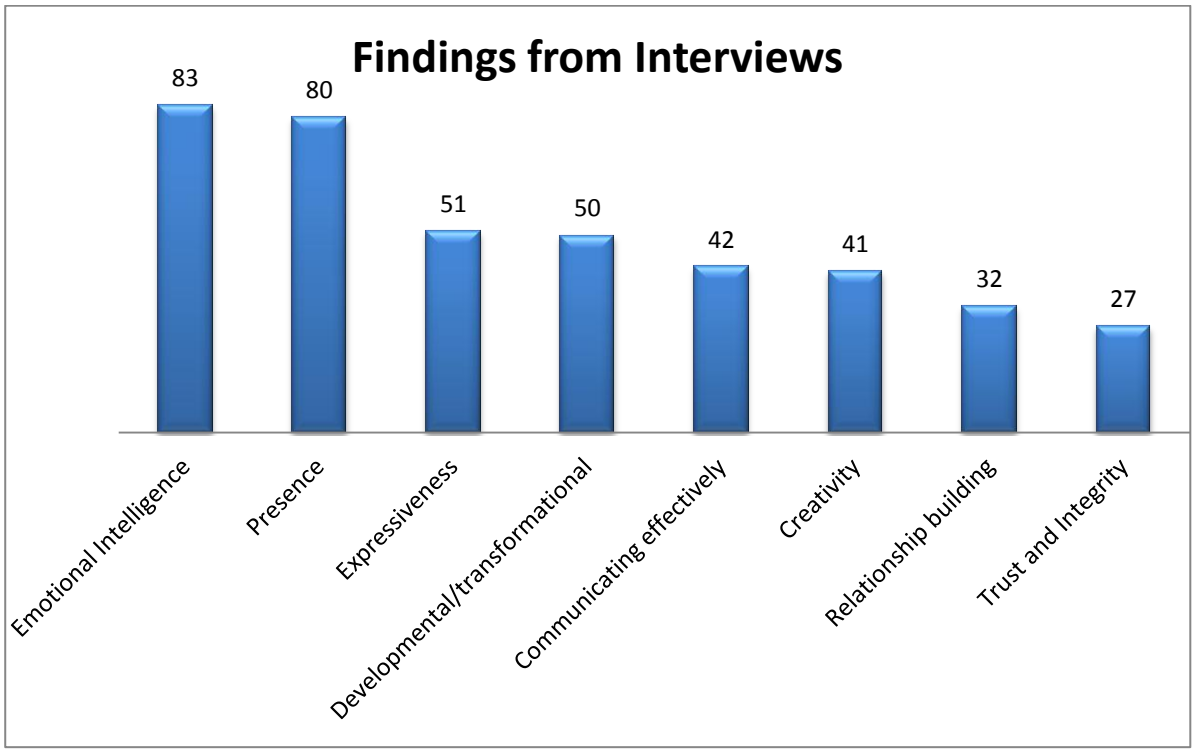



**Figure 2: Findings from interviews: core coaching competencies developed by TBTs**

Interviewees viewed emotional intelligence and presence as the primary competencies that are developed by theatre-based techniques. Emotional intelligence emerged as a core competence with 83 references having been made to emotional intelligence, which was seen to encompass self-awareness; self-mastery; self-motivation; emotional awareness; and empathy. Presence was also seen to be a core competence and was made reference to 80 times, with allusion to heightened consciousness, mindfulness, groundedness, authenticity and being in the flow.

Expressiveness was also seen to be an outcome of theatre-based techniques and was mentioned 51 times, with reference to expressing oneself energetically in an engaging and inspiring way, with emotional, vocal and somatic expressiveness. Theatre-based techniques were also perceived to

lead to development and transformation in leaders who coach, and was referred to 50 times in the context of being transformative, co-constructive, engaging, endorsing and rigorous.

Communicating effectively was seen to be a competence built by theatre-based techniques and referred to the ability to communicate directly, listen and question, 42 times. Creativity was referred to 41 times as an outcome of theatre-based techniques and this was mentioned in the context of flexibility, spontaneity and innovation. 32 references were made to relationship building, connectedness and sharing as an outcome of theatre-based techniques, while 27 references indicated that trust and integrity underpinned theatre-based techniques and were key for creating a safe non-judgmental space for a coaching relationship.

### 4.2.2 Observation of workshops

Observation of four theatre-based workshops took place for the researcher to gain personal insight into the coaching competencies that were developed by theatre-based exercises. These workshops included:

1. An improvisation workshop for coaches which was held at Wits Business School as part of the MMBEC programme and an improvisation workshop for leaders/coaches at GIBS Business School;

2. An Active Communicating, theatre-based workshop for facilitators and coaches at a private venue in Johannesburg;

3. A story-telling workshop, The Hero's Journey, for facilitators and coaches at a private venue in Cape Town.

A template was used to record each of the exercises used in the workshops; the purpose and the outcomes of these exercises; and the core competencies that were developed by each exercise. In order to check the researcher's description of the exercises and the assessed outcomes and competencies, this template was forwarded to the programme designer/facilitator to be checked and approved. Suggested changes were integrated into the final table which is included on the CD. In addition, workshop participants were engaged in informal discussions during and after the

workshops to gauge their level of involvement in the workshops and their perceptions of the competencies that they had acquired and the relevance of theatre-based work for coach education.

A description of the Improvisation, Active Communicating and Storytelling workshops follows.

#### *4.2.2.1 Improvisation workshop*

The stated purpose of the improvisation workshop was to build coach competencies through heightening the use of all of the senses: listening and awareness; keeping one's eye on the big picture; trusting the intuitive; giving and taking control; accepting ideas and being open to taking risks. Improvisation exercises included using mime to mirror a partner's actions and required partners to sense and respond to one another in the moment. Vocal mirroring exercises were also conducted and required intense concentration, listening and paying attention for the exercises to succeed. In a non-judgemental atmosphere of trust and safety, participants were encouraged to experiment, take risks and embrace their vulnerability. Exercises to celebrate failure included taking a deep circus bow and saying, "I failed", to the applause of the group. Exercises such as "Yes and", illustrated the importance of accepting and building onto other people's offers. The coaching process of co-creating an outcome was demonstrated through a storytelling exercise, in which the group members each contributed a word to construct a new story. The atmosphere of the day was physically and emotionally engaging and succeeded because trust and safety were established.

#### *4.2.2.2 Active Communicating*

The focus of the Active Communicating workshop was very different from the improvisation workshop. Here the stated purpose was to nurture "the four powers of leadership: communication, conviction, presence and knowledge" (Rittenberg, M. 2011 [pers. Com] Ketz, 2012). Emphasis was placed on theatrical activities that build energy, physical and vocal expressiveness, spontaneity, focus and awareness. Actor's diaphragmatic breathing and voice exercises were used to build vocal variety, and acting out of short extracts from plays encouraged expressive, engaging communication. The workshop culminated in a coaching exercise where delegates, through the use of deep and curious questions, explored their partner's moment-of-pride stories. These stories were then reframed and related to the group in an expressive and authentic manner. In preparation to present these personal stories to the group, theatrical centring exercises were

undertaken to heighten awareness and control nerves. Although the workshop took place over a short one day period, the level of energy, engagement and rapport between delegates was tangible and the impact of hearing one's own story being positively reframed by someone else, was an unforgettable lesson in co-creative coaching.

#### *4.2.2.3 Hero's Journey storytelling*

The Hero's Journey workshop is based on the work of Joseph Campbell, and uses the stages of a story to illustrate how characters are able to move from a stuck state to a new understanding by gaining insight into their core values and reframing these to create a new reality. In this way the process of deep learning and transformation was illustrated. This workshop explored the narrative of fairy-tale heroes, such as Red Riding Hood, who undertakes an adventure from her naïve world, through trials and tribulations, to a new awakened world. This storytelling framework can be likened to the personal journey that coachees undertake to move from their present reality to a new, reconstructed, more desired reality. Exercises such as 'Voices in the Head', based on Augusto Boal's (1990), exercise the 'Cop in the Head', assisted delegates to unblock the underlying beliefs and values that hold them back from achieving their desired reality. Other exercises from Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1990), were used to help delegates to move from a stuck state to a new awareness. These exercises included building body sculptures, with a protagonist, contagonist, antagonist and guide/coach to assist the group reconstruct their reality.

As can be seen from the description of the workshops above, they all used theatre-based techniques, but the focus and process used, although overlapping in part, were quite different. From the researcher's observation of these workshops, presence (22) was perceived to be the highest ranking competence that emerged, followed by trust and integrity (16); creativity (14), communicating effectively (13); emotional intelligence (12); development/transformation (11); expressiveness (9); and relationship building (6) as can be seen in the bar diagram below, figure 3.

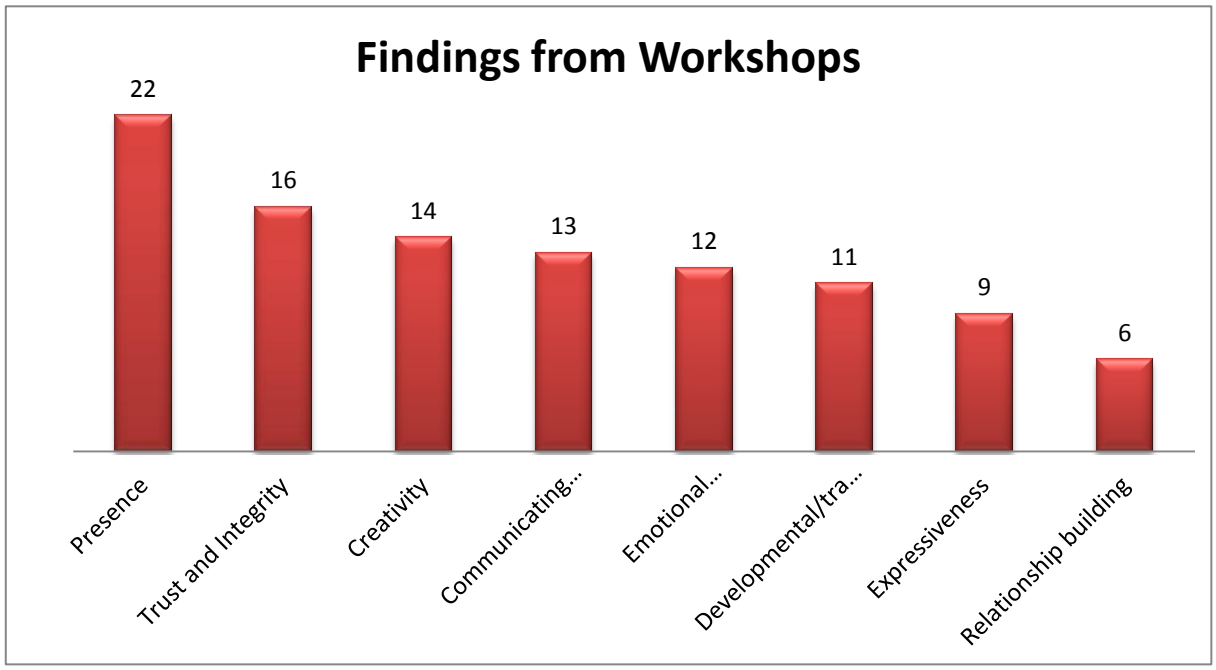



**Figure 3: Findings from Workshops: core coaching competencies developed by TBTs**

### 4.2.3 Feedback from delegates

To assess the core coaching competencies that theatre-based techniques develop in the leader-as-coach, delegates were asked to complete a feedback form, which included open-ended questions about the core coaching competencies that delegates felt they had acquired from the workshop. In addition, they were asked to comment on the value of the workshop for coach development. (Please see the feedback form in appendix C and the composite feedback on the CD).

Feedback was received from the delegates who attended the improvisation workshop only, and not from delegates who attended the Active Communicating or Storytelling workshops, as permission was not granted for this. 18 of the 22 delegates who attended the improvisation workshop submitted detailed feedback immediately after the completion of the workshop, or shortly thereafter, by email. This feedback was then captured and collated into categories and themes.

As has been described in the findings above, the improvisation, Active Communicating and Storytelling workshops differed from one another quite significantly and this could account for the difference in the ranking of competencies from feedback, interviews and observation of workshops.

As can be seen in the graph below, delegates who attended the improvisational workshop ranked communicating effectively as the primary competence to emerge, followed by development/transformation; presence; emotional intelligence; creativity; trust and integrity. Expressiveness and relationship building accounted for only three and four responses respectively.

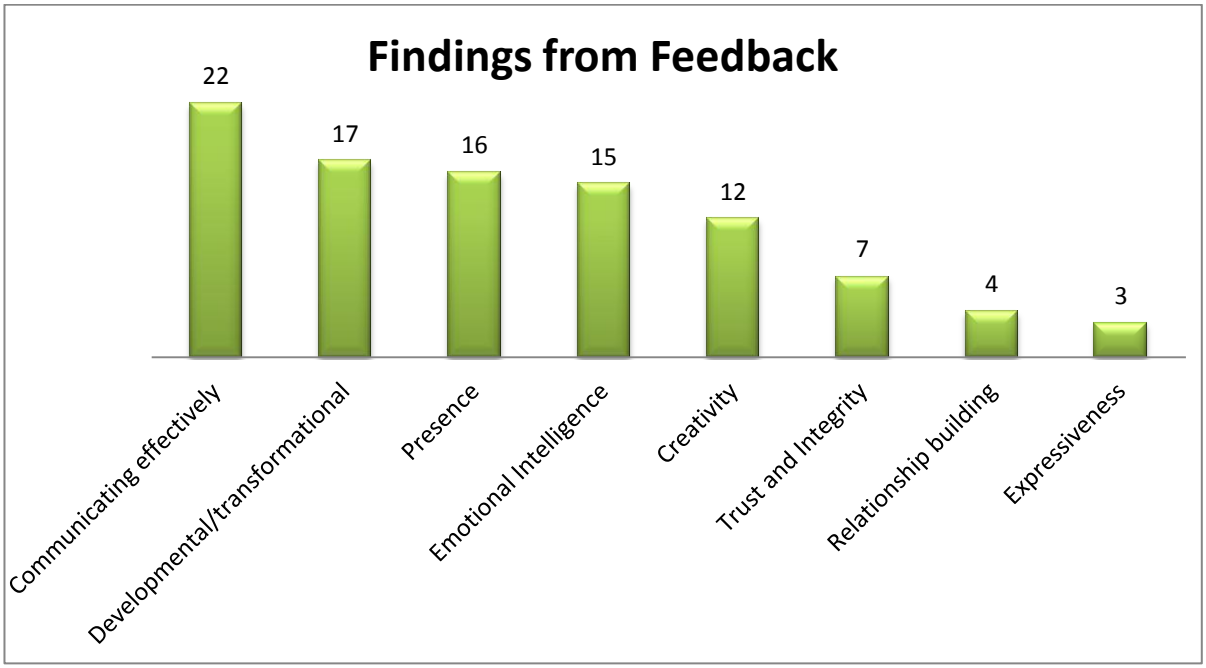



**Figure 4: Findings from feedback: core coaching competencies developed by TBTs**

## 4.3 Composite findings for research question 1: The core coaching competencies developed by theatre-based techniques

The following bar diagram reflects the composite coaching competencies that were found to be developed by theatre-based techniques, from interviews, observation of workshops and feedback from delegates. There were a total of 605 responses to this research question. The interviews accounted for 403, workshops 103 and delegate feedback 96 responses. All the responses were coded inductively, the codes divided into categories and the categories into themes. Each of the themes reflected in the table below was made up of several categories, which in turn were comprised of a number of codes. The themes, categories and codes are listed in the table in appendix D and these will be elaborated on in this section of the report.

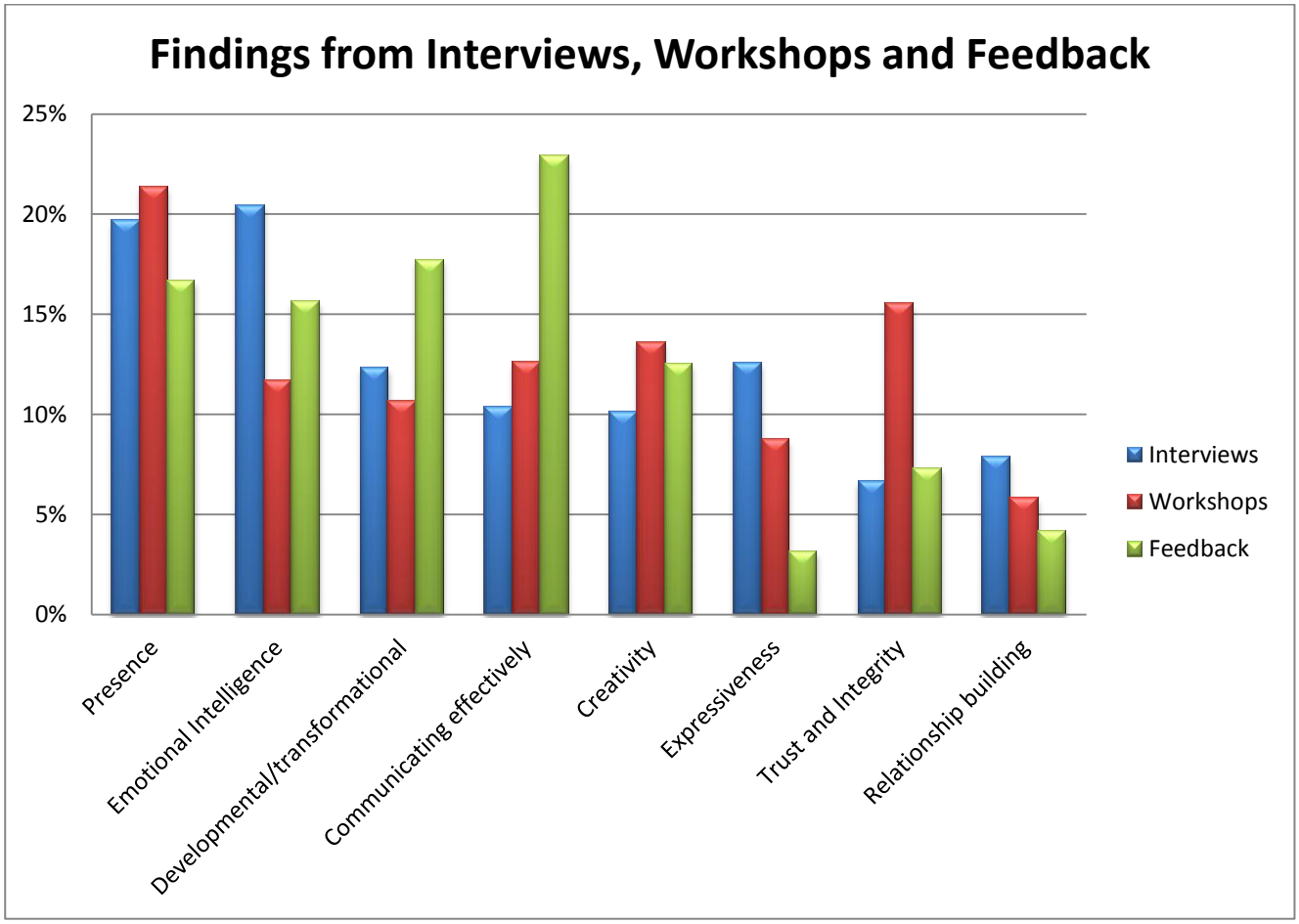



**Figure 5: Composite findings from interviews, workshops and feedback**

Two interesting observations emerged from these research findings:

1. The core competencies that emanated from the interviews, observation of workshops, and the analysis of the feedback differed from one another. From the interviews of experts in the field, it emerged that emotional intelligence and presence were the dominant competencies perceived to be developed by theatre-based techniques. Presence was the dominant competence that emerged from the workshops that were observed. However, delegates who attended the improvisation workshop perceived effective communication to be the main outcome they attained, according to their feedback reports.

2. The findings are in alliance with the literature if the themes are divided as per the initial categorisation. If, however, some of the themes are combined, a slightly different picture emerges and the competencies are found to be more interdependent than initially thought.

   The research problems that arise are:

   - Why do the core competencies that emanate from each of these theatre-based methods differ?

   - How do the core competencies that are found to be developed by theatre-based techniques differ from what has been stated in the literature review?

The competencies that emerged from this research will be dealt with in the order that they appear in figure 6 below: Composite findings from interviews, workshops and feedback.

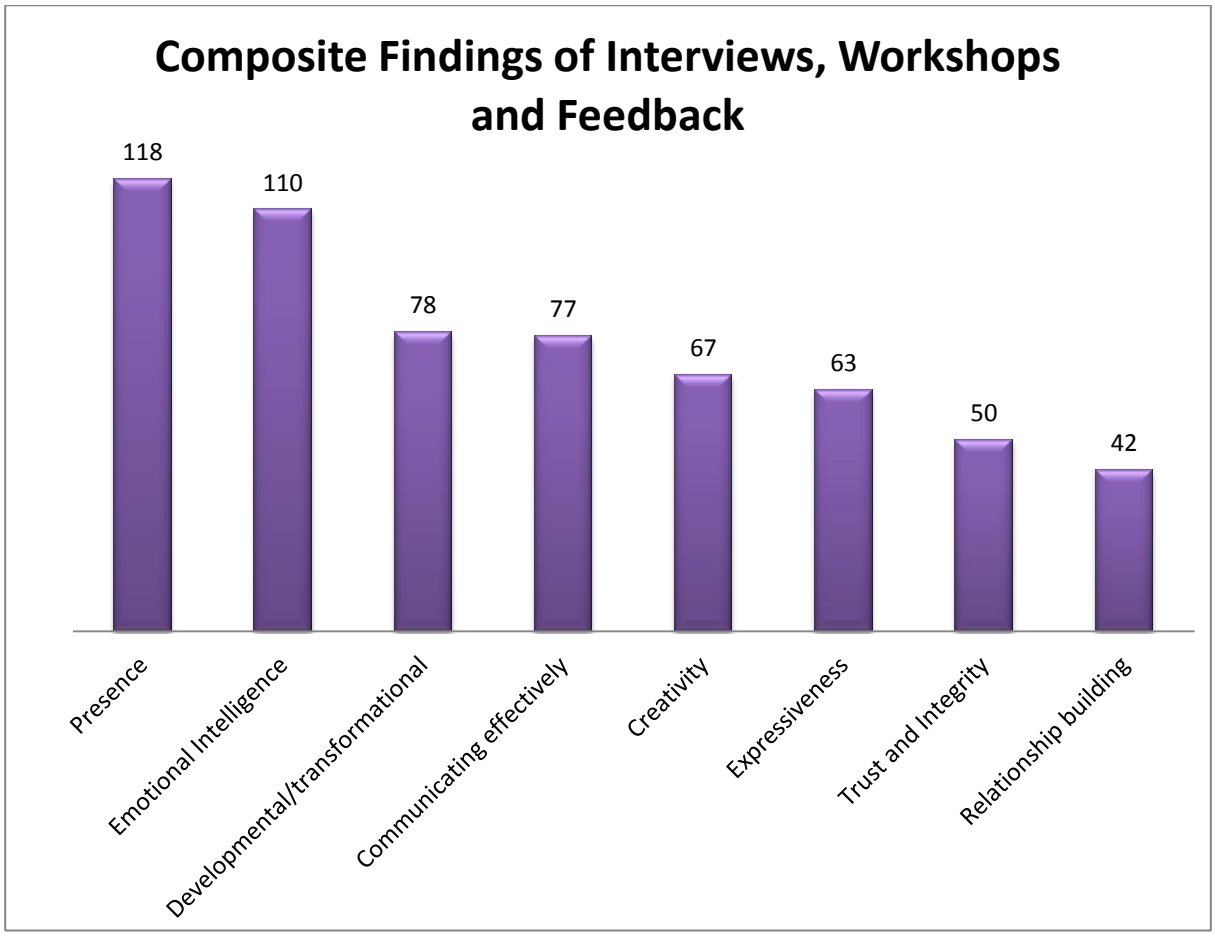



**Figure 6: Composite coach competencies found to be developed through TBTs**

### 4.3.1 Presence

Presence was found to be the key competence that was nurtured by theatre-based techniques in this research study. Presence was described as the ability to be in the present moment with heightened consciousness, mindful awareness, being grounded and engaged in the process: being in the flow. Presence was perceived to be a core competence for actors, leaders and coaches, which enables them to relate authentically and deeply in the immediate moment with others.

Most of the Active Communicating specialists and facilitators made reference to the fact that theatre-based methods focus on building presence by developing all four of the intelligences: mental, physical, emotional and spiritual. Being present - using all of one's senses - was perceived to be necessary if coaches were to assist in transforming a coachee's way of being in the coaching relationship:

*"As a coach aiming to transform a coachee's way of being, one needs to be present intellectually, emotionally; spiritually and relationally in the coaching relationship. Active Communication's stated aim is to build emotional, spiritual and relational quotient" (Mark)*

Many Active Communicating facilitators made reference to the following four principles, which appear to be central to the Active Communicating philosophy and key to the competence of presence:

*"Show up and choose to be present" which was spoken about in the context of being willing to be in the moment, attentive and engaged – being in the flow.*

*"Pay attention to what has heart and meaning" which was referred to in the context of being mindful of what is meaningful to other people.*

*"Tell the truth without blame or judgment" which was about being honest and authentic without being overly critical.*

*'Be open to outcome but not attached to outcome" referred to being aware, open, flexible and adaptable to outcomes. (Des)*

The competencies of heightened conciousness; mindfulness; authenticity; groundedness and being in the flow, which are seen to be integral to presence, are elaborated on in this section.

#### *4.3.1.1 Heightened Conciousness and Spiritual Awareness*

**Heightened consciousness** was regarded as a key component of presence, having been referred to 48 times in this study. Combined with 10 references to spiritual awareness, this increased to 58 references. Terms such as awareness, insightfulness and sensitivity were used to refer to heightened consciousness, together with terms such as intuitive, open-hearted, holistic (in tune with all senses), and meaningful, which were used to describe spiritual awareness. Several facilitators of Active Communicating TBTs described the work they did as deeply spiritual:

*"you work from deep inside, where you find your truth. It is almost spiritual ….. it is a journey that transforms from inside." (Mot)*

**Intuition** appeared to be linked to the concept of heightened consciousness and spiritual awareness and was described as a subconscious process that is essential in coaching, as it allows the coach to read the person and the situation without too much analysis.

The intuitive nature of theatre-based techniques was observed in several exercises in the improvisational workshop and a facilitator of the Active Communicating workshop described the free-flowing intuitive nature of these techniques, which she says are more difficult to facilitate than other training methods because of this:

> *"A lot depends on the facilitator who needs to hold the space and be intuitive - know when to push and when to desist – to dance the dance with participants." (Caryn)*

#### *4.3.1.2 Meaningfulness*

The concept of being in tune with what has "heart and meaning" for others was referred to by several respondents as being central to being present in a coaching relationship and to the effective facilitation of theatre-based techniques. This attention to what was important to others was observed in all of the workshops, but particularly in the storytelling workshops, where participants were required to pay attention with heightened awareness to what was meaningful to others. The following quote from a theatre-based specialist, who is also a master coach, illustrates the importance of understanding what is meaningful in his own practice so that others can emulate his example and pursue their own sense of purpose and meaning:

> *"the framework for my own coaching work with my coaching participants, making sure that the work I am doing is meaningful and impactful - and is something that they can relate to and want to become, in other words fulfilling their aspirations and their dreams."(Mark)*

#### *4.3.1.3 Mindfulness*

In this research, 27 statements were made about theatre-based techniques building mindfulness, with reference to paying attention, being focused, in the moment, centred and relaxed. Mindful awareness was described as a primary skill that actors need to have in order to respond

spontaneously to their fellow actors. It was also seen to be the number one skill that leaders who coach need:

> *"the no. 1 skill that I think a coach needs to have, (and there is an argument that leadership is just being a coach), is paying attention, is being really good at receiving information, and being able to see and hear and understand and assess where this person is infinitely. And one of the things actors say is 'acting is reacting' – and we spend a lot of our time in the world of acting learning how to get out of the way and not come up with ideas about how we should act, or feel or respond, and instead being present in the moment and being impacted." (Kat)*

The specialist who conducted the improvisation workshop described mindfulness as being:

> *"completely present so that you are actually listening and engaging to what they (others) are talking about." (Burgert)*

This mindfulness was evident in improvisation exercises such as 'counting with one's eyes closed' and 'mirroring,' which required mindful focus to anticipate what the group might do next and to mirror this in the moment. In the Active Communicating workshop, actor's techniques that focused on control of breathing and centring oneself physically and mentally were used to prepare delegates to present their stories in a mindful, focused way.

Facilitation of theatre-based techniques was seen to be synonymous with directing a film or play, where the director's role is to focus attention on a particular issue or attitude, as a coach might do with a coachee:

> *"dramatic techniques allow an opportunity to focus because if your facilitator is being a director then focus and attention are a critical director's task – where do you want people to be looking, where do you want them not to be looking, who is in the background, who is in the foreground? And if you can shine light on the moment, you create a moment of heightened insight." (Lucy)*

Just as being present and aware is central to effective theatre-based work, mindfulness appears to be key to a productive coaching relationship.

#### *4.3.1.4 Authenticity*

Authenticity was referred to 20 times in the context of being real; true to oneself and honest, and was seen to be central to presence in this research study, with respondents expressing the opinion that without authenticity presence was difficult to attain. This was particularly evident in the story sharing exercise in the Active Communicating workshop, where honest sharing of deeply personal stories was contingent on an authentic relationship between coach and coachee. Theatre-based techniques were seen to be relevant to leaders, who need to immerse themselves authentically in their different roles to be credible, just as actors do:

> *"actors play roles but when you immerse yourself within the role, you find it is true. We all have different roles to play. Now it is the genuineness and authenticity of those roles." (Mot)*

This need for authenticity was stressed as being particularly relevant for facilitators of theatre-based techniques. These facilitators needed to be present and authentic from the outset of a workshop in order to connect with the group, uncover underlying dynamics, and elicit self-discovery, just as a coach would need to do:

> *"If you were present from the first minute you walked in you would have figured out what is going on in this group, what is the energy, what they need to work on. But don't tell them; let them work on a self-discovery journey. And that is where the being authentic comes in." (Amon)*

#### *4.3.1.5 Groundedness*

Being grounded was referred to in this research study as being centred and in control. Although this competence was only referred to seven times, it was observed in presence-based coaching practices that focused on deep breathing, relaxation exercises and finding one's core centre while standing or sitting, such as in the Active Communicating "curtains up, curtains down" exercise. This exercise encouraged leaders and coaches to ground themselves before presenting.

*"there are techniques that you... utilise, that help you to prepare. In terms of the breathing, in terms of the focus, what you do to ground yourself in the present…. what you do to prepare yourself before you step onto that stage." (Des)*

#### *4.3.1.6 Being in the flow*

In the observation of the three theatre-based workshops that the researcher attended, it appeared as though delegates were completely engaged and involved in the process: in the flow. An improvisational specialist drew an analogy between the process of improvisation and of coaching, which engages totally:

*"art in the sense that when practised with excellence, there is no attention to the technique: the coach is fully engaged with the player, and the process of coaching becomes a dance between two people, conversationally moving in complete harmony and partnership." (Burgert)*

### 4.3.2 Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence was seen to be a key coaching competence that was nurtured by theatre-based techniques. Emotional intelligence was referred to 110 times in this research study and was described as being comprised of self-awareness; self-mastery; self-motivation; emotional awareness and empathy.

#### *4.3.2.1 Emotional awareness*

Emotional awareness was seen to be an important outcome of theatre-based techniques and was mentioned 18 times as a competence fostered by theatre-based techniques.

A theatre-based exercise, in which group members were required to craft an image of the multiple emotions in the group through body sculpturing, was seen to heighten emotional awareness and develop the group's ability to label emotions correctly. The ability to be attuned to the emotions being expressed by another vocally or physically, was seen to be an important coach competence that is nurtured through theatre-based techniques.

*"So…..whether it is to label correctly what is going on with that person, or simply to evoke or draw out what that person appears to be going through…… you are really heightening people to their emotional awareness...I think emotional awareness is one critical, guaranteed competency or area of development that can be built through theatre-based techniques" (Lucy)*

#### *4.3.2.2 Empathy*

Empathy was perceived to be a key outcome of theatre-based techniques, with 40 responses attesting to the competence of empathy. Words and phrases such as caring, compassionate and open-hearted, attuned, connected and non-judgemental were used to describe this competence. Building empathy in leaders who coach was described as a central focus of theatre-based work:

*"As a result of the work that I'm doing, I want to see leaders who operate from the head and the heart, and as a result of the coaching programme, becoming more in touch with themselves and others. By being more in touch with others they begin to be more tolerant, understanding that people have different work styles and learning styles – beginning to understand that that one size doesn't fit all." (Mark)*

Being able to tap in to what has "heart and meaning" for others, was seen to be necessary for facilitators of Active Communicating work. This enabled them to elicit honest sharing very quickly from workshop participants.

*"it is getting them to talk about and acknowledge what has heart and meaning (for them). Then you can start working with them again, because they express themselves authentically…and so it changes the space." (Amon)*

The importance of building an environment that tells people that they 'matter' was stressed by several Active Communicating theatre-based specialists. They highlighted how these techniques focused on developing leaders who care about themselves and the welfare of their people, and this was seen to be a fundamental skill for leaders who coach.

Using theatre-based methods, executives coached each other to enact dramatic monologues by modeling the performance they wished to see and directing others to realise their potential:

*"Encouraging the coach to be expressive and model the behavior they require from the coachee.... entails being "side by side" with the coachee (not directing from afar them but rather being physically side by side which means you are literally doing what they are doing and helping them to unlock their potential and be the greatest they can be)." (Kathy)*

It was clear from the following extract that empathy did not come naturally to leaders who coach and that they could learn about this skill from actors.

*"Empathy often does not come naturally for the leader-as-coach - it is an emotional challenge… Conversely, from the world of theatre, actors are good at stepping into another person's shoes and empathising with that person so that they come from a feeling and heart-centered as well as from a mind-centered place." (Kathy)*

#### *4.3.2.3 Raising self-awareness*

In this study raising self-awareness was described as developing insight into beliefs and values to enhance self-discovery. 31 references were made to the ability of theatre-based techniques to raise self-awareness in leaders and coaches. According to a leading proponent of Active Communicating, the primary purpose of this theatre-based methodology was the:

*"Creation of a SOLE PORTRAIT through deep and significant work on the self." (Mark)*

Story-telling was seen to be a theatre-based tool that was used to elicit discovery of self and others:

*"In Theatre-based techniques leaders and others tell their own stories and learn from their own and others' stories." (Caryn)*

*"So by telling my story you get to see yourself because we mirror each other; you get to face your demons through me." (Mot)*

A parallel between improvisation and coaching was drawn, as both were seen to be organic processes of self-discovery. Improvisation, like coaching, appears to start from a place of self-awareness. The improviser, like the coach, tries to understand the other person's perspective and assist them in their journey of self-discovery in an affirming way:

*"So if I start from a place of 'are you aware of what you are doing, why are you doing it, what do you think; and then there is something I can "Yes And",….then it is a different conversation and my coachee can be open to me, other than feel like they are being judged or shut down." (Kat)*

#### *4.3.2.4 Self-mastery and self-motivation*

Reference was made to self-mastery and self-motivation 13 times, with emphasis on terms such as resilience; embracing vulnerability; courage of convictions; self-control and responsibility. Theatre-based techniques such as presentations, role-playing and improvisation were seen to require self-management, and self-management was perceived by respondents to be a competence that was needed by coaches to manage their own thoughts and emotions in a coaching situation.

*"It doesn't matter what is going on in your mind… you are there for a role and you actually step up and understand that in that moment, for the next 30 minutes or whatever the case is… you have to bring yourself there. So it is important, you put things in place so that you manage yourself. So EQ is a very big driver of that; if you don't understand your own triggers and your own strengths and weaknesses you are kind of dead in the water." (Des)*

Although only two respondents referred to theatre-based techniques as self-motivating, these techniques were observed to build enthusiasm, energy and motivation. Deep breathing, relaxation and vocal projection exercises were perceived to be energising and self-motivating and the positive reconstruction of personal stories appeared to have a motivating effect on both the coach and the coachees.

### 4.3.3 Communicating effectively

Effective communication is viewed as a key skill for leaders and coaches, and theatre-based techniques were perceived by many of the respondents in this research to have focused on developing effective communication. 25 references were made to direct communication, seven to articulation, 29 to listening and 17 to questioning and reflecting.

Several of the interviewees in this study had specialised in developing the communication skills of leaders and felt that these skills were foundational for leaders and for coaches. As theatre was seen

to be high in communication, it was perceived to be suited to the development of communication competencies needed for leading teams, facilitating meetings and coaching. For these reasons, the need for leaders to acquire effective communication skills before attempting to coach their followers was stressed:

> *"it is important to do leader-as-communicator before you even attempt leader-as-coach, because it sets the scene." (Des)*

Even though the importance of communication in the workplace was emphasised, it appears that internal communication in organisations leaves much to be desired and this is an area in which employees would like to see change happening in their workplace:

> *"it is about the worst competence in most organisations - communication. The one complaint that you get in most organisations is 'we don't get communicated with properly, we don't get communicated with in any kind of way'." (Sunny)*

Theatre-based techniques were observed to build the different voices that leaders need to use to communicate effectively in the different roles that they play:

> *"whether you are looking at it from just a purely coaching perspective or whether you are looking at building leadership, it is around understanding when and how to communicate to the individual or group that is in front of you...And if you talk about skills, there is a lot in terms of people being aware that there are different voices that you utilise." (Des)*

#### *4.3.3.1 Listening and observing*

Listening and observing were key competencies to emerge from this research, having been reflected on 30 times. Words and phrases that describe this competence include holding the silence, paying attention, being focused and being non-judgmental. For example, exercises in the improvisation workshops, such as 'mirroring', 'noticing changes in appearance' and 'sensing what the group is going to do next', would not have succeeded without attentive listening and paying attention, often in silence. Improvisation, like coaching, appears to be dependent on being finely attuned to and perceptive of the other person's attitudes and actions.

It appears that, whereas a lot of training might focus on building the skill of listening, listening and paying attention is a central focus of the improvisation workshops:

> *"improvisers/actors have a whole … body of exercises that are about 'here is how you do it, here is how you get better at paying attention, here is how you get better at listening." (Kat)*

Coaches who attended the improvisation workshop emphasised the value of the skill of listening and paying attention without judgement, which they had acquired in this workshop:

> *"It has taught me that the critical coaching skills are the simple ones, giving full attention, active listening, attentiveness and treating the client as a whole, resourceful human being."*

Both the storytelling workshop - the Hero's journey - and the Active Communicating workshop demanded sensitive, focused, non-judgemental listening to the stories of others. This facilitated a safe, open space for people to explore their own stories and reframe them in a more productive way where necessary.

#### *4.3.3.2 Direct communication and articulation*

Direct communication and articulation were mentioned 32 times as competencies that were developed through theatre-based techniques in this research. This was seen to incorporate the ability to articulate authentically through alignment of body, voice and content. The centrality of communication in theatre-based work was summed up as follows:

> *"it is all about communication… once I am present I will be able to send the right messages; once I am aware of my surroundings I will be… alert, I will be in the moment. How I use my voice will be communication, how I use my body is communication; I use my eyes, it is all communication." (Mot)*

The use of structured, concise and descriptive language was stressed in the presentation exercises that were done in the Active Communicating workshop.

#### *4.3.3.3 Questioning*

The competence of questioning was described in this research as the ability to ask difficult, curious, probing and reflective questions. Although the competence of questioning was not referred to often in the interviews, an Active Communicating exercise that elicited questions, as a coach would do, was described*:*

> *"an exercise called 'what is working what is not working'. And it is being able to ask questions that elicit what is actually happening now and for you to think through that, and typically that would be a coaching style as well." (Des)*

Questioning was a skill that was observed in the Active Communicating workshop, where coaches were required to explore each other's 'moment-of-pride' stories through in-depth questioning of one another. In the Hero's Journey workshop, questioning was also used extensively in the "cop in the head" exercise (Boal, 2000) to explore the voices in one's head - one's beliefs and attitudes – that hold one back from realizing their goals.

### 4.3.4 Development and transformation

According to this research, theatre-based techniques were seen to be transformative (23), constructivist in nature (17), rigorous (10), engaging (8), endorsing (14) and supportive (6), leading to development and transformation in leaders and coaches.

Actors' techniques that explored stories of leadership and encouraged delegates to rehearse and relate these powerfully and expressively were seen to facilitate development. Through rigorous practice and positive endorsement, senior leaders were coached by their colleagues to perform proficiently on stage:

> *"The full performance… often involves amazing performances from very left-brain people who have just been coached by a colleague." (Kathy)*

#### *4.3.4.1 Transformative*

Active Communicating theatre-based techniques were described as *"transformational work of the heart" (Mark)*

Several facilitators of this methodology made reference to the transformative nature of this work:

> *"it is work that is also primarily about changing behaviour and it begins with the individual." (Mot)*

Techniques such as body sculpturing and storytelling, where leaders were encouraged to relate their own 'hero's journey' to others in the group, were perceived to be transformative, as they assisted delegates to construct a new identity from their own and others' leadership lessons. In these theatre-based workshops, exercises that challenged underlying beliefs and assumptions that were holding people back from achieving their potential, such as "voices in the head", helped delegates to facilitate mind-shifts and reframe their personal narratives.

#### *4.3.4.2 Co-constructive*

In the improvisation workshop the coaching practice of co-constructing stories was illustrated through an exercise in which participants constructed a story together, each contributing a new word. Through creative collaboration, the participants were able to unfold a new story together. From this exercise it was apparent that there are multiple ways to unfold a story, however in this exercise, as in coaching, the importance of having a clear intention or desired outcome to work towards, was emphasised. The lessons for coaching were clarified by a delegate who described the improvisation workshop as a holistic and systemic co-creative process*:*

> *"It gives us the opportunity to co-create our solutions, answer our problems and (be involved in the) decision-making process, which is a systemic and holistic solution."*

#### *4.3.4.3 Endorsing and Supportive*

Theatre-based techniques were perceived to be endorsing (14) and supportive (6). In the improvisation workshop, participants supported suggestions for activities made by their colleagues with an enthusiastic "Yes lets!" and mimed these activities. In addition, "Yes and!" exercises were done to build on offers that group members made to one another. This practice illustrated the power of endorsing and building on ideas rather than inhibiting them with "yes buts" and facilitated team work. In explaining the importance of this in a coaching context, an improvisation specialist stated that:

*"Improv teaches us that everything is an offer. In other words there is value in everything. When coaching, everything the client says and does or doesn't say or do is an offer. Accepting these offers and looking for the value in it helps to open possibilities and create creative energy." (Burgert)*

#### *4.3.4.4 Rigorous*

Although there were only 10 responses in this section, a leading theatre-based specialist described theatre-based techniques, which encompassed delegates coaching one another to attain peak performances as rigorous and provocative, holding people accountable for their actions.

*"Rigorous encompasses being committed, accurate and provocative. So a coach often asks a coachee to taking risks, yet also asks the tough questions, follows up and holds people accountable." (Kathy)*

Theatre-based techniques were seen to demand rigorous practice in order to entrench new behaviours:

*"we say act and rehearse and rehearse and rehearse, it never stops…. It is practice, practice, practice, and we are saying yes, it might not happen overnight, because the damage has happened over years, but I do know that the shifting happens." (Mot)*

### 4.3.5 Creativity

Creativity was seen to be an important outcome of theatre-based techniques such as Active Communicating, storytelling and improvisation techniques, accounting for 73 references. For the purposes of this research, creativity was categorised as flexibility (34), innovation (18), spontaneity (11) and energy (7).

#### *4.3.5.1 Flexibility*

Flexibility, in this study, is defined as being adaptable, open to outcomes, able to shift perspective and flex performance in the moment. All of these competencies were seen to be nurtured by theatre-based techniques and integral to coaching. A delegate who attended the improvisation

workshop described the different perspective it gave her about the need to be flexible in a coaching context:

> *"The 'different' perspective it came from (it's like changing a word - it makes you think differently about that word). It asked you to flex muscles that are not usually flexed in everyday life - which is so appropriate for advanced masters coaching skills."*

Improvisational techniques, particularly, were perceived to nurture the flexibility that is fundamental to human interaction:

> *"human beings are performing all the time… and we do it consciously or unconsciously, but we make choices about 'how am I going to interact with this person in this moment?" (Kat)*

#### *4.3.5.2 Innovation*

Innovation in this research study was described by 18 respondents as possibility thinking, visualising, imagining, having different options and taking risks to implement new ideas. Improvisation techniques were described by a delegate who attended the workshop as:

> *"a new and innovative way that engages your thinking and flexes your 'application' muscles"*

Improvisation techniques which stimulated experimentation were seen to nurture innovation:

> *"you have many more options than you think and if you are paying attention and you are giving yourself permission to do something new or to stretch in a certain way or feel uncomfortable, then you are going to maximize your impact and probability of success, because you are not just following a script, you are building with whatever is happening in this moment." (Kat)*

#### *4.3.5.3 Spontaneity*

Spontaneity - being open and not attached to outcomes, and able to improvise in the moment - is listed as one of the key outcomes of Active Communicating work (Rittenberg, 1994) and was observed in several exercises in the Active Communicating workshop the researcher attended.

An Active Communicating facilitator described a theatre-based exercise that requires spontaneity:

> *"……we have a spontaneity exercise we use and what happens is somebody gives you a topic…. talk about, any subject, and I just give you clues, so you will agree, you start in the affirmative, talking about the pros or cons." (Mot)*

### 4.3.6 Expressiveness

Expressiveness of voice, body and story was a competence that was referred to 67 times in this research study. The Active Communicating and storytelling workshops that the researcher observed, paid much attention to the competence of expressiveness. In addition, specialists and delegates who attended the improvisation workshop made reference to this competence which was described as energetic (21), engaging and inspiring (19); and vocally, emotionally and somatically expressive (27) communication.

#### *4.3.6.1 Energy*

In this study, energy was seen to be physical rather than cerebral, and was seen to result in passionate, engaging communication. Energy is listed as a key competence in the Active Communicating literature and in the workshops that the researcher observed was maximised through controlled breathing and relaxation exercises, together with physical and vocal theatre-based activities.

#### *4.3.6.2 Engaging and inspiring*

Engaging, inspiring communication was defined as energetic, enthusiastic, expressive, motivating, passionate and powerful. Being engaging and inspiring was seen to be an important competence in leaders, as they need to enthuse their followers to action their own and the company's vision. Through theatre-based techniques that integrated vocal exercises, body movement and verbal messages, delegates were taught to express themselves in an engaging, inspiring way.

The following extract emphasises the need for leaders to influence and persuade in the diverse modes in which they communicate – from one-on-one coaching to presenting in public forums:

*"as a leader it is not just about what you know, about what the latest theory is. It is understanding that you bring your whole self….that you as a leader influence others through the way that you communicate and the way that you utilise your body, and you engage or disengage people….Whether it is helping with specific coaching for another individual, whether it is about having that challenging conversation or whether it is about addressing an audience of 2000 people in the organization and motivating them." (Des)*

#### *4.3.6.3 Emotional expressiveness*

Respondents to this research believed that emotional expressiveness was dependent on being emotionally sensitive, relaxed, aware and able to integrate mind, body and emotions. Theatre-based techniques were perceived to nurture emotional expressiveness through role-playing, relating stories and using metaphor, all of which are integral to coaching.

#### *4.3.6.4 Vocal and somatic expressiveness*

Expressive vocal and non-verbal communication was seen to be the essence of engaging theatrical performance and appealing leadership communication.

*"actors think of their bodies and voices as instruments, so if you have a leader who talks funny it is one thing to say 'don't do that' but the theatre is all about how you learn to breathe differently, how you learn to stand differently, how you learn to move and make eye contact in ways that look better." (Amon)*

Several of the respondents criticised leaders' ability to align their verbal and non-verbal messages and to use their voices expressively, and stressed the importance of this for engaging leadership communication. A range of theatre-based techniques was used in the Active Communicating workshop to develop better physical and vocal presence in leaders. Through diaphragmatic breathing exercises the voice was empowered, and drama school exercises in pitch, pace and resonance were used to build vocal variety. One of the leading exponents of theatre-based techniques and executive coaching, described the different theatre-based techniques that she uses to enhance leadership communication in presentations and meetings:

*"We would work with Shakespeare, we would work with sound, with singing, with body movement, we would work with having them integrate all of themselves to present, in other words, not to stand there like a dead zombie and just kind of flatly give a message." (Sunny)*

In order to raise their level of expressiveness, another theatre-based specialist described how delegates are encouraged to *"go out of the box and really get physical"* when coaching each other in performing extracts from plays. Vocal and somatic expressiveness were also encouraged when delegates presented the real stories of their coachees, in the Active Communication workshop.

### 4.3.7 Trust and integrity

In this research study, trust and integrity were seen to underpin theatre-based work, with 50 responses attesting to this. Trust appears to be an integral part of creating a safe environment in theatre-based work and a facilitator recounted how telling the truth without blame or judgment encourages honesty, openness and trust in these theatre-based workshops.

*"Trust is what it is based on - freedom and confidence to share your issues with the group." (Caryn)*

In improvisation, trust is seen to be central and is enhanced through techniques that focus on making one look good and being okay with one's own discomfort and vulnerability.

#### *4.3.7.1 Creating a safe environment*

In defining a safe space, reference was made to terms such as non-judgmental, honesty, trust, risk taking and embracing vulnerability. It was clear from the interviews, observation of workshops, and feedback from delegates that theatre-based techniques were able to create a safe space very quickly for participants to feel free to experiment and make mistakes.

An international author and improvisational specialist explained how her methods create a safe space for leaders to experiment:

*"different things are dangerous for different people and one of the things we have got pretty good at over the years is creating an environment where most people… are willing to*

*engage in the activities and I think there are two reasons for that. One is we really spend some time up front saying 'if you feel uncomfortable that is by design; it is part of the process…. And that buys us a willingness to do the first game." (Kat)*

A delegate who attended the improvisation workshop commented on the lessons that had been learnt for coaching about being non-judgemental and not making assumptions about other people's experiences and expectations:

*"Suspending judgments and decisions, not assuming a "storyline" or plot of someone's life, experiences and expectations."*

#### *4.3.7.2 Embracing vulnerability*

The Active Communicating process, which is founded on the principle of telling the truth without blame or judgement, was observed to encourage honesty, openness and risk taking in the participants. A facilitator of Active Communicating was convinced that these methods encouraged participants to enter a safe space more quickly than other methods as they allowed delegates to:

*"be who they want to be, and say what they want to say and do what they want to do." (Amon)*

Several delegates who attended the improvisation workshop stated that the workshop encouraged them to embrace their vulnerability and be courageous:

*"It encouraged me to say "yes" to my authentic self – warts and all!"*

*"it helps create a courageous space"*

The storytelling workshop was also observed to create a safe environment in which delegates were able to explore one another's beliefs and circumstances without fear of recrimination.

#### *4.3.7.3 Risk taking*

Acting techniques were observed to require leaders to take risks and stretch themselves verbally, vocally, somatically and emotionally. As this could be very threatening it was essential to create a safe space where delegates were encouraged to take risks, make mistakes and be okay with this from the outset of workshops. The philosophies and activities of improvisation appeared to create

an environment in which leaders were uncomfortable and yet felt safe to experiment and stretch themselves. This was seen to facilitate learning and growth:

> *"…..the edge of learning, of growth, is by definition a place where you are not comfortable, because if you were comfortable you would already be doing it! So one of the things the philosophies and activities of the theatre can help with, is 'play me in a place where I feel whoa, this is different, I feel foolish, I feel silly, I feel awkward, and I am not going to die – it is okay'……but that is the place where if you can learn to be there, you can stretch and grow – and by definition be more effective. For leaders I feel that is very powerful." (Kat)*

The following Active Communicating theatre-based techniques, that take senior leaders out of their comfort zones and encourage them to take risks to realise their vision, were also described:

> *"I introduce culture change by asking the partners to step out of their comfort zones, leading them in Shakespeare, which was completely out of their comfort zone, in order to realise their goals and visions by taking risks." (Kathy)*

### 4.3.8 Relationship Building

In this research study 67 responses referred to the competence of relationship building through theatre-based techniques. Connectedness was perceived to be the primary dimension of relationship building with 30 responses in this section referring to connectedness. This was followed by Ubuntu and support, together totalling 12 responses.

Theatre-based techniques were perceived to build relationships by first focusing on the individual and then on relationships:

> *"…once you have worked on yourself then comes the interaction - it is a two way thing, you have to look at the interpersonal skills." (Mot)*

#### *4.3.8.1 Connectedness*

Thirty references were made in this study to connectedness, with terms such as being attuned; engaged; appreciative and accepting of offers and Active Communicating methods, in particular, were seen to promote connectedness at a deep level:

*"..we use the principles identified by Angeles Arienn, at the very heart. What we know from her research is that this is what made the difference between successful and unsuccessful families, successful communities and unsuccessful communities, successful individuals and unsuccessful individuals. It is a universal core human principle…. about humans engaging with each other." (Des)*

#### *4.3.8.2 Ubuntu*

Ubuntu was described by a South African facilitator of TBTs as an African cultural concept that incorporates sharing, collaborating and respect that is central to theatre-based methodology:

*"You are open and operate from that place of openness and place of unselfishness, a place where it is about giving." (Mot)*

Theatre-based techniques were seen to be built on the principles of group sharing and Ubuntu:

*"Theatre-based techniques focus on sharing the stage. They are based on Ubuntu where group support is used to overcome personal demons, and dynamic big group activities and sharing are used." (Caryn)*

### 4.3.9 Conclusion

From the interviews conducted with specialists, observation of workshops and feedback from delegates who attended an improvisation workshop, it appears that theatre-based techniques develop the following competencies in leaders who coach:

- Presence
- Emotional Intelligence
- Developmental/transformative
- Communicating effectively
- Creativity
- Expressiveness
- Trust
- Relationship building

The analysis of these findings in chapter five will examine these competencies against those outlined by international coach federations to determine if they are indeed core coaching competencies.

## 4.4 Findings for question 2: Relevance of theatre-based techniques to coach education

This section examines the findings pertaining to reseach question 2: What is the relevance of theatre-based techniques to coach education? In evaluating the relevance of theatre-based techniques for contemporary leader-as-coach education, the following questions emerged:

1. How relevant are the competencies developed by TBTs for leaders who coach?
2. Where are theatre-based methods currently being used for coach education?
3. How relevant is theatre-based methodology for coach education?
4. How could theatre-based techniques best be used in coach education?
5. Who are the target populations that theatre-based techniques aim to educate?
6. What organisational culture and level of leadership is most amenable to using theatre-based techniques for leader-as-coach education?
7. What is the significance of theatre-based techniques for leaders in today's world of work?

### 4.4.1 Relevance of competencies built through theatre-based techniques for coach education

According to the theatre-based specialists interviewed, observation of workshops and feedback from participants in this research, the competencies that are developed through theatre-based techniques such as presence, emotional intelligence, development and transformation, effective communication, creativity, trust and integrity and relationship building, appear to be applicable to

coaching, and are therefore relevant to coach education. These competencies, that are listed in the bar diagram below, were seen to be the core competencies developed by theatre-based techniques:

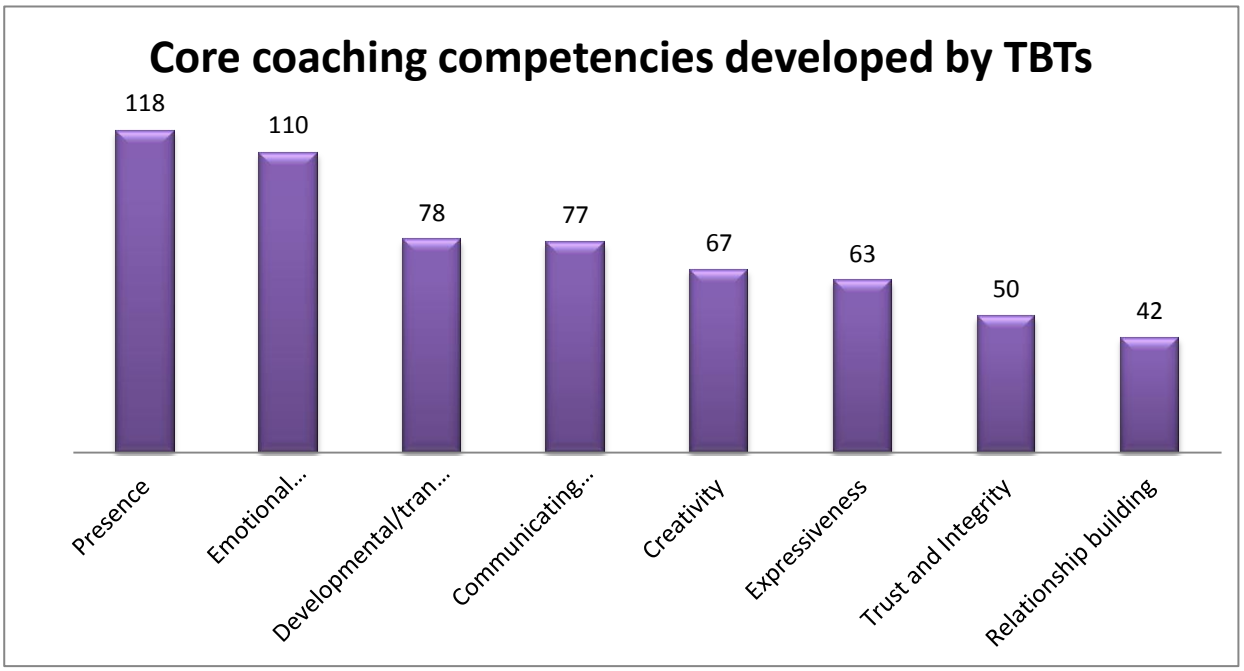



**Figure 7: Core coaching competencies developed by TBTs**

47 references were made to the relevance of theatre-based techniques to coach education under the question 'How relevant are these techniques to leader-as-coach education?' A local improvisation specialist, who is also a qualified industrial psychologist and coach, drew a parallel between the skills of an improviser and the competencies required by a coach in the following quote:

> *"The competencies that are required of a coach bear a striking resemblance to the skills of an improviser namely, being present, listening, awareness, non-judgment, acceptance, noticing themes and openness to possibilities." (Burgert)*

An international improvisation specialist and coach concurred with this and talked about how coaching programmes are using improvisation techniques to stretch coaches and build coach competencies:

> *"many, many coaching programs are embracing this and many coaching conferences have people who are members of the Applied Improv Network for example, who are teaching*

*this stuff to coaches. I have never spoken to a coach who has been exposed to this body of work who hasn't said 'this is incredibly useful to me'. I also sort of think that what coaches learn traditionally is often a lot of the same stuff in different clothing. So coaching is obviously about empathising and receiving and listening and framing what they say, and thinking about what it is that my client needs and how do I reach them and what kinds of activities can I do with this person to stretch them and have them behave in different ways." (Kat)*

The CEO of a consultancy that specialises in change interventions and uses theatre-based techniques in combination with other training methods, believes that Active Communicating theatre-based techniques are essential to develop the communication skills that leaders need:

*"I think that if this programme was actually taught at Business Schools you will have a hell of a lot more effective people because you can have the best intention as a leader, but if you cannot articulate and engage with people you are dead in the water, you just have no impact… That is unfortunately how society is, because it is just information overload. So you have to be able to cut through that and engage with people very quickly about what is core, why is it significant and important, otherwise you just don't have impact." (Steve)*

So it appears from interviews, observation of theatre-based workshops, and feedback from delegates, that many of the competencies that are developed through theatre-based techniques are relevant for leaders who coach. However, in order to determine whether they are relevant to coach education or not, these competencies will have to be evaluated against the core coaching competencies that have been outlined by the ICF and WABC for coach credentialling. The relevance of these competencies for coach education for leaders will be discussed in the analysis of these findings in section 5. (Please see appendix E and F for the list of the ICF and WABC competencies).

### 4.4.2 Which institutions are using theatre-based methods for coach education?

From the interviews conducted, it is apparent that several TBT specialists are conducting theatre-based programmes for leader-as-coach development at reputable academic institutions. In South Africa, theatre-based techniques have been used at Wits Business School in a module of their coach education programme, and at GIBS Business School, amongst others, to educate coaches and

leaders. In the USA, several prominent institutions are using theatre-based techniques to train coaches. An Active Communicating specialist gave an example of an academic institution in the USA where theatre-based programmes are being used for leader-as-coach education:

> *"at the University of California at Berkeley we work through the Center for Executive Education, where we facilitate open enrolment and customized programs for the "Leader as Coach". This program allows first and second level managers to attend two to three-day seminars where they learn coaching techniques and coaching behavior using my theater-based Active Communicating® methodology." (Mark)*

Several other American-based companies are also working with other well-established and respected business schools to train leaders and coaches, using theatre-based techniques. A senior executive of a leadership development, theatre-based company in Boston stated:

> *"everyone entering the Harvard Business school faculty goes on a week-long orientation programme… the first two days is run by the Ariel Group….This will also take place at other well-established and respected business schools, including Darton, Duke, NCI, Kellogg and Columbia. These institutions have incorporated…theatre-based techniques and have been amazed at the power of these programmes. These are the brainiest people in the world, with cutting-edge leadership content, who realise that they need to involve the whole person." (Kathy)*

### 4.4.3 Are the processes used by theatre-based techniques relevant for coach education?

In this research, comments were made about the experiential nature of the theatre-based techniques and about the fact that these techniques are practical, simple, relevant and engaging. In this respect there seemed to be a parallel between theatre-based techniques and coaching, as they both use a lot of positive reinforcement and both are contingent on accepting the ideas and offers of others. However, it is apparent that facilitators of theatre-based work need to be a specialist in this field as the process can involve "deep dive work".

#### *4.4.3.1 Experiential methods*

There were 18 comments about the experiential nature of theatre-based techniques. The use of experiential learning methods in theatre-based and other work for the development of coach competencies is described in the following quote:

> *"Experiential learning is either working with techniques and tools you give them, or where you help them to create the experience that they want…in other words they have to do it….. you talk to them about what skill or behaviour you are going to work on.. and then they talk about how they are going to apply that in the real world." (Sunny)*

Another leading proponent of theatre-based techniques stated that she believes that the work that her company is doing with theatre-based techniques takes experiential to a whole new level:

> *"participants are using their minds; exploring their emotions and taking risks." (Kathy)*

Several delegates who participated in the improvisation workshop also saw the process as:

> *"Experiential; active learning" which "Moved…..from a head to a heart space"*

#### *4.4.3.2 Practical, simple and relevant*

Theatre-based techniques were described as being practical, simple and relevant to coaching by several participants who attended the improvisation workshop:

> *"The simplicity and metaphorical (holistic, integrated and practical) tools are easy to recall, have immediate applicability (you don't have to 'rework' the concepts in your head to make them personally relevant) and can apply to any coaching setting (are not context specific)."*

> *"Practical, but directly relevant to the neuroscience underlying coaching frameworks and models as well as coaching skills and techniques."*

#### *4.4.3.3 Fun, alive, engaging*

Theatre-based work was described as being fun, alive and engaging by several delegates who attended the improvisation workshop:

*"It captured practical concepts in a new and innovative way that engages your thinking and flexes your 'application' muscles."*

*"Wonderful experience – stretched, challenged, appreciated, laughed"*

*"Remained stimulating, gentle and fun throughout, new and thought-provoking"*

Leaders also appeared to love the visceral experience of the theatre, as it allowed them to express their emotions wholeheartedly, rather than repressing them as they often are required to do:

*"…leaders love this exercise and say it is the best thing they've done, even though it is so theatrical. When the company was started … eighteen years ago, we were shocked at how hungry people were for visceral experiences and using more of themselves. People are so involved in their lives and technology, that they are using such a small percentage of themselves, cutting off the emotional self, the creative self and the expressive self." (Kathy)*

#### *4.4.3.4 More difficult to facilitate*

At the same time as describing the methodology as being engaging, facilitators commented on the fact that it is more difficult to facilitate, as it is a deeper and more spiritual process, describing it as:

*"a free flowing process. Facilitators are always present and part of what is happening. Facilitators have to be intuitive and know when to push and when to desist." (Caryn)*

### 4.4.4 How could theatre-based techniques best be used in coach education?

Several of the specialists interviewed made reference to the fact that theatre-based workshops for coach education were conducted over short sessions of one to three days. The four workshops that the researcher observed were all one-day workshops. The comments that follow make reference to how theatre-based techniques could be used as part of a coach education programme.

#### *4.4.4.1 Theatre-based techniques for continued professional development*

Theatre-based techniques were seen to be suitable for the continued professional development of coaches. The following specialist stressed the importance of professionals putting themselves back into a growth space in order to continue learning:

> *"the hardest thing about that is making yourself vulnerable to being seen and developed and coached, right? So part of leadership development is saying to people who have been incredibly successful, and are supposed to be expert at what they do now, 'be willing to put yourself back in a growth place'."(Kat)*

#### *4.4.4.2 Theatre-based techniques as part of best suited for a module on master coaching*

In feedback from delegates who attended the improvisation workshop, the opinion was expressed that theatre-based techniques would be best suited to enhancing master coaching skills, as the techniques challenged one to flex muscles that were not normally flexed:

> *"It asked you to flex muscles that are not usually flexed in everyday life - which is so appropriate for advanced master coaching skills."*

#### *4.4.4.3 Reservation about theatre-based techniques as an independent module*

A reservation was expressed about using theatre-based techniques as an independent training module by the following participant, who stated:

> *"I don't think that this could be a coaching module on its own in an academic setting (definitely in a skills based setting) but as part of an overall module it helped to vary the pace and mode of delivery which is so appropriate for adult learning"*

#### *4.4.4.4 Theatre-based techniques in combination with other methods*

One of the leading authorities on coaching and theatre-based techniques explained how she used a combination of theatre-based techniques and Thinking Environment methods to coach groups or develop the skills of coaches. She felt strongly that a combination of these methods was the best option as these methods were very different from one another.

*"with Active Communicating there is a lot of body and voice work, but there is no body work in the Thinking Environment, and really no voice work. So it is different – and that is why I bring the two together." (Sunny)*

However, she did express the view that theatre-based work was a start in building self-awareness:

*"if you just work with the theatre-based it is a start; because it is a development of self-awareness of how I am in the world and how I am impacting others, and what works and what needs to change." (Sunny)*

### 4.4.5 Who are the target populations that theatre-based techniques aim to educate?

The originator of the Active Communicating workshop described the three populations his TBT workshops are targeted at as: practising coaches, in-house company coaches, and senior executives who wish to adopt a coaching style of leadership:

*"The first population wishes to become better coaches…because of our theatre-based methodology, which uses the actor's skills to train coaches, these students add techniques that we have discovered and evolved into their own repertoire. Population two refers to the trend in the field of coaching where organisations are developing their own in-house coaches… these companies will then send us these individuals to learn theatre-based coaching techniques. The third population, perhaps the minor population but very prominent, is a certain kind of executive. They may be a COO or CEO who has decided that they don't necessarily want to be an executive coach or internal coach, but they want to shift their behaviour to be seen more as a coach, rather than as an autocrat." (Mark)*

Another international coach and TBT specialist described her predominant target population as leaders in transition:

*"I almost always work with leaders in transition. They are either stepping into a CE, CEO, or head of division or department – but strong leadership positions …they have got to make a quantum leap in to doing and knowing more than they do." (Sunny)*

### 4.4.6 What organisational culture and level of leadership are most amenable to TBTs?

Several of the interviewees in this study stressed that both coaching and theatre-based techniques depend on the culture of an organisation being open and experimental rather than authoritarian and repressive:

> *"Whether a leader can also be a coach depends on the culture that the company has or wants to create." (Kathy)*

A specialist who coaches executives explained that certain companies did not support coaching as they did not believe that leaders could be coached for competencies they do not already have:

> *"So they didn't bother to coach because they didn't think those things were learnable – charisma or listening or influencing or building relationship. So it was a sort of a weird idea to think that people could learn those things." (Kat)*

When asked what level of leadership was most amenable to theatre-based techniques and coaching, it was not surprising to learn that more powerful leaders were more open to taking risks and might be more amenable to using TBTs than lower level managers.

> *"Sometimes the people who are the most powerful in organisations got there because they are willing to live on the edge, and so take risks and they are really courageous. And it is the middle managers who are still being judged and being controlled, but there are an awful lot of people in corporations who say 'that is all well and good but you are crazy'." (Kat)*

### 4.4.7 The significance of theatre-based techniques for leaders in today's world of work?

An executive outlined the significance of TBTs for leaders-who-coach in today's world of work where leaders need to engage employees to retain scarce skills:

> *"I think of the leader-as-coach as a broader concept. I mean it is just so significant in today's world of work, and it has far reaching impact within an organisation because we don't operate in a command and control world any longer and we know it is about engaging employees. The degree to which employees are retained is reflected in how your*

*customer is experiencing the organisation. So it has far reaching consequences for an organisation for leaders to have these skills, so it is very powerful." (Steve)*

The relevance of theatre-based techniques for developing leaders who coach in the current business environment was supported by one of the international improvisation specialists, who stressed the importance of leaders being able to adapt in order to cope with changing situations:

*"the world that we are living in is very clearly one where things are changing very quickly, and you are always having to flex and…change. In order to do what they do, improvisers have come up with philosophies of how to create collaboratively, how to take risks, and live on the edge and be responsive, and create in the moment." (Kat)*

## 4.5 Conclusion of findings

It appears from these findings that theatre-based techniques develop competencies that are relevant to leaders in general and leaders who coach in particular, with certain provisos:

- The competencies that are developed by theatre-based techniques appear to be relevant to coach education according to the findings of this research, if they are in line with those that are outlined by international coach federations;
- Several reputable institutions world-wide appear to be using TBTs for coach education;
- The processes used by theatre-based techniques appear to be experiential, practical and relevant and invoke critical thinking in leaders to effect development and transformation;
- They appear to be suited to short interventions for leaders and coaches in conjunction with other methods of development;
- Theatre-based techniques like coaching appear to need a culture that supports experimentation and risk taking; and
- TBTs appear to develop skills such as empathy, creativity and flexibility that are critical in today's world of work.

# CHAPTER 5

# 5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the report focuses on analysing the results of the findings presented in Chapter 4. In order to assess the efficacy of theatre-based techniques in building the key coaching competencies, the competencies that have emerged in the findings of this research, have had to be measured against the coach competencies outlined by the WABC and ICF. To do this, a table listing the core competencies of each of these coach federations has been compiled and the competencies built by theatre-based techniques have been compared with these.

Each of the two research questions are discussed independently. The chapter concludes with a summary of the overall research findings.

## 5.1 Discussion of research question 1: core coaching competencies developed by theatre-based techniques

In assessing whether theatre-based techniques are effective in developing core coaching competencies in leaders who coach, one must assess what core coaching competencies are. Although there are no generally agreed upon competency models for coaches (Brotman, Liberi and Wasylyshyn, 1998; Ennis et al., 2005; Bennet, 2006, in Cox, et al., 2009: 411), a list of coaching competencies for credentialing of coaches has been published by international coach federations such as the WABC and the ICF. The researcher has used these lists against which to evaluate whether the competencies that have been found to be developed by theatre-based techniques in this research study, are in line with those that are required for coach credentialing by the WABC and ICF. The competencies that are seen to have been developed by theatre-based techniques appear on the graph in figure 8 below:

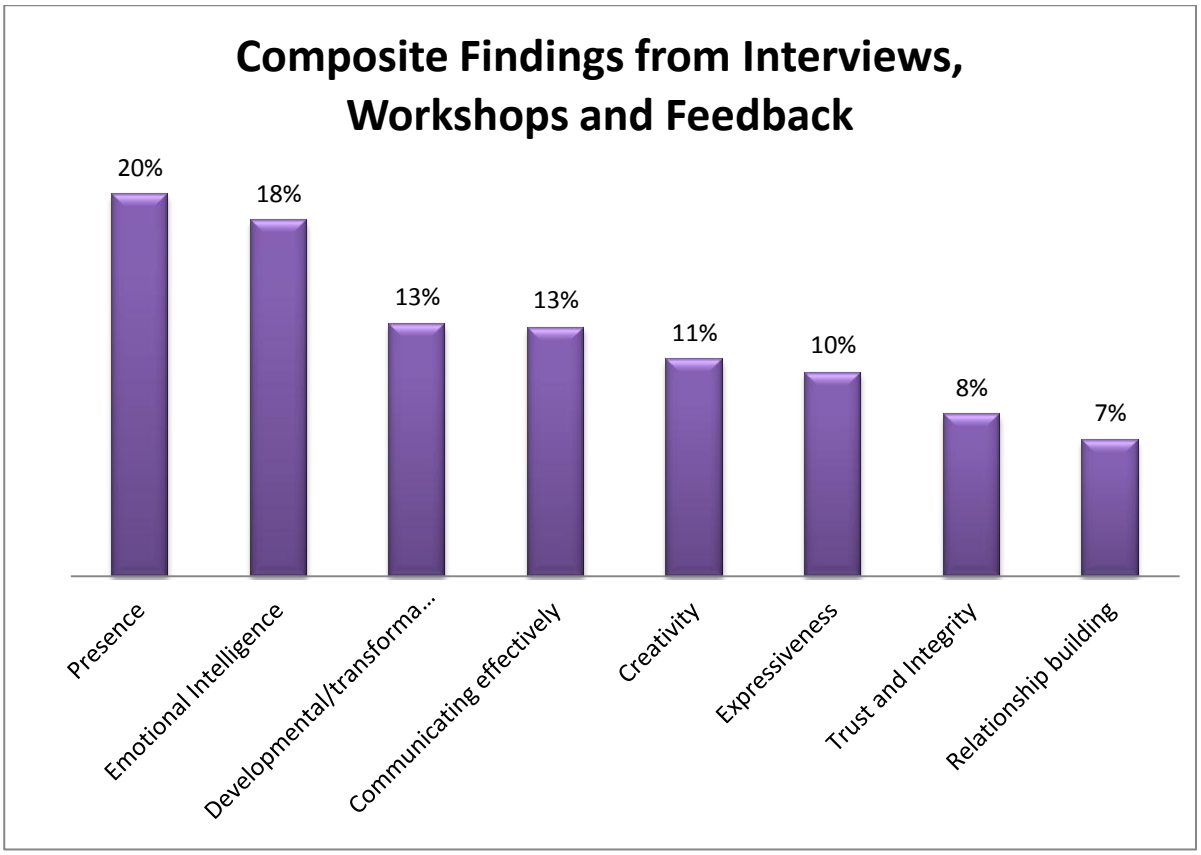



**Figure 8: Composite findings on coaching competencies developed by TBTs**

As can be seen from the diagram above, presence appears to be the predominant competence that is developed through theatre-based techniques, followed by emotional intelligence, communication, development and transformation, creativity, expressiveness, trust and integrity and relationship building. However, to evaluate their applicability to coaching, these competencies have not been discussed in the above sequence, but rather in the sequence in which they appear in the following sections outlined by the ICF and WABC:

1. Self-management – knowing oneself and self-mastery;
2. Co-creating the relationship;
3. Promoting client understanding through effective communication; and
4. Effecting personal transformation and development.

The table below highlights the relationship between the competencies developed by theatre-based techniques and those that have been outlined by the WABC and the ICF.

**Table 2: Coaching competencies outlined by WABC, the ICF and those developed through theatre-based techniques**

| WABC COMPETENCIES: SELF-MANAGEMENT–KNOWING ONESELF AND SELF-MASTERY | COMPETENCIES DEVELOPED BY TBTS |
|---|---|
| 1) **Knowing Yourself–Self-Insight and Understanding**<br>*a) Having ready access to your thoughts and feelings and being aware of how they affect your behaviour* | **Emotional Intelligence**<br>Self-awareness<br>Self-discovery |
| 2**) Acknowledging Your Strengths and Development Needs**<br>*a) Having a realistic perception of your strengths and development needs–knowing your strengths and limitations and showing a commitment to continuous learning and self-development*<br>*b) Self-belief–believing in your self-worth and capabilities* | **Emotional Intelligence**<br>Exploring self-beliefs and abilities<br>Acknowledge strengths<br>**Presence**<br>Present yourself in an authentic manner, aligning mind body and emotions<br>**Expressiveness**<br>Expressing yourself confidently |
| **3) Self-Mastery–Managing Your Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours in Ways that Promote Behaviour Contributing to Career and Organisation Success**<br>*a) Self-regulation–managing your reactions and emotions constructively*<br>*b) Integrity–choosing ethical courses of action and being steadfast in your principles and beliefs*<br>*c) Self-responsibility–assuming personal responsibility and accountability for your performance*<br>*d) Adaptability–flexibility in handling change*<br>*e) Emphasizing excellence–setting for yourself, and confidently pursuing, challenging goals and high standards*<br>*f) Initiative–taking independent action to change the direction of events*<br>*g) Creativity and innovation–being receptive to new ideas and being able to generate alternative ways to view and define problems* | **Emotional Intelligence**<br>Self-regulation<br>Managing emotions and actions<br>**Trust and Integrity**<br>Being trustworthy and honesty<br>**Creativity**<br>Being creative and adaptable<br>Open to learning new ways<br>Using initiative<br>Being open to new ideas and offering new suggestions for solve problems<br>**Development**<br>Taking charge of your actions<br>Striving for the best |

| WABC core coaching skills | ICF Coaching Competencies | Competencies developed by TBTs |
|---|---|---|
| **1) Creating the Foundations for Business Coaching**<br>*a) Working within established ethical guidelines and professional standards*<br>*b) Agreeing on a clear and effective contract for the coaching relationship* | **A. Setting the foundation**<br>1 Meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards<br>2 Establishing the coaching agreement | **Trust and integrity**<br>Ethics<br>**Developmental/transformational** |
| **2) Developing the Business Coaching Relationship**<br>*a) Establishing trust and respect*<br>*b) Establishing rapport* | **B. Co-creating the relationship**<br>1 Establishing trust and intimacy with the client<br>2 Coaching presence | **Relationship Building**<br>**Trust and integrity**<br>**Presence**<br>**Emotional intelligence** |
| **3) Promoting Client Understanding**<br>*a) Listening to understand*<br>*b) Questioning effectively*<br>*c) Communicating clearly*<br>*d) Facilitating depth of understanding* | **C. Communicating effectively**<br>1 Active listening<br>2 Powerful questioning<br>3 Direct communication | **Communicating effectively**<br>Articulating<br>Listening<br>Questioning<br>Reflecting<br>**Emotional Intelligence**<br>**Transformation**<br>Mind shifts<br>Reframing |
| **4) Facilitating the Personal Transformation**<br>*a) Promoting action*<br>*b) Focusing on goals*<br>*c) Building resiliency*<br>*d) Managing termination of coaching*<br><br>**5) Professional Development**<br>*a) Maintaining and improving professional skills* | **D. Facilitating learning and results**<br>1 Creating awareness<br>2 Designing actions<br>3 Planning and goal setting<br>4 Managing progress and accountability | **Presence**<br>**Developmental/ transformational**<br>Rigorous<br>Supportive<br>Transformative<br>Constructivist<br>Engaging<br>**Creativity**<br>Spontaneity<br>Flexibility |

### 5.1.1 Self-management – knowing oneself and self-mastery

In order for coaches to be credentialed by the WABC, they need to demonstrate the following competencies under the category of self–management:

- *"Knowing Yourself–Self-Insight and Understanding;*
- *Acknowledging Your Strengths and Development Needs;*
- *Self-Mastery–Managing Your Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours in Ways that Promote Behaviour Contributing to Career and Organization Success" ((WABC), 2012).*

Several of the competencies listed above, fall under the theme of emotional intelligence and this competence will be discussed in this section of the report. Reference will also be made to other competencies that are pertinent to self-management, which are seen to be developed through theatre-based techniques, such as adaptability, innovation, trust and integrity.

#### *5.1.1.1 Emotional intelligence*

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is described in the literature as the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively and is contingent on self-awareness and self-regulation (Goleman, 2006). From this research it appears that theatre-based techniques do promote an awareness of one's own emotions and an ability to regulate these emotions in one's relationships with others. From this awareness, empathy towards others is nurtured, which enables us to relate to others with rapport. This, in my view, is essential for an attuned coaching relationship and an authentic mindful presence.

From the findings of this research, emotional intelligence was seen to be one of the primary skills nurtured by theatre-based techniques (18%), comprised of:

- Emotional awareness
- Empathy
- Self-awareness
- Self-mastery and self-motivation

**Emotional awareness**

Emotional awareness underpins emotional intelligence, according to the literature (Druskat & Wolff, 2001; Goleman, 1996, 2003, 2006) and is listed by both the WABC and the ICF as a competence that coaches need to develop in themselves and their coachees. In the WABC list of competencies this is referred to as "*having ready access to your thoughts and feelings and being aware of how they affect your behavior" ((WABC), 2012).*

In this study, emotional awareness was seen to be a competence that was enhanced through theatre-based techniques and enabled one to recognise one's own emotions and those of others, and to correctly label these emotions. Theatre-based techniques, such as those in which emotions were represented in body sculptures, appeared to sensitise leaders to their own and others' emotions by enhancing their ability to pick up verbal cues and observe physical nuances.

> *"I think emotional awareness is one critical, guaranteed competency or area of development that can be built through theatre-based techniques." (Lucy)*

Sensitivity to others' emotions is seen to be an important competence for coaches and is referred to by the WABC in both the sections on Self-Management and Core Coaching Skills base.

**Self-awareness and self-mastery**

Self-awareness and self-mastery underpin self-leadership, and are pillars of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2003). This study indicated that theatre-based techniques raised self-awareness and self-mastery and it is my view that this methodology enhanced self-knowledge and mastery of self.

**Self-awareness,** according to the literature, entails examining one's experiences honestly; having insight into one's values, motives, feelings and cognitions; and being aware of one's strengths and unique capabilities (Ilies, et al., 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This is in line with the coaching competencies listed by the WABC as *"knowing oneself and acknowledging one's strengths and limitations while believing in one's self-worth and capabilities"* ((WABC), 2012).

Both improvisation and Active Communicating were seen to be organic processes of self-discovery that enhanced self-awareness and self-belief by building positive attributes and contributions. In this way, I believe that they have positive lessons for leaders, who have a vested interest in developing the unique talents of their followers through coaching.

The storytelling elements of the Active Communicating and Hero's Journey workshops in particular, contributed to developing self-awareness in the leader-as-coach. Through the construction of their life stories, leaders were able to develop their self-concept and self-awareness and this impacted on their ability to relate to others authentically. The ability to reframe their stories positively was observed to give leaders a sense of self-mastery and motivation and it is these lessons that can be applied in the coaching relationship.

**Self-mastery,** according to the WABC, involves managing your thoughts, feelings and behaviours in a way that is congruent and contributes to individual and organisational success. This aligns with the literature which defines self-mastery as knowing oneself and ensuring that one's transactions are aligned with one's values, so that one is perceived to be authentic - consistent in thoughts, intentions and actions (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

Theatre-based techniques are seen to be *"very much about self-management"* (Des) which is perceived to be an important skill for leaders in general, and particularly for leaders who coach.

**Self-motivation**

Although only two respondents related theatre-based techniques to self-motivation, theatre-based techniques were observed by the researcher to build enthusiasm, energy and motivation. This aligns with the requirement for coaches to present themselves to others as *"self-assured and confident in your capability"* by the WABC (2012).

In the researcher's view, theatre-based techniques that develop expressive communication skills in leaders contribute to building self-confidence and self-motivation in leaders who coach. As followers often emulate their leaders behavior this is seen to be an important skill.

**Empathy**

The competence of empathy is made reference to by the WABC in their description of core coaching skills base under *establishing rapport,* rather than in this section on self-management. Having **rapport** is described by the WABC (2012) as having an "*open responsive presence"* and being able to tolerate and manage strong expressions of emotion.

In this study, theatre-based techniques were perceived to build empathy, which was defined as having rapport, being compassionate, caring, connected, and attuned. For leaders who coach, empathy is seen to be an important skill as it enhances tolerance, connectivity and compassion. However, a concern was expressed that this skill does not necessarily come easily to leaders and that a focus of the theatre-based programme for leaders who coach is developing leaders who operate from both the head and the heart.

In my view, this alignment of mind, body and heart is essential for attuned relationships in which leaders who coach are present and fully engaged in the moment with their coachees. This engagement, care and compassion can spread to others, creating a culture of caring, which is important if coaching is to succeed (Boyatzis, Smith, & Blaize, 2006).

Besides needing emotional intelligence for self-awareness and self-management, reference is also made by the WABC under self-mastery, to the need for coaches to develop "*ways to promote behaviour that contributes to career and organisational success" ((WABC), 2012).* This includes having integrity, adaptability, initiative, creativity and innovation. All of these competencies are seen to be developed through theatre-based techniques, according to the findings of this research, and are referred to under the themes of trust and integrity and creativity, that are discussed in the next sections on co-creating the relationship and facilitating development and results.

### 5.1.2 Co-creating the relationship

According to the ICF and the WABC, the business coaching relationship is a co-creative one that hinges on:

- "*establishing trust and intimacy with the client*" through creating a *"safe supportive environment"* (ICF, 2012); and
- "*coaching presence – the ability to be fully conscious and create a spontaneous relationship with the client*" ((ICF), 2012).

The findings of this research report indicate that trust and integrity are competencies that underpin the successful implementation of theatre-based techniques. Just as the success of the coaching relationship appears to be contingent on creating a safe environment, so too, does the success of theatre-based techniques appear to depend on trust and safety, in my view.

Presence appears to be a primary outcome of theatre-based techniques and, as is outlined by the ICF, is also a key coaching competence. The indicators of the business relationship competence: co-creating the relationship, outlined by both the WABC and the ICF, highlight the need for rapport between the coach and coachee. Rapport, according to the Encarta Dictionary (2013), is defined as "an emotional bond or friendly relationship between people based on mutual liking, trust, and a sense that they understand and share each other's concerns". An effective coaching presence is required to establish a spontaneous relationship of rapport with clients. This rapport, I believe, is contingent on the coach being empathetic, and for that they need emotional intelligence.

In unpacking the competencies required under the category **co-creating the relationship,** I will discuss the competencies of trust and integrity and presence that are integral to this section, and are seen to be developed through theatre-based techniques. I will also make reference to emotional intelligence, which has been covered in the previous section on self-management.

#### *5.1.2.1 Trust and integrity*

*Personal integrity, honesty and sincerity* (ICF, 2012) are seen to be characteristics that coaches need to display to build trusting coaching relationships, and in the literature, trust is seen to be an essential leader-coach competency (Ellinger, et al., 2003; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Riddle & Ting, 2006; Zeus, 2002). Although only 8% of statements in this research made reference to trust and integrity, theatre-based techniques were perceived to encourage honesty and openness, truth telling and trust, as participants were given the freedom to explore issues without fear of being judged.

The ICF (2012) defined trust and intimacy as "*the ability to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust"*. The literature also reinforces the need to create a safe space in which emotions that impact on interpersonal and group efficacy can be explored, unpacked and examined, and innovative ideas can be tried and tested without fear (Goleman, et al., 2002). In this study, theatre-based techniques, such as improvisation, were seen to provide a container - a safe non-judgemental space - for delegates to experiment and discover new creative ways of solving problems. By creating a safe space, leaders were encouraged to move out of their comfort zones and, in that way, learning was stimulated and growth motivated.

In the same way that theatre-based techniques were able to create a safe space in which leaders were encouraged to take risks, embrace their vulnerability and make mistakes, so an environment of safety needs to be cultivated if coaching is to elicit the sharing of sensitive issues and champion "*new behaviors and actions, including those involving risk taking and fear of failure"* ((ICF), 2012).

A key outcome of business coaching, according to the ICF and WABC, is to "*maximize personal and professional potential"* ((ICF), 2012) to help the client achieve agreed-upon business outcomes. In order to achieve this, learning needs to take place and this is stimulated, in my opinion, by theatre-based techniques that create an environment in which it is safe to experiment and make mistakes.

#### *5.1.2.2 Presence*

Several books have been written on building leadership presence using theatre-based techniques (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Olivier & Janni, 2004; Rittenberg, 2007). The focus of these books is on building an authentic, expressive presence in leaders, so that they can inspire their diverse followers in the same way that actors engage their different audiences. Coaches, however, need to be present in the moment with their coachees. This presence is contingent on intense listening, paying attention with heightened consciousness and being attuned to their coachees.

The ICF (2012) defines Coaching Presence as "*the ability to be fully conscious and create a spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident*". One of the indicators of this competence, outlined by the ICF, is that the coach "*is present and flexible during the coaching process, dancing in the moment" ((ICF), 2012).* This description aligns with the literature, where presence is described as being attuned and in flow with clients in the moment, paying attention with heightened awareness to what they are saying, thinking and feeling (Rock, 2006).

The findings of this research study indicate that theatre-based techniques do nurture the ability in leaders who coach to be present, and this quality does appear to be central to the professional efficacy of coaches, who need to develop presence themselves before coaching others. However, in my view, this competency appears to be contingent on leaders and coaches being emotionally intelligent.

In this study, the competence of presence was seen to be comprised largely of heightened conciousness; mindfulness; authenticity; and being in the flow. Each of these categories will be discussed in this section, with reference to the required indicators of the ICF and WABC.

**Heightened consciousness**, which was seen to be a key component of presence in this study, is regarded as a primary skill that leaders who coach need. Terms such as awareness, insightfulness and sensitivity were used to refer to heightened consciousness, together with terms such as intuitive, open-hearted, in tune with all senses and meaningful, which were used to described the spiritual depth of this theatre-based work.

**Intuition** is listed by the ICF (2012) as a competence of presence, defined as "*trusting one's inner knowing – 'goes with the gut'"*. Intuition, which appeared to underpin improvisation and other theatre-based techniques, is described as a subconscious process that can get to the heart of things without reason or analysis, and is seen to be important to the coaching relationship (Murray, 2004).

An international author and TBT exponent stated that it is imperative for leaders who coach to be *"intuitive by following where the person leads you and reading the person." (Kathy)*

This intuitive ability was clearly demonstrated in coach-like exercises in the improvisation workshop and, in my view, has important lessons for coaches who need to be able to read and interpret what the other person is feeling and be led by them.

**Mindfulness** is defined as "paying attention in the present moment, on purpose, without grasping onto judgments" (Kabat-Zinn, 2003 pp 145-146, in Daniel J Siegel, 2007: 10). Paying attention requires focus in the moment, being centred and relaxed. Mindful focus was observed in most of the improvisation and Active Communicating work and is core to coaching, where the "*ability to focus completely on what the client is saying"* is referred to under the competence of listening actively ((ICF), 2012). Mindfulness was seen to be a key competence nurtured by theatre-based techniques that appears to be dependent on attentive listening and complete engagement in the moment: being in the flow.

**Authenticity** is defined as in the literature as knowing yourself, as well as being true to yourself and your values in your actions (Harter, 2002; Moreno & Fox, 1987), and, as such, is dependent on emotional intelligence where self-awareness and self-mastery are central. **Authentic expression** is contingent on the ability to express oneself congruently through one's words, voice, body language and deeds, and was seen by many of the interviewees of this study as a core competence that is nurtured through theatre-based techniques and is key to authentic leadership and coaching relationships. By being authentic - honest and real - in the coaching relationship, the coach can hold the space safely for their coachees to embrace their vulnerability without fear.

Rapport between the coach and coachee, which is essential for an effective coaching relationship, is facilitated by heightened awareness, mindfulness and authenticity, and these competencies appear, in my opinion, to be nurtured by theatre-based techniques.

#### *5.1.2.3 Relationship Building*

The competence of relationship building comprised 7% of the statements made in this study with reference to connectedness, Ubuntu and support. Words and phrases such as attuned, engaged, appreciative and accepting of others' offers were used to describe the competence of connectedness that was seen to be nurtured by theatre-based techniques. Attuned relationships are described as "frequent affective relationships of one group of people for another, where the welfare of the other is of primary concern" (Rock & Page, 2009: 427). A concern with the group's welfare rather than just the individual's, appears to be an underpinning philosophy of theatre-based techniques such as Active communicating.

Active Communicating, is based on the universal principle of humans engaging with each other (Arrien, 1993), and was seen to evoke *"Sharing at a deep level - connecting to others"* (Caryn). This theatre-based work, as well as improvisation techniques, which are founded on the principle of accepting other people's offers, facilitates a high level of collaboration and sharing, which in my view, are important, not only in coaching relationships, but in business in general.

According to Daniel Siegel, when we "attune with another person and they attune to us, two different worlds become adjoined and we resonate with each other through our voices, bodily gestures, posture and facial expression" (D.J. Siegel, 2006: 123). It is this attuned connection that is vital in coaching relationships and, in my view, is nurtured by emotional intelligence and expressive authentic communication.

Even though reference is not made directly to the competencies of connectedness and Ubuntu by the WABC and ICF, reference is made to respect and rapport, which, in my view, are fundamental to co-creative coaching relationships and are nurtured through theatre-based techniques that promote sharing, caring and a respect for diversity.

### 5.1.3 Promoting client understanding through effective communication

The ICF lists communication as a core coaching competence, which includes:

- Direct communication – "*communicating effectively in a coaching session in a clear, articulate manner, using language appropriately and metaphor and analogy to paint verbal pictures"((ICF), 2012);*

- Listening actively and without judgement – "*focusing on hearing and interpreting the client's overt and covert messages, relayed through their words, body language and tone of voice" ((ICF), 2012); and*

- Questioning powerfully "*to evoke discovery and move the client towards their desired outcomes"((ICF), 2012).*

The literature, too, identifies the skill of communicating, listening and questioning as core coaching competencies (Cox, et al., 2009; Ellinger, et al., 2003; Olivier, 2001; Rittenberg, 2010; Zeus, 2002).

#### *5.1.3.1 Effective communication*

Direct communication, articulating, listening, questioning and reflecting all emerged as key to effective communication in this research study, and are seen to be core coaching competencies that are developed through theatre-based techniques by 13% of the respondents. Communication skills are the building blocks of the Active Communicating methodology and were listed in the workshop manual as:

> *"energy; physical expressiveness (body language); relaxation; eye contact; spontaneity – impromptu, improvisation, openness to outcomes; breathing; voice; listening; focus and concentration; and awareness." (Mark)*

**Direct communication**

The ICF (2012) refers to direct communication as "*the ability to communicate effectively during the coaching session and to use language that has the greatest positive impact on clients".*

In this study, direct communication was seen to be comprised of the ability to communicate clearly, simply and articulately. Theatre-based exercises that focused on building eye contact; relaxation and focus; telling stories; using metaphors; synthesising meaning from other people's stories and articulating this in presentations; were used to develop clear, articulate communication skills.

Just as theatre-based techniques are seen to promote the use of different voices in the different roles that actors play, so they are believed to equip leaders with the skill to adapt their communication for the different roles that they play, not least of all for their role as coach. In my view, leaders need to be effective communicators before attempting to coach, as communication is key to effective coaching and is an essential leadership competence, which appears to be lacking in many leaders. Theatre-based techniques appear to focus on building this core coaching competence.

**Listening**

Active listening – "*the ability to focus on and understand the client's concerns, attitudes and desires"((ICF), 2012),* was seen to be central to effective communication in the coaching relationship. Knight described this type of intent listening as paying attention whole-heartedly to gain insight and find solutions to problems (Knight, 2002, in Murray 2004:205 as cited in Gouveau, 2012). In this study, listening and paying attention were also seen as primary skills developed by theatre-based techniques and foundational to a mindful presence, in my view.

In the improvisation and storytelling workshops, theatre-based techniques were seen to develop active listening skills in exercises that focused on holding the silence, paying attention, and being non-judgmental. In the Active Communicating workshop that I observed, the story sharing exercise illustrated the basic improvisational practice of listening and responding in the moment. It reinforced the importance of listening with an open mind and heart when coaching. This encouraged the delegates being coached to embrace their vulnerability and to share openly and honestly. Other improvisational exercises were seen to focus on hearing, receiving, accepting and building onto other people's ideas, rather than blocking them and shutting them down. All of these competencies that are built through Theatre-based techniques are seen to facilitate understanding and sharing in the coaching relationship, in my view.

**Questioning**

According to the literature, questioning is seen to be a key coaching competence (Cox, et al., 2009; Ting & Scisco, 2006; Zeus, 2002), and is defined by the ICF (2012) as the "*ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship and the client*".

The competence of questioning was described in this research study as the ability to ask difficult, curious, probing and reflective questions. Although there were not as many comments about questioning as there were about communicating and listening from interviewees, the theatre-based exercises that I observed encouraged delegates to use probing questions to find out about the characters they were being coached to play; about each other's personal stories; and about attitudes and beliefs that were holding them back from realising their potential. These questions simulated the in-depth questions that are required when coaching.

#### *5.1.3.2 Expressiveness*

Expressiveness is described as the ability to express emotions authentically and passionately through appropriate use of voice, body and story (Halpern & Lubar, 2004: 142). Although theatre-based techniques are, to a large extent, dependent on verbal communication, they also make use of body sculptures, physical mirroring, storytelling and play-acting, to promote expressive vocal and non-verbal communication. The Active Communicating and storytelling workshops that the researcher observed paid much attention to the building of vocal, somatic and emotional expressiveness to enhance communication.

Expressiveness is not a skill that is referred to directly in the competencies listed by the ICF and the WABC and appears to be more applicable to actors and leaders (who have to present themselves in an appealing and inspiring way to influence their followers), than to coaches. However, it is my view that expressiveness is vital in all communication, not least of all in coaching, where successful coaching relationships depend on engaged, authentic communication. This view was expressed by a specialist whose company conducts theatre-based work for leaders of Fortune 500 companies, who reinforced the need for leaders to engage others authentically when coaching by:

*"using vocal flexibility and good facial expression and body language and walking the talk." (Kathy)*

**Engaging, inspiring communication** was defined in this research as being energetic, enthusiastic, expressive, motivating, passionate and powerful. Being engaging and inspiring is an important competence in leaders, as they need to be able to enthuse their followers to action their own and the company's vision. In the same way, in the researcher's view, coaches need to engage their coachees and inspire them to reach their desired outcomes.

Being inspiring and engaging vocally, somatically or emotionally requires energy and energy is central to expressiveness. Just as actors need a high level of energy to captivate their audience night after night on stage, so leaders need energy to motivate and inspire their workforce (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Rittenberg, 2007), whether communicating in large forums, in meetings, or in one-on-one coaching sessions.

Energy is one of the express skills that Active Communicating techniques aim to build. Through theatre-based exercises such as 90 second elevator speeches, which start big, tell a story, and end it, energy is built. Actor's breathing, relaxation and physically robust exercises, also contribute to building energy.

In the researcher's view, coaches need to be energetic to hold the space and be present for their coachees as one cannot be present and attuned if one has no energy.

**Emotional, vocal and somatic expressiveness**

Voice and body language need to work congruently to communicate a message (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Rittenberg, 1994; Rodenburg, 2002). Just as actors need to align their use of voice, body and emotions to play a role convincingly, so leaders need to align their voice and body with their psychological and emotional intentions if they are to be believed (Harrop, 1992).

Certain theatre-based techniques referred to in this study, involved strenuous physical and vocal activities to help leaders improve their vocal and physical presence. Non-verbal communication was enhanced through appropriate use of gesture, facial expression and eye contact in presentations. Vocal proficiency was built through deep breathing and vocal variety exercises,

designed to assist participants to use different voices to communicate effectively in different situations.

Although leadership is often viewed as an intellectual pursuit, rather than a physical one, in my view leaders need to integrate their intellectual, physical and emotional communication to be credible and authentic, and theatre-based techniques develop this ability.

**Verbal expressiveness**

Much leadership literature focuses on verbal aspects of communication; getting the message 'right' in terms of its content (Ladkin, 2006) and the ICF (2012) referred to the need for the coach "to *paint a verbal picture for their coachees by using metaphor and analogy to help to illustrate a point"*. In this research, it is apparent that theatre-based techniques make significant use of storytelling and metaphor to illustrate points. Besides being an expressive process, storytelling is also seen as a constructivist process of self-discovery and is covered both in the sections on building self-awareness and development and transformation.

### 5.1.4 Facilitating Learning and Results

One of the primary functions of coaching is facilitating development (Park, Mclean and Yang, 2008, in Ellinger, Beattie and Hamlin, 2009, in Cox, et al., 2009). This development might entail transforming attitudes and behaviour for improved well-being and more efficacious individual and organisational performance. According to the ICF (2012), "*facilitating learning and results"* includes:

- *"creating awareness*
- *designing actions*
- *planning and goal setting*
- *managing progress and accountability" (ICF, 2012)*

#### *5.1.4.1 Development and transformation*

Theatre-based techniques were seen to be transformative, constructivist in nature, engaging, endorsing, rigorous and supportive, leading to development and transformation in leaders and

coaches, according to 13% of the responses to this research. Several theatre-based exercises, such as those in which senior leaders coached each other to perform professionally, resulted in dramatically improved performance and were seen to be developmental.

For transformation to be effected, coaches need to facilitate a mind shift in their clients and help them *"to discover for themselves the new thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, emotions, moods, etc. that strengthen their ability to take action and achieve what is important to them" ((ICF), 2012).*

Coaching for development, not just for performance, often involves a major shift in the coachee's mind. Recounting our own stories and listening to other peoples' stories can affect us and create these mind shifts, as was observed in theatre-based workshops. Entrenching new behaviours often requires rigorous practice and, in my view, that is what theatre-based techniques demand.

WABC speaks about the coach promoting self-discipline in the client by holding the client responsible and accountable for agreed-upon actions. Although there were only 10 responses in this section, reference was made to theatre-based processes in which coaches ask their coachees to take risks, ask tough questions, follow up and hold people accountable for their actions.

According to the philosophies of Freire (1970) and Boal (1973), growth and transformation do not just happen to us. They are critical, conscious, co-creative processes that take place between student and teacher, coach and coachee. The Active Communicating methodology is founded on the bedrock of building critical consciousness in students so that they can analyse their own situations, learn from others, and change who they are. Storytelling and performing, which are integral to these theatre-based techniques, are ways of taking who we are and creating something new (Vygotsky in Holzman, 2008). To do this we need to see ourselves as others see us and draw from the stories of others in constructing our own narrative:

> *".. what theatre-based techniques are doing is they are saying that how you be and how you shape your knowledge in relation to what you think you are being, is totally within your own construction, and therefore can be altered by being conscious of your constructs." (Lucy)*

The Active Communicating and storytelling workshops that I observed illustrated how stories are a powerful tool for self-discovery and the construction of a new identity through the responses of another and this in my opinion, is a primary purpose of coaching.

**Being endorsing and supportive** are seen to be key competencies for leaders, who have a vested interest in developing the potential of their followers through coaching. According to the WABC, "*the coaching session should leave the client feeling motivated to apply what was learned in his/her life setting by recognising and celebrating the client's successes and encouraging and supporting the client to apply new knowledge or skills immediately"* ((WABC), 2012). In all of the theatre-based workshops that I observed, a positive supportive climate was established from the outset. The improvisation workshop, in particular, implements the fundamental principle of acknowledging and accepting others' offers to sustain momentum and build performance:

> *"everything that one's partner says or does is an offer and one is obliged to build them, to create with them and offer something back; as opposed to judging them or blocking them or rejecting them or ignoring them." (Kat)*

Active Communicating techniques were seen to encourage facilitators to give their delegates credit for their own accomplishments in order to gain their trust and participation. Several theatre-based exercises in the improvisation and Active Communicating workshops were seen to encourage participants to coach each other using lots of endorsing, which appears to be one of the main competencies that one needs as a coach.

**Managing accountability** is also a competence of coaching outlined by the ICF, and a theatre-based specialist and coach described how she uses theatre-based techniques, together with another methodology, to hold clients accountable for results:

> *"...being results orientated… is about delivery, integrity - integrity with commitment. And if you don't have vision, if you can't think on your feet, if you aren't listening to others, if you don't have the energy to be in the moment and think about where are we going now, if you can't listen to others, you can't be results-orientated." (Sunny)*

Theatre-based techniques appear to develop several of the competencies required to facilitate learning and results, even if not all of the indicators of this competence outlined by the ICF or WABC were met.

#### *5.1.4.2 Creativity*

Encouraging *"the client to think deeply and creatively, to look for new or different approaches to take"((WABC), 2012)* is listed as a competence that coaches need to have to facilitate development and transformation in their coachees. Creativity was seen to be an important outcome of theatre-based techniques, with 11% of the references attesting to this in this research. Creativity was divided into four categories: flexibility, innovation, spontaneity and energy.

*"Adaptability - flexibility in handling change"*, is listed by the WABC (2012) as a competence that coaches need for their own self-mastery. Flexibility in this study is defined as being adaptable, being able to shift perspective and flex performance in the moment, and being open to outcomes. Being open to possibilities has particular relevance in today's challenging business environment for leaders who have to initiate and manage change. Active Communicating theatre-based work is seen to centre around flexibility and being open to outcomes:

> *"You can't be attached to outcome... You can't have your own goals per session. You can't have a fixed idea about what needs to happen at every session." (Amon)*

As stated by Senge et al. (2005), the more one is able to be in the present moment the more creative and adaptable one may be professionally and personally. The principles, philosophies and techniques of the theatre appear to be very helpful in enabling leaders to flex their performance in the moment and adaptability is an important skill for coaches.

Olivier (2001) believes that leaders need to encourage those around them to express zany ideas and to try them out, otherwise they might lose out on innovation. To promote action in clients, the WABC stated that coaches need to encourage their clients to think of new ideas and apply new knowledge or skills immediately. Theatre-based techniques, such as improvisation, appear

to promote innovation by encouraging leaders to pay attention and respond extemporaneously to situations. By improvising as a leader one is able:

> *"to maximise your impact and probability of success, because you are not just following a script, you are building with whatever is happening in this moment." (Kat)*

Although the WABC (2012) stressed the need for coaches to "*experiment with different and novel ways to deal with problems and opportunities"* for their own self-mastery, they do need to be aware that creative processes, like improvisation, are likely to yield unintended results, and that business, like theatre, needs a culture that is experimental and tolerant of some errors to support novel initiatives (Crossan, 1998; Taylor, 2012, 26 January).

**Spontaneity** - being open and not attached to outcomes, and able to improvise in the moment - is listed as one of the key outcomes of Active Communicating work (Rittenberg, 1994) and was observed in several exercises in the Active Communicating workshop the researchers attended. The lessons that leaders can learn from improvisation about creating in the moment are valuable for business, particularly in a world that is constantly changing:

> *"In order to do what they do, improvisers have come up with philosophies of how to create collaboratively, how to take risks, and live on the edge and be responsive, and create in the moment." (Kat)*

The creativity competencies developed through theatre-based techniques, in the researcher's view, assist coaches to be adaptable - flexible in handling change - as well as spontaneous and innovative, and to nurture this creativity in their coachees. These competencies appear to be dependent on creating a safe space for experimentation and on collaboration in teams.

### 5.1.5 Overview research question 1: core coaching competencies developed through theatre-based techniques

It appears that many of the coaching competencies outlined by the ICF and the WABC are nurtured by theatre-based techniques. However, having completed this research, it now appears that many of the competencies are much more interdependent than originally hypothesised. Competencies such as emotional intelligence, relationship building, communicating effectively

and presence, which are developed through theatre-based techniques, appear to be contingent on one another. Being self-aware, able to regulate your own behaviour and empathetic to others enables you to interrelate with rapport. This facilitates relationship building between the coach and the coachee. Relationship building is dependent on attuned, connected relationships, in which effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, takes place. Attuned relationships, in which one person is in sync with another, are vital if one is to be present in the coaching relationship.

If co-creative, developmental conversations are to take place between coach and coachee, the coach needs to be present in the moment with their coachees, paying attention with heightened awareness. Being present also requires flexibility and openness to outcomes, which is fundamental to creativity. For creativity to flourish, the environment needs to nurture spontaneity, relaxation and trust. The creative process also appears to depend on passion for what you do as well as collaboration, exchange of diverse ideas, and building onto other people's offers and accomplishments. (Robinson, 2010). Collaboration and sharing are central to relationship building; effective communication facilitates the exchange of ideas; accepting offers and endorsing these builds on others' ideas and motivates them to pursue their passions.

If there is trust in an environment, people feel safe to express their vulnerabilities or insecurities that might be holding them back from fulfilling their potential. Recognition of underlying beliefs and attitudes could enable mind shifts to occur, which could lead to personal and organisational development and transformation. So it is clear that all of the competencies that are nurtured by theatre-based techniques are interdependent, rather than only being supportive of presence, as was stated in my original model on page 21.

## 5.2 Discussion pertaining to research question 2: Relevance of theatre-based techniques for coach education

### 5.2.1 Relevance of the competencies developed through theatre-based techniques for coach education

In determining the relevance of theatre-based techniques for coach education, it was important to evaluate the competencies developed through these techniques in terms of the key credentialing coach competencies outlined by the WABC and ICF. In examining the findings of this research study, it appears as though theatre-based techniques are relevant to coach education as they develop several of the competencies that are listed by the WABC and ICF:

- Emotional Intelligence is seen to underpin the competence of self-management and is perceived to have been nurtured by theatre-based techniques. Other competencies that are developed by theatre-based techniques, such as creativity; trust and integrity; expressiveness; presence and development, are also perceived to contribute to the development of self-mastery.

- Trust, integrity and presence, together with emotional intelligence and relationship building, are perceived to be built by theatre-based techniques and underpin the competence of co-creating the coaching relationship, specified as a key business coaching competence by the ICF and WABC.

- Communicating effectively was seen to be a core coaching competence that emanated from theatre-based techniques and the skills of active listening, powerful questioning, and direct communication, were seen to align with the competencies required by the WABC and ICF.

- The competencies listed under the themes development and transformation and creativity were seen to include elements of creating awareness; designing actions; planning and goal setting; and managing progress and accountability, listed by the WABC and the ICF under the section facilitating learning and results. In order to ensure that all of these competencies are acquired comprehensively, it might be advisable to use theatre-based techniques together with another methodology.

One of the highly respected specialists, an author of several books on coaching and an Active Communicating specialist, expressed the opinion that TBTs, such as Active Communicating, contribute to the development of all of the core coaching competencies outlined by the ICF:

> *"the skills that are developed touch on a lot of qualities – respect, support, commitment, trust, acceptance, forgiveness, acknowledging the necessity, recognition of diversity, generosity, alignment, agreement towards a role. So the words aren't the same but I think they work on all of them. If you look at it in terms of those four categories – creating a foundation, competence of communication, the competence of facilitating learning as a leader and mentor; co-creating in the relationship. I think they are all touched on." (Sunny)*

However, in my opinion, from the results of this research, the ICF section that deals with foundational skills, such as meeting ethical guidelines and professional standards and establishing the coaching agreement, has not been dealt with directly by theatre-based techniques. Nevertheless, reference should be made to competencies such as honesty, integrity and goal orientation that have been developed under the themes of trust and integrity and development and transformation respectively, in this regard.

As the business and leadership coaching capabilities' competencies were not observed in the one day workshops that I attended, this would need to be the subject of further study.

### 5.2.2 Relevance of theatre-based techniques to coach education for leaders

It appears that many of the competencies that are required by coaches, according to national and international coaching bodies, bear a striking resemblance to the skills of improvisers and actors. Specialists that were interviewed in this research study listed skills such as being present, listening, awareness, being non-judgemental, acceptance, noticing themes and being open to possibilities, empathising, articulating clearly and engaging with others, as key skills that are nurtured by theatre-based techniques, which are relevant for leaders who coach.

In addition**,** the philosophy of improvisation could stand leaders in good stead. Just as improvisers know how to create collaboratively, take risks, live on the edge and be responsive,

leaders need to be prepared to flex their performance at a moment's notice and motivate others to initiate and manage change. In order to be one step of the competition, leaders have to be imaginative, innovative and creative and think differently from their competitors. Coaches, too, need to extrapolate what they learn from other fields such as drama, cinematography and art, to be ahead of their game and, in my opinion, theatre-based techniques can stimulate them to do this.

The fact that leading institutions like Harvard, Berkeley and Cranfield are using theatre-based techniques to groom future leaders in their MBA and other leadership development programmes, such as those for coaches, testifies to the relevance of these programmes (Adler, 2006; Austin & Devin, 2003; Olivier, 2001; Stout-Rostron, 2002).

In addition to these academic institutions, many private training companies are using theatrical performance and improvisation in their management consulting, organisation development and leadership training, and one such company claims that their theatre-based methods have "enabled over thirty thousand senior executives in fourteen countries of the world to effect personal transformation" (Halpern & Lubar, 2004:xviii).

### 5.2.3 Relevance of theatre-based processes for coach education

From the research findings it is clear that theatre-based techniques make use of active, experiential, participative processes that are simple, relevant, emotionally engaging and provocative. These methods appear to challenge participants to think critically about their own situations and effect changes to their beliefs and attitudes, in a supportive and safe environment.

In storytelling workshops such as the Hero's Journey, participants were encouraged to ask each other probing questions and to listen actively and empathetically to beliefs that were inhibiting their colleagues' progress. Through critical examination of their own and other's unrealistic beliefs, delegates were able to remove these stumbling blocks (Boal, 2000). In the Active Communicating workshop, too, it was evident that once delegates were able to view their stories in a more positive light through the eyes of their colleagues, they were able to formulate new strategies for improved performance. This type of mind shift of attitudes and beliefs

appears to be an outcome of theatre-based techniques, according to this research, and is a primary aim of developmental coaching according to the literature (Cox, et al., 2009).

Experiential techniques such as storytelling that help leaders to reframe their own attitudes and behaviours and those of their coachees, through co-creative conversations, appear to be well suited to coach education for leaders. Powerful questioning and mindful, non-judgemental listening techniques can assist leaders who coach to elicit key themes from their coachees' stories. They can also help to build the empathy that leaders need to assist their coachees to strategise for more efficacious performance (Tschannen-Moran, 2009, in Cox, et al., 2009). All of these competencies appear to be developed by theatre-based techniques, according to this research study and, in my view, are relevant for leaders who coach and could assist them to develop the skills and performance of their coachees and to effect personal transformation.

### 5.2.4 What culture and leadership style is necessary for TBTs and coach development?

From the literature, it is clear that to be a coach you need to be a consultative leader who is interested in the welfare and development of your followers. According to Hunt and Weintraub (2002), managers who coach need to have empathy, an attitude of helpfulness, an openness to learning and a belief that others want to learn (Hunt and Weintraub, 2002, in Cox, et al., 2009). They also need to have an ability to build trust, rapport and relationships. It is clear from the literature that it is difficult to coach if one is a commanding leader, as one would be more inclined to tell than to ask (Ellinger and Bostrom, 2002), and questions are fundamental to coaching. In the same way, an authoritarian culture that is rigid and does not believe that people can learn new skills may not be conducive to the use of experiential theatre-based techniques or to coaching; these are best used in a culture that tolerates mistakes in the interest of innovation. This philosophy needs to be modeled by senior leaders if it is to be believed, according to one of the improvisation specialists:

> *"anybody in a position of influence or power within the organisation needs to be modeling and supporting the initiatives and the values that they say the organisation has." (Kat)*

Although it is a challenge for managers to simultaneously manage for performance and coach for development, an international TBT specialist maintains that it can be done and theatre-based techniques can be relevant, if leaders at the top and the organisational culture support it:

> *"The people at the top have to be a champion of this type of work... Theatre-based techniques can, however, be relevant in every organizational culture, from Google to the Royal Bank of Scotland. Theatre-based techniques are universal." (Kathy)*

It was outside the scope of this research study to assess the fit between theatre-based techniques, coaching and culture and it is proposed that further work be done to assess this.

### 5.2.5 The proposed use of theatre-based techniques in coach education

Theatre-based techniques are seen to be relevant for building the emotional intelligence, communication skills, presence, adaptability and trust and integrity of leaders who coach. It is suggested that this training be conducted in short two to three day sessions, as part of a holistic coaching programme that equips leaders with the knowledge of a particular coaching model such as Rock's CREATE model, which reinforces all of the skills leaders need to contract, relate, explore current reality and alternatives, and to energise their coachees to action their desired outcomes (Rock, 2006).

In addition, theatre-based techniques are seen to be relevant for continued professional development (CPD) for coaches or leaders who currently coach, to assist them to improve their professional practice. Because of the active experiential nature of theatre-based techniques and the key competencies that they build, I believe that they would be well suited to the professional development of coaches and could be facilitated by theatre-based specialists over a series of short CPD sessions in meetings held by local chapters of the ICF.

Theatre-based techniques could also be used to build master coaching skills, as was proposed by one of the experienced coaches who attended the improvisation workshop.

Theatre-based techniques, according to this research, nurture these master skills in leaders, teaching them to listen intuitively and be present and in the moment for clients to unpack their

issues, ideas, insights and intentions (Cox, et al., 2009), and to assist them to shift their perspectives to attain new possibilities.

### 5.2.6 Summary of section

Theatre-based techniques, which are high in structure and high in participation, are seen to be relevant for coach education, particularly in short sessions, as part of a holistic coaching programme, or as part of a continued development programme for improving the skills and competencies of beginner or professional coaches. These techniques could also be useful as an intervention to build the emotional intelligence, communication skills, presence and trustworthiness of leaders who coach. It is suggested that this development be done in conjunction with training that equips these leaders with the knowledge of a coaching model such as Rock's (2006) CREATE model, which emphasises the coach's presence - their ability to 'dance in the moment' with their coachees.

## 5.3 Summary of findings

From the outset it is necessary to acknowledge the difficulty of separating competencies into themes, as many overlap. When one examines the competencies listed by the ICF and the WABC this is also apparent. Under each of the categories listed by the WABC and the ICF, several competencies are needed. For example, in the section on developing the business coaching relationship, *building rapport* is seen to be a key competence with reference to having *an open and responsive presence and being able to tolerate the expression of strong emotions*. However, rapport is seen to be an outcome of empathy, a key competence of emotional intelligence.

*Having an open and responsive presence and a flexible approach to coaching* is seen in this research study to be a criterion of creativity. At the same time, it is acknowledged that in order to be present, one needs to be open to outcomes. I have, however, chosen to categorise this competency under the heading of creativity. It must be noted that if reference to openness to outcomes is included under the section on presence, the total responses in this section will increase by 20 to 138 responses.

Relationship building is seen to be a core coaching competence according to the literature, and the success of business coaching is seen to hinge on the coaching relationship (Kahn, 2011). Attuned, connected relationships appear to be contingent on emotional intelligence (Druskat & Wolff, 2001). If, therefore, relationship building is incorporated under the general heading of emotional intelligence (equalling 152 responses), as it is referred to in the literature (Goleman, 2006), emotional intelligence would be the most significant outcome of theatre-based techniques. In the same way, if expressiveness is a seen as a subsection of communication, in a category referred to as expressive communication (totalling 140 responses), it too, would supersede presence.

It is the researcher's contention, having completed this research study, that the competencies that are built by theatre-based techniques are more interdependent with one another than hypothesised in the initial conceptual framework, and although presence does appear to be a key coaching competence that has emerged from this study, it is appears to be contingent on other competencies such as emotional intelligence, effective communication and trust and integrity. I have chosen to reflect the competencies developed by theatre-based techniques in

the circular diagram below within the context of the competencies outlined by the ICF and WABC:

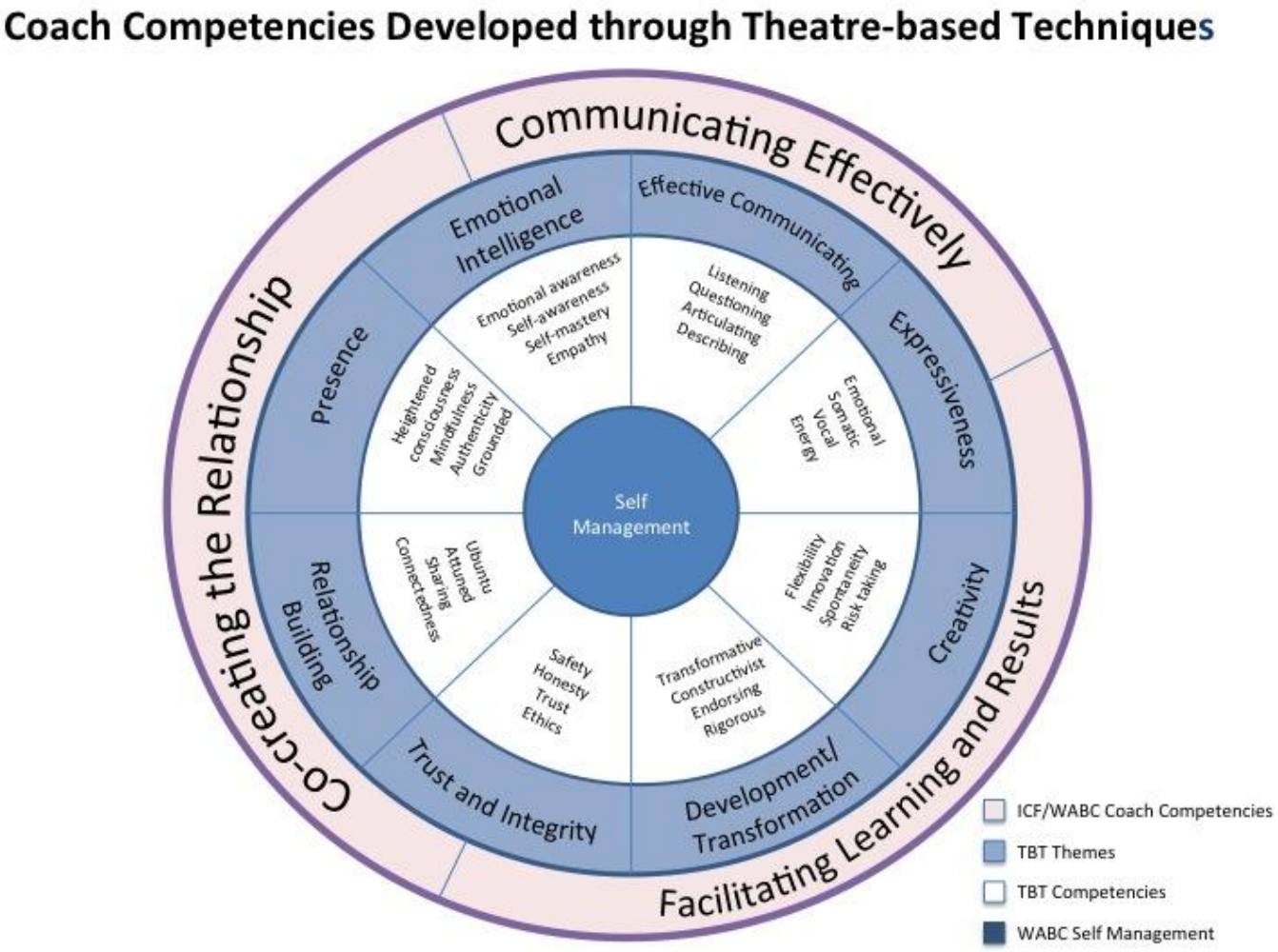



**Figure 9: Coaching competencies built by theatre-based techniques**

In the diagram above, the coach competencies outlined by the WABC and the ICF are reflected in the outermost circle. The competencies of co-creating the relationship; effective communication; and facilitating learning and results are seen to be developed by theatre-based techniques of presence; emotional intelligence; effective communication; expressiveness; creativity; development and transformation; relationship building; and trust and integrity, which are reflected in the next circle of the diagram. Some of the categories that make up these competencies are outlined in the next circle of the diagram. Self-management, which is a prerequisite of the WABC for credentialing of coaches, is reflected in the innermost circle of the diagram and is seen to be impacted on by all of the competencies outlined above it.

# CHAPTER 6

# 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 Conclusion

This research set out to explore:

- what theatre-based techniques are;
- how theatre-based techniques are used in business training and leadership development;
- the core coaching competencies theatre-based techniques develop in leaders who coach; and
- the relevance of theatre-based techniques to contemporary leader-as-coach education.

Based on this and the research topic “Developing core coaching competencies through theatre-based techniques” two research questions were formulated as follows:

1. What are the core coaching competencies developed through theatre-based techniques?
2. What is the relevance of theatre-based techniques for contemporary coach education?

The findings and analysis of this research have been detailed in chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

This chapter concludes this research study and makes recommendations for further areas of research. This includes an outline of a proposed three day theatre-based training workshop for leaders who coach.

Although the focus of this research has been on the leader-as-coach, the findings of this study appear to be applicable to both coaches and leaders who coach.

In today's turbulent times, the role of the leader has changed from that of commanding, directing and motivating, to one of facilitating development and learning, in order to enable followers to take independent actions that are aligned with organisational goals. This requires leaders to adopt a coaching style of leadership, which encompasses building self-awareness, being accountable for their own actions and 'walking their talk' - being authentic in what they say and do - and helping others do the same in order to enhance business performance.

The techniques of the theatre that are fun, simple, relevant and yet transformative, appear to be effective in developing many of the coaching competencies that leaders need. These competencies are in line with the competencies that are outlined for coach credentialing by international coach federations such as the ICF and WABC. These coach federations specify competencies such as emotional intelligence, which contributes to building the leader's self-awareness, self-mastery and ability to interact with others. Core coaching skills that contribute to relationship building, expressive communication, and facilitating development and results are also made reference to and are developed through theatre-based techniques.

What distinguishes theatre-based techniques from other methods of development is that they apply the rules of theatre to the business world and to coaching. Just as actors need to have heightened consciousness and awareness to connect instantaneously with their audiences, so coaches need to pay attention and be present in the moment with their coachees. In the same way as actors need to create rapport to engage their audiences, so too, do coaches need to be emotionally sensitive and empathetic to build a co-creative relationship with their clients. Effective communication between actors is key to an authentic performance and entails paying attention to co-performers' overt and covert signals. In coaching, in order to promote co-creative dialogue, it is imperative to listen attentively to the coachee's verbal and non-verbal messages, so that one can synthesise meaning accurately and communicate clearly. Improvisation is a core acting skill, and leaders and coaches are often called upon to flex their performance in the moment and innovate in uncertain times. Just as theatre-based techniques, such as improvisation, are contingent on trust between role players, so too does successful coaching hinge on a safe space in which coachees feel free to share their vulnerabilities and take the risks required to shift values and performance.

When one looks at the above competencies it is apparent that coaches aiming to transform a coachee's way of being, need to be present intellectually, emotionally, spiritually and relationally in the coaching relationship. They need to be able to communicate with empathy and insight in an atmosphere of honesty and safety and they need to be able to flex their performance in the moment, and theatre-based methods appear to help them to do this.

Theatre-based methods appear to be relevant to coach education for leaders, as they nurture the core competencies of emotional intelligence, presence, effective expressive communication, trust and integrity, creativity, the ability to facilitate development and transformation and relationship building, which are all central to coaching. These competencies should assist leaders to implement the following eight elements of leadership in a consultative style:

- Formulating and implementing their vision collaboratively with their team members by being perceptive and attuned to the insights of members of their team;
- Building emotionally intelligent teams who are connected and capable of implementing the organisation's vision collaboratively;
- Initiating and managing change by being flexible and adaptable and encouraging others to do the same;
- Motivating and inspiring others by listening, paying attention to their needs and communicating with empathy and conviction;
- Stimulating creative thinking in others by creating a climate which encourages reasonable risk taking and experimentation in the interest of innovation;
- Developing others by recognising their capabilities and nurturing these in the interest of their own progress and that of the organisation; and
- Achieving results for the organisation by delivering with honesty and integrity and expecting the same from others.

Although the coaching style of leadership may not be the most appropriate style to use in every situation, nor is it the easiest to master as it requires time and patience, empowering others does appear to be an effective way to achieve results for the organisation in the long term.

Theatre-based techniques appear to build competencies which encourage a coaching-type of relationship between leaders and their followers. These theatre-based methods, used in conjunction with other forms of coach education, could be a powerful tool to move leaders out of their conventional way of thinking and challenge them to see the world through the eyes of visionaries, such as great artists, dramatists and storytellers – vital in the world of tomorrow, which it appears we have already stepped into.

## 6.2 Recommendations for coach education

### 6.2.1 Theatre-based techniques in conjunction with other methods

In the light of the findings of this research study, it is recommended that theatre-based techniques be used to develop core coaching competencies in beginner and professional coaches, as well as in leaders who coach.

Most of the theatre-based specialists, who I interviewed, appear to be conducting short one to three day courses for coaches and leaders who coach. This may not suffice to equip leaders and coaches with all of the skills and knowledge that they need to coach effectively. It is, therefore, recommended that theatre-based techniques be used in conjunction with other processes that may include coaching models, which would complement a theatre-based approach to coaching.

Theatre-based methods could also be used as an important adjunct for coach and leader-as-coach development as they appear to raise awareness, build presence, develop communication skills and create a safe environment in which experimentation with novel ideas can take place. They also are endorsing and rigorous, enabling development and transformation to take place. They could, therefore, be suitable to build a leader/coach's approach to coaching, after they had completed a course on coaching models.

### 6.2.2 Continued professional development

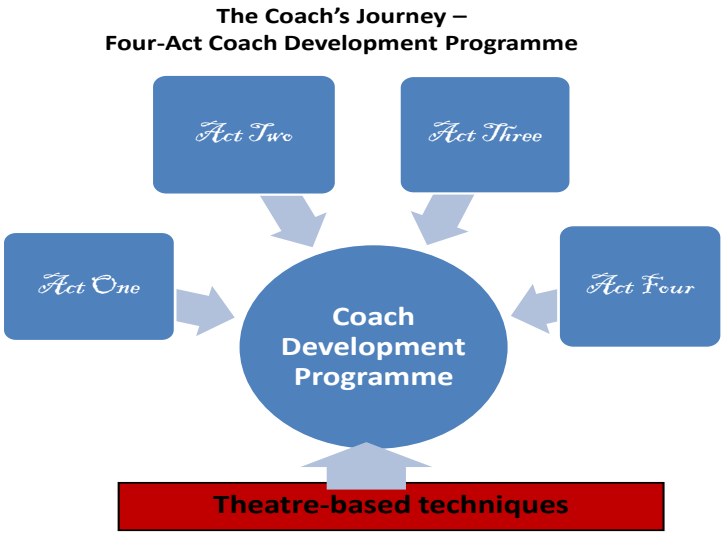
As coaching is a relatively new profession, there is no clarity as yet as to what constitutes the initial professional development of coaches or continuing development. However, several reputable institutes offer academic qualifications for coaches and many private organisations offer a wide variety of short courses. In addition, coach regulatory bodies such as the ICF and COMENSA offer regular sessions for coaches to attend to improve their skills.

It is suggested, therefore, that theatre-based techniques be offered as part of continuing coach development, and that leaders and coaches who are inclined to use experiential techniques and who are interested in using theatre-based practices attend these sessions.

These sessions could be aimed at novice coaches, or master coaches who wish to develop their approach to coaching once they have mastered their coaching model. According to experts such as Clutterbuck (2012), competencies such as presence, attunement, rapport, openness to outcomes, flexibility and creating a safe space, are all key to master coaching practices. Many of these competencies have been found to be nurtured through theatre-based techniques and these could be the focus of some of these CPD sessions.

### 6.2.3 Proposed programme for leaders who coach

In this section, I have outlined a three-day coach development programme using a theatre-based approach. This programme is based on the Hero's Journey storytelling framework (Janse van Vuuren, 2012), Active Communicating principles (Halpern & Lubar, 2004; Rittenberg, 1994), and improvisation techniques (Kirsten & du Preez, 2010; Koppett, 2012). It is also allied to Rock's (2006) CREATE model. I have called this four act workshop the Coach's Journey:




- **Act one: Exploring the coach's world**

  In the introductory act of the Coach's Journey, coaches get to learn how to centre themselves mentally, emotionally and spiritually through the use of presence-based centring exercises (Silsbee, 2008). Improvisation exercises are also used to enhance mindfulness and prepare delegates to embrace their vulnerabilities in order to embark on the journey of exploring their current reality (Kirsten & du Preez, 2010; Koppett, 2012).

- **Act two: The call to action**

  In this act, coaches are exposed to extracts from film and literature that reveal famous heroes' personal journeys of leadership and the lessons they have learnt from this. From these lessons, coaches, in partnership with a colleague, get to reflect on and record their own personal journeys and to analyse the influence of these journeys on their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour.

- **Act three: Dealing with challenges**

  In this act, in groups of four, coaches create body sculptures that reveal their personal dilemmas and work out concrete ways to change these patterns (Boal, 2000, in Janse van Vuuren, 2012). In addition, coaching is used to explore personal beliefs and attitudes that are holding individuals back from realising their potential (Boal, 2000, in Janse van Vuuren, 2012). Metaphors are constructed as visual reminders of each individual's positive potential.

- **Act four: Creating a new world**

  In the final act of this journey, coaches script a new story for themselves that reflects the type of coach/leader they want to be within their ideal environment. This new story is rehearsed and acted out expressively, with delegates coaching each other based on guidelines that are modelled by the theatre-based facilitator. To prepare themselves for the final performance, actor's deep breathing, relaxation and vocal projection exercises are used. To consolidate learning and build energy for transformation of attitudes and stabilisation of actions, exercises such as 'Yes Lets' and 'Yes And' are used (Kirsten & du Preez, 2010; Koppett, 2012).

This leader-as-coach development programme requires self-awareness, mindful insight, self-mastery, and rigorous rehearsal to effect and maintain transformations. To embark on this journey, coaches need to harness the intelligence of the mind, the body, the heart and the spirit (Silsbee, 2008).

The process is experiential in nature, so delegates get to:

- Understand the principles that underpin the methods used;
- Implement the processes;
- Reflect on their learning and the coaching competencies acquired; and
- Formulate ways to implement this learning in a coaching context.

## 6.3 Suggestions for further research

During this study a number of areas for further research became apparent. Although these areas were touched on in the findings and discussion of this report, they were not able to be explored in-depth because of the limited scope of this report. The areas listed below are suggestions for further research.

### 6.3.1 Further research into theatre-based techniques for leaders who coach

This study set out to explore the relevance of theatre-based techniques for building coaching competencies in leaders who coach. Unfortunately, the researcher was not able to observe a group of leaders being trained within a corporate setting, in a theatre-based workshop, or to access direct feedback from such a group. However, she was able to observe leaders and coaches being trained in academic settings and has extrapolated these findings to leaders who coach and coaches in general. It is recommended that a further study be done in the corporate world to assess the value of these techniques for leaders who coach.

### 6.3.2 Comparison between different types of theatre-based techniques

A difference was noted in the primary themes that emerged from the feedback received from delegates; interviews with specialists; and the observation of workshops. This may be accounted for by the fact that feedback was only received from delegates who attended one of the three workshops observed - the improvisation workshop. Feedback was not received from the Active Communicating or from the storytelling workshops as this was not permitted at the time. This might be a limitation of this study and it is recommended that further research take place which focuses on the use of each of these theatre-based methodologies independently, and compares the outcomes and competencies built by each of them.

### 6.3.3 The use of theatre-based techniques in specific companies

It is suggested that research takes place inside a specific company where theatre-based techniques have been used to develop coaching competencies in leaders who coach. Feedback should be obtained from delegates just after the completion of the workshop, on their perceptions of the efficacy of these methods in building coaching competencies. The short, medium and long term benefits of this development process, should also be assessed. The results of this study could be written up in a case study.

### 6.3.4 Theatre-based techniques versus other methods of training leaders who coach

It is suggested that theatre-based methods be compared with other non theatre-based methods, to assess the relevance of theatre-based methods for coach education for leaders. Although the use of one method does not preclude the use of another method, it would be useful to compare the efficacy of different methods of training leaders who coach. A study could also be done to determine which methods would complement one another, to ensure that coaches attained all of the competencies they needed.

A study which assesses the use of theatre-based techniques, in conjunction with other coaching methods, to determine the efficacy of a combined approach to coach competency development, would also be useful.

## 6.4 Conclusion

Leaders in the 21st century need to reach out to and engage their followers, as it is only through their followers that they will be able to realise their organisation's vision and goals. A coaching style of leadership could help them to do this. However, coaching does not necessarily come easily to leaders, and skills such as emotional intelligence, paying attention mindfully and communicating authentically to develop the well being and capacity of others, may need to be developed. There are many programmes to choose from for this development and choices are often influenced by the style of leadership and culture of an organisation.

In a world in which leaders have to think more like artists - to be flexible, emotionally aware and able to respond to unforeseen events in their environment - theatre-based methods of training may well be appropriate. These techniques stimulate leaders to challenge the way they think, to question their assumptions and to change the way they respond in different situations. This is particularly important for leaders in transition, in a country like South Africa, where many more emotionally mature leaders with sound values and ability to cope with the changing needs of the country are needed, to meet its growth and transformation challenges.

Theatre-based techniques that use rigorous actor-based methods could be well suited to assist leaders to examine their own stories, within the context of their community's and the country's history, and reframe these to meet their leadership and the country's challenges.

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## APPENDIX A: Letter to respondents

Dear Respondent

I am completing a Masters in Management, Business Executive Coaching (MMBEC) at the University of the Witwatersrand Business School, Johannesburg. In this Masters programme I will be undertaking research for a dissertation. The purpose of this study is to assess how theatre-based techniques are being used to develop the leader-as-coach in South Africa and internationally. In a case study I will examine what theatre-based techniques are being used in leader-as-coach programmes, the dimensions of coaching that these techniques develop, and the relevance of these techniques in leader-as-coach development in South Africa and internationally.

As you are regarded as one of the leading specialists in this field, it would be invaluable to my research study if you would agree to participate in this study. I know that you are extremely busy, but I would be most grateful if you could avail yourself for a one hour interview at a time and place that is convenient to you. As I am based in South Africa, this interview will need to be conducted telephonically or on Skype. Alternatively, if you will be visiting South Africa in the next few months, I would appreciate it if you could allocate an hour to meet with me.

My interview schedule includes the following questions:

1. How do you define the work you do?
2. How would you describe the theatre-based techniques that you use in training leaders as coaches?
3. What theory underpins these techniques?
4. How and where are you using theatre-based techniques to develop the leader-as-coach?
5. How relevant are these techniques in leader-as-coach development programmes?
6. What dimensions of coaching do these methods focus on developing in the leader-as-coach?
7. What have I not asked that you think might be important in this field?

Confidentiality will be observed throughout the thesis process and the final report will be for academic purposes only.

Please let me know when it would suit you to be interviewed.

Thank you for your kind assistance.

Yours sincerely

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## APPENDIX B: Actual Research Instrument

**Interview schedule**

**Questions to ask interviewees:**

1. How do you define the work you do?

2. How would you describe the theatre-based techniques that you use in developing leaders as coaches? Could you please describe your methods of training?

3. What learning theory underpins these techniques?

4. How and where are you using theatre-based techniques to develop the leader-as-coach?

5. How relevant are these techniques in contemporary leader-as-coach development programmes?

6. What dimensions of coaching do these methods focus developing in the leader-as-coach? Tell me more about the importance of presence and how you develop presence in the leader-as-coach using theatre-based techniques?

7. What have I not asked that you think might be important in this field?

## Appendix C: Feedback Form to Evaluate the Training Programme

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation form. Your feedback will provide valuable insight into the programme, assess its effectiveness and allow us to modify future programmes. Please take 15 minutes to complete the feedback form**.**

**Programme:** _____
**Date:** _____

1. Please rate the ***overall effectiveness*** of the facilitator

| **Facilitator's name:** | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Acceptable** | **Poor** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Explained conceptual material clearly** | | | | |
| **Stimulated enthusiasm** | | | | |
| **Provoked thoughtful discussion** | | | | |
| **Engaged participation through experiential techniques** | | | | |

1.1 Comments

_____
_____

2. Please rate the ***content*** of the programme

| **Programme content/process** | **Strongly agree** | **Agree** | **Neutral** | **Disagree** | **Strongly Disagree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Well-structured & clear objectives** | | | | | |
| **Enhanced my understanding of concepts and principles** | | | | | |
| **Challenged my thinking** | | | | | |
| **Was experiential and varied** | | | | | |

2.1 What differentiated this programme from others you have attended? Please specify.

_____
_____
_____

2.2 How do you think this programme will enable you to improve your role as leader-as-coach?

_____
_____
_____

2.3 What core competencies of coaching did you learn from this programme?

_____
_____
_____

2.4 Would you recommend this programme to other people in a similar role to yourself? Why?

_____

## Appendix D: List of themes, categories and codes

| Themes | Categories | Codes |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Presence** | 1.1 Heightened consciousness | 1.1.1 Awareness<br>1.1.2 Insightfulness<br>1.1.3 In tune with verbal/non-verbal<br>1.1.4 Sensitive/sensing |
| | 1.2 Mindfulness | 1.2.1 Focused<br>1.2.2 In the moment<br>1.2.3 Centred<br>1.2.4 Relaxed |
| | 1.3 Authenticity | 1.3.1 Real<br>1.3.2 Honest<br>1.3.3 Developing self<br>1.3.4 Leading from the inside out |
| | 1.4 Spiritual Awareness | 1.4.1 Intuitive<br>1.4.2 Open-hearted<br>1.4.3 Holistic: in tune with all senses<br>1.4.4 Meaningfulness |
| **2. Emotional Intelligence** | 2.1 Self-awareness | 2.1.1 Beliefs, assumptions, values<br>2.1.2 Insightfulness<br>2.1.3 Self-discovery<br>2.1.4 Story-telling |
| | 2.2 Self-mastery | 2.2.1 Resilience<br>2.2.2 Embracing vulnerability<br>2.2.3 Courage of convictions<br>2.2.4 Self-control<br>2.2.5 Responsible |
| | 2.3 Empathy | 2.3.1 Caring<br>2.3.2 Compassionate<br>2.3.3 Connected<br>2.3.4 Attuned<br>2.3.5 Non-judgmental |
| | 2.4 Self-motivation | 2.4.1 Pro-active<br>2.4.2 Enthusiastic<br>2.4.3 Energetic<br>2.4.4 Motivated |
| **6 Relationship Building** | 3.1 Ubuntu | 3.1.1 Sharing<br>3.1.2 Team building<br>3.1.3 Collaboration<br>3.1.4 Supportive<br>3.1.5 Accepting diversity |
| | 3.2 Connectedness | 3.2.1 Attuned<br>3.2.2 Engaging<br>3.2.3 Appreciative<br>3.2.4 Accepting of offers<br>3.2.5 Interaction |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **7 Communicating Effectively** | 4.1 Listening | 4.1.1 Paying attention<br>4.1.2 Focused<br>4.1.3 Non-judgmental<br>4.1.4 Attention to nuances<br>4.1.5 Holding silence |
| | 4.2 Questioning | 4.2.1 Reflecting understanding<br>4.2.1 Difficult questions<br>4.2.2 Probing |
| | 4.3 Reflecting | 4.3.1 Contemplating<br>4.3.2 Mirroring<br>4.3.3 Playing back<br>4.3.4 Reframing |
| | 4.4 Articulating | 4.4.1 Appropriate<br>4.5.2 Authentic<br>4.4.2 Clarity of meaning<br>4.4.3 Use of metaphors |
| **8 Expressiveness** | 5.1 Vocal | 5.1.1 Breathing<br>5.1.2 Variety<br>5.1.3 Tonality<br>5.1.4 Passion |
| | 5.2 Somatic | 5.2.1 Physical<br>5.2.2 Energy |
| | 5.3 Feelings | 5.3.1 Engaging<br>5.3.2 Physical and emotional |
| | 5.4 Verbal | 5.4.1 Storytelling<br>5.4.1 Descriptive<br>5.4.2 Metaphor<br>5.4.3 Revealing content |
| | 5.5 Energy | 5.5.1 Alive and engaging<br>5.5.1 Breathing<br>5.5.2 Relaxation<br>5.5.3 Passionate<br>5.5.4 Motivational<br>5.5.5 Inspirational |
| **6 Trust and integrity** | 6.1 Safe environment | 6.1.1 Safety<br>6.1.2 Trustworthy<br>6.1.3 Trusting |
| | 6.2 Ethics | 6.2.1 Honesty<br>6.2.2 Honouring |
| **7 Developmental/ transformational** | 7.1 Rigorous | 7.1.1 Accurate<br>7.1.2 Focused<br>7.1.3 Committed<br>7.1.4 Knowledge-based |
| | 7.2 Supportive | 7.2.1 Endorsing<br>7.2.2 Acknowledging<br>7.2.3 Supportive |
| | 7.3 Transformative | 7.3.1 Co-creative<br>7.3.2 Self-discovery<br>7.3.3 Story telling<br>7.3.4 Constructivist |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | 7.3.5 Mind-shifting |
| | 7.4 Engaging | 7.4.1 Fun<br>7.4.2 Alive<br>7.4.3 Confidence building |
| **8 Creativity** | 8.1 Flexibility | 8.1.1 Adaptableness<br>8.1.2 Flexing performance<br>8.1.3 Open to outcomes |
| | 8.2 Innovation | 8.2.1 Risk taking<br>8.2.2 Imagination<br>8.2.3 Visualizing<br>8.2.4 Possibility thinking<br>8.2.5 Having different perspectives |
| | 8.3 Spontaneity | 8.3.1 Flexibility<br>8.3.2 Improvisation |

## APPENDIX E:

### COACHING COMPETENCIES

- ICF and WABC Core Coaching Competencies

### FEEDBACK

- Feedback from Improvisation Training Programme

### INTERVIEWS

- Interview Burgert Kirsten
- Interview Caryn Katz
- Interview Kat Koppett
- Interview Kathy Lubar
- Interview Lucy Voss-Price
- Interview Mark Rittenberg
- Interview Motshabe Tyelele
- Interview Resolve - Amon, Steve and Des
- Interview Sunny Stout Rostron

### WORKSHOPS

- Active Communicating Workshop
- Improvisation Exercises
- Storytelling Workshop