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Exploring the influence of the five factor model of personality on the executive coaching process

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Management in Business Executive Coaching

Johannesburg, 2017

ABSTRACT

Personality match between a dyadic pair in helping relationships has shown to improve the process and outcomes. Does the same apply to executive coaching?

Coaching is deemed to be effective but why is this so? This study explored the role of personality similarities on the executive coaching process. By understanding the role personality plays it was anticipated that: understanding would be elicited as to why coachees select their particular coach; better matching could occur between the executive coach and coachee; the process would be more beneficial due to this similarity and there would be a better return on investment for organisations who could assess coaches and coachees and pair them accordingly based on similarities in personality. This study utilised the five factor model (FFM) of personality to explore the personalities of the coaches and coachees across eight coaching dyads.

This study utilised qualitative methodology that of eight case studies made up of eight coaching dyads. All 16 respondents were interviewed using a semi-structured interview. This served as the primary data source. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and uploaded into Atlas ti software for analysis. Content analysis was used and a codebook was created inductively, resulting in 94 codes. The 16 respondents then completed the Wave personality questionnaire as the secondary data source. The assessments were uploaded onto Atlas ti software and were analysed qualitatively using content analysis. 34 codes were created deductively using psychometric principles and the Wave personality questionnaire's measures. The 128 codes were then categorised into 27 categories and 11 themes.

Similarity in personality did not appear to have as great an influence as was anticipated on the executive coaching process within each dyad. Although there was a perception of personality similarity in the majority of the cases, there was very little to substantiate this according to the FFM. This study argues that this perception of similarity is due to the rapport built between the coach and coachee as well as the adaptation of the coach to the coachee's style and needs. This creates cognitive resonance and reinforcement-affect. Due to this perception it is evident that the training of coaches must focus on the coaching skills of openness and trust building.

Despite similarities or dissimilarities in personality, all eight dyads indicated satisfaction with the coaching process, the coaching relationship and the outcomes.

Across all coaches there was no similarity in personality factors. However, across all coachees, there were similarities in personality regarding change orientation, optimism and openness to feedback which speaks to coachee readiness. This study argues that coachee readiness should be assessed for in order to determine readiness for coaching which will allow for more beneficial outcomes.

The relationship, rather than personality similarity, was deemed to be the fundamental component in the coaching process. A relationship based on trust and openness allows the coachee to become vulnerable. This vulnerability allows for validation of the coachee by the coach and it is this validation which allows for growth and development.

DECLARATION

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

Kerry Peacock

Signed at Johannesburg

On the day of 2017

DEDICATION

To all of those individual who believe in the support, development and validation of others, I dedicate this to you.

> “People are just as wonderful as sunsets if you let them be. When I look at a sunset, I don’t find myself saying, ‘Soften the orange a bit on the right hand corner.’ I don’t try to control a sunset. I watch with awe as it unfolds.”
>
> ~ Carl Rogers

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract		i
Declaration		iii
Dedication		iv
Acknowledgement		v
List of tables		viii
List of figures		xii
Chapter 1:	Introduction	p1
Chapter 2:	Literature review	p8
	2.1 Introduction	p8
	2.2 Executive coaching	p8
	2.3 Personality	p16
	2.4 Personality assessment	p26
	2.5 Executive coaching and personality	p29
	2.6 The proposed research approach	p34
	2.7 Theoretical framework	p35
Chapter 3:	Research design and methodology	p36
	3.1 Research paradigm	p36
	3.2 Research design	p37
	3.3 Population and sample	p39
	3.4 The research instruments	p34
	3.5 Procedure for data collection	p47
	3.6 Data analysis and interpretation	p48
	3.7 Limitations	p49
	3.8 Reliability and validity	p50
	3.9 Ethical considerations	p51
Chapter 4:	Presentation of results	p52
	4.1 Case 1	p53
	4.2 Case 2	p68
	4.3 Case 3	p68
	4.4 Case 4	p97

	4.5 Case 5	p112
	4.6 Case 6	p125
	4.7 Case 7	p141
	4.8 Case 8	p153
	4.9 Summary of each case	p165
	4.10 Saturation	p168
	4.11Conclusion	p169
Chapter 5	Discussion of results: Cross case analysis	p170
	5.1 Theme 1	p170
	5.2 Theme 2	p174
	5.3 Theme 3	p177
	5.4 Theme 4	p180
	5.5 Theme 5	p183
	5.6 Theme 6	p186
	5.7 Theme 7	p189
	5.8 Theme 8	p192
	5.9 Theme 9	p194
	5.10 Theme 10	p196
	5.11 Theme 11	p201
	5.12 Limitations and weaknesses	p202
	5.13 Conclusion	p202
Chapter 6	Conclusions and recommendation	p207
	6.1 Introduction	p207
	6.2 Conclusions of the study	p207
	6.3 Generalisability	p215
	6.4 Recommendations	p216
	6.5 Suggestions for future research	p217

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Definitions and purposes of executive coaching	p10
Table 2	Cattell's 23 normal primary source traits literature	p21
Table 3	Types and Definitions of Case Studies	p38
Table 4	Profile of Respondents	p40
Table 5	Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire reliability	p46
Table 6	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 1	p59
Table 7	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 1	p61
Table 8	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 1	p63
Table 9	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 1	p64
Table 10	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 1	p66
Table 11	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 2	p74
Table 12	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 2	p75
Table 13	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 2	p77
Table 14	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 2	p78
Table 15	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 2	p79
Table 16	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 3	p88
Table 17	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 3	p90
Table 18	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of	p92

	the five factor model: Case 3	
Table 19	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 3	p93
Table 20	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 3	p94
Table 21	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 4	p103
Table 22	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 4	p104
Table 23	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 4	p106
Table 24	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 4	p107
Table 25	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 4	p108
Table 26	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 5	p118
Table 27	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 5	p119
Table 28	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 5	p121
Table 29	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 5	p122
Table 30	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 5	p123
Table 31	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 6	p133
Table 32	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 6	p134
Table 33	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 6	p136
Table 34	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 6	p137

Table 35	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 6	p138
Table 36	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 7	p146
Table 37	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 7	p148
Table 38	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 7	p149
Table 39	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 7	p150
Table 40	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 7	p151
Table 41	Comparative table of the Openness factor of the five factor model: Case 8	p158
Table 42	Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the five factor model: Case 8	p159
Table 43	Comparative table of the Conscientiousness factor of the five factor model: Case 8	p161
Table 44	Comparative table of the Agreeableness factor of the five factor model: Case 8	p162
Table 45	Comparative table of the Emotional Stability factor of the five factor model: Case 8	p163
Table 46	Subjective experiences and objective measures of similarity in each dyad	p167
Table 47	Biographical differences in each case	p171
Table 48	Similar factors and sections of personality using secondary data	p178
Table 49	Similarities in sections and factors across all coachees	p181
Table 50	Similarities in sections and factors across all coaches	p184
Table 51	Personality dimension and perception of challenge in the coaching dyad	p187

Table 52 Personality dimension and perception of support in the coaching dyad p190

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1	The performance pipeline model	p9
Illustration 2	Eysenck's supertrait model	p23
Illustration 3	The five factor model of personality	p25
Illustration 4	The Saville Consulting Wave model illustrating cluster, section, dimension and facet/trait hierarchy	p42
Illustration 5	Mapping of the five factor personality model to the Saville Consulting Wave personality clusters	p43
Illustration 6	Example of the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire questions using the 9 point Likert response scale.	p44
Illustration 7	Example of the ipsative scoring on the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire	p44
Illustration 8	Sten scores, normative-ipsative split and talent-motive split	p45
Illustration 9	Mean validity of personality assessments against independent ratings of overall total performance	p47
Illustration 10	Saturation graph	p168
Illustration 11	Depiction of the coaching process	p209

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to explore the influence of personality on the executive coaching process. The research aims to ascertain how personality influences various aspects of the executive coaching process "…several aspects of the process…are worth exploring. Among them, the interpersonal fit between the coach and the coachee is of particular interest. Indeed, very little is known about the personal characteristics that should be taken into account…" (Baron & Morin, 2009, p99). This research aims to understand those personal characteristics. It will investigate the personalities of both coach and coachee, at factor level, according to the five factor model (FFM) of personality, in each dyad, to ascertain the influence this has on the coaching process as well as investigating the personality factors across executive coaches and coachees.

1.2 Context of the study

Currently, the research indicates that the relationship between coach and coachee influences the executive coaching process (Kampa Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). If this is the case, it is pertinent then to understand how the personality of both the coach and coachee influences the relationship and how this, in turn influences the coaching process.

Currently, executive coaching is a major leadership development tool within organisations (Bozer, Joo & Santora, 2015; Baron & Morin, 2009). Feldman & Lankau (2005) state that "…executive coaching has emerged as a major developmental tool in industry that has had, at least on the face of it, some positive outcomes for clients and their organizations alike" (Feldman, 2005, p845). However the exact mechanisms as to why this is so, requires further exploration. As such, organisations need to ensure that there is a return on investment and that executive coaching is beneficial to the organisation. "…while previous claims of Return on Investment (ROI) were over-stated, coaching did yield a relatively good ROI based on the four studies…" (Passmore & Fillery Travis, 2011, p79). Understanding the role that personality plays, if any, on the executive coaching process will allow for better

ROI as the process can be better aligned based on the findings of how personality influences the matching, the relationship, the approach and, ultimately the outcomes within the coaching process. This then, will allow organisations to make more considered decisions regarding the selection of executive coaches, aligned with the organisation's strategy as well as ensuring suitable alignment between the executive coach and the coachee.

This study anticipates that personality will influence all aspects of the coaching process. Understanding the influence that personality has on the process will allow for better facilitation of the executive coaching process than currently occurs within the South African coaching industry.

The research literature suggests that the relationship is key to the executive coaching process (Joo, 2005). This research study will not only investigate how personality influences the executive coaching relationship, but will further explore how personality influences various other aspects of the coaching process. The study will investigate the personalities of both the coach and the coachee at factor level, in order to understand similarity-attraction effects between both parties and how this influences the various aspects of the coaching process.

This research will add to the body of knowledge by understanding the role, if any, of personality on the coaching process. Not only will information be elicited about personalities of the coaches as an entity and personalities of the coachees as an entity, but the research will also investigate the dyadic relationship between executive coach and coachee and how the interplay of personalities influences the entire executive coaching process.

1.1 Problem statement

The problem statement for this research is:

The understanding of personalities, according to the five factor model, in the coaching dyad would allow for better matching and a better relationship between the executive coach and coachee. This in turn would allow for more beneficial outcomes in the executive coaching process.

The main research question is:

How does personality, according to the five factor model, influence the executive coaching process?

Sub research questions:

- How does the coaching relationship influence the executive coaching process?
- Do personality factors, according to the five factor model of personality, influence the role of challenge or support in the executive coaching process?
- Do personality factors influence coachee readiness?
- Does testing of personality factors, according to the five factor model of personality, allow for a better understanding of personality and the influence this has on the executive coaching process?
- Does similarity in personality factors, according to the five factor model, between the coach and coachee influence the executive coaching process?

1.2 Significance of the study

This study will be significant, as it will contribute to the current body of academic literature by allowing for a greater understanding of the role personality plays in the executive coaching process. Not only will information be garnered about the personalities of executive coaches as an entity and personalities of coachees as an entity, but more importantly the coach-coachee personality dyad will be investigated.

Understanding the influence personality has on the executive coaching process will elicit a better understanding of the requirements within the coach-coachee relationship. This then will result in a better matching process between coach and coachee at the outset and will allow for a more beneficial relationship. As the relationship is central to the executive coaching process, this will then positively influence all aspects of the coaching process and ideally positively influence the coaching outcomes. Furthermore, understanding the personality influences on the

process, will allow more streamlined methodologies to be utilised in the process and as such, it is anticipated that organisations will obtain a better return on investment as the coaching fraternity will better understand the role personality plays on the coaching process and how to utilise this understanding. This will allow for the best matching of coach to coachee, a more effective coaching relationship, alignment of personality to the coaching approach utilised and, ultimately, productive goal attainment and beneficial outcomes from the coaching process.

South Africa is in its infancy regarding executive coaching. This research will be significant in that no research like this has been conducted in the South African context.

1.3 Delimitations of the study

This study will take place amongst executives and their respective coaches in Johannesburg, South Africa.

1.4 Definition of terms

Term	Definition
Coachee	Executives who have performed highly in the past but whose behaviors are interfering with, or not sufficient for, current job requirements, and managers who have been targeted for advancement to the executive level but are missing some specific skills (Feldman & Lankau, 2005).
Counselling	A two way collaborative exchange…that enables clients to explore their problems, understand their problems, resolve or come to terms with their problems (Sutton & Stewart, 2002).
Dimension	The Wave personality questionnaire comprises 36 dimensions. These are combinations of the 108 facets in order to understand personality (Saville Consulting, 2012)
Executive coach	An experienced individual who works primarily one-on-one with the leader to carry him or her through the needed changes to implement organizational strategy or transform the people or the business to a

Term	Definition
	place more capable of achieving career and business objectives. They understand business principles as well as psychological principles (Stern, 2004).
Executive coaching	Executive coaching is a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organisation and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to assist the client to achieve a mutually identified set of goals, to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and consequently to improve the effectiveness of the client's organisation within a formally defined coaching agreement (Kilburg, 1996).
Facet	The Wave personality questionnaire uses the word facet as opposed to trait. It refers to the same principle – a building block of personality. There are 108 facets measured in the Wave personality questionnaire (Saville Consulting, 2012)
Factor	A factor is a personality unit of measure made up from the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire. The factors include extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability (neuroticism) and openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1992).
Five factor model	The model that arose out of the trait theories of Cattell and Eysenck; here are 5 main factors made up of traits including extroversion; agreeableness; conscientiousness; emotional stability (neuroticism) and openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1992).
Malingering	Faking of answers in a psychometric assessment usually due to social desirability factors (Anastasi, 1998).
Modelling	The adoption of the attitudes and values of the helper in helping relationships as these are viewed as favourable by the client (Wills, 1982).
Norm group	The comparative group to which an individual is

Term	Definition
	compared in psychometric testing to make sense of the individual's score in relation to the population (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006).
Personality	A pattern of relatively permanent traits, dispositions or characteristics within an individual that gives some measure of consistency to the person's behaviour. The traits may be unique, common to some group, or shared by the entire species, but their pattern is different for each individual (Feist & Feist 1998).
Person-centred theory	The individual has within himself/herself vast resources for self-understanding, for altering his/her attitudes, his/her self-concept and his/her self-directed behaviour (Feist & Feist 1998).
Psychometric testing	The branch of psychology dealing with measurable factors (Anastasi, 1988).
Reliability	A psychometric test that measures the same construct consistently over time (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006).
Section	The Wave personality questionnaire is made up of 12 sections. This is the clustering of the 36 dimensions (made up of 108 facets) in order to understand personality (Saville Consulting, 2012). The sections then make up the factors, which align to the five factor model.
Similarity-attraction effects	Similarity between helper and client, which is thought to enhance interpersonal attraction and thereby foster rapport, treatment persistence, and outcome (Abramowitz, Berger & Weary, 1982).
Social desirability	An individual answers the assessment questions as to how they would like others to perceive their behaviour, rather than how they actually behave (Anastasi, 1988).
Standardisation	Standard directions for administration and scoring that should be followed closely, leaving little room for personal interpretation or bias (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006).
Supertraits	Large bodies of several interrelated traits. Also

Term	Definition
	known as types (Feist & Feist 1998).
Trait	Relatively permanent and broad reaction tendencies that serve as the building blocks of personality (Feist & Feist 1998). In this study, traits are termed facets due to the psychometric instrument used.
Validity	A psychometric test actually measures what it purports to measure (Lanyon & Goodstein, 1982).

1.5 Assumptions of the study

It is assumed that the researcher will gain access to executives and their coaches. Some executives as well as coaches may be reticent to share their experiences of the coaching process due to the sensitive nature of the information.

It is assumed that all coachees and coaches will answer the semi-structured interview questions honestly.

It is assumed that the executive coach and coachee will consent to being assessed using the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire and that all parties will answer the personality assessment honestly. Psychometric properties and limitations of assessments will need to be considered.

1.6 Conclusion

The above has highlighted the importance and significance of this research study. Personality and its influence on the coaching process needs to be researched to allow for better matching, a superior coaching relationship, better alignment to the coaching approach, clearer goal setting and, ultimately, a better return on investment.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The following literature review will discuss the current state of affairs within executive coaching. This will focus particularly on the definitions of executive coaching, the various coaching approaches as well as the executive coaching relationship. The review will then go on to discuss personality. Theories of personality, particularly the person-centred theory of Carl Rogers (1959) and the trait theories of Raymond Cattell (Feist & Feist, 1998) and Hans Eysenck (1983) will be discussed. Thereafter, the five factor model (FFM) of personality, proposed by Costa and McCrae (1992), will be discussed. Psychometric testing, particularly that of personality testing will be reviewed. Matching paradigms of helping relationships will be investigated. Particular attention, for purposes of this study, will be paid to the similarity-attraction process. Finally, personality matching within coaching relationships, as conducted by Erik De Haan (2016) and Baek-Kyoo Joo and Gil Bozer (2015), will be explored.

2.2 Executive coaching

For purposes of this research, the following aspects of executive coaching will be extrapolated on definitions of executive coaching, approaches to executive coaching, methodologies within the executive coaching process, the executive coaching relationship, coachee readiness and a commitment to the coaching process.

Before definitions of executive coaching can be discussed, it is important to understand the concept of an executive. For purposes of this research, Stephen Drotter's performance pipeline will be utilised (Drotter, 2011). Executives will be termed as business manager level at Passage 4, group manager at passage 5 or enterprise manager at passage 6. These individuals are responsible for delivering on the portfolio strategy. The role is likely to include the key outputs of new ventures, leadership results, strategy, people development and enterprise leadership (Drotter, 2011). The sample will be made up of executives at group manager level, business manager level and functional manager level.

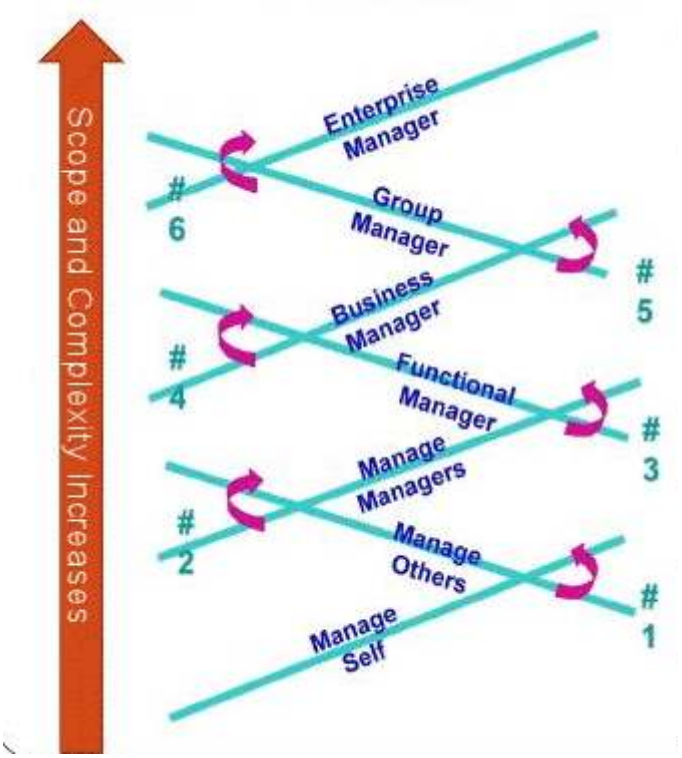


Illustration 1: The performance pipeline model (Drotter, 2011)

2.2.1. Definitions of executive coaching

Executive coaching is a relatively new field, with the term formally utilised in the business environment in the late 1980s (Joo, 2005). According to Tobias, executive coaching is "…simply a repackaging of certain practices that were once subsumed under the more general terms consulting or counselling" (Tobias, 1996, p87). So then, what exactly is executive coaching? Joo (2005) conducted an integrative literature review of the practice and research of executive coaching. The article detailed the various definitions and purposes of executive coaching (Joo, 2005). Table 1 identifies the various definitions proposed.

Table 1: Definitions and purposes of executive coaching (Joo, 2005, p467)

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

For the purposes of this research, Kilburg's (1996) definition will be utilised, where executive coaching is defined as

> …a helping relationship formed between a client who has managerial authority and responsibility in an organisation and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioural techniques and methods to assist the client to achieve a mutually identified set of goals, to improve his or her professional performance and personal satisfaction and consequently to improve the effectiveness of the client's organisation within a formally defined coaching agreement (Kilburg, 1996, p142).

The first reason for using Kilburg's definition is due to the fact that he states that the premise of coaching is a helping relationship. This research aims to understand the influence of personality on the coaching process. There is literature on the influence of personality on other helping relationships, particularly medical and therapeutic relationships. It was deemed that this literature could elicit a better understanding of those relationships, which could be similar in executive coaching relationships. Secondly, Kilburg's definition encapsulates various reasons as to why an executive may begin the coaching process. Furthermore, it also considers the impact on the organisation. Kilburg's definition is a robust definition and will thus be utilised for this research study.

Regarding the purpose of coaching, Kampa Kokesch and Anderson (2001) argue that there is not much scope for executives to develop once they reach a certain point in their careers. However, rather than stagnate, these executives embark on coaching and through the coaching process increase their self-awareness. This leads to better communication with subordinates and peers, which leads to an increase in productivity, morale and profits (Kampa Kokesch & Anderson, 2001).

2.2.2 Approaches to executive coaching

According to Ives (2008), there are three main dimensions within executive coaching. These include directive versus non-directive, personal development versus goal focused and therapeutic versus performance driven. Within this framework, there are various approaches to coaching.

Ives (2008) discusses the various approaches. The cognitive approach to coaching is based on the notion that an individual's emotions are a product of their thoughts. It is argued that altering an individual's thoughts will allow for a modification of emotion, allowing for personal development. The behaviour-based approach focuses on "…practical change rather than psychological adjustments…" (Ives, 2008, p101). The goal-oriented approach focuses on allowing the coachee to identify and work towards specifically outlined goals, which are in alignment with their personal values. This approach is short term in nature (Ives, 2008). The adult-development approach focuses on developmental life stages proposing that as individuals mature they become more aware and open to experiences, thus, facilitating change and personal growth. The positive psychological approach to coaching focuses on the coachee's individual strengths. This elicits positive emotions, which widens the individuals' intellectual and psychological resources and improves performance (Ives, 2008). The humanistic approach proposes that the relationship between the coach and coachee facilitates growth. Through the coaching relationship, the individual develops and works towards self-actualisation. The adult-learning approach focuses on a deep learning for the coachee, through reflection and critical questioning. This reflection allows for insight and thus, personal growth. The adventure-based approach proposes moving the coachee out of their comfort zone, which then facilitates change and personal growth. The systemic approach to coaching focuses on helping the coachee to receive feedback allowing them to view their experiences in new ways (Ives, 2008).

2.2.3 Executive coaching methodologies

Executive coaching employs a variety of techniques and methodologies, which Kampa Kokesch and Anderson (2001) discuss in detail. Despite the differences in techniques and methodologies "…there appears to be agreement regarding the stages of executive coaching: relationship building, assessment, intervention follow-up and evaluation" (Kampa Kokesch & Anderson, 2001, p210). Dingman (2004), proposed that there are six generic stages in the executive coaching process, despite the approach utilised. These stages include formal contracting; relationship building; assessment; getting feedback and reflecting; goal setting and implementation; and evaluation.

2.2.4 Executive coaching and counselling

There has been some debate regarding the difference between executive coaching and counselling (Kampa Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). ”One obvious comparison of the coaching process is with counselling, as both involves one to one relationship, which are largely confidential, between a paid worker and customer and employs a series of techniques to help the person achieve a goal set at the start of the relationship” (Passmore & Gibbes, 2007, p123). Kampa Kokesch and Anderson (2001) argue, however, that coaching occurs in a workplace setting, focusing particularly on workplace performance. Unlike counselling, it is issue focused and occurs in a broader context. Lastly, it is more directive than counselling. According to Kilburg (1996), there is a difference between counselling and executive coaching due to the level at which issues are discussed. There is a deep focus on issues within counselling, but this is not as apparent in executive coaching.

On the assumption that counselling and coaching move along the same lines, it is important then to understand aspects within a counselling session. As stated above, it has been argued that there are similar processes in counselling and coaching interventions (Kampa Kokesch & Anderson, 2001). Thus, it is prudent to understand the therapeutic relationship and how findings from this research could be extrapolated to the executive coaching relationship. Furthermore, as this research utilises the definition of executive coaching as a helping relationship, factors that affect a helping relationship need to be considered. This includes the role of similarity-attraction effect within the dyadic relationship, which will be discussed under matching paradigms (Section 2.5.).

2.2.5 The coaching relationship

Amongst all of the literature on executive coaching, the coaching relationship appears to be the dominant factor in the success of the coaching process “…the most consistently identified factor seen as contributing to the success of a coaching engagement…is the quality of the relationship between the coach and the individual client” (Passmore, Rawle-Cope, Gibbes & Holloway, 2011, p78). De Haan argues that the coaching relationship is crucial to the coaching outcomes (De Haan, Culpin & Curd 2011). However, “[p]aradoxically, the coaching literature has repeatedly attested to the importance of the coaching relationship for over a decade…yet little

dedicated research literature currently exists on those qualities or characteristics important in its formation" (O'Broin & Palmer, 2010, p124).

O'Broin and Palmer (2010) investigated the coaching relationship, finding three main themes as key to the relationship, which they termed: coach attitudes and characteristics, bond and engagement and collaboration. Regarding bond and engagement – trust, rapport, listening and openness, were identified as the most important factors in the executive coaching relationship.

Gyllensten and Palmer (2007) conducted research on the coaching relationship utilising interpretative phenomenological analysis and found that four main themes emerged. These include management of stress; the coaching relationship; coaching as investment in staff and confidence (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007). Regarding the theme the coaching relationship – trust, transparency and valuable coaching relationship were identified as the main sub themes (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007). According to their study, Gyllensten & Palmer (2007) found that "…unless a good enough relationship was developed in the coaching, relevant achievements would not be made" (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007, p175).

Baron and Morin (2009) conducted research into the coach-coachee relationship. They found that "[t]he working relationship established between the coach and the coachee appears to be a key process variable" (Baron & Morin, 2009, p86). Furthermore, "[t]he coach-coachee relationship thus constitutes a prerequisite for coaching effectiveness" (Baron & Morin, 2009, p99). Further research on the various aspects of the executive coaching intervention makes a difference to clients. The most helpful aspects in coaching were found to be listening, understanding and encouragement from the coach (De Haan, 2011). Helpfulness of coaching is based on general factors described as "…the quality of the relationship or working alliance between the coach and client…" (De Haan, p40).

In the executive coaching domain, the relationship was viewed as key to the coaching process. Further studies went on to illustrate the similarities between the person-centred theory of Rogers (1959) in the therapeutic relationship and utilising the same principles in the executive coaching relationship.

Bluckert's (2005) research discussed the coaching relationship in relation to Carl Rogers' theory. According to this research, the therapeutic relationship is characterised by unconditional positive regard and acceptance, accurate empathy, congruence/genuineness and non-possessive warmth (Bluckert, 2005, p337). Bluckert found that "…the quality of the coaching relationship is not just a critical success factor but the critical success factor in successful coaching outcomes" (Bluckert, 2005, p337). De Haan (2011), also found that the central tenets in person-centred theory are central to the coaching relationship "…what they appreciate most in their coach is general support, encouragement, listening and understanding" (De Haan, 2011, p40).

Although it is essential to take the dyadic relationship into account, as well as the theory of person-centred theory, executive coaching is not counselling and thus, must be treated differently. Although Rogers' person-centred theory can be explored, the business world of today is dynamic and this needs to be carefully considered. Furthermore, Gyllensten & Palmer (2007) agreed and found that "…the relationship was not the only factor that made coaching useful, rather working towards goals and improving performance were also valuable components" (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2007, p175).

Research Question 1: How does the coaching relationship influence the executive coaching process?

2.2.6 Challenge and support in executive coaching

Executive coaching has been embodied by the challenge of and support for the coachee in attaining their goals. The executive coach's job is to support the leader who they are coaching, as well as challenge that individual to think of alternatives, from a different perspective or with an alternate world-view (O'Neill, 2007). This research will aim to understand if and how personality factors underpin the roles of challenge and support in the executive coaching process.

Research Question 2: Do personality factors influence the role of challenge or support in the executive coaching process?

2.2.7 Commitment to coaching

Commitment to the coaching process is viewed as pivotal (Baron & Morin, 2009). This commitment is from both the coachee as well as the executive coach. Ting and Hart (2004) argue that there are three key elements for a positive coaching relationship. These include the connection between the coach and the coachee, their collaboration, and their mutual commitment to the process. Kilburg (1996 reiterated this, arguing that coaching effectiveness involves the coachee's commitment to development and the coach's commitment to the client's development plan. Passmore and Gibbes (2007) agree, stating that a coach must be committed to coachee success.

2.2.8 Coachee readiness

Another important consideration regarding executive coaching is the coachee's readiness for coaching. "…clients as well as their organizations vary in their readiness and commitment to leadership coaching…" Ely, Boyce, Nelson, Zaccaro, Hernez-Broome & Whyman (2008) argue that clients and organisations vary in their readiness and commitment to coaching. Lack of readiness could have a negative influence on coaching outcomes. McKenna & Davis (2009) argue that it is difficult to coach an individual who demonstrates a limited capacity to change. However, how will a coach know this? McKenna and Davis (2009) suggest using a coaching readiness scale, which measures a coachee's motivation to change, intelligence, conscientiousness, feedback, learning orientation, self-efficacy and self-awareness. It aims to assess whether the coachee is willing and able to embark on a coaching journey. Thus, it is likely that personality traits would influence these criteria, or alternatively, that testing personality traits or factors would allow one to understand whether an individual is ready to embark on a coaching journey. This will allow organisations to understand what personality traits and factors' coachees require in order to benefit fully from executive coaching, which will allow for a better ROI.

Research Question 3: Do personality factors influence coachee readiness?

2.3 Personality

Personality has fascinated psychologists for decades; however, a single definition of personality has not been agreed upon (Carducci, 2009; Feist & Feist, 1998). It has

been described as a "[c]omplex hypothetical construct that has been defined in a variety of ways" (Weiten, 1995, p472). These ways include "…a person's overall pattern of character, behavioural, temperamental, emotional and mental traits" (Papalia & Olds, 1998, p58), as well as "…a pattern of relatively permanent traits, dispositions or characteristics within an individual that gives some measure of consistency to the person's behaviour. The traits may be unique, common to some group, or shared by the entire species, but their pattern is different for each individual" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p4). Weiten (1995) postulates that there are two components to personality – consistency and distinctiveness. At the core of personality is the consistency across situations. Distinctiveness, on the other hand, is that not all individuals behave in the same way across similar situations. Thus, personality explains "…the stability in a person's behaviour over time and across situations and behavioural differences among people reacting to the same situation…. Personality refers to an individual's unique constellation of consistent behavioural traits" (Weiten, 1995, p472).

As can be seen, there are numerous definitions of personality, and in the same way, there are a myriad of theories, which aim to explain this construct. From personality theories, we are better able to understand human behaviour due to "…the controlled observations of behaviour and the speculated meaning of those behaviours…" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p3). For the purposes of this research, humanistic theory – that of person-centred theory and trait theory of personality will be utilised. These theories of personality will be investigated and the influence that these have on the executive coaching process will be elaborated on.

2.3.1 Person-centred theory

Rogers' person-centred theory is a holistic theory – that is that each assumption is interrelated and cannot be separated from the whole (Feist & Feist, 1998). There are two main assumptions in person-centred personality theory, that of formative tendency and actualising tendency (Feist & Feist, 1998). Formative theory postulates that all matter has a tendency to evolve from simple to more complex forms (Feist & Feist, 1998). Actualising tendency is the concept that human beings strive to reach their optimal potential (Rogers, 1959). The executive coaching literature has

identified a link between coaching and person-centred theory (Kampa Kokesch & Anderson, 2001) thus, it is important to understand this theory in more detail.

Rogers postulated that all individuals have a self-concept. This is "…a person's conceptual construction of him or herself…and which does not by any means always correspond with the…real self" (Thorne, 1996, p125). It is the therapist's role to uncover the real self from the self-concept to allow for self-actualisation to occur. Self-actualisation occurs when the individual unleashes their potential and becomes self-fulfilled. From infancy, Rogers believed that individuals experience conditions of worth, the perception that others will only love and accept one, if one meets their expectations (Rogers, 1959). Thus, the relationship is based on a set of conditions, which affects the individual's self-concept.

For self-actualisation to occur, individuals require positive self-regard. When an individual is growing up, they may receive affirmations or criticisms from their primary care givers. This assimilates into the self-concept allowing for either positive or negative regard of oneself. Positive regard from primary care givers is essential and it is from this that positive self-regard is established. Positive self-regard incorporates feelings of self-worth and self-confidence (Rogers, 1959). Positive self-regard is the premise from which self-actualisation will occur (Feist & Feist, 1998).

With regard to the therapeutic process, Rogers states that congruence and unconditional acceptance are essential. Thus, the therapist must act with authenticity and genuineness (Thorne, 1996). Due to the fact that conditions of worth have been placed on individuals from infancy, it is imperative in the therapeutic set up that the therapist approaches the client with unconditional acceptance, that is "…to offer the client an unconditional acceptance, a positive regard or caring, a non-possessive love…not of the person as she might become…but…as she seems to herself in the present" (Thorne, 1996, p134).

Rogers further states that empathetic understanding is required for the therapeutic relationship (Rogers, 1975). This is when the therapist truly understands the feelings of their client and enters into their world, "…without prejudice, projection or evaluation" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p470). Regarding the therapeutic relationship, three

factors are deemed as being the most essential to productive outcomes. These include trust, intimacy and mutuality (Thorne, 1996). Through these concepts, the individual will experience positive self-regard allowing for self-actualisation to occur.

What is imperative to note, is the fact that executive coaching is in itself a form of self-actualisation. It is the process of moving towards completion or fulfilment, which may be done through different approaches and techniques. According to Rogers (1959, p96), "…significant positive personality change does not occur except in a relationship…" The research conducted on executive coaching all postulate that the relationship between coach and coachee is essential to the coaching process. However, what is it about the relationship, which makes it so significant? Rogers (1959, p103) adds that "[t]he implications of this theory for research, for psychotherapy, and for educational and training programs aimed at constructive personality change, are indicated". Thus, as executive coaching is aimed at constructive personality change, it is proposed that Rogers' theory of personality can be extrapolated to the coaching relationship and coaching process. When investigating the executive coaching relationship, is it the bond between the executive coach and coachee based on trust, rapport and unconditional positive regard, alone, that influences the coaching process as it does in Rogers' person-centred theory?

2.3.2 Trait personality theory

Raymond Cattell and Hans Eysenck were the main propagators of trait and factor theories (Feist & Feist, 1998). There is a strong biological basis to these theories and much research was conducted on hereditary bases of behaviour (Modgil & Modgil, 1986). Traits are viewed as the building blocks of personality and can be measured using factor analysis (Feist & Feist, 1998).

Cattell as cited by Ryckman (2004, p298) states that traits are "…relatively permanent and broad reaction tendencies and serve as the building blocks of personality". Cattell identified several traits including constitutional traits, environmental-mold traits, ability traits, temperament traits, dynamic traits, surface traits and source traits (Ryckman, 2004). However, it is Cattell's research on surface and source traits, which are highly significant (Ryckman, 2004).

According to Feist & Feist (1998), previous personality theorists Allport and Odbert, identified 18 000 trait names, which was done looking purely at the English lexicon. This list then was reduced to 4 500 traits, which were seen as surface traits. Surface traits are a collection of trait elements, which appear to go together obviously (Feist & Feist, 1998). Cattell believed that these 4 500 traits were interrelated (Feist & Feist, 1998). Using factor analysis, Cattell correlated these traits, identifying 35 first-order personality traits or source traits (Feist & Feist, 1998). Source traits are "[t]he underlying factor responsible for the intercorrelation among surface traits…" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p371). These 35 underlying factors "…emerged as psychologically meaningful traits within three modalities of personality – temperament, ability and motivation" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p371). Temperament traits identify how a person behaves, ability traits identify how one performs and motivational traits identify why one behaves as one does (Feist & Feist, 1998).

Cattell attributed 23 traits within the realm of normal personality and 12 traits in the pathological realm (Feist & Feist, 1998). The traits are recorded from three sets of data, L data, which are observations from other people, Q data, which are based on questionnaires utilising self-report measures and T data, which are data obtained from objective tests, such as cognitive assessments; the 23 traits are made up of Q and L data (Feist & Feist, 1998).

Table 2: Cattell's 23 normal primary source traits (Feist & Feist, 1998)

Trait	Low score descriptor	High score descriptor
A	Sizia: Reserved, detached, critical, aloof	Affectia: Warm-hearted, outgoing, easygoing, participative
B	Low intelligence: Low mental capacity, dull, quitting	High intelligence: High mental capacity, bright, persevering
C	Low ego strength: Affected by feelings, easily upset, changeable	High ego strength: Emotionally stable, faces reality, calm
D	Phlegmatic temperament: Undemonstrative, deliberate, inactive, stodgy	Excitability: Excitable, impatient, demanding, overactive, unrestrained
E	Submissive: Obedient, mild, easily led, docile, accommodating	Dominance: Assertive, aggressive, competitive, stubborn
F	Desurgency: Sober, taciturn, serious	Surgency: Enthusiastic, heedless, happy-go-lucky
G	Low superego strength: Disregards rules and group moral standards, expedient	High superego strength: Conscientious, persistent, moralistic, staid
H	Threctia: Shy, timid, restrained, threat-sensitive	Parmia: Adventurous, thick-skinned, socially bold
I	Harria: Tough minded, rejects illusions	Permsia: Tender minded, sensitive, dependent, overprotected
J	Zeppia: Zestful, liking group action	Coasthenia: Circumspect individualism, reflective, internally restrained
K	Social unconcern: Socially untutored, unconcerned, boorish	Social-role concern: Socially mature, alert, self-disciplined
L	Alaxia: Trusting, accepting conditions	Protension: Suspecting, jealous, dogmatic
M	Praxernia: Practical, down to earth concerns	Autia: Imaginative, bohemian, absent minded
N	Naivete: Forthright, unpretentious	Shrewdness: Astute, worldly, polished, socially aware
O	Untroubled adequecy: Self-Assured, placid, secure, complacent	Guilt proneness: Apprehensive, self-reproaching, insecure, troubled
P	Cautious inactivity: Melancholy, cautious, takes no risks	Sanguine casualness: Sanguine, speculative, independent
Q1	Conservatism: Disinclined to change, respects traditional values	Radicalism: Experimenting, analytic, free thinking
Q2	Group dependency: A joiner, sound follower	Self-sufficiency: Self-sufficient, resourceful, prefers own decisions
Q3	Low self-sentiment: Uncontrolled, lax, follows own urges	High self-sentiment: Controlled, exacting will power, socially precise, compulsive, follows self-image
Q4	Low ergic tension: Relaxed, tranquil, unfrustrated, composed	High ergic tension: Tense, frustrated, driven, overwrought, fretful
Q5	Lack of social concern: Does not volunteer for social service, experiences no obligation, self-sufficient	Group dedication with sensed inadequacy: Concerned with social good works, not doing enough, joins in social endeavours
Q6	Self-effacement: Quiet, self-effacing	Social panache: Feels unfairly treated by society, self-expressive, makes abrupt antisocial remarks
Q7	Lacks explicit self-expression: Is not garrulous in conversation	Explicit self-expression: Enjoys verbal-social expression, likes dramatic entertainment, follows fashionable ideas

Table 2 highlights the 23 source traits that are found in normal personality of adults (Feist & Feist, 1998). These are lettered from A to Q and "[t]raits are lettered in descending order of magnitude" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p373). Thus, A is seen as the

largest trait, which emerges most clearly from factor analysis. It also accounts for the largest amount of variance (Feist & Feist, 1998). The latter traits are weaker and more difficult to identify with certainty, from factor analysis (Feist & Feist, 1998).

Both Cattell and Eysenck focused on traits. Eysenck (cited by Ryckman, 2004, p340). defined personality as a "…more or less stable and enduring organisation of a person's character, temperament, intellect and physique which determines his unique adjustment to the environment". Eysenck's theory postulates that personality is made up of behaviour, habits, traits and types (Ryckman, 2004). At the lowest level are specific behaviours (Feist & Feist, 1998). Habits are formed from repeated behaviours under similar conditions, which are seen as the second level (Feist et al, 1998). The third level is made up of traits. These are formed from habitual responses and are "…important semi-permanent personality disposition" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p387. Eysenck also utilised factor analysis and as such "Traits are defined in terms of significant intercorrelations between different habitual behaviors" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p387). Cattell's source traits and Eysenck's third level account for the same unit – what this study will call traits and which are termed facets by the personality instrument to be used. However, Eysenck introduced a fourth level, namely types, identified by Feist and Feist (1998, p388) as being "made up of several interrelated traits".

Eysenck's theory postulates that there are not 23 traits. Although applauding Cattell for his work on trait theory (Eysenck, 1983), Eysenck believed that Cattell's theory was insufficient, stating, "[b]ut as it stands, Cattell's system will not do; there are too many criticisms, too many failures to replicate, too many psychometric faults to continue to use the system…" (Eysenck, 1991, p777). Instead, Eysenck proposed that the 23 traits can in fact be clustered to form three types or supertraits, namely extraversion (E), neuroticism (N) and psychoticism (P) (Feist & Feist, 1998). "Extraversion is characterised by sociability and impulsiveness…neuroticism, by anxiety and compulsivity…psychoticism, by antisocial behaviour…" (Feist & Feist, 1998, p399).

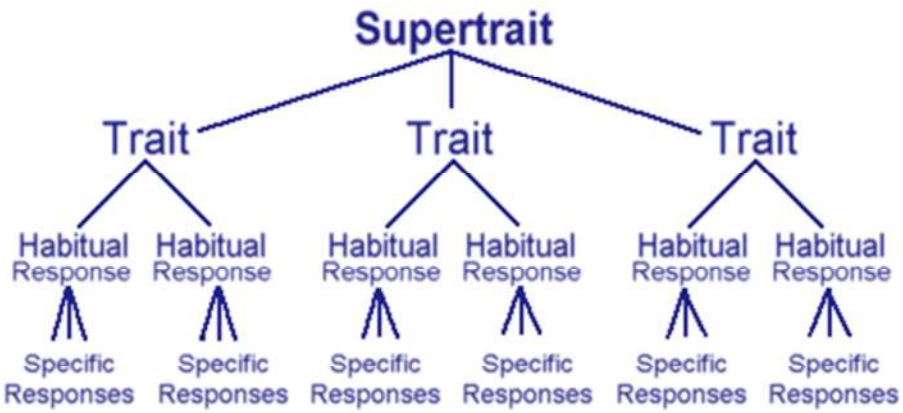


Illustration 2: Eysenck's supertrait model (Heffner, 2015)

One critique of the trait theory is the fact that it is based on language. Allport and Odbert utilised the English language and an English Dictionary to discover the 18 000 traits, which were then whittled down to 4 500 traits (Feist & Feist, 1998) However, it is questionable if the theory is inclusive enough and if it covers all traits in behaviour rather than in language. This must be taken into account for this research, as there may be traits, not yet in the language, which in fact influences the coaching process.

2.3.3 The five factor model of personality

Utilising the trait theories of Cattell and Eysenck, trait research continued. In 1957, Tupes and Christel studied Cattell's theory, but "…were unable to replicate the complexity Cattell reported" (Digman, 1990, p419). These researchers also found that there were more than the three supertraits, as postulated by Eysenck. According to them, "…five factors appeared to account for the observations remarkably well" (Digman, 1990, p41). Digman (1990) and Costa and McCrae (1992) conducted research regarding traits and their results were similar - five factors were evident in each data set (McCrae & John, 1992). The research found that unlike Cattell's theory of 23 source traits and Eysenck's three types, the traits could be assimilated into five superordinate factors including openness, extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability (neuroticism) (McCrae & Costa, 1987).

The factors on the FFM of personality are outlined as follows:

Openness

This factor is associated with intellect (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Traits associated with this factor include being imaginative, cultured and broad-minded (Barrick & Mount, 1991). It must not be confused with the colloquial term of being open to experience.

Extroversion

This factor is common to that of Eysenck's introversion/extroversion. The following traits are associated with extroversion: sociable, assertive, active, talkative and gregarious (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Conscientiousness

This factor, often associated with achievement, can be associated with the will to achieve. It reflects dependability and is associated with being organised, planful, responsible and careful (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Agreeableness

Agreeableness, also termed likeability or friendliness is comprised of traits including social conformity, compliance, courteous, flexible, trusting, good natured and tolerant (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Emotional stability (neuroticism)

Emotional stability, also termed neuroticism, is associated with traits including those of being depressed, anxious, angry, insecure and worried (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Further research was conducted on the theory of five factors across several different languages including English, German and Japanese, "[a]ll five factors were shown to have convergent and discriminant validity across instruments and observers, and to endure across decades in adults" (McCrae and John, 1992, p176). To date, research has continued on the FFM with it being replicated repeatedly. According to Digman, research has yielded similar findings "…that the domain could be adequately described by five superordinate constructs" (Digman, 1990, p420). Borkenau and Ostendorf's (1990) research found that "…the present study replicates the 5 factor model of personality not only across sexes, across instruments, across observers,

and across languages, but also across somewhat different conceptualizations of the five major factors of personality" (Borkenau & Ostendorf, 1990, p524).

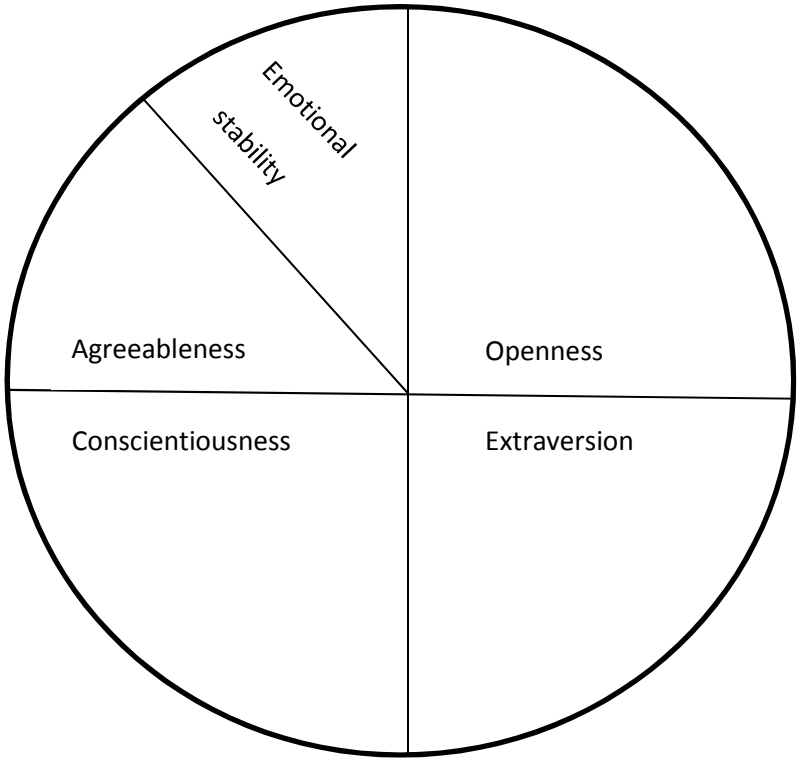


Illustration 3: The FFM of personality (Kurz, McIver & Saville, 2008)

There has been critique of the FFM, highlighted by McAdams (1992). First, there is the issue of language. Scientific research has been premised on a lexical framework, which McAdams postulates is unscientific (McAdams, 1992). Secondly, all the research has been done based on observations or self-report measures. Thus, although in itself sound, the FFM is based on "…the viewpoint of an observer" (McAdams, 1992, p351). McAdams states, "…the five-factor model is one important model in personality studies, not the integrative model of personality" (McAdams, 1992, p355). Eysenck also critiqued the FFM; he argued that the FFM factors of agreeableness and conscientiousness could in fact be combined into his type of psychoticism – resulting in three types, not five factors (Eysenck, 1992, p867).

This is significant in that the majority of personality assessments today are based on the FFM of personality (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Thus, for this research, personality will be investigated at the factor level using the FFM of personality.

2.4 Personality assessment

The trait theories of Cattell, Eysenck and Costa & McCrae are based on the theory of psychometrics rather than clinical judgement (Feist & Feist, 1998). Psychometrics is the branch of psychology that deals with measurable factors (Rust & Golombok, 1989) . Considering this, it is essential to understand psychometrics, particularly in relation to personality measurement.

Personality is measured using psychological tests. These have been described as "…an objective and standardised measure of a sample of behaviour" (Anastasi, 1988, p23). According to Rust & Golombok (1989), there are two models of psychometric test design, trait and function. Trait design is that discussed in this research. Trait psychometrics arose from attempts such as that of Cattell and Eysenck to allow for a more scientific basis to the understanding of personality psychology (Rust & Golombok, 1989). The trait approach assumes that there are "…individual differences in personality related to individual differences in the biology – whether biochemical, physiological, anatomical or neurological – of the human organism. Psychometric tests were thus devised to measure traits, which were seen as representing biological variation in personality or aptitude" (Rust & Golombok, 1989, p28).

Thus, for this research, personality assessments will be conducted in order to understand the personality traits of individuals as well as the interplay of these on the executive coaching process. This data will be used as secondary data.

Two of the most important factors in psychometric assessments are that of validity and reliability (Anastasi, 1988). Validity focuses on whether an assessment measures what it purports to measure (Lanyon & Goodstein, 1982). Reliability ensures that the assessment measures what it is supposed to, consistently over time (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006). An imperative of psychometric testing is that an individual's score must have meaning. This is done by creating a norm group,

whereby the individual's score is compared to the normative group (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006). In order for this to occur, a psychometric test must be standardised, that is the test must have "…standard directions for administration and scoring that should be followed closely, leaving little room for personal interpretation or bias" (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006). Furthermore, standardisation involves the administration of the assessment to a large sample group, so that an individual's scores can be compared to that of the sample group – the standardisation sample (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006).

When utilising personality assessments, individual traits are compared to those of the standardised norm group. Meaning then can be extrapolated from this comparison. The average range occurs when an individual's behaviour is like that of most other people's in the comparative population. Above average occurs when the individual's behaviour is higher than that of the majority of the comparative population and is likely to be a strength. Below average occurs when the individual's score is below that of the comparative population and is seen as an area for development (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006).

Although there has been much research into psychometrics, there are some concerns regarding psychometrics, which need to be considered. Aiken & Groth-Marnat (2006), state "[t]he bulk of the criticism of psychological…testing…has been concerned with either the content and application of tests or the social consequences of relying on test scores to make decisions about people" (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006, p229). Concerns regarding psychometric testing include test bias and test fairness (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006). Test bias and test fairness focus on issues of whether the test has been utilised for the group on which it was sampled. Bias occurs when decisions are made on valid assessments, which are not fair to those assessed. Unfairness results when assessments are utilised on a different group from the norm group of the test resulting in skewed results, often resulting in negative cultural stereotypes (Aiken & Groth-Marnat, 2006).

There are also concerns regarding self-report measures and social desirability on personality assessments (Cronbach, 1984). Kleinmuntz (1982) states, "…item equivalence for all subjects and the uniform administration and scoring procedures

are the distinguishing features of the self-report inventory, features that enable the scores obtained by one individual to be compared with those of the others, provided…that norms are made available." (Kleinmuntz,1982, p210). However, because these tests are self-report, they are subject to malingering. As personality assessments require the answer from the individual being tested, rather than on observable behaviour, there is questionability as to whether the answers provided are in fact true and honest (Anastasi, 1988). Compounding the issue of self-report is that of social desirability – where an individual answers the test as to how they would like others to perceive their behaviour, rather than how they actually behave. Regarding personality assessments, "…most items on such inventories have one answer that is recognisable as socially more desirable than the others." (Anastasi, 1988, p549). This can undermine the validity of the assessment.

Thus, in psychometric testing there are concerns regarding the process such as test bias and test fairness, self-report formats and social desirability. These will have to be considered within the research study and are accounted for in the assumptions made. However, despite the limitations, psychometric testing allows for a greater understanding of individual behaviour and an understanding of the traits, which make up personality. Standardisation, validity- and reliability measures allow for the best utilisation of assessments in order for a sound understanding of individual personality.

Research Question 4: Does testing of personality factors allow for a better understanding of personality and the influence this has on the executive coaching process?

Throughout the executive coaching literature, comparisons are made between executive coaching and therapeutic relationships, particularly that of counselling. Joo (2005), Kampa Kokesch and Anderson (2001) and Passmore & Fillery-Travis (2011) all elicit various discussions regarding the evolution of executive coaching, which has evolved similarly to counselling and how counselling has become a recognised body of knowledge (Passmore et al, 2011). It is important to understand this as the processes are similar (Passmore & Fillery Travis, 2011), as is the role of the relationship within the process. In light of this, just as personality influences the

therapeutic relationship and therapeutic process (Thorne, 1996), so too should it theoretically influence the coaching relationship and the coaching process. The research further investigates the differences between coaching and counselling and the fine line between the two. Section 2.5 outlines the matching paradigms within the therapeutic relationship which could be extrapolated to executive coaching and which will be investigated.

2.5 Executive coaching and personality

2.5.1 Matching paradigms: Similarity-attraction effect

Byrne (1961) investigated the strength of affect between two participants in a dyad. Much of Byrne's research, focused on attraction and liking in friendships and relationships, not in helping relationships. However, the principles are important when considering similarity effects. Byrne, Griffitt, & Stefaniak (1967) proposed that interpersonal attraction is based on the extent to which the individuals are similar in personality and that this is defined through scores on personality measures. Attitudes were investigated and Byrne et al (1967) states that,

> [b]ehavioural similarity to self, whether involving attitudes or values or abilities or emotional responses or tastes or adjustive responses or worries or need hierarchies or whatever, provides evidence that one is functioning in a logical and meaningful manner…makes one's interpersonal environment more predictable and understandable (Byrne et al, 1967, p83).

Thus, people pursue situations, which are similar and others who are similar to themselves in order to make sense of the world.

Byrne et al (1967) proposed then that "…it is the behavioural stimuli to which the subjects are responding and not to the hypothesized personality dimension" (Byrne et al, 1967, p84). This is important in light of the coaching relationship. Are the executive coach and coachee similar in personality factors, which what makes the process beneficial or are the coach and coachee responding to behavioural stimuli, which may influence the perception of similarity and it is not in fact the traits or factors, which are themselves similar ? This research study will explore this and the meaning this holds for the executive coaching process.

Abramowitz et al (1982), focused on therapist-patient similarity in relation to therapeutic process and outcome. They postulate that, "[i]f treatment success is indeed a function of therapist technique and patient variables…then the clinician theoretically could improve therapeutic outcome by optimizing the fit among primary factors…" (Abramowitz et al, 1982, p358). As it is also a helping relationship, could the same be said for executive coaching? According to Abramowitz et al (1982), research into psychotherapeutic relationships suggests that therapist-patient similarity should facilitate positive treatment results. The mechanism supporting this suggests that, "…similarity between therapist and patient is thought to enhance interpersonal attraction and thereby foster rapport, treatment persistence, and outcome" (Abramowitz et al, 1982, p358). Empirical demonstrations of similarity-attraction principles stems from the notion that individuals view others judgements and choices that are similar to one's own as common and appropriate. Judgements and choices that are different to one's own are viewed as uncommon and deviant. This deviance then is attributed to underlying personality dispositions or traits (Abramowitz et al, 1982). The research has been conducted across various diverse categories including demographics, personality styles, values and cognitive variables.

There are a number of explanatory processes for similarity-attraction effect. Three will be discussed below including reinforcement-affect approach, cognitive models, and personal construct theory.

The reinforcement-affect approach is based on classical conditioning "…the occurrence of an interpersonal reward engenders positive affect that is directed towards the rewarding person" (Abramowitz et al, 1982, p361). Thus, if an individual obtains positive feedback from the therapist, that person is viewed in a favourable light. However when negative feedback is given, the opposite occurs. This will be of interest when extrapolated to executive coaching, as feedback is essential within the executive coaching process. How is this critical feedback experienced by the coachee in the executive coaching process? Does this reward model influence the coaching process?

Regarding the cognitive model, Abramowitz et al (1982), postulates that consistency is the preferred psychological state. If an individual is faced by an individual with a dissimilar attitude, a state of cognitive dissonance is created. In order to maintain consistency, the individual will then view the dissimilar attitude as unattractive. "Because cognitive consistency is the preferred psychological state, the individual will strive to maintain it by evaluating the dissimilar person as unattractive" (Abramowitz et al, 1982, p361). In executive coaching, how does this play out, if at all? How is the coaching relationship and process experienced if the executive coach is dissimilar to the coachee?

Kelly's personal construct theory focuses on personal constructs, that is "…the way in which a person understands two things as being alike and different from a third" (Abramowitz et al, 1982, p362). Overlap in the construct systems between therapist and client is required, particularly for the rapport building phase of the relationship (Abramowitz et al, 1982). However, where is the point at which an overlap becomes stifling to the individual? Does the same apply for executive coaching? If there is too much overlap does this result in coachee complacency? Does an overlap become problematic in the executive coaching process when challenge, growth and personal development are required?

Coleman's (2006) study indicates that, "[t]he overall personality similarity of a dyad, or similarity on certain personality traits, may have an effect on the nature and outcome of dyadic interaction" (Coleman, 2006). In personality studies, "[a]s similarity increased from low to moderate, outcome improved. From moderate to high degrees of similarity, outcome began to decline" (Coleman, 2006, p233). This is important in relation to executive coaching. There needs to be enough similarity for rapport building between executive coach and coachee but there also needs to be an element of dissimilarity in order for challenge to be created and personal development to begin (Egan, 2002).

Ensher, Grant-Vallone and Marelich (2002) conducted research on the similarity effect on mentors and mentees in the mentorship process. Their focus was on how perceived attitudinal similarity and demographic similarity affected support and satisfaction within the mentoring relationship. What was evident was that diversity

was perceived as important in the dyadic relationship (Ensher et al, 2002). However, diversity was distinguished into two types. First, surface level diversity, which described demographic factors such as age, race and gender. Secondly, deep level diversity, which described values and attitudes (Ensher et al, 2002). The findings were interesting in that "…the present study suggests that perceived attitudinal similarity is more important than demographic similarity in affecting the quality of mentoring relationships and subsequent satisfaction with the relationship" (Ensher et al, 2002, p1424). This is of particular interest in the South African context where there is a lot of emphasis placed on race and gender issues. Race and gender particularly in the South African cultural context must be considered (McClintock, 1993). There may be dyads made up of different races or genders. Consideration must be given to the influence, often unconscious, this may have on the executive coaching process. Patriarchy and the influence this may hold on the relationship between a coach and coachee must be considered. Based on the study by Ensher et al (2002), it is anticipated that executive coaching requires a similarity in values and attitudes – deep level diversity not similarity in race, age or gender.

Thus, the above may be extrapolated to the executive coaching domain and indicate the similarity-attraction effect of relationships. These need to be considered in relation to the executive coaching relationship.

For purposes of this study, only similarity-attraction processes of personality will be considered.

2.5.2 Executive coaching and personality match

Executive coaching is an emergent field. Research has been conducted on the personality of coaches and personality of coachees separately using type theories, particularly the use of the Myers Briggs type indicator (MBTI) (Passmore et al, 2006). Recent studies now have been conducted on personality match between the executive coach and coachee and the importance, if any, this has on executive coaching.

Coachee personality and coachee self-efficacy as a predictor of coaching effectiveness was studied by Stewart, Palmer, Wilkin and Kerrin (2008). They utilised

the FFM of personality and found moderate positive effects for conscientiousness, openness and emotional stability. This study, however, only focused on coachees' personalities.

Bozer, Joo & Santora (2015) conducted research on coach-coachee matching based on similarity. Their study only included quantitative data made up of six measures using self-reported ratings including gender, perceived similarity, self-awareness, career satisfaction, organisational commitment and supervisor rated task performance. They found that "…perceived similarity between coach and coachee was non significant for most coaching-effectiveness outcomes" (Bozer et al, 2015, p226). Some studies have indicated that matching of coach and coachee on demographics, professional status or personality has little impact on coaching outcomes; the only significant contributor is the coach-coachee relationship (Bozer et al, 2015).

A pivotal study on personality match was the research of De Haan, Grant, Burger and Eriksson (2016). They explored perceptions of coaching effectiveness in relation to the working alliance, coachee self-efficacy, personality and personality match between the coach and coachee. Their study utilised self-report recollection of the respondents' MBTI. The MBTI is based on Jung's theory of opposites and as such, uses type theory to categorise individuals along four sets of dichotomies allowing for 16 different personality types (Briggs, Myers, Quenk & Hammer, 2003). The dichotomies include extroversion (E) – introversion (I): orientations of energy; sensing (S) – intuition (N): processes of perception; thinking (T) – feeling (F): processes of judging and judging (J) – perceiving (P): orientation towards dealing with the outside world (Briggs-Myers et al, 2003). They found that coachee perceptions of coaching effectiveness were related significantly to the working alliance and coachee self-efficacy but unrelated to coachee or coach personality or to personality matching. "Coach and coachee personality differences or matching in terms of MBTI showed no significant correlation with effectiveness" (De Haan et al, 2016, p4). They reported that 25 percent of the variance was due to the working alliance and thus suggested, like previous seminal research that "…the relationship is the key factor in coaching effectiveness" (De Haan et al, 2016, p4).

The studies above are fundamental to this research study. This study aims to explore the role that personality has on the executive coaching process. The study by De Haan et al (2016) used the MBTI. This study will utilise trait theory and the FFM of personality. The MBTI is different to trait personality assessments in that it measures a respondent's status on either of two opposing personality categories. Trait theory measures a respondent's status on a continuum of one trait – how much of that trait the respondent displays. Type theories allow for an understanding of personality but are broader in their scope as opposed to trait theories, which are more detailed. This study is different to previous studies in that it will explore personality using trait theory and the FFM between coaches and coachees in a working dyad. It will aim to explore the role personality plays on the executive coaching process or whether, as evidenced by previous research it is the relationship and not personality, which influences the coaching process. Furthermore, it will explore the influence of personality utilising qualitative data, that of an interview triangulated by secondary data that of a trait personality measure. ,

Research Question 5: Does similarity in personality factors, between the executive coach and coachee influence the executive coaching process?

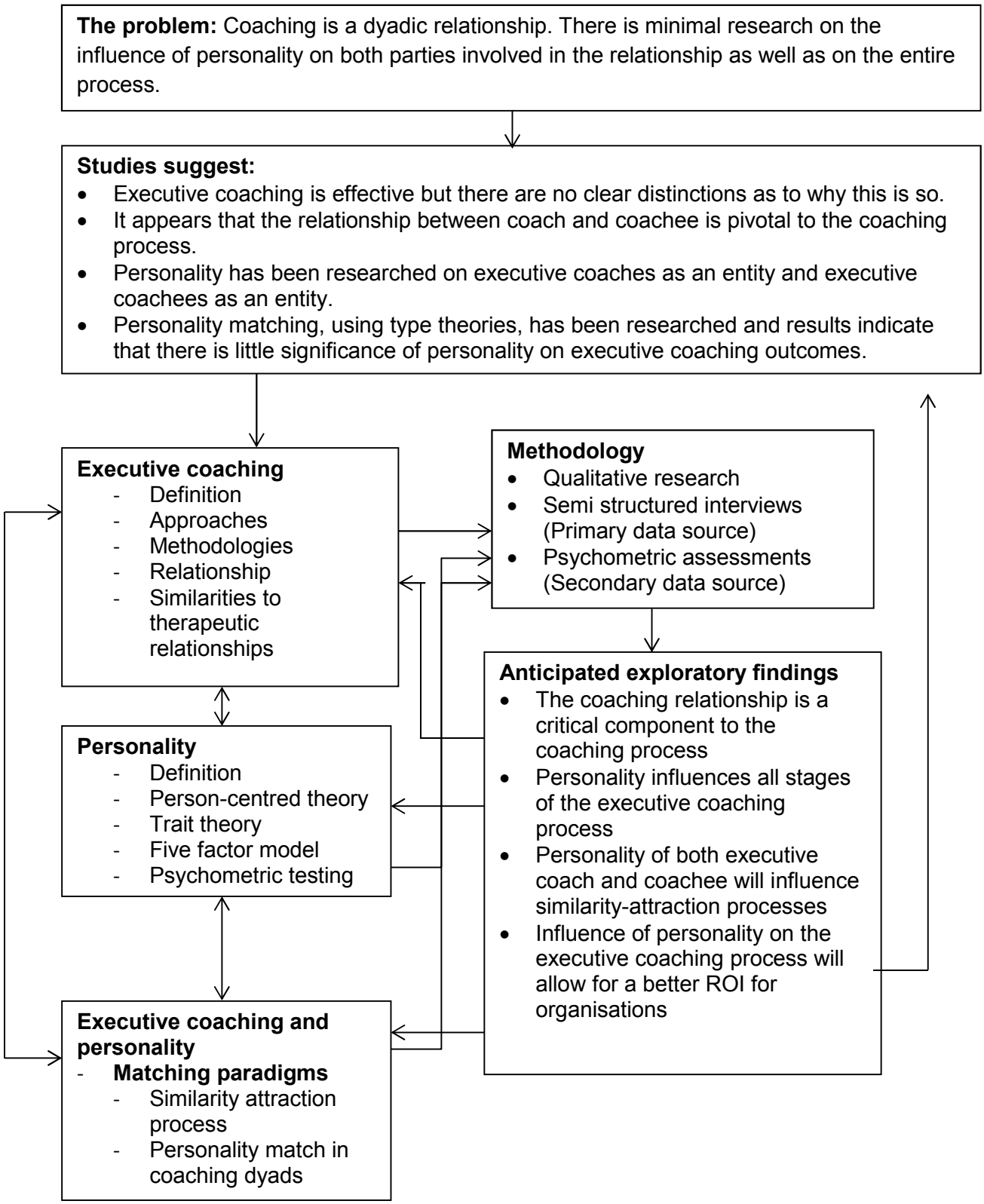
The above literature review has outlined executive coaching. It then went on to discuss person-centred and trait theories of personality, focusing particularly on the theories of Rogers, Cattell, Eysenck as well as McCrae and Costa who promulgated the FFM of personality. It went on to discuss psychometric testing as a means to measure personality. It then discussed the theory of similarity-attraction processes in helping relationships. Lastly, it discussed the study of De Haan et al (2016) and Bozer et al (2015) who researched the contributions of the relationship as well as personality on executive coaching.

2.6 The proposed research approach

The literature has elicited five research questions focusing on the role that personality plays on the coaching process. This research study will investigate the personality of both the executive coach and the coachee in each dyad as well as personalities across all coaches and all coachees.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The following theoretical framework will be used as the basis for this research.



Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

The following section will outline the methodology used for this research study. It will focus on the research paradigm, the research design, the population and sample. Thereafter a discussion on the research instruments, the procedures for data collection as well as the data analysis will take place. Lastly, it will discuss the limitations of this research methodology.

3.1 Research paradigm

Ponterotto describes a research paradigm as "[a] set of interrelated assumptions about the social world, which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the organised study of the world" (Ponterotto, 2005, p127). For purposes of this research, an interpretivist paradigm is used. The main reason for this is that executive coaching theory building is in its infancy (Passmore & Gibbes, 2007). The interpretivist paradigm is thus ideal as this paradigm starts with data and builds a theory about phenomenon from data, as opposed to the positivist paradigm that tests verified theories through empirical data (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Furthermore, the interpretivist paradigm postulates that the phenomena studied are not objective but instead are shaped by human experience and social contexts, thus the context needs to be considered as part of the research (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

According to Bhattacherjee (2012), the following are characteristic of the interpretivist paradigm: naturalistic inquiry; researcher as instrument; interpretive analysis; use of expressive language; temporal nature and hermeneutic circle. Although generalisability can be limited to this approach, it is essential that the phenomenon is studied in the context. The researcher will form part of the research; he/she will be immersed in, and part of the data. Thus, the researcher will need to be aware of his/her personal biases and preconceptions. The researcher must observe findings from the participants' viewpoint. Two levels of meaning must take place; first, the researcher must experience the phenomenon from the perspective of the participant. Secondly, the researcher needs to understand the meaning of the participants' experience (Bhattacherjee, 2012). The interpretive analysis must include both verbal and non-verbal language so that not only experiences but also emotions of the participant are encapsulated. Interpretivist research aims at making

sense of phenomena rather than finding specific answers. The interpretivist paradigm requires theoretical saturation, thus movement from the data to the context moves back and forth in an iterative process.

The interpretivist approach has several benefits including,

> First, they are well-suited for exploring hidden reasons behind complex, interrelated, or multifaceted social processes…. Second, they are often helpful for theory construction in areas with no or insufficient a priori theory. Third, they are also appropriate for studying context-specific, unique, or idiosyncratic events or processes. Fourth, interpretive research can also help uncover interesting and relevant research questions and issues for follow-up research (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p105).

These factors advocate the reasons for utilising an interpretivist paradigm for this research study.

This study utilised qualitative methodology. The aim is to understand the role of personality on the executive coaching process. Thus, an understanding of the participants' experiences, who are involved in the executive coaching process, are required. "Qualitative methods refer to a broad class of empirical procedures designed to describe and interpret the experiences of research participants in a context specific setting" (Ponterotto, 2005, p128). Thus, this methodology, rather than a quantitative approach was utilised as it was deemed best fit for purpose.

3.2 Research design

This research explored eight dyadic relationships through eight case studies. Each case comprised the executive coaching process between the executive coach and the coachee. A case study provides an in-depth understanding of how different cases provide insight into an issue. Yin (2003) argues that a case study design should be considered when: the focus of the study is to answer how and why questions; you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study; you

want to cover contextual conditions that are relevant to the phenomenon under study and the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

This research aims to understand how personality of the executive coach and the coachee influences the executive coaching process. An in-depth understanding of the role of personality on the executive coaching process was explored highlighting similarities and differences within and between each case. Furthermore, the main research question is: How does personality influence the executive coaching process? The researcher will not be able to manipulate the behaviour of the participants and the context is important to understanding the process, thus, a case study research design was ideal for this research study.

According to Baxter and Jack (2008), there are several types of case studies. These are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3: Types and definitions of case studies (Baxter & Jack, 2008)

Case Study Type	Definition
Explanatory	Used if you were seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies. In evaluation language, the explanations would link program implementation with program effects.
Exploratory	Used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes.
Descriptive	Used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred.
Multiple case studies	Enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases are chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory.
Intrinsic	Genuine interest in the case. the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest.
Instrumental	Used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinised, its ordinary activities detailed, and because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest.

For the purposes of this research, exploratory case studies was used. This is because there are no clear, set outcomes. The study aimed at understanding how personality influences the executive coaching process. The best way to do this was to explore the personalities of the executive coach and coachee and how these influence the process. The exploration provided understanding of the executive coaching process and a contribution to theory building.

3.3 Population and sample

3.3.1 Population

The population included executive coaches and coachees from Johannesburg, Gauteng province, South Africa.

3.3.2 Case selection

The executive coaching fraternity is fairly small. Thus, purposive sampling was utilised for case selection. According to Tongco (2007), purposive sampling is ideal when research aims to study a certain cultural domain with knowledgeable experts. It is argued that, "[t]he inherent bias of the method contributes to its efficiency" (Tongco, 2007, p147).

The sample was made up of primary respondents – the coachees. These coachees were executives who, according to Drotter's performance pipeline (Drotter, 2011), fall at business manager level at Passage 4, group manager level at Passage 5 or enterprise manager level at Passage 6.The executive coaches were coaches who had coached the executives selected within an 18-month period. An 18-month period was chosen in order to mitigate against recall bias. According to Raphael (1987), recall bias exists in all historical self-report methodologies. It occurs when past events are recalled and portrayed in a different way to what actually occurred at the time. This research needed a time frame to allow for the process to have commenced or to be completed and for coachees to understand the purpose, process, relationship and outcomes. However, the time frame could not be too protracted as bias in memory would result.

This research utilised typical cases within the purposive sample. The research aims at understanding the role of personality on the executive coaching process. Thus, it required standard executive coaching processes involving individuals in a standard executive role.

In totality, eight case studies were conducted involving two participants in each case, the executive coach and the coachee. Thus, 16 respondents in total were interviewed.

Table 4: Profile of respondents

Respondent type	Data sources	Number to be sampled
Coachees	• Semi-structured interview (face-to-face) • Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire	8
Executive coach of each respective coachee	• Semi-structured interview (face-to-face) • Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire	8

3.4 The research instruments

Two instruments were used to obtain data from the various respondents in each case study. They included a semi-structured interview with the executive coach and coachee which elicited primary data. Secondary data was obtained through the use of the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire. This was administered to both the executive coach and coachee in order to understand the personality traits of each party, both within the case study as well as across case studies.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interview schedule

A semi-structured, face-to-face English interview was appropriate for this research. This research aims to understand the complex issue of personality on the executive coaching process, thus perceptions, opinions and emotions needed to be explored, which is ideal through a face-to-face interview. Furthermore, executive coaching may be sensitive and thus, this procedure allowed for clarification and probing (Barriball & White, 1993).

It can be argued that interview data is skewed through language as not everybody has the same understanding of the words used, creating a different meaning to each participant (Barriball & White, 1993). However, the semi-structured interview can be depended upon for reliability and validity by conveying the meaning rather than the exact words, which allows for comparability (Barriball & White, 1994).

A semi-structured interview guide was developed taking into consideration personality and the executive coaching process. Personality was also identified through analytic memos. These were imperative to the research, as they took into consideration the verbal and non-verbal cues, which are indicative of personality factors.

3.4.2 Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire

Secondary data was collected from the executive coach and coachee using the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire. A personality instrument was required to understand the personalities of both the executive coaches and the coachees across all case studies. The five factor personality model was used and thus, it was deemed that the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire was appropriate for the understanding of personality within this research study.

It must be noted that the assessment is not used as quantitative data in this research and this study is not a mixed methods study. Rather, the aim was to utilise the assessments as secondary data to understand the personalities of the coachees and coaches qualitatively in terms of the research questions in conjunction with the semi-structured interview data. “Secondary sources are written by authors who interpret the work of others……are useful because they combine knowledge from many primary sources and provide a quick way to obtain an overview of a field or topic. …” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p110).

The Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire is a personality assessment, which is statistically valid and reliable (Saville Consulting, 2012) and is registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). The Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire has several permutations relating to various job

levels. For the purposes of this research, the Professional Styles questionnaire was used.

The Wave Professional Styles questionnaire is based on the five factor personality model. The questionnaire is made up of questions built from 108 facets (traits), which align to the FFM of openness, extroversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability. The 108 facets (traits) combine into 36 personality dimensions, assimilated into 12 sections, which combine into the five factors of the FFM (Kurz et al, 2008). For purposes of the instrument, the 12 sections also combine into four clusters. This will not be discussed in this research.

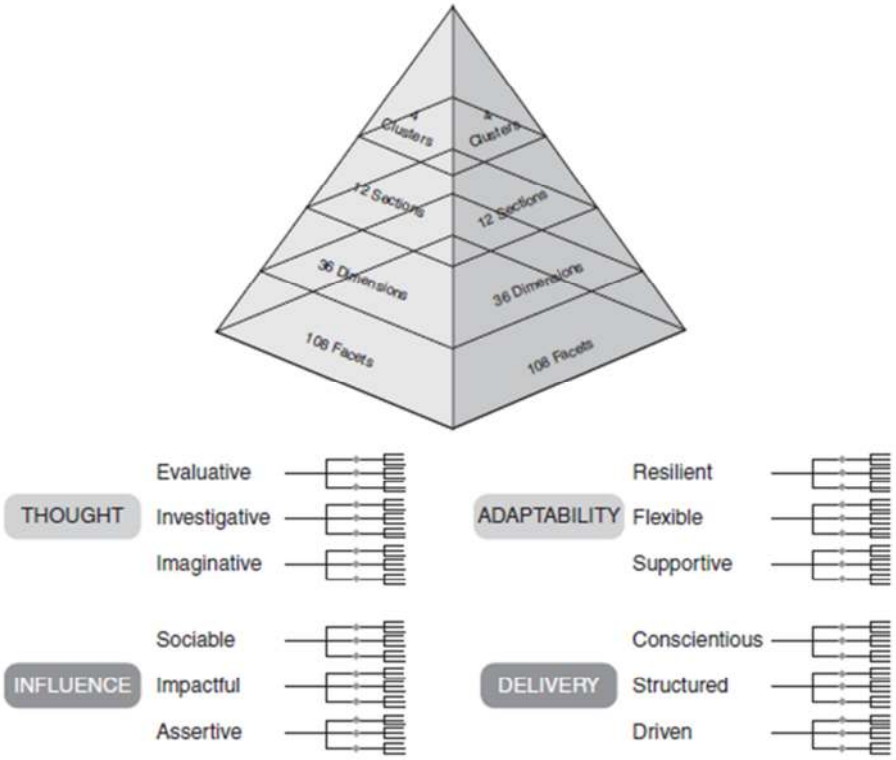


Illustration 4: The Saville Consulting Wave model illustrating cluster, section, dimension and facet/trait hierarchy (Kurz et al, 2008)

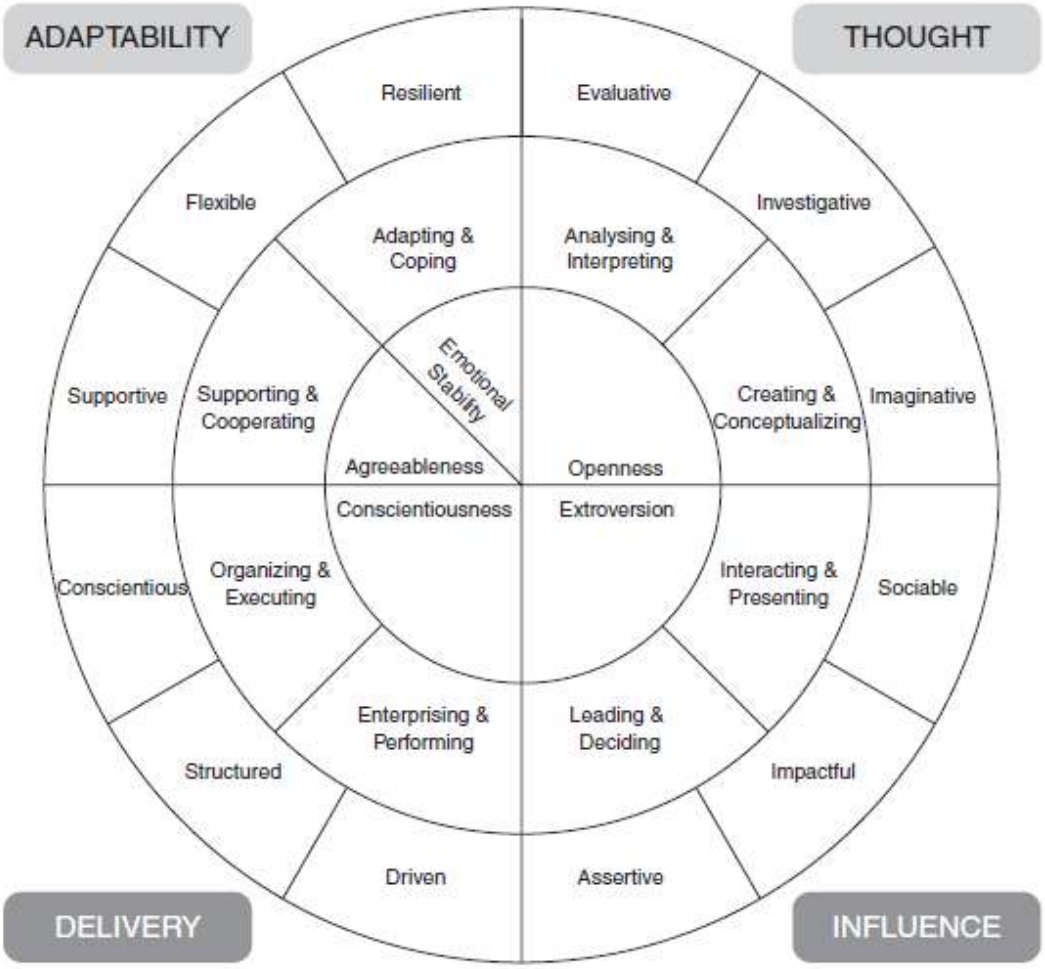


Illustration 5: Mapping of the five factor personality model to the Saville Consulting Wave personality clusters (Kurz et al, 2008)

The Professional Styles questionnaire utilises a self-report, nine-point Likert response scale. From the assessment, the respondent obtains a sten score - a score out of ten - which indicates the preference an individual has for that dimension (Saville Consulting, 2012). A score between four and seven indicates that the individual's score on that dimension is in the average range when compared to the norm group (they are like most people in the norm population). It is imperative to note that the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire measures preference not competency on a particular dimension.

The assessment uses a normative-ipsative split (Saville Consulting, 2012). The respondent is not only required to rate their response (normative), they are also

required to rank it (ipsative). This allows the respondent to build on the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of each response (Kurz et al, 2008).

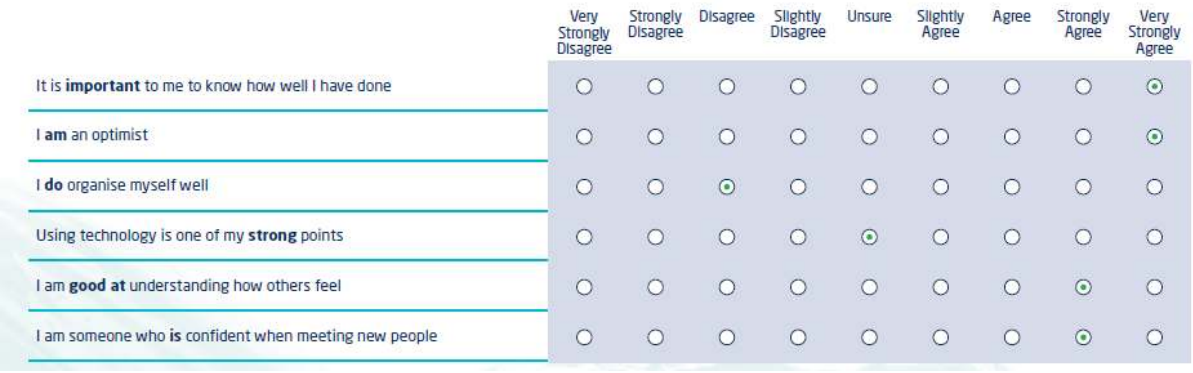


Illustration 6: Example of the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire questions using the nine-point Likert response scale



Illustration 7: Example of the ipsative scoring on the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire

The assessment is broken down at facet (trait) level to a motive or talent split. This indicates behavioural inclinations. A motive indicates preference whilst talent indicates learnt behaviour. The split then indicates the degree to which a facet is a personality preference (motive) or a learnt behaviour (talent) (Kurz et al, 2008). It does not measure actual competence at the facet (trait) level. This research focused on the influence of personality on the executive coaching process. Thus, preference measurement is sufficient. The measurement of competence is beyond the scope of this research and will not be considered.

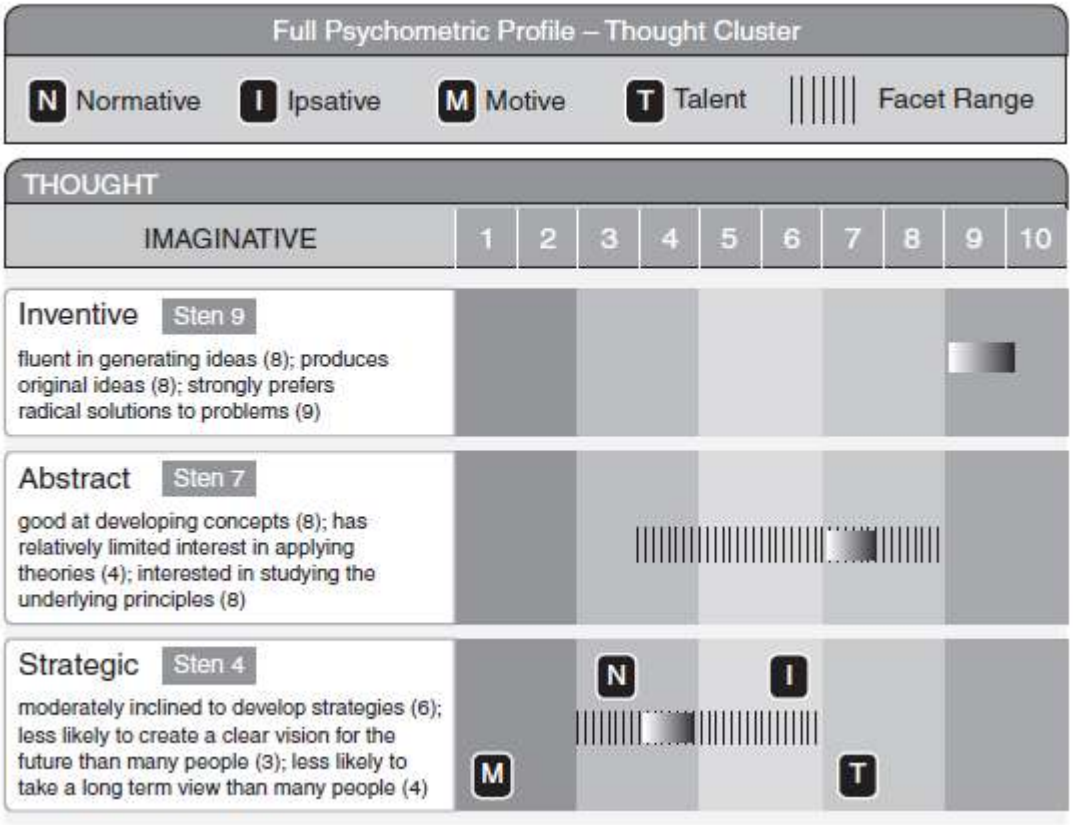


Illustration 8: Sten scores, normative-ipsative split and talent-motive split (Kurz et al, 2008)

A Saville Consulting Wave Professional Styles Expert report was collated for each respondent and analysed qualitatively.

Saville Consulting Wave personality reliability

Reliability indicates the extent to which an assessment measures the same construct consistently over time (Anastasi, 1988). “No measure of human traits has perfect reliability, yet good reliability of measurement is an important property of any assessment” (Saville Consulting, 2012).

The following table illustrates the various reliability measures of the Professional Styles Wave questionnaire (Saville Consulting, 2010).

Table 5: Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire reliability

Description	Population	Mean reliability coefficient	Median reliability coefficient
Internal consistency reliability – Section level	1153	.81	.83
Test-retest reliability – Section level	100	.80	.79

Acceptable reliability scores using Cronbach's alpha (Howell, 1999) is between 0.6-0.7 for internal consistency reliability and 0.7-0.85 for other reliabilities. Thus, mean scores of .81 and .80 respectively indicate that the Saville Consulting Wave personality assessment is statistically reliable.

Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire validity

Validity focuses on whether an assessment measures what it purports to measure (Anastasi, 1988). In the workplace, performance is a key measure. Thus, the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire focuses on predictive validity – Will high scores on the sections indicate better performance on the job, related to those clusters?

Illustration 9 indicates the degree of predictive validity of personality measures against performance. Validity scores of .35 are considered suitable (Howell, 1999). The Wave Professional Styles indicate a validity of .57. This indicates that the assessment traits correlate highly to the construct. Furthermore, Illustration 9 indicates that the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire has the highest validity score compared to the other personality assessments measured (Saville Consulting, 2012). Thus, predictive validity is sound and the assessment can be used with confidence in that the assessment is measuring criteria related to performance.

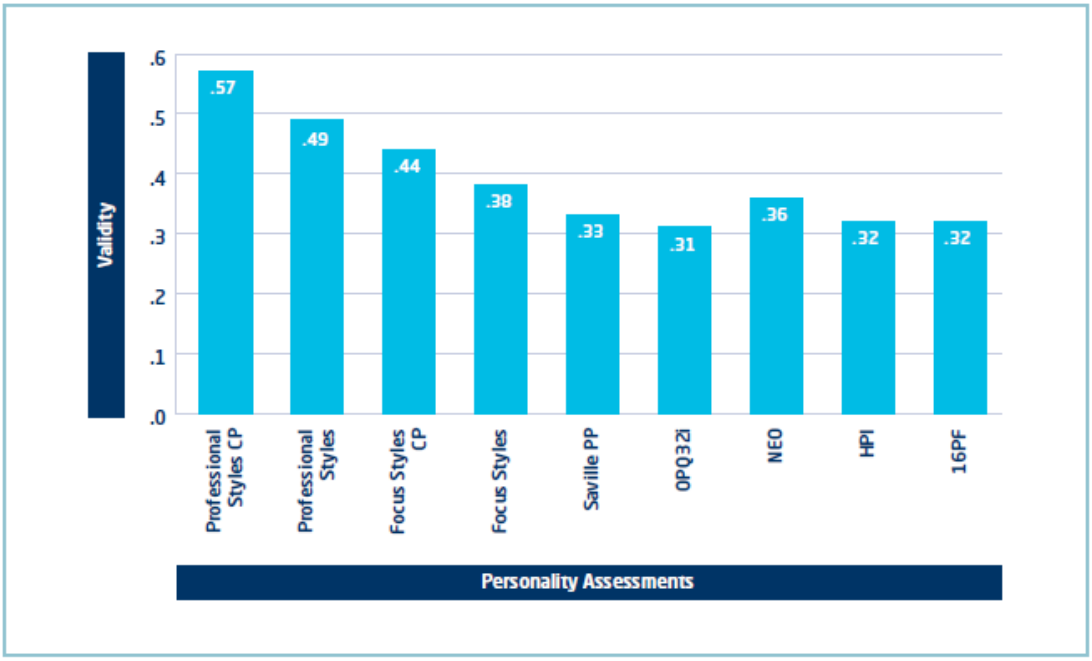


Illustration 9: Mean validity of personality assessments against independent ratings of overall total performance (n=308) (Saville Consulting, 2012)

Saville Consulting Wave personality norms

The South African professionals and managers norm group was utilised for this study. These norms are based on the results obtained from a sample of 792 senior managers and executives from various industries across South Africa (Saville Consulting, 2012). 51 percent of respondents were female with 49 percent male. The mean age is 34 years. The racial split of the norm group consists of 40 percent white; 38 percent black and 12 percent Asian 8 percent coloured and 2 percent other.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

Executives who had been coached, as well as executive coaches were approached to ascertain their interest in taking part in the research. Thereafter, permission was obtained from them to contact their respective coach/coachee to ascertain whether they would be comfortable taking part in the research. Once both parties agreed, the dyad formed a case as part of the research.

An appointment was made with each coachee whereby a semi-structured interview was conducted (Appendix A). The researcher obtained informed consent (Appendix B) from the respondent before proceeding with the interview. The interview took place in a meeting room or office to ensure confidentiality of all information as well as ensuring limited disruptions. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed.

Once the interview was completed, the researcher then obtained consent from the respondent for them to complete the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire (Appendix C). This was only done once the interview was completed as should the respondent have completed the personality assessment prior to the interview they may have ascertained the objective of the research which could influence and skew their answers in the interview and the research findings. The respondents received an on-line link via e-mail for the personality assessment. They then completed the assessment. The Expert report (Appendix E) was generated for each respondent and psychometric feedback was provided to the interested respondents.

The above process took place with the respective executive coach of each coachee (Appendix D – semi-structured interview guide; Appendix B and Appendix C).

3.6 Data analysis and Interpretation

Content analysis was utilised to analyse the results (Creswell, Hanson, Plano & Morales, 2007). This was used as content analysis is "…usually appropriate when existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p1279).

The content of each semi-structured interview of the executive coach and coachee, in each case, was analysed inductively using Atlas.ti (2003). The researcher immersed herself into the data, which was read and 94 codes were derived.

The Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire was then analysed deductively utilising Atlas.ti (2003). Each coachee's assessment and the executive coach's assessment was analysed independently. The Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaires of the executive coach and coachee in each case study

were then compared to each other at dimension, section and factor levels to understand any similarities in personality between the executive coach and coachee. 34 deductive codes were used.

The inductive codes from the interview as well as from the deductive codes from the assessment (128 codes in total) were then sorted into 27 categories. 11 themes were formed from the categories (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Furthermore, all of the executive coaches' data and all of the coachees' data was then compared to each other to ascertain whether there were any shared themes between, or clear discrepancies across, the case studies.

Analytic memos are notes made by the researcher during the research process (Saldana, 2009). Analytic memos were kept by the researcher regarding each interview, assessment analysis and psychometric feedback discussion as well as thoughts, ideas and assumptions when analysing the assessment results. Those analytic memos were also coded, categorised, clustered and synthesised into themes.

3.7 Limitations of the study

The challenges this research faced included issues regarding methodology as well as sampling.

Qualitative methodology of case studies was used to collect data. The main concerns regarding case studies and qualitative methodology are due to questions regarding the reliability, validity and generalisability due to the subjective nature of the methodology. However, despite these concerns, it was felt that this methodology was most appropriate for the research question.

Regarding the sampling participants may have been reluctant to share their experiences or be concerned about the scrutiny on their coaching relationship. The respondents may have been uncomfortable being assessed on a personality measure. The participants were part of the coaching dyad and as such they may have been biased, framing everything in a positive light. These considerations were taken into account but did not appear to negatively impact the research study.

Regarding the analysis, the researcher was aware of her own personal biases and assumptions and challenged these accordingly.

3.8 Reliability and Validity

The qualitative research method has been criticised as it is viewed as unscientific due to the concerns regarding validity, reliability and generalisability (Diefenbach, 2009). Diefenbach states that the researcher will not only affect, but will determine the research question and methodological approach. To mitigate this, the researcher must state his/her own assumptions, interests and objectives regarding the research explicitly. It is argued that there is no precise research question. However, this is the nature of case studies – to explore the phenomenon at hand, which may result in a refinement of the research question.

Diefenbach (2009) postulates that when collecting data, case study data collection does not happen systematically or objectively. Researchers then must again be aware of their own biases. However, the fact that the data collection is not systematic allows for a greater understanding of the participants subjective experience. Diefenbach (2009) states that case studies rely on data from interviewees and as such, this is not a reliable source of data. Furthermore, the interviewee may purposefully mislead the researcher due to social desirability factors.

Despite the disadvantages listed above, qualitative methodologies, particularly that of case studies, were the best suited for this research study. The researcher was cognisant of the limitations of qualitative methodologies and mitigated against those factors. However, executive coaching theory is limited and the case study methodology allowed for a greater understanding of the subjective experience of the participants involved in the executive coaching process.

The above has outlined the methodology used for this research study. Qualitative methodology was utilised as it was deemed fit for purpose regarding the proposed research question. Dyadic case studies made up of executive coaches and coachees, in Gauteng, South Africa were explored. A semi-structured interview, to

be used as the primary data source and the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire, to be used as the secondary data source, were carried out on all respondents and analysed using content analysis. There were limitations to the study and questions regarding validity and reliability, however, these were mitigated against accordingly.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The following ethical considerations were considered:

All interview data was treated with the strictest confidentiality. The coaching relationship is one of confidentiality whereby private conversations are held between the executive coach and the coachee. This confidentiality was not violated. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and all recordings were transcribed. The recordings, transcriptions, analytic memos and interview schedules have been stored securely with only the researcher having access to this. All electronic information is stored accordingly and is password protected. All cases in the study have been presented anonymously.

The executive coach and the coachee were required to complete the Saville Consulting Wave personality questionnaire. These results are highly confidential and will only be shared with the researcher and her supervisor, examiners for purposes of this research and the individual themselves as per the consent form, unless written consent is provided. All psychometric reports have been stored in an access-restricted password protected file, which only a psychometrist ~~hasaccess~~has access to as per HPCSA regulations. After five years, these reports will be destroyed.

All participants were offered feedback on their own psychometric results at no charge. Only two respondents requested this feedback. Feedback was provided by a trained psychometrist registered with the HPCSA.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Results

This study investigated eight dyads. These dyads form the eight cases as part of the case study methodology utilised for this research. This section will introduce and elaborate on the findings of all eight cases. Each case will be discussed outlining the roles and relationship of the executive coach and coachee. It will then discuss the interviewer's field notes outlining how the executive coach and coachee personalities were experienced. Thereafter, the findings will be discussed according to each case study. The biographical data will be analysed, then the semi-structured interviews will be analysed as the primary data source. Finally, secondary data, that of the psychometric assessments, the Wave personality questionnaire, will be analysed.

Each case will be discussed according to the following:

A. Description of each dyad
B. Biographical data
C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and the coachee's personality
D. Primary data
    - Experience of the coach's personality
    - Experience of the coachee's personality
    - Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee
    - The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process
    - Relationship factors influencing the coaching process
    - Coaching outcomes
    - What does coaching allow for coachees?
    - What does coaching allow for executive coaches?
E. Secondary data
    - Personality factor: Openness
    - Personality factor: Extroversion
    - Personality factor: Conscientiousness
    - Personality factor: Agreeableness
    - Personality factor: Emotional stability

4.1 Case 1: Dyad in the financial services industry

A. Description

The first dyad analysed is between a mature, female executive coach, Emma[1] and a younger male Kevin*, working in the financial services industry.

Kevin[2] indicated that executive coaching is offered by his employer and that as a general manager he was told to embark on a coaching journey as part of his development. Kevin was excited at the prospect of coaching. He met three executive coaches and began coaching with Emma.

B. Biographical data

	Race	Gender	Age	Ethnic Group	Position	Industry
Case 1						
Emma	White	Female	64	South African English	Executive Coach & Psychologist	
Kevin	White	Male	38	South African Afrikaans	General Manager	Financial Services

Emma is a 64-year-old, white, female, English South African. The coachee, Kevin, is a 38-year-old, white, male, Afrikaans South African. Afrikaans is a language made up of a mixture of high Dutch and local dialects. It was legally recognised as a language in 1918 (McClintock, 1993).

The differences in age, culture, language and gender could have been problematic to the coaching. During the interview, it was mentioned that this difference may have been a barrier to the relationship: “I mean Kevin is an Afrikaans male.” Kevin also indicated that this was a discussion point prior to the coaching journey: “The fact that she… told me that she is not Afrikaans and she can’t understand Afrikaans. So…for me it was one thing that I think she was just making sure that I am going to be comfortable.” However, when discussing the coaching relationship, the outcomes

[1] Not her real name
[2] Not his real name

and process with both parties, neither respondent indicated that the language difference or any other of the demographic variable was an inhibitor to the coaching process.

C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and coachee's personalities

Prior to meeting with Emma, the interviewer and coach conversed via e-mail. Emma came across as a busy individual. She was open to being interviewed and part of the research process. At times, she came across as quite abrupt but never rude. This ascribed to the fact that she appeared very busy.

On meeting Emma, she came across as a very warm, concerned, helpful and interested person. She appeared highly intelligent. On meeting her, she was instantly likeable.

Kevin came across as extremely friendly and personable. He had quite a good sense of humour and came across as amiable. Kevin indicated that he selected Emma as his coach as she had dealt with his organisation extensively and that gave him a sense of comfort in that she understood the organisational dynamics.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach's personality

When asked to describe her personality, Emma stated that she was an open, optimistic and resilient person. She stated that she was empathetic and able to understand that the coaching process is a vulnerable one and that she allows for that vulnerability: "…so I think I am quite an empathic person, I understand that vulnerability. And I'll acknowledge it and honour it." She also stated that for her, values were important in the coaching relationship. Her value system included compassion, kindness, accessibility and transparency.

When Kevin was asked to describe Emma's personality, he indicated that Emma was a good listener but somewhat reserved in nature: "I think she's quite a reserved person."

Experience of the coachee's personality

When asked to describe his personality, Kevin stated that he was an outgoing person and someone who listens well to others. He stated that he was an easy-going person.

The coach described Kevin's personality as open, warm, optimistic, resilient and cheerful. Emma also stated that Kevin was honest.

Experience of similar personality factors by the executive coach and coachee

The section below will delve into the experience and perception of similarities elicited from the semi-structured interviews with both parties and the influence this had, if any, on the coaching process.

What was interesting to note was that before the question of similarities between personalities was asked, Emma indicated that they had similar personalities. When asked to describe Kevin's personality, Emma stated: "Very similar in many ways… I think he's a very resilient person. Which I am too…I think he's … incredibly honest … which I am too."

Emma saw her own and the coachee's personalities as being similar: "Very similar in many ways". She saw both him and herself as being optimistic and resilient. Emma noted that she and Kevin "… hit it off!" She also stated "…perhaps you should not match your client quite so accurately." She noted that it was important not be too similar "…because maybe you need some edges." Emma stated that she and Kevin had similar values and that according to her, a match in values pivotal to the coaching relationship: "But I do believe that if people have got the same values, in terms of integrity and honesty and that kind of thing, then coaching, you're going to be able to build a deeper relationship."

Kevin also indicated that he saw Emma and himself as having similar personalities. Although not the focus of this research, both respondents in this case had previously completed the Insights Discovery (2013) Evaluator. Insights Discovery uses a four colour model, based on Carl Jung's theory to indicate personality preferences. The

four colours of personality include: Fiery Red – Extroverted, action-oriented and energetic; Sunshine Yellow – Extroverted, friendly and persuasive; Earth Green – Democratic, accommodating and values driven and Cool Blue – Analytical, introverted and detail-focused. It is based on Jung's theory of opposites (Jacobi, 1973). The coach and coachee reportedly had the same colour type.

Experience of modelling in the executive coaching process

Emma spoke about modelling and the need for the coach to model certain behaviours, such as vulnerability, to allow the coachee to be able to do the same: "…I think modelling accessibility, willingness to be vulnerable, because a person has to be quite vulnerable sitting there as the person being coached, it's a vulnerable position to be in…"

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

Emma cited her provision of support for Kevin as a 50:50 split between support and challenge.

Kevin viewed the ratio of support to challenge as a 20:80 split. Although supported, he clearly stated: "I never really got support if I wanted to complain". For Kevin, there was a lot more challenge during the process and the challenge is what made the coaching process successful. "So, I think the whole success of my journey with my coach, was definitely the challenge, so the challenge is far above support…There was not one session that I didn't feel challenged and I quite liked that…But it was a good challenge. I also believe that I made it quite easy to be challenged…in my journey there was set challenges that Emma gave me and that's what we then, between sessions, started work on and when we came back with the result, it was challenged and it was a good thing."

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

There were several factors within the coaching relationship, which were expressed as having influenced the coaching process.

Trust was expressed as a pivotal factor in the coaching relationship. Emma described her relationship with Kevin as: "We were allies". "So they've really got to

trust you. They're putting… a lot in the coach's hands." "I mean if there's no deep relationship of trust people aren't going to take a risk. Why would they? I know that from my own coaching. So I think Kevin and I just had an instant trust in each other."

Confidentiality was expressed as being important to the relationship, as was respect.

Emma also indicated that the coach needs to believe in the coachee's ability to change: "So if the coach doesn't believe that the person is going to change, the person isn't going to change…So somehow that has to be communicated to a person like… without the sort of rah, rah, rah. But you have to communicate that absolute belief. That this is a stretch, but do you know what? You can do it. So I think when you have that relationship, which… it's a completely different kind of relationship, because it's quite I think, an intimate space. And they have to be able to trust that person…it's a felt sense rather than a spoken sense."

Emma also stated that the relationship was enabled as Kevin was committed to the coaching process: "…I mean Kevin was committed to coaching. He was always on time, always cheerful, always interested…"

When Kevin was asked to describe the coaching relationship, he stated that Emma made him feel at ease: "…I feel very comfortable with Emma. And I am comfortable enough to share things with her that I won't share with anybody else in the working relationship." Kevin also stated that he knew everything they spoke about was confidential: "…So…there is definitely confidentiality there. I…felt from the get go…"

He also felt that it was a caring relationship and one in which he felt heard and understood: "…she understands me and she had time to listen."

Emma and Kevin explicitly stated that they viewed the relationship in a positive light and that the outcomes set at the start of the coaching journey had been met.

Coaching outcomes:

Kevin did not go into great detail about the anticipated outcomes of the coaching process. He, however, did state that the coaching had been successful and he was

happy with the outcomes “So we had five clear areas of my life and work life that I wanted to explore and do better, and we have addressed four of the five with great success.”

Emma indicated that they had achieved what was set out within the coaching and indicated that they had had a shortened series of coaching “…because he’d hit all his agenda items, he ticked them all of and he was happy, he got to a place. And he wanted to park the rest of his sessions for the future. Which I… yes we, you know when it’s finished. Yes, we go to a point. And it doesn’t matter that it’s early, it matters that…we’d hit the goal.”

What does coaching allow for coachees?

From Kevin’s perspective coaching allowed for the feeling of really being listened to and heard “…she understands me and she had time to listen.” The coachee also indicated that coaching had allowed for personal growth and development “…growth in a way that one, I think about myself. Growth in the way that I coach others…”

What does coaching allow for executive coaches?

When considering the factors coaching provides for the coach, it was evident that Emma derived real satisfaction in her work as a coach “You know coaching is an extremely wonderful occupation. It’s not an occupation it’s a calling. It’s an incredible privilege to actually be walking with this person while they want to learn and grow and develop. It is just amazing.”

E. Secondary data (Appendix G)

The secondary data will be discussed below per each factor of the FFM. These factors will be explored in order to understand personality from an objective measure, that of the psychometric assessment. It will then also consider how these factors align with how personality was experienced by the interviewer, how the coach and coachee experience their own as well as the other party’s personality and the influence this may have on the executive coaching process.

Personality factor: Openness

Table 6: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Emma	Kevin
Openness	**Evaluative**			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Investigative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Imaginative			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Emma obtained a below average score on evaluative (sten = 1). As such, she is not inclined to analyse information. Kevin obtained an average score (4) thus, he is likely to be somewhat more analytical than Emma is; however, it is not a clear preference. He tends to be more factual and rational than his coach.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Emma obtained an average score (6) on this section. She is moderately inclined to enjoy learning and tends to be generally insightful. Kevin, obtained a below average score on this section (3). He is less inclined to investigate issues.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Emma showed a clear preference on the inventive section and obtained an above average score (8). She is likely to enjoy abstract and strategic concepts. Kevin obtained an average score on this section (7). He is likely to be comfortable with strategic and abstract concepts and may at times be fairly inventive.

Although the sten scores are close, there is a difference in rating between above average and average. As such, the coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

With regard to the openness factor of the FFM the coach and coachee are not similar in personality. Kevin obtained an average score on openness in the personality profile, however, he was viewed by Emma as being very open "He was very open". "So he was just open, like bring it on, bring it on and I really enjoyed that. He was open to feedback. Open to that process..." Kevin also saw himself as being open, "…so I was quite open to the process. I was willing to improve and listen so…I think it goes to the challenging of it, so, take it on board you can do something with it…"

Although the psychometric assessments indicate that there is no similarity in personality in the factor of openness between the coach and coachee, the coach described herself as well as Kevin as being open and saw this as a similarity between them, "I think I'm an open person. I'm also…experimental… But I think Kevin… I had quite a good match with Kevin in terms of experimental."

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 7: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Emma	Kevin
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average	X	X
		Average		
		Below average		
	Impactful			
		Above average		X
		Average	X	
		Below average		
	Assertive			
		Above average		X
		Average	X	
		Below average		

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Both the coach and the coachee obtained an above average score on this section (8). Although the behaviour may manifest in different ways, the respondents are both likely to come across as interactive and engaging with others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

The interviewer experienced both Emma and Kevin as highly sociable, describing them as friendly and outgoing.

It is interesting to note that Kevin described Emma's personality during the interview as reserved "I think she's quite a reserved person." Emma did not describe herself in this way and the above average score on sociable also indicates that she does not view herself as being reserved. It is interesting then that this was a description used.

Impactful

Although Emma is articulate when communicating, she is not overly convincing in her engagements with others. She may challenge others' views at times but will weigh up the situation. Overall, she obtained an average score on this section (4). Kevin obtained an above average score on this section (9). He is likely to be very convincing and articulate and will challenge others' views quite easily.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

When asked in the interview to describe themselves Kevin indicated that he was extroverted "…I think I'm an outgoing personality, So outgoing…I'm easy going and ja, outgoing."

When considering the Wave personality assessment, Emma obtained an average score (5) at the dimension level for challenging. Kevin however obtained an above average score (8). Although it is not Emma's preference to be challenging it is important for Kevin who has a clear preference for this. This was indicated when Kevin stated that the relationship was characterised more by challenge than support with an 80:20 challenge to support ratio. This may actually be hidden and not overtly discussed but may be unconsciously picked up on by the coach and behaviour modified. Emma also indicated that in order to challenge a coachee there needs to be a solid relationship within the dyad "…so the stronger the relationship is, the stronger the challenges to growth can be…If there's no relationship, or a weak relationship, you can't really challenge the person."

Assertive

Emma obtained an average score (5) for this section. She is not likely to be highly directive of others, but is somewhat empowering of others. Kevin obtained an above average score on this section (8) and is likely to be assertive.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

With regard to the extroversion factor of the FFM the only similarity between the coach and coachee is on the sociable section. Overall, they are not similar when considering the factor.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 8: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Emma	Kevin
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**	Above average		
		Average		
		Below Average	X	X
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below Average	X	
	Driven			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below Average	X	

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

The coach and coachee obtained a below average score (1 and 3 respectively for this section). They are less inclined to be meticulous or reliable and do not tend to always conform to the norm.

The coach and coachee are similar on the conscientious factor of the FFM.

Structured

Emma obtained a below average score (2) on this section. Although highly principled, she shows limited interest in organising and may prefer theorising as opposed to activity. Kevin obtained a score in the average range (6). He is also

principled with a typical focus on activity orientation. He, however, may also tend to be disorganised.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Driven

Emma scored below average (2) on this section. She is somewhat relaxed in her approach. Kevin obtained an average score (6) on this section. He is moderately inclined to be driven in his approach.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Regarding conscientiousness of the FFM, the respondents are similar in personality scores on the section conscientious but are not similar when considering the overall factor.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 9: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Emma	Kevin
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average	X	X
		Average		
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

The coach obtained an above average score (8) on flexible. She is likely to be receptive to others and highly optimistic. She handles change effectively. Kevin obtained an average score on flexible (7). He is also optimistic but may tend to display a typical response regarding change and being receptive.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Emma and Kevin obtained above average scores on this section (10) (8). Both parties are attentive to the needs of others and generally accepting of others. They are likely to get involved with others.

This was also evident in the interviews where both respondents stated that they believe that they are good listeners.

When considering the supportive section on the Wave personality questionnaire this is particularly interesting. Emma viewed herself as a highly supportive person (sten = 10). She viewed herself as accepting of others, involved and highly attentive. The interviewer who stated that Emma appeared genuinely interested further experienced this. However, within the coaching realm, Emma has not let supportive take over and is able to provide challenge to the coachee as indicated by Kevin when he stated that the support was only a 20 percent split when opposed to challenge, which was 80 percent.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Regarding agreeableness of the FFM, the respondents are similar in personality scores on the supportive section but are not similar when considering the overall factor.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 10: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Emma	Kevin
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Flexible			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

The coach obtained a below average score on the resilient section (3). She may be less inclined to remain composed or self-assured. However, she will resolve issues that arise. Kevin obtained an average score on resilient (7). He is likely to handle stress fairly effectively, is somewhat confident and will resolve issues where required.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

The coach obtained an above average score (8) on flexible. She is likely to be more flexible in her approach, receptive to others and optimistic. Kevin obtained an average score on flexible (7). He is also optimistic but may tend to be less receptive and open to change.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

With regard to the emotional stability factor of the FFM the coach and coachee are not similar in personality.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaires, used to understand the FFM of personality, indicate that there were no similarities in the overall factors of the model. There, however, were similarities between the coach and coachee in the sociable section of the extroversion factor, both with an above average score. There were similarities between the coach and coachee on the conscientious section of the conscientiousness factor, both below average. The respondents both obtained an above average score on the supportive section on the agreeableness factor. Openness and emotional stability indicated opposite scores for the respondents.

Conclusion:

The biographical data indicates clear differences in this dyad. There were some initial concerns noted by the coach in that the coachee was Afrikaans, but this was not indicated as an inhibitor to the process or relationship. The biographical data was stated as having little influence on the coaching process.

When considering the personalities of the coach and coachee, the interviewer experienced both respondents as displaying personality traits of friendliness, extroversion and openness. The interview data indicates that there was a connection between the coach and coachee as they described themselves as being similar to one another, particularly regarding honesty, resilience and optimism. Based on the assessment results, Emma and Kevin are similar on the sociable section. Emma indicated that she believed she and Kevin were outgoing. Kevin, however, viewed Emma as somewhat reserved. Thus, despite the assessment results being the same, a sten score of eight, Kevin did not experience Emma as an outgoing individual. The respondents scored completely different scores on resilience. Emma clearly described herself and Kevin as being resilient people, however, when considering the secondary, objective data, this is in fact not so. Lastly, Emma described herself and Kevin as both being optimistic. When delving into the flexible section into the positive dimension they both obtained a score of eight. Thus, the experience of the respondents of each other, as well as the interviewer's experience and the assessment results are all compatible, with the respondents being

experienced as optimistic. However, when considering the FFM of personality, the respondents are not similar to each other on any of the five factors. They are only similar on three of the 12 sections, which load onto the five factors. These sections are sociable (above average), conscientious (below average) and supportive (above average).

This indicates that the coach and coachee experienced each other's personality as being similar to that of their own. However, when considering the objective measure of a personality assessment, no similarities according to the FFM are evident.

One needs to question why this is so. What is occurring to make the respondent feel that they are quite similar to the other when considering their personality but when this is investigated objectively, this is not so?

The respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met.

This case indicates that the personalities between the respondents were experienced as similar, however, there were no similar personality factors according to the FFM. Both respondents stated that the coaching process and outcomes had been beneficial.

4.2 Case 2: Ex-pat in the retail industry

A. Description

The second dyad analysed is between Olivia[3], an executive coach and Peter[4], a British ex-pat who has been living in South Africa after previously having worked in the Middle East. He is from the retail industry.

Peter indicated that he was offered executive coaching through his employment contract but jokingly indicated that they were told to go for coaching. He stated that the organisation's two top tiers of management embarked on an executive coaching

[3] Not her real name
[4] Not his real name

programme. Peter selected two coaches for a chemistry session. He indicated that the chemistry between himself and Olivia was superb and thus, selected her as his coach.

B. Biographical data

Case 2						
Olivia	White	Female	57	South African Afrikaans	Executive Coach & Psychologist	
Peter	White	Male	52	British	Managing Director	Retail

Olivia, is a 57 year old, white, female, South African Afrikaans executive coach. Her coachee, Peter, is a 52 year old, white, male, British ex-pat working as a managing director in the retail industry. There were some initial concerns regarding the language difference and that language may have been an inhibitor to the process "At first I thought language would be, but it wasn't, it wasn't..." "When I met with Peter at first I found it a bit hard to understand his accent, because he's British. But I realised within about ten minutes I could work with it, it's not so bad. Your ear tunes in to it you know. I realised I could work with it." The coach, however, believes that the fact that they were similar in age was beneficial to the coaching process "I think the fact that we are a similar age definitely helped…" Peter did not raise any biographical details as a possible inhibitor to the relationship.

C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and coachee's personalities

The interviewer had met Olivia prior to the interview as Olivia had acted as a mentor to the team the interviewer was part of in her organisation. During the mentorship sessions, Olivia came across as focused on achieving her goals, very outgoing and friendly. She also came across as a strong and direct person. This, at times, could perhaps be viewed as forceful, but the interviewer did not experience this. During the research interview, Olivia was friendly, talkative and came across as intelligent and extremely knowledgeable.

Peter was likeable straight away. He came across as friendly, driven and extremely open. He spoke about intuition as a leader. What came across clearly during the interview was that he valued that the process was not a blanket approach but rather an intervention tailored specifically for him. He viewed the coaching as developing him as a spiritual leader rather than a mechanical leader.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach's personality

Olivia described her personality as being open-minded, focused on the bigger picture, fun-loving, resilient, flexible, approachable and driven: "So I think there's a very strong performer in me. Performer and achiever kind of person, but then there is the open-minded, fun-loving, big picture thinker".

The coachee described Olivia's personality as being open and flexible. When considering the flexibility and openness, Peter stated that Olivia didn't follow a mechanical process. Her approach was specific and relevant to him personally: "I don't like to do things that are mechanical. And I don't like to do things where I feel it's a process. For me if it was mechanical in the process I wouldn't have enjoyed the journey…She actually understands the person. And for me that was really important because for me it was more about me as a person and as a spiritual leader rather than a mechanical leader."

Peter also stated that Olivia was supportive, particularly in that she was an excellent listener: "…so what I felt was Olivia was very much the sort of person who listened a lot, listened to what I was going through, understood the context in which I was operating." He also viewed her as direct in her approach.

Experience of the coachee's personality

Olivia described Peter as an energetic person but also someone who was able to reflect. She described him as intelligent and practically minded. Recognition was important for him. She viewed him as a natural leader: "He's a great leader" and described him as courageous.

Peter described himself as extroverted, open and talkative: “I’m outgoing. I’m pretty extrovert. Very open. Very very open. I don’t hide things, almost to my detriment actually in terms of that. And very communicative. I think that’s worked well in the relationship with Olivia.”

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

Olivia saw herself and Peter as being similar. She referred to their chemistry session as “…I think there was a bit of a meeting of minds…” She stated that there were similarities in that they were both resilient and take the lead easily: “Yes I think we’re both extremely resilient. You know, so he told me about some life challenges that he’s had, and I’ve had…similar life challenges. And yes so that, and I think also… taking the lead so easily, yes, I think that’s something we have in common as well.”

Before the question of similarity was asked to Peter, he indicated that he and Olivia were similar: “I think that’s worked well in the relationship with Olivia. She’s very similar.” After further discussion, Peter again reiterated: “I think we’re both very similar.” Peter summed up the similarity aspect by indicating that “So yes, for me it was an absolute match made in heaven really.”

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

Olivia stated that there was a 60:40 ratio of support to challenge: “Shoo, there was a stage that I challenged him a lot. And then there was a stage where I supported him a lot. So I would guess about…40 percent challenge, 60 percent support.”

Peter indicated that overall there was a lot of support and saw the ratio as a 70:30 support: challenge split: “I would say it’s more of support overall. But where it needed to be challenged it was.”

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

Trust was viewed as pivotal to this dyad. Both respondents described the relationship as trusting. Olivia further elaborated on trust in the coaching relationship: “Yes, it’s amazing how this thing of trust in coaching works, because when you really think about a friend that you trust very, very well…sometimes we spend ten minute

conversations with them, or 15 minute conversations with them, here (in coaching) you sit with somebody (coach) who's there for you. Three sessions in, we've had four and a half hours of deep conversation. That is trust building." Olivia further stated that although there was absolute trust in the relationship, there were also clear boundaries and the relationship never moved into a friendship dimension: "The boundaries are well managed, there's no social contact."

Both parties described the relationship as being an honest relationship.

Peter reiterated the above aspects of the coaching relationship but also added that he was listened to and could raise any subject without judgment: "And so what I felt was Olivia was very much the sort of person who listened a lot, listened to what I was going through, understood the context in which I was operating…I feel very comfortable to raise anything that I want to raise."

Peter stated that he felt through the relationship that Olivia held a level of care for him personally – she was not merely a business coach: "And first and foremost, which I think is important in a coach, I see her as a coach for me, not a coach for me as the head of this business."

The coaching process was viewed as effective and this was viewed largely in that there was a sincere commitment to the process. Peter stated: "I threw myself into it. I think that's one of the most important things, is I just threw myself into it outright. You know I decided not to hold back. Not to "play the game". I actually went for it because I wanted to learn. I wanted to develop, and so the goals were very much open in terms of it. I didn't know what the end would be like. I just wanted to fulfil or feel like I put myself into it, committed to it, got something out of it, and that I can say comfortably I did achieve that." Olivia reiterated this: "The fact that Peter… he was really so into this coaching thing, he wanted to optimise the experience." was imperative to the success of the coaching process.

Coaching outcomes:

Both Peter and Olivia stated that they viewed the outcomes as being met. Further sessions were even being set up for Peter to continue the coaching sessions further

than the sessions paid for by the organisation. Peter stated that Olivia had "…given me that, that toolkit if you will, that you can apply to different scenarios. So I still find myself thinking in a different scenario, okay I won't behave like this. I know what I want to do here. I wonder how Olivia would have encouraged me to do this."

Olivia and Peter both stated that the goals set out at the outset had been met. They both valued the relationship and viewed the coaching in a positive light.

What does coaching allow for coachees?

Peter spoke about using his intuition in leadership and coaching allowed him to use his intuition with more confidence: "Back up for my intuition was really good."

Peter also indicated that the coaching process allowed for validation: "So it was really fine tuning what I think and how I behave in how I approach my team in the various scenarios for a workplace that throws at you, and to get validation that it was the right approach." Furthermore, coaching allowed for him to receive "…validation of something I'm thinking…"

Another factor that was raised by Peter was that coaching allowed him to use techniques learnt through the process on future scenarios. He felt that this enabled him well and was a real benefit of the coaching process: "So…I've been able to not just reflect on things I've done previously…What I've actually done is used it for things that I know are coming up…and so we've actually gone forward with something rather than reflecting on it."

What does coaching allow for executive coaches?

Olivia enjoyed the fact that through the relationship with Peter, he challenged her on some level as well. She stated that it was a partnership, which provided "…really good conversation."

Both respondents in this case spoke frequently about intuition. They both viewed coaching as allowing them to utilise their intuition more, which was beneficial to the coaching process. Olivia stated that after one interaction with Peter early in the relationship she had to provide feedback, which would not be easy "…you actually

know that you're on risky ground. I was very intuitive, and I knew it was quite risky that I'm giving him this feedback and leaving him. But I just felt that he would probably be able to see…while we're still in the room. So I think my learning once again is, that you have to trust your gut, go with your gut…Even if your heart beats like crazy while you're doing it…I knew I'm on risky ground here, but I also knew I have to go where this energy is."

E. Secondary data (Appendix H)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 11: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Olivia	Peter
Openness	Evaluative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Investigative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Imaginative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Olivia obtained an average score (5) on this section. As such, she is likely to be moderately rational and analytical. Peter obtained a below average score on this section (3). As such, he is less inclined to evaluate the data.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Olivia obtained an average score on this section (4), indicating that she is somewhat likely to enjoy learning and be insightful and practical. Although insightful, Peter is rarely likely to investigate the issues at hand. His overall score was below average (1) for this section.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Olivia and Peter both obtained scores in the average range for this section (6 and 7 respectively). They are likely to be comfortable with abstract concepts and may be somewhat inventive.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 12: Comparative table of the Extroversion factor of the FFM

			Olivia	Peter
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Impactful			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Assertive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Olivia and Peter scored in the average range on the sociable section, (4 and 7 respectively), of the extroversion factor. They are likely to be interactive, engaging and may at times be self-promoting. When considering the primary data, both respondents indicated that they were outgoing – both extroverted in nature.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the sociable section. This was also evident in the interviewer's experience of the respondents as well as the respondents' experiences of each other.

Impactful

Olivia obtained a below average score on this section (3). Although she is somewhat likely to challenge ideas, she may not always be very convincing with others and may not articulate herself clearly. Peter obtained an average score (7) and although less challenging than Olivia is likely to articulate well and convince others in an appropriate manner.

This is somewhat interesting in that the interviewer indicated that she viewed Olivia as being a strong personality with the potential to be forceful if needed (although this was not experienced by the interviewer). Thus, the experience of the coach's personality is somewhat different to the objective measure of the assessment.

Challenging is a dimension measured under the section impactful. Olivia and Peter obtained average scores on this dimension. However, they both viewed the relationship as being characterised by support rather than challenge.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Assertive

Olivia and Peter obtained an average score (4) on this section. They are likely to be purposeful in their actions, generally empowering of others and somewhat directive in approach.

This again is interesting as the interviewer experienced both respondents as being very assertive. Although the assertiveness score is in the average range, it would be expected to be higher based on the lived experience of the interviewer. It is questionable why assertiveness is experienced more strongly than the respondents rate themselves. Perhaps it is due to the nature of the roles each encompasses?

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 13: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Olivia	Peter
Conscientiousness	Conscientious	Above average		
		Average		
		Below average	X	X
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Driven			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

Olivia and Peter are seldom likely to conform to the rules and may be somewhat unreliable. They may seldom pay attention to details. Both of them obtained a below average score on this section (1).

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Olivia and Peter obtained an average score for this section (4 and 5 respectively). Both parties are oriented to take the initiative. They are not likely to be overly organised and may tend to take more risks than most.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Driven

Both coach and coachee obtained an average score (4 and 7 respectively) for this section. Peter viewed himself as highly dynamic in approach whereas Olivia did not. This may talk to the courageousness and action orientation that Olivia stated in the interview. Both respondents however are enterprising and strive to achieve.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 14: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Olivia	Peter
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

An average score was obtained by both respondents (5). They are likely to be comfortable with change, generally optimistic in approach but may not always be receptive to others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Olivia and Peter both obtained an average score on this section (4). Although not always inclined to involve others, they are likely to both be attentive as well as accepting of others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

It is interesting to note that when queried regarding the nature of support to challenge both respondents viewed the relationship as being more supportive with Olivia providing a ratio of challenge to support as 40:60 and Peter as 30:70.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 15: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Olivia	Peter
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Flexible			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

Olivia obtained an above average score (8) on resilience. She is likely to remain calm under pressure and resolve conflict. Peter obtained an average score (7). He is fairly likely to remain calm under pressure and aim to resolve conflict.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

An average score was obtained by both respondents (5). They are likely to be comfortable with change, generally optimistic in approach but may not always be receptive to others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

The respondents Wave personality questionnaire profiles, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were similarities in the following factors of the model:

- Conscientiousness
- Agreeableness

There were also a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the imaginative section of the openness factor, sociable and assertive sections of the extroversion factor and flexible in the emotional stability factor.

Conclusion:

The biographical data indicates clear differences in this dyad. There were some concerns the coach had regarding the coachee's accent; however, this was not

indicated as an inhibitor to the process or relationship. The biographical data was stated as having little influence on the coaching process.

The coach and coachee were experienced by the interviewer as being outgoing, driven and friendly. These personality traits were reiterated by each respondent about themselves in the interview as well as about each other during the interview. The respondents also describe their personalities as being similar to each other's. Olivia indicated that the partnership was "A meeting of minds". Peter stated it "…was a match made in heaven." When considering the secondary data of the psychometric assessment, there are a number of similarities in sections and factors between the respondents. They are similar on nine sections out of 12, which load onto the FFM. These sections include imaginative, sociable, assertive, conscientious, structured, driven, flexible and supportive (flexible of the FFM reflected twice).

Olivia and Peter were similar in the conscientiousness factor of the FFM with the sections of conscientious, structured and driven all within the same category, conscientious - below average, structured – average and driven - average. The factor of agreeableness was also similar between Olivia and Peter with the sections of flexible and supportive both being rated in the average range by both respondents. Imaginative was rated in the average range by both respondents in the openness factor as was flexible in the agreeableness factor. The extroversion factor had both sociable and assertive as rated in the same category (average) by the respondents.

When considering the influence of personality on the coaching process the coach and coachee experienced each other's personality as being similar to that of their own. When considering the objective measure of a personality assessment, this was reinforced with the factors or conscientiousness and agreeableness being similar, as well as nine out of 12 sections, which load onto the FFM.

It is evident then that personality is similar objectively and that the respondents experience of that personality is similar subjectively.

The respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met.

This case indicates that the respondents experienced each other as being similar in personality. The personality measure indicates that the personalities between the respondents were similar on two factors of the FFM and that the coaching process was effective.

When considering Case 1 and Case 2, both cases indicate a fruitful relationship between the executive coach and the coachee as well as beneficial outcomes, which were achieved. In both cases, the coach and coachee viewed themselves as having similar personalities to their respective coachee and coach; however, objectively this was only the case in Case 2.

Why are people, such as Case 1, experiencing personality in the coaching relationship as being similar but according to the objective measures it is not so?

4.3 Case 3: Male-female dyad in the mining industry

A. Description

Walter[5] is a business owner and executive coach. He studied clinical psychology but decided to change his career to that of organisational psychology. He indicated that coaching is not something he loves but does embark on it from time to time based on the needs of the coachee.

Rose[6] completed her law degree and currently works as a company secretary. Rose did not meet any other executive coaches. She had an interaction with Walter through a team intervention through her organisation. She felt she would benefit from coaching from Walter and got the necessary approval from her supervisor.

[5] Not his real name
[6] Not her real name

B. Biographical data

Case 3						
Walter	White	Male	42	South African Afrikaans	Owner, Industrial Psychologist and Executive coach	
Rose	White	Female	38	South African Afrikaans	Company Secretary	Mining

Walter is a white, Afrikaans, male, South African. Rose is also Afrikaans South African, white but female. No reference was made to the biographical mix of this dyad during the interviews; however it would be prudent to consider the culture in which this dyad operates. The Afrikaans culture generally is still quite patriarchal (McClintock, 1993). Gender bias is apparent with Afrikaans history organised around a male national narrative (McClintock, 1993). Although the dyad operates in an organisational context, the cultural nuances and impact of the gender differences within the Afrikaans culture should be taken into consideration as "…Afrikaaner nationalism was dependent not only on powerful constructions of racial difference, but also on powerful constructions of gender difference." (McClintock, 1993, p71).

During the interview with Walter. he stated that he believed that there should be a better matching process of coachees to coaches. Walter stated that "…so biographical surveys, good ones to match people, I think would be first prize for coaching." He stated that he believed matching was an exceptionally important part of the coaching process and that biographical data, work experience and psychometric data should be used to match coaching dyads more effectively "…when you match a coach and a coachee, it should be people that are very similar and people of the same sort of social stature and experience stature. Because what I've found is that when you sit with someone who has less experience than you, way less experience, it becomes a problem because they don't… they just don't get the nuances of corporate life…So their worldviews should be the same, there should be like a little biographical questionnaire, how many years of experience...yes the age…" Walter stated that ability and emotional intelligence should also be measured and then coachees should be presented with the three coach choices, which match best according to the above criteria and from there the coachee should choose a

coach "…a bit of EQ and then ability. Ability is also important, remember, let's say the coach had less ability, lower scores than the person that he's coaching. They're going to have a problem. So there must be a match at that level as well…". Interviewer: "So do you think that we should get to a place in executive coaching where even though the people might have chemistry sessions with several people and choose whoever they like, that there would be biographical information based on those sorts of things, that then matches those three people?" Walter: "Yes, because then you'd know when those three meet, at least then there's a lot of alignment prior to the session."

C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and coachee's personalities

The interviewer has known Walter for several years. On first meeting Walter approximately four years ago, the interviewer would have described him then as quite aloof, highly intelligent and serious. He is a strong personality and is a perfectionist. Over the four years, the interviewer has become acquainted with Walter and has experienced a softer side to him.

Rose was experienced by the interviewer as vivacious, friendly and extroverted. She also came across as quite a sensitive, emotional person. She, however, is extremely self-aware regarding her own emotions and feelings and in particular, how this influences her.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach's personality

When asked to describe his personality, Walter clearly stated he is a Type A personality. Type A personality is characterised by being competitive, impatient, ambitious and hostile. Time urgency is displayed and these individuals may be overly committed to work (Bruck & Allen, 2003). Walter stated that he was strong at solving problems as well as a good leader. He described himself as principled and adaptable "…and then in terms of adaptability, too adaptable…so the world can fall apart next to me and I'll find a way around it." He stated that he is an introvert but

that he has learnt to be more extroverted in certain situations. He stated that he had high expectations and could often be impatient.

Rose described Walter as being an introvert but also as being adaptable and adventurous: “I think he’s reserved…I think he’s adventurous, because he flies that helicopter. I think he likes that adrenaline rush that takes him out of his comfort zone…” She further stated that she did not view Walter as an emotional person “…he is not emotional at all, so he’s a very straightforward person…” This was reiterated by Walter who stated that his approach in coaching was to lessen the emotions: “So that’s my approach to anything, to teach people to think as opposed to feel. Because when we feel we’re emotional, and we make mistakes. When we think, we don’t.”

Rose further stated that she viewed Walter as being a driven individual.

Experience of the coachee’s personality

Rose described her personality as being one of a perfectionist “…so I want to be perfect in everything.” This was also evident in the way that Rose chose Walter as her coach. When asked about the chemistry session she stated that she had not had a chemistry session with Walter. She had met him when he had run a team session with the team. On providing feedback to the team she stated that “…I thought he knew what he was talking about. That’s the only reason why I would go…So he really impressed me in his knowledge of it…I liked his presentation style…So I think… I think that’s my point, I don’t know if I would have been as satisfied if I knew that I didn’t get the best.”

Rose stated that she was an extrovert and that she was a person who didn’t handle stress very effectively: **“**I stress very easily, a lot…”

Walter described Rose as slightly reserved “…so when she’s with people that she knows you can’t shut her up. When she’s with new people she’s very quiet. So slightly reserved…” He stated that she was a sensitive person with lower confidence levels who does not like conflict. He saw her as being a principled person.

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

The dyad in this case study very clearly saw themselves as having very different personalities. When asked the question, Walter stated that they were: “Completely the opposite.” Rose also viewed their personalities as different “…you know my personality is totally different from his, totally. So I could see that he tried to accommodate me…” However when asked if she would embark on a coaching journey with a coach more similar to her personality, Rose stated without hesitation that she would: “Definitely go back to Walter.”

Walter stated in general terms that he viewed similarities as being quite important to the coaching process: “Remember with opposites it’s going to be exaggerated, so impatience, intolerance will be exaggerated. And that may impact on the effectiveness of the session. But if the people are similar, yes you might find there’s a blind spot, but that’s why you need proper tools, to understand what those blind spots are.”

Rose’s interview showed the importance of the modelling by a coach as in Case 1. When discussing extroversion, Rose stated that Walter is an introvert but he has taught himself to be extroverted when required. She stated that she felt that if he could work on things to benefit him, so could she: “But I can see that he forces himself to do it. And it’s quite motivating, because if he can do it, I can do it. So I can see that he’s able to handle himself quite well despite his personality, and that was a good lesson for me.”

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

Rose viewed the challenge to support ratio as 60:40: “But he was challenging me in the sense that he would say, I should approach… again also the approach thing… how would you approach him differently you know? What can you do to change your way, change your words?” Rose clearly stated that at times she found the process difficult: “I still struggle with it, I just do… you know it’s difficult. But I’m better, and I’m improving.”

Walter viewed the ratio of challenge to support as a 50:50 split.

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

The relationship was characterised by trust: “I think the fact that she trusted me from the word go…I mean we started the session and she just started telling me everything.”

Rose did not mention trust in the interview. She, however, stated that Walter was professional and credible: “I thought he knew what he was talking about. That’s the only reason why I would go.” She further stated that she found the coaching was not a blanket approach but was specific to her “…applicable to me and my situation.”

Walter stated that Rose was invested in the coaching process “…she was committed, yes.”

What was interesting was that Rose stated that the coaching relationship could at times be uncomfortable as she felt that she was being evaluated: “It makes me uncomfortable sometimes as well, because it sometimes makes me feel as if I’m always being evaluated.”

Coaching outcomes

Rose clearly stated that she viewed the coaching as working exceptionally well and that she had grown and changed through the process: “I was thinking about it, because you were coming here, and I was thinking what did it do for me? And it really did change my world.” “…what changed was…my way changed and their reaction changed as well, and substantially…” Rose stated that she felt that: “I think you seriously never stop needing coaching, you never do, no.” When asked about an alternative coach, Rose stated that based on the positive outcomes of this coaching journey she would only go back to Walter: “Definitely go back to Walter.”

Walter also stated that the coaching outcomes were met: “So Rose specifically, her biggest challenge was assertiveness and executive stature, and essentially following our sessions…she’s become very assertive…to analyse her own behaviour…” Walter stated “…there was a great improvement, in terms of her approach to inter-personal relationships. How to solve challenges, and how to…distinguish and differentiate in terms of that behaviour.”

What does coaching allow for coachees?

Rose stated that coaching allowed her to reflect and change her approach. She may have felt the same way about situations but coaching gave her tangible skills to use in the environment and situations she found herself in: “Well I think he enabled me to grow…” “…I can see the change…” What is of interest is the fact that Rose credits much of the change to Walter. She did not express much credit to herself and the work she may have put into the process in order to change and grow.

What does coaching allow for executive coaches?

Walter also stated that as a coach he never stops learning through the journey he partakes with others: “Every time I coach someone I learn more about myself, and I learn more about how to behave differently to be successful.”

E. Secondary data (Appendix I)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 16: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Walter	Rose
Openness	**Evaluative**			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Investigative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Imaginative			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Walter obtained an above average score (9) on evaluative. He is likely to be very rational and analytical, enjoying working with the facts. Rose obtained an average score (4) on this section. She may be slightly less analytical and evaluative in approach.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Walter obtained an average score (7) on investigative. He is likely to be fairly insightful and enjoying learning. Rose obtained a below average score (3) on this section. She may be less inclined to investigate issues.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Walter obtained an above average score (10) for this section. He is likely to be extremely inventive, strategic and comfortable with abstract concepts. Rose obtained an average score (4). She is slightly less inventive and strategic.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 17: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Walter	Rose
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Impactful			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Assertive			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Walter and Rose obtained an average score on this section (4 and 7 respectively). Rose is likely to be somewhat more interactive and engaging than Walter. This section was reiterated through the interviews where Rose clearly labelled herself as extroverted and Walter saw Rose as being extroverted only once she knew people well. This was also experienced by the interviewer who saw Rose as being outgoing and gregarious. Although calling himself an introvert, Walter stated that it is something he has learnt and thus, scores in the average range.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

Impactful

Walter obtained an above average score on this section (8). He is more likely to challenge others and is convincing in his approach. Rose obtained an average score (5) for this section. She is moderately impactful.

When considering challenge it is important to discuss the challenging dimension on the profile. Walter obtained an above average score (8) and Rose obtained an average score (7). Rose also indicated that that the relationship encompassed more challenge than support with a 60:40 challenge to support ratio. This is indicative of the coach's preference. It is questionable if this is suitable when the coachee's score is in the average range; however, Rose stated that she was satisfied with the coaching outcomes and would choose Walter again as her coach, thus the challenge provided must have been to some benefit.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Assertive

The coach obtained an above average score (8) on this section. Comfortable with directing and empowering others with a purposeful stance he is likely to come across as assertive. The coachee obtained an average score (7) for this section. She is fairly assertive when dealing with others.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

It is interesting to note that despite the average score Rose obtained, Walter described her as not being assertive: "Her biggest challenge was assertiveness…" On discussion with Rose, she stated that it was not actually assertiveness, but rather the messaging of this, related to the dimension articulate in the impactful section. Rose stated that she feels she does not communicate well because she is Afrikaans and this makes her appear unassertive. This must also be considered in terms of the cultural nuances. It is questionable whether Rose appears less assertive as due to her Afrikaans upbringing she may be more submissive to men.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 18: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Walter	Rose
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Driven			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the average range for this section (5 and 6 respectively). Both respondents are reliable and meticulous. Rose is somewhat conforming. Walter on the other hand is not likely to conform.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Both the coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (7 and 6 respectively). They are likely to be principled, generally organised and action focused.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the structured section

Driven

Walter obtained an above average score (10) on this section. Rose obtained a score of (7), in the average range. Walter is likely to be extremely dynamic, always striving to achieve more. He is also enterprising. Rose tends to be fairly enterprising and striving.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 19: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Walter	Rose
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

Walter and Rose obtained a score in the average range for this section (4 and 6 respectively). They are typically optimistic, receptive to others and able to handle change.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Walter and Rose obtained an average score on this section (4 and 6 respectively). They are likely to be fairly accepting of others and moderately attentive and involved with others.

This was reiterated in the interview where the relationship was viewed as being more one of challenge than of support.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 20: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Walter	Rose
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Flexible			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

Walter obtained an above average score (9) on this section. He is likely to be very self-confident, handle pressure well and resolve conflicts. Rose obtained an average score (4) on this section. She is slightly less adept at handling stress. This was reiterated in the interview: “I stress very easily, a lot…” This was evident to the interviewer in that Rose came across as being quite anxious and doubting herself.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the average range for this section (4 and 6 respectively). They are moderately optimistic, receptive to others and able to handle change.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaires, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were similarities in the following factors of the model:

- Agreeableness

There were also a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the sociable section of the extroversion factor, conscientious and structured sections of the conscientiousness factor and flexible in the emotional stability factor.

Conclusion:

The biographical data indicates gender differences in this dyad. However, language and culture are similar. No concerns were raised by either respondent regarding the biographical information and its influence on the coaching process. It is questionable if biographical data may have influenced the coaching process unconsciously due to the more patriarchal nature of the Afrikaans culture.

During the interview with the respondents, the interviewer viewed the personalities of the respondents as being quite different to one another. At times, the interviewer was surprised that the outcomes had been as beneficial as described, as the interviewer questioned how the two respondents actually got on as they came across as being very different. The coachee is a sensitive, softer individual whereas the coach came across as somewhat tougher and aloof. It is of note that despite the differences in the personalities viewed by the interviewer the respondents both clearly stated that the coaching outcomes had been met.

The coach and coachee in this case describe their personalities as being different to one another. Rose stated "…you know my personality is totally different from his…" Walter stated that his personality was "Completely the opposite…" Despite these perceived opposites, both respondents believed that the relationship had been effective and the coaching outcomes met. Rose clearly stated that should she embark on coaching again, it would again be with Walter.

When considering the secondary data of the psychometric results, Rose and Walter are similar on six out of the 12 sections, which load onto the FFM. These include sociable, conscientious, structured, flexible and supportive (flexible of the FFM reflected twice). Rose and Walter are similar on the agreeableness factor of the FFM.

It is evident then, that personality is fairly similar using the objective measure of the psychometric assessment, however, when discussed subjectively, the respondents view their personalities as being very different to one another.

The respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met. It, however, must be noted that Rose was the only coachee who indicated a little bit of discomfort in the relationship, stating that the process made her feel that she was being evaluated "It makes me uncomfortable sometimes as well, because it sometimes makes me feel as if I'm always being evaluated."

It is interesting to note that in Case 3, the respondents state that their personalities are completely opposite to each other and they experienced each other as being different in personality, yet they are similar in the agreeableness factor of the FFM. Case 1, perceived themselves as being very similar to one another, yet there were no similarities in any of the five factors of the FFM. In Case 2, the respondents subjectively experienced each other's personality as being similar to their own personality and the objective measure indicated that there were similar on two factors of the FFM – conscientiousness and agreeableness.

4.4 Case 4: English – Afrikaans Dyad in the financial services industry

Walter was the coach in two cases – Case 3 and Case 4. There may be certain similarities in the reported text.

A. Description

Walter[7] is a business owner and executive coach. He studied clinical psychology but decided to change his career to that of organisational psychology. He indicated that coaching is not something he loves but does embark on it from time to time based on the individual.

Tamsyn[8] is an executive head in the financial services industry. She has been exposed to coaching previously. She did not meet Walter through a coaching session. She was exposed to him due to an organisational intervention. He impressed her in that he possessed the traits she feels she needs to learn, particularly focus and being contained and decided to embark on a coaching journey with him.

B. Biographical data

Case 4						
Walter	White	Male	42	South African Afrikaans	Owner, Industrial Psychologist and Executive coach	
Tamsyn	White	Female	47	South African English	Executive Head	Financial Services

Walter is a 42 year old, white, Afrikaans male. Tamsyn, the coachee is a white, 47 year old, English South African.

No direct reference was made by either respondent regarding their particular demographic match. However, through the interview, Walter stated that he believed that there should be a better matching process of coachees to coaches. Walter

[7] Not his real name
[8] Not her real name

stated that "…so biographical surveys, good ones to match people, I think would be first prize for coaching." He stated that he believed matching was an exceptionally important part of the coaching process and that biographical data, work experience and psychometric data should be used to match coaching dyads more effectively "…when you match a coach and a coachee, it should be people that are very similar and people of the same sort of social stature and experience stature. Because what I've found is that when you sit with someone who has less experience than you, way less experience, it becomes a problem because they don't… they just don't get the nuances of corporate life…So their worldviews should be the same, there should be like a little biographical questionnaire, how many years of experience...yes the age…" Walter stated that ability and emotional intelligence should also be measured and then coachees should be presented with the three coach choices which match best according to the above criteria and from there the coachee should choose a coach "…a bit of EQ and then ability. Ability is also important, remember, let's say the coach had less ability, lower scores than the person that he's coaching. They're going to have a problem. So there must be a match at that level as well…". Interviewer: "So do you think that we should get to a place in executive coaching where even though the people might have chemistry sessions with several people and choose whoever they like, that there would be biographical information based on those sorts of things, that then matches those three people?" Walter: "Yes, because then you'd know when those three meet, at least then there's a lot of alignment prior to the session."

C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and coachee's personalities

Tamsyn came across as outgoing, extroverted and dynamic. She has a strong personality with a go-getter attitude. She was experienced by the interviewer as friendly and open.

The interviewer has known Walter for several years. On first meeting Walter approximately four years ago, the interviewer would have described him then as quite aloof, highly intelligent and serious. He is a strong personality and is a

perfectionist. Over the four years, the interviewer has become acquainted with Walter and has experienced a softer side of him.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach's personality

When asked to describe his personality, Walter clearly stated he was a Type A personality. He stated that he was strong at solving problems as well as a good leader. He described himself as principled and adaptable "…and then in terms of adaptability, too adaptable…so the world can fall apart next to me and I'll find a way around it." He stated that he was an introvert but that he had learnt to be more extroverted in certain situations. He stated that he had high expectations and could often be impatient.

Tamsyn described Walter's personality as introverted and analytical. She stated that he was goal-oriented and very driven. She stated that he was deliberate in his actions and described him as calculated: "…almost mercenary."

Experience of the coachee's personality

When asked to describe her own personality, Tamsyn stated that she was outgoing and extroverted. She stated that she was results driven and could be quite tough on people. She stated that she was: "Challenging…in the interest of results and outcomes." She saw herself as a natural leader, "…looking to make a contribution…"

Walter described Tamsyn as being dynamic and a strong leader: "But she's a 'tell' leader, and I'm trying to get her to become a 'sell' leader. Because she's very strong…some people struggle to keep up…" He stated that she was a 'big picture' thinker, not focused on the details. He described her as a driven person.

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

When asked whether her personality and Walter's personality was similar, Tamsyn stated: "In some ways I am." These included being results-driven and demanding:

"…we are extremely demanding of ourselves, so while we judge others, we judge ourselves even more harshly."

One difference, however, which was highlighted by Tamsyn was the fact that Walter is "…much more contained." Tamsyn stated that whilst she believed there were similarities between them in personality, she selected Walter as her coach because she believed she could learn from the differences in personality between them, particularly the fact that Walter is contained and restrained.

Walter stated that he saw a lot of similarities between himself and Tamsyn describing their personalities as: "Very similar". When probed during the interview about the relationship, Walter stated that due to the similarities he saw between himself and Tamsyn, he looked forward to the sessions: **"**So Tamsyn's sessions I look forward to. Meaning that I know something would have happened, she would share, she'd be excited…"

Modelling was viewed in this coaching relationship. Tamsyn stated that Walter:"…executes the things I need to learn. So he does what I struggle with…" This was one of the reasons Tamsyn selected Walter as her coach.

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

The ratio of challenge to support was indicated by Tamsyn as being a 70:30 split. Walter stated that he believed it was a 90:10 split.

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

The relationship between Walter and Tamsyn was described by Tamsyn as involving trust, respect, openness and professionalism, but she also stated that it was quite a clinical relationship: "It's quite clinical…It's kind of… we have strict sessions, like when I say strict we have very bounded sessions. We work… through some stuff, he gives me some homework, I do the homework, sometimes more diligently sometimes less diligently and we'll meet again, and it's my journey, he's simply facilitating. So it's like that. It's quite… it's almost, not distant, but it is a bit distant yes. He's literally a tool."

Tamsyn further stated that the relationship encompassed trust but at an extreme level describing it as "…not just trust, submission."

Walter stated that the relationship worked well as Tamsyn was open, willing and enthusiastic "I think her enthusiasm and her willingness to try things."

Coaching outcomes

Tamsyn stated that her coaching journey had really just started and although the outcomes were set out, these had not been reached at the time of the interview: "I haven't really had a breakthrough yet, so we haven't you know, it's actually quite a frustrating journey…" She stated that her anticipated outcome was reinvention of herself. Tamsyn indicated that there was a positive move towards these outcomes. Her achiever nature created impatience in the process.

What does coaching allow for coachees?

Tamsyn stated that the coaching had provided her with "…uncompromised feedback" that she valued highly. She stated that the coaching had really increased her self-awareness: "So he would say to me, we would be in a session, he would send me an sms saying you look completely bored and you've just shut down half the team. And stuff like that, and I had absolutely no awareness that I was coming across like that, it was so powerful…" The coaching had also provided different perspectives: "So I've had extremely different perspectives on some things, which is really, really interesting…"

Coaching has also allowed a space for reinvention.

What was interesting to note was that Tamsyn indicated that her level of vulnerability and the extent to which she was willing to be vulnerable in order to grow had increased. She stated that the only inhibitor to the coaching relationship was: "The extent to which I'm willing to be vulnerable…" She explained that she was a very self-sufficient, independent person and that stating her needs during the coaching journey, opening up to that vulnerability, had been difficult: "I'm very self-sufficient you know, I'm very…independent…so driving my requirements into the process, so saying no, no…I need to meet with you every two weeks. That's been

challenging…So actually expressing my requirements and needs…because there's a dependency linked to that…and I find that difficult. Because it talks to the vulnerability as well. Which is quite an insight." Tamsyn elaborated on this further stating that Walter had to postpone a session "…and I was angry as hell, and then I said, 'no problem, I totally understand…I'll see you then next week'. And then I stopped and just thought, no if this is a trust relationship then I just need to tell him. And I said, 'I was so disappointed and I don't think you're taking this seriously.' And that was amazing."

What does coaching allow for executive coaches?

Reflection was noted by both respondents, as what coaching allowed for them. Walter also stated that as a coach he never stops learning through the journey he partakes with others: "Every time I coach someone I learn more about myself, and I learn more about how to behave differently to be successful."

E. Secondary data (Appendix J)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 21: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Walter	Tamsyn
Openness	**Evaluative**			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Investigative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Imaginative			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Walter obtained an above average score (9) on evaluative. He is likely to be very rational and analytical, enjoying working with the facts. Tamsyn obtained an average score (5) on this section. She is likely to be moderately evaluative in her approach.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Walter obtained an average score (7) on investigative. He is likely to be fairly investigative. Tamsyn obtained a below average score (3) on this section. She may be less inclined to investigate issues.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Walter obtained an above average score (10) for this section. He is likely to be extremely inventive, strategic and abstract when coming up with concepts. Tamsyn obtained an average score (6). She is likely to be moderately inclined to imaginative.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 22: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Walter	Tamsyn
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Impactful			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Assertive			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Walter and Tamsyn obtained an average score on this section (4 and 6 respectively). Tamsyn is likely to be somewhat more interactive than Walter is; however, both are typically sociable.

This was of interest to the interviewer as Tamsyn came across as being highly extroverted. She was talkative, friendly and approachable. It is questionable why she demonstrates this behaviour when the objective measure of the personality assessment indicates that she is not overly extroverted. It is also interesting that based on the objective measure both respondents are in the average range of sociable; however, this factor on their personalities is experienced so differently.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

Impactful

Walter obtained an above average score on this section (8). He is likely to challenge others and is convincing in his approach. Tamsyn obtained an average score (7) for this section. She is likely to be fairly impactful in her approach.

When exploring the challenging dimension of the assessment, Walter obtained an above average score (8) as did Tamsyn (10). It is evident then that both respondents appreciate challenge. Tamsyn stated that she received this challenge stating that the ratio of challenge to support was 70:30. Walter stated that the ratio was 90:10. Although he also scored above average on this dimension, he may have had to provide even more challenge as Tamsyn's score is 10. Walter also indicated that he enjoyed the sessions with Tamsyn. This may be because as she is challenging by nature and he has a high inclination for this, he enjoyed the challenge she in all likelihood gave him.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Assertive

The coach obtained an above average score (8) on this section. Comfortable with directing and empowering others with a purposeful stance he is likely to come across as assertive. Tamsyn obtained an average score (7) for this section. She is fairly assertive in her approach.

This is interesting in that she, her coach and the interviewer all describe her behaviour as being direct and assertive. She is experienced as such, which is similar to her coach's personality factor; however, objectively this is not the case.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 23: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Walter	Tamsyn
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**	Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Driven			
		Above average	X	X
		Average		
		Below average		

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

Walter obtained an average score (5) on this section. He is likely to be moderately conscientious. Tamsyn obtained a below average score (1) on this section. She is rarely likely to conform to the norm and is disinclined to be conscientious.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Both the coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (7 and 5 respectively). They are likely to be typically organised and action focused.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the structured section

Driven

Walter and Tamsyn obtained scores in the above average range for this section (10 and 8 respectively). They are both highly dynamic individuals.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 24: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Walter	Tamsyn
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

The respondents obtained a score in the average range for this section (7). They are typically optimistic, receptive to others and able to handle change.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Walter obtained an average score on this section (4) He is likely to fairly supportive of others. Tamsyn obtained a below average score (3) on this section. She may be less inclined to support others. This was reiterated further in the interview when Tamsyn stated that the relationship provided far more challenge than support. It is unlikely that Tamsyn looked for this as she has a disinclination for supportive.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 25: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Walter	Tamsyn
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average	X	X
		Average		
		Below average		
	Flexible			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

Walter and Tamsyn obtained an above average score on this section (9 and 8 respectively). They are both self-assured individuals who are likely to be somewhat more resilient than others are.

What was interesting to note is that Walter obtained a score of 10 on the composed dimension, whereas Tamsyn obtained a six. Tamsyn stated in the interview that Walter was a much more contained person than she was. This composed dimension talks to that. This dimension may be a factor, which drew Tamsyn to Walter as her coach. She saw Walter's composure as something, which she could learn from "He executes the things I need to learn. So he does what I struggle with…"

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

The respondents obtained a score in the average range for this section (7). They are fairly optimistic, receptive to others and able to handle change.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaire profiles, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were similarities in the following factor of the model:

- Emotional stability

There were also a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the sociable sections of the extroversion factor, the driven and structured sections of the conscientiousness factor and flexible in the agreeableness factor.

Conclusion:

The biographical data indicates some differences including gender and culture in that Walter is Afrikaans and Tamsyn is English. No concerns with regard to biographical data were mentioned as a concern during the interviews. It must be noted that Walter was the coach in Case 3 and Case 4. There are cultural differences in these

cases with Case 3 involving an Afrikaans male and Afrikaans female. It appeared that Rose in Case 3 deferred often to Walter. In Case 4, the coachee is English. Although Tamsyn appears more forceful in personality than Rose, there may also be some unstated influence of the gender differences on the coaching process. Walter indicated that he enjoyed working with Tamsyn more than with Rose. Was this due to personality factors or could it be that as an English female Tamsyn was less deferential than Rose was to Walter, which was more enjoyable for Walter?

The interviewer experienced the respondents as being fairly similar, particularly in their assertiveness. They are both driven, successful, achievement oriented individuals. They, however, were experienced differently, regarding their sociability. Walter was experienced as an introvert and somewhat aloof. Tamsyn was experienced as extremely outgoing and friendly. This was reiterated by Tamsyn who stated that in some ways they were similar but she had selected Walter because of the differences between them, particularly the fact that Walter contains himself well.

Walter stated that he viewed Tamsyn as being similar to himself. Tamsyn indicated that in some ways she was similar to Walter.

When considering the secondary data, Walter and Tamsyn have one factor of the FFM, which is similar, that of emotional stability. The psychometric results indicate that they are also similar on six out of the 12 sections, which load onto the FFM. These include sociable, driven, structured, resilient and flexible (flexible of the FFM reflected twice).

The respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met.

The cases thus far, indicate that out of the four cases, three cases indicate that they experience their coach's/coachee's personality as being similar to their own. However, when investigating the secondary data, there is little alignment to this. In Case 1 the respondents stated that they view their personalities as being very similar, however, no factors of the FFM are similar between them. In Case 2, the respondents viewed themselves as having similar personalities and were similar on

two factors of the FFM: conscientiousness and agreeableness. In Case 3, the respondents stated that they were very different from each other, yet they were similar on one factor of the FFM: agreeableness. In Case 4, the respondents viewed themselves as being fairly similar to each other in personality, yet they were similar in only one factor of the FFM, that of emotional stability. Why are the dyads, generally experiencing themselves as being similar to their respective coach/coachee, yet the secondary data yields no such evidence? Why is Case 3 experiencing themselves as having different personalities yet there is still one factor, which is similar of the FFM – one more than in Case 1, where there are no similar factors but they experience their personalities as similar?

What is of particular interest is the fact that Walter was the executive coach in Case 3 and Case 4. In both of these cases, one factor is similar in each dyad. In Case 3, agreeableness was similar between the respondents and in Case 4, emotional stability was similar between the respondents. Across both cases, six out of 12 sections were similar. However the experience of the respondents, as well as the interviewer, clearly indicates that despite the secondary data showing similarities, the lived experience of personality is quite different. Despite the secondary data indicating six out of 12 sections and one factor being similar, Case 3 described their personalities as being completely different, whereas Case 4, described their personalities as being quite similar. This may be due to difference in the factor of the FFM, which is similar between respondents, but is questionable how these two cases with six out of 12 sections and each having one similar factor (agreeableness and emotional stability respectively) can experience the personality of the other so differently.

It must further be noted, that despite the experience of personality differences in Case 3, across all the cases the respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met.

4.5 Case 5: Dyad in the banking industry

A. Description

Both respondents were older males. They had both started with a well-known bank in South Africa and developed their careers within the same bank. There was a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Greg[9], the coach is semi-retired, consulting to the bank and working as a coach. Liam[10] the coachee had been coached by Greg several times and for several years. They had a long-lasting, deep relationship, bordering on that of a friendship.

B. Biographical data

Case 5						
Greg	White	Male	68	South African English	Director	Financial Services
Liam	White	Male	56	South African English	Head	Financial Services

The coach, Greg, is a 68 year old, white, English South African male. Liam, the coachee, is 56 year old, white, English South African male. No comments were made regarding demographic variables and the influence of these on the executive coaching process.

C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and coachee's personalities

Greg was instantly likeable. Friendly, open and kind he was enthusiastic about the research and contributing towards it. He was a talkative person. He came across as displaying high empathy and high inter-personal sensitivity. During the interview, he described himself as a difficult person. The interviewer did not experience this in any way. This may be because when he worked full time he may have been demanding, however, now that he is semi-retired this is not so prevalent in his behaviour.

Liam was known to the interviewer prior to the interview. He is a caring person. At work, however, he may come across as a direct, 'no-nonsense' individual. Liam is

[9] Not his real name
[10] Not his real name

extroverted, outgoing and friendly. He was also very open during the interview process.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach's personality

Greg described himself as being a difficult person. He stated that he was goal oriented. He also stated that he was a supportive person who was very tolerant: "But I'll always give somebody another chance, too often…" Greg stated that he was a leader, happy to take on an authoritative role.

When asked to describe his coach, Liam described Greg's personality as goal oriented and focused. He described Greg as friendly, approachable and a person who has a lot of time for others. Liam also stated that Greg was inspirational: "As I say he inspires me a lot…"

Experience of the coachee's personality

Greg described Liam as energetic, outgoing, respectful and an overall "…nice guy". He stated that he is diplomatic, intelligent and has a positive attitude. He also stated that Liam was always ready for a challenge and never shied away from more difficult tasks. Greg also stated that Liam was a faithful person.

When asked to describe his own personality, Liam stated that he was: "A difficult person…" He stated that he was also goal oriented and fun-loving. He stated that he will speak his mind. He described himself as influential and impatient. He stated that he was a flexible individual. He believed that his listening skills could be improved upon.

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

When considering the similarities in personalities, it was interesting to note that the first comment uttered by both Greg and Liam was that they described themselves as being difficult.

Liam was more open regarding the similar characteristics between himself and his coach. Liam stated: “We have the same personalities. There’s very little difference at the end of the day.” He also stated that they were similar and that their backgrounds within the organisation were similar. He further went on to reiterate that being so similar was a positive “…it’s actually quite marvellous that we’re actually almost joined at the hip…”

One difference that was discussed, was the level of cognition. This is interesting to note due to the point raised by Walter (Case 3 & Case 4) who proposes that a cognitive similarity is required for the coaching process to work. Liam stated that at times the difference in cognitive processing according to Jaques’ levels of work (Jaques & Cason, 1994) could be frustrating: “So where you find a lot of the people…they can help you more with the tactical level and execution level, but a strategic level often you’re on your own. Even sometimes with Greg there is that disconnect there.” Thus, Liam certainly feels that there is a difference in cognition between him and his coach, which was at times a frustration.

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

When considering the ratio of challenge to support, Liam stated that the relationship was one of support with an 80:20 support to challenge ratio. Liam stated that Greg was supportive and stated: “His make-up is that of support.”

Greg did not provide a ratio but stated that: “You’ve got to throw out the challenge, and then support the effort…” He used the analogy of a battle “…and so you know, I’ll make sure that you’ve got all the rations you need, and I’ll carry the ammunition and the supplies, but you do the shooting…”

Both males, although stating that there was a lot of support in the coaching process, also stated that there had been challenges and disagreements but that these challenges were beneficial for the relationship and the coaching process: “Do we ever have challenges or arguments? Not really arguments, but forceful discussions. But they are rare but they are needed at certain times…and I think that also builds trust and that relationship as well to say we’re both prepared to have those tough discussions and I think when you talk about coaching that needs to happen both

ways."

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

Greg and Liam spoke about trust and respect as pivotal to the coaching relationship: "You know there's got to be mutual trust, there's got to be understanding…you've got to understand the person, you've got to understand his background, his likes and dislikes." Liam stated: "I think first of all it's the one of trust. So you can go to him around something and it's confidential. So he's also a soundboard. So you can go off and you can bounce stuff off of the guy. I think the connection is built on the respect we have for each other…" "He's got deep respect for me. I've got deep respect for him."

Liam indicated that Greg was also always willing to give of his time and effort: "Willing to put that effort in…and he's always willing to make the time for you." He also stated that Greg always acted with integrity: "As I say his integrity is another thing. It's just not in doubt at all…"

What was clearly evident through the interview with Liam was that the coaching relationship only works if both parties are invested, but if the coachee in particular is: "sincerely committed" to the process: "To take it sincerely, to understand what it is that you want to get out of it, what is it in for me? So why am I doing that...What do you want to get out of coaching? Set yourself clear outcomes what you want to achieve, the agendas that you're wanting to get out of it and the milestones associated with that…So it's around taking it as personally to make sure that you become a better person at the end of the day. So that's what I've really got out of it. But I do take those things sincerely." He further went on to state that it is about clearly defining the outcomes "Having it on a piece of paper. Not in your head. Where you can manage it. List the things you want to achieve. List the things that you going to do to achieve it. List the timeframes and list the reflections in how you going to do your actions. What are you going to do to it? If you do that, anything's achievable because it's got too used to being reflected…that personal accountability that you take for it, it's up to you."

Greg and Liam saw the relationship as a partnership: “We must make it a sincere partnership where it’s a not a you and an us. It’s a partnership.” Liam commented on the connection between him and his coach and how important this was to the relationship: “I can’t under-estimate the connection that we actually have…”

The relationship was also described as one where Greg listened and provided guidance and feedback: “I think is if you know what you want to achieve and you get the right guidance and feedback in terms of how you can navigate that journey…” I think is if you know what you want to achieve and you get the right guidance and feedback in terms of how you can navigate that journey…”

What was interesting to note was that Greg believed that in the course of the coaching journey, the relationship becomes one of friendship: “You’ve got to move towards friendship in the normal course…It’s first and foremost a friendship you know, I think I probably was still pappa bear in the beginning, you know if he was wanting to do something and he wasn’t sure, he’d call me. But then you know, I’d probably call him too if I wasn’t aware at some stage. It was very much a friendship role, but again in the first years, he will acknowledge you know, that I was senior.”

Coaching outcomes

The coaching outcomes were described by Liam as assisting him to move into middle management, which he had far exceeded “Well I think where I am in my career right now, so I think, I think the goals I set myself was to be a middle manager… So from that side I have been successful and a lot of it goes to Greg.” This was the initial outcome but Greg has been Liam’s coach for many years. The outcomes now for coaching Liam are to help him: “Clear the path in terms of obstacles that I may see or may not see to help me clear the path. It’s also to help me grow. So irrespective where I am in my career or where I am with regarding age it’s always helped me.”

What does coaching allow for coachees?

Greg indicated that coaching allows for support and a sounding board: “But again he still…relies on that support. You know, he doesn’t need the enlightenment any more, but he still needs the sounding board, he still needs the support.” This was reiterated

by Liam who stated that leadership is lonely: “But we are lonely sometimes.” Coaching provides support and a sounding board for executives.

Liam stated that coaching allows for growth and development: “It’s also to help me grow.”

Liam also stated that coaching had allowed him to find alternate avenues to deal with challenges in the world of work: “So for me is really to help me clear the path in terms of obstacles that I may see or may not see...” Coaching also provided Liam with alternative perspectives: “He’s actually exposed to a lot more than what we exposed to here from an outside perspective.”

Coaching further allows leaders to reflect. Liam stated that one must take coaching sincerely and: “Make sure you regularly reflect on it and make sure you realign and when you’re not achieving what you want to achieve, go back to Greg and say: “Listen Greg. I’m battling with this.”

What does coaching allow for coaches?

Greg also stated that coaching provided a fun element: “Coaching is great fun, and it must be, it must be!”

Greg stated that coaching allows for growth and development of the coach. He stated: “It’s a very rewarding phenomena…when you see people grow.”

E. Secondary data (Appendix K)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 26: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Greg	Liam
Openness	Evaluative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Investigative			
		Above average		X
		Average	X	
		Below average		
	Imaginative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Greg obtained an average score (4) on evaluative. He is likely to be fairly rational and factual but may at times not be highly analytical. Liam obtained a below average score (1) on evaluative. He is rarely likely to enjoy evaluating information

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Greg scored an average score on investigative (5). He is likely to be moderately investigative in approach. Liam obtained an above average score (8) and is more likely to enjoy learning, be quite insightful and fairly practically minded.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Greg and Liam obtained scores in the average range on this section (4 and 5 respectively). They are likely to be typically imaginative in approach.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 27: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Greg	Liam
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Impactful			
		Above average		
		Average		
		Below average	X	X
	Assertive			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Greg obtained an average score (4) on this section. He is likely to be fairly interactive and engaging and may promote himself at times. Liam obtained a below average

score (3). Although also interactive, he is not likely to be highly engaging or self-promoting.

This was certainly not how the interviewer experienced the respondents. Both respondents came across as extroverted and sociable. It is interesting that the secondary data indicates that this is not a clear preference for either of them.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

Impactful

Greg and Liam obtained a below average score on this section (3 and 1 respectively). Both respondents less inclined to be convincing or challenging of others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

It was interesting to note that Greg viewed Liam as being somewhat challenging, ready to speak his mind. Liam may not have a preference for challenging but has learnt the skill due to his environment. Greg may view the behaviour but this may not be Liam's preferred style. It is also interesting to note that Liam stated that the relationship was more one of support than challenge giving it an 80:20 ratio of support to challenge

Assertive

The coach obtained a below average score (2) on this section. He shows limited interest in asserting his authority. Liam obtained an average score (7) on this section. He is likely to be fairly purposeful, directing and empowering.

This must be noted as Greg is semi-retired, consulting to the bank at which Liam works. This difference in approach may be due to a new life stage. When he worked at the bank, Greg may have obtained a higher score on assertive and there may have been more alignment in this section at that time.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 28: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Greg	Liam
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**	Above average		
		Average		
		Below average	X	X
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Driven			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the below average range for this section (2 and 3 respectively). They may be less inclined to be conscientious.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Greg obtained a below average score (1) whilst Liam obtained an average score (5) on this section. Greg may seldom behave in a structured manner. Liam, however, is moderately likely to behave in a structured approach.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the structured section

Driven

The coach and coachee obtained scores in the average range (4 and 7 respectively) for this section. They are moderately likely to be dynamic and enterprising.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 29: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Greg	Liam
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the average range for this section (5 and 6 respectively). They are typically optimistic, able to handle change and receptive to others. .

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Greg and Liam obtained an average score on this section (6 and 4 respectively). They are likely to be fairly attentive and somewhat involved with others.

During the interview, Liam felt that the relationship was particularly supportive giving it a ratio split of 80:20.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 30: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Greg	Liam
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Flexible			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

Greg obtained a below average score (3) on this section. He may be less inclined to behave in a resilient manner. Liam obtained an average score (5). He is moderately likely to be self-assured, focused on resolving problems and composed.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the average range for this section (5 and 6 respectively). They are moderately optimistic, able to handle change and receptive to others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaires, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were similarities in the following
factors of the model:

- Agreeableness

There were also a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the imaginative section of the openness factor, impactful on the extroversion factor, conscientious and driven sections of the conscientiousness factor and flexible in the emotional stability factor.

Conclusion:

Liam and Greg are similar in biographical information. Both are white, English, male respondents. No concerns with regard to biographical data were mentioned as a concern during the interviews. They are however at quite different stages in their career life cycles.

Greg and Liam stated in the interviews that they viewed themselves as being very similar in personality to one another "We have the same personalities. There's very little difference end of the day." The interviewer also experienced the respondents as being quite similar in personality and could ascertain why the respondents got on so well. Greg was experienced as having somewhat more empathy and sensitivity but this may be attributed to the fact that Greg is semi-retired.

When considering the secondary data seven out of the 12 sections that load onto the FFM are similar. These include imaginative, impactful, driven, conscientious, supportive and flexible (flexible of the FFM reflected twice). The only factor according to the FFM, which is similar in this case, is agreeableness.

The respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met.

Across the five cases discussed thus far, four of the cases have viewed themselves as having similar personalities to the executive coach/coachee. One case, Case 3, viewed each other as being quite different. Across these five cases, however, there are no consistencies in any of the objective, psychometric measurements. In Case 1, the respondents view themselves as being very similar in personality to each other, but no factors of the FFM are similar. In Case 2, the respondents viewed themselves as similar and two factors of the FFM are similar, namely conscientiousness and agreeableness. In Case 3, the respondents viewed themselves as being different to each other, yet one factor of the FFM was similar, that of agreeableness. Case 4 respondents viewed themselves as fairly similar with one factor similar of the FFM, that of emotional stability. Both Case 3 and Case 4 had six out of 12 sections similar of the FFM. However, despite this objective measure of similarity, the lived experience was viewed as being different in Case 4 between executive coach and coachee. Case 5 respondents' lived experience was that the executive coach and coachee were similar, yet only one factor of the FFM was similar, that of agreeableness. Liam however indicated that he was more strategic cognitively than Greg.

4.6 Case 6: Opposing racial dyad in the mining industry

A. Description

Ian[11] and Adam[12] were older males. Adam has worked in the mining industry his whole life. Adam clearly expressed how coaching had changed him for the better. He clearly stated that some of the answers to the interview questions would have been different had he not experienced coaching.

Adam took up the offer of feedback on the secondary data - psychometric report. During the feedback he again stated that he has worked consciously on developing

[11] Not his real name
[12] Not his real name

himself during and after his coaching sessions. Thus, it is highly likely that certain dimensions, sections and factors of the personality assessment would have been different prior to coaching.

Ian worked previously as a chief executive officer but opened his own business and coaches as part of this business.

B. Biographical data

Case 6						
Ian	White	Male	52	South African English	Owner, Executive Coach	
Adam	Black	Male	58	Zimbabwean/South African	Executive	Mining

Ian is a 52-year-old white, South African male. Adam is a 58-year-old black, Zimbabwean male. No concerns regarding demographics were raised by either respondent.

C. Interviewer's experience of the coachee's and executive coach's personalities

The interviewer had met Ian prior to the interview as he had facilitated a workshop of which she had been part. Ian came across as strong willed, determined but caring. During the interview, he came across as direct and open.

Adam came across as a very kind person. He came across as determined and strong willed. This case was very interesting in that Adam clearly noted the change in him as a person due to the coaching. He clearly stated that prior to coaching he would 'blow-up' in meetings. This was certainly not how Adam was experienced in the interview. Adam also became very emotional at times during the interview. This was in contrast to the strong-willed, tough persona described. It further indicates the impact coaching had on him and he stated that coaching had changed him.

D. Primary data

Of all of the case studies, it was clear through the interview as well as the feedback on the assessment requested by the coachee, that the coachee had experienced profound change due to the executive coaching process. Adam stated that he thought some sections on the assessment would have been different prior to the coaching having taken place. When discussing the coaching journey, Adam got emotional and it was clear that there had been personal development, growth and change for him.

It must be noted that generally, personality is constant and unlikely to change on a psychometric report. However, should the person consciously work on certain areas diligently, areas of personality can be developed. It would have been interesting to run a pre- and post-test scenario, however, this was not the focus of this research and psychometric personality reports are valid for 18 months.

When interviewing Ian and Adam they both noted that they had completed the Insights Discovery tool (Insights Discovery, 2013). The coach and coachee had the same colour type, describing their personalities as Fiery Red. Individuals who have a Fiery Red preference tend to be extroverted, strong willed, purposeful and demanding. Under stress, they can be intolerant, controlling and aggressive.

Experience of the coach's personality

Ian described himself as forceful, directive and impatient but also as empathetic and a good listener. He stated that he does not enjoy analytical and detailed work.

Adam described Ian as very open. He stated that he had expected Ian to be task focused but what surprised him was the fact that he focused on feelings: "…but also just pulling together feelings, the feeling side of things."

Experience of the coachee's personality

Adam stated that he was driven and exceptionally hard working – an achiever. He stated he had: "A very complex personality." He stated that he has high expectations (however, he worked on this in coaching and felt that his expectations of others and himself had become more realistic). He described himself as an honest person.

Adam also indicated that he had a high work capacity with a strong focus on quality: “Right, so I think one of the main things was that I was… as a result of my approach to work, I’m a highly focused individual, and I’ve got very high standards in my work, and my assumption was that I should expect the same of the people that I worked with. I take a lot of responsibility easily, in fact it’s like a drug to me, the more work and more responsibility I get, the more satisfied I get in my work. And I was then tending to expect the same things of everyone I worked with, and I expect also that everybody worked at my very high pace and my high responsibility requirements, and it was now spilling into my relationship with my peers, and with my subordinates.” He stated that he could be dogmatic: “I tend to be dogmatic about certain things, with good reason. And that sometimes I don’t allow them to share their views before I’ve made a decision about it…”

When Ian was asked to describe Adam’s personality he stated that Adam was impatient and direct: “…will want to get to the end very quickly and I had to constantly hold him back and say, ‘You need to trust the process here, because if you want to get there, we haven’t covered this and you will jump to conclusions about yourself, about what you should be doing, about how you should be behaving and that is inappropriate’, so I had to be direct with him and I am comfortable doing that especially with someone who is Fiery Red because they tend to appreciate direct behaviour.” Ian stated that Adam was an open person.

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

Ian stated that he was similar to Adam with regard to personality in that both individuals are Insights Discovery Fiery Red and had discussed this between them. They then also discussed this during the interview. When describing their personalities, they described themselves and each other as strong willed, purposeful and demanding. Ian stated that being similar to Adam helped him in that he could confront Adam: “…helped me…could get impatient and bullish at times and I could go back at them.” He argued that if he had a different personality type (a different colour preference) it could be more difficult “…now if I was just in my Green, I might have become too passive about it or too withdrawn about it and it would have actually made the situation worse, I was able to hit them back and, in a nice way, and we’d get back on track so it helped me with that…”

Ian was asked if coaching someone who was similar to him was easier. He indicated that it "…is probably a little bit easier because you can be more instinctive in your reaction as opposed to thought out because you know that person or you generally know that person is going to respond appropriately because they are thinking the same way." However, he stated that more planning may have to go into coaching somebody who has a different personality style and the approach would need to be different. Thus, coaching a different personality type would not be more difficult, the approach would just be different to one's natural style: "I would need to give more thought to it, more planning to it. That is the only difference, my approach has to be a little different, not that it is more difficult."

Adam agreed that he and Ian were similar being Fiery Red: "Yes, the similarities were where for instance, I didn't have to explain into great detail certain things about myself, because he would quickly get to the gist of it…" This relates to the Fiery Red descriptor of "Be brief, be bright, be gone"

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

Adam stated that he viewed the coaching as 70 percent challenge and 30 percent support. Adam was given tasks in between sessions and Adam viewed them as quite challenging: "…because of the assignments he would give me to go away and do…I found them more challenging because they always took me into these areas that previously I didn't think were that important."

Ian also viewed the relationship encompassing more challenge: "I would say more of challenge because I saw my role as having to challenge his, how he saw his leadership style as being okay. I was there to say actually it's not that okay…so it was a very supportive, trusting relationship. But it came, I think, from a lot of challenge, which was done respectfully and he knew there was a need for that…".

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

Trust was seen as pivotal to the relationship: "Trusting, I hope. Certainly, it felt like he trusted me and he certainly indicated that…but probably that is the most important part of the whole thing for me. If there wasn't that level of trust the whole

process would have been difficult and if there is one thing you as a coach need to get, I believe in every relationship is that sense of trust".

Honesty and openness also were indicated as being important to the relationship: "Adam was very open to the process from the beginning…" "It was open and honest but from my side, looking at Adam, one of the biggest things that was positive for me was the openness he displayed…the ability to look in the mirror. He really did that exceptionally." Adam reiterated this stating "…and I deliberately chose to be open minded about it…to reshape who I was going to be going forward, at this late stage of my career."

Ian also indicated that he probed a lot into Adam's background: "So, ja, I did a lot of digging into him and his background and where he really comes from in terms of his upbringing, his family life, what is important to him." This seemed to have struck a chord with Adam as when asked about the first meeting with Ian and the relationship with Ian, Adam got emotional during the interview stating: "My first meeting with Ian was a very emotional meeting, because he was drawing… trying to… he gave me an opportunity to know him. I also… he also gave me an opportunity to open up with myself. In fact when I think about it, (becomes teary) it's very emotional… and he touched on a few things in my personal life…so through that drawing out I think we got to the real issues very quickly, and once we had established that, it is quite an easy journey then to move on from that."

Ian stated that the relationship worked as Adam was committed to the process. He stated that Adam was willing and that there was a "…willingness to really grapple with the tough issues…" He stated that Adam "…really took it to heart and really worked at it." Adam further stated that he was committed to the process: "…but once I committed, then I knew that I had to play the game as well."

Adam stated that coaching also allowed him to find his own solutions through the guidance of the coach: "~~Hhe~~He never provided any solutions for me. He just guided me to open up these doors, and to open up these pathways, so that I could then make those connections."

Adam indicated that post the coaching journey, Ian and his relationship had moved more into a friendship: “We are friends on Facebook…”

Coaching outcomes

The coaching outcomes were quite clear and both parties noted that there were clearly defined goals related to management style “…had very strong Fiery Red Insights, personality traits (Insights Discovery) and so they were prone to outbursts, prone to not listening, overbearing behaviour typical Fiery Red attributes or characteristics I should say…And it was really about being aware of the impact on the people they are leading…”

Both parties viewed the outcome as successful. Ian stated “I think that through the process he definitely has changed his behaviours...the feedback I have got is that he really has stepped up to the mark in terms of his behaviour…from what I understand, he has got a promotion. “

Adam reiterated the successful outcome “…that one of my colleagues…he was observing me over that journey, and I think he summed it quite well when he said to me, you know what, I wish I could have done this coaching thing like you, because I can see that you are more relaxed, you are a different person now…” Adam stated that coaching helped him in “…understanding those differences and then re-shaping my approach to my work and my approach to people, understanding that I had to give people responsibility, but also be careful not to overload them, set very strict and stringent deadlines for what could be delivered, and helping people in a different way in terms of more coaching, more… accepting that sometimes they may provide work which is not up to my expected, very high standards.”

What does coaching allow for coachees?

It was evident through this case that coaching allowed the coachee to experience, understand and assimilate their emotions into their identity. Ian described the interactions where “…at certain times in him telling me his story where this toughish guy got quite teary and he didn’t break down sobbing but certainly there were tears in the eyes and there was a bit of a lump in the throat because of things from his upbringing…” Adam reiterated this scenario: “My first meeting with Ian was a very

emotional meeting, because he was drawing… trying to… he gave me an opportunity to know him. I also… he also gave me an opportunity to open up with myself. In fact when I think about it, (becomes teary) it's very emotional… and he touched on a few things in my personal life…" Adam further stated that talking about feelings became a very important part of the process: "It was very funny… he would always start the conversation with, how do you feel about this now? I struggled a lot with that until I forced myself to talk more about my feelings, about my colleagues, my work, my relationships at home, and how all of that was impacting into what was happening in my life." The major factor which coaching allowed for Adam, aligned to his identity, was becoming an integrated, holistic person: "Tithe main thing he enabled me to be a more holistic type of person. Because prior to that I was missing something, but I didn't know what I was missing, and by hiding those things, and saying, look this is not important. In fact, it has turned out to be a very important side of my life... sometimes we go through this journey, and you graduate from university, and there's this big world in front of you, and you just keep on running, you just keep on running. You don't know what you don't know. And I just found that it was an opportunity that most people either avoid or don't get to experience in their lives. And I… sometimes it's simply because people do not know that one can actually find that kind of coach that can help you in a safe environment, to know things about yourself, which you actually don't even know about. You know that there's something, but you don't know what that something is. And you tend to brush it aside because it may be a sign of weakness perhaps or whatever. But that you really need to have all of these aspects about yourself, lined up nicely so that you can integrate them for the purpose of you being more effective in what you do. Yes, that's what it has been for me."

A clear factor, which coaching provided for Adam was validation. Adam commented several times that the coaching allowed him to accept who he was: "Mainly to trust myself in the sense that there was nothing wrong with me, because sometimes I felt that perhaps I was odd in the sense of my expectations." "Also to get to know that it was okay the way that I was…" "I think… the main thing he has enabled me to be more comfortable in my skin."

Adam spoke several times that coaching allowed him to reshape various aspects: “Understanding those differences and then re-shaping my approach to my work and my approach to people…” “…and I deliberately chose to be open minded about it, and maybe using it again to reshape who I was going to be going forward, at this late stage of my career.”

What does coaching allow for coaches?

Ian indicated that as a coach he continually learns through the coaching process: “I learn probably as much as what the people (coachees) learn. I always find it quite humbling in that sense, so that’s quite lekker (nice) about this work…”

E. Secondary data (Appendix L)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 31: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Ian	Adam
Openness	**Evaluative**			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Investigative			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Imaginative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Ian and Adam obtained average scores on the evaluative section (4 and 6 respectively). They are fairly likely to evaluate information. Ian clearly stated that he is not good at analysing information and this can be seen with his average score of four in the secondary data.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Ian obtained a below average score (3) on the investigative section. He is less inclined to investigate issues. Adam obtained an average score (4) on investigative. He is likely to be fairly investigative.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Ian and Adam obtained scores in the average range on this section (7 and 5 respectively). They are likely to be fairly inventive and strategic.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 32: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Ian	Adam
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Impactful			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Assertive			
		Above average	X	X
		Average		
		Below average		

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Ian and Adam obtained an average score on this section (5 and 4 respectively). They are likely to be fairly interactive and engaging. This was evident in the interviews in that both respondents although friendly and open were not overly so.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

Impactful

Both coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (6 and 7 respectively). Both respondents are quite challenging in approach, articulate and convincing.

When considering the challenging dimension, both coach and coachee obtained an average score (6 and 7 respectively). Both however indicated that they viewed the relationship as providing challenge, with Adam stating that the ratio of challenge to support was 70:30.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Assertive

Ian and Adam obtained above average scores on this section (9 and 10 respectively). They are likely to be very directing, empowering and purposeful in their actions.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 33: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Ian	Adam
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**	Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Driven			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

Ian obtained a below average score (2) on this section. He shows limited interest in being meticulous, detail focused or reliable. Adam obtained an average score (7) and is likely to be quite reliable and meticulous.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Ian obtained a below average score (1) on this section. He is seldom likely to be organised or activity oriented. Adam on the other hand, obtained and average score on this section (7). He is likely to be quite an organised individual who focuses on activity.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the structured section.

Driven

Ian obtained an above average score (8). He is likely to be more enterprising and striving than most. As such, he is likely to be ambitious and driven to achieve outstanding results. Adam obtained an average score (7). Although also driven to achieve outstanding results, as was indicated in the interview, his scores indicate that he is somewhat less enterprising and dynamic.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 34: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Ian	Adam
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the average range for this section (6 and 7 respectively). They are moderately optimistic, able to handle change but may not always be highly receptive to others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Ian is highly supportive, obtaining an above average score (8) on this section. He is likely to be more accepting of others, attentive to others and involving of others. Adam obtained an average score (5). He is likely to be moderately supportive of others.

This was reiterated in the interview when Adam stated that the ratio of challenge to support was 70:30.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 35: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Ian	Adam
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Flexible			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

Ian and Adam obtained scores in the average range for this section (5 and 6 respectively). They are likely to be moderately resilient and as such are generally able to handle stress but may doubt themselves at times. This was evident in the interview with Adam where he stated that at times, he has not felt comfortable in his own skin, and coaching allowed for this. It is also evident when Adam became a little emotional during the interview.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained a score in the average range for this section (6 and 7 respectively). They are moderately optimistic, generally able to handle change but may not always be highly receptive to others.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaires, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were similarities in the following factors of the model:

- Extroversion
- Emotional stability

There were also a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the evaluative and imaginative section of the openness factor and flexible in the agreeableness factor.

Conclusion:

The biographical information for this dyad indicates differences. There is difference in race, language and culture. However, no concerns with regard to biographical data were raised during the interviews.

Ian and Adam came across during the interview as strong willed, determined and focused. When questioned in the interview, both respondents indicated that their Insights Discovery (2013) profile is Fiery Red, indicating that they are extroverted, strong-willed, purposeful, competitive and demanding. The respondents saw their personalities as being similar to one another's.

When considering the secondary data, eight out of 12 sections, which load onto the FFM, are similar. These sections are evaluative, imaginative, sociable, impactful, assertive, resilient and flexible (flexible of the FFM reflected twice). The factors, which are similar in this case are extroversion and emotional stability.

The respondents clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met. Of all of the coachees, Adam was perhaps most explicit in the benefit coaching had for him.

Both respondents view their personality as being similar to that of their coach/coachee. Both respondents also clearly indicate that the outcomes and relationship had been fruitful. When considering the secondary data, two factors of the FFM are similar across the dyad, that of extroversion and emotional stability.

When considering the six cases discussed thus far, five of the cases have viewed themselves as having similar personalities to the other. One case, Case 3, viewed each other as being quite different. Across these six cases there are no consistencies in any of the objective, psychometric measurements. In Case 1, the respondents view themselves as being similar in personality to each other, but no factors of the FFM are similar. In Case 2, the respondents viewed themselves as similar and two factors of the FFM are similar, namely conscientiousness and agreeableness. In Case 3, the respondents viewed themselves as being different to each other, yet one factor of the FFM is similar, that of agreeableness. Case 4 respondents viewed themselves as fairly similar with one factor similar of the FFM, that of emotional stability. Both Case 3 and Case 4 had six out of 12 sections similar of the FFM. However, despite this objective measure of similarity, the lived experience was viewed as being different in Case 4 between executive coach and coachee. Case 5 respondents' lived experience was that the executive coach and coachee were similar, yet only one factor of the FFM was similar, that of agreeableness. In Case 6, both respondents view themselves as being similar yet only two factors of the FFM indicate similarity, that of extroversion and agreeableness.

One needs to consider the reason that the respondents view similarities in personality to the other in the dyad, but when considering the secondary data, less than half of the factors of the FFM are similar. In contrast, one needs to question the reason that the dyad in Case 3 indicates no similarity in personality during the lived experience yet are similar on one factor of the FFM.

4.7 Case 7: Two Indian females in the media industry

A. Description

This dyad was made up of two Indian females. The coachee knew the executive coach through the coachee's husband, but only as an acquaintance. She then decided to embark on a coaching journey with her. The coachee and the executive coach identified themselves as mothers.

B. Biographical data

Case 7						
Harriet	Indian	Female	45	Indian	Executive Coach	
Sally	Indian	Female	48	Indian	Head	Media

Harriet[13], the executive coach, is a 45 year old, Indian, South African female. Sally[14], the coachee is a 48-year-old Indian, South African female.

Sally did not purposefully pick Harriet because she was female. However, on discussion Sally stated that she believed females have a higher intuition than men and this was beneficial to her coaching journey: "I think females have high levels of intuition, and I think they pick up the unspoken…So if you pick up someone that can like read between the lines, and read you, and that can sense particularly what is bothering you, that's nice. And maybe it's because I'm female, I don't know."

Sally also indicated that although not the reason she selected Harriet as her coach, the fact that Harriet had a strong corporate background had really assisted her in her coaching journey: "Harriet had a very strong corporate background. Yes, so she was able to help me, because I'm in a corporate. So her worldview and mine is the same…"

[13] Not her real name
[14] Not her real name

C. Interviewer's experience of the executive coach's and coachee's personalities

Harriet came across as highly professional. She appeared somewhat serious and more aloof than other executive coaches interviewed. She appeared somewhat introverted. She was articulate and appeared to really think critically before answering the questions posed.

A second meeting was held with Harriet to provide her with her psychometric results. During this meeting, she was far more approachable and open.

Sally came across as warm, enthusiastic and a very caring individual. She was open and talkative.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach's personality

When asked to describe her personality Harriet stated that she was a fun-loving person, jovial, relaxed and down to earth. She also stated, however, that she could be demanding "…because I'm definitely one of those people who, what's the word? What's the saying? Work hard and play hard. I'm quite an achiever, I'm results driven but I sometimes, not sometimes, I expect that of others as well." Harriet stated that she was an introvert. She further stated that she was nurturing, caring and supportive.

When asked to describe her coach's personality Sally stated that she immediately connected with Harriet. Harriet was described as being warm, a good listener, self-assured, ambitious and forthright. Sally stated that Harriet was an intelligent woman who was compassionate.

Experience of the coachee's personality

When asked to describe her personality, Sally stated that she is a helper and nurturer. She stated that she is passionate about people development and is a fair person. She went on to describe some of the values she lives by including

"…fairness, transparency, honesty, integrity, yes in general those are I think my core values.

Harriet described Sally as a bubbly person. She stated that Sally was "…quite a down to earth person, also very caring, supportive, nurturing…"

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

When asked if she and Sally were similar in personality, Harriet stated: "Yes I think so." She stated that the similarities were their nurturing and supportive natures. One difference noted by Harriet is that that she is far more guarded than Sally: "I see her as more of an easy going person, and it may be easier for people to relate to her and get on with her, get on with her on a deeper level, whereas I'm more guarded and cautious, and it takes me a little longer to kind of open up and let somebody in. And that may be the difference."

When Sally was asked the same question Sally stated: "…she's quite direct, and I'm also quite direct…I'm also ambitious, I'm also forthright." She further elaborated as to the similarities: "A bit of a mirror…I think we're similar…even when we talk, like sometimes we talk about the kids or family or whatever. There's a lot that you know resonated, we found in common…"

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

Both Harriet and Sally described the coaching relationship as supportive, splitting the ratio into a 60:40 supportive: challenge split.

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

Harriet stated that she, as a coach, has to believe in the potential of her coachees and that this influences the relationship: "You know firstly every human being wants to be better, every human being wants to change, every person wants to, has potential, and every human being wants to grow and develop that potential and to take that to a place that they wouldn't necessarily have done themselves."

Harriet spoke about connection: "You know getting to know me is about making a connection. And making that connection on a deeper level is something that's not so

obvious." And she stated that a coach has to also like the coachee "…and you must like them as well…"

Openness, trust and confidentiality were viewed as key factors to the relationship: "She's an easy person to coach, even though it wasn't an easy coaching role, she's an easy person to coach, in that she kind of offers easily and she opens up herself easily" "I feel a sense of trust, and I think it's a reciprocal trust, because I know that she can trust me with the information she gives me, you know she shares with me, and I think we have quite a strong relationship, we've got good rapport, and I think… I mean I know I can trust her as well you know. So I think trust is big between us, and confidentiality is also a huge thing for both of us, because I also know her organisation, I know people in the organisation, and the level of information she trusts me with, I know she must think I'm worthy of the level of information." Sally reiterated the factor of trust but also stated that this trust was due to Harriet's corporate background: "Harriet had a very strong corporate background. Yes, so she was able to help me, because I'm in a corporate. So her worldview and mine is the same, So she was able to really understand the depth of my issues, and the complexity of my issues. So that for me… so that's where the trust was. I knew she came from a place of knowing…"

Harriet also stated the egalitarian nature of their relationship: "I see her absolutely as an equal."

Sally indicated that a key factor in the coaching relationship was that Harriet was accessible, describing her as available: "**…**available, that was for me like the most brilliant thing about Harriet. I'd just SMS her, I need to chat to you at some time, immediately she'd phone me and spend an hour with me on the phone. So that was fantastic…and I find her very easy to talk to…"

Harriet described the closeness of the relationship: "Our relationship has climbed to quite a close one in a very short period." Sally indicated that this had moved more into a friendship "So she said to me…let's go for lunch. So she said not as coachee and coach, let's just go for lunch. So we are going to go for lunch. So I think at some point it does go into a bit of a friendship…"

Coaching outcomes

The coaching outcomes were discussed by both respondents and the outcomes set out at the beginning of the journey had changed. However, Sally and Harriet were satisfied with the outcomes. Harriet indicated: “I can tell you what we contracted on in terms of goals were nowhere near what we coached on because her journey changed completely.” Sally stated: “So my conversation with Harriet changed completely. And she then has been helping me and sound boarding with me…” On discussion, Sally summed up the outcomes of the coaching process and the support provided, stating that Harriet had provided deep support “I think I felt incredibly supported to be able to be so brave.”

What does coaching allow for the coachee

Sally clearly indicated the loneliness of leadership She stated that often in leadership: “I think as an executive you are so guarded, for all reasons we know, we don’t always say what’s really is bothering me.” Through coaching she found that many of the things that were bothering her were universal: “I understood that issues and stuff were not just about… it’s not just mine, it’s quite universal…” Due to the loneliness of leadership, Sally stated that coaching assists in validating the person: “So I think that when you sit with a coach, you know you almost become very grounded, it’s a very grounding experience you know, because you sit and you talk, and at exco you don’t talk, you don’t talk to anyone. Commanding, and instructing, and talking to your teams. But at exco…you don’t talk…at a level of depth - what’s really worrying you, what’s really troubling you, how do I really get out of this? You tend not to have that level of conversations. So it gives you a nice little outlet…someone to talk to…someone to talk to in a non-threatening, non-judgemental way. Someone who validated them, just for being who they are. And I think that’s so important.”

Harriet and Sally spoke about the different perspectives coaching provides: “She gave me perspective on things I’d lost perspective on, or I just didn’t think about. So she was able to say, have you thought that maybe this has happened because of that? I’d say, yes I never thought about that. I loved her complexity of analysing situations from a different perspective, perspective. Yes that is what I liked.”

Sally stated that coaching had provided self-awareness and the ability to self-coach, which was highly beneficial: So that was very nice for me, because it also then made me see all those patterns, you know which with your own self you can't see unless someone makes you aware of it. So that was nice, that was some of the patterns that she made me aware of."

Sally spoke of reconstruction, terming it reframing. This allowed for change: "She was able to…reframe things for me by reflecting and going back to certain things."

Coaching provided a sounding board for Sally.

Lastly, Sally believed that growth and development took place in coaching: "So I think real change and real transformation happens in the coaching process."

What does coaching allow for executive coaches?

Harriet and Sally spoke about the different perspectives coaching provides

Harriet added that she enjoyed the conversations from the coaching journey.

E. Secondary data (Appendix M)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 36: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Harriet	Sally
Openness	**Evaluative**			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Investigative			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Imaginative			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Harriet obtained a below average score (3) on evaluative. She is less inclined to enjoy evaluating data. Sally obtained an average score on evaluative (4). She is fairly likely to evaluate data.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Harriet obtained an above average score (8). She is more likely to be insightful, enjoying investigating issues. Sally obtained an average score (6) on this section. She is moderately investigative in approach.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

The coach and coachee obtained average scores on this section (5 and 4 respectively). They are moderately likely to be imaginative in approach.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 37: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Harriet	Sally
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X
	Impactful			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Assertive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

Harriet scored on average (4) on the sociable section. She is likely to be engaging and fairly interactive. Sally obtained a below average score (3). She is likely to be less engaging and self-promoting.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

It is interesting to note that Harriet described Sally as “bubbly”. The interviewer also experienced Sally in this way. However, Sally does not view herself this way and the secondary data indicates that this is below average. It is interesting why this is so and why Sally was working hard to project this when perhaps it is not a natural personality trait. It is also interesting to note that Harriet appeared less extroverted than Sally but is actually more so according to the secondary data.

Impactful

Harriet obtained a below average score on this section (3). She may be less inclined to be impactful on others. Sally obtained an average score (5). She is likely to be moderately impactful.

When considering the challenging dimension, Harriet and Sally obtained average scores (6 and 4 respectively). Although fairly comfortable to challenge, both respondents indicated that the relationship was more of support than challenge. Thus, despite being comfortable with challenge, both respondents stated that support was important at this time in the relationship.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Assertive

The coach and coachee scored in the average range on this section (6 and 7 respectively). They are likely to be moderately directing, empowering and purposeful.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on this section.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 38: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Harriet	Sally
Conscientiousness	Conscientious	Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	
	Structured			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Driven			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

Harriet obtained a below average score (1) on this section. She is rarely likely to conform and is not likely to pay attention to details. Sally obtained a score in the average range (4). She is somewhat more conscientious.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Harriet and Sally obtained an average score on the structured section (5). They are likely to be moderately organised, activity oriented and principled.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the structured section

Driven

The coach and coachee obtained average scores on this section (5 and 4 respectively). They are likely to be moderately driven

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 39: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Harriet	Sally
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (5 and 4 respectively). They are moderately receptive and optimistic.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

The coach and coachee obtained an average score (5 and 6 respectively) on this section. They are likely to be moderately attentive and accepting of others.

Both respondents stated that the relationship was characterised more by support than challenge with both respondents providing a ratio of 60:40 support to challenge.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 40: Comparative table of the emotional stability factor of the FFM

			Harriet	Sally
Emotional stability	**Resilient**	Above average		
		Average		
		Below average	X	X
	Flexible			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Resilient

Flexible

The coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (5 and 4 respectively). They are moderately receptive and optimistic.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Resilient

Both respondents obtained a below average score (3) on this section. They tend not to feel comfortable around upset or angry people. However, they are likely to handle stress effectively and are fairly self-confident.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaires, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were similarities in the following factors of the model:

- Agreeableness
- Emotional stability

There were also a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the imaginative section of the openness factor, assertive on the extroversion factor, and structured and driven sections of the conscientiousness factor.

Conclusion:

Sally and Harriet, on the surface were similar in that both were Indian, females of similar age, both mothers. The interviewer experienced the respondents as similar except for the fact that Sally was far more extroverted than Harriet. The two respondents, however, also noted this as a difference. Regarding other aspects of personality, however, the dyad described themselves as being similar "…a bit of a mirror…yes, I think we're similar…"

When analysing the secondary data, eight out of the 12 sections, which load onto the FFM are similar in this dyad. These include imaginative, assertive, structured, driven,

flexible, (flexible of the FFM reflected twice), supportive and resilient. The factors, which are similar in Case 7 are agreeableness and emotional stability.

Harriet and Sally clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and the outcomes were met.

This dyad clearly viewed their personalities as being similar. When looking at the secondary data, two factors of the FFM of personality are similar that of agreeableness and emotional stability. Other dyads that had two factors similar of the FFM were Case 2 and Case 6. These dyads also stated that they viewed their coach/coachee as similar in personality in their lived experience. Case 3, Case 4 and Case 5 all had one factor of the FFM similar in each dyad. However, only Case 4 and Case 5 viewed themselves as being similar in the lived experience. Case 3 stated that the personalities between the executive coach and coachee were completely different, yet this dyad had one similar factor of the FFM. Case 1 had no similar factors of the FFM across the executive coach and coachee, yet the lived experience was one in which the personalities were seen as similar.

4.8 Case 8: Two Afrikaans females in the financial services industry

A. Description

This dyad occurred at a financial services organisation. Here the coach was selected from the organisations internal panel of coaches. Mandy[15], the coachee, selected three coaches with whom she had chemistry sessions. She then selected Noreen[16].

Noreen and Mandy indicated that they had known each other for years as they work in the same organisation.

[15] Not her real name
[16] Not her real name

B. Biographical data

Case 8						
Noreen	White	Female	40	South African Afrikaans	Business Coach	
Mandy	White	Female	35	South African Afrikaans	Business Manager	Financial Services

Noreen, the coach, is a 40 year old, white, Afrikaans South African female. Mandy is a 35 year old, white, Afrikaans South African female.

No reference was made by either respondent that they had selected each other based on demographics. However, during the interview Noreen indicated that there were similarities based on the fact that they are both mothers with children of similar ages: “We had that connection, and we’ve always had that connection with the children as well.” Mandy reiterated this: “We’ve had our moments where we speak about the kids, and the school, and so yes, so we have that connection there.”

C. Interviewer’s experience of the coachee’s and executive coach’s personalities

The interviewer works with the coach, thus she knew the coach prior to the interview. Noreen is an introverted individual. She enjoys conceptualising concepts and ideas. She is approachable and friendly. Noreen is an amiable person preferring to avoid conflict.

Mandy came across as outgoing, fast paced, focused and driven. She was very direct in her approach.

D. Primary data

Experience of the coach’s personality

Noreen described her personality as friendly, patient and easy-going. She stated that she likes harmony and cohesion, so finds assertiveness and particularly the challenging of other’s perceptions in coaching difficult for her: “I need to challenge

more. Because I like the harmony, I like the cohesion, so I try not to… or I naturally would not challenge too much."

Mandy described Noreen as friendly but somewhat introverted until one gets to know her. She stated that Noreen was thoughtful and very helpful.

Experience of the coachee's personality

Mandy described herself as very friendly "a people person". She enjoyed having people around her and building relationships.

Noreen described Mandy as friendly, and action oriented. She stated that Mandy really cares for people and wants to develop her team, but that she is not very patient.

Experience of similarity factors by the executive coach and coachee

When considering the similarities between them, Noreen stated that: "I think Mandy is…very much like me in a sense." When probed further, Noreen stated that Mandy takes her personal growth, career and family seriously, as does Noreen. She further stated that there was a connection due to the fact that they were both mothers. Thus, there was a feeling of similarity but not based on personality factors: "So you know she's got the twins, and they're sort of the same age as my kids as well…and we had that connection, and we've always had that connection with the children as well. So that connection is definitely there."

Mandy also stated that she and Noreen were similar but not necessarily in personality.

Mandy: "I think probably on the things like, we've got children, and we can connect through a common base, and you know, having been married and been working for (organisation) for so long, so there's a lot of areas that I think we can connect on yes, where we have similarities, yes."

Interviewer: "But not necessarily in your personality?"

Mandy: **"**Personality I'm not sure, yes."

This is of interest. Mandy and Noreen have worked together for over eight years. Mandy was explicit in stating that there were similarities but not necessarily in

personality. This may be due to the fact that she has known Noreen over a long period of time.

The experience of support vs. challenge in the coaching process

Mandy stated that she viewed the ratio of challenge to support as a 60:40 split: “I think in the sessions she’s supportive, but she… I don’t know, I think probably more challenging, because she leaves me in the end with a list of things that I need to go and complete. So in the sessions she’s very supportive because she listens and she understands. But there’s a lot of challenges that comes out of the sessions that I need to go and deal with when I leave the session.”

Noreen stated that she was concerned that due to her personality, she didn’t challenge enough. She stated that she had an 80:20 ratio of support: challenge: “…but thus far it’s been about 80:20 of support rather than challenge, because I didn’t really have to challenge up to now.”

Relationship factors that influence the executive coaching process

Noreen and Mandy spoke about a ‘connection’. Mandy indicated that she had met three potential coaches and had then selected Noreen: “…and you could sort of immediately feel, okay I’m a bit more comfortable with this person than the other two…so it was very interesting to see how you connect or didn’t connect in that first session…” Noreen also spoke about a ‘connection’ between the two of them: “I think… that connection between us, because she was able to just talk to me about some of the things that she felt in the business…”

The relationship was described as an open relationship, characterised by trust and guidance: “I think we have a very open relationship. I’m able to…speak to her about things that I’m struggling with, that I might not necessarily have spoken to with my manager. So a very trusting relationship, very open, she’s very easy to talk to. Yes, and then the guidance that she gives me…so it’s very good.” Noreen also spoke about trust: “I feel that it’s important that the two of us trust each other, and we can work together…”

Mandy indicated that it was an honest straightforward relationship: "…she doesn't candy-coat anything. She's very honest and straightforward…and I appreciate that because it does make things easier…"

Coaching outcomes

The coaching outcome was described as personal growth, focused on promotion. At the time of the interview, both respondents were happy with the coaching outcomes thus far.

What does coaching allow for coachees?

Mandy alluded to Nancy Kline's 'Time to Think' (Kline, 1999) when she stated that coaching has allowed her to take time out to think: "I think firstly, just to take that time out to think about things, because you're so busy in your day-to-day, you don't take time out to think out the box, or think, what are the things that I'm struggling with? What are my gaps… how can I deal with this? So that to me is very good, to take that time out."

The coaching was viewed as personal growth for both coachee and the coach. Mandy stated that: "…it was for personal growth and to ensure that I'm ready to take that next step." Noreen stated that: "…every time you coach, you get better at it, because you find sort of your groove."

Although not explicit, Noreen did comment that Mandy wanted to improve. Thus, again there was the comment around the sincere commitment made from the coachee to the coaching process.

What does coaching allow for coachees?

Noreen stated that during her coaching she has learnt to become adaptable to all kinds of coachees: "So my learning is…you really have to adapt to your different kinds of coachees…" She viewed coaching as highly beneficial: "I think coaching can be very powerful…"

E. Secondary data (Appendix N)

Personality factor: Openness

Table 41: Comparative table of the openness factor of the FFM

			Noreen	Mandy
Openness	Evaluative			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Investigative			
		Above average	X	X
		Average		
		Below average		
	Imaginative			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

The factor of openness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following three, of the 12 sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Evaluative
- Investigative
- Imaginative

Evaluative:

Noreen obtained an above average score on evaluative (8). She is more likely than most to enjoy working with numerical data and analysing information. Mandy obtained an average score (5) on this section. She is moderately likely to enjoy evaluating information.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the evaluative section.

Investigative:

Both respondents obtained an above average score on investigative (8 and 9 respectively). Generally, they are highly likely to enjoy learning, be fairly practically minded and insightful.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the investigative section.

Imaginative:

Noreen obtained an above average score (8) on this section. She is likely to be more imaginative than most. Mandy scored average (4) on this section. She is somewhat comfortable with imaginative concepts.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the imaginative section.

Personality factor: Extroversion

Table 42: Comparative table of the extroversion factor of the FFM

			Noreen	Mandy
Extroversion	**Sociable**	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Impactful			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Assertive			
		Above average		
		Average		X
		Below average	X	

The factor of extroversion of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Sociable
- Impactful
- Assertive

Sociable

The coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (4). They are likely to be somewhat interactive and engaging. This is quite interesting in that Mandy came across as far more sociable than Noreen.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the sociable section.

Impactful

The coach and coachee obtained an average score on this section (4 and 6 respectively). They are likely to be moderately impactful.

Although obtaining average scores on the section, when considering the dimension of challenging, Noreen obtained a below average score (3) and Mandy obtained an average score (6). During the interview, Noreen stated that she that challenging coachees was where she needed to improve. However, Mandy stated that she did feel that Noreen provided challenge, in fact indicating that the relationship was characterised more by challenge than support giving it a ratio of 60:40.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the impactful section.

Assertive

Noreen obtained a below average score on assertive (1). She is not likely to be assertive. Mandy obtained an average score on this section (6). She is moderately assertive.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Personality factor: Conscientiousness

Table 43: Comparative table of the conscientiousness factor of the FFM

			Noreen	Mandy
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**	Above average		X
		Average	X	
		Below average		
	Structured			
		Above average		X
		Average	X	
		Below average		
	Driven			
		Above average		
		Average	X	
		Below average		X

The conscientiousness factor of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Conscientious
- Structured
- Driven

Conscientious

Noreen obtained an average score (5) on this section. She is moderately conscientious in her approach. Mandy obtained an above average score on this section (8). She is more likely than most to be conscientious.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on this section.

Structured

Noreen obtained an average score (5) on this section. She is likely to be moderately organised and activity oriented. Mandy obtained an above average score (8) on this section. She is more likely than most to be well organised and focused on activity.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the structured section.

Driven

Noreen obtained an average score (4), whereas Mandy obtained a below average score (3) on this section. Noreen is fairly likely to be driven. Mandy is less inclined to be driven. This is of interest in that the coach and the interviewer experienced and described Mandy, as being a driven, focused individual yet this is not a trait, which comes naturally. It may be something Mandy consciously works on in the work environment and thus, is experienced in this way.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the driven section.

Personality factor: Agreeableness

Table 44: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Noreen	Mandy
Agreeableness	**Flexible**	Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		
	Supportive			
		Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		

Agreeableness of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Flexible
- Supportive

Flexible

Noreen obtained an above average score (8) on this section. She is likely to be somewhat more receptive, flexible and optimistic. Mandy obtained an average score (7) on this section. She is quite receptive and optimistic.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

Supportive

Both the coach and the coachee obtained an average score on this section (7 and 4 respectively). They are fairly accepting of others and attentive.

Mandy stated in the interview that support was provided but that the relationship was more of challenge giving it a ratio of 60:40 challenge to support.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the supportive section.

Personality factor: Emotional stability

Table 45: Comparative table of the agreeableness factor of the FFM

			Noreen	Mandy
Emotional stability	Resilient	Above average		
		Average	X	X
		Below average		
	Flexible			
		Above average	X	
		Average		X
		Below average		

Emotional stability of the FFM of personality is made up of the following sections on the Wave personality questionnaire:

- Resilient
- Flexible

Resilient

Noreen and Mandy obtained an average score on this section (4 and 6 respectively). They are likely to be fairly resilient.

The coach and coachee have similar personality scores on the resilient section.

Flexible

Noreen obtained an above average score (8) on this section. She is likely to be somewhat more receptive, flexible and optimistic. Mandy obtained an average score (7) on this section. She is quite receptive and optimistic.

The coach and coachee do not have similar personality scores on the flexible section.

The respondents' Wave personality questionnaires, used to understand the FFM of personality indicates that there were no similarities in the sections, which load onto the FFM.

There were a number of similarities between the coach and coachee, including the investigative section on the openness factor, sociable and impactful section of the extroversion factor, supportive section on the agreeableness factor and the resilience section of the emotional stability factor.

Conclusion

Mandy and Noreen came across as similar to each other, particularly regarding biographical information. Both are white, Afrikaans, females, similar in age. What was evident is the fact that they were both mothers played a significant role in their connection to each other.

When considering personality it is interesting that Noreen stated that she viewed her and Mandy's personalities as being similar. Mandy did not. Mandy clearly stated that there were similarities but not in personality.

The secondary data indicates that no factors of the FFM were similar between Noreen and Mandy. However, there were similar sections on ~~fuve~~five out of the 12 sections, which load onto the FFM. These included investigative, sociable, impactful, supportive and resilient.

Case 8 is similar to Case 1 in that there are no factors of the FFM, which are similar between the coach and coachee. However, the cases are different in that despite

there being no objective, secondary data similarities in Case 1, those respondents viewed themselves as being similar in personality to one another. Here, Mandy, the coachee explicitly stated that she did not see her coach as being similar in personality to her. It must be noted that the respondents had known each other for eight years prior to embarking on the coaching journey.

Mandy and Noreen clearly indicated that the coaching process was beneficial, the relationship was effective and they were comfortable with the outcomes at the current stage of the coaching process when the interviews took place.

4.9 Summary of each case

According to the literature, research in other dyads including therapeutic, medical as well as mentorship have examined similarities in demographics as well as personality between the two parties. This research aims to explore the influence of personality on the executive coaching process.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with all respondents. This was done to uncover how they viewed their own personality, their coach/coachees personality, whether they saw themselves as having similar or different personalities, the coaching relationship as well as the outcomes of the coaching process.

Secondary data, that of the Wave personality questionnaire, was then used to understand each coach and coachee's personality using the FFM of personality and to ascertain from an objective measure, according to the five factors, if there are any similarities in personality between the executive coach and coachee in each dyad, which influenced the executive coaching process.

Case 1: Respondents stated that they were similar in personality. However, no factors were similar of the FFM of personality.

Case 2: Respondents stated that they were similar. Out of all of the cases, they had the most sections similar to each other – nine out of 12. Two factors from the FFM were similar, that of conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Case 3: Respondents stated that they had different personalities. However, six out of the 12 sections were similar and they were similar on the agreeableness factor of the FFM.

Case 4: Respondents stated that they were similar. Six out of 12 sections were similar with only one factor of the FFM being similar, that of emotional stability.

What is interesting to note was that the coach in Case 3 and Case 4 was the same. It is interesting that he was very clear in stating that he was very different to the coachee in Case 3 but similar to the coachee in Case 4, despite there being an equal number of sections, which were similar on the Wave personality questionnaire and one factor of the FFM being similar in each case. The factor was different and this may be the reason that the coach felt a difference in personality between the two coachees.

Case 5: Respondents stated that they were similar. Seven out of the 12 sections were similar with the agreeableness factor of the FFM being similar.

Case 6: Respondents stated that they were similar with eight out of 12 sections being similar on the Wave personality questionnaire. Extroversion and emotional stability were the two factors of the FFM, which were similar in this dyad.

Case 7: Respondents stated that they were similar with eight out of 12 sections and two factors, that of agreeableness and emotional stability, being similar of the FFM.

Case 8: Respondents stated that they were similar but the coachee stated that this was due to demographic factors – being a mother. When considering this case, five out of 12 sections were similar but no factors of the FFM were similar in this dyad.

Table 46: Subjective experiences and objective measures of similarity in each dyad

Dyad	*Lived experience as similar*	*Biographical Similarities*	*Similarities in FFM*	*Openness*	*Extroversion*	*Conscientiousness*	*Agreeableness*	*Emotional stability*
Case 1	Yes	No	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Case 2	Yes	No	Yes			X	X	
Case 3	No	No	Yes				X	
Case 4	Yes	No	Yes					X
Case 5	Yes	Yes	Yes				X	
Case 6	Yes	No	Yes		X			X
Case 7	Yes	Yes	Yes				X	X
Case 8	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

During the interviews, it was clear that the majority of the cases experience their coach/coachee's personality as similar to their own. The interviewer's field notes reiterated this in that she also experienced similarities in personalities across all dyads except Case 3. It is evident then that the lived experience of the coaching process is one in which the majority of coachee's feel an affinity and similarity to their coach and of the coach to the coachee.

However, when one considers the objective secondary data of the psychometric assessments there was no clear indication of similarities in personality. Case 1 believed themselves to be very similar in personality to the other but there were no factors of the FFM, which were similar to support this. Case 8s coachee stated that she was different in personality to her coach and this dyad had no factors similar of the FFM. Case 3 and Case 4 had one factor, which was similar in each dyad (a different factor, however), yet Case 3 stated that they experienced each other as being completely different, whereas Case 3 experienced similarities in personality. Case 5, Case 6 and Case 7 experienced each other as being similar in personality and the secondary data indicated one factor of the FFM for Case 1 and two factors of the FFM in Case 6 and Case 7 (different factors, however) as being similar. Thus,

no factor of the FFM indicates conclusively that it influences the executive coaching process.

All respondents clearly indicated that the relationship had been one based on trust, openness and commitment to the process. Furthermore, at the time of the interviews all respondents stated that the coaching had been beneficial with the majority of respondents stating that the coaching outcomes had been met. Thus, it seems that more is at work in the executive coaching process than any matching of personalities or combination of factors of the FFM of personality. What is it then that makes coaching work if it is not a similarity in personality between the executive coach and coachee?

4.10 Saturation

Illustration 10 indicates the number of codes that were coded for each interview transcript throughout the research study. The first interview transcript, that of Emma in Case 1, created 90 codes. The interview transcripts coded thereafter created far fewer codes with fluctuations in some transcripts, particularly Tamsyn in Case 4, Liam in Case 5 and Adam in Case 6. Saturation was reached as very few new codes, which brought about new ideas or relationships within the research were added, particularly in the last two cases (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

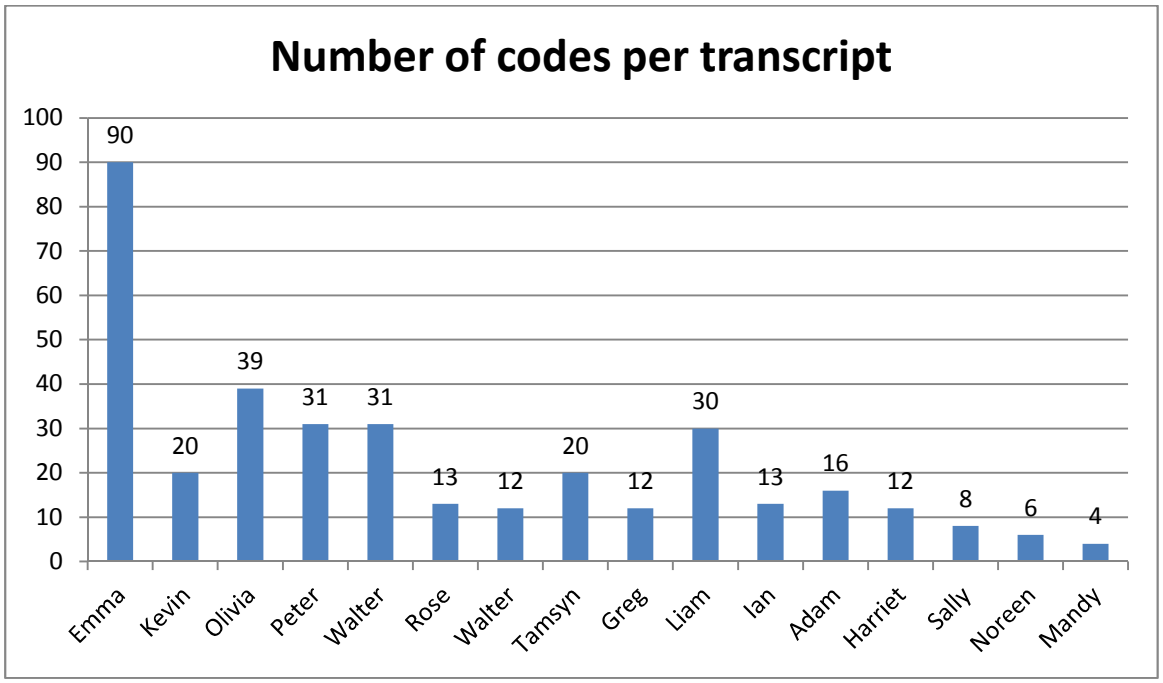


Illustration 10: Saturation table

It must be noted that saturation, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998), is a matter of degree. It is argued that the longer that researchers examine their data there is always the potential for new data to emerge. They argue that saturation is reached when the newly discovered data "…does not necessarily add anything to the overall story, model, theory or framework…" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p136).This is evident in this study where in particular, Case 8 did not add anything new, it reiterated the already mentioned data.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the findings for each case of both the primary as well as the secondary data sources. It has also provided the level of saturation reached, which provides comfort in the data to be discussed. The following chapter will go on to discuss the cross case analysis.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Results: Cross Case Analysis

This chapter will discuss the findings across all eight cases.

5.1 Theme 1: Biographical data is not a differentiator in the executive coaching process

In many helping relationships, biographical data including race, age and gender is viewed to better enable the relationship (Abramowitz et al, 1982). It is assumed then that the same could be true for executive coaching.

South Africa is a complex society imbued with a multicultural, multilingual and multiracial nation. It is made further complex in that culture and language is not defined by race. Thus, assumptions could be made that because individuals are of the same race, the coaching process and outcomes will be positive. When considering the data across all eight case studies this was not the case.

When looking at the findings of the various cases outlined in Chapter 4, all coaches and coachees clearly stipulated that, they had benefitted from coaching and that the outcomes, process and relationship had, in their view, been successful. The demographics, however, of each case are very different, with the exception of Case 7 and Case 8 with similar biographical data.

Table 47: Biographical differences in each case

Case	Age	Race	Gender	Culture	Language
Case 1	X		X	X	X
Case 2			X	X	X
Case 3			X		
Case 4			X	X	X
Case 5	X				
Case 6		X		X	X
Case 7**					
Case 8**					

**Similar in biographical data

Table 47 indicates the various differences amongst the respondents in each case. In Case 1, there were differences regarding age (with an age difference of 26 years), gender, culture and home language. In Case 2, there were differences gender, culture and home language; however, the age was quite similar. In Case 3, there were differences only in gender. In Case 4, there were differences in gender, culture and home language. In Case 5, there was a difference in age of 12 years; however, the other biographical data was similar. In Case 6, there were differences in race, culture and home language. In Case 7, there were no biographical differences and in Case 8, there were no biographical differences.

Case 6 was the only case where the respondents were of different race groups – black and white. This is perhaps most important as research has indicated that people generally choose, are more comfortable with and have better outcomes from a helping relationship where individuals are of the same demographics (Ensher et al, 2002). However, no biographical data was a concern for this dyad, with Adam clearly indicating the positive change he had experienced in his life due to coaching. When considering this further in accordance to the study by Ensher et al (2002) one would

assume that Case 7 and 8 may have had a more fulfilling process or better outcomes as they were of the same race, age, language, culture and gender. The respondents in both of these cases indicated positive outcomes and a positive process but nothing very different to those cases where there were biographical differences. Thus, biographical differences did not appear to impact on the executive coaching process.

The study conducted by Ensher et al, (2002) focused on diversity within the mentorship relationship. The findings indicate that attitudinal similarity was more important to the quality of the relationship than demographic similarity. Both Emma in Case 1 and Sally in Case 7 stated that they viewed the similar values between themselves and their coachee/coach to be an important factor. Values and attitude were not the focus of this study. However, the executive coaching process may be influenced by values and attitudes.

Half of the cases had dichotomous gender pairing. Again, no coachee indicated that this was a conscious choice. Thus, gender differences did not appear to impact on the executive coaching process. Case 3 demonstrated similarities in biographical data regarding language, culture and age. The only difference was gender. Neither party viewed the biographical gender difference as being a key differentiator in the coaching relationship. Both parties clearly stated that the relationship and process was beneficial with the outcomes met. It must be noted that Rose, the coachee, attributed much of her behavioural change to Walter. It is questionable whether this deference to Walter is due to the gender difference in the dyad, which may stem from an Afrikaans cultural norm that is more patriarchal (McClintock, 1993) or if it is due to Rose's personality or due in fact, to the coaching process.

The coachees in Case 1 and Case 2 indicated that the language and the difference in culture could have been problematic – Afrikaans and English – but that it was not. Culture and language do not appear to have impacted on the executive coaching process.

In Case 8, the coachee stated that she believed that the fact that she and her coach had similar demographics, in that they were both mothers, wives and worked for the

same organisation, aided the executive coaching process: “I think probably on the things like, we’ve got children, and we can connect through a common base, and you know, having been married and been working for (organisation) for so long, so there’s a lot of areas that I think we can connect on…”

A biographical detail that was mentioned, which could have an impact on the executive coaching process was the coach’s work/corporate experience. Sally in Case 7 stated: “…what was very good for me was Harriet had a very strong corporate background. Yes, so she was able to help me, because I’m in a corporate. So her worldview and mine is the same, so she was able to really understand the depth of my issues, and the complexity of my issues…I knew she came from a place of knowing.” The Ridler Report (Ridler & Co., 2013) states that the coach’s business experience is important in the coaching relationship as it builds credibility.

Walter, the coach in Case 3 and Case 4 stated that, as a coach, he believed that there should be better matching of coachee to executive coach based on biographical data, experience and social stature. That the coach and coachee’s “…worldviews should be the same.” It is questionable whether differences in biographical data allow for a challenge in the coaching relationship due to a different worldview; however, this is beyond the scope of this research. What is evident according to this study; however, is that matching on biographical data does not produce a better relationship, process or coaching outcomes.

Conclusion

Despite similarities and/or differences in biographical data, all parties viewed the relationship and process as beneficial with the coaching outcomes achieved. What is evident is that there was no substantial difference in the relationship, process or achievement of outcomes with those who were more similar biographically than to those who were dissimilar. Thus, biographical similarities and matching does not appear to be a precursor to a positive relationship in executive coaching. It may be beneficial to measure similarities in values and attitudes.

5.2 Theme 2: Perceptions of similarity in personality between the executive coach and coachee and the influence of this on the executive coaching process

This research study utilised semi-structured interviews as primary data to explore how the coach and coachee experienced personality in each dyad.

When interviewing the respondents, it was evident that the majority of respondents (12 out of the 16) viewed themselves as being similar in personality to their dyadic partner.

In Case 1, Emma stated, before even being asked the question, that she viewed herself as being very similar to her coachee, Kevin: “Very similar in many ways… I think he’s a very resilient person. Which I am too…I think he’s an incredibly honest guy…Which I am too.” She stated that they were: “Very similar in many ways”. Olivia and Peter also stated that they viewed the respective other as being similar to themselves. Olivia stated that, “…I think there was a bit of a meeting of minds…” indicating that they thought along similar lines. Peter stated: “I think we’re both very similar.” And: “So yes, for me it was an absolute match made in heaven really.” In Case 4, only the coach, Walter, stated that he and Tamsyn were “Very similar”. In Case 5, both respondents stated that they believed they were similar to their respective other, citing: “We have the same personalities. There’s very little difference end of the day.” In Case 6, both respondents described their personalities using the assessment tool Discovery Insights (Insights Discovery, 2013), stating that they had similar personality types, that of Fiery Red. Adam stated: “Yes, the similarities were where for instance, I didn’t have to explain into great detail certain things about myself, because he would quickly get to the gist of it…” The respondents in Case 7 also stated that they saw themselves as being similar to one another. Sally stated that working with Harriet was like: “A bit of a mirror…I think we’re similar…” The coach in Case 8 saw similarities in personality between herself and the coachee: “…she’s very much like me in a sense…” The coachee in Case 8 stated that there were similarities between them; however, viewed these as biographical in nature not due to personality factors. Mandy stated: “I think probably on the things like, we’ve got children, and we can connect through a common base, and you know, having been married and been working for (organisation) for so long,

so there's a lot of areas that I think we can connect on yes, where we have similarities…"

The majority of respondents described their personality as being similar to that of their respective dyadic partner. There, however, was a small minority (four out of 16 respondents) who indicated that they believed their personality to be very different to that of their respective coach/coachee. Walter, in Case 3, stated that they were: "Completely the opposite." Rose, Case 3, also viewed their personalities as different: "…you know my personality is totally different from his, totally." However, Rose clearly stated that she valued the coaching relationship with Walter, that she viewed the process as being beneficial: "…it (coaching) really did change my world." and that given another opportunity to work with Walter or another coach, despite the difference in personality she would: "…definitely go back to Walter." Tamsyn in Case 4 indicated some similarities but also viewed differences in personality, particularly that Walter contained himself well. This was one of the reasons she selected Walter as her coach. Although there were some frustrations from Tamsyn's side in that she was at the beginning of the coaching journey and hadn't yet reached tangible goals, she indicated that the coaching process was beneficial. Mandy in Case 8 viewed her personality as being different to that of Noreen's. However she stated that there was a connection due to the biographical similarities in that they were both mothers of a similar age, working in the same organisation.

When considering all of the cases, all of them viewed the outcomes in a positive light, that the relationship had been fruitful, that the process had been beneficial and that the outcomes had been met. In Case 1, Kevin stated: "So we had five clear areas of my life and work life that I wanted to explore and do better, and we have addressed four of the five with great success." Peter, Case 2, viewed the process and outcomes as beneficial and had set up further sessions with Olivia to work on additional areas. Rose, in Case 3, stated that the process "…really did change my world". Tamsyn, Case 4, stated that her coaching journey was still beginning and that she could not comment on the outcomes at the time of the interview. However, through the discussion she clearly indicated that she had grown, particularly in her willingness to become more vulnerable for her own development. Liam, Case 5, also viewed the coaching process as beneficial: "So irrespective where I am in my career

or where I am with regarding age it's always helped me." In Case 6, Adam was definitive about the change the coaching process had made in his life. At times, he even became emotional discussing the change. Adam summed up his development, stating that coaching helped him in "…understanding those differences and then re-shaping my approach to my work and my approach to people, understanding that I had to give people responsibility, but also be careful not to overload them, set very strict and stringent deadlines for what could be delivered, and helping people in a different way in terms of more coaching…". Adam was promoted shortly after completing the coaching journey. This may or may not have been due to coaching but when considering the clear mandate provided to Ian to work on the direct, headstrong, argumentative nature of Adam, it is likely that the coaching had benefitted Adam. Adam stated that through the coaching process he had become far more aware of his behaviour and the impact this had on himself and others and was able to accept the feedback provided and change ingrained patterns of behaviour. In Case 7, Sally and Harriet indicated that the coaching goals had changed from the initial session but that both parties were satisfied with the outcomes. Lastly, the respondents in Case 8 both were happy with the coaching outcomes at that time in their coaching journey, which was in the beginning phase.

According to Coleman (2006, p233), "[t]he overall personality similarity of a dyad, or similarity on certain personality traits, may have an effect on the nature and outcome of dyadic interaction…As similarity increased from low to moderate, outcome improved. From moderate to high degrees of similarity, outcome began to decline". This research study contradicts this finding. Despite low or high degrees of perceived similarity in personality, all of the coaching dyads stated that the coaching outcomes were achieved. When considering Coleman's study, one would expect that those dyads who stated emphatically that they were so similar to the other, would have had a poorer outcome. This was not the case in this study. Perceived similarities in personality, which were high in nature, were seen to positively influence the executive coaching process. However, those dyads, which indicated little or no similarities in personality, also stated that the executive coaching process was positive. Thus, according to this research study, perceptions of similarity in personality in the coaching dyad were not a requirement for a beneficial coaching process. Those who described similarities in personality and those who described

differences in personality both experienced a beneficial coaching relationship, process and achievement of coaching outcomes.

It must be noted that Byrne et al (1967) stipulated that respondents respond to elicited behaviour, not the personality dimension per se. It is argued that the perceived similarity between respondents is because the coach adapts their style and behaviour to that of the coachee in order to build rapport. Furthermore, they maintain a non-judgmental stance, accepting the coachee completely. These are trained as coaching skills across the globe (Rogers, 2012). Do the respondents feel that they are similar due to this adaptive change made by the coach as opposed to actual similarity in personality traits and factors?

Conclusion

As is indicated above, all of the respondents viewed their coaching process as being successful and each coachee's specific outcomes had been attained. This was despite personality similarity or personality differences perceived and expressed by the respondents.

5.3 Theme 3: Objective measurement of similarity in personality between the executive coach and coachee and the influence of this on the executive coaching process

Secondary data, an objective measure of personality, that of the Wave personality questionnaire was used to ascertain actual, self-reported similarities in factors of the FFM between the executive coach and coachee in each dyad.

Table 48: Similar factors and sections of personality using secondary data

Factor	SECTIONS	Case 1: Emma & Kevin	Case 2: Olivia and Peter	Case 3: Walter & Rose	Case 4: Walter and Tamsyn	Case 5: Greg & Liam	Case 6: Ian & Adam	Case 7: Harriet & Sally	Case 8: Noreen & Mandy
Openness									
	Evaluative						X		
	Investigative								X
	Imaginative		X			X	X	X	
Extroversion							X		
	Sociable	X	X	X	X		X		X
	Impactful					X	X		X
	Assertive		X				X	X	
Conscientiousness			X						
	Conscientious	X	X	X		X			
	Structured		X	X	X			X	
	Driven		X		X	X		X	
Agreeableness			X	X		X		X	
	Flexible		X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Supportive	X	X	X		X		X	X
Emotional stability					X		X	X	
	Resilient				X		X	X	X
	Flexible		X	X	X	X	X	X	

Table 48 indicates the similar factors and sections in each case. What is interesting to note is that there are very few similarities between the coach and coachee in each case according to the FFM. In Case 1 and Case 8, there are no factors, which are similar. In cases 3, 4 and 5 there is one factor, which is similar between the coach and coachee, that of agreeableness, emotional stability and agreeableness respectively. In cases 2, 6 and 7, there are two factors, which are similar in the coaching dyad, that of conscientiousness and agreeableness; extroversion and emotional stability, and agreeableness and emotional stability, respectively. The

factor of agreeableness is the most common factor of the FFM across the dyads, followed by emotional stability, then extroversion and conscientiousness. Openness is not similar in any of the dyads.

The match of the dyadic pair is often deemed pivotal to the success of the coaching relationship (Abramowitz et al, 1982; Bozer et al, 2015). However, when considering this research, a match in personality is not deemed essential, as similarity in personality between the coach and coachee does not appear to influence the executive coaching process. During the interviews, Emma, the coach in Case 1 stated "…perhaps you should not match your client quite so accurately." This again indicates the perception versus the reality of the similarity in the dyad. This case had no similar factors yet the coach and coachee perceived themselves to be very similar citing that the match may be too accurate. This in fact was not so according to the secondary data. This indicates that the match and the success of the outcomes and process are more than merely a match in personality between the coach and coachee.

This extends the research conducted by De Haan et al (2016). Their study clearly indicated that personality factors and personality matching did not play as important a role as was initially considered regarding the success in executive coaching. Their study used the MBTI - a type personality measure. This study used a trait measure of personality in accordance with the FFM. Despite various similarities and dissimilarities in personality factors across all eight dyads, all respondents stated that the coaching process had been beneficial to them. This builds on the research by De Haan et al (2016) that personality plays a lesser role in predicting the success of coaching.

What is highly insightful in this research study is the perception of similarity. This is in accordance with the 2015 study carried out by Bozer et al which examined perceived similarity. In this study, there is a clear perception of personality similarity. However, when compared to actual similarity factors, there is very little similarity across all of the cases. Case 1, Case 2, Case 4, Case 5, Case 6 and Case 7 all clearly perceived their personalities to be similar to that of their respective coach/coachee. However, when analysing the personality assessments there are in fact very few similarities of

the FFM. Kevin and Emma were emphatic on the perceived similarity of personality; however, they have no factors of the FFM in common. Case 2, Case 5, Case 6 and Case 7 were as emphatic regarding their perceived similarity and had two factors, one factor, two factors and two factors respectively, which were similar of the FFM. Case 4 indicated some similarities and when considering the objective measure had one factor, which was similar of the FFM. Case 8 indicated that there were only similarities based on biographical data and when looking at the secondary data, no factors were similar in personality according to the FFM. Case 3 is a noteworthy case in that both the executive coach and coachee indicated that their personalities were different. However when looking at the secondary data, two factors were similar according to the FFM. This case, despite the perceived differences, has as many factors that are similar of the FFM – two factors, as that of Case 2, which expressed perceived similarity in personality and displayed similarities in two factors of the FFM. Both cases also have one factor in common, that of agreeableness, yet their perceptions regarding similarities in personality are different. However, all respondents in both cases clearly stipulate a positive and beneficial coaching relationship, process and outcomes. What is it then that makes the coach and coachee feel that they are similar but objectively they are not?

Conclusion

What stands out in this research study is that there are, at most, only two factors of the FFM that are similar in each dyad. There is no clear indication of similarities across all five factors of the FFM in the personalities of the coach and coachee in the dyadic relationship.

5.4 Theme 4: Similarities in sections and factors of the FFM across all coachees

This research explored if there were any similarities in personalities across all coachees in the study. The section below will explore this using the Wave personality questionnaire and the FFM.

Table 49: Similarities in sections and factors across all coachees

			Kevin	Peter	Rose	Tamsyn	Liam	Adam	Sally	Mandy
Openness	**Evaluative**									
		Above average								
		Average	X		X	X		X	X	X
		Below average		X			X			
	Investigative									
		Above average					X			X
		Average						X	X	
		Below average	X	X	X	X				
	Imaginative									
		Above average								
		Average	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Below average								
Extraversion	**Sociable**									
		Above average	X							
		Average		X	X	X		X		X
		Below average					X		X	
	Impactful									
		Above average	X							
		Average		X	X	X		X	X	X
		Below average					X			
	Assertive									
		Above average	X					X		
		Average		X	X	X	X		X	X
		Below average								
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**									
		Above average								X
		Average			X			X	X	
		Below average	X	X		X	X			
	Structured									
		Above average								X
		Average	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
		Below average								
	Driven									
		Above average				X				
		Average	X	X	X		X	X	X	
		Below average								X

			Kevin	Peter	Rose	Tamsyn	Liam	Adam	Sally	Mandy
Agreeableness	**Flexible**									
		Above average								
		Average	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Below average								
	Supportive									
		Above average	X							
		Average		X	X		X	X	X	X
		Below average				X				
Emotional stability	**Resilient**									
		Above average				X				
		Average	X	X	X		X	X		X
		Below average							X	
	Flexible									
		Above average								
		Average	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Below average								

Table 49 indicates that all coachees achieved an average score on the section flexible. This may indicate then that coachees are likely to be open to change, receptive to others and have a positive outlook on life. This then may be useful in understanding traits, which coachees require in order to be coached. The coachees obtained scores in the average range, as most people in the population would obtain. However, it is interesting that flexible is common across all coachees. When considering the dimensions these are relevant to the coaching journey, one needs to be change oriented - open to change when one embarks on a coaching journey. If one is closed to possibilities, one is unlikely to change. One also needs to be receptive, to receive feedback from the coach, assessments and others in order for development to happen. The coachee is likely to manage the change and feedback appropriately if they have a more positive outlook on life. Thus, this section may be useful in understanding coachee readiness.

Coachee readiness is key to executive coaching (McKenna & Davis, 2009). The coachee needs to be open to feedback and change, and needs to be self-aware. These criteria are embodied in the flexible section on the agreeableness factor of the

FFM. This study clearly indicates that all of the coachees assessed were similar in their scores on flexible – indicating that at an average level they were open to change and feedback and demonstrated a positive outlook on life. This supports McKenna & Davis' (2009) study and it can then be argued that personality can be assessed in order to measure coachee flexibility as this will indicate coachee readiness. It may allow organisations to become more stringent in their use of coaching as a personal development tool as the research indicates that it will only be beneficial if the coachee is ready for change. By using personality measures to assess for this, there may be better outcomes to the executive coaching process and better ROI.

Conclusion

A factor, which is prevalent across the dyads is agreeableness. The sections, which make up the FFM of agreeableness are supportive and flexible. The factor emotional stability also stands out across the dyads. Emotional stability includes the sections flexible and resilient. It is interesting that both of the most prevalent factors include the section flexible. The flexible section is constituted of the dimensions positive, change oriented and receptive. Thus, in coaching it may be one's openness to change, positive attitude and openness to feedback that is required in the executive coaching process. This may also be beneficial for coachee readiness. Rather than assessing for a personality match between the coach and coachee, testing can be used instead to assess coachee readiness. This is shaped by the notion that the secondary data indicates that all coachees display openness to change and feedback and a positive attitude.

5.5. Theme 5: Similarities in sections and factors of the FFM across all coaches

All of the coaches' scores were compared to each other qualitatively, not statistically. It examined if there were any similarities in personality across all of the sections, which load onto the FFM using the categories of above average, average and below average.

Table 50: Similarities in sections and factors across all coaches

			Emma	Olivia	Walter	Walter	Greg	Ian	Harriet	Noreen
Openness	**Evaluative**									
		Above average			X	X				X
		Average		X			X	X		
		Below average	X						X	
	Investigative									
		Above average							X	X
		Average	X	X	X	X	X			
		Below average						X		
	Imaginative									
		Above average	X		X	X				X
		Average		X			X	X	X	
		Below average								
Extraversion	**Sociable**									
		Above average	X							
		Average		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Below average								
	Impactful									
		Above average			X	X				
		Average	X					X		X
		Below average		X			X		X	
	Assertive									
		Above average			X	X		X		
		Average	X	X					X	
		Below average					X			X
Conscientiousness	**Conscientious**									
		Above average								
		Average			X	X				X
		Below average	X	X			X	X	X	
	Structured									
		Above average								
		Average		X	X	X			X	X
		Below average	X				X	X		
	Driven									
		Above average			X	X		X		
		Average		X			X		X	X
		Below average	X							

			Emma	Olivia	Walter	Walter	Greg	Ian	Harriet	Noreen
Agreeableness	**Flexible**									
		Above average	X							X
		Average		X	X	X	X	X	X	
		Below average								
	Supportive									
		Above average	X					X		
		Average		X	X	X	X		X	X
		Below average								
Emotional stability	**Resilient**									
		Above average		X	X	X				
		Average						X		X
		Below average	X				X		X	
	Flexible									
		Above average	X							X
		Average		X	X	X	X	X	X	
		Below average								

Table 50 indicates that there were no similarities across all coaches in the study.

There is little research on personality factors of coaches. What is deemed more important for organisations is the coach's credibility, gravitas, track record and business understanding (Ridler & Co., 2013).

Conclusion

There are no similarities across all of the coaches in this study. This indicates that no factors of the FFM are common across coaches. This is interesting as one would assume that personality factors, particularly the factors of emotional stability or agreeableness, would have been common across coaches. This is not so.

The above, thus far, has demonstrated that often the coach and coachee believe themselves to be similar in personality but when their psychometric assessments are analysed this is not so. There are similarities in the section flexible across all coachees, but there are no similar sections or factors of the FFM across all coaches.

The main point illustrated by this research is that across all eight cases, all dyads indicate a beneficial coaching relationship, beneficial coaching process and an achievement of coaching outcomes. This research aimed to show that the reason for this was due to similarities in personality, between the people in the dyad. This, however, is not the case. The majority of respondents were not similar in biographical criteria and this did not negatively affect the relationship, process or outcomes. The majority of respondents perceived themselves to be similar to their respective coach/coachee but when objectively measured, there is nothing to support this, yet the relationship, process and outcomes were described as highly beneficial. The question then, is why is this so? What is the key element, which influences the executive coaching process? Key insights here allow one to consider several reasons as to why this is so. As part of their training, coaches are taught to be non-judgemental (Rogers, 2012). This non-judgemental stance may build the relationship between the coach and coachee steadily as there is complete acceptance of the coachee. The coachee may in turn feel more relaxed and a trust relationship is established quickly creating the sense of liking and of being liked. This reciprocity in liking due to a non-judgemental stance may then allow one to believe they are similar to the coach/coachee in the coaching dyad, even if this is objectively not the case.

5.6 Theme 6: Personality factors and the role of challenge in the executive coaching process

The role of challenge differed substantially across all dyads with some respondents indicating that there was a lot of challenge and others stating that there was only some challenge. This research aims to ascertain the influence of personality on the executive coaching process. Thus, did personality factors influence the role of challenge between the executive coach and coachee? This research focuses on the FFM, exploring the five factors of the FFM and the 12 sections of the Wave personality questionnaire. Challenge was explored at dimension level – challenging.

Table 51: Personality dimension and perception of challenge in the dyad

Case	Challenging	View of ratio of challenge to support	View of Coachee
Case 1			
Emma	Average (5)	50:50	Challenge
Kevin	Average (8)	80:20	
Case 2			
Olivia	Average (6)	40:60	Support
Peter	Average (4)	30:70	
Case 3			
Walter	Average (8)	50:50	Challenge
Rose	Average (7)	60:40	
Case 4			
Walter	Average (8)	90:10	Challenge
Tamsyn	Above average (10)	70:30	
Case 5			
Greg	Below average (3)	N/A	Support
Liam	Below average (2)	20:80	
Case 6			
Ian	Average (6)	More challenge	Challenge
Adam	Average (7)	70:30	
Case 7			
Harriet	Average (6)	40:60	Support
Sally	Average (4)	40:60	
Case 8			
Noreen	Below average (3)	20:80	Challenge
Mandy	Average (6)	60:40	

Table 51 illustrates the objective measure on 'Inclination to challenge others' ideas' as well as the subjective perception of the ratio of challenge to support in the coaching relationship.

The perceived challenge to support ratio differed amongst the dyads. What must be noted are Cases 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8. In Case 1, the coachee indicated a high inclination for challenge (8). He also perceived challenge to be high within the coaching relationship providing a ratio of 80:20, challenge: support. Although Emma obtained an average score on challenging, she clearly provided Kevin with the challenge he requires and enjoys. In Case 3, Rose obtained an average score (7) whilst her coach Walter obtained an above average score (8). Rose described the relationship as encompassing a lot of challenge and it is evident that the coach using his natural inclination provided this. In Case 4, Tamsyn, the coachee obtained an above average score (10) indicating that she is very likely to challenge others' views. She also stated that the ratio was 70:30. Walter, also obtained an above average score (8), obviously then providing this challenge for Tamsyn. As it is a prevalent dimension in Tamsyn's personality, this would be key to her remaining engaged. It is argued that if she was not challenged the coaching process and outcomes may not be fully beneficial. It is also interesting to note that Walter stated that he enjoyed the coaching sessions with Tamsyn. It is likely that she also challenged him, which he enjoyed. This challenge is likely to be unusual for Walter who, in his role as CEO and Industrial Psychologist, is unlikely to be challenged by the majority of people. Greg and Liam in Case 5 obtained below average scores on challenging. First, this is very interesting. Although the interviewer did not experience either respondent as challenging, in their roles at the bank one would assume that they would be required to be more challenging. This, however, was not a preference for either. Secondly, it is of interest to note that they both viewed the relationship as more supportive than challenging. This aligns then to personality factors. As both respondents do not enjoy challenging others, it is likely that they prefer to seek out support. It is important then that they obtain this through the coaching relationship. In Case 8, Noreen obtained a below average score (3) whilst Mandy obtained an average score (6). Despite the coach's aversion to challenging, which she also stated in the interview, Mandy stated that she was challenged, providing a ratio of 60:40 challenge to support.

Conclusion

Overall, it appears that the personality dimension of challenging does not influence the perception of the relationship as being supportive or challenging. It may be beneficial to assess for such a trait to ensure that the coach provides the necessary challenge for the coachee; however, it can just as easily be discussed between the coach and coachee as to what the coachee requires. It also is imperative that the coach provides what is required at that time for the coachee. This research extends on the work carried out by O'Neill (2007). This indicated that challenge is vital to the coaching relationship. This study indicates this as well, as elicited through the primary data. However, it is something of which the coach must be aware. This is something that can be discussed and contracted on rather than it being assessed for.

5.7 Theme 7: Personality factors and the role of support in the executive coaching process

The role of perceived support differed substantially across all dyads with some respondents indicating that there was a lot more support than challenge. This research aims to explore the influence of personality on the executive coaching process. Thus, did personality factors influence the role of support between the executive coach and coachee? This research focuses on the FFM, exploring the five factors of the FFM and the 12 sections of the Wave personality questionnaire. Support was explored using the section level - supportive.

Table 52: Personality dimension and perception of support in the dyad

Case	Supportive	View of ratio of challenge to support	View of Coachee
Case 1			
Emma	Above average (10)	50:50	Challenge
Kevin	Above average (8)	80:20	
Case 2			
Olivia	Average (4)	40:60	Support
Peter	Average (4)	30:70	
Case 3			
Walter	Average (4)	50:50	Challenge
Rose	Average (6)	60:40	
Case 4			
Walter	Average (4)	90:10	Challenge
Tamsyn	Below average (3)	70:30	
Case 5			
Greg	Average (6)	N/A	Support
Liam	Average (4)	20:80	
Case 6			
Ian	Above average (8)	More Challenge	Challenge
Adam	Average (5)	70:30	
Case 7			
Harriet	Average (5)	40:60	Support
Sally	Average (6)	40:60	
Case 8			
Noreen	Average (7)	20:80	Challenge
Mandy	Average (4)	60:40	

The table above illustrates the subjective perception of the ratio of challenge to support in the coaching relationship from the ~~prmary~~primary data source as well as the objective measure on the section supportive from the Wave personality questionnaire.

As can be seen, the majority of the cases fall within the average range of scores on supportive. The ratio of challenge to support differs quite substantially across the board with some average scores viewing the relationship as one of challenge whilst other cases with average scores indicating the relationship as one of support.

What is perhaps of most interest are cases 1, 4 and 6. Case 1 indicates that the respondents obtained above average scores on supportive. This indicates a strong inclination by both the coach and coachee to be attentive, involving and accepting. Despite these personality dimensions, the relationship was viewed by the coachee in particular as being one in which he was challenged. The perception, however, was also one that was enjoyed. Thus, despite the supportive personality section, the perception and requirement of challenge was one that was enjoyed and by all accounts needed by the coachee.

In Case 4, Tamsyn obtained a below average score on supportive (3). Walter obtained an average score (4). Tamsyn reiterated this in the interview when she stated that the relationship provided far more challenge than support. It is unlikely that Tamsyn looked for support as she has a disinclination for supportive. This is an important concept in coaching. Although the fact that she received challenge and not as much support, which is aligned to her personality, it is questionable whether this is where the gap lies. There is a fine line between pandering to the personality of the coachee and frustrating the coachee based on their personality. Is it a case of focusing on strengths and building on those, allowing for growth or is it a case of providing the space where there is a gap, which allows for growth?

Case 6 is of interest as both respondents viewed the relationship as being characterised by challenge; however, Ian is highly supportive (8). Adam is somewhat less so. Again it is questionable how this aligns to the coachee's personality and if this is where the gap lies. Should Ian have utilised his supportive section more,

stretching Adam out of his comfort zone? It is questionable whether the coach attuned his behaviour to that of the coachee who may have become frustrated had the coach been too supportive, which may be his natural inclination and style. It appears to show the adeptness of the coach who, being self-aware, modified his behaviour to ensure his supportive style did not take over the relationship, ensuring that challenge was provided.

This then is important in shaping how a coach needs to be self-aware and to adapt their style as and when is needed. The coaching process is not binary in approach and the coach needs to be able to utilise both challenge and support in order to allow growth and development for the coachee (O'Neill, 2007). Thus, it is not personality traits that are all important but rather how a coach is able to adapt his/her style in order to meet the needs of and stretch the coachee.

Conclusion

Overall, it appears that the personality section of supportive does not influence the perception of the relationship as being supportive or challenging. It may be beneficial to assess for such a trait to ensure that the coach provides the necessary support for the coachee; however, it can just as easily be discussed between the coach and coachee as to what the coachee requires. What this does provide insight into is the need for the coach to remain adaptable at all times, modifying their style and behaviour in order to meet the needs of the coachee and to stretch them. Thus again, it does not appear to be personality per se, but rather an understanding and self-awareness of one's personality and the ability to adapt one's style to get the best out of the coachee.

5.8 Theme 8: A sincere commitment from the coachee allows for best possible outcomes

Commitment to the process was viewed as essential to the coaching process. This was indicated by a desire to be at the sessions and a willingness to do the work between sessions to make the desired change. Liam termed this commitment, "sincere commitment", which will be used in this study.

Across the cases this sincere commitment was essential to the executive coaching process. In Case 1, Emma noted that Kevin was committed: “Kevin was committed to coaching. He was always on time, always cheerful, always interested…” Emma further stated that sincere commitment is required from the coachee: “…as being sent on coaching doesn’t help. It doesn’t work. It’s a waste of energy…I would much rather work with people who see coaching as a way to grow. And then… and they must be committed.” Peter in Case 2 stated: “I threw myself into it. I think that’s one of the most important things, is I just threw myself into it outright. You know I decided not to hold back. Not to ‘play the game’. I actually went for it because I wanted to learn. I wanted to develop…I just wanted to fulfil or feel like I put myself into it, committed to it, got something out of it, and that I can say comfortably I did achieve that.” Walter stated that both Tamsyn and Rose were committed to the process. Liam, in Case 5 stated that coaching or any other feedback and reflective practice should be taken sincerely: “To take it sincerely, to understand what it is that you want to get out of it...So for me it’s really about as I say take it sincerely. Having it on a piece of paper. Not in your head. Where you can manage it. List the things you want to achieve. List the things that you going to do to achieve it. List the timeframes and list the reflections in how you going to do your actions.” Adam in Case 6 also stated that he made a full commitment to the process: “…but once I committed, then I knew that I had to play the game as well.”

According to Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker and Fernandes (2008), in order for a successful coaching process to occur, commitment to behavioural change is essential. “The executive’s willingness, motivation, and his view of the problem determine the extent of change possible. Therefore, the executives who will benefit most from the coaching experience are those who are ready to be coached and do what is needed to accomplish the goals” (Kombarakaran et al, 2008, p87). This research supports these findings. All of the respondents stated that they had gained from the coaching process due to the commitment they gave to the coaching journey.

Conclusion

It is evident through this study, which extends on previous research, that sincere commitment is required for there to be beneficial outcomes to the executive coaching process.

5.9 Theme 9: The influence of the coaching relationship on the executive coaching process

Across all of the literature on executive coaching, the main determinant on the success of the coaching process is the coaching relationship "…the most consistently identified factor seen as contributing to the success of a coaching engagement…is the quality of the relationship between the coach and the individual client" (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011, p78). This study corroborates these findings. All of the respondents indicated that trust and openness, were paramount to the coaching relationship.

Trust

Emma, in Case 1, stated: "So they've really got to trust you. They're putting… a lot in the coach's hands…I mean if there's no deep relationship of trust people aren't going to take a risk." Olivia also cited trust as pivotal to the relationship: "Three sessions in, we've had four and a half hours of deep conversation. That is trust building." In Case 3, Walter also indicated a high level of trust from the outset: "I think the fact that she trusted me from the word go…I mean we started the session and she just started telling me everything." Liam, in Case 5 stated: "I think first of all it's the one of trust. So you can go to him [about] something and it's confidential. Case 6, also indicated this: "Trusting, I hope. Certainly it felt like he trusted me and he certainly indicated that…but probably that is the most important part of the whole thing for me." In Case 7: "I feel a sense of trust, and I think it's a reciprocal trust, because I know that she can trust me with the information she gives me, you know she shares with me…" In Case 8 this was again mentioned : "So a very trusting relationship…" Tamsyn in Case 4, stated that the relationship was: "…not just trust, submission."

Thus, it is evident that across all eight cases, trust was viewed as essential to the coaching relationship. All coachees and coaches within the eight dyads experienced

this trust and all eight dyads experienced a positive coaching relationship and beneficial coaching outcomes.

Openness

It was evident across all eight cases that there was an element of transparency, or what was termed openness by the respondents. Comments such as: “So he was just open, like bring it on, bring it on and I really enjoyed that. He was open to feedback.”; “so I was quite open to the process”; “so he’s actually very open to feedback.”; “Very, very open. I don’t hide things, almost to my detriment actually in terms of that.”; “…was very open to the process from the beginning…”; “he also gave me an opportunity to open up with myself.”; “But I was open to that kind of honesty.”; “…I found his character to be more open to using not just this task orientation, but also just pulling together feelings, the feeling side of things.”; “…because I went with an open mind…”

This openness must not be confused with the openness factor of the FFM. Openness of the FFM refers to analytical and evaluative preferences. This colloquial term of openness used by the respondents, is in fact indicative of the flexible section of the agreeableness factor of the FFM. The section is broken down into three dimensions, namely receptive, change oriented and positive. This study then highlights the fact that both coachee and coach, but particularly the coachees, were open to change, open to feedback and optimistic. This was cited in the primary data and highlighted by the secondary data. According to the sections of the FFM, flexible was common across all coachees. This demonstrates that the coaching process may be influenced by the coachees’ flexible nature. Are they receptive to the coach, receptive to feedback, accepting of change and optimistic? These areas are in essence the fundamentals of coaching. Thus, openness in the coaching relationship as well as a flexible personality section of a coachee, is indicative of a beneficial relationship as well as beneficial coaching outcomes, but these are certainly not the only factors, which allow for this.

The literature is clear that the coaching relationship is key. Bluckert (2005; Baron & Morin (2009); De Haan et al (2011) and Passmore et al (2011) all provide key insights into the importance of the relationship in terms of the coaching process and

coaching outcomes. This research supports these findings. All eight dyads had a relationship embodied by trust and openness and all dyads stated that the coaching process had been beneficial. The relationship between the coach and coachee is pivotal.

Conclusion

Trust and openness are essential to the coaching relationship. Openness as described in the interviews actually addresses the flexible section of the Wave personality questionnaire. Thus, it is trust and openness between the coach and coachee, as well as a receptive, optimistic, change-oriented personality, which will allow for a beneficial coaching process.

5.10 Theme 10: What the executive coaching process allows for the coachee

Through the semi-structured interviews it was evident that coaching allows the coachee to experience a number of, or different effects. These included self-awareness, personal growth, an alternative perspective, reflection, re-invention, vulnerability and validation.

Self-awareness

Many of the coachees stated that they had become more self-aware through the coaching process. This research supports the literature. Wales (2002) argues that the benefits of coaching include self-awareness, confidence, leadership and management, assertiveness, understanding difference, stress management, work/life balance and communication skills. Joo (2005) reiterates that change through coaching is elicited through self-awareness. It is the cornerstone of executive coaching. It allows the coachees to understand their impact as a leader on those around them, often, which they are unaware of.

Personal growth

What was most important was that all the coachees as well as some coaches stated that they had grown and developed through the coaching process.

The vast majority of the literature indicates that this is what coaching does – allows for the growth and development of people. Joo (2005) argues that coaching allows

for personal and professional growth. This research builds on these findings as all respondents stated that they had grown and developed through the coaching process.

Alternative perspective

Coaching allows for a different perspective, one which the coachee may not have considered previously: “she gave me perspective on things I’d lost perspective on, or I just didn’t think about.” “So I’ve had extremely different perspectives on some things, which is really, really interesting…”

An alternative perspective links somewhat to the challenge found in coaching (O’Neill, 2007). The challenge provided by the coach is done by questioning the coachee’s current worldview. Without challenge or a different perspective, the coachee may not grow and develop.

Furthermore, in order for the alternative perspective to be considered, the coachee needs to be receptive – open to feedback and open to change. This links back to the flexible section of the personality assessment. It becomes evident that a myriad of factors are required for a beneficial coaching process but one of these factors is the receptiveness of the coachee – how flexible they are in order to consider an alternative worldview.

This study supports the literature and extends on it. It examines how the section flexible, which forms part of the agreeableness factor of the FFM, is important for coachee readiness in order to reflect on the alternative perspectives without the coachee feeling threatened.

Reflection

Reflection is pivotal to the coaching process and many of the coachees in the dyads stated that coaching allowed them the time to consider things and to process feelings. Liam in Case 6 stated that the reflection, however, must be done mindfully “Having it on a piece of paper. Not in your head. Where you can manage it. List the things you want to achieve. List the things that you going to do to achieve it. List the

timeframes and list the reflections in how you going to do your actions. What are you going to do to it? If you do that, anything's achievable…"

Grant (2003) states that self-reflection is vital to coaching. It allows one to spend time contemplating, which will "…lead to insight, and insight will facilitate goal attainment and behavioural change". This study supports this literature.

Reinvention/reshaping/reconstruction

Growth and development are often cited as outcomes of coaching (Kilburg, 1996). However coachees also cite that there is a transformation of their personal identity due to coaching. Reconstruction has been formally used in the literature to demonstrate the renewal of one's identity due to coaching (Drake, 2007). In this research, a number of the coachees indicated that coaching will be used to transform them, or has already done so. Tamsyn stated that she wanted to "…re-invent myself". Adam stated that coaching was used "…to reshape who I was going to be going forward, at this late stage of my career." and "…understanding those differences and then re-shaping my approach to my work and my approach to people…" Sally stated that change occurred because her coach "…was able to…reframe things for me by reflecting and going back to certain things."

Adam's comments provide insight into this. Adam clearly indicated how through coaching, he became an integrated, holistic person. He stated that prior to coaching he did not talk about feelings. Ian opened this up for him – an alternative perspective. By doing so, Adam could reconstruct his identity: "Tthe main thing he enabled me to be a more holistic type of person. Because prior to that I was missing something, but I didn't know what I was missing, and by hiding those things, and saying, look this is not important. In fact, it has turned out to be a very important side of my life... sometimes we go through this journey, and you graduate from university, and there's this big world in front of you, and you just keep on running, you just keep on running. You don't know what you don't know. And I just found that it was an opportunity that most people either avoid or don't get to experience in their lives. And I… sometimes it's simply because people do not know that one can actually find that kind of coach that can help you in a safe environment, to know things about yourself, which you actually don't even know about. You know that there's something, but you

don't know what that something is. And you tend to brush it aside because it may be a sign of weakness perhaps or whatever. But that you really need to have all of these aspects about yourself, lined up nicely so that you can integrate them for the purpose of you being more effective in what you do. Yes, that's what it has been for me."

Coaching allows for the change from "…reiterating the old story line to start discovering new possibilities and action" (Stelter & Law, 2010, p22). The coachees interviewed for this study clearly outlined the change from past behaviours and past ways of being (storylines) to new ones. This study, therefore, supports previous research in this regard.

Vulnerability

Tamsyn in Case 4, stated that the relationship was "…not just trust, submission." Tamsyn went on to state that this level of submission is at odds to what a leader normally portrays. Instead of the leader being in control, independent, highly knowledgeable and managing through power, this level of trust, this submission leads to vulnerability "…I'm very self-sufficient you know, I'm very…independent…so driving my requirements into the process, so saying no, no…I need to meet with you every two weeks. That's been challenging…So actually expressing my requirements and needs…because there's a dependency linked to that…and I find that difficult. Because it talks to the vulnerability as well. Which is quite an insight." Tamsyn went on further to state that the only inhibitor to the coaching relationship would be "the extent to which I'm willing to be vulnerable…" This demonstrates from one leader the struggle it is to be vulnerable, but by being vulnerable, one can open up and thus, truly benefit from coaching.

Sally too spoke about the vulnerability that coaching allows: "So I think that when you sit with a coach, you know you almost become very grounded, it's a very grounding experience you know, because you sit and you talk, and at exco you don't talk, you don't talk to anyone. Commanding, and instructing, and talking to your teams. But that's at exco, well our exco anyway, you don't talk you know, at a level of depth. What's really worrying you, what's really troubling you, how do I really get

out of this? You tend not to have that level of conversations." This real conversation is linked to vulnerability – really getting to the fundamentals of issues.

Emma, the coach in Case 1, also indicated how vulnerable the coaching process can be: "…so I think I am quite an empathic person, I understand that vulnerability. And I'll acknowledge it and honour it."

This research expounds on that elicited in previous studies. Tobias (1996) states that through coaching, executives can express their emotions allowing for a little more vulnerability. This was clear in this study as well with Tamsyn and Sally indicating the vulnerability coaching allows for and requires in order to work.

Validation

Across the majority of interviews it was clear that coaching had allowed for the coachees to feel validated. The space to talk, which Sally in Case 7 discussed, allows for this validation: "They had someone to talk to in a non-threatening, non-judgemental way. Someone who validated them, just for being who they are."

A clear factor, which coaching provided for Adam in Case 6, was validation. Adam commented several times that the coaching allowed him to accept who he was: "~~Mmainly~~Mainly to trust myself in the sense that there was nothing wrong with me, because sometimes I felt that perhaps I was odd in the sense of my expectations." "Also to get to know that it was okay the way that I was…" "I think… the main thing he has enabled me to be more comfortable in my skin."

Peter in Case 2 stated that he too felt validation through coaching: "So it was really fine tuning what I think and how I behave, in how I approach my team in the various scenarios for a workplace that throws at you, and to get validation that it was the right approach." Furthermore, coaching allowed him to receive "…validation of something I'm thinking…"

This is exceptionally powerful when considering the coaching process and the coaching relationship. Most leaders are experienced as knowledgeable, confident, competent individuals. When interviewing these senior executives it was clear that

they too experience doubt and have the need to be validated. In the corporate world, this is may not occur. Coaching, however, allows these executives to be open and experience true vulnerability allowing for absolute validation.

This study builds on Rogers' (1959) theory of unconditional positive regard. It is through the absolute acceptance of the individual that the coachee can become vulnerable in the coaching process and it is through this vulnerability that the coachee is then validated.

Conclusion

The factors highlighted provide insight into the coaching process and coaching relationship. As is highlighted by the literature and this study, coaching allows for personal growth and development, self-awareness, reflection, reconstruction of one's identity and an alternative perspective. This study has highlighted that a coachee becomes more vulnerable through coaching. By allowing oneself to become more vulnerable, this study argues that validation is experienced. This validation, the non-judgemental acceptance of the person, allows for self-acceptance, which in turn allows for personal growth and development. It is through authentic validation that change occurs. It is argued that vulnerability and validation arise out of the relationship based on openness and trust between a coach and their coachee.

5.11 Theme 11: What the executive coaching process allows for the coach

All coaches except Walter stated that they enjoyed their work as a coach. Emma stated that it was highly rewarding: "You know coaching is an extremely wonderful occupation. It's not an occupation it's a calling. It's an incredible privilege to actually be walking with this person while they want to learn and grow and develop. It is just amazing." Greg stated: "…it's a very rewarding phenomena…when you see people grow." He also stated that: "Coaching is great fun, and it must be, it must be!" Ian described it as: "Lekker" (nice).

Coaching also allowed the coaches to develop and grow as people, allowing for continuous learning. Olivia stated that coaching allowed for excellent conversation, which she enjoyed.

Conclusion

The benefits of coaching to coaches are highlighted as a rewarding profession as well as personal growth for the coach themselves.

5.12 Limitations and weaknesses

This study explored the influence of the FFM of personality on the executive coaching process. It researched eight coaching dyads using qualitative methodology.

The limitations and weaknesses of this research are:

- This study focused on the factors of the FFM and the sections and dimensions of the Wave personality questionnaire, which load onto the factors. It may be beneficial to research personality at trait (facet) level to ascertain if there are any similarities at this level, which influence the executive coaching process.
- This study focused on factors using the FFM of personality based on trait theory. It may be beneficial to extrapolate in this ~~reseach~~research, which utilises trait theory, as well as expand on research conducted on type theory and the influence these have on the executive coaching process.
- The literature indicates that similarity in values and attitudes influences dyadic relationships. This study did not investigate this. There may be scope to research the role of values and attitudes and the influence these may have on the executive coaching process.
- The limitations of psychometric instruments must be considered.

5.13 Conclusion

This discussion chapter has highlighted eleven themes.

Theme 1: Biographical data does not influence the executive coaching process

Despite many references in the literature stating that biographical similarities influence the matching paradigm, this study indicates that it is not so. No biographical data was seen as having a positive or negative influence on the executive coaching process.

Theme 2: Perceptions of similarity in personality between the executive coach and coachee and the influence of this on the executive coaching process

The majority of respondents perceived themselves to be similar to their coach or coachee in the dyad and indicated that the coaching process, relationship and outcomes were beneficial. The remaining pool of respondents who were the minority, indicted that they believed their personality to be different to that of the coach/coachee in the dyad. Despite the perceived differences in personality, this minority also stated that the coaching process, relationship and outcomes had been beneficial.

Theme 3: Objective measurement of similarity in personality between the executive coach and coachee and the influence of this on the executive coaching process.

The majority of respondents illustrated perceptions of similarity. However, when an objective personality measure was used to ascertain similarity in personality of the FFM focusing at section and factor level, there was very little to corroborate these perceptions of similarity. Dyads who indicated a similarity in personality displayed no objective measures of similarity (Case 1). Dyads who stated similarity in personality displayed some factors, which were similar of the FFM (Case 2). Dyads who indicated differences in personality displayed some factors, which were similar of the FFM (Case 3).

This provides insight into the executive coaching process. The aim of the study was to explore the influence of the FFM of personality on the coaching process. There was an array of information with no common thread between dyads. There were some dyads that stated clearly that they were so similar to their respective other within the dyad, yet the personality measure showed no sections or factors of personality being similar. There were dyads who indicated that they were very different from one-another in the dyad, yet those personality assessments indicated some similarities in section and factors of the FFM. There were also dyads who stated that there was similarity between the coach and coachee in the dyad and there were in fact similarities in sections and factors of the FFM in the personality assessment. All respondents clearly indicated that the relationship, process and outcomes had been beneficial. The main point then of this research indicates that

people benefit from coaching but that this is not due to any similarity in personality factors despite most respondents perceiving themselves to be similar to their coach/coachee in the dyad. This supports the research conducted by Bozer et al (2015) as well as De Haan et al (2016).

Theme 4: Similarities in sections and factors of the FFM across all coachees
The section, which was common across all coaches, was flexible. Flexible loads onto the agreeableness factor as well as the emotional stability factor of the FFM. Flexible is made up of the dimensions: positive, change-oriented and receptive. This flexible section, in conjunction with the primary data source, which indicates that openness (receptiveness) was pivotal to the coaching relationship, indicates that coachees need to be open to feedback, open to change and optimistic in order for change, development and growth to occur.

This is useful in that personality should not be measured to match coach to coachee, as similarity effect does not allow for a better executive coaching process. It, however, elicits the proposal of assessing the personality of coachees in order to establish readiness for coaching for self-development. Bozer & Joo (2015) argue that it is important to qualify a coachee by understanding readiness and suitability for coaching. They further state that their study "…justifies the assessment of an executive's readiness for coaching intervention" (Bozer & Joo, 2015, p50). This study supports this notion, arguing that coachees need to be flexible – positive, change-oriented and receptive - in order to be open to change which allows for growth and development. This can be tested for. Personality testing of coachees, however, would incur costs for organisations, which would need to be considered.

Theme 5: Similarities in sections and factors of the FFM across all coaches
There were no similarities in personality sections and factors across all coaches. This indicates that coaches are made up of a myriad of different traits. Coaches need to be self-aware and well-functioning individuals but there is no specific factor that indicates a good coach, according to this research. It further highlights the need for adequate and meaningful training programmes for executive coaches.

Theme 6: Personality factors and the role of challenge in the executive coaching process

Challenge is an important part of the coaching process. When evaluating the challenging dimension of the Wave personality questionnaire there was no connection between personality and the experience of being challenged by the coachee. This demonstrates that the coach must be self-aware in order know when to challenge a coachee. This self-awareness will allow the coach to challenge the coachee when necessary but will also allow them to be aware of boundaries and how far they can ethically push and stretch the coachee.

Theme 7: Personality factors and the role of support in the executive coaching process

Support is essential to the coaching process. When evaluating the supportive section of the Wave personality questionnaire there was no link between personality and the experience of being supported by the coachee. Coaches who were supportive were able to challenge and those coaches who displayed a preference for challenge were able to support their coachee. Again, this illustrates the importance of self-awareness as a coach.

Theme 8: A sincere commitment from the coachee allows for best possible outcomes

The coachees and coaches stated that the more committed the coachee was to the coaching process the better the coaching outcomes. Liam phrased this as a sincere commitment to the process and this was evident across all eight cases. The coachees stated their commitment and many argued that as executives they could have 'played the game' but did not, instead really using the opportunity for growth and development by committing to the process and requirements. Ratiu & Baban (2012) argue that the results of coaching depend on the coachee's participation and involvement in the process, which was elicited from this study as well. The coachees who were clearly committed and dedicated to the process, which was reported in all cases, gained from the coaching experience.

This research clearly demonstrates the need for the coachee to be committed to the coaching process in order to gain fully from it.

Theme 9: The influence of the coaching relationship on the executive coaching process

This study further reiterates the literature regarding the relationship on the executive coaching process. The relationship is fundamental to the coaching process and the coaching outcomes. The relationship is characterised by trust and openness. This research provides insight into the relationships of eight dyads, all of which stated that their relationships were beneficial. This research illustrates that the relationship influences the coaching process and that the coaching relationship is not considerably impacted by personality traits.

Theme 10: What the executive coaching process allows for the coachee

Coachees benefit from coaching. The main benefits include self-awareness, reflection, looking at situations from a different perspective and personal growth. Coaching also allowed for reinvention. This has all been documented by the previous literature. What is noteworthy from this study is the fact that coaching allows the coachee to become vulnerable. This vulnerability as well as genuine acceptance of the coachee by the coach, allows for feelings of personal validation. This validation enables the coaching process, coaching relationship and coaching outcomes to be beneficial.

Theme 11: What the executive coaching process allows for the coach

Coaches also benefit from the coaching process. Coaches stated that they grow and develop, enjoy great conversation and have a highly rewarding occupation.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The following chapter will outline the research study, conclusions and recommendations for future research.

6.2 Conclusions of the study

This research study explored the influence of the FFM of personality on the executive coaching process.

This research used an interpretivist paradigm using qualitative methodology. Eight case studies were researched, which encompassed eight coaching dyads. The case study approach was exploratory. This was deemed the most suitable methodology to be used as the phenomenon of personality was to be explored in order to ascertain the influence it had, if any, on the coaching process. Purposive sampling was used and all eight coaching dyads were made up of respondents from Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa.

The executive coach and coachee of each dyad were interviewed using a semi-structured interview. This was the primary data source, which provided subjective, rich data. Secondary data was used, namely that of the Wave personality questionnaire to objectively measure and triangulate each respondent's personality facets, dimensions and sections, which load onto the FFM of personality. All 16 respondents completed both the primary and secondary data sources.

The data was then analysed using Atlas.ti (2003). Inductive and deductive analysis was used. Inductive analysis was used on the semi-structured interview in order to understand the experience of the coach and coachee, while deductive analysis was used on the secondary data source as the facets, dimensions and sections, according to the FFM of personality, are standard.

It is argued that the reliability and validity requirements of qualitative methodology have been met in this research study. The researcher was aware of subjectivity and

bias and this was documented both in field notes as well as in the interviewer's experience of the respondents.

The conclusions of this study are as follows:

Research Question 1: How does the coaching relationship influence the executive coaching process?

Rogers (1959) proposed that the relationship is fundamental to the therapeutic relationship. His theory focused on conditions of worth and an individual's ability to self-actualise. One avenue to self-actualisation is through the unconditional positive regard shown by the therapist to the individual. This is the non-judgemental, full acceptance of the individual. Although executive coaching is not a therapeutic relationship, as stated in the theory of Rogers (1959), unconditional positive regard is pivotal to the relationship in executive coaching. Most coaching programmes follow a humanistic approach facilitating the full acceptance of the coachee.

The coaching relationship needs to be one that encompasses trust and openness (flexible). The coachee has to demonstrate a sincere commitment to the coaching process. When trust is elicited, with a coachee who demonstrates sincere commitment to the process, it allows the coachee to truly open up. This trust and openness may allow for the perception of being similar to the other in the dyad even if this is not objectively so. This commitment, trust and openness then allows for vulnerability. By becoming vulnerable, the coachee experiences validation. This validation of a person, this study argues, is why the executive coaching process works. When a person is accepted and validated for who he/she is, it allows for personal development and self-actualisation.

Just as Rogers (1959) postulated in his theory of unconditional positive regard as being pivotal to therapy, this study proposes that validation is the most important tenet of the coaching relationship and it is this, which has the greatest influence on the executive coaching process.

This study illustrates as previous research before it, that the relationship is fundamental to the coaching process. It is the relationship, despite personality

similarities or differences, which influences the executive coaching process. This study reiterates the central role the relationship plays in the coaching process, just as Bluckert stated that the coaching relationship is "…the critical success factor in successful coaching outcomes" (Bluckert, 2005, p337). This study further extends on the research of (Joo, 2005), De Haan (2011), Passmore et al (2011), Bozer et al (2015) and De Haan et al (2016) and who found that the relationship between the coach and coachee is the fundamental component to the coaching process and coaching outcomes.

This study aimed at ascertaining the influence of personality on the executive coaching process but it is clear that the relationship is fundamental to the process. A relationship of trust and openness allows for vulnerability which in turn elicits validation. This validation of the person ensures that growth and development occurs.



Illustration 11: Depiction of the coaching process

This illustration depicts the all-encompassing role the relationship plays in the coaching process. Despite personality factors, if the relationship is based on trust and openness, and the coachee displays a sincere commitment to the process it allows for development and growth. The commitment, trust and openness facilitate in the coachee becoming vulnerable. This vulnerability allows for validation of the coachee by the coach and then allows for self-actualisation. Vulnerability and the subsequent validation from this can only occur in the context of an open and trusting dyadic relationship.

Research Question 2: Do personality factors influence the role of challenge or support in the executive coaching process?

Executive coaching is characterised by the nuance of challenge vs. support (O'Neill, 2007). This study aimed to ascertain whether those individuals who have a preference for either challenge or support, according to the personality assessment, also demonstrated this during the coaching process. It also explored whether a coach who was perceived as being either more supportive or more challenging in the coaching process actually had a preference for this style when considering the personality assessment.

The assessment section of supportive and the dimension of challenging does not appear to have shaped the executive coaching process in any way. It was evident that although a coach may have a particular preference according to the personality measure, for either challenge or support, they are able to adapt their behaviour in order to prompt what is required for the coachee at that time. Thus, it reiterates the notion of self-awareness and the pivotal role this plays as a coach. A coach needs to be aware of his/her own preferences and how this could direct a coaching session. They then need to pick up on what the coachee needs at a particular time and adapt their style to either that of support or challenge.

Research Question 3: Do personality factors influence coachee readiness?

This study elicited that the section flexible was common across all coachees. Flexible is the term utilised on the objective personality measurement, however, in popular terms it is the openness described by coachees and coaches as being pivotal to the coaching relationship. Flexible encompasses the dimensions of

positive, change oriented and receptive. This indicates then that coachees who benefit from coaching are open to change, open to feedback and display an optimistic outlook.

Testing of personality, particularly the flexible section, which loads onto agreeableness of the FFM of personality, may thus be beneficial to ascertain coachee readiness prior to the start of any coaching journey.

Bozer & Joo (2015) as well as Carter, Blackman & Hicks (2014) argue that readiness for coaching is an essential ingredient to the success of the coaching process. This study supports this literature, further arguing that coachee readiness should be assessed for with a focus on openness to feedback and an optimistic orientation to the world, which load onto the agreeableness factor and emotional stability factor of the FFM.

Research Question 4: Does testing of personality factors allow for a better understanding of personality and the influence this has on the executive coaching process?

All 16 respondents completed an objective personality measure, that of the Wave personality questionnaire. This is a self-report measure, which ascertains an individual's personality preferences. It is based on trait theory. These traits, known as facets on the Wave personality questionnaire, load onto dimensions, which load onto sections, which then load onto the factors of the FFM of personality. Only factors, sections and dimensions were explored for the purposes of this study.

Testing of personality factors allowed for some understanding of each individual's personality, however, across the eight dyads, testing of personality did not allow for a better understanding of the executive coaching process. All coaches and coachees indicated a beneficial coaching process, a beneficial coaching relationship and beneficial coaching outcomes, regardless of personality factors, sections or dimensions.

Research Question 5: Does similarity in personality factors between the executive coach and coachee influence the executive coaching process?

This study clearly illustrates that similarity effects in personality do not influence the executive coaching process.

The primary data indicated that the majority of respondents perceive themselves to be similar in personality to their respective coach/coachee. However, there was nothing conclusive, according to the FFM, which indicated why this would be so. There were cases, which strongly indicated through the interviews that they believed there were strong similarities between the coaching dyad with no factors similar of the FFM. Conversely, there were cases, which indicated complete differences in personality between the dyad, yet there were factors, which were similar on the FFM.

There were no more than two factors of the FFM, which were similar in each dyad. The factors, which were most similar in the dyads across all cases, were agreeableness followed by emotional stability.

All of the coaching dyads clearly stated that they found the coaching process, relationship and outcomes to be beneficial. This was despite the objective personality measure indicting similar factors in some dyads and no similar factors in other dyads. There was no connection between similarity in personality and this similarity in personality allowing for a more beneficial coaching process.

What is highly important when considering this study is the fact that the majority of respondents perceived themselves to be similar to their coach/coachee in the dyad despite there being nothing significant according to the FFM. It is questionable why this is so.

Byrnes proposed that interpersonal attraction is based on the extent to which the individuals are similar in personality and that this is defined through scores on personality measures (Byrnes, 1967). This was not the case in this research. As illustrated, whether respondents were similar in personality factors or not, most of the respondents perceived themselves as being similar in personality to their coach/coachee.

Byrnes (1967) further argued that people make sense of the world when others' behaviour is similar to that of oneself. It is the behaviour the person is responding to not the underlying personality trait. One could argue that during the coaching process, as part of rapport building, the coach adapts their style. This then may be interpreted by the coachee as similar behaviour to that of themselves and thus, personality is perceived as similar. It is questionable then why the vast majority of the coaches, however, also perceived themselves as being similar in personality to their coachees as the coachee is not likely to modify their behaviour as much as a coach would.

Abramowitz et al (1982) argued that research into psychotherapeutic relationships suggests that therapist-patient similarity should facilitate positive treatment results as similarity enhances rapport and outcome. The similarity categories stretched across various diverse categories including demographics, personality styles, values and cognitive variables. This research study focused on personality similarity and biographical similarity. Neither of these influenced the executive coaching process as was anticipated. Across biographically diverse dyads and dyads similar in factors of personality and dissimilar in factors of personality, all of them viewed coaching, despite these similarities or differences, as being beneficial.

Reinforcement-affect approach focuses on the fact that when one is rewarded one views the rewarding person in a positive manner and is 'liked'. The coaching process may be rewarding in itself. The coachee spends one on one time with a coach who listens to them. For busy executives this could be argued as a reward. The coach may then be viewed in a positive manner and due to this positive view is then seen to be similar to the coachee, even though objectively they are not.

Regarding the cognitive model, Abramowitz et al (1982), postulates that individuals seek consistency in their worldview. If an individual is faced by an individual with a dissimilar attitude, a state of cognitive dissonance is created. In order to achieve the desired homeostasis, the person who created the cognitive dissonance is viewed then as dissimilar. This is important regarding executive coaching. Coaching incorporates the element of challenge and this is a key requirement in coaching as it

allows the coachee to see alternative perspectives (O'Neill, 2007). This challenge, which allows for an alternative perspective should then create a cognitive dissonance and theoretically, the coach should be viewed as dissimilar to the coachee. This was not the case in this research. Case 3 evidences this well - Case 3: Walter and Rose. Rose clearly stated that Walter was very different in personality to her. As such, she should experience cognitive dissonance and not like him. This should affect their relationship and thus, the coaching outcomes. However, Rose clearly stated that the coaching had been so beneficial to her and that she would go back to Walter for coaching if the need arose. Thus, dissimilarity or similarity in personality does not influence the executive coaching process.

This study postulates that the reason for this is that everything is contracted upfront between the executive coach and the coachee. The coachee will explain to the coach if they want to be challenged and how they would like this packaged. When it is time for the coach to challenge, they are likely to stipulate this openly and refer back to the contracting phase. As such, the coachee anticipates and expects cognitive dissonance but because it occurs in a safe space, with a trusted individual and it has been contracted upon, the executive coach is not likely to be viewed in a negative manner. Furthermore, it also reiterates the flexible nature of the coachee and the nature of the coaching process. The coachee is likely to be more receptive and positive and generally, has embarked on coaching in order to develop. Thus, they are likely to accept a challenge far more readily than in other helping relationships and the coach who provides the cognitive dissonance is not viewed in a negative manner. This reiterates the need to assess for coachee readiness.

Coleman (2006) found that similarity in personality at a moderate level improved outcome, however, when similarity became too high outcome declined. This does not appear to be the case in executive coaching. As has been illustrated whether similarity was low, medium or high, all respondents indicated that the coaching outcomes had been beneficial.

Ensher et al (2002) found that deep level diversity, that of values and attitudes were important in the mentorship relationship and similarity in values and attitudes affecting the mentoring relationship. Attitude and values were not the focus of this

research. Personality did not influence the coaching process in this study; however, attitudes and values may do so and should be considered for further research.

This study interviewed both coach and coachee yet the majority of both groups indicated perceived similarity in personality even if objectively this was not so. The above has highlighted reasons why coachees may perceive this; however, it is questionable why coaches perceive themselves to be similar. It is proposed that this may be due to:

- The coaches finds themselves as a trusted source and on hearing the coachee's dialogue can identify with certain aspects and thus, this connection creates feelings of being similar to the coachee.
- The coachee, due to the factors above, 'likes' the coach and this is felt by the coach. This then is reciprocated. Both parties then view themselves as being similar even though there is little or nothing of similarity in an objective measure.

6.3 Generalisability

This research occurred across eight dyads. As indicated in the Discussion of results chapter, across all eight dyads, regardless of similarity in personality, all respondents indicated that the relationship was positive, the process was beneficial and the coaching outcomes were met.

Bloomberg & Volpe (2016) argue that generalizability is not the goal of case study research but in fact, transferability "…how…and in what ways understanding and knowledge can be applied in similar contexts and settings." It is argued that this study is, in fact, transferable in that across all 16 respondents in the eight case studies there were differing experiences of personality and objectively, using the personality measure, this was so as well. However what is transferable across the eight cases and which is likely to be transferable outside of this research is that each respondent in the dyad experienced the relationship as positive – based on openness and trust and that this relationship allowed for a beneficial process and outcomes within the executive coaching process.

The thick descriptions (Denzin, 2001) elicited through the semi-structured interview, as well as the objective personality measure allow one to understand that despite similarity in personality or lack of similarity, the majority of respondents experience themselves as being similar to their respective coach or coachee. This is likely to be the case when other coaching dyads in similar but not identical conditions are explored. In the same way, it is likely then, that other coaching dyads in similar conditions, outside of this study, will experience the coaching relationship as being one of trust and openness and despite similarity of personality factors or lack of similarity in personality factors, the relationship and process are likely to be viewed as being positive and beneficial with the coaching outcomes being achieved.

6.4 Recommendations

The above has outlined the main conclusions from the study. Unlike many previous studies that show evidence where the outcomes of dyadic helping relationships are influenced by similarity in personality, it appears that this is not the case in executive coaching. It was clearly apparent that whether or not the respondents were similar in personality, they viewed the coaching outcomes as being beneficial. What is noteworthy, however, is the fact that respondents perceive themselves to be similar even though through an objective measure they are not. This reiterates the importance of the coaching skills trained in coaching programmes. Coaching skills focus on listening, congruence and building rapport. These skills are likely to elicit feelings of attraction, liking, sense building and cognitive resonance and are thus essential skills required of an executive coach.

The study also displayed that across all eight cases all of the coachees obtained a similar score on the section flexible, indicating that coachees are open-minded, open to feedback, receptive and optimistic. This then allows for an understanding of coachee readiness. Testing of personality can then be used to assess readiness for coaching.

It was anticipated that by understanding how personality influences the coaching process, the matching of coachee to coach could be improved, allowing for a better coaching relationship, better outcomes and a better ROI. This study has illustrated that personality factors are not as important to the coaching process as was

originally thought. This study's findings run counter to theories in therapy, which suggest that moderate similarities in personality improve the outcome. This is not so for coaching according to this study. Some dyads experienced moderate similarities, some high similarities and some no similarities, yet the process was experienced as beneficial across all eight dyads.

What was pivotal in this study was that despite similarities or differences in personality all respondents indicated that the process had been beneficial and through the interview, it was clear that this was due to the relationship established between the coach and the coachee. The relationship was one of trust and commitment. This then allowed for openness, which in turn elicited vulnerability. By being vulnerable, the coachee experienced validation by the coach and this allowed for personal growth and development.

This research clearly illustrates that matching of coach to coachee according to biographical or personality factors is of little benefit to the coaching process. Testing of personality may assist with coachee readiness and to create self-awareness but it is not likely to create better outcomes. There is more to the executive coaching process than similarities in personality factors. Rather, it is the relationship between the executive coach and coachee, which influences the executive coaching process. This study argues that this is due to the validation experienced through the coaching relationship, which allows for growth and development and a move towards self-actualisation.

6.5 Suggestions for future research

The following points should be considered for future research:

- Flexible was the only section that was common across all coachees. This section allows for openness to feedback, being receptive, openness to change and an optimistic outlook, which are key elements for change in the coaching process. This links to the openness discussed in the semi-structured interviews. This section should be researched further to understand how it influences coachee readiness.

- This research utilised the FFM underpinned by trait theory. However, it focused only at factor, section and dimension levels. It may be beneficial to research personality at trait/facet level and the influence that this has, if any, on the coaching process.
- This research focused on similarity-attraction processes in personality only. It may be useful to research complementary effects, dissimilarity effects of personality and modelling on the matching paradigm in the executive coaching dyad.
- Studies have indicated that similarity in attitudes and values influences the mentorship process. It will be beneficial to study similarities of values and attitudes in coaching dyads to ascertain if these influence the coaching process.
- This study, as well as the Bozer et al study (2015) indicates perceptions of similarity. It may be beneficial to further study respondent perceptions and the reasons to which respondents ascribe these perceptions of similarity in personality.
- The relationship between the coachee and coach appears to be pivotal to the coaching process as much of the literature states. Further research needs to be done to understand the dynamics of this relationship and how and why it allows for a beneficial coaching process.
- This study argues that it is validation arising out of the coaching relationship, which allows for a beneficial coaching process. More research should be done into the validation of a person through coaching – what it is, how it works and how it influences the executive coaching process.

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