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Executive coaches' work experiences through a wellbeing and values lens

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2019

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/29304

Norden, Beth (2019) Executive coaches' work experiences through a wellbeing and values lens,University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/29304>

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of the study was to explore how executive coaches experience their work, as this has been largely unexplored in the coaching literature (Bachkirova, 2016; Grant et al., 2010; Schermuly, 2014). Both a wellbeing and values lens were applied to gain a better understanding of how coaches experience their work. The research questions addressed in the study were: What are the positive aspects and challenges coaches experience in their work, what strategies do they apply to sustain their wellbeing and what is the association between coaches' wellbeing and values? A mixed methods research design was chosen to answer the research questions. Twenty executive coaches comprised the qualitative sample and ninety-eight coaches comprised the quantitative sample. The qualitative component looked at coaches' wellbeing and how these experiences align to Ryff's (1989) six-component model of wellbeing. Strong support was found for the alignment of coaches' wellbeing with the model. The quantitative component examined the way in which wellbeing and values are associated by using the PERMA-Profiler (Butler & Kern, 2016), based on Seligman's (2011) model of human flourishing, and the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR), based on Schwartz's (1990) model of human values. Inter-battery factor analysis (IBFA) confirmed the association between coaches' wellbeing and values. Four factors were identified from the analysis, resulting in the identification of four coach profiles: good timers, traditionals, independents and achievers.

KEY WORDS

Wellbeing; eudaimonic; values, executive coaching, workplace coaching.