

## The history of coaching

### COACHING IS A NATURAL PART OF LIFE

Coaching is not a new discipline that has suddenly been invented. Coaching is probably as old as the first stone age spear throwing competition, however it is only in the last 10 years or so that you can actually purchase coaching commercially outside the sports or performance arena.

Coaching has always been a natural part of life for people everywhere. It is used by millions of great parents who love their children unconditionally and put their own needs aside to completely believe in their kids potential and support them, encourage them and nurture them to be great.

It is used by hundreds of thousands of great business leaders who truly know how to develop their people, not by abusing their power, but by believing in them, challenging them, supporting them, giving them more positive than negative feedback, and making sure they take care of themselves.

So coaching is the art of bringing out the greatness in people in a way that honours the integrity of the human spirit. It is both an innate human capacity and a teachable skill, which has now become a new way of working with people within a corporate context.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF COACHING AS A DISCIPLINE

Coaching is a relatively new discipline; at least in its present form. The coaching field is the result of the convergence of several developmental strands dating back as far as the 1950's. However, it is only in recent times that coaching has been recognised as forming a largely cohesive set of principles, knowledge and skills.

The emergence of coaching as a popular profession began in the United States in the late 1980's. Since this time the proliferation of coach training schools, close to 100 in the USA for example, and the establishment of the International Coach Federation (ICF) has led to a dramatic increase in the numbers of professional coaches worldwide. The ICF, the largest non-profit professional association of coaches worldwide, has more than 5,000 members spanning 179 chapters in 30 countries. They have a set of competencies for coaching that are now recognised as the fundamental competencies for coaching by the majority of training providers globally.

Alongside this explosion in popularity, there has also been an elevation of the image of the profession in the wider business and academic community. This has seen the establishment of many successful coaching companies focused on the corporate sector and the establishment of several coaching courses in respected Universities. In America, Georgetown University (Washington, DC) has instituted a Coaching Certification Program in its Centre for Professional Development. The University of North Carolina (Charlotte, North Carolina) now has a Business Coaching Certification Program. George Washington University (Arlington, Virginia) has a Graduate Certificate Program in Leadership Coaching through its Organisational Sciences Department. Sydney University offers a Graduate Coaching Program as part of its Psychology Faculty.

#### COACHING AS AN INDUSTRY

The coaching profession is a growing part of the \$100bn worldwide training and development industry. The three main markets for coaching are the USA, United Kingdom and Australia. Australia also has one of the fastest growing coaching industries in the world. There are around one thousand people now training to be coaches throughout Australia each year, with many more times this in the USA.

It has been estimated that between ten and twenty percent of CEO's of Australian companies have utilised the expertise of a coach. In the USA this number was 60%, including both mentoring and coaching programs. Over 95% of people in these programs found the process to be of value.

In Australia in 1995 there were possibly a few dozen practicing coaches, there are now over 1,000 coaches operating in this country. If we compare coaching to personal fitness training industry, fifteen years ago only the rich and famous had a personal trainer. In NSW today there are currently over 4,000 registered fitness trainers.

Coaching is without a doubt one of the fastest emerging industries of the past decade having experienced enormous growth in that time. There is the potential for professional coaches to become as widely utilised as accountants or lawyers, though there is a long way to go to get to this stage.

#### INFLUENCES BEHIND THE GROWTH OF COACHING

##### 1. MYTHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

The elements of coaching have been with us in one form or another from the earliest times.

Joseph Campbell is a recognised authority on religion and mythology. His work explores the archetypal hero journey that every human undertakes when they move out into the wider world, linking the mythology of cultures that are separated by huge distances in time and geography and finding the same story in its essential components.

It is the tale of a person leaving their familiar world, usually encountering a guide/teacher, experiencing an adventure/quest (often involving the overcoming of obstacles), learning or developing something new within themselves and then returning to their home to utilise that knowledge in helping their community in some way.

Campbell's interdisciplinary approach led him to realise that this common story was a reflection of the internal journey of self-discovery and personal development that every human being is called on to undertake. In a very real sense coaching is a natural progression of this hero journey and coaches are the guides that people are utilising to facilitate their own process of personal development.

Additional reading

"The hero with a thousand masks" Campbell, J. (1949)

*A groundbreaking work for its time. One of the earliest inter-disciplinary efforts.*

"The power of myth" Campbell J., Moyers, B. (1987)

*The record of a series of interviews taken just before Campbell's death. Making myth relevant to the layperson.*

## 2. SCIENTIFIC INFLUENCES

A number of new ways of viewing the world have emerged this century as a result of different disciplines working together to process the world. Modern physics has challenged the old view - that the world can be understood by breaking it down into its component parts. This mechanistic worldview epitomised by the writings of French philosopher Rene Descartes and the English physicist Isaac Newton has given way to a new science. It is a science that looks at the patterns in seemingly chaotic systems (chaos theory), providing an understanding of how collective properties arise from individual parts (emergence studies). We are living through a time of change, the like of which has not been seen since the industrial revolution. Thinking in science and business is becoming increasingly holistic, and non-linear. People are valued for their knowledge and skills, not just what they can produce in the moment.

At the same time there has been a trend by many leading scientists to link the new theories of Quantum Mechanics, Relativity and other new fields, back to everyday life.

Links are being created between things like the wave / particle duality of light and quantum uncertainty principles, to our ability to 'create our own reality'. Scientists such as Paul Davies, James Gleick and Fritjof Capra have been building a case for looking to scientific principles as a source of guidance for day to day life.

#### Additional reading

"The turning point: science, society and the rising culture" Capra, F. (1982)  
*Details a holistic, systems-based approach which relates to all areas of contemporary life. Beginning with quantum physics and relating the changes in scientific thinking to medicine, economics, ecology and psychology.*

"Chaos" Gleick, J. (1987)  
*Chaos theory is the science of everyday systems - waterfalls, biological rhythms, traffic jams, weather, and human societies. This is an excellent history and introduction to this area.*

### 3. SOCIOLOGICAL CHANGE

If we examine many of the sociological changes that have occurred over the past fifty years it is easy to see why coaching has become such an important resource in today's society. One overall factor is increasing wealth in the 1st world. As individuals achieve their professional and financial goals, many of them find they still are not fulfilled and are seeking resources to help them realise their personal potential.

The diminished role of the family in western culture is a factor in the growth of coaching. Over half of all marriages now end in divorce. The typical nuclear family no longer consists of a stay at home partner operating as a support for the working partner and children. Family roles that fifty years ago were set are now blurred. This has led to a decline in our ability to get the support and sounding boards we need from our close and extended family.

The big shifts in the workforce are also a driver. The loss of 'careers for life' has led to uncertainty for people and more people looking for help to define their future. People change careers on average at least three times in their lives now. There is a perceived deficit of integrity in the modern business world, which has made job certainty and company loyalty a thing of the past. This uncertainty has contributed to the increasing pressure on employees to work longer hours and achieve ever-greater results. In the move from an industrial age to an information age people and the knowledge that they possess is now recognised as a most important resource in the marketplace. It is in this climate that companies and individuals are viewing coaching as an important resource.

The decline of mainstream religion has left many people with no one to turn to for support, guidance or community. Many of the eastern religions such as Buddhism have been growing in popularity driven by celebrities and political issues, resulting in greater acceptance of spirituality of a new form.

The decline of the family and religion, the increased pressure on people, and the big move into cities over the last century are all factors contributing to a an increased sense of isolation amongst a large chunk of the western world. People are turning to coaching to help them add connection, intimacy and meaning to their lives, both as clients of coaches and becoming coaches themselves.

#### Additional reading

“Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives” Naisbitt, J. (1982)

*Identifies and describes the ten most important global trends for the nineties and their social, political, cultural, and economic context.*

“The Popcorn Report: Faith Popcorn on the Future of Your Company, Your World, Your Life” Popcorn, F. (1992)

*Forecasts trends in consumer attitudes and behavior.*

#### 4. CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY/THERAPY

Until the 1950’s the dominant model of psychology was behaviourism; a theory that rested on the idea that human behaviour was controlled by stimulus and response connections. Psychology as a discipline felt that there was little point in examining the contents of the mind.

In a clinical setting the behaviourist approach was not working for some disorders, specifically depression. This prompted behaviourists to incorporate cognitive techniques into their treatment of patients. The addition of this component in the 1960’s saw the birth of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which is the cornerstone of clinical psychology today. There are some cognitive-behavioural techniques used in coaching.

“Science and practice of CBT “ Clark, D.M., & Fairburn C.G. 1997 (Ch. 1). *The first part is a general introduction and a history of CBT. In the second part specific disorders are conceptualised from a CBT perspective.*

“The feeling-good handbook”. (1989) Burns, D.M. *Puts CBT techniques into everyday language for the layperson to use.*

In the 1970's there was a growing section of the therapeutic community who were discontented with the problem focused nature of the cognitive-behavioural models of the time. They formed the opinion that an approach based on constructing solutions would be more beneficial for clients.

They developed a new form of therapy entitled brief solution focused therapy (BSFT). This approach is characterised by:

- Clear and specific goal setting
- Strategic planning with the client
- An expectation of change in a short period of time
- Emphasis on what will happen (future, not past, orientation)
- Recognition of the clients resources and experience for producing change.

Although BSFT was originally devised for therapeutic clients the above components are all hallmarks of coaching today. The solution focused approach is at the core of the Results coaching methodology.

Additional reading

'Solution focused therapy' O'Connell B. (1998)  
*A good overview.*

'Keys to solutions in brief therapy' De Shazer. S. (1985)  
*One of the important researchers in this area.*

'The skilled helper' Egan, G. (1975)  
*Although not specifically about CBT or BSFT, it is a seminal work on helping and counselling. Almost all of the micro-skills that are required for effective coaching and counselling are in this book.*

## 5. LIFE SKILLS TRAINING/EDUCATION

This began in the 1960's with a focus on teaching life skills to disadvantaged groups in the hopes that it would increase their functionality and reduce the likelihood of mental illness in the community. This was one of the first attempts by mental health professionals to work with normally functioning populations. There was also a great deal of work being done at this time on education and how adults learn. Some of the key insights developed during this time relate to experiential and self-directed learning, which is one of the core principles of the results coaching model.

#### Additional reading

“Understanding and facilitating adult learning” Brookfield, S. (1991)

*On the specific challenges involved in helping adults learning new things.*

“Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development” Kolb, D.A. (1984)

*A great resource for those wishing to learn more about experiential learning and the adult-learning cycle.*

In the 1970’s psychologists began to work increasingly with normally functioning clients to improve performance. Most notable is Martin Seligman’s work on optimism and pessimism. In fact he first coined the term ‘learned optimism’ and it was his research that first indicated that pessimism and optimism could be learned or unlearned. Seligman was one of the first psychologists to research how highly functioning people become so successful.

“Learned Optimism” Seligman, M. (1991)

*A fascinating and very readable summary of Seligman’s work on optimism/pessimism.*

“What you can change and what you can’t” Seligman, M.

*Literally an examination of various aspects of human nature and behaviour and what it is possible to change according to the research.*

#### 6. SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY

Achievement on the sporting field has long been a source of inspiration to us all.

Perhaps this is even more the case in these times of relative peace. The psychology of winning on the playing field has increasingly found it’s way into boardrooms, classrooms, workshops and the speaking circuit. Today, many teams have a sports psychologist and there are companies that specialise in providing services to athletes and teams alike.

“The inner game of tennis” Gallwey, T. (1975)

*An early work specifically on the internal mental processes that determine an athlete’s success - now a whole series with many other sports covered. A useful resource for coaches.*

“Peak performance” Garfield, C. (1984)

*Good background from sports psychologists on the impact of mental state on performance.*

“Everyone’s a coach” Blanchard, K., Shula, D. (1995)

*Don Shula has one of the most prolific records of success in American pro-football. Ken Blanchard is a leader in the management field. This work is a synthesis of concepts from management development, winning on the sporting field, with lessons on effective leadership.*

“Sports psychology in action” Butler, R. (1996) *This book offers useful ideas to maximize training through the development of self-awareness, resourcefulness, clear thinking, focus, and visualisation. This volume is an accessible resource for both trainers and athletes.*

## 7. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

This movement has been with us at least since the 1950’s, arguably earlier. Often believed to have begun with Normal Vincent Peale’s ‘The power of positive thinking’ the movement began to proliferate in the 1980’s in literature and courses offered to the general public and is now a feature of modern life.

The key principles of the personal development movement have been:

- A move toward increasing self awareness, including work on the ‘filters’ by which we see the world, our expectations and assumptions
- A focus on accepting responsibility for one’s actions
- The idea of having choice in our lives.

The personal development movement has created an optimal environment for the acceptance of coaching in the wider community. Individualised coaching is a logical next step from mass participation in personal development and life skills training programs.

### Additional Reading

There are many works in this area, however they all have one thing in common; they seek to challenge and stretch to individual to meet their full potential. This is another underlying core principle of Results Coaching.

“The power of positive thinking.” Peale, N.V. (1952)

*A pivotal work in this area. It is as relevant today as when first published. Provides powerful methods for eliminating the negative thoughts that prevent you from achieving happiness and success.*

"The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success: A Practical Guide to the Fulfillment of Your Dreams" Chopra, D (1995)

*Natural laws of abundance and prosperity.*

"The Celestine Prophecy: An Adventure" Redfield, J. (1993)

*9 key insights for a spiritual life. One of the best sellers of all time.*

"The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth", Peck, M Scott. (1978)

*"Life is difficult": a guide to confronting and resolving problems, and suffering through the changes, to reach a higher level of self-knowledge.*

"You Can Heal Your Life" Hay, Louise L. (1984)

*We are each responsible for our own reality and "dis-ease." Includes a directory of ailments and emotional causes for each with a corresponding affirmation to help overcome the illness.*

#### MOTIVATION

The motivational area has been an enormous contributor to culture. Hundreds of Millions of people worldwide have read the top motivational books by Tony Robbins, Zig Ziglar, Tom Peters, Brian Tracy and others like them, and millions worldwide have attended their workshops. Many of these people are now delivering their own coaching models built around their core principles and ideas. The motivational world has also had a strong influence in the development of all types of coaching.

#### Additional reading

"Think and grow rich." Hill, R. (1937)

*Hill interviewed over 500 of America's richest men, and detailed the steps required to achieve abundance. Proving that the basic principles remain the same, this is a timeless book.*

"Your erroneous zones", Dr Wayne Dyer. (1976)

*One of the biggest selling books in the USA in the 1970's, a practical guide to taking responsibility for creating one's life.*

"Awaken the giant within". Robbins, A. (1991)

*Based on NLP principles, Robbins presents an easy to read, step-by-step program for achieving mastery of your body, your relationships, your finances, and your life.*

## 8. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

A key strand that has contributed to coaching is the move towards improved work performance through management development techniques. There are some early groundbreaking works but today there is a proliferation of literature, courses and companies that all purport to improve workplace performance. Coaching concepts have been pivotal throughout with tremendous crossover between business and coaching literature. Much has been written for, and many companies are now targeting, the corporate sector. It is one of the most exciting and rapidly expanding areas for coaching in the new millennium.

Additional reading

"The one-minute manager" Blanchard, K. (1983)

*In narrative form, this work is about a young man in search of world-class management skills. Areas covered include goal-setting, motivating, training, praising and even reprimanding employees. It is an excellent work on the coaching principle of positive feedback.*

"The seven habits of highly effective people." Covey, S. (1989)

*Covey's work continues to be a groundbreaking work in the area of personal and professional effectiveness. He presents highly practical methods for performing better in both arenas. Considered an important work in the business area, it has sold over ten million copies.*

"The E Myth". Gerber, M.E. (1995)

*Looks at the various roles we need to play as effective managers and how to turn businesses into systems instead of being people dependent.*

#### 9. NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING (NLP)

Originally developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in 1975, NLP represents one of the most practical applications of psychological concepts and techniques. NLP is utilised in both professional and personal domains, including management, sales and performance, interpersonal and communication skills, personal development, motivation, and the utilisation of effective learning techniques.

Bandler and Grinder began by modelling and duplicating the patterns of a few top communicators and therapists. Some of the first people to be studied included hypnotherapist Milton Erickson, Gestalt therapist Fritz Perls and family therapist Virginia Satir. Since then, many others have contributed to the growth and development of the field, and NLP has come to represent the study of excellence in any field of endeavour.

NLP practice talks about the modalities through which people interact with the world. It postulates that people primarily utilise one of three modes - visual, auditory or kinaesthetic. These factors can be quite important when we look at the mechanics of coaching which could be face-to-face or by telephone. People who are primarily kinaesthetic are greatly influenced by their feelings - important to consider in the emotional journey of coaching.

#### Additional reading

"Frogs into Princes". Bandler, R., & Grinder, J. (1979)

*One of the first books ever written on the subject. A good introduction to the area.*

"Introducing NLP". O'Connor, J., & McDermott, I. (1998).

*A more up-to-date look at the field.*

#### 10. RESEARCH INTO THINKING AND CREATIVITY

There has been a lot of work done in the last twenty years on the mind and how we think, from many angles. We have had significant breakthroughs in neuroscience that has shown us the way the mind works at a cellular level, for example that habits are also well trodden electrical pathways that our thoughts follow easily. Gardner's work on the various types of intelligence - including musical, spatial, emotional, opened the way for new distinctions in these types of intelligence, most notably emotional intelligence. Many of Edward De Bono's insights have now become everyday terminology, specifically his ideas on lateral thinking. Some of his for increasing creative output such

as the 'Six Hats' approach has been highly effective at increasing the output of our minds and of groups. There have been many other works that have broken new ground and opened the way for improving individual performance through thinking tools and new ways of modelling aspects of our thoughts, actions or worlds. Robert Fritz's book the 'Path of Least Resistance' is essential reading for coaches as it identifies ways of ensuring we achieve our goals through how we set up the frameworks around them.

#### Additional reading

"How brains makes up it's mind", Freeman, W (1999)

*A detailed analysis of the neurological pathways to decision making and interpretation. An interesting insight is the way the mind chooses to pigeon-hole what it sees according to not what things look like but against previous decisions, filters and expectations.*

"Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences", Gardner, H (1993)

Gardner challenges the widely held notion that intelligence is a single general capacity possessed by every individual to a greater or lesser extent. Amassing a wealth of evidence, Gardner posits the existence of a number of intelligences that ultimately yield a unique cognitive profile for each person, opening the way to the idea of emotional intelligence and the importance of learning being driven according to individual styles and needs.

"Lateral Thinking: Creativity Step-By-Step" De Bono, E. (1990)

*Learning a new way of thinking: creative, generative lateral thinking, as opposed to vertical, logical thinking.*

"The Path of Least Resistance: Learning to Become the Creative Force in Your Own Life", Fritz, R. (1989)

*Creativity, and creative process, this book has many parallels to the Results Coaching and provides rich insights into ways of thinking.*

#### 11. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In the past ten years there has been a growing recognition that the traditional gauge of future achievement, IQ (Intelligence Quotient) is not the predominant indicator of success. Work such as Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences paved the way for focused research on the various intelligences.

As well as this, advances in technology have allowed scientists to map the architecture of the human brain with unprecedented accuracy. Daniel Goleman's work (reference below) is based on much of this research. He emphasises that self-awareness, self-discipline, persistence, altruism, personal motivation, empathy, and the ability to love and be loved by friends, partners, and family members have a far more important role to play in human success than IQ. This Emotional Quotient (EQ) enables people to succeed in work as well as play, building thriving careers and healthy relationships. Goleman's model of what it means to be 'intelligent' puts emotions at the centre of aptitudes for living.

Research is telling us that emotions play a significant role in our physical health. Toxic emotions put our health at risk in the same way that exposure to pollutants can harm us. A poor emotional life also exposes us to a whole range of risks including depression, eating disorders and alcohol/drug abuse. One stark piece of research from the book was that social isolation seems to be nearly twice as dangerous to our health as smoking.

The emotional journey that underlies good coaching is often the most significant thing that comes out of the entire process. That journey is often not emphasised when coaching is sold to clients (particularly in a corporate setting). The achieving of certain goals in their lives may be why people sign on for coaching yet a large part of what makes coaching so powerful is the emotional journey and the resultant shifts that occur in the client. Shifts in beliefs, attitudes, aptitudes and habits can be literally life changing in a great coaching relationship.

#### Additional reading

"Emotional Intelligence" Goleman, D. (1995)

*This book is in five parts. It provides an analysis of what the latest research tells us about the brains functioning as it relates to emotions. It outlines how neurological functioning relates to our emotional intelligence. It looks at The key differences that our EQ's play in everything from health to career. It then explores the significance of childhood and adolescence to EQ and how emotional patterns are formed in the early stages of life and the risks to those who do not master their emotional life before adulthood.*

"The emotional intelligence handbook" Lynn, A.B. (2002) *Building on the emotional quotient work of Daniel Goleman by providing practical and innovative exercises to develop people's emotional intelligence in a work setting.*

## 12. COMMUNICATION SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The corporate world has been on a drive to improve communication since the first corporation was set up. A lot of research has gone into how to deliver messages in a more effective way, particularly in the model of working within a team environment. The growth of NLP has been driven to an extent by this.

There has been a large body of work done on listening skills, on speaking in a way that keeps people's attention and on the way we process information. All of this has contributed to the development of the coaching world. One very interesting insight from recent research is that we speak at 100 words a minute but think at 300.

There has been an enormous amount of research done within the advertising and marketing arena. Some of the big insights from this area have been around our attention span (minimal), the way we remember information (we need simple repetitive messages) and the importance of emotions in any message.

Having said all this, the quality of written and verbal communications in the first world are still quite low on a whole, particularly in the realm of communicating values, vision and emotions.

Additional reading

"People Skills", Bolton, R Ph.D., 1987

*A classic text used by most communication courses at universities. Useful and practical*

## 13. MENTORING

Mentoring has grown significantly as a discipline in the last decade around the world, both within corporations as a form of knowledge sharing and development, and externally to support career development and small business. There are many formal mentoring programs now supported by government around the world to help small business people, and independent organisations that connect mentors with their mentorees.

Additional reading

"The Art of Mentoring: Lead, Follow and Get Out of the Way" Peddy, S. (1999)

*Takes you through real case studies and dialogue to distinguish the key elements of mentoring.*

#### 14. COACHING

Coaching as a profession is relatively new, with minimal research papers in the field to this date. The world's first Ph.D. in coaching was achieved only since 2000, and the first research papers are starting to come out now. However there are already many strong texts that approach the concept of coaching world from a range of angles.

"Personal Best" Rock, D.

*A book by the founder of Results Coaching, is both a 'coach yourself book' and takes you through the story of three people going through a coaching series. Excellent resource for Results Coaches.*

"It's your life, what are you going to do with it", Grant, Dr T, and Greene, J. (2002)  
*By the world's first Phd in coaching, a well researched book with strong theoretical underpinnings*

"Coaching for performance" Whitmore, J. (1992)

*A somewhat basic but well structured and useful book on workplace coaching for the manager and coaching practitioner.*

"Life strategies: Stop making excuses! Do what works. Do what Matters." McGraw, P.C. (1999)

*A psychologist and strategist, this book charts ten ways to take responsibility for your life. Quite action orientated.*

"The coaching revolution" Logan, D.C., King, J. (2001)

*A manager's guide for bringing coaching into organizations.*