DIPLOMA IN REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND COACH SUPERVISION

Introduction

Supervision accompanies and promotes the professional development of qualifying and qualified coaches in the context of their practice. It offers coaches an opportunity to learn and develop through reflection and dialogue and to grow further towards personal and professional excellence. It offers coaches a similar resource to the one they offer their clients.

In organisations, coaching is increasingly becoming an integral part of the professional development of senior management and executive, and these organisations are expecting coaches to demonstrate their commitment to maintaining their professional best through being in formal supervision.

Also, at some point in the near future, national and international coaching bodies are likely to require their credentialed coaches to be in regular, on-going supervision. Thus, there will be an increasing need for accredited supervisors.

Coaching Development is co-leading the profession in developing and supporting the growth of coach supervision with its Diploma in Reflective Practice and Coach Supervision. This training course is designed to build a body of well-trained, informed supervisors who understand the ethics, responsibilities, practices and defining features of the coaching profession. Coaching Development sees supervision not as advanced coach training, but as a parallel profession which serves and supports the coaching community.

If you are a seasoned coach working towards your MCC with the ICF, this is an excellent opportunity to advance your thinking about (your) coaching and to deepen your skills set.

This programme has run multiple times online and in person in London and South Africa.

Reflective practice

Reflective practice (RP) is very similar to this approach to coach supervision. It is a form of adult learning, whereby one of the parties reflects on a situation with a co-thinker, uses models to understand the situation, analyses it, comes to a new understanding and based on this designs an experiment to try out. The 'supervisor' in this context is a thinking partner who enriches the conversation by bringing a psychological mindedness and inviting deeper personal reflection. RP is increasingly popular among executives and is sometimes called 'executive supervision'.

Coaching Development's model of supervision

Supervision consists of two areas, the practice analysis and the professional development of the coach. A typical supervision session will help the coach think deeper about their work, but will also contribute significantly to their professional development. It is much more than talking about case work; it's also about deepening the personal awareness for the coach which leads to professional and personal growth and change.

What makes this training unique?

The process of a supervision session covers three areas: management (the practice analysis), support (of the coach by the supervisor) and development (ideas for change and growth). Typically there are

two outcomes, the changed understanding of the coach in relation to their client work, and the development of the person of the coach. The thinking behind this is that development is not only about external practice, but equally about internal change – reducing our blind spots (for example, biases, assumptions, limiting beliefs, etc.).

A typical session flow is as follows:

1. The coach presents a case or asks a supervision question.
2. The supervisor invites the coach to analyse the case they have brought using coaching models or theories that they know, or which the supervisor suggests. This helps the coach to develop their thinking skills and to apply theory to their own work – and to themselves. It also helps the coach to reflect on their work from a meta-position, thus enriching their thinking, deepening their psychological mindedness and evoking a new awareness. This in turn fosters growth and autonomy.
3. From this part of the session the coach takes away a developmental opportunity, such as recommended reading, watching a YouTube clip or doing a piece of research.
4. During the practice analysis stage, the supervisor has been listening out for where the personal is intruding on the professional for the coach – the so-called 'key issue'.
5. The supervisor then confirms the key issue with the coach, co-creates an intervention and works with them to integrate this change into their professional life.

Participants

This programme is open to coaches with extensive experience, who are psychologically minded and who wish to contribute actively to the development of the profession.

Ideally applicants will have 500+ hours of formal coaching practice, and

1. will be a PCC (ICF) or equivalent,

2. or be approaching the PCC assessment, or equivalent,

3. or have completed a coach-specific training of 125+ hours,

4. or have passed an equivalent formal independent assessment.

Course Overview

The course is rigorous and experiential; it is practice-focussed, with a strong theoretical underpinning. It consists of a blend of reflective practice, personal development, practice management, applied psychology and ethics.

The Diploma is given following attendance at the 8 days and the submission of 2 recordings with skills analyses. Certification requires 80% attendance.

Training structure and content - summary

This training course is strongly experiential with a focus on how the 'personal intrudes on the professional'. It also introduces tried and tested psychological theories and a variety of supervision models. Reflecting the importance of personal and professional development, it offers extensive opportunities for practice, reflection and integration. To put this differently, the course trains you to become skilled at talking with other people about their thinking about what they are doing, and potentially changing this. This is equally true of RP as it is of supervision.

There are two taught Modules. Module One, run in two sets of two days, sets the foundation for being a supervisor with focus on practice analysis. Module Two includes advanced theory and focuses on helping the coach work with their own blind spots and on their professional development. Module Two also runs in two sets of two days.

Content covered in the programme includes:

- What supervision is (not) and how it relates to coaching
- What reflective practice is
- The International Coach Federation's Coaching Supervision Competencies
- The supervision triangle
- Contracting (explicit and implicit)
- 8-eyed model
- Working alliances and personality types
- Relationship dynamics
- Learning styles and feedback skills
- Appreciative supervision
- Ethical and legal issues
- Ego states
- Boundaries
- Psychological dynamics (parallel process, transference, etc.)
- Identifying and working with underlying personal issues
- Injunctions and permissions
- Human needs (that help and hinder)
- Supervision in groups and organisations
- Evaluation and reflection

Psychological framework

We have chosen Transactional Analysis (TA) as the main source of the psychological frameworks we use. TA lends itself well to understanding human nature and to understanding our internal psychological and external interpersonal dynamics. As a series of models for planning interventions and bringing about lasting change it works well. On this programme we teach how to use certain selected frameworks to make sense of what is happening in both coaching and supervision.

Reading

There is some excellent material on the market and we have chosen to use this rather than course notes. Among other books we will be using Supervision as Transformation edited by Robin Shohet (published by Jessica Kingsley), Coaching Supervision by Birch and Welch (Routledge) and Supervision and Coaching by Cochrane and Newton (Routledge). If you are interested in the application of TA to coaching, then we recommend Transactional Analysis Coaching by K. Pratt (Routledge).

The learning process

The teaching on this highly experiential course generally consists of a short explanation of theory, a discussion, a learning event / experience in pairs or a small group, and a learning discussion in the main group. It thus follows Kolb's learning cycle. The focus is on the supervision of coaches and the application of supervision and psychological theory to a coaching context, also to oneself as a supervisor. This is easily transferable to reflective practice.

A significant amount of time is spent on skills practice in between the Modules. These practices should be followed by a reflection on the supervision competencies, the interventions used and the application of the theory taught. Learning, then, is through taught input and personal reflection. Throughout the programme we ask you to keep a Journal of your learnings. We want you to be a model of reflective practice and / or coach supervision. During the programme you will have access to demonstrations of live supervision sessions, with the supervisor reflecting on the supervision afterwards.

Practice

As a seasoned coach you will be expected to contribute by bringing issues arising from your coaching and supervision practices to the training course for peer supervision. You and the other participants will also supervise each other during and after the Modules, but the greater part of your supervision practice should be with practising coaches and supervisors, not only with your peers on this programme.

On-going support and feedback

During and following completion of the first Module you supervise one of your peers a number of times and record these supervision sessions. You then select one and send it to us with a transcript, a commentary and an analysis (at the very latest 2 weeks before day 5). You then receive feedback on how your skills and style are developing.

At the end of Module 2 you again select and submit a recording of you supervising, this time not with a peer, and send this in, with a written reflection, for feedback.

Coaching Development believes that this form and amount of on-going individual support makes it significantly different from other supervision training courses.

Certification and ethics

Ethical practice and accurate representation are fundamental values which Coaching Development holds. Taking the training element of this programme entitles you to say that you are 'in training with' or 'have trained with' Coaching Development, but only those who have also completed the assessments can say that they have 'qualified' through or are 'certified' supervisors, or any other similar phrase.

Coaching Development
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