Structuring and Understanding the Coaching Industry: The Coaching Cube

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We offer a theoretical coaching cube that helps to structure and understand the coaching industry. The three dimensions of the cube refer to (1) coaching agendas (what); (2) coaches' characteristics (who); and (3) coaching approaches/schools (how). Each dimension is described by discussing the academic literature surrounding it. Using an economic and psychological perspective, we explore which combinations of these three dimensions are more likely to be observed in the business world. Next, we present three studies from Belgium that empirically explore the existence of the different combinations. Finally, we discuss theoretical and practical implications of the coaching cube.

Coaching has become a $2 billion per-year global market (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006) and has only reached the maturity phase in terms of the product life cycle in two of the 162 countries surveyed in the Global Coaching Survey (2009), while in 83 countries it is in the introduction or growth phase. In line with Grief (2007) and Kilburg (1996), we define *coaching* as an intensive and systematic facilitation of individuals or groups by using a wide variety of behavioral techniques and methods to help them attain self-congruent goals or conscious self-change and self-development in order to improve their professional performance, personal well-being and, consequently, to improve the effectiveness of their organization. Hence, coaching in this study is aimed at managers and executives, as well as individuals and teams on lower levels in organizations.

Most of the coaching is happening in the Western economies (Global Coaching Survey, 2009). Day, Surtees, and Winkler (2008) for example, consistently report in their annual surveys in the U.K. (since 2004) that approximately 70% of organizations use coaching and that about 44% currently offer it to all employees. Day et al.'s (2008) surveys further reveal that the purpose of coaching in those organizations that offer it to all employees is gen-

eral personal development and remedy of poor performance. In organizations that offer coaching only to managers, it has often become part of a wider management and leadership development program.

Although still lagging behind the world of practitioners, a similar increase in coaching interest was observed in the academic field by Grant (2006), who showed that academic publications in the period 2001–2005 increased by 266% in comparison with the 1996–2000 period. The academic world seems to follow the practitioners' world, as Parker, Hall, and Kram (2008) pointed out that peer coaching can be used to accelerate career learning (cf. general personal development). Boyatzis, Smith, and Blaize (2006) on the other hand, advocated that to ensure sustainable leaders, coaching with compassion should be made a key part of their leadership role, as this behavior would reduce their chronic power stress and serve as a remedy against poor performance. Coaching has become part of leadership development programs, and several authors have empirically or theoretically justified the use of coaching techniques to increase self-awareness in executive development programs (Mirvis, 2008); develop intuitive awareness in management education (Sadler-Smith &

Shefy, 2007); create reflective executives through executive MBA programs (De Déa Roglio & Light, 2009); and improve the performance of executives after an executive education program by supplementing multisource feedback with it (Hooijberg & Lane, 2009).

The obvious risk of this intense growth of coaching interest in the practitioner and academic world is that the field ends up in chaos, lacks transparency, experiences a drop in the quality of services and studies, and hence, might become an organizational fad that passes quickly. Spence, Cavanagh, and Grant (2006), and Brooks and Wright (2007), stress the importance of understanding the state of the coaching industry in order to start structuring and further mature the professional field. One cannot, for example, increase the quality of trainings of coaches (Garman, Whiston, & Zlatoper, 2000) or improve the selection process of coaches used in leadership development programs if one does not know the characteristics of the industry.

We aim here to offer a framework that helps to structure and understand the coaching industry by exploring three main questions: (1) what can be coaching agendas; (2) who can act as a coach; and (3) how is coaching done? Taken together, these questions can be visualized as a coaching cube (see Figure 1). The academic literature that can be grouped within each dimension of the cube will be discussed. Using an economic and psychological perspective, we will then explore whether all different combinations resulting from the three dimensions are equally likely to be observed in the business world. Next, we present three studies that empirically explore the existence of the different combinations in the Belgium market. Last, we discuss theoretical and practical implications of the coaching cube.

WHAT: THE COACHING AGENDA

The first dimension covers coaching agendas, which can range from a low- to high-engagement level for all parties involved, and have been discussed by several authors (e.g., Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006). Low-engagement agendas are often clearly defined and concretely linked to the job role and require less time and effort in comparison with high-engagement agendas, which are often open agendas that also involve personal or private issues. Below we provide examples of recurring topics under each agenda that executive coaches self-reported as engaged for (see Coutu & Kauffman, 2009; Gale, Liljenstrand, Pardieu, & Nebeker, 2002; Grant & Zackson, 2004; Hall, Otazo, & Hollen-

beck, 1999; Spence et al., 2006; Wasylyshyn, 2003); agendas of nonexecutive coaching are currently very scarce in the literature. Executive coaching refers to coaching where the executive is the coachee.

- *Skills* coaching requires the coach to focus on specific behaviors (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006; Grant & Cavanagh, 2004; Witherspoon & White, 1996) and takes place over a period of days or weeks (Gray, 2006). It has a low-engagement level and is also referred to as targeted behavioral coaching (Peterson, 1996; Stern, 2004). It aims to modify specific behaviors or habits—typically one or two key skills areas—or to develop new behaviors that allow an employee to be more effective in the current or a future role (Peterson, 1996; Stern, 2004). Examples of this type of agenda are learning to influence, to provide feedback and active listening.
- *Performance coaching*, also referred to as intensive coaching (Peterson, 1996), has an average-engagement level, and "focuses on an employee's specific performance potential, job requirements, deficiencies, or derailers and on how to fill performance gaps and shape the job to optimize the individual's performance" (Stern, 2004: 157). Similar definitions are found in Thach (2002) and Witherspoon and White (1996). Grant and Cavanagh (2004) and Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006: 25) describe it as the "process by which the coachee can set goals, overcome obstacles, and evaluate and monitor his performance." Gray (2006) mentions that it may take place over a period of several months. Examples of this type of agenda are dealing with change, clarifying and pursuing goals, developing leadership (e.g., changing leadership style from top-down management to participative style, or learning to develop others), team building and career transitions.
- *Development* or *life coaching*, also known as personal (Stern, 2004), or in-depth coaching (Thach, 2002), requires the highest engagement level as it "takes a broader, more holistic view, often dealing with more intimate, personal and professional questions. This can involve the creation of a personal reflective space rather like what they call 'therapy for the people who don't need therapy'" (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006: 25). Similar descriptions are found in Grant and Cavanagh (2004) and Witherspoon and White (1996). Stern (2004: 157) points out that its "primary focus is on an individual's personal goals, thinking, feeling, and actions and how the individual can change his or her life for greater personal effectiveness and satisfaction." Thach (2002: 205) mentions that it takes more time than performance coaching as it attempts to "get to deep-seated issues and often explores personal values, motivations, and even family issues." Examples of this type of agenda are important career decisions, work–life balance, and learning to cope with emotions in the workplace.

It should be noted, however, that the boundaries between the different agendas are not always clear in practice. Personal issues might, for example, surface in skill and performance coaching. Coutu and Kauffman (2009) report that 97% of the 140 executive coaches they surveyed in the United States indicated that they are not frequently hired to address personal issues, but 76% reported to have assisted executives with personal issues. Hence, several studies revealed that two important factors in achieving desired coaching outcomes are clarifying the coaching agenda or the goals that have to be achieved at the start of coaching track, as well as the ability of a coach to clarify the goals and keep them result oriented during the process (Brauer, 2005, 2006; Maethner, Jansen, & Bachmann, 2005; Runde & Bastians, 2005). The above classification of the coaching agendas, the "what" can help to (re)clarify the goals and the engagement levels they require.

WHO: CHARACTERISTICS OF COACHES

The "who" provides answers to the question of who can act as a coach by taking into account that organizations have by and large four options for choosing a coach: an external coach, an internal coach (who is outside line management, e.g., peer coaching, cf. Frisch, 2001); the line manager as coach; and self-coaching (i.e., using on-line intervention technology instead of face-to-face interventions). The most important reported advantages of an external coach are higher feelings of confidentiality and trust from the coachee's perspective, less "company blindness" of the coach, which makes that coach less likely to judge or evaluate the coachee, and the generally broader experience of the coach, which could lead to a wider variety of ideas or solutions.

Internal coaches on the other hand, have the advantage of being more easily available for the coachee, they have better knowledge of internal politics, contacts, and the wider goals of the organization, and they find it easier to assess the accuracy of the coachee's perception, as they can more easily observe the coachee in their work environment, and they are perceived by executives (Wasylyshyn, 2003) and executive coaches (Hall et al., 1999) to be less expensive. To the best of our knowledge, however, no empirical study has actually tested if external coaches are really more expensive than internal coaches. For a more in-depth discussion of the pros and cons of external versus internal coaches, see Frisch (2001), Hall et al. (1999), Wasylyshyn, (2003), and Schnell (2005).

Three studies have compared the effectiveness of who can act as a coach (Offermanns, 2004; Spence & Grant, 2005; Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004). In line with our definition of coaching, effectiveness in the coaching literature is typically measured at the individual level by two groups of dependent variables. The first consists of processes or business outcomes (e.g., goal attainment), and the second focuses on people outcomes (e.g., changes in affect, well-being). Although further research is warranted in this area as the three existing studies suffered from small sample sizes (average N = 35.25), taken together the following picture arises: External coaching seemed to be more effective than peer coaching in terms of goal attainment (Spence & Grant, 2005; Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004), although peer coaching still had positive effects compared to control groups without coaching (Spence & Grant, 2005). This difference in success between the external coach and peer coaching was explained by Sue-Chan and Latham (2004) as a result of the higher perceived credibility of the external coach by the coachees. No differences between external and peer coaching were observed for well-being measures (Spence & Grant, 2005).

Similar to external coaching, self-coaching was perceived to be more credible than peer coaching (Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004), and was shown to be as effective for goal attainment as external coaching (Offermanns, 2004; Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004). External coaching, however, led to a higher satisfaction with the coaching process in comparison with self- or peer coaching (Offermanns, 2004; Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004). Up to this point, no study seems to be available that compares the difference between self-coaching and peer coaching on well-being measures.

Interesting to note is that the prevalence of who is acting as coach and the extent to which the different coaches (i.e., external, internal, line manager, and self) work together in organizations might depend on the maturity of the coaching culture of the organizations. Megginson and Clutterbuck (2006: 236) report, for example, that in the nascent stage of a coaching culture (i.e., when coaching is introduced in the organization), coaching is seen as "a specialist activity separate from normal managing" and peers generally do not coach each other. This implies that the line manager as coach and the internal coach are not likely to occur in those organizations. While in the final, embedded stage of a coaching culture (i.e., when coaching is a well-established practice in the organization), they report that external coaches work with the line managers acting as coaches to steer the coachee-led development agenda, and peer coaching happens "both within the same function

and across functions and levels" (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2006: 233).

HOW: APPROACHES TO COACHING

Similar to the psychotherapeutic field, where more than 250 distinct approaches are identified (Wampold, 2001), approaches to coaching are also different. Several theoretical attempts have been made in the literature to classify the existing coaching schools (Barner & Higgins, 2007; Gray, 2006; Peltier, 2001; Stober & Grant, 2006). However, none of these approaches has been validated.

Given the fact that coaching and psychotherapy are based upon similar theoretical constructs (Hart, Blattner, & Leipsic, 2001); have functional similarities (Mckenna & Davis, 2009); and draw heavily upon the principles and processes of psychotherapy (Judge & Cowell, 1997); we are using the Emotionality-Rationality-Activity-Awareness-Context (ERAAwC) model from L'Abate (1981) and L'Abate, Frey, and Wagner (1982) to structure the field. The authors empirically derived their model based upon the goals, processes, and tasks of the different therapeutic schools, and had it validated by experts in the field. Obviously coaching differs from therapy, but we strongly believe that a model able to classify the many different therapeutic schools is currently the best candidate available to structure the different coaching schools.

The ERAAwC model of L'Abate et al. (1982) classifies the schools in terms of their different emphasis of the five components: Emotionality, Rationality, Activity, Awareness, and Context (see L'Abate, 2005, for a recent discussion of the model).

- Humanistic approaches, stressing the importance of phenomenological experiencing and personal feelings, which use mainly techniques such as restatement, paraphrasing, listening for feelings, reflection on feelings, summarizing, and physical listening, are classified under the *Emotionality* school and have their roots in theorists such as C. R. Rogers, A. H. Maslow, L. Greenberg, R. May, and S. Johnston. This school is discussed separately in Gray's (2006), Peltier's (2001), and in Stober and Grant's (2006) classifications, although the latter define it much more broadly, as they also include the *Awareness* school, which is outlined further below.
- Psychodynamic, rational-emotive, and reality-oriented approaches that stress the importance of logical, cognitive processes, and use techniques such as logical levels, (counter)transference, projection, resistance, mental maps, and ladder of inference, are classified under the *Rationality* school. Theorists such as S. Freud, C. Jung, H. Hartmann, K. Horney, A. T. Beck, and A. Ellis belong here. Peltier (2001), and Stober

and Grant (2006), discussed two of the approaches within the rational school separately, namely, the psychodynamic school and the cognitive psychology school, while Gray (2006), only discussed the psychodynamic school and combines the cognitive approach with the behavioral approach. The latter belongs to the next school in ERAAwC model.
- Approaches stressing activity, modeling, shaping, observation, rewards and reinforcers, such as behaviorism, are classified under the *Activity* school. J. B. Watson, B. F. Skinner, J. Wolpe, H. Eysenk, G. Patterson, A. Bandura, N. Azrin, and T. Ayllon are theorists that are part of this school. Barner and Higgins (2007), Peltier (2001), and Stober and Grant (2006) also discussed it as a separate school in their classifications.
- Approaches emphasizing awareness, such as Gestalt, Eastern philosophies, or personal narratives, are classified under the *Awareness* school. These are more inclined to use techniques such as meditation, drawing, guided imagination, role plays with empty chairs, and metaphors. F. Perls and W. Kempler are prototypical theorists for these types of approaches. Part of this school is also described in Peltier's (2001) chapter on "existential stance." Gray (2006) discussed only the Gestalt approach, and Stober and Grant (2006) placed the Awareness school under the humanistic school.
- Last, most approaches that focus upon family and community systems are classified under the *Context* school and have their roots in theorists such as H. S. Sullivan, P. Watzlawick, S. Minuchin, M. Selvini, D. D. Jackson, J. Haley, C. Withaker, and V. Satir. This school is more inclined to use paradoxical assignments, organization-setups, role-tracking charts, and process observation checklists and is discussed separately in Barner and Higgins (2007), Peltier (2001), and Stober and Grant (2006).

It is noteworthy that although the techniques mentioned under each school are prototypical for these schools (often because the techniques were developed within it), other schools sometimes use them as well. Especially techniques from the Emotionality school (e.g., active listening) are employed in the other schools, as they are excellent to start a coach–client relationship (Peltier, 2001). Hence, Stober (2006: 30) observes that "the humanistic stance is a shared orientation in coaching" and Joseph (2006) calls it a metatheoretical perspective within coaching. In addition, some coaching schools are hybrid schools. The cognitive–behavioral school, for example, is derived from the combination of two schools of thought, namely the Rational and the Active, and transformational coaching is a combination of Awareness, Emotionality, and Activity.

In terms of prevalence, Brooks and Wright (2007) reported that the Activity and Rationality approaches dominated the New Zealand industry,

while Whybrow and Palmer (2006b) demonstrated that in the United Kingdom mainly the Activity, Rationality, and Emotionality schools were followed and that coaches reported a greater use of eclectic approaches over integrative approaches, by combining several.

Only Grant (2001) seems to have investigated whether one school is more effective than another. His study revealed that cognitive–behavioral skill coaching applied by an external coach was more effective on both "business" and "people" measures than cognitive or behavioral skill coaching provided by an external coach.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

Coaching is clearly on the rise in Western economies, and coaching can exist in 60 different formats according to the proposed coaching cube, resulting in a range of questions. For example: "Who has had a line manager as coach (Who) who uses meditation techniques (How) to help increase the negotiation skills of his coachees/followers (What)?" "Who knows about self-coaching technology (Who) that can be deployed to facilitate an organization-setup (How) in order to improve team functioning (What)?" It seems unlikely that all formats in the cube will occur in the business world.

An Economic Perspective

An economic demand-and-supply perspective can help here to consider which formats are more likely to occur, by exploring which combinations of who, what, and how HR managers or coachees prefer (the demand side) and what formats the market offers (supply side). Little is known about the demand side, as one of the limitations of the studies that report on coaching agendas is that the collected data often comes from the coaches themselves, which could bias the results. An interesting exception, however, is a Dutch study (NVP, 2007) that surveyed both HR managers and coaches and compared the responses. The HR managers, for example, perceived the utility of coaching to be lower than the coaches. In addition, the HR managers indicated that they would hire coaches more for cure than prevention of issues. This contrasts with the finding of the Coutu and Kauffman study (2009) that external coaches were engaged more often for developing capabilities of high-potential performers, than for correcting toxic behavior. A factor that could explain this difference between the results is the importance of the organizations' future agenda, which might depend on size and sector, as well as on cultural differences. Hence,

the question arises of whether the importance of the agenda has an influence on the preferences of HR managers about who to engage.

Another factor that might determine which formats are more likely to be observed in organizations is the time and effort required from all parties in the coaching process (i.e., the level of engagement required). Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006) have argued that the skillfulness (mastery of practice) follows the engagement level. In their view, skill coaching should be done by the managers acting as coaches, and performance coaching should be done by internal coaches. External coaches on the other hand, should only be hired to deliver development or life coaching, as the engagement level is higher and thus requires a higher mastery of practice. Frisch (2001) noted, however, that the (perceived) high cost of external coaching, and the need to become learning organizations is responsible for an increase in internal coaching and for broadening the scope of internal coaches' work agendas. In line with those statements, the Dutch study (NVP, 2007) indicated that HR managers preferred to use a mix of internal, external, and line manager coaching (while the external coaches obviously preferred external coaching). Therefore, we investigate the question of whether the engagement level of the agenda has an influence on HR managers' preferences of who to engage.

The largest gap in the existing literature is found on the "How" dimension (cf. coaching approaches) in the coaching cube. The literature only reveals that the most frequently observed approaches in the countries studied belong to the Rationality and Activity schools and that coaches indicated to combine different approaches. But it is not really known whether the approaches differed in their effectiveness, in particular when the two other dimensions (the agenda, and who can act as coach) are taken into account. From a supply perspective, this raises the question of whether coaches learn different approaches, with a dominant focus on techniques from the Rational and Activity schools as part of, for example, the short coaching certification courses. These courses are currently on the rise as organizations increasingly demand proof of coaching competences or quality in the nontransparent marketplace (Whybrow & Palmer, 2006a). Bearing this in mind, we explore which techniques coaching students learn from which major schools on the certification courses. More specifically, we ask, "Do they learn different approaches for different agendas? Are there differences between what line managers, external, and internal coaches learn in the certification institutes?"

Both the Rationality school and the Activity

school are characterized by goal setting and brief time spans (Brooks & Wright, 2007; Ducharme, 2004; Peltier, 2001). Hence, from a demand perspective the simplicity and transparency of both schools (Ducharme, 2004) might be more desirable for HR managers, who have to justify the financial investment. Moreover, HR managers might feel more comfortable with the rational and behavioral aspects, which have greater similarities with traditional trainings where insights are offered and exercises are carried out, enabling them to better understand what the coaches are doing.

A Psychological Perspective

Drawing on the psychological literature that empirically investigates how coaching works can help to provide insight into which formats are more likely to occur. Grief (2007) summarized the status of this literature for external, internal, and self-coaching, which often lacks information on what the coaching agenda consisted of and what type of school was applied. Despite these limitations, the temporary findings are helpful to understand which formats might be more frequently observed in the business world. As mentioned earlier, one factor that had a positive influence on the desired coaching outcomes was the clarity of the goals and expectations of the coachee (Brauer, 2005, 2006; Maethner et al., 2005; Runde & Bastians, 2005). Hence, in skills or performance coaching, for example, where relatively clear goals are offered, we expect that the Rationality and Activity schools might be more often observed and applicable than others due to their characteristic of working with clear goals (Ducharme, 2004; Peltier, 2001).

A second factor that played a role in coaching success was the individual diagnosis of the coach and the degree to which the coach adapted the suggested interventions to the client (Runde & Bastians, 2005). Hence, in situations where diagnoses, expectations of the coachee, or goals are unclear (i.e., development/life coaching), we expect that the Awareness school might be more frequently observed and appropriate, as these coaches will try to raise the awareness of the coachees to help them clarify their development need, hereby taking into account that a person acts differently in different contexts (Chidiac, 2008; Peltier, 2001). The Context school might also be more frequently observed and applicable in this situation, as it will typically focus upon the unique organizational dynamics in which the coachee works in order to arrive at a diagnosis (Peltier, 2001).

A third factor to achieve coaching success was the quality of the relationship between coach and coachee during the coaching process (Brauer, 2005, 2006; Maethner et al., 2005; Parker et al., 2008; Runde & Bastians, 2005). More specifically, the degree of the esteem, openness, sympathy from the coach, and the equality in the relationship had a positive effect (Maethner et al., 2005). Hence, in situations where more intimate, personal topics will have to be addressed (i.e., development/life coaching), the Emotionality school could be more frequently observed and applicable, as this school has a stronger focus on relationships and emotions (Peltier, 2001; Stober, 2006).

In summary, drawing on the psychological literature, we suggest that the Rationality and Activity schools are more likely to be observed when clearly defined agendas are on the table (i.e., skills and performance agendas), while the Emotionality, Awareness and Context schools are more likely to be observed when less clearly defined agendas have to be tackled (i.e., development/life coaching agendas).

Next, we present three studies that attempt to explore which formats of the theoretical coaching cube are observed more frequently in the business world. In the first study we focus upon the "What" and "Who" dimensions from the demand side in order to answer the following two questions:

Research Question 1: Does the importance of the agenda to the organization have an influence on the HR manager's preference of who to engage?

Research Question 2: Does the engagement level of the agenda have an influence on the HR manager's preference of who to engage?

In the second study, we focus on the "What," "Who," and "How" dimensions from the supply side in order to answer the following three questions:

Research Question 3: Do external and internal coaches coach in the same way?

Research Question 4: Do coaches use more approaches from the Rationality and Activity schools when they focus upon skills and performance agendas?

Research Question 5: Do coaches use more approaches from the Emotionality, Awareness, and Context schools when they focus upon development/life coaching agendas?

In the third study, we focus on the "What," "Who," and "How" dimensions of the supply side, by looking at the techniques coaches learn in the different certification institutes, in order to answer to following three questions:

Research Question 6: Which techniques from which major schools do coaches learn on courses offered in certification institutes?

Research Question 7: Do coaches learn different approaches for different agendas on courses offered in certification institutes?

Research Question 8: Are there differences between what line managers, external, and internal coaches learn in the certification institutes?

STUDY 1:
WHAT AND WHO FROM THE DEMAND SIDE

Method

Upon our request a self-developed questionnaire was published on the website of an HR-practitioners' magazine in Belgium (*HRSquare*) in the third quarter (Q3) of 2008, and at the same time an invitation to complete the survey went out in their weekly electronic newsletter. We also sent an e-mail with the link to the survey to HR managers who were personal contacts of the authors with the request to complete and forward the questionnaire to other HR colleagues within their firm (cf. snowball sampling, Goodman, 1961). Although in the United States the coachee often plays a more important role in setting the agenda (Global Coaching Survey, 2009), we have chosen to survey HR managers, as from our experience in Belgium, the majority of coaching engagements are arranged through the HR department (this also applies to executive coaching).

In a first stage, we asked respondents to tell us their view of how their organization perceived the utility of coaching for learning and development issues on a 4-point scale: 1 = *insufficiently aware of the possibilities*; 2 = *is aware, but is not using it sufficiently*; 3 = *is aware and uses it sufficiently*; 4 = *the cost is too high*. Next, respondents indicated which of 17 potential coaching topics they thought would become important in the next 2 years in their organization (response categories: important or not important). Hereafter, they were asked to indicate what type of development technique(s) (training, mentoring, line manager as coach, internal coach, external coach, other tech-

nique) they would use for these coaching topics. They could indicate more than one technique. Finally, respondents were asked to provide some information on the characteristics of the organization they worked for.

Our efforts resulted in a sample of 202 organizations. The most typical respondents were HR directors of organizations with more than 1000 employees in the service industry. In 27% of the cases, function was not captured by our list of options, and respondents selected "other." The majority of "other" functions consisted of CEOs or general managers, as indicated in the open text box. For more information on the sample characteristics see Table 1.

Results and Discussion

Study 1 confirmed that coaching is on the rise in Belgium, and that it has not yet reached its full potential (cf. Global Coaching Survey, 2009). The majority of organizations (52%) reported as aware of the utility of coaching for learning-and-development issues in their organizations but were not using it sufficiently at the time. The HR managers reported, however, that they would consider coaching for the topics provided (see Table 2). Using ANOVAs and post hoc Schéffe tests, we observed no significant effects for industry, type of respondent, or size of the organization.

Table 2 provides an answer to research question 1: the importance of the agenda (What) tends to influence the HR manager's preference on who to engage (Who). Similar to the Dutch study (NVP, 2007), the Belgian HR managers preferred to use a combination of development techniques (on average 1.27, $SD = 1.17$), especially for topics they regarded as more important (Pearson correlation: $r = .54$, $p < .001$). More specifically, training ($r = .39$, $p < .001$) and manager as coach ($r = .48$, $p < .001$) were on average the preferred development options for the important challenges ahead. Hence, one cannot claim that "organizations are turning away from the traditional training initiatives with the implied ethos of one size fits all" (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2006: 23) in order to turn to coaching, but rather that organizations are complementing the traditional training initiatives with new initiatives such as coaching.

In relation to research question 2, Table 2 shows that not only the importance, but also the engagement level of the agenda (What) has an influence on the HR manager's preference on who to engage (Who). Although the line manager as coach and training were perceived to be valid options for agendas with a lower engagement level, training was no

TABLE 1
Sample Characteristics of Studies 1 and 2

Study 1 (N = 202 Organizations)			Study 2 (N = 83 Coaches)		
Variable	Frequency	Percentage	How: Coaching Approach[1,2]	Frequency	Percentage
Function			Solution-focused coaching	45	54%
HR Director	58	28%	Goal-focused coaching	36	43%
HR manager training and development	34	17%	Neuro-Linguistic Programming	30	36%
HR Business partner	38	19%	Person-centered coaching	25	30%
Line manager	18	9%	Behavioral coaching	24	29%
Other	54	27%	Cognitive–behavioral coaching	24	29%
Total	202	100%	Action coaching	23	28%
Size of the organization (in Fte)			Cognitive coaching	18	22%
<50	30	15%	System coaching	18	22%
50–124	21	10%	Humanistic coaching	16	19%
125–250	23	11%	Problem-focused coaching	15	18%
250–500	24	12%	Transformational coaching	15	18%
500–1000	24	12%	Transpersonal coaching	15	18%
>1000	80	40%	Transactional coaching	13	16%
Total	202	100%	Integrative coaching	9	11%
Industry (%)			Gestalt coaching	8	10%
Agriculture and food	2	1%	Inner game coaching	5	6%
Chemical, pharmaceutical, and science	20	10%	Multimodel coaching	5	6%
Electronics and electrotechniques	4	2%	Rational Emotive Behavioral	1	1%
Energy and environment	6	3%	No idea	6	7%
Fast-moving consumer goods	8	4%	Other	12	15%
				SD	Average
Finance and banking	14	7%			
Goverment and nonprofit	20	10%	Amount of coaching approaches	3.43	4.16
Health Care	10	5%	**Who**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Human Resources	20	10%	Gender		
Industry and textile	14	7%	Male	46	55%
Logistics, transport, and distribution	7	3%	Female	37	45%
Media, entertainment, and communication	2	1%	Type of coach		
			Internal	19	23%
Other	16	8%	External	56	68%
Retail and wholesale	3	2%	Both	8	10%
R&D/engineering	2	1%	Type of employment		
Services	27	13%	Full time	14	17%
Telecom, ICT, and internet	14	7%	Part time	69	83%
				SD	Average
Tourism	5	2%			
Training and education	8	4%	Percent time spent part time	19.57%	30.80%
Total	202	100%	Tenure in years	7.56	8.66
			What: Coaching Agenda[2]	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
			Skills coaching	43	52%
			Performance coaching	43	52%
			Development/life coaching	32	39%

[1] The coaching approaches are based upon the UK study of Whybrow and Palmer (2006b).
[2] Total exceeds 100% as respondents could indicate several options.

longer among the two most selected choices for agendas with the highest engagement level (i.e., development/life). It was replaced by the preferred use of internal coaches. This preference of HR managers to use their internal resources for high or long en-

gagement agendas over external coaching could be the result of the (perceived) higher cost of external coaching (Frisch, 2001). This can, however, be a disadvantage for the coaching process, as peer coaches are perceived to be less credible than external

TABLE 2
Study 1: Importance of Coaching Topics (What) and Who to Engage (Who) According to 202 Organizations (Demand Side)

Skill coaching topics[1]	Important in the Coming 2 years[2]	Manager as Coach[3]	Internal Coach[3]	External Coach[3]	Training[3]	Mentor[3]	Other[3]	Average Amount of Techniques SD (.54***)[4]
Competency development of individual employees	86%	55%	34%	20%	58%	27%	1%	1.94 (1.24)
Conversation skills	71%	25%	22%	21%	55%	11%	4%	1.38 (1.19)
Learning to give feedback	71%	43%	21%	15%	40%	13%	3%	1.35 (1.11)
Competency development of high potentials	61%	40%	26%	26%	40%	31%	8%	1.71 (1.48)
Average	72%	41% (.30***)	26% (.32***)	21% (.24***)	48% (.47***)	21% (.22**)	4% (−.09)	1.60 (1.26)
Performance coaching topics[1]								
Changing leadership style	75%	43%	23%	34%	60%	15%	4%	1.78 (1.34)
Coping with change	73%	45%	26%	23%	37%	16%	6%	1.55 (1.39)
Learn to set goals and realizing them	66%	46%	20%	10%	29%	8%	5%	1.18 (1.08)
Leaders learning how to develop followers	65%	37%	24%	11%	37%	11%	5%	1.24 (1.06)
Stimulating personal leadership of the leader	65%	46%	20%	27%	36%	16%	4%	1.49 (1.19)
Changing behavior and motivation of employees	62%	42%	22%	14%	20%	13%	6%	1.18 (1.15)
Team development	61%	29%	22%	29%	29%	4%	6%	1.20 (1.06)
Changing personal performance of employees	56%	41%	18%	8%	17%	12%	5%	1.02 (1.18)
Career transitions	41%	23%	20%	14%	10%	13%	12%	.93 (1.13)
Average	63%	39% (.52***)	22% (.34***)	19% (.24**)	31% (.37***)	12% (.16*)	6% (−.02)	1.29 (1.18)
Development/life coaching topics[1]								
Career development	60%	41%	32%	15%	19%	18%	9%	1.35 (1.24)
Work–life balance within the framework of career management	49%	32%	21%	11%	15%	7%	9%	.96 (1.08)
Personal leadership in terms of work–life balance	43%	23%	13%	6%	10%	10%	8%	.71 (.94)
Learning to cope with own emotions	26%	15%	8%	10%	12%	7%	9%	.61 (.94)
Average	45%	28% (.53***)	19% (.35***)	11% (.36***)	14% (.31***)	11% (.30***)	9% (.00)	.91 (1.05)
Total average	61%	37% (.48***)	22% (.35***)	17% (.29***)	31% (.39***)	14% (.20**)	6% (.00)	1.27 (1.17)

[1] In order to define the most relevant topics on which coaching could take place, we primarily drew upon questions from the Dutch study (NVP, 2007) because of institutional similarities between Belgium and the Netherlands (Global Coaching Survey, 2009), and the fact that this research surveyed HR managers. We retained only topics of which at least 60% of the Dutch HR managers thought that they would be important in the future and then cross-checked and supplemented the topics with recurring self-reported topics from coaches as reported in the following studies: Coutu and Kauffman (2009), Gale et al. (2002), Grant and Zackson (2004), Hall et al. (1999), Judge and Cowell (1997), Wasylysshyn, (2003), and Spence et al. (2006). Classification of the different topics into skill, performance, and life/development coaching was done by two of the authors, and validated afterward by two senior coaches.

[2] Percentage of organizations that indicate the topic will be important in the coming 2 years within their organization.

[3] Type of development technique HR managers would use for the topic. Between brackets are the Pearson correlations with the average importance of the topics.

[4] Pearson correlation with the importance of the topic.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

coaching, which may explain why they are less effective (Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004).

STUDY 2: WHAT, WHO, AND HOW FROM THE SUPPLY SIDE

Method

An on-line version of a self-developed questionnaire was e-mailed in Q1 of 2009 to 203 coaches who were personal contacts of the authors and found through an internet search, with the request to complete the questionnaire and to forward it to other internal or external coaches (cf. snowball sampling, Goodman, 1961). The internet search was needed as the Belgium market is very fragmented with a lot of independents or small (group) practices. The initial group of coaches included a wide variety of coaches; some were certified by the International Coach Federation (ICF), some were self-employed and working for local small enterprises, others were working internationally in alliance with the Center for Creative Leadership, or were working in the organization in which they acted as a coach. The link to the questionnaire was also available in the electronic newsletter of the Flemish Association for Coaches, and on the website of an HR practitioners' magazine in Belgium (*HRSquare*).

The questionnaire first asked coaches to complete some demographic variables and then inquired which coaching approach(es) they practice. In a next step, respondents indicated which coaching agenda(s) were their main focus: skills coaching, performance coaching, development/life coaching. We provided the explanation of the different agendas, as in our introduction section. Respondents could select more than one approach and more than one agenda.

Eighty-three coaches responded, 55% of whom were male, 68% external coaches, and 52% focused upon skill coaching and performance coaching. On average they used 4.16 (SD = 3.43) coaching approaches. For more information on the sample characteristics, see Table 1.

Results and Discussion

Given the outcome in Study 1 that organizations do not utilize coaching to its full extent (yet), it is not surprising that Study 2 showed that many coaches worked part-time and had recently started in the industry (see Table 1). The approaches most frequently used in the Belgium coaching market (i.e., solution focused, goal focused, behavioral, person-centered, cognitive-behavioral, see Table 1), are in line with the studies of Brooks and Wright (2007) in New Zealand and Whybrow and Palmer (2006b) in the United Kingdom. One exception, however, was the popularity of the neurolinguistic programming (NLP) approach in Belgium. This is probably due to the influence of one certification institute, which was among the first to be active in the Belgium coaching market. In addition, this institute has currently two NLP spin-off organizations and has published 9 NLP books. The Belgian coaches (like the coaches in the U.K.) reported a greater use of eclectic over integrative approaches.

In research question 3 we examined if external and internal coaches (Who) coach in the same way (How). Table 3 reveals no significant difference between the groups in how they coach. Table 4, however, shows that internal coaches focused less on development/life coaching themes (21%) in comparison with external coaches (45%). Therefore, it seems that Study 2 contrasts Study 1 here: External coaches reported working more on development/life themes, despite the preference of HR managers to use their internal resources for these themes. One explanation for this observation might be the benefit of external coaches offering higher levels of confidentiality (Hall et al., 1999; Wasylyshyn, 2003; Schnell, 2005), which is likely to be more important when issues from the private life are discussed. In addition, this finding might also fit the logic of Fillery-Travis and Lane (2006) that the mastery of practice follows the engagement level, which is to a certain extent supported by the fact that external coaches are perceived as the most credible by coachees (Sue-Chan & Latham, 2004).

Turning to research question 4, the independent sample t tests in Table 3 revealed that coaches who used more approaches that belong to the Rationality school (e.g., cognitive coaching, solution-focused coaching; How) focused marginally more on skill coaching (What), $t(81) = -1.90$, $p < .10$, while coaches who relied more on approaches from the Activity school (e.g., action coaching, goal-focused coaching, behavioral coaching) focused more on performance coaching, $t(81) = -2.57$, $p < .05$. These results can be understood from both a demand perspective, as well as from the psychological literature on how coaching works. HR managers (the demand side) are probably more inclined to select coaches with a Rationality and Activity focus, due to the simplicity and transparency of both schools (Ducharme, 2004), and the conceptual familiarity with traditional training. The Rationality and Activity schools are characterized by goal setting (Brooks & Wright, 2007; Ducharme, 2004; Peltier, 2001) and in the psychological

TABLE 3
Study 2: (1) Do Different Coaches (Who) Use Different Approaches (How), and (2) Do different Agendas (What) Lead to Different Approaches (How)? (Supply Side)

N = 83	Who (1)				What (2)			
How	Internal	External	Both	Significance[6]	Skills	Performance	Development/Life	Total[9]
Emotionality[1]	.19 (.19)[7]	.25 (.25)	.20 (.15)	ns.	.21 (.24) vs .25 (.22)[8]	.24 (.24) vs .22 (.21)	.30 (.26) vs .18 (.20)**	23%
Rationality[2]	.17 (.15)	.21 (.21)	.23 (.11)	ns.	.24 (.21) vs .16 (.17)*	.23 (.22) vs .18 (.15)	.25 (.22) vs .18 (.16)	20%
Activity[3]	.25 (.26)	.28 (.24)	.21 (.15)	ns.	.29 (.27) vs .24 (.20)	.33 (.26) vs .20 (.19)**	.28 (.27) vs .26 (.22)	27%
Awareness[4]	.09 (.15)	.18 (.26)	.08 (.15)	ns.	.13 (.23) vs .18 (.24)	.14 (.23) vs .17 (.24)	.24 (.26) vs .10 (.20)***	15%
Context[5]	.22 (.18)	.25 (.26)	.31 (.22)	ns.	.28 (.24) vs .21 (.24)	.27 (.25) vs .23 (.23)	.24 (.27) vs .25 (.23)	25%

Note: Classification of the different coaching approaches under the five main schools (ERAAwC) was done by two of the authors and validated afterward by two senior coaches. When a hybrid approach was encountered, we classified the approach under a maximum of three schools. We calculated the prevalence of schools by taking the average percentage of the different approaches that belong under that school.

[1] Sum of (Person centered; Humanistic; Integrative; NLP; Transformational)/5.
[2] Sum of (Cognitive; REBC; NLP; Inner Game; Multimodal; Solution-focused; Problem-focused)/7.
[3] Sum of (Action; Behavioral; Goal-focused; Multi-modal; NLP; Transformational)/6.
[4] Sum of (Transpersonal; Transformational; Gestalt)/3.
[5] Sum of (System; Solution-focused; Problem-focused; Inner Game)/4.
[6] ANOVAs with post hoc Schéffe tests.
[7] Average score (SD) on the coaching school.
[8] Independent sample t test of average percentage (SD) of coaches who are part of that school and indicated to focus upon that agenda versus average percentage (SD) of coaches that are not part of that school but focus upon the same agenda.
[9] Total exceeds 100% as respondents could indicate several options.
* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

literature, this might be regarded as best practice, as skills and performance agendas have relatively clear goals, which has been shown to be important for successful coaching outcomes (Brauer, 2005, 2006; Maethner et al., 2005; Runde & Bastians, 2005). Hence, those coaching schools might be more aligned with these types of agendas than the other schools.

In relation to research question 5, Table 3 shows that coaches who used more techniques from the Emotionality school (e.g., person-centered coaching and humanistic coaching) were more involved in development/life coaching, $t(81) = -2.31$, $p < .05$. Given the stronger focus on relationships and emotions of this school (Peltier, 2001; Stober, 2006) and the more intimate and personal agendas involved,

this approach might be considered best practice from the psychological literature. In addition, the coaches reported to use more approaches belonging to the Awareness school (e.g., transformational coaching and Gestalt coaching), $t(81) = -2.78$, $p < .01$. Again, this approach might be regarded as best practice, as Ducharme (2004) explains that one of the difficulties of the cognitive–behavioral techniques (which is prototypical for the combination of the Rationality and Activity schools) is to increase the more complex goals (which require a higher involvement level) of psychological and social awareness. A higher awareness level of the coachee is probably required first, before one can define the required concrete individualized goals (Runde & Bastians, 2005). We found no significant

TABLE 4
Study 2: What Is the Typical Agenda (What) for Different Coaches (Who)? (Supply Side)

N = 83	Who Is the Coach			
What Type of Coaching	Internal	External	Both	% (Frequency) of What Total[1]
Skills coaching	63% (12)	46% (26)	63% (5)	52% (43)
Performance coaching	63% (12)	48% (27)	50% (4)	52% (43)
Development/life coaching	21% (4)	45% (25)	38% (3)	39% (32)
% (Frequency) of who total	23% (19)	67% (56)	10% (8)	

[1] Total exceeds 100% as respondents could indicate several options.

differences for coaches from the Context school (e.g., system coaching and problem-focused coaching) and their focus on different coaching agendas. As the Context school is considered to be the most complex and most comprehensive approach to coaching (Feldman & Lankau, 2005), it might mean that these approaches are always appropriate regardless of the agenda.

STUDY 3: WHAT, WHO, AND HOW FROM THE SUPPLY SIDE

Method

We contacted five major certification coaching institutes in Belgium that provided short training programs and retrieved information about the content of these programs from their websites in Q1 of 2008, as well as from documentation we received from the institutes themselves. All schools aimed their training programs at (future) line managers, internal, and external coaches and were based on the 11 core competencies for coaches as defined by the ICF. For more information on the training programs see Table 5.

Results and Discussion

In research question 6, we explored which techniques from which major schools coaches learn on courses in certification institutes. Table 5 reveals that 31 techniques (How) are taught across the five certification institutes, reflecting that all institutes offered techniques from all schools. This might explain why coaches reported themselves as eclectic in their approaches, as 11 techniques (35%) were classified as belonging to the Rationality school, 6 (19%) to the Context school, 5 (16%) to the Emotionality school, 5 (16%) to the Awareness school, and 4 (13%) to the Activity school. Grant (2001) showed that combining certain approaches for skill coaching is more effective than using one approach, so certification institutes might follow a best-practice approach here.

Research question 7 asked if coaches learn different approaches (How) for different agendas (What) on courses offered in certification institutes. It seems that for skills and performance coaching techniques from the Emotionality (52%; 32%), Activity (45%; 40%), and Rationality (36%; 45%) schools were more dominant in comparison with techniques from the Context (13%; 20%) and Awareness schools (8%; 16%).

Skills and performance agendas were considered to be basic training in all institutes, meaning that this training has to be successfully completed first, before starting the advanced training for development/life agendas. For the development/life agendas, techniques from the Awareness (24%) and Context (20%) schools were more dominant, in comparison with techniques from the Emotionality (8%), Rationality (7%), and Activity schools (5%). The results presented in Table 5 correspond strongly to the results of Study 2 (see Table 3 and 4), which focus on the coach's perspective and suggest that coaches apply in practice what they learn in the certification institutes, and that it might even be best practices. As an example, the coaches learn several techniques from the Context school in order to tackle development/life agendas. Ducharme (2004: 221) argues, for instance, that the cognitive–behavioral approach, which is also frequently taught, "does not sufficiently allow for either a holistic view of the individual or a view of the individual embedded in an organizational system." Here, approaches from the Context school can be applied to provide this more holistic perspective. An exception to the strong correspondence between what coaches learn in the certification schools for each agenda and what the coaches report using in Study 2 is, however, that coaches from the Emotionality school in Study 2 focused more on development/life agendas, while the majority of their techniques are taught as part of the basic training in the institutes. The latter is probable as they provide a good basis for establishing a coach–client relationship (Peltier, 2001).

Finally, research question 8 investigated if the content (How) of what line manager, external, and internal coaches (Who) learn differed in the researched certification institute programs. This was not the case. This might explain why internal and external coaches in Study 2 reported coaching in a similar fashion (see Table 3).

In summary, the coaching cube is a useful conceptual tool to better understand and structure the coaching market. Taking into account the results of the three studies, which cover both the demand and the supply sides of the coaching market, it seems that many of the theoretical combinations of the coaching cube in Figure 1 are, however, not likely to be observed in practice (see Figure 2). From the 30 possible formats that we explored, we would argue that only 13 are likely, and 17 are rather unlikely to be observed. Combinations that are more frequent in the business world do seem to make theoretical sense from an economic supply-and-demand perspective, and potentially, from the psychological perspective of how coaching works.

TABLE 5
Study 3: How Do Coaches Learn to Coach (How) and for What Type of Agenda (What) in 5 Certification Institutes?

How		What		
Coaching School	Technique	Skills	Performance	Life/Development
Emotionality	Active listening	1α;2α;4α;5α	2α;4α	
	Asking powerfull questions	1α;3α;4α;5α	3α;4α	4b;5c
	Reformulation techniques	2α;4α;5α	2α;4α;5b	
	Rapport	1α		
	Ok Corral	2α	2α	
% of maximum amount of observations (25)		52%	32%	8%
Rationality	Transference, countertransference, projection	2α;3α;4α	1b;2α;3α;4α;5b	
	Resistance	1α;2α;3α;	2α;3α;5b	
	Core qualities	1α;2α;3α	2α;3α	3b
	Logical levels	2α;4α	1b;2α;4α;5b	4b
	Thinking patterns/imprints	3α;4α	3α;4α;5b	4b;5c
	Reframing	2α;4α	2α;4α;5b	
	SWOT analysis	1α;2α	1α;2α	
	GROW	2α	2α	
	Metaposition	5α	5b	
	Functional analysis	3α	3α	
	Outcome model		1b	
% of maximum amount of observations (55)		36%	45%	7%
Activity	SMART goals	1α;3α;4α;5α	3α;4α	
	Behavioral patterns	2α;3α;4α	2α;3α;4α	4b
	Shaping	4α	4α;5b	
	Modeling	4α	4α	
% of maximum amount of observations (20)		45%	40%	5%
Awareness	Body–mind techniques	2α	2α;5b	5c
	Masks	2α	2α	
	Metaphors		5b	4b
	Narratives			4b;5c
	Intuition techniques			4b;5c
% of maximum amount of observations (25)		8%	16%	24%
Context	System thinking	2α;3α;4α	2α;3α;4α;5b	4b;5c
	Organization'setups			2b
	Teambuilding techniques			2b
	Golden triangle	3α	3α	3b
	Drama triangle		1b	
	Behavioral patterns in teams			3b
% of maximum amount of observations (30)		13%	20%	20%
	Average Hours (SD); in so many Months (SD)	126.00 (25.10); 10.20 (1.79)	58.13 (46.38); 6.25 (7.89)	

Note: We classified the techniques learned in the certification institutes under the five main schools (ERAAwC) on the basis of our literature research of where these techniques originated from or where they are most frequently used (e.g., Barner & Higgins, 2007; Gray, 2006; Peltier, 2001; Stober & Grant, 2006). We calculated 'the percentage of the maximum number of observations by summing the number of observed techniques in the different institutes divided by maximum theoretical number of observations per school. If all institutes, for example, taught the five techniques of the emotionality school, then 25 observations was the maximum. Only 13 observations were found, which resulted in 13/25 or 52%.

1α = basics; 1b = advanced Quintessence & UAMS;
2α = basics; 2b = advanced (ICF continued coach education) Coaching Ways;
3α = basics; 3b = advanced School for coaching & leadership;
4α = basics; 4b = advanced Coaching & co;
5α = basics; 5b = medium; 5c = advanced Coaching Square (ICF-accredited coach training programs).
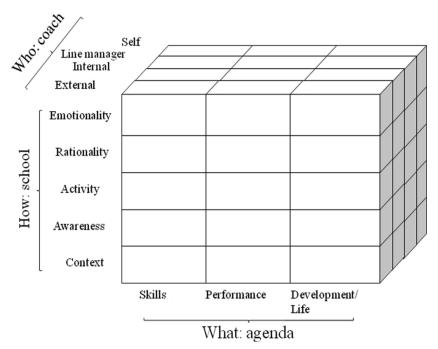
FIGURE 1
The Coaching Cube: What, Who, and How

Limitations

Although the three studies give insights into which formats suggested by the theoretical coaching cube occur more frequently in the business world, they have several limitations. First, they all rely on self-report and preferences. Although the HR managers in Study 1 reported that they would use a specific development technique, this does not mean that they will actually use it. Nor do we know the strength of their preference, as the respondents could select several options without having to rank order them. Other, external factors, such as budget constraints or social influences from line managers, might influence the final decision and behavior (cf. theory of reasoned action; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Second, similar to the Dutch study (NVP, 2007), our study did not explain the 17 coaching topics presented to respondents in Study 1, as we considered them to be straightforward. Following Whybrow and Palmer (2006a; 2006b), and Brooks and Wright (2007), we also did not explain the different coaching approaches provided to participants in Study 2, which could raise some validity concerns. As we considered the approaches somewhat less straightforward, however, we offered the option "no idea" and provided an open text box where respondents could add and explain "other approaches."

Third, despite having a diverse set of industries and coaches, both the samples of Studies 1 and 2 were cross-sectional in nature and had been collected mainly through snowball sampling techniques. Hence, we do not know if the samples are representative of the Belgium coaching industry. For example, HR managers who participated in Study 1 might have been more open to coaching in general. In addition, the sample size in Study 2 was small, but was in line with other studies that attempted to take stock of the coaching industry in their country.

Fourth, although many of the findings correspond with theory and empirical research in other countries, our studies are limited to the Belgium coaching industry. In Belgium, for example, most coaching tends to be arranged through the HR department. For this reason we chose to look at the demand perspective from this angle, while in the United States, for example, a coachee perspective might be more appropriate (Global Coaching Survey, 2009).

Fifth, similar to the Dutch study (NVP, 2007) in Study 1 we provided the response option "the cost is too high" when respondents were asked to indicate how their organizations perceived the utility of coaching. This might have confounded the scale as this option makes the choices no longer mutually exclusive. As only 3% of the HR managers selected this option, it seems unlikely that the core finding of the question is strongly affected: About half the organizations (52%) was "aware of the utility of coaching for learning and development issues but is not using it sufficiently."

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed structure in terms of the coaching cube has both managerial and theoretical applications, which are summarized as follows. It is our experience that the coaching cube helps to structure the existing and upcoming academic literature and define future research avenues. It would, for example, be very helpful for researchers and practitioners if future studies reported what coaching agendas are used, who the coach is, and how the coaching is approached. The latter is often missing in academic papers, but might be particularly important for practitioners to know. This would also allow testing if the factors summarized by Grief (2007) on how coaching works are applicable to all combinations of the dimensions in the cube, or if, for example, the presence of specific combinations is not solely the result of a demand-and-supply process, but also the result of higher coaching effectiveness as we suggest. In that respect, it would be very interesting to investigate if the combinations presented in Figure 2 hold across different countries.

Furthermore, as we have not measured every theoretical combination of the cube in the three studies presented here, future research might want to explore to which schools the techniques of self-coaching programs typically belong, or which techniques line managers typically learn on in-

house training programs that focus on the leader as coach, and what the quality of these in-house training programs is.

As using the leader as coach was on average the preferred development option of HR managers in this study, it seems that research focusing on this type of coaching seems highly relevant, as it is currently lagging behind the practitioner literature (Ellinger, Ellinger, & Keller, 2003). In addition, the results revealed that organizations prefer to use several development techniques to address topics of importance. Hence, another future research avenue might be to look at how coaching can interact with or supplement, for example, training (see Oliver, Bane, & Kopelman, 1997 for the potential positive benefits), or how organizations can optimize the use of external coaches in combination with internal coaches.

In order to further understand what type of organizations use coaching in what kind of format (what, who, and how), future research could focus upon the role of coaching cultures (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2006) or the role of business and career management strategies (Miles & Snow, 1978; Sonnenfeld & Peiperl, 1988). The latter is something we are currently examining.

In terms of managerial implications, the coaching cube can help managers locate their development need and recruit and select the most appro-
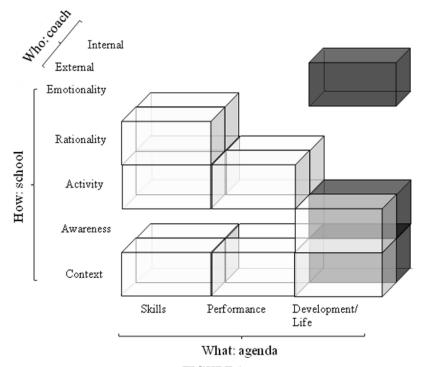

FIGURE 2
Coaching Cube: Probability of Observing the Theoretical Combinations.
White = high probability; Grey = medium probability; Missing = low probability.

priate coach by, for example, asking coaches to locate themselves on the three dimensions or by advertising the combination they are looking for. External coaches and certification institutes can use the cube to position their offering/program toward HR managers and future coaches and coachees, which would make it easier for them to find the most appropriate coach or training institute.

In summary, as it seems that coaching is here to stay (Day et al., 2008), it is our hope that the structure provided will further mature the industry by guiding future research efforts and by helping all parties engaged in the coaching practitioner field to better understand the currently chaotic marketplace.

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