Diversity's Impact on the Executive Coaching Process

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> *This paper presents a conceptual model intended to expand existing executive coaching processes used in organizations by building the strategic learning capabilities needed to integrate a diversity perspective into this emerging field of HRD practice. This model represents the early development of results from a Diversity Practitioner Study applied to concepts drawn from selected executive coaching literature.*

Keywords: Executive coaching, Strategic Learning, Diversity

Since its introduction to the business literature during the 1980s, the concept of executive coaching has emerged as a powerful new field in the applied HRD arena (Zeus & Skiffington, 2002 p. 3). A study conducted by The Harvard Business School in 2003 reported a worldwide coaching market exceeding 1 billion dollars annually. The study suggests this number will double in the next two to three years, with companies spending anywhere from $50,000 to $120,000 per executive for 18 to 24 months of coaching. Fueled by increasing demand, the number of available coaches is also on the rise. For example, The International Coaching Federation reported a membership roster of over 7,000 in 2004.

From the perspective of corporate leaders and their shareholders "the ultimate reason for running an executive coaching program is to improve business results" (Freas, 2000, p. 27). Rapid growth of the executive coaching field presents both an opportunity and challenge for HRD practitioners. When done well, executive coaching contributes to bottom-line benefits. When done poorly, considerable time and financial resources are expended without any clear return on investment. One element rarely considered in the coach-client relationship, yet critical to the effectiveness of partnerships is diversity—the differences that define and determine our worldviews and our ways of relating. Rapidly changing workplace demographics suggest that recognizing and clarifying diversity's impact on the coaching relationship should be a guiding principle for effective coaching. The model described in this paper shows how the business and executive coaching movement, currently sweeping the nation, can open new doors into the executive suite by leveraging diversity and creating inclusive work environments needed to achieve executive parity.

Problem and Purpose Statements

While no uniform definition of executive coaching exists, five key themes emerge when reviewing the various ways the concept is defined in the literature, including executive coaching as (1) a process, (2) a partnership, (3) a balance between individual and organizational needs, (4) a way of working and (5) a new face of leadership for the 21st century (Dotlich & Cairo, 1999; Flaherty, 1999; Freas, 2000; Hargrove, 2000; Hudson, 1999; Thomas, 2000; Watkins, 2003; Whitmore, 2002; Whitworth, Kimsey & Sandalhl, 1998 and Zeus & Skiffington, 2002). Executive coaching is a process, specifically a motivational process that involves an intimate, one-on-one relationship between a senior organizational leader (or high potential) and a coach, generally external to the organization. Further, executive coaching involves working in partnership with clients to construct a highly individualized set of interventions.

Coaching processes are designed to unlock the client's potential by setting clear goals, creating supporting action plans, seeing the future with strength and optimism in what's possible and reflecting on the outcomes of one's actions to learn and take informed future action. In short, the group of authors reviewed for this paper frame executive coaching as an active and collaborative partnership between the client and coach. The primary activity of the coaching relationship is dialog where issues related to the client's values and beliefs, as well as performance issues related to effective leadership are explored, plans developed and action taken. In this way, executive coaching helps organizational leaders build their capacity to lead, as well as coach within their organizations to "spark learning and build the capabilities needed to succeed" (Hargrove, 2000, p. 5).

There is a growing understanding of the potential benefits and pitfalls of executive coaching, the various types of executive coaching, and how executive coaching programs are being implemented in organizations (e.g., Corporate Leadership Council 2000, 2004; Gegner, 1997; Dotlich & Cairo, 1999; Freas, 2000; Watkins, 2003 & Whitmore, 2002). Yet as demonstrated in the selected literature summarized in this paper, few leading thinkers in the field of coaching directly address the impact of diversity to the coaching process. Of the ten primary literature sources included in this

study, only three explicitly address the role of diversity in the coaching process (Flaherty, 1999; Thomas, 2000). We believe the current state of affairs represents a significant gap in the emerging coaching literature and its practice because (1) organizations by necessity are having to work in multicultural environments driven by changes in market and workforce demographics, and (2) despite significant changes in demographics of the available talent pool today and in the future, minorities and women continue to report coming up against glass ceilings in many organizations suggesting differences in selection, development and promotional opportunities.

Thomas (2000) provides an additional diversity-related perspective. He describes a number of barriers to the use of executive coaching as a developmental tool for leveraging diversity including (1) traditional social allegiances result in white males in power being more comfortable coaching other white males in comparison to women and minorities, (2) concerns about preferential treatment or reverse discrimination often serve to block the establishment of coaching relationships with white males and women or minorities, (3) a number of white male executives have limited business-related experience interacting with women and minorities resulting in a lack of confidence for engaging in a coaching process with "the other," (4) some white executives simply fear the intimacy with women or minorities an effective coaching relationship often requires, and (5) women and minorities often find it difficult to trust organizations when they see others like themselves clustered in positions near the bottom, making productive coaching relationships difficult.

This study sought to discover potential connections between the emerging coaching literature and the workplace diversity literature. Specifically, building on an extensive review of this literature and previous Diversity Practitioner research, the purpose of this study was to integrate key elements from these two tracks of literature (coaching and diversity) into a comprehensive approach that seeks to build the strategic learning capabilities needed to leverage diversity in the coaching process for breakthrough results.

To achieve this aim, the study focused on responding to three core research questions. (1) What are the various ways executive coaching is defined in the literature and are there opportunities to expand the meaning to include a diverse perspective? (2) What are the intended outcomes of executive coaching and to what extent is diversity embedded in these aims? And (3) In what ways can the emerging coaching processes used in practice be employed to leverage diversity?

Methodology, Summary of Case Study Findings and Limitations

This paper is a follow-up to a descriptive, exploratory qualitative case study conducted by the authors. The case study included a sample of 20 diversity practitioners located across the United States and selected for their contribution to the emerging theory and practice of diversity initiatives in or for Corporate America. Specifically, a sample of 12 external practitioners participated in the study drawn from a sample of 16 individuals that were identified from the workplace diversity literature as "thought leaders" by applying an "extreme case" sampling strategy (Patton, 1990). The primary sources for participant identification included databases (i.e., A.S.T.D TRAINLIT, ABI and ERIC), resource guides listing diversity consultants and internal consultant (e.g., The Diversity Directory, Hunt-Scanlon) and conference brochures listing key note speakers (e.g., The Society of Human Resource Development). The study also included 8 internal participants in the lead diversity role for their organization.

The data gathered during face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the 20 participants were supplemented by selected literature (i.e., workplace diversity, learning from experience and critical pedagogy), respondent demographic data and other case documents (i.e., written materials including books, articles, diversity strategic plans, training materials, etc.). One of the study's key findings pointed to a need to examine the organizational transformation literature and the transformative learning literature to gain insights for driving the diversity change process. The model for creating strategic learning capabilities was the result of that work and is reported elsewhere (Maltbia, 2004).

Summary of The Diversity Practitioner Study Findings

This paper continues the line of inquiry outlined above by focusing on the emerging field of executive coaching, which was identified in The Diversity Practitioner Study as a critical area for future research (Maltbia 2001). Three findings from The Diversity Practitioner Study (Maltbia, 2001) guide the focus of this inquiry. First, the successful implementation of diversity initiatives must be the responsibility of line executives and managers. As a result, the Diversity Practitioner's primary role is that of advisor and educator. When effective, Diversity Practitioners rely heavily on the use of influence and strategic skills in their advisory role to CEOs and other company executives. Second, Diversity Practitioners employed a three-phased learning and change process including (1) creating awareness and generating diversity related knowledge, (2) building diversity skills and capabilities and (3) applying the learning to real-world situations diversity related challenges and opportunities to realize their intentions. Third, while much progress has been made to change the face of diversity in organizations, there is still much to be done. In light of these findings, this paper argues that much can be learned by integrating what is known about leveraging diversity in organizations with emerging executive coaching processes.

Limitations

The executive coaching literature reviewed came from the popular literature, where popular literature is defined as information found in various publications not typically refereed (Plunkett, Egan & Garza, 2004). Popular literature is used here given the current academic coaching literature's focus on counseling or clinical psychology perspectives and the general lack of research and scholarly writing focused on the subject of executive coaching. While not generally perceived as scholarly, popular literature provides an account of the state of this emerging field of practice. The 10 primary sources included in this summary of the popular executive coaching literature were identified using a number of databases identified by a search conducted on Teacher College's Milbank Memorial Library's electronic tools (e.g., Digital Dissertations, ERIC and ProQuest e-Journals) and a review of proceedings from conferences focused on coaching during 2003 and 2004. These 10 sources represent authors who are cited frequently by recent (posted since 1995) literature reviews and dissertations focused on coaching in organizations, as well as, appearing as keynote speakers at professional coaching conferences. As such, these authors represent a sample of major contributors to the emerging field of applied executive coaching practice in organizations. Examining the race and gender make up of this sample reveals the elite sampling procedure employed resulted in a majority of the authors included being White and Male, with only one Black Male and two White Females. The summary of this coaching literature using these sources might suggest a limited integration of diversity and multicultural perspectives given their demographic make-up, yet this group appears to be representative of the "certified" or "professional" coaches currently available to organizations.

Summary of Literature Review and Key Concepts

A number of key concepts are defined and discussed here related to the current state of executive coaching. These are used to frame the preliminary findings resulting from combining this knowledge with insights gained from prior Diversity Practitioner Research (Maltbia 2001, 2003).

A Brief History of Executive Coaching

Coaching was introduced into the management literature by the 1950s as a management skill (Zeus & Skiffington, 2002). By the 1980s coaching became a part of the business literature, largely as an outgrowth of increased interest within leadership development programs. For several decades business writers introduced coaching concepts by drawing on the experiences of athletic team coaches, with sports psychology as the foundation. By the 1990s many organizations began to combine executive coaching with other more formal training programs to enhance leadership skills or prevent executive derailment. One source suggests between 35 and 75 percent of top executive promotions or placements are unsuccessful resulting in direct costs estimates of between 15 to 30 percent of the six figure salaries of failed executives on average (Corporate Leadership Council 2000). While many authors argue that often these departures could be avoided with one-on-one coaching during the critical transition period, the results of return-on-investment for executive coaching are mixed.

Guiding Principles and Assumptions. This review of the coaching literature also revealed numerous guiding principles, or assumptions the authors use to guide their professional practice. Several authors note that coaching is as much of a "mindset" or shared set of values and beliefs as it is a process. One guiding principle relates to a belief that the goal of this work is *creating a coaching culture*; that is, to be successful and have a significant impact coaching must become a way of life for a critical mass of leaders in the organization (Dotlich and Cairo, 1999). p. 31). Whitmore (2002, p. 19) notes that "performance, learning and enjoyment are inextricably intertwined" and are factors that must be embedded in the belief structure of the organization to realize high performance over the long term.

A second guiding principle is the importance of *clarifying the scope or level of coaching goals*. Dotlich and Cairo (1999, p. 2) list "four clearly focused change goals" of coaching: (1) self-awareness (i.e., client gains insight into their attitudes, behaviors, strengths, weaknesses and their impact on others), (2) performance improvement (i.e., client improves individual performance in a way that contributes to their effectiveness in growing the business by improving profitability, increasing revenues, expanding market share, improving employee productivity, etc.), (3) performance breakthrough (i.e., client raises their performance to an entirely new level, one that constitutes a significant change in their own and others' perceptions of capabilities and potential) and (4) organizational or systems "transformation" (i.e., client makes a fundamental change in behavior, attitudes, values and emotional intelligence is a way that opens up new possibilities for them and the organization's future).

A third guiding principle relates to *recognizing the various types of coaching* (or coaching roles). This principle suggests that coaching roles can be categorized based on whether (1) the coach is internal or external to the organization, and (2) the emphasis of the coaching in terms of content or process. Internal coaching roles identified by the authors include: leader, sponsor, peer coach and specially trained coaches. Given the nature of the task executive coaches and life coaches tend to be external. Several coaching roles are performed by internal or external coaches including: mentoring, teaching and counseling the client, observing and reflecting with the client on the client's performance, and using the principles of Appreciative Inquiry for developing future possibilities. Lastly, specific coaching types were identified including: business coaching, business practice coaching, systems coaching and group or

team coaching.

A fourth guiding principle focused on *completing a front-end assessment early in the process*. This principle is based on the assumption that assessment precedes actual coaching. Data is collected from a variety of sources, including other people to facilitate a readiness for change. Dotlich and Cairo (1999) suggest that the coach needs to "jar the client's self identity while increasing a realistic awareness of self by confronting individuals about their beliefs using tools such 360 feedback, benchmarking, shadowing (coach observations in action)" and self report instrumentation, to name a few (p. 27).

The fifth guiding principle, *being aware of diversity's impact on the coaching process*, was mentioned by only two of the authors, yet we believe it is of critical importance given changing workforce and market demographics. Additionally, we include it here because a significant gap exists in the executive coaching literature and needs to be addressed. This principle acknowledges as Thomas (2000) notes "diversity can play havoc with developmental processes such as coaching, mentoring and sponsoring" (pp. 354-355). The developmental processes of coaching, mentoring and sponsoring are all a part of succession planning and a lack of awareness of diversity's impact on these activities, including who is coached and by whom, has influenced the succession planning process—a key driver of promotions to the executive level—for decades.

Lastly, the sixth guiding principle identified is that *coaching is a learnable skill* as defined in the following table:

Table 1. Teachable Coaching Skills

Personal Qualities	Behavioral Qualities	Organizational Perspective	Results Orientation
Empathy Flexibility (openness & willingness to be coached) Deep listening/ intuition Pragmatic Learning orientation Curiosity Self management	Provides clear feedback w/o judgment Motivates others Sets "stretch goals" Builds mutually satisfying relationships Accepts responsibility for building a trusting, intimate relationship Fairness and equal treatment Client focused Resourcefulness (focus on the whole person)	Personal experience in high-level position Balances the needs of the individual and organization Big picture thinker Integrates different ideas, techniques and people to solve problems	Hold people accountable for results Developing plans that produce results Pinpoint behavioral and attitudinal changes needed to achieve specific business results Relentless correction based on feedback (with clients and on-going self work)

The Rationale for Executive Coaching. In general, the basic rationale for individuals and organizations engaging in executive coaching are three fold: (1) to raise performance, (2) to develop high potentials, and (3) to adapt to changes in the external environment. Further, the intended results of executive coaching found in the literature included *individually focused outcomes* (i.e., reaching goals, producing desired results/maximizing performance, increasing personal fulfillment, finding meaning in work, increasing life balance, building capability by becoming more competent) and *collective outcomes* (i.e., clarifying goals and roles, contributing to the organization, delivering business results, producing extraordinary results, having effective conversations across the organization, improving strategic thinking, facilitating change, retaining high potentials, enhancing innovation, increasing customer loyalty and improving overall leadership effectiveness today and in the future).

The Executive Coaching Process

After exploring the "what" and "why" of executive coaching embedded in the history of the coaching movement, an analysis of the "how" of the executive coaching process was conducted. The processes described in the literature ranged from three to ten steps or phases, with the most common being a five step process (Dotlich & Cairo, 1999; Flaherty, 1999; Freas, 2000; Hargrove, 2000; Hudson, 1999; Thomas, 2000; Watkins, 2003; Whitmore, 2002; Whitworth, Kimsey & Sandalhl, 1998 and Zeus & Skiffington, 2002). These steps were similar to those outlined in a study conducted by The Corporate Leadership Council in 2000 that included 18 companies (e.g., American Express, Citicorp, Goldman Sachs, IBM, Proctor & Gamble and Unilver): (1) *assessment*, (2) *data analysis and development planning* (3) *execution of development plan*, (4) *continuous coaching support* and (5) *the final coaching session*.

Preliminary Findings

The findings presented in this paper applied the model for *Building Learning Capabilities to Leverage Diversity for*

Breakthrough Performance (see Figure 1) by using it as a conceptual framework to content analyze a total of 56 executive coaching process steps described in the selected literature, in addition to the five steps outlined in The Corporate Leadership Council Study (2000, p. 6; Maltbia, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 55, 183-184).
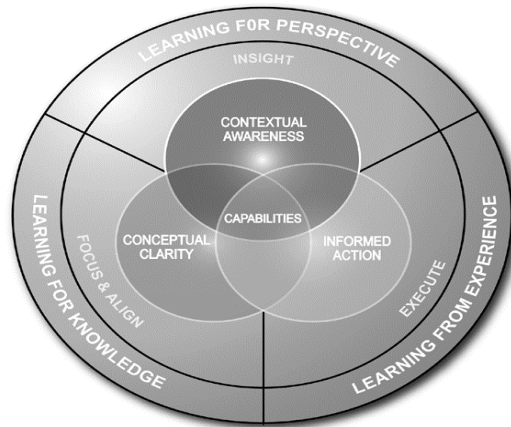
Definition of Strategic Learning Capabilities and Connections to Leveraging Diversity

Drawing on various ideas from the organizational transformation and transformative learning literature, for the purpose of this paper, strategic learning capabilities are defined "as intentional and performance driven learning linked to strategy that clearly defines the core competencies necessary for current and future organizational success. The strategic learning process involves identifying critical knowledge and skill areas needed to support organizational core competencies. Additionally, planning and accountability systems are established that ensure the new learning is embedded in the actual work and major business processes of the enterprise" (Maltbia, 2004, p. 745).

The model in Figure 1 is based on the assumption that leveraging diversity is a process of strategic learning and change intended to enhance performance and facilitate organizational renewal. Organizational renewal is the ability to continuously adapt to the external environment and respond to emerging problems, challenges and opportunities. While not the only factor, winning companies are beginning to understand that leveraging diversity can contribute greatly to creating and sustaining an adaptive enterprise. Further, executive coaching is increasingly an element of comprehensive leadership development and talent management processes in organizations. Given the role coaching plays in influencing the both the make-up and mindset of future leaders, this paper examines potential synergies between coaching practices and strategic learning capabilities believed to leverage diversity in organizations.

The model's basic components include (1) three strategic learning capabilities, (2) three related outcomes associated with each learning capability and (3) three different learning foci needed to generate the desired learning outcomes (Pietersen, 2002; Maltbia, 2004). Drawing on concepts from Jackson (1991) and Sanchez & Heen (2000), the model asserts that understanding diversity, as a form of human performance, is a function of examining the three dimensions of *context*, *content* and *conduct*. The three strategic learning capabilities for leveraging diversity respond to the "where/when/why," the "what" and the "how" of leveraging diversity. The three strategic learning capabilities are: (1) achieving and sustaining *contextual awareness* (know "why" theoretical knowledge); (2) creating *conceptual clarity* (know "what" or strategic knowledge)*; and* (3) Taking *informed action* (know "how" or practical knowledge).

Figure 1: Building Learning Capabilities to Leverage Diversity for Breakthrough Performance

Linking Strategic Learning Capabilities to the Executive Coaching Process

Contextual awareness involves scanning the external and internal business environments from multiple perspectives and is necessary in order to clearly articulate the basic rationale for leveraging diversity in a given organization; resulting in the learning outcome of deep and diverse insight. Conceptual clarity concentrates on the knowledge areas necessary to leverage diversity for enhanced performance and competitive advantage that leads to making important strategic choices about business and diversity priorities; resulting in the learning outcome of aligned and focused organizational systems and processes (i.e., measurement and reward systems, organizational structures and processes, culture and employees skill and motivation). Taking informed action involves exploring a number of action imperatives and tactics needed to develop a capacity to leverage diversity for business success; resulting in the learning outcomes of planned experimentation and learning from action. The reflective potential of learning during and from experience provides a capacity to repeat this cycle of learning for perspective, knowledge and informed action, over and over again, and can result in personal and organizational renewal and transformation.

Using the "Building Learning Capabilities to Leverage Diversity for Breakthrough Performance" model, the

authors condensed over 50 elements of data described in the selected coaching literature into 6 coaching stages. Importantly, these six stages align with the three strategic learning capabilities and explicitly integrate diversity and cultural practices into the executive coaching process (see Table 2). We agree with Thomas (2002) and believe an integrated approach to coaching "encourages executives to work hard to legitimize the value of coaching by (1) positing coaching as a necessity that is critical to organizational viability, (2) recognizing the role and impact of diversity in the coaching process by sanctioning and rewarding coaching across racial and gender lines; and (3) helping clients accept responsibility for addressing diversity in coaching relationship helping them become more comfortable with the diversity tension that can characterize relationships in which people have significant differences" (pp. 349-358).

Table 2. Executive Coaching Process Phases & Practices

Phase I: Achieving and Sustaining Contextual Awareness
Explore expectations/contracting—grounded in the process consultation tradition of action research (Burke 1994, pp. 8, 54-62), this stage of the executive coaching process focuses on (1) clarifying the presenting problem challenge or opportunity that triggered the motivation for coaching (i.e., the opening from the perspective of individual and organizational needs, which should be explored for any diversity-related implications); (2) exploring the potential "need/fit" between the situation and the coach's capabilities including cultural and diversity factors; and (3) if appropriate enrolling the client by making apparent in the coaching relationship intended outcomes of coaching including a commitment by the sponsoring organization to sanction and reward coaching across racial and gender lines to reflect the organizational, professional and geographic cultural factors embedded in the situation (Thomas, 2000; Watkins, 2003). This stage can take 1-3 sessions depending on the situation.
Assessment, Analysis & Feedback—The purpose of this stage is to collect data from multiple sources (people and business and performance related documentation) to gain a comprehensive picture of how the situation is being managed (both in terms of the strategic context and how the leader shows up in relationship with others); assessment occurs before formal coaching begins and generally includes (1) the use of formal assessment tools such as Hudson's (1999) life review or equivalent to examine background factors that shape the client's worldview, behavioral patterns, values, sense of the future and so on (Whitmore, 2002), The Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory (Hammer, 2003) to gain insight of client's style understand intercultural stress, employee surveys and cultural audit data (Maltbia, 2001) etc.; (2) interviewing key stakeholders and assessing 360 feedback, reviewing strategy and performance documents to understand both "being" and "performance" coaching opportunities; (3) analyzing the results using both organizational diagnostic and emotional/cultural competence models to identify themes and prepare feedback; and (4) having conversations to share and interpret assessment results and to reaffirm the coaching contract. This stage can take 2-6 sessions plus contact with significant others in the sponsoring organization. The desired result of this phase of coaching is learning for perspective, to expand one's awareness of both the strategic business context and how one's own leadership style contributes or impedes realization of a desired future.
Phase II: Creating Conceptual Clarity
Goal Setting—armed with enhanced contextual awareness this stage is designed to draw laser beam focus to the vital few factors that will translate talk into action in pursuit of personal and organizational objectives. The coach collaborates with the client (informed by the insights from key stakeholders) to set both performance goals (i.e., these are business results focused) and development goals (i.e., these are "being" focused, including awareness of how one responds productively to difference) that unleash personal and collective aspirations; create a climate of accountability and breakthrough performance (Hargrove, 2000). The coach helps the client to prepare to lead from the future by clarifying the results they truly desire, both in business and in relationships with others. It is a time of shifting from problem orientation to future orientation. During this phase the coach challenges, probes and confronts the client to explore possibilities outside the client's normal assumptions and safety zones (Hudson, 1999). Goal setting involving an extensive exploration of options and the intended and unintended consequences and payoffs of each; perspective taking is critical in uncovering unintended consequences of one's actions in relationship with others and across differences. Goal setting generally takes 1-2 sessions.
Development and Action Planning—once the client has a set of focused goals (performance and developmental, 2 to 3 each) then the emphasis is placed on devising plans. Given their role, executives must engage in a dual process of individual leadership development planning and action planning to enhance the performance in their area of accountability. Action plans must ensure alignment of strategy and (1) measures and rewards i.e., for diverse hires, promotions and retentions (2) structure and process

(i.e., insuring organization re-design does not have an adverse impact on diversity, and insuring equitable decision processes, etc.), (3) culture (widely shared beliefs and behaviors that increasingly need to account for diversity in experience, background and culture) and (4) people i.e., fostering intercultural competence and understanding one's personal motivation and response to diversity (Pietersen, 2002, Maltbia, 2001). The coach collaborates with the client to insure that action plans not only align with strategy, but also reflect the executives beliefs and values around diversity and how they "walk the talk" by modeling these beliefs and values. This stage generally takes 2-3 sessions to complete. The desired result of this phase of coaching is learning for knowledge, to understand the vital areas where the leader and the organization must excel to realize the aims of the desired future.

Phase III: Taking Informed Action

Executing the Plan and Continuous Coaching Support—this stage represents the majority of the coaching relationship; where the coach supports the client in taking "big steps," breaking what's missing into a few small projects or doable steps; focusing on doable steps that the client and others will act on. The coach encourages the client through conversations that use action language, i.e., What happened? What's missing? What's next? Throughout the action process the coach helps the client (1) explore how diversity is omnipresent throughout all work interactions, (2) diagnosis the diversity factors related to the steps at hand, (3) devise appropriate responses for outcomes with a positive impact on diversity, and (4) reflect on the results of such action. The coach's role is to work with the client to foster reflection in action; recognizing teachable moments, i.e., the learning potential embedded in experience, small incidents that occur while executing plans; and doing so using multiple coaching media including face-to-face, telephone, email, groupware and observation; coach helps client to continuous explore both the technical and cultural dimension of change to engage the "whole person," i.e., head, hand and heart (Dotlich & Cairo, 1999; Maltbia, 2001).

Evaluation—this stage is listed last, yet in practice evaluation starts during Phase I of the process while aligning expectations and continues throughout the entire process. At its core, evaluation of the coaching process is assessed by the degree to which a gap exists, and the size of the gap, between intentions and outcomes in terms of both business results and helping the client gain the courage needed to grow as a human. As major progress is realized it becomes time to conclude the formal relationship and begin follow-up coaching to sustain gains and prevent slippage. The termination of the formal coaching relationship requires some talk about the contract, its fulfillment or lack thereof its transmutations, feelings in general, and any unfinished business (Zeus & Sfiffington, 2002). The desired result of this phase of coaching is learning from the experience of experimentation and executing the plan, having a clear sense of progress compared to expectations and a sense expanded capacity and renewal to take continuously reinvent a collective future.

Conclusions and Implications for HRD Practice

This paper examined selected literature on executive coaching and explored diversity's impact on the process of executive coaching in organizations. Additionally, the paper grounded executive coaching in its brief historical context, reviewed the various ways coaching is defined in the literature and importantly, catalogued six guiding principles to effective practice of applied executive coaching with an emphasis on understanding diversity's impact on the process. The basic rationale for coaching was summarized and "teachable" skills needed to facilitate the coaching process were identified. Lastly, the various stages of the executive coaching process were integrated into a strategic learning model that explicitly integrates diversity and cultural factors into the process. The findings from this study provide additional insight from the perspective of diversity into this frequently utilized HRD practice. Importantly, the findings illustrate a significant gap in the literature—and more than likely a related gap in practice. What is important to note is that when diversity principles are integrated into the executive coaching process they contribute to a range of positive outcomes at the individual, group and enterprise level. These outcomes are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Potential Outcomes for Effectively Integrating A Leveraging Diversity Perspective into the Coaching Process

Leveraging Diversity: Potential Outcomes		
Individual Level	Group Level	Organizational Level
▪ Job/Career Satisfaction	▪ Cohesiveness/teamwork	▪ Attendance/Turnover Rates
▪ Engagement	▪ Communication	▪ Productivity & Quality
▪ Commitment	▪ Problem Solving	▪ Talent Pool/Resources
▪ Performance Evaluation	▪ Decision Making	▪ Diverse Market Penetration
▪ Personal Reward	▪ Creativity/Innovation	▪ Overall Effectiveness

Source: Adapted from Terrence E. Maltbia's, *The Journey of Becoming a Diversity Practitioner*, 2001 p. 41 & Taylor Cox's, Jr., Cultural Diversity In Organizations: Theory, research and practice, 1993, pp. 6-10.

As chief architects of organizational culture an executive's daily actions and decisions directly influence the climate of their company and the related outcomes. In the executive coaching relationship it is critical to continually ask the question: How are you doing?

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