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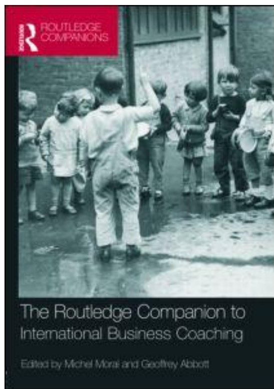

The Routledge Companion to International Business Coaching

Michel C. Moral, Geoffrey Abbott

Integral Coaching

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ROUTLEDGE COMPANIONS

The Routledge Companion to International Business Coaching

Edited by Michel Moral and Geoffrey Abbott

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2

INTEGRAL COACHING

Cultivating a cultural sensibility through executive coaching

Hilary Armstrong

> . . . but if the wind of thinking . . . has shaken you from sleep and made you fully awake and alive, then you will see that you have nothing in your grasp but perplexities, and the best we can do with them is share them with each other . . .
>
> (Hannah Arendt 1978: 175)

There has been much written about the value of coaching in the development of personal insight. This chapter proposes that insight is not enough, especially when working in global environments. What is also required is a cultural sensibility. A cultural sensibility is the mental and emotional understanding of, and response to, the influence of the tacit, essential ethical frames of meaning constructed by a culture that are expressed through social roles, race, class and gender differences. This chapter uses practice narratives to draw out aspects of a cultural sensibility and how integral executive coaching enhances it.

INTRODUCTION

Previously I have written about executive coaching as a cultural phenomenon that is fulfilling an archetypal need in work life today: that of a quiet, reflective space – a sanctuary – in which to chew the fat, be challenged in one's assumptions and asked reflective questions to get one to think differently. This proposal emerged from the results of an ongoing coaching effectiveness study conducted by the Institute of Executive Coaching, Sydney, Australia. In the study we ask coachees how they think that coaching worked to produce its benefits. Their descriptions suggest the ancient archetype of the Greek goddess Hestia. In ancient times, Hestia represented the centre of the home or city – the hearth – which was a place a visitor or family member was required to visit before doing any other business. This was seen as essential to the ongoing well-being of the city and its citizens. Thinking about coaching in this way helped us understand why 90 per cent of coachees, across the board, are highly satisfied with the coaching experience. In organizations today there are few opportunities to reflect, talk through personal issues or work together on solutions. Executive coaching then could be thought of as the 'hearth' in an

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organization – a sanctuary in which people can take time to focus on themselves and gain insight into behaviours and actions.

In this chapter, I want to shape coaching not only as a sanctuary for personal insight and behaviour change, but also as a space for the development of a cultural sensibility. With a cultural sensibility one has the flexibility to think and act in ways that demonstrate not only insight, but also 'outsight'[1] – the ability to take into account the complexity of any situation shaped as it is by power hierarchies in terms of ethnicity, gender, positional power, etc., and that the cultural narratives – roles, relationships, opinions and stories – that ensue, influence in-the-moment human interactions.

Integral coaching[2] broadens the scope of executive coaching to include outsight. It recognizes that gaining personal awareness of our individual subjectivity is only a part of the story. There are social structures and cultural narratives as well as psychological and biological processes which shape individuals' behaviour. Coaching that focuses primarily on insight, as in psychologically driven forms, is problematic especially in terms of culture. Social structures construct and mould who we are as much as our biology does. Integral coaching therefore includes a double loop of reflection; reflection on one's own psychological process and actions (insight), and outsight, reflection on social structures and roles in a situation – knowing that the latter is also shaping what is happening. It is by taking into account both aspects of lived experience that a cultural sensibility is promoted and enhanced.

A CULTURAL SENSIBILITY AND GLOBAL MANAGEMENT

In a study done by Development Dimension International (DDI) in which executives in multinational companies were interviewed about working in cross-cultural environments, researchers identified five characteristics that separated successful global executives from their less successful colleagues (Tandukar 2006). They are: intellectual grunt (analytic skills to deal with significant levels of complexity and ambiguity), emotional intelligence (the ability to reflect on our self-narratives), curiosity/openness (the drive to understand the dynamics of culture), cultural adaptation (the ability to read cultural nuances and adjust their style accordingly) and resilience (the capacity to function in often challenging environments while maintaining a consistent, positive demeanour). All these characteristics together make up to a cultural sensibility, a refined mental and emotional response to the tacit, essentially social and cultural frames of meaning that shape conduct and relationships.

What is interesting about these characteristics is that while insight and mindfulness are vital to cultivate in working in complex environments, there is a tendency in the individualism of Western cultures to presume that with well-developed personal insight and behaviour flexibility, people will operate successfully. This chapter takes the view that personal insight is important but, as this research reflects, it is only a part of the picture. Global executives need outsight – or as Arendt vividly termed a 'visiting imagination' (1978), the ability to observe and read others, and imagine stepping into their shoes. In other words to tune into the phenomenon called culture, the pervasive, yet largely tacit set of collective practices and stories that form and perpetuate individual relating and social reality. Executive coaching for global management must involve tools and skills that enable the development of outsight. This is important particularly in Western cultures where the focus of insight practices can simply feed the existing propensity for narcissism. Without including tools that will encourage outsight, executive coaches are at risk of perpetrating the very thing they are trying to influence, the ethnocentricity that prevents many individuals from being successful in global environments.

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Integral coaching, while focusing on insight, also works to recognize that this is only half the picture. Our work is to guide coachees to observe outwards, and take into account that social and cultural realities are shaping their responses. For example, one coachee talked about finding himself silenced in a global meeting when he knew the answers and solutions, because every time he offered an opinion or solution, his boss would agree and the regional chief executive officer (CEO) would throw an obstacle in his path. His goal was to present confidently, but because he was not picking up the signals of competition between his boss and the regional CEO he was unable to. Another coachee was frustrated with being surrounded by 'yes men'. His goal was to develop better interpersonal skills but he was unaware of the cultural signals of respect for the 'absolute authority' that in the particular culture, his role contained. A female member of a senior financial team was continually angry about meeting behaviours because when she put forward an opinion it was rejected, only to be later spoken by a male colleague and accepted. She was giving herself a hard time for being angry but she was not aware of the signals of a culture of sexism. These are all examples of cultural signals (whether a national culture or a local, group culture) that can place people in roles/positions/opinions that may not (or may) be helpful.

The coachees would have been able to make more informed decisions about their responses if they had been (also) alert to local cultural nuances.

CULTURE AND INTEGRAL COACHING

Culture is defined in many ways. It is made up of the myriad of everyday stories and practices embedded in shared values and experiences of any group, big or small. We live it, we contribute to it, we shape it and it shapes who we are, how we relate and how we live. At a simple level it is a system of shared symbols, values and practices that shape lived experience and give it meaning and identity. Culture is pervasive – it does not only operate across national boundaries. There are transnational cultures and national cultures, and also regional cultures, local cultures, workplace cultures, family cultures, group cultures and many more, making culture an ever-present influence at all levels of lived experience.

Integral coaching takes a 'storied' view of culture,[3] i.e., that in the life of communities, organizations and groups there are 'stories' – patterns of lived experience that are passed along as we interrelate. These patterns are viewed as cultural narratives that emerge, produce and grow to keep alive a group's collective structure and identity. They convey shared meaning in a variety of ways. There are symbolic stories (such as about a company brand, a national flag, or a mascot), myths (narrated stories that are passed through organizations (the 'good old days')), hero stories (as in the Hestia archetype mentioned earlier), everyday conversation such as work-place gossip (the juicy stories shared around the water-cooler), ritualized practices ('the way we do things around here') such as the manner in which birthdays are celebrated, meeting and greeting habits or the conventions around recognition effort. The stories are always held together by implicit shared values – a collective and tacit preference or inclination for what is considered by the group, organization, family or nation as worthy.

Cultural stories shape our daily interactions with each other. They are always present, largely imperceptible inhabiting the space between the individual and the social organization. Different cultural stories lead to differently cultivated behaviours and we notice their influence only if something interrupts our usual patterns of relating, disturbing us with its difference (e.g., visiting unfamiliar cultures, or a job in a new organization alerts us to this process as we begin to notice difference and make comparisons with our habitual ways of relating). Unless we can

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notice, be curious about the difference and open to its worthiness (it has worked for others) as well as take it into account in our reactions and responses, we will be unable to build dialogue and effective working relationships.

People with a cultural sensibility are aware that culture is an invisible shaper of relationships. They have self-understanding (insight). They also have outsight in that they observe and notice difference because they are curious and they do not judge it immediately as inferior/superior. They are open and engaged. They value dialogue (in the sense of keeping the communication channels open) as the most important task and have the courage to keep trying new behaviours and resilience and make mistakes to enable this.

The following case studies describe the different aspects of a cultural sensibility. The first one relates the story of a newly appointed global executive who struggled to develop a cultural sensibility; the second, the story of different personal reactions to cultural pressure; and the last, the story of a global executive who successfully found the middle ground in his adaptation to a different culture.

A senior executive working in a multinational company was told that some of his virtual team members and customers had complained to his immediate superior on exit interviews that he was a micromanager and that he did not understand the business. They gave this as the reason why they were leaving. The executive was a self-involved and anxious man on his first global assignment. The culture he was promoting in his new job was process-driven and highly conventional, a style that was also manifest in his relationships. His worldview was that correct processes and procedures were all that was required in management. He worked hard to enforce this focus and neglected anything that was less pragmatic (soft skills), believing them unnecessary. He pushed hard when someone opposed him and was considered a bully by his reports. He took no responsibility for mistakes, believing them to be due to inadequate processes or people not following process.

While there had been a lot of rumbling in the company about his behaviours, it was not until a large customer bluntly refused to deal with him on one of his trips overseas that the organization took action. The CEO recommended executive coaching with a view to its assisting this person to improve his relationships with his teams and customers in other countries. The executive took the suggestion of coaching as an example of lack of support and people out to ‘get him’.

After a three-way meeting between the CEO, coach and coachee, coaching began with the coach eliciting the coachee’s version of the story. As the coachee told the story there was no sign that he was taking any responsibility for any of the problems. The exploration of the coachee’s actions and the approach he was taking was elicited through a reflection about his role, its global context and all the ‘external’ factors that influenced it. This provided the coach with the background (through the coachee’s self-narrative) and the opportunity to build trust through demonstrating active listening and empathy. As the coachee relaxed he began to open up about the anxiety which led to his micromanagement – which he also continued to justify on the grounds that he had no effective staff. Over subsequent sessions, with careful questioning and patience from the coach, the coachee began to develop some awareness, and relationships with his team at home improved somewhat. However, his relationships with his overseas teams deteriorated.

The coachee’s blind spot was his ethnocentricity. He maintained throughout coaching that his role with his overseas reports was to enforce the Western standards of the company and he would countenance no other way (because all other ways to him were inefficient, time-wasting and unethical). He was adamant that his overseas reports do things his way even though budgets and targets were healthy. The coachee talked about his overseas staff as though they were ‘naughty children’ whose behaviour needed correcting. His belief in the superiority of his Western identity and his own self-importance remained unshaken. This

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> affected his ability to think beyond simple ideas of right and wrong, black and white, reducing his ability to deal with the complexity required to work in global environments. Although he had gained some degree of insight, he had hit a wall. He lacked the ability to recognize the necessity of understanding the 'other' and walking in their shoes in order to understand their world – in other words, 'outsight', and therefore a cultural sensibility.

The central character of this story is not unusual. He is taking a stance that is prevalent in Western organizations. People who rise to the top are often egocentric (self-superiority) and this feeds ethnocentricity (cultural superiority). His egocentricity was demonstrated in his self-centred belief that his way was the best – if not the only way. His changes through coaching were minimal, and by recognizing that anxiety was his main driver he was able to see that others were capable of doing things and if the outcomes were successful how they did it was less important. He also began to practise small changes, greetings, leaving his door open for easier access, asking for more regular updates, delegating. But this only worked with people who worked closely with him – and my sense was that they had learnt to manage his anxiety as well. When it came to his virtual teams, his mindset was intractable. He was capable of some insight, but he lacked a cultural sensibility: i.e., he could not think beyond his own ethnocentricity.

When working with people operating in global environments, executive coaching must address ethnocentricity (something not exclusive to the West but endemic). Added to this is the egocentricity that is common in Western senior executives and this goes hand in hand with ethnocentricity – people regarding their own culture (as well as themselves) as superior. This superiority is expressed in the belief that any processes and procedures that work 'at home' are necessary in other cultural contexts to upgrade the perceived inferiority. Ethnocentric managers, like the executive above, cultivate an attitude of entitlement. With this they fail to notice 'difference' or recognize that diversity of any form is essential to the enrichment and survival of systems and species. 'Others' are simply a warped version of themselves and their entitlement gives them the right to correct them. Furthermore, the more self-centred a person is, the more likely they are to revert to simplistic 'us/them', linear, 'black and white' thinking and this polarizes people and foments hatred, 'isms' and divisions.

Our coaching was successful to the extent that the coachee's negative self-talk reduced and he modified his management style. But coaching also had a limit – the manager's ethno-centricity. If he had expressed curiosity about his team members' behaviours, about the CEO's feedback, about why a customer would not deal with him, about his own cultural embeddedness and difference (rather than assuming superiority) he may have been able to conduct himself differently. Instead he was irritated by the coach's curiosity about these things. His ethno-centricity (along with other things of course) got in the way.

In our experience, many coaches are not trained in recognizing how power structures social reality through hierarchies of culture, type of work, class, age, gender, roles and responsibilities. Yet, in coaching, issues that reflect these dynamics are often present: the inability to influence colleagues or teams in other areas, the demonization of different departments, such as risk and compliance, the view of top management, of people on the shop floor. Stereotyping is every-where and what produces it is an informal pecking order of class, gender, work styles and work content, which makes up the culture of a group. Integral coaching emphasizes this aspect of coaching practice as vital because it is always present, whether it is across national boundaries or particular workplace cultures.

The next scenario illustrates the effects of different organizational cultures, and the way different people respond. In this example, the process of outsight brought personal insights that changed the situation as well as the person.

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A highly accomplished senior academic and researcher with an international reputation accepted a role of associate director (AD) in a government department to head and assist with policy in her field of research. Within three months, she was asked to accept coaching because the 'cultural' fit between her and the organization was not good – which on briefing seemed a euphemism for her lack of people management skills and the dissatisfaction of her team and others in the department. The stakes were high. Unless she 'changed her ways', her contract would be dissolved. She was shocked and surprised when told her contract might not be renewed.

The AD (coachee) was oblivious to culture and its effects. She was familiar with achievement-oriented, autonomous university environments. In these, academic freedom is vital, and, although always reconciled against broader university goals, opinions can be at odds with them. In government and corporate environments this freedom of speech is less encouraged, especially if it is at odds politically or culturally. At a systemic level the AD was excellent in terms of political and cultural savvy, but in terms of the department and her team, savvy was not present.

With her team she was curious and then annoyed at the seeming lack of cooperation. She challenged them and was ignored – people kept doing what they had always done, and she was kept out of the loop. Her frustration grew. She counteracted by ascertaining that one of her staff was inadequate for the job and two others were engaged in a competitive relationship that was not productive. Being used to academic environments that were based on merit and autonomy, she thought directness was the best policy. She therefore told the team her problems with them in no uncertain terms and she laid down her new expectations. The reaction was immediate. One woman went straight to the chief policy officer and the director and complained. The others were less obvious and began covertly working against her more. There was a stalemate. She was stunned therefore to be informed that her presence was causing difficulties and people were demanding her resignation.

Culturally the department was a very different place from the university and it was staffed by people who had worked together in different areas in the public service for many years. In addition, there was a political appointment on the AD's team and a sensitive one in terms of the survival of the department. Two other team members were engaged in a sort of sibling rivalry and when something went wrong they reported it to another senior woman. The coach asked what a metaphor for the culture might be. The AD immediately said a 'family'. When the AD was questioned further she recognized that there was a local 'mother' and 'father' – the father with the positional power and the mother with the informal power. Anything that occurred, any decisions that were made, any complaints, gossip, outputs were put through the department head and his informal deputy – the local mother and father. She was an outsider who did not fit.

When faced with cultural perplexity people respond differently and in many cases a usually empowered person can quickly become frustrated and depressed. The reaction leads to more rudimentary communication styles and this amplifies the negativity, leading to a vicious cycle in which differences are amplified out of proportion and perpetuate the story (early coaching was filled with stories of complaint and protest). In this case the AD moved to the safety of task orientation and rationality (she decided to keep her head down and just do the job and forget about the team). Sadly, in the face of cultural perplexity such responses as this are counterproductive. When people miss or misread cultural symbols, the ability to relate to others becomes even more important. If, as the AD did, one becomes more introverted and isolated, the problems tend to amplify. In the AD's case there was even difficulty in everyday meeting and greeting (she dreaded going to work) and the responses from her team did not help.

> Much of the early coaching sessions were aimed at the development of relationality. The first steps began with her curiosity about the 'family culture'. This led to an inquiry into how the local culture developed historically from certain events that were built into the fabric of its interactions. She found a number of people in other parts of the department who were friendly and she was able to build confidence. Talking with her new friends, she realized there was an existing joke about the department as a family. She began to look at the role she was playing within it and she reflected that it mirrored the role she had taken up in her family. This was the pivotal moment for her, as the understanding gave her choices as to when (and whether or not) she would adopt this role.
>
> She then tackled her main relationship challenges. She forced herself to be less isolated. A good opportunity came to test this when one day the department head requested that she, the AD, 'loosen up' at work. She managed to hide her distress at the comment and asked what he meant. He suggested she chat more and perhaps have a social drink after work with him and others. She was able to recognize her seriousness as part of her family story. Although, in the face of this comment, she found 'loosening up' extremely difficult, she showed enormous courage to adapt and join others socially through project work, social events and conference visits. Her other challenge, the Department 'mother', remained a challenge in every way. After several failed attempts, after our coaching she took on the task of asking a trusted colleague how he managed 'mother'. He was very helpful, first normalizing the AD's difficulties (he and others had similar experiences of the 'mother') then sharing with her his strategies of how he bypassed this person.
>
> Over the year she was coached, her situation markedly improved and there was no question about renewal of contracts.

Executive coaching in this case was about encouraging insight and behaviours, but this process was meaningful for the coachee only when outsight was encouraged. Outsight provided the awareness of what symbolically was sculpting the relationships in the environment and once she recognized this she was able to choose and adapt with awareness. Any situation that we enter has a history of action and events which have built up its culture and we cannot ignore this history. Understanding this belongs to a cultural sensibility.

Culture needs always to be taken into account. Any organization, by its very nature, is conflictual as it is arranged both by a formal hierarchy that shapes communication and an informal set of networks that aim to level people through open conversations and affiliations. Different cultures lie at different points along a continuum between these two sets of relationships. With a cultural sensibility a new appointee bides their time and observes the informal networks. Often people think in generic terms when it comes to culture, but what is really required is awareness of one's own perplexity in the face of cultural difference, because once one can pick this up, relevant response is possible.

My last scenario is a success story about a cultural sensibility in a global environment.

> A newly appointed CEO in a takeover of an offshore manufacturing company decided to begin his term by introducing the management practices that had made him successful in Australia. One of these practices was to hold relatively short, action-oriented Monday morning meetings with his direct reports. He saw this as a necessary catch-up at the beginning of a week to energize his people and to plan and strategize decisions for the week ahead. He was an experienced leader and enjoyed different environments, and he was quickly accepted by his staff. He considered himself sensitive to cultural difference, and after several rather brief, too efficient, Monday mornings, he began to notice a pattern of conduct that aroused his curiosity. Each Monday he and his direct reports gathered, chatted, and then got down to business and agreed with everything he said. At first he found this fine, but then he began to realize that there was no dialogue or discussion. His frustration was further amplified

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because, after each meeting, the rest of his morning was spent with his team, one at a time, filing in and out of his office to tell him what they really thought. He was finding this time-consuming. Nothing helped and finally his increasing frustration and bewilderment led him to engage an executive coach.

In coaching he presented his problem as a behavioural issue on the part of his direct reports that needed 'fixing' and he wanted advice on how to do this. The coach resisted, and, using externalizing questions, assisted him to use outsight. He began to realize that external factors might also be shaping the interactions. As part of this he examined his assumptions and the cultural narrative and values that were driving them. Through the process of 'other-oriented' questions he developed a 'visiting' imagination, placed himself in the shoes of his direct reports and then imagined, from his knowledge of the culture, what assumptions and cultural values they might be bringing to the meeting. In the course of this process, he began to recognize that his role as CEO might be differently perceived by his team. With this new understanding, he tried new ways of meeting. Initially he shortened his meetings to 15 minutes and then put aside the rest of the meeting time for 'post-meeting' meetings. Everybody was very happy with this arrangement.

If we interpret this story through a narrative view of culture we can see the CEO's cultural narrative is different from his team's. Their narrative regards his role as supreme authority who should not be challenged in public (respect him so he does not lose face). This was a different cultural narrative from the CEO's and from these different narratives, different sets of values and behaviours were being expressed. Neither narrative is superior, they are simply different.

The CEO expressed a cultural sensibility. He was open and curious about the behaviours and, with questioning, reflected on it objectively. He developed a keen ability to observe what was going on, to read the signs and symbols around him, to sometimes name them, and at others to work them out and strategize around them. He moved away from being ethnocentric to outsight and to the enjoyment and acknowledgement of difference.

THE PRACTICE – INTEGRAL EXECUTIVE COACHING FRAMEWORK

The Institute has shaped its training and practice in executive coaching to reflect an integrated and holistic approach that addresses the 'whole' person within a context. This means taking into account that people both influence and are influenced by personal, organizational, social and cultural demands. Integral coaching is a transformational process that regards the coachee as a participant in a whole system that includes the culture, systems and social context of their situation. There are three domains of coaching outcomes identified as leading to sustained change: the intrapersonal, interpersonal and instrumental domains. Cumulatively the three domains of integration incorporate outcomes for the person and the organization (see Figure 2.1).

In integral coaching the mindset is one in which human beings 'story' the world and through self- and collective narratives construct and contour it. Coaching therefore must examine the ways that people structure their worldview. The ability of outsight requires ways of thinking that enable us to imagine we can stand outside ourselves and witness our actions and behaviours. To do this, integral coaching employs an 'externalizing' conversation.

People are not problems, problems are problems, and people get captured by them, as the social constructionist maxim says. The statement means that although problems or obstacles exist, it is the way of thinking or construct that we employ to approach the problem that is the important thing. If we can think of the problem as an object which can be thought about in a

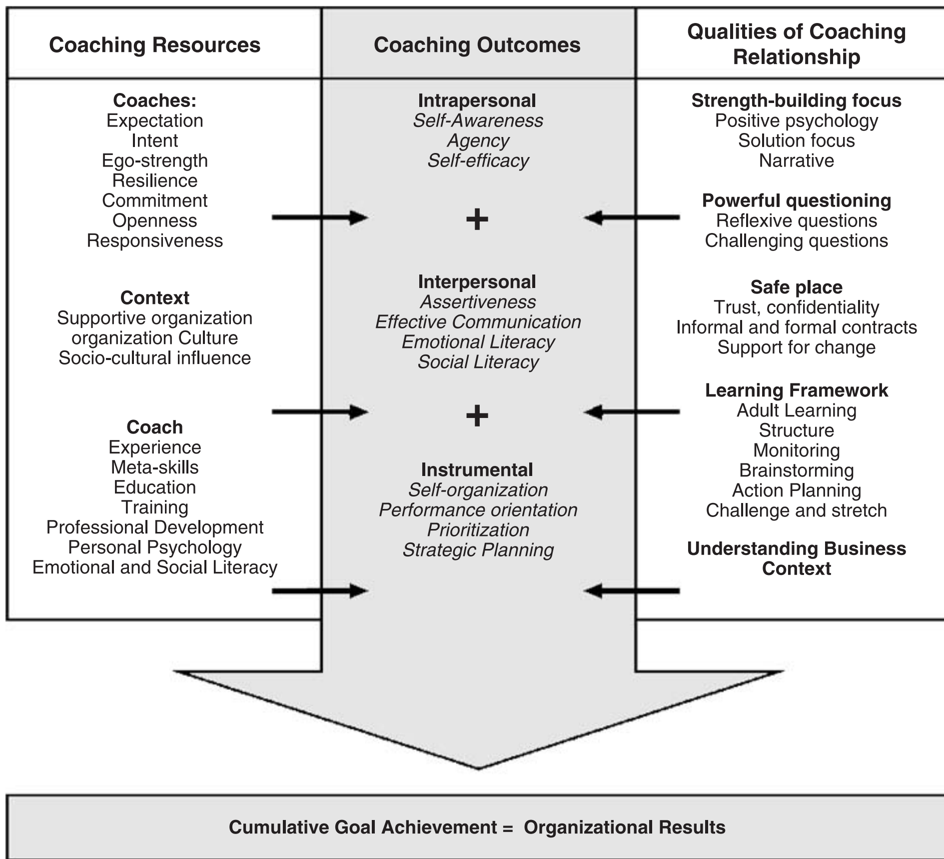

Figure 2.1 Coaching outcomes

variety of ways, we have externalized it. By externalizing it we can then examine and begin to understand how our thinking is getting in the way. The coach employs externalizing questions to draw out storylines that are shaping a person's acting and thinking and, in a collaborative dialogue, the coach and coachee ascertain the different storylines and listen for the preferred ones (those that fit a person's goals). Integral coaching therefore is solution-focused, valuing and giving more airtime to more helpful and proactive patterns of thinking and action.

People live multi-storied lives. Stories are never coherent or complete and there are myriads of them. We get drawn into some and not others. Sometimes this is helpful and at other times it is not. However, there are always snippets and echoes of other narratives present and the role of the coach is to listen for what does not fit the existing cognitive frameworks – news of difference. In all problem stories there are exceptions to the storyline and these often provide the seed of the solution. An integral coach listens for the exceptions and uses them as the springboard for new stories, actions and outcomes.

In the final scenario the CEO realized his implicit and dominant self-narrative was ethno-centric and he had been blind to the cultural nuances that were also present. He lacked outsight. With the use of reflexive questions, he started thinking in terms of outsight and he realized very quickly that taking it personally was an unhelpful storyline in his present circumstances. His actions changed and he and his team found a middle ground in which all were satisfied.

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In the second scenario, once the coachee recognized that the department was a different culture, she was able to free herself from her self-blame to the extent that she strategized different ways to fit in and she was able to make more choices about how she responded and acted.

A powerful questioning method that elicits outsight is the use of other-directed questions (Epston 1993). Examples are: 'If you gave me some advice in this situation, what would it be?' or 'What would your colleague have said about that?' The CEO was asked: 'If you were in your team's shoes and had grown up in their culture, how might you be thinking, acting?' He was open to the question and employed a 'visiting imagination' (Arendt 1978) to answer it. The coachee in the first scenario, on the other hand, when asked other-directed questions struggled and replied: 'Because I am not the other person I would not have a clue, and anyway anything I say is me saying it and I cannot speak for another!' Unfortunately he was speaking and doing for the others most of his time and that is what they were objecting to!

So how does one develop or teach outsight? Below (Figure 2.2) is a four-quadrant landscape adapted from Wilbur (1996, 2000) which maps a selection of questions to elicit insight and outsight.

In conclusion, this chapter has explicated a cultural sensibility as an important meta-skill for global executives. Executive coaches in global environments therefore need to be aware of it. It has been drawn out as a process of insight and outsight, the ability to observe, read and understand the significance of social and cultural influences on human interaction. My purpose for doing it is to try and understand more fully the characteristics that the DDI research

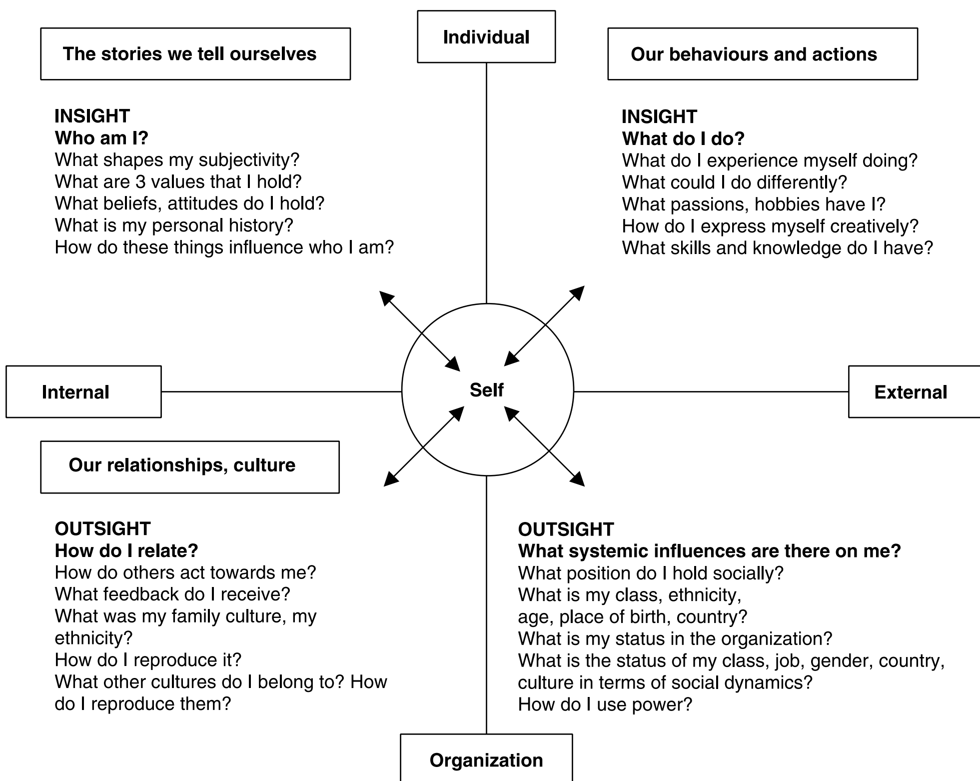

Figure 2.2 Mapping the reflexive process

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identifies as being important for working in the current global markets. As an executive coach the concept of a cultural sensibility belongs to an ethical stance about our work. Unless the rampant ethnocentricity and egotism of many powerful individuals is challenged and new models of being and relating encouraged, dialogue between peoples will not be possible and in a global world this would be a recipe for disaster. We, as a profession, have a responsibility to be aware and open to not only internal influences on behaviour but also how the social realities we all dwell in, and perpetuate, are important creators of our beings in the world.

Notes

1 'Outsight' is not in the dictionary. I first heard it used by David Epston, a narrative therapist from Auckland, New Zealand during a conversation.

2 Within the field of executive and business coaching there are different approaches and emphases. Some organizations and clients focus specifically on tools and skills directly related to work task performance and coaching is viewed as an individual development process achieved through a semi-prescriptive program of skills or behaviour development. The Institute has shaped its training and practice in executive coaching to reflect an integrated approach that addresses the whole person within a context. Using Wilber's (1996, 2000) Integral Model as a landscape for the coaching process, the Institute takes into account that people both influence and are influenced by personal, organizational, social and cultural demands. Executive coaching, for the Institute, is a transformational process that regards the coachee as an actor in a whole system that includes the culture, systems and social context of their situation.

The IEC coaching framework identifies three domains of outcomes/cumulative goal realization from coaching; the intrapersonal, interpersonal and instrumental domains. These outcomes are shaped by factors that include resource factors brought to the coaching, including factors requiring 'outsight' for the development of cultural sensibility, as well as relationship quality factors, which cumulatively produce outcomes. The outcomes/goal realizations are not cumulative in a linear sense but build on each other, often in a circular fashion to produce outcomes (see Figure 2.2).

3 There is a considerable tradition of narrative psychology, sparked by people like Jerome Bruner (1986), and taken into practice by the narrative therapy practice of Michael White (1992) and David Epston (White and Epston, 1992). Information about this tradition is readily available on the web, e.g., the Virtual Faculty at Massey University in New Zealand and the Dulwich Centre, Adelaide.

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