The Alliance
COACHING WITH IMPACT

Continuing Professional Development and Supervision in The Alliance

Business / executive coaching is a rapidly developing field, influenced by the changing requirements of increasingly sophisticated clients and organisations, and research in areas such as psychology, sports and neuroscience. It is essential for professional coaches to continue their development and monitor their coaching practice in order to ensure quality, responsiveness and value for individual / team clients and for their sponsoring organisations.

Continuing professional development is vital for coaches to stay abreast of emergent thinking across a broad range of disciplines and information sources, and to explore the relevance and applicability to coaching approaches. In addition *CPD* provides a wealth of resources for further exploration with and by individual and organisation clients, where appropriate and relevant to the Alliance work.

In The Alliance we develop our learning together, as well as individually, and our differences of background, experience and personal characteristics promote a lively and diverse discussion often leading to innovative approaches. We develop through:

- a learning zone at each of our monthly meetings where we share and discuss specific learning that has inspired or stimulated us
- attendance at *CPD* events including conferences, coaching fishbowls, master classes, expert-led workshops, particularly those provided by Meyler Campbell (all Alliance coaches have completed the Meyler Campbell Business Coach Programme® – see http://www.meylercampbell.com/programmes/businesscoach.html)
- participation in external workshops provided by organisations in specific skill areas (eg MBTI® workshops from OPP, Realise2® workshops from CAPP)
- reading and sharing learning highlights from a vast range of coaching- and business-related publications (eg books, websites, *Coaching at Work, The Coaching Psychologist, Harvard Business Review,* TED Talks and other videos)
- our monthly meetings themselves used to experience different approaches and physical settings, followed by reflection and learning.

Supervision[1] is the oversight of the work of coaches (individual and groups), designed to ensure that the work is within ethical boundaries and follows current best practice, and to promote reflection, challenge and development. It is for the benefit of clients and for the coach's / coaches' learning.

At The Alliance, we have adapted therapeutic supervision approaches to be relevant and dynamic in the coaching setting. Our *supervision* focus is on the three components of any business coaching relationship: the coach, the coaching client, the organisation sponsoring the coaching, along with the relationships among and between them. Our aim is to ensure that:

- the coach is able to reflect, develop and grow by exploring their approach, thinking and feeling about the work with the client, and testing other options or alternative tools for supporting and challenging the client
- the client receives effective coaching and contracted boundaries are respected or renegotiated, with any issues addressed quickly, appropriately and early in the relationship
- the sponsoring organisation receives value for the investment, is appropriately informed about the progress of the coaching, is able to influence the direction and outcome of the coaching, and gains insights about their organisation (within appropriate confidentiality, and where there are multiple coaching assignments with multiple coaches, as trusted partners we are able to share themes about the organisation's culture, strengths and challenges)
- we continue to test our beliefs, processes and tools about coaching-led work.

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[1] This practice has developed from supervision in the therapeutic sector, and is often constructed on similar models. The focus of therapeutic supervision is on quality and client protection as well as the development of the therapist. Most coaching supervision training currently uses models from therapeutic supervision. As the coaching profession develops and refines, supervision definitions and approaches are under exploration.

The approaches we use for *supervision* include:

- a standing item for peer supervision in our monthly meetings when one of our members presents a case and a question, all other members contribute their views / alternative approaches, the individual reflects on learning, and the full Alliance group reflects on general learning and applicability elsewhere
- quarterly supervision sessions (half- to one-day) with skilled, qualified supervisors and experts in an area of interest (eg Gestalt, Thinking Environment®)
- oversight / supervision of coaches by the designated Relationship Manager(s) at the start / middle / end of individual coaching assignments and on an agreed basis for group work, where there are multiple assignments within a broad organisation relationship
- one-to-one and small-group peer supervision sessions with other Alliance members
- individual supervision with external supervisors
- specific supervision-related items in our learning zones (see above).

(*A note about quality and experience:*
Our coaches have significant coaching and business experience: half of our members have been active coaches for more than 10 years; many have held board-level positions in their business careers and / or currently serve as NEDs in business organisations and charities; four of our eight members are Faculty members for the Meyler Campbell Business Coach Programme®, where the tutor role includes regular supervision of individuals learning to be coaches and completing practice coaching assignments.)

This document has been produced by The Alliance, a group of experienced coaches. Additional guides, support materials and case studies are available on our website. For further information contact *info@alliancecoaching.co.uk* or call 020 7794 5841 (*www.alliancecoaching.co.uk*).