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“Making a Difference in a World of Differences”

“Balanced Coaching – the mixture is the key for success”

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“Making a Difference in a World of Differences”

“Balanced Coaching – the mixture is the key for success”

What makes Balanced Coaching so special, why does it make a difference in a world of differences?

1. Introduction or how the idea of *mixture* came about

One evening, about three years ago, after a long day at work during which I had successfully completed one particular coaching assignment, I was sitting at home on my balcony with a glass of wine.

I should have been content, the 10 unit coaching process with my client, as the evaluation discussion had shown, had been successfully brought to a close.

The original goals had been achieved, the client had gained new ideas, new options for action and, above all, new courage.

The key objective had been for professional reorientation after an unpleasant settlement arrangement, with the previous employer, for which the client had been a senior executive. He had also been affected by the merging of businesses, restructuring, and reduction of personnel.

But three months later, he had new perspectives and also some fresh, encouraging experiences.

What was wrong? My inner voice told me that some elements were missing.

I already knew my client from previous professional encounters, and viewed him as an analytical and focused person, very much goal orientated, but with little awareness of personal emotions, be it his own or that of others.

So while on the surface the coaching seemed to have been completed successfully, I did not feel comfortable that all the issues underneath the surface had been dealt with.

One could argue that these kind of unmentioned and unconscious issues should be considered and dealt with during the first phase of the coaching process. This vital phase is usually defined as “Contracting”, during which coach and coachee very specifically clarify the issues and goals of the process.

I would agree, it is just that senior executive types are often in strong command of their emotional appearance. Due to the nature of their position, they have come to adopt a rigorous “poker face” attitude as part of a survival strategy.

Furthermore, even if an issue has arisen during Contracting, it is very well possible that this has not been viewed as a priority by the client, and thus this issue would effectively be sidelined, or even disregarded.

In this case, there had been no clues whatsoever as to any further issues not included in the formulation “professional evaluation and reorientation”.

Let us go back to the matter at hand and the issue of the balanced mixture of various possible components of a coaching process.

I introduced you to a concrete situation early on because it has been a key experience in my professional coaching career.

Ever since, I have found myself dealing with the question of how to find the right balance when coaching senior executives, or more specifically, of how to enable the coachee to find the right balance in their life.

Because again and again I have come to realize that managers, who have very demanding and complex tasks and bear a lot of responsibility, put little emphasis on other important areas in their life. Thus imbalances are created with possibly hazardous long-term consequences.

Certainly not every issue needs, and can successfully be dealt with through, coaching. Any one of us will have phases which are characterized by intensive juggling between professional, private and family life, and a struggle to ensure bodily comfort and health through hobbies, friendships and other purposeful activities.

It is a question of how long and extensive the particular imbalance is with which I burden myself or my surroundings, and of the possible consequences which can arise from it.

From personal experience, I would say that no more than 10% of top managers are in brilliant command of their “work-life balance“. Surprisingly or not, it is often these 10% of managers who distinguish themselves through extraordinary leadership qualities in the various disciplines.

To illustrate this point, let me complete the practical example from above.

The following day, I contacted my client and let him know of my perceptions of the situation. In case that my feelings were right, I offered further support.

Soon the telephone rang and it turned out that the underlying coaching need was a lot more than expected.

The client’s marriage was destroyed. His partner had had an affair – with his former business partner and until then his best friend - and wanted a divorce. The children wanted to stay with the father but looking after them would be difficult.

And this was just the beginning. Over the next few months more issues would be added to the list.

I continued coaching this client where coaching was the suitable means of intervention. Simultaneously the couple sought counseling, individually as well as together, and psychological support was given to the children.

I can say that my client is very well now and that the professional reorientation proved successful. Though the divorce has gone through, the parents manage to look after the children responsibly.

Back to the main question:

Stimulated by the described scenario, I started to work on how the issues “comprehensiveness versus balance“ can be integrated into the coaching process in an ideal way. More specifically, how coach and coachee can comprehensively address and articulate the various aspects of work-life balance during Contracting to ensure the coachees long- term satisfaction.

This is how I formulated the first concept of “balanced coaching”.

2. Coaching fundamentals. Why coaching at all?

Coaching enables the coachee to have a change of perspective. It helps to see through the fog of a complex personal situation. It helps to identify essentials and arrive at suitable solutions. The coach accompanies and guides the coachee through a professional/ personal learning and development process for a certain period of time.

One will work on complexities, recognize patterns, develop profiles, reduce or build up tension, stimulate resonance and formulate new beliefs.

Coaching helps to deal with fears and power struggles, to release blockades, get rid of misconceptions or transform a lack of courage into an ability to act.

How can a coach be helpful?

It is my philosophy of coaching to support the coachee in the process of finding his or her own solutions, and to design that process but not to dictate a, or *the*, solution.

This means that the coach offers support with methodical competence and emotional insight, but not with “good recommendations”.

This is because the clients’ ability to act is to be preserved. They are usually highly competent people, who need to reflect on their situation, and be given independent support in structuring the complexity of the issues at hand, themselves.

They do not have a lack of competence and need parental advice!

If you arrive at your own answers, you are more likely to be able to put them into practice, than if these have been dictated to you.

3. Who needs coaching, what is the history and the philosophy?

From my point of view, coaching makes sense in the business context, and here for “the best of the best”. It is not for those whose performance fails to meet the employers’ requirements.

The roots of coaching lie in sports, but it has become an established means of performance improvement in the world of business.

Essentially, top sportsmen or teams seek coaching in order to develop aspects of already high-standard performances.

The coach must not be mistaken for a trainer, who is specialized in a particular field and trains the individual, or team, giving clear direction, demanding commitment, pushing for high personal engagement and enforcing sanctions in case of unfulfilled standards.

Again: The coach, on the contrary, designs a process that enables the client to work towards, and arrive at, a solution himself.

4. Business Coaching. Why, and how, does it make a difference?

I see coaching as useful in the business context, as long as it is not designed to impose knowledge, since top managers are in command of the subject themselves. They do not need the x-th trainer or consultant who wants to enthuse the market with the latest wisdoms.

Real support in the business context means coaching as a means of reflection, with the goal of the client helping himself.

By asking the right questions, mirroring and feeding back impressions, creating hypotheses, and through methodical structuring, he supports the client in his analysis of personal or organizational structures, as well as arriving at solutions for these.

Furthermore, it is to be considered who is specifically suitable for coaching in the business context. Who is the one, with broadened views and realizations, that can make a real difference?!

I do not mean to say that good coaching can not help everyone, personally or professionally . But the more complex an organization the more important the keys the manager can use, and the bigger the influence he has.

The more balanced and in unison a manager is with the different areas of his life, the more effective he can be.

5. The use of coaching. How can coaching success be measured?

For years it has been tried to determine the benefit of coaching, which is difficult in this discipline because you work with opinions, feelings, beliefs and attitudes that change all the time, and it is difficult to find the right measurement criteria.

Still, success will show in various forms of behavior changes, such as confident appearance, friendly attitude, improved ability to communicate, assertiveness and focus.

So, it is important to/that

- evaluate the process based on the goals agreed during Contracting
- agree on criteria that are as precise as possible
- perceive changes which are observable
- changes have direct financial consequences.

As part of an extensive research and study in Germany, research results from the European Coaching and Consulting scene were compiled in U. Bönings' book "Coaching für das Business". There were asked personnel manager and personnel development manager from 70 companies. 31 of them belong to the financially strongest companies in Germany, 11 of them are DAX-companies and nearly half of them have more than 10.000 employees.

There were also 50 coaches asked about their experience of the current coaching status, need and evaluation. All of them are certified coaches from the Ch. Rauen institution of qualified coaches. 40% of them work already 10 years or more as a coach, another 54% already for 5 years.

Over 30 pages U. Böhning has analysed how benefits and successes of coaching can be measured.

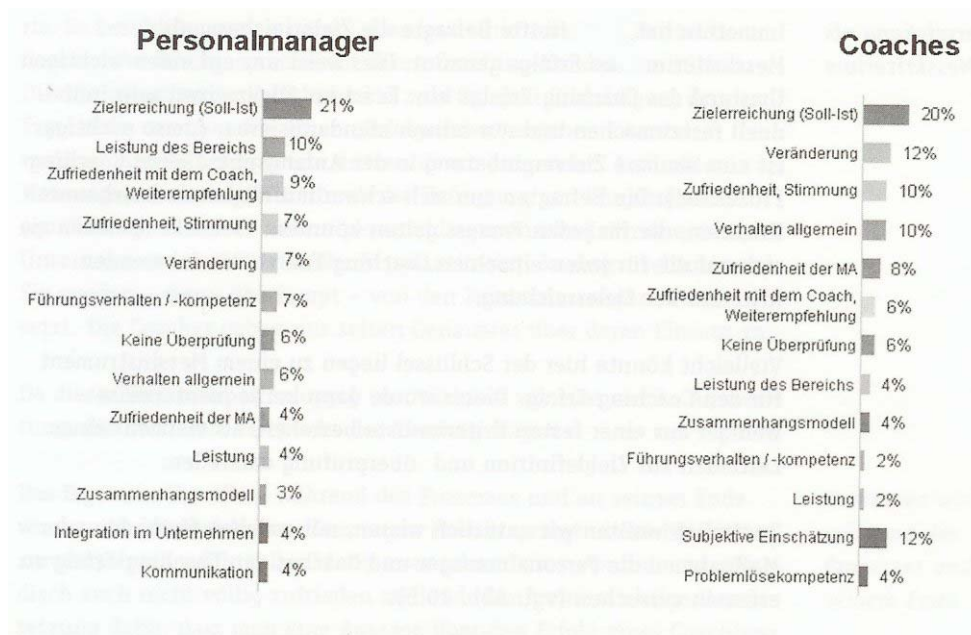


Abb. 10.4: Messvariablen des Coaching-Erfolgs, BC 2004

Reference: Coaching fürs Business, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005

56% of the companies, 84% of the coaches say, that they measure the success of coaching. Above there are shown the concrete criteria.

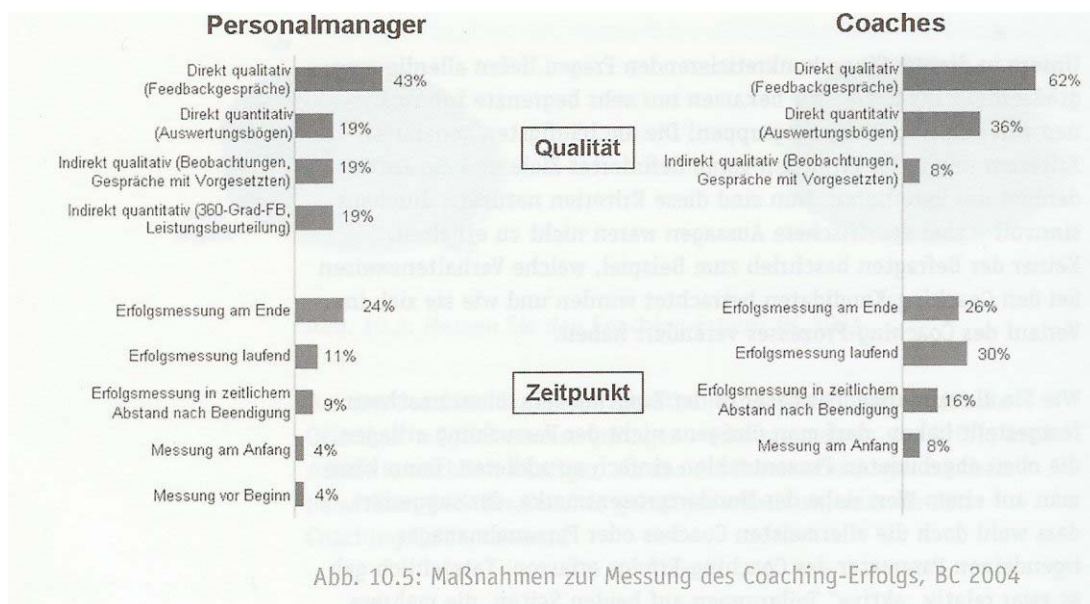


Abb. 10.5: Maßnahmen zur Messung des Coaching-Erfolgs, BC 2004

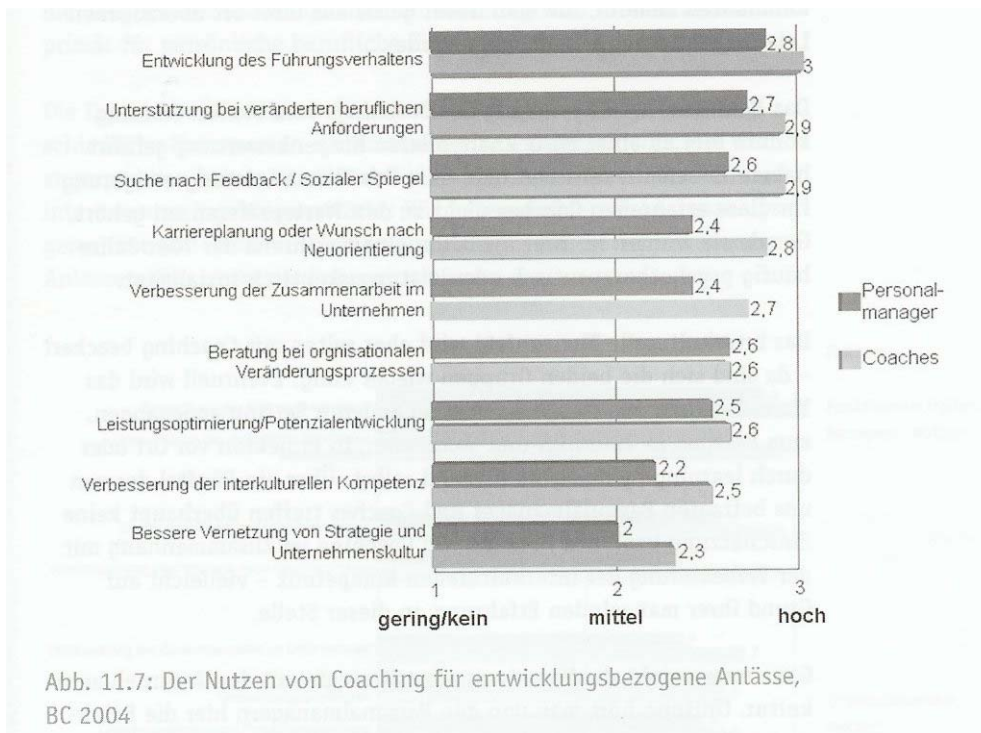
Reference: Coaching fürs Business, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005

In this graphic are shown the measures/ actions, how and when to measure the success of the coaching. It is to see that feedback discussions are still the most used measures, sometimes connected with others and at different times within and at the end of the coaching process.



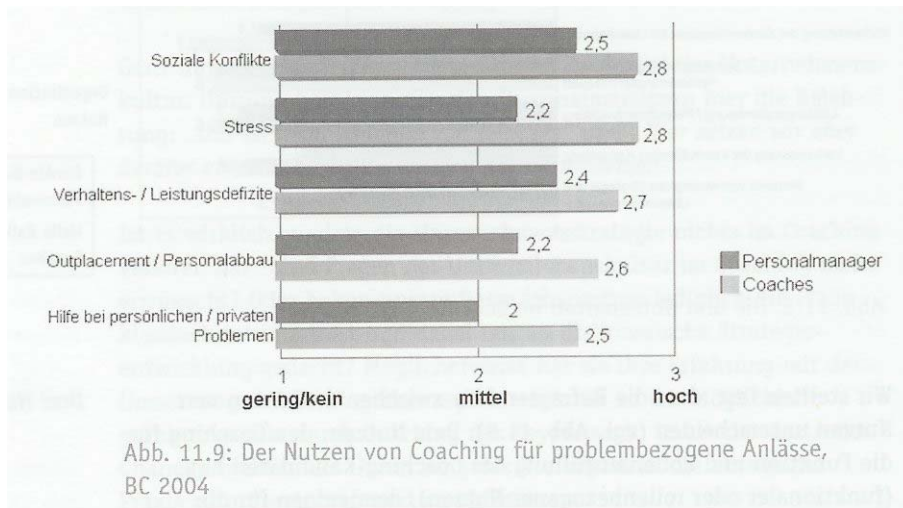
Reference: Coaching fürs Business, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005

Here are shown the key success factors for a successful coaching process.



Reference: Coaching fürs Business, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005

In the following two graphics you can see the benefit from coaching while having a development coaching (above) and problem solving or crisis coaching (below), answered from companies as well as from coaches.



Reference: Coaching fürs Business, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005

The summary and the results of the study about the possibility of measuring the success of coaching and the effectiveness of coaching can be summarized in some bullet points:

- The general answer as to the success of coaching is, according to the book, yes, it is successful and it pays off. However, there cannot be a definitive answer.
- There is no agreement on how to measure the success of coaching, since the formulation of a question implies the answer, and thus the result.
- The effects of coaching manifest themselves in a change of attitude and behavior, emotional relief, determining ones' position, optimization of behavior, optimization of resources, stress reduction, and it especially benefits the development of leaders.
- Apart from this, certain requirements are connected to the coaching process, without which it cannot go ahead. These requirements are trust, openness, partnership, methodical competence, a goal orientated approach and support from the financing company.

In addition to this, an American study of the company Metrix Global, 3 years ago, developed a model to measure the ROI (return on investment) of coaching benefits.

It might not answer all questions of how to measure the effect of coaching, but it's a very good step towards more concretely defining the quantitative benefit from coaching.

The ROI Model Applied to Coaching

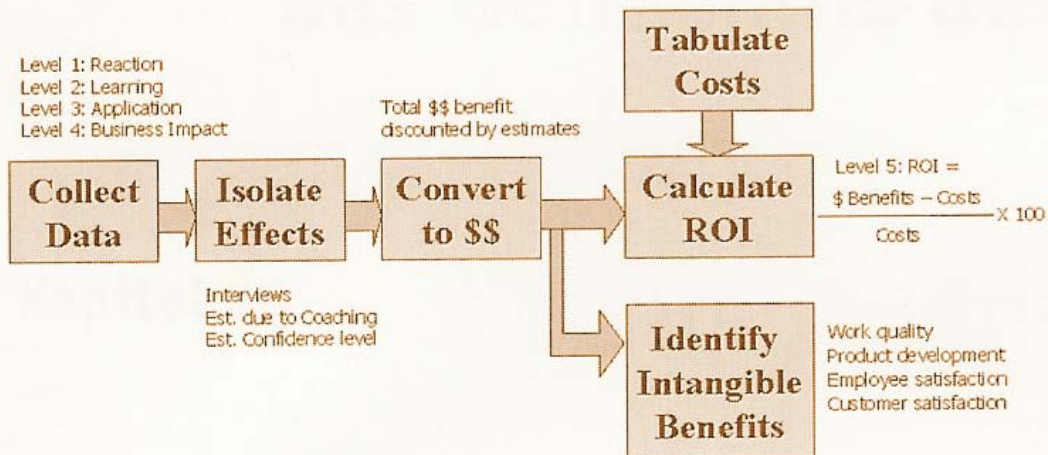


Abb.: Das ROI-Modell nach Philips (1997),
adaptiert von Metrix Global

Reference: *Coaching fürs Business*, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005
Original reference: MetrixGlobal: Case study on the return on Investment in Coaching,
www.metrixglobal.net/docsmetrixglobalcoachinggroibriefing.pdf, 27.10.2004

Included were leading managers from the US and Mexico who participated in a management course. All of them came from a Fortune 500 company. On the basis of behavior changes, surplus time, for instance, was to be calculated in terms of money saved. Also, it was considered how likely those behavioral changes were a result of the coaching process, and the probability of correctness of ones own assumptions. Deducted from that was the actual cost of the Coaching sought. Only those components that could be measured in \$\$ were included, meaning that other possible benefits, such as employee- and customer satisfaction, were not integrated, factors which in a more inclusive system of measurement could further increase the ROI. The result of the ROI of coaching measured at a success of 529%, which would mean that the investment into coaching of management staff pays back more than five-fold. Another attempt had been made to prove the effectiveness of coaching.

Although a lot more research into the effectiveness of coaching needs to be done, I would argue that the ever-increasing number of voices praising the positive effects of coaching, suggests that it has established itself as a respectable and serious instrument for management development within the business environment over the past 20 years or so. Furthermore, the latest questioning of coaches and personnel managers suggests that demand in Europe will further increase over the next 5 years.

U. Böning describes this development well when saying that...

"...Coaching is the expression of a Zeitgeist (intellectual atmosphere of the current time); by the very nature of the personal interaction which coaching creates, a style of communications is established which captures what people today increasingly demand: an experience of vivid individuality and appreciation by others, of self responsibility and performance, common orientation, purpose and meaning, which makes work and life worth living".

6. The model itself: „Balanced Coaching”

As a coach within the national and international business context, I longed for a holistic model, which displays and summarizes the key areas of coaching and can be used as a signpost for coach and coachee.

Thus I have packaged my own coaching concept into a new and, from my point of view, practical model, and started to evaluate this in my coaching sessions.

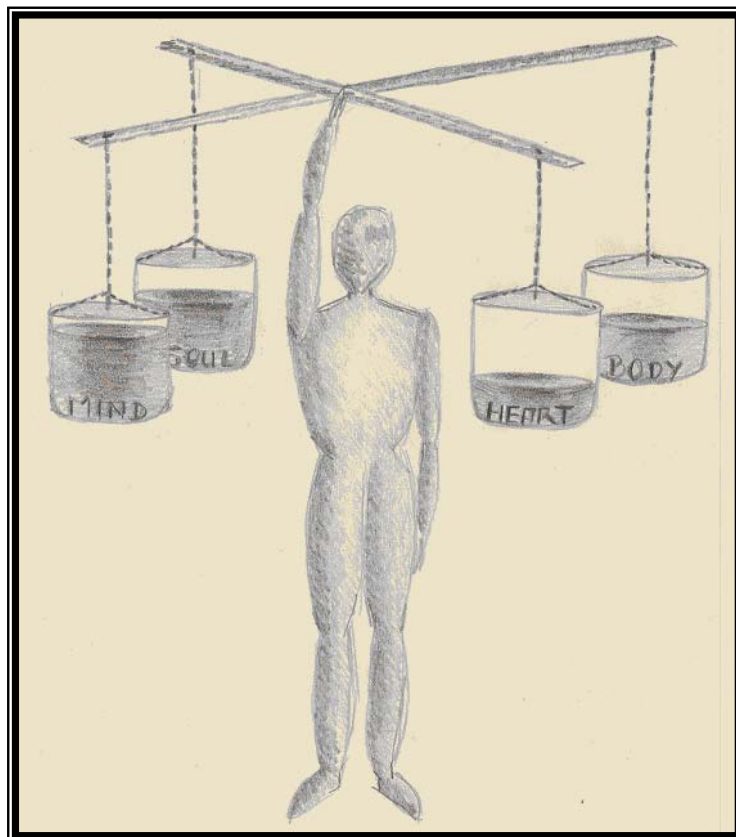
It can be used as a guideline for the various areas of coaching.

To supplement this I have developed a questionnaire to identify possible key areas of the coaching process.

The basis for this is a belief that an ideal balance in life exists, if

- Body
- Mind
- Heart
- Soul

are in unison.



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Especially in business coaching, the key area of coaching is the mind, meaning issues such as career development, strategic positioning, leadership, conflict management, etc.

From the business point of view this is where to start and offer managers and employees a coach if needed in the above areas.

At the same time it is my experience as a coach that especially with managers, the issue of “work-life-balance” is often imbalanced and can have a negative effect on those areas that have to be solved professionally.

If I am not balanced physically, psychologically, emotionally and intellectually, if I am not stable in my current situation in life and the subsequent quality of my life is unsatisfactory, then it is questionable how well I can lead employees in a moment of crisis and how much I will be able to lead them in a strategically orientated way.

If I do not take care of my physical condition, and manage accordingly the time that is given to me, then it is questionable how well I will take care of the available resources of the company, including the capabilities of the employees.

If I am dissatisfied with the current professional situation, this will most probably have an effect on other areas of my life, which again can be bad for individuals, but can be even more dramatic in the business context.

Interestingly, throughout my professional career it has been my experience that those managers who work most effectively have a healthy “work-life-balance”, and vice versa. This again does not mean that all those managers only work 8 hours a day, have a balanced family life, with 2-4 healthy kids, go for a jog every morning, are vegetarians, and once a year attend a Buddhist seminar in the Himalayas.

Far from it. Depending on each person, their balance might look very different. From my perspective, there is not one example or formula of how to lead a balanced life.

There are people, for example, who work 12-15 hours a day, who have chosen their hobby or passion as their profession, or who in their profession have found their meaning in life.

Also, partial dissatisfaction is not necessarily reason to speak of a unsatisfactory life, or to question ones work-life-balance.

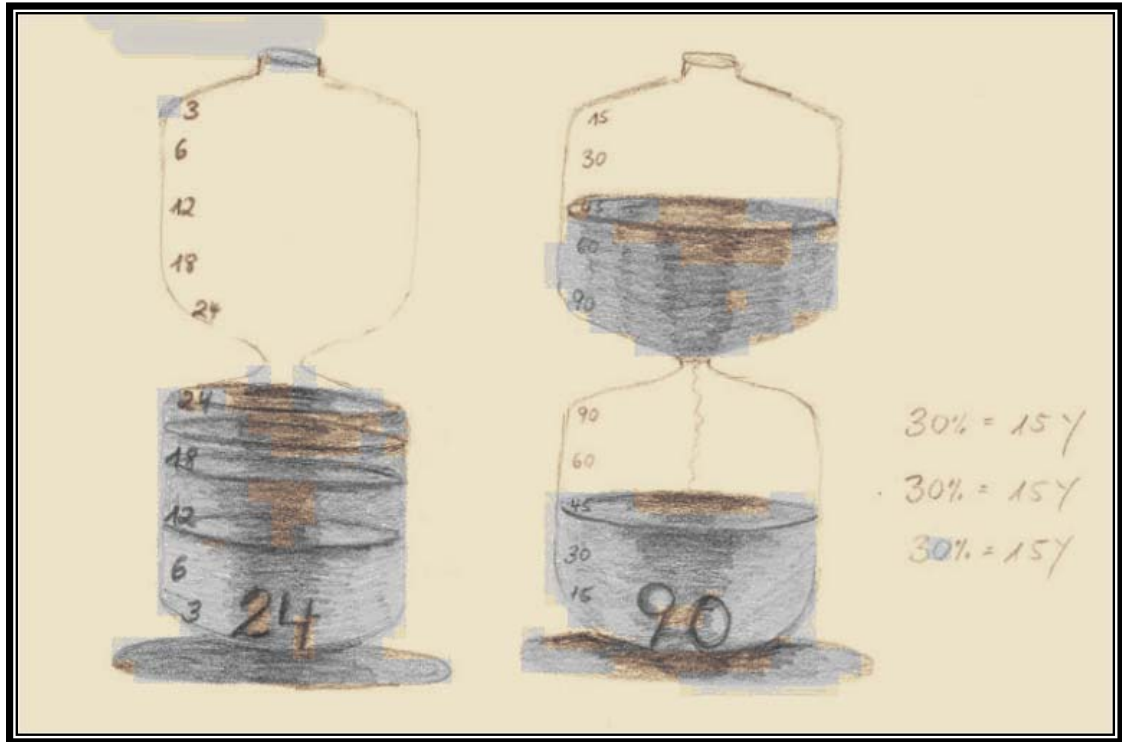
One thing is clear, however: if at least one of the areas is out of balance over a longer period of time, than this will influence other areas, even if it can be concealed for some time.

Sooner or later, this will have an effect, be it physically, in terms of gastric trouble, heart disease, circulation problems, weight problems or other physical dysfunctions, or emotionally, in terms of marriage or relationship problems, destroyed friendships, or crises regarding the purpose of life, which again might lead to dramatic actions.

From my perspective, the question is only, for how long we are able to bridge those imbalances, before a collapse in one or more areas of life might occur.

That eventually we will falter, is beyond reasonable doubt, there are too many examples for this.

From this results the question of the life- time at our disposal, which, depending on your perspective can seem rather frightening.



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If your personal plan includes becoming 90 years old and you are already 45 years old, you can ask yourself, how much is left for qualitative lifetime. If you further consider sleeping 8 hours average, work 8 hours average, than there are 8 hours left for the “daily survival and enjoyment”.

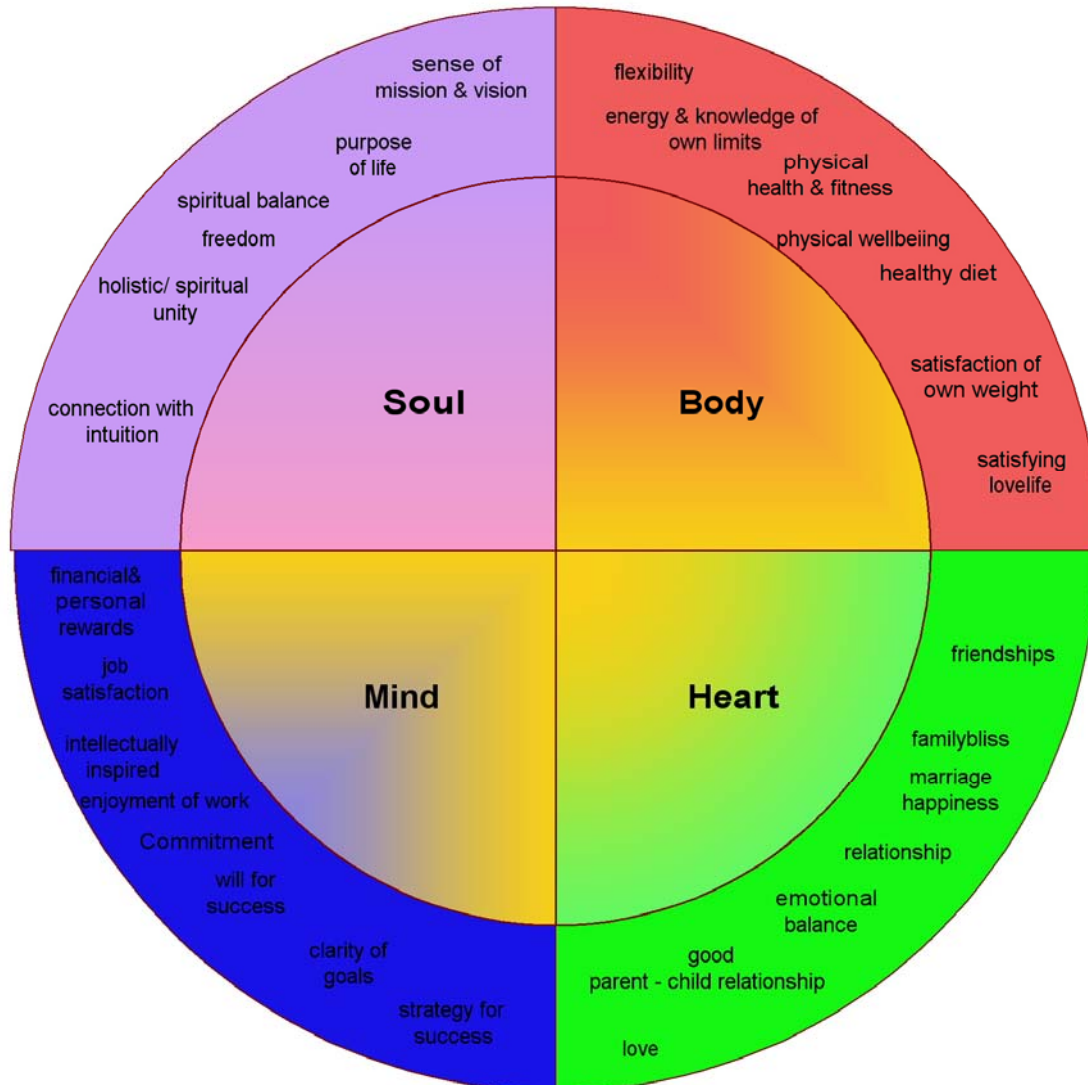
That means, taking the 45 years of spare life-time, 15 years of life time to plan and use next to work, not having included any time for being ill., but also not taking into consideration that we probably will not work till the end of our life time.

The average life time of men is currently worldwide round about 75 years, that means, the counting will probably look worse than having 15 years. Just becoming 75 years old and being 45 now means 10 years of usable lifetime.

If you consider the left clock, which deals with the daily time available, than it becomes clear, that quality in all areas of life, if there is an imbalance, is to be well clarified and then reorganized, in order to regain the work-life-balance.

For the purpose of analyzing the issues that should be a part of “work-life-balance-coaching”, I have developed an overview. This can help to recognize and discuss the key areas. Another means to find the issues can be the added questionnaire.

Balanced Coaching



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Next to this, I have developed a questionnaire also to define the possible areas of coaching. I also tried to implement the necessary measures to count the return on invest of the coaching process afterwards.

At first the questionnaire seemed a little too analytic to me, but then I realized that especially for analytically orientated people, which managers often are, this questionnaire can offer real support as they will trust and accept the results of the apparent balance/ imbalance and be more willing to discuss their work-life-balance, than to do so as part of early contracting discussions.

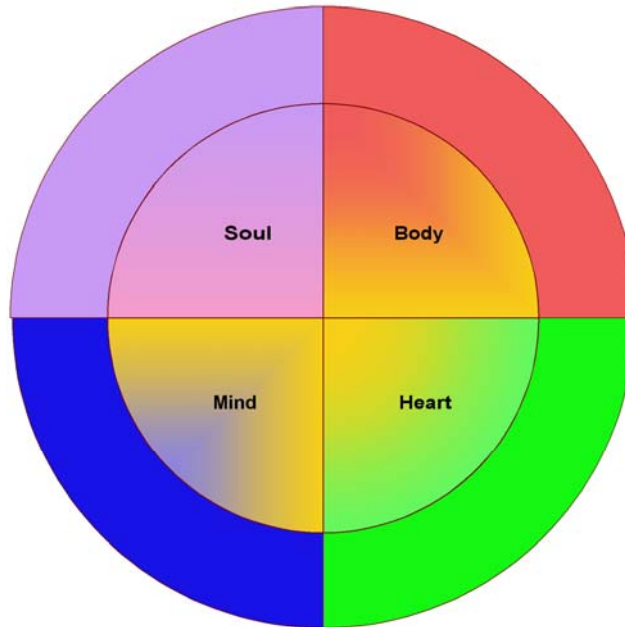
Balanced Coaching Questionnaire

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Questions:	1. Points awarded: 1 (low) - 8 (high)	2. Importance: 1 (low) - 8 (high)	3. Point 1 – Point 2	4. Satisfaction with Coaching 1 to 8, to be assessed after coaching	5. ROI - Measurable change s (n/ \$)	6. ROI - Probability result is due to coaching process	7. ROI - Probability of proper evaluation
Body							
How do I evaluate my physical condition?							
How do I evaluate my diet?							
How satisfied am I with the quantity of alcohol consumed?							
How satisfied am I with my current weight?							
How much do I exercise?							
How regularly do I practice my hobby?							
...							
Heart							
How much time do I invest looking after friendships?							
How much time do I spend with my family?							
How do I evaluate the quality of family life?							
How satisfied am I with my marriage/ relationship?							
How much do I feel emotionally balanced and fulfilled?							
How satisfied am I with my love life?							
How good is my relationship with my children?							
...							
Mind							
How satisfied am I with my professional situation?							
How satisfied am I with the financial reward for my work?							
How much of a challenge is my job intellectually?							
How much do I enjoy my work?							
How much do I feel that my work is recognized and valued?							
How clear is my strategy for success in life?							
How clear are my personal goals?							
How committed am I to the goals in my life?							
...							
Soul							
In how far do I have a vision/ mission in life?							
Have I found a purpose in life?							
In how far do I feel spiritually fulfilled and enriched?							
How connected am I to my intuition?							
How connected am I with my environment?							
How well do I manage to switch off/ relax?							
...							

Open Questions:							
What means for me “the real meaning of a fulfilled life”? (in all 4 areas)							
What/ what component is missing in the in my definition of happiness and satisfaction in my current life? (in all 4 areas)							
What is missing to really feel physically well?							
What happened to my dreams of former times? Do I continue working on their realization? If not, what is left along the way and why?							
If I would have 4 wishes to change something in my life, What would it be and with what aim or result?							
....							

Balanced Coaching



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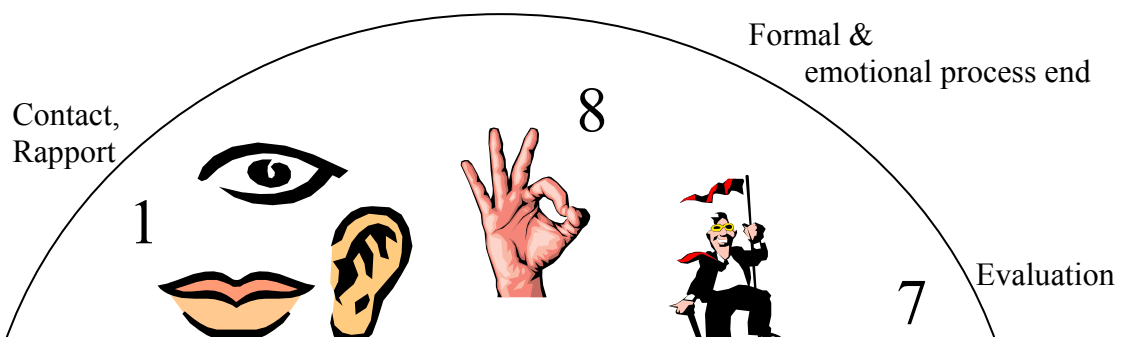
Another variable that I have practiced is the filling in of the four key areas on behalf of the client. Then you discuss how far he was able to do so to his satisfaction, or whether there are areas where there were gaps.

This variable was helpful insofar as the vocabulary of my model does not necessarily correspond to what the client might fill in. In other words, my prepared model might not be enough to figure out the key areas for the clients' coaching necessities.

Naturally, the selection of the methodology used lies with the coach, and should depend on the personality of the client.

Of course, the model can be used throughout the coaching process, if it turns out that, apart from business issues, there are further things that come up and were not originally to be part of the coaching. This is often the case, especially if during the coaching the relationship between the coach and the coachee becomes more trusting, and personal issues are discussed.

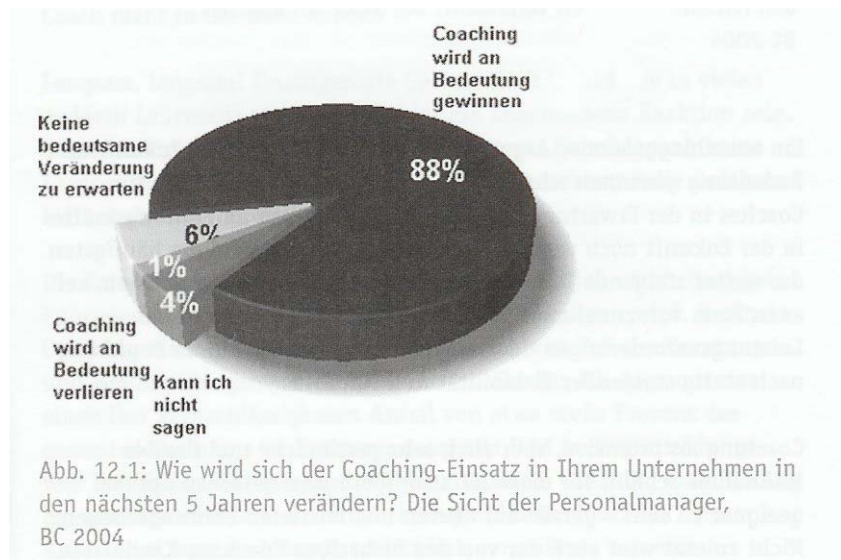
Coaching - Process



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8. Summary - What makes Balanced Coaching so special, why does it make a difference in the world of differences?

In our ever-changing, performance-based world, which poses diverse challenges and makes high demands on the individual, balanced coaching offers a unique opportunity for personal progress. By working together with professional specialists, we are able help to detect those areas in ones' life where there might be problems, unclarities, crises or underlying issues, be these of a personal or professional nature, no matter how small or significant, or at what time in ones' life, and create holistic satisfaction, if that is desired.



Reference: Coaching fürs Business, U.Böning, B. Fritsche, MangerSeminare Verlag 2005

Coaching is a sign for growing communication requirements without being prepared for them through any kind of education. Social, communicative or emotional competence are key words of new competence requirements especially for managers, which need to be met in future university programmes, educations, apprenticeship programmes, trainings and already at school.

Coaching also helps to orientate in the fast changing world where it becomes again and again necessary to define your role and position new and in a different way.

If there is no private partner or husband/ wife, great friend or mentor all with great skills or a group of people coming together to support and supervise each other, you can be happy to have or get a coach to accompany you through the new requirements of this business century.

Summarizing the research about the development of coaching and the future demand be it individually or business coaching says definitely “yes, there is a growing demand within the next years. The train has left the train station and is increasing the speed”.