

L'entreprise marocaine à l'ère du coaching : comment réussir le choix de son coach

The Moroccan company in the era of coaching: how to successfully choose a coach

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Résumé

Actuellement, nous assistons à une vague très importante de l'accompagnement managérial. Toutefois, le coaching managérial se présente dans la nouvelle stratégie de GRH de l'entreprise marocaine comme étant une bonne solution à la réussite de la mission des managers. Toutefois, et face à un marché de coaching très riche et diversifié, les entreprises font appel à des coaches pour répondre aux besoins managériaux de leurs collaborateurs, sans avoir une bonne connaissance au préalable sur ce qu'est le meilleur profil de coach à solliciter. C'est ainsi que différents prestataires de services se proposent pour répondre à cette demande.

Le métier de coaching n'est pas règlementé par une loi. Donc, Face à ce grand vide juridique, nous avons mené notre étude auprès des professionnels bénéficiaires du coaching dont le demandeur est l'entreprise. L'objectif de cette étude est de pouvoir montrer ce que sont les éléments importants à savoir lors du choix du coach. Au terme de l'analyse, nous avons pu dégager quelques limites pour l'efficacité du coaching au Maroc. Ces résultats d'analyse seront de bonnes références pour les entreprises souhaitant intégrer ce mode d'accompagnement dans la nouvelle stratégie de la gestion des ressources humaines

Mots clés : accompagnement managérial ; limites du coaching ; efficacité coaching ; performances du coach.

Abstract

Currently, we are witnessing a very important wave of managerial support. However, managerial coaching presents itself in the new Human Resources Management strategy of the Moroccan company as a good solution for the success of the managers' mission. However, and faced with a very rich and diversified coaching market, companies call on coaches to meet the managerial needs of their employees, without having a good prior knowledge of what is the best coaching profile to apply for. This is why various service providers offer themselves to meet this demand.

The problem is that the coaching profession is not regulated by law. Therefore, faced with this great legal void, we have conducted our study among professionals who benefit from coaching requested by the company. The main objective of this study is to be able to identify the important elements to take into account when selecting a coach.

At the end of the analysis, we were able to identify some limits to the effectiveness of coaching in Morocco. These analysis results will serve as good references for companies wishing to implement this type of coaching into the new human resources management strategy.

Keywords: managerial support; coaching pitfalls; coaching efficiency; coach performance.

Introduction

Presently, both at national and international levels, the development of any enterprise rely on its adjustment in terms of global competitiveness. Enterprises' managers, whatever the size, large or even small enterprise of the, are aware of the need for international development.

This perspective offers new opportunities for development, and also implies important changes: at the interpersonal level, at the value system level, and even at the level of employees' expectations and needs.

Therefore, alongside technological development, the human factor remains the company's most important asset, which must be differently managed. In the era of globalized competitiveness, the most demanding in the history of the economy, companies in the Moroccan economy must be governed and steered by leaders. This is a new management approach to implement the corporate citizenship perspective into perspective. (Ollivier, D. 2015)

However, in the face of the various organizational and economic upheavals that our companies are currently undergoing, and given the complexity of their environment, all the entities that constitute our companies, i.e. individuals, groups and even organizations, show a strong need for support to ensure that performance is achieved more reliably.

In this respect, several support structures are available to help team leaders and managers succeed in their tasks.

Coaching is among the different types of support and schemes prescribed to increase the commitment of individuals to their organizations. It is now the most popular and most widely described as a means of alleviating the growing problems faced by managers. (Pezet, Le Roux, 2012)

The major problem that arises is that these companies, by appealing to such a request, do not have the right knowledge that allows them to succeed in their choice of coach. So our problem is as follows: How can the company study the CV of a coach in order to make a successful choice, and to ensure successful support?

Through this article, and delving into a literature review, we will try to define the basic theoretical fields of coaching. Also, through our qualitative study with an interpretative epistemological framework and an abductive approach, we will show the good characteristics of a coach relating to the relational and technical level, its training, as well as its determining expertise determining the success of his coaching, and his success modes.

1. What does coaching signify ?

The history of coaching goes back to the 5th century B.C., at that time it was not yet known as coaching, but identified under other philosophical names such as the maieutics taught by the father of coaches, the philosopher Socrates. (Mouterde; Monédie; 2009).

In the French Dictionary, Socratic maieutics is defined as an art. It is a technique that allows the mind, through dialogue, to give birth to truths that have remained hidden.

The International Coaching Federation, ICF, defines coaching as a sustained relationship over a defined period of time that enables the client to achieve concrete and measurable results in his or her professional and personal life. It is a professional accompaniment that aims to improve individual and collective skills. (Amado, 2004)

Coaching is aimed at people occupying responsibility positions within their company. It is an accompaniment that aims to establish the right strategies in relation to the know-how and know-how. (Tabardel, 2001)

Indeed, it is an awareness exercise, allowing the coached to be in his reflexivity allowing him to find himself in the most appropriate actions. (Thierry, 2008)

Unlike other modes of support, coaching, thanks to a kind of maieutics, helps the coached to regain his or her well-being. (Chouinard; 2004). Also, it aims at maximizing his performance while releasing his potential. (Withmore; 2004).

Through these definitions, we can deduce that coaching practiced within companies is perceived as distinct from other adopted practices such as training, consulting or even mentoring. It is an individual or collective accompaniment, followed in the professional

environment, leading the coached to reach a level of balance, and to improve his relational skills and managerial performance.

2. Managerial coaching theoretical and conceptual main foundations

Managerial coaching has no precise theories that define it, however it finds its foundations in several theoretical and methodological approaches. It borrows conceptualizations and methodologies from the different disciplines of human and social sciences to suggest an intervention design.

Socrates, through his teaching and the methods he used, is considered to be the first coach in history, the father of coaching, as early as the 5th century BC. (Amar; Angel, 2005).

It was then the first source of coaching because of its particular method, called maieutics, aiming at questioning the interlocutor about his knowledge, so that the latter would realize what he did not know. Thus, Maieutics is the art of questioning.

Over the last few decades, from the 1960s in the United States to the 1990s in France, several currents have developed and have helped to weave the web of coaching. (Amar; Angel 2005). Within the general framework of coaching, managerial coaching has thus constituted a corpus characteristic of its singularity, aiming at the personalized support of actors in management, individually or in congregations, covering different connotations, guidance, mentoring and involving the implementation of a personalized learning process of personal development.

Several theoretical currents have emerged, and we quote the most striking ones that have inspired coaches in their missions. We have divided them into three points:

The first field is that of organizational theory. The second theoretical field has a strong contribution to coaching; it is the field of the psychotherapeutic approach, where the coach can have a good technical reference in order to build up his toolbox. And lastly, the theoretical field which relates to the theories of human resources management.

2.1. Coaching and the contribution of organizational theory

The field of organizational theory has made a great contribution to managerial coaching. The coach intervening in a company, and in his mission to accompany change, must understand what the existing organizational behaviors are.



The role of the organizational behavior current is to understand the dynamics that may exist between the individual and his group on the one hand, and between the individual and his organization on the other.

That being said, and through this field, and given the current widespread issues, such as cultural diversity, the coach will have the opportunity to develop his knowledge and skills to effectively support individuals and groups.

Another current that represents a wealth of knowledge for the coach is Change Steering. It is nourished by very important expectations in the management of organizations. It is often a question of accompanying the players in learning adapted management methods to facilitate organizational and strategic change.

In order to develop or to remain efficient and competitive, companies need to implement organizational change and adaptation projects for management methods. By proceeding this way, companies face difficulties, particularly related to the situations of unease that these changes can generate as an undesired result. (Remoussenard; Ansian, 2013)

Nevertheless, companies use coaching to accompany change without causing any damage to the employees. Coaches, through their professionalism, refer to basic theories on change management and the implementation of organizational learning. Also, they try to take advantage of this to build their toolboxes.

Organizational learning is the ability of an institution to take action to correct its mistakes. The institution must be able to change its knowledge base in order to become more adapted to the current situation and also to generate new action skills. (Probst; Büchel; Al, 1998). This new knowledge - in addition to its acquisition - must be verified in the reactions and behavior of the enterprise. (Cayla, 2007)

The latest reference current for the coach is that of the Palo-Alto school. It is a mayor reference in the fields of management sciences and information and communication sciences in particular. (Olivier, 2012)

The Palo Alto School was established in the 1950s by its founder Gregory Bateson. (Cayla, 2007). The novelty brought by this school is the great value attributed to interpersonal communication. The objective is to better equip oneself to communicate better. This group of

researchers was called the "invisible college" and has had theoretical and practical inputs that have been widely used in coaching. (Rappin, 2013)

This movement of thought has favored the beginnings of coaching in the establishment of the relevant foundations on which the relationship between coach and coached can be well built.

The coach, in his coaching mission, must know how to manage his relationship with his interlocutor, the coached, and the client. The works of this school have laid the foundations for good communication within organizations.

The first technique that has been tried and tested is the mastery of listening. Listening enables the coach to understand the coached and to gather the information necessary to carry out his mission. It involves a reformulation process aimed at identifying the psychological reality of the coached. The work carried out contributes to the transformation of the coached representations. (Demarquet, 2009)

Globally, the basic techniques of coaching based on the outcomes of the Palo-Alto School are: Questioning, Listening, Rephrasing, and Feedback.

The personality of the coach impresses the coached, and therefore counts a lot in the relationship with the coached. The coach must succeed in building a communication system with the coached to bring about change. The method is decisive in coaching. (Demarquet, 2009)

2.2. Coaching and psychotherapeutic approach

The field of the psychotherapeutic approach is a very rich field in terms of important currents, constituting a technical reference for the coach. It is thanks to it that the coach can formalize his expertise and professionalism.

Social psychology has two objectives: The first is to understand the psychological mechanisms responsible for social behavior, and the second is to better understand how the social context can influence different behaviors. (Rechlin, 1957)



Kurt Lewin (1947,1951), has brought significant contribution to leadership theory. Indeed, leadership has been defined as a process, by which the individual can influence a group of individuals, and in order to achieve their common goal together¹.

In coaching, this notion of leadership is sought in the triptych of the three². The leader is the one who knows how to play the three types according to the situation, namely: the participative leader called democratic, the directive or autocratic leader, and the third type which is the permissive leader characterized by let it happen.

2.3. Coaching and humanist theories

The humanist approaches, said to be more flexible, centered on the individual, consider him/her as a person who can build him/herself according to his/her personal perceptions, in view of his/her potentialities.

In each person there is an inner psychic dynamic. The coach must seek to understand it, so as to enable the coached to better know himself, and to know what his potential for personal and professional development is.

The coach, in his relationship with the coached, must not be prescriptive. On the contrary, he must listen carefully, be emphatic and above all not make judgments while remaining neutral.

In this case, he represents, in a metaphorical language, a mirror that only reflects what has been said by his client. (Amar; Angel, 2005)

"Rogers blames any failure to change its client for the misuse of the data provided to the coach. Within his non-directive method, Rogers attributes this famous "mirror effect" an important place during individual coaching. According to him, when the coach is well in tune with himself, and when all his attention is focused on his coached, he can give him feedback, i.e. feedback based on the internal information he feels". (Higy-Lang;Gellman, 2000).

¹Lewin,K . La théorie du leadership . Blog/ inspirer au changement, inspirer le changement.www.changement.pn ; consulté le 10 mars 2018

² Ibidem.

3. Coaches' practice analysis within Moroccan enterprises

3.1. Methodological frame

Our research will adopt a qualitative, inductive approach while evolving towards another abductive one.

In choosing a qualitative study, we have taken an interest in what the coached say. The interviewees are managers/directors who have benefited from managerial coaching provided by the company's Human Resources Management department.

Our interest is more focused on the person. Indeed, we did not want to restrain ourselves to a quantitative approach based on statistical correlations between variables, or based on causal relationships between entities. Rather, we strive to enrich our research work with very specific testimonies.

That said, our logical reasoning mode is based on an inductive approach, and as our research progresses, we conduct a test of validity of the knowledge extracted in the framework of an abductive approach. The aim here is to show that our research strives to confront between our mental schemes of interpretation, the schemes of the individuals with whom our research is confronted, and the scientific knowledge already known and provided by the literature review.

3.2. Interpretativist epistemological framework

In our case, the research framework remains pragmatic. We could not take a positivist approach, at least for a qualitative type of research, insofar as the production of knowledge, which has its origin in the behavior of the actors, is not objective. Reality is not independent of the subjects. It is human behavior here that is singular.

3.3. Research process

Our field of study was very diverse. This diversification of the survey sample allowed us first of all to see what the similarities as well as the existing differences in coaching practices in Moroccan organizations are, and also to see what are the requirements for which coaching is sought. This diversification of the sample also allowed us to enrich our knowledge and to better understand what the necessary measures to take when a company requests coaching.

We precise that our investigation field is composed of a wide array of companies: national private companies, transnational companies, and public institutions.

As far as data collection is concerned, and given that the research methodology adopted in our research topic is the qualitative method, the interview technique is seen as the best way to access information. In fact, interviews are considered the most correct method for the collection of information for the correct scientific approach. (Imbert, 2010)

Before proceeding to the final interviews with the beneficiaries of management coaching, it was necessary to go through exploratory interviews at the beginning. These were interviews with HR managers and also with coaches.

From these two types of exploratory interviews, we were able to obtain information about the context of coaching in Morocco. These first interviews were very important for us, as they allowed us to construct the first materials with which we approached our coached interviewees.

Interview guide with the coached managers (20 persons):

Coach profile

- 1- Coach's posture (personality, competence...)
- 2- The coach's tools and teaching method
- 3- Technical skills, how do you judge its effectiveness in the transfer of learning?
- 4- Its relational aspect
- 5- Were your colleagues satisfied with this coach?

3.4. Results analysis

In order to analyze the 20 interviews collected during our empirical investigation, it was important for us to find the appropriate method for the analysis. We have opted for the content analysis method recommended by Mucchielli. The software we used was IRamuteq.

We have proceeded with a thematic analysis. For our study, we have worked on the basis of a qualitative analysis model, which led us to create items for each of the questions, through the gathering of key words with a meaning proximity.

The Hierarchical Descending Classification (HDC) deduced through the analysis carried out by the IRamuteq software, allowed us to reach the classes of the question "coach's profile". The result of the analysis allowed us to identify 3 classes, and we will consider each class as a sub-item.

Class 1 includes words such as “company, cabinet, French, Moroccan, psychologist, convert, former...” Through the sample sentences generated by the software, these forms relate to the theme of the coach's professional training and his knowledge of the culture of the coached. For these active forms of words, we give a title to this class 1, under the name of "adequacy to the skills base".

For class 2 and class 3, we have found common points that are repeated in both classes. To do this, we have redone them in our own way, which is as follows:

Class 2, groups together words such as "professional, method, situation, tell, competent, technical, professional..." These forms relate to the item of the relationship of the coach and coached on the transfer side. For these active forms of words, we give a title to this class 2, under the name of " quality and efficiency of the coach/coached relationship, in the transfer space ".

For **class 3**, it includes words such as "trust, inspire, relational, personal...". These forms relate to the item of the coach/coach relationship on the interpersonal side that bound them together. For this reason, we have given a title to this item for class 3, under the name "quality and effectiveness of the coach/coach relationship: aspect of the interpersonal relationship".

Let's take the results analysis grid for question 3, "Coach Profile", which we gave as the main title after analysis: "Coach Performance".

Item: Coach performance

Sub-item 1: Adequacy of the skills base

Sub-item 2: Quality and efficiency of the coach/coach relationship in the transfer space

Sub-item 3: Quality and effectiveness of the coach/coach relationship: aspect of the interpersonal relationship.

3.5. Results discussion

The most important point addressed in the first sub-item, "Adequacy of the skills base", is the major flaw that can be found in the lack of cultural competence in the coach. If the coach is unaware of the culture of the other, it would be hard to accompany individuals easily.

Unfortunately, when Moroccan companies proceed to their coach choice, they believe that when they choose an intervention through a foreign firm, they will obviously be successful. It makes no sense to intervene in coaching in a different cultural environment. The coach must be in the position to be able to recognize the cultural differences that exist between him and his client. It is by knowing these differences that he will be able to better accompany his coached. (Lemeir, D; 2012)

The skills and training of the coach are very important in the coaching mission. We have found that it is difficult to satisfy all requests or beneficiaries. For the coach to be able to accompany the change of his clients, he needs to have a sufficient knowledge basis in social psychology, to be able to acquire the appropriate tools for coaching.

For the second sub-theme "Quality and effectiveness of the coach/coached relationship in the transfer space", and according to the interviewees, the most effective methods used by the coach were those where the coach recounted his experiences in a situation similar to that of his coached individuals. By telling his own experiences as well, or by giving examples closer to reality. During questioning and listening, the coached reviews his or her actions thanks to the mirror effect that the coach can draw on his or her face.

Having said that, the coaches who were congratulated were those who were able to develop a better work plan, and they are the ones who have the most experiences to tell.

The work group sessions on real situations were also very useful for the coached and a good approach for the coach.

Concerning the third sub-theme "Quality and efficiency of the coach/coached relationship: aspect of the interpersonal relationship", the coach's posture is a point that is very much addressed by coached at the relational level. Certainly, at the level of theory, trust and alliance are valuable items. The coach must have relational skills and a sense of being in order to be

able to build an alliance with his client. "The coach's interpersonal skills are manifested in a quality of being and relational skills that condition interaction". (Angel.p; Ammar, P, 2005). "The quality of the relationship between coach and coached is very important. It is the feeling that makes the current flow". (Mouterde, 2009).

The fact to feel secure, prepares the coached to say his mistakes easily without fear of his coach's judgments. This is a very important point for the coached, which must be favored in order to better lead the mission to its objectives. In a coaching relationship between coach and coached, the coached must feel committed to a relationship of caring and trust that allows him/her to feel comfortable, safe and listened to without being judged on what he/she says. (St-Onge, S., & Gins, C.2011).

As a conclusion to our study results, we can say that companies, wishing to professionalize their future managers through coaching, find themselves at a disadvantage with regard to this new practice. However, the company must first of all prepare its future coached, and inform them about the new method of accompaniment - coaching - adopted by the human resources department. Explain to them what will be the benefits for individuals and groups, and also what the objectives will be through this mode which will be newly integrated into their structures.

Indeed, our study showed that there is a big problem with the integration of coaching in Moroccan organizations. The problems identified are:

- Problem at the level of the professionalization of the coach and his expertise.
- Problem in the choice of the coach
- Problem of framing the demand and contract formulation between stakeholders and coaching service providers.

4. The main skills that should appear in the coach's curriculum vitae in the Moroccan national context

- Academic background in psychology or psychotherapy: The first condition to look for in a coach's curriculum vitae is that, besides to his or her coaching training, the coach

must have an academic profile in psychology or psychotherapy in order to better understand how individual or even collective behavior is determined.

- Professional experience at company level: the coach must necessarily have professional managerial experience within a company in order to be better situated to understand others in the problems they may encounter. However, the coach while having experience to share with the beneficiaries can not only remain focused on the academic but can also propose feasible examples in the field.
- Speaking the language of the coached: The coach must also be savvy in the language of the beneficiary, as the latter, during emotional learning, finds it very difficult to express his or her discomfort through another language.
- Know the culture of the organization and the human environment of the coached: The coach must also know the culture of the coached environment. He must have cultural competence. On this point, we found that among foreign coaches, only those who had spent years of residence in our country were the only ones who understood their clients. Hence, being a coach of Moroccan nationality or not presents no problem, but the real problem lies in the expertise of the coach.

Conclusion

Currently, the national market is flourishing. There is a clear evolution in the demand for coaching services in Moroccan companies. The first clients of coaches remain large national or multinational companies.

Our objective during this research work was to shade light on the limiting points for the effectiveness of managerial coaching in Moroccan organizations, as there is a serious issue that impacts the coach expertise. The way is clear for any amateur to practice the coaching profession without being competent.

Indeed, we were able to identify the limits of the practice of coaching within Moroccan organizations, we were able to draw out some existing irregularities, and we also proposed some recommendations that can be used in the event of a choice to accompany one's collaborators through coaching.

While waiting for the State to regulate this profession, which remains effective provided its basic foundations are respected, the company can take the right measures to make it a success within its department.

So, we can deduce that among the great contributions of our research:

- The future involvement of the human resources management department in the development of the strategy that will be adopted by the coach.
- Have a good vision on the prescription of a possible request for coaching.
- Offer companies some suggestions for choosing a coach: Indeed, these are important skills that should be included in the coach's curriculum vitae. It is an operational model that meets national requirements.

During our empirical research, we have encountered some limitations:

We have found ourselves with a low level of theoretical framing material mobilized in this research, due to the complexity of the phenomenon studied. This is also explained by the fact that several research studies on coaching have focused on interviewing coaches without paying more attention to the coached perceptions.

We also encountered difficulties in accessing the field: In order to carry out our research study, we have also experienced numerous problems. First of all, regarding our sample, we had great difficulty accessing it. There was reluctance from some company managers and even coaches to participate in the study.

Sometimes the interviewees tried to avoid talking about the problems encountered in their support.

Regarding the prospects of our study, we can use it as a basic reference for future studies of a quantitative nature. Indeed, we can follow up on future research work. We will try to put our current work in the form of a questionnaire to test it, and test its managerial effectiveness on a fairly representative sample of coached individuals.

Also, our study will be a good source for other research work on the management of human resources in order to establish a very precise evaluation grid.

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