



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# POSITIONING COACHING IN SOUTH AFRICA 2011

*National coaching survey of coaches, coachees and organisations that utilise coaching*

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## About the survey and participants

During 2010, the COMENSA Research Committee was looking at establishing the first comprehensive data set of the 'state of the coaching industry' within South Africa. After much exploration and consultation, the survey was launched in November 2010. **The purpose of the survey is to highlight the current trends in South Africa within the coaching industry from three main perspectives – that of the coachee, the coach and organisations utilising coaching.** The survey includes life coaching and organisational coaching perspectives.

Two Hundred and thirty three (233) people responded to the survey, which included 204 COMENSA members (coaches). Note: as the question of membership was posed only in the 'Coaches' section, it is not certain how many organisations or coachees are COMENSA members.

## Organisational results

Forty four organisations were represented in the survey, 79% in the private sector and 14 % in the public sector. Approximately 1/3 of the organisations employed under 50 employees,

with medium sized companies (100–499) and large (5000+) well represented.

## Organisational definitions of coaching

There was a wide variation on the definitions, application and purpose of coaching; as well as some confusion between coaching and mentoring.

Interestingly, organisations listed lack of understanding of coaching (47%) as a hindrance more often than budgetary constraints (40%).

Coaching is seen as scheduled sessions with an external facilitator qualified as a coach, not necessarily with industry expertise. The coaching relationship is short term with equal power relations and non-directive in nature. Coaching is seen as providing: thinking space, questioning, focusing on life and career goals.

Mentoring is seen as daily, practical and internal. The mentor has technical expertise and therefore more power and authority in the relationship; possibly giving direction and advice for the purpose of skills transfer. The focus of mentoring is seen as performance support.

Despite the perception of respondents that most organisations have a coaching culture, it seems that the definition of a coaching culture is not shared (it is sometimes seen as a management style and sometimes as a propensity to hire coaches).

Most coaching programmes have recently been implemented (under 3 years old), with less than a third utilising coaching with training programmes; only around 25% integrating internal coaching into their performance management.



The role of the person coordinating the coaching programme seems to be very important. As in most organisations, matching coaches and employees occur with some degree of intervention from the coordinator, either in selecting a panel of coaches from whom the coachee chooses or in doing the actual matching.

The majority of responses indicate that coaching has been delivered successfully with benefits both at an organisational and personal level.

### Recommendations

We would recommend that organisations already using coaching or thinking of using coaching, define for themselves very clearly how they wish to:

1. Define
2. Position coaching and mentoring
3. What a coaching culture would look like to support their organisational and people development objectives. This may extend the scope for use of coaching as a developmental tool.

### Coachee results

One hundred and sixty-two coachees responded to the survey, of which 79% were self-source coaches, most often for personal development/growth

(86%). Coaching predominantly occurs on a face to face basis (96%).

A small percentage (13%) of coachees cease early, more commonly for financial reasons, or a combination of time, poor fit and lack of expertise. Only 3% of coachees felt that coaching goals were not achieved, with 0.5% citing poor relationship with coach. Forty seven per cent (47%) of coachees rated competence as 'brilliant' and 42% as 'good'. The coaching experience was rated as 'invaluable' by 61% and 'reasonably valuable' by 31%. Increased self-awareness was the highest scoring benefit of coaching at 93%, and 81% for self-discovery. The coaching skills (listed in the survey) were rated most often as 'excellent' (44%), or 'very good' (30%). 'Integrity' and 'ethics' had highest number of 'excellent' ratings, while 'motivating' seemed to be the

least demonstrated coaching skill.

### Recommendations

Coachees generally found the coaching process valuable. For coachees, the importance of the coaching relationship seemed to override the importance of focus on achieving goals. The coaching relationship enables and elicits greater self-awareness and development for coachees and in turn this then becomes a bigger focus of the coaching. It is recommended that communicated outcomes and benefits of coaching be informed by the results of this study.

### Coach results

Of all the respondents, 92% (215) were coaches, 94% COMENSA members and 69% were aged between 35 and 55 years.

### Qualifications and years of practice

The most common qualification (not necessarily a coaching



qualification) of coaches seems to be a Masters degree (36%), followed by an Honours degree and a Diploma (20%). Eighty six per cent (86%) of coaches had obtained some form of coaching qualification. Thirty per cent (30%) of coaches have been coaching for a year to three years and 23% for three to five years.

### Coach roles and programmes

Seventy eight per cent (78%) of coaches were self-employed at the time of the survey. Ninety one per cent (91%) operate as independent coaches, with 15% defining themselves as internal coaches, 8% as line managers and 4% as HR practitioners. Coaches selected more than one category, which indicates a lack of mutual exclusivity between the roles.

Coaches typically meet with coachees every: 2–3 weeks (43%), monthly (23%) or weekly (21%); most commonly face to face (98%), telephonic (21%) while only 19% used Skype. One-to-one coaching was most popular (89%), with team coaching at 45% and leadership conversations facilitation at 39%.

### Revenue

Coaching practitioners frequently have other sources of income besides coaching, such as facilitating, training and consulting as part of their service offering. Twenty four per cent

(24%) indicated that coaching forms 75 to 100% of their income, 30% generate up to 25% of their income from coaching. Almost half the coach respondents have increased their coaching revenue in the past year. Twenty seven per cent (27%) of coaches charge between R450 and R800 per hour, followed by R200 to R400 (16%), R850 to R1200 (15%) and 14% charged R1500 and more. Interestingly, there seems to be no correlation between qualification and hourly rate. Only 10% rated their practices as not successful and 3% as unsuccessful. It seems the time in practice is related to the perceived level of success for coaching practices.

### Quality assurance

Sixty eight per cent (68%) of coaches use some kind of supervision though only 51% said they were involved in supervision under the quality assurance section, as such, these results conflict somewhat. Feedback is gained directly (94%), from managers (46%) or peers (28%). Eighty five per cent (85%) develop by reading, with 84% viewing COMENSA registration as a method of quality assurance and 70% keep up to date with coaching research. Fifty per cent (50%) attend master classes as a means of continued development.

### Challenges

Three main themes emerged as challenges for coaches, viz. 'marketing and educating of SA public about coaching', 'accreditation and credibility' and 'professionalisation'. 'Cost and benefit' also came up as a possible barrier and 'diversity' was also mentioned.

### Recommendations

The data collected suggests that coaching is still an emerging industry. For coaches to increase the success of their individual practices; constant effort is required in terms of supervision, continued quality assurance by means of continued professional development and a close look at what is being charged to the coachee, with regard to the value being provided.

As for the needs expressed above, it would be interesting to possibly dialogue and come up with ways to fill these needs as an industry, rather than simply on an individual basis.

