

CONTEXT: WHY IS THIS RESEARCH IMPORTANT TO PRACTICE?

- Talent management (TM) and leadership development = a perennial issue and a priority for organisations in post covid-19 era (Caligiuri et al. 2020; Collings et al. 2021)
- Talent shortages and predicted leadership crisis in the banking sector (PWC, 2017; The Economist, 2022)
- Coaching in organisations = widely used worldwide and perceived as one of the most effective TM practice (ICF, 2020; CIPD, 2021)

BUT

- Effectiveness of TM practices often questioned (McKinsey, 2018)
- The views of talented employees is often missing in empirical studies (Gallardo-Gallardo-Thunnissen, 2016; Sparrow, 2019)
- Coaching often studied as part of a bundle of TM practices, not examined specifically (Blackman, Moscardo and Gray, 2016)

WHAT ARE MY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES?

Objectives:

- Understanding coaching as a specific TM practice
- Defining the role played by talent coaching for talented employees and other stakeholders

Research questions:

1. How do multiple stakeholders (talented employees, HR managers, and coaches) perceive the contribution of coaching in the context of TM in a global bank?
2. How is coaching characterised in the context of TM?
3. What is the role of talent coaching ?

WHAT RESEARCH METHODS HAVE I USED?

A qualitative single case study in a global bank underpinned by a social constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology

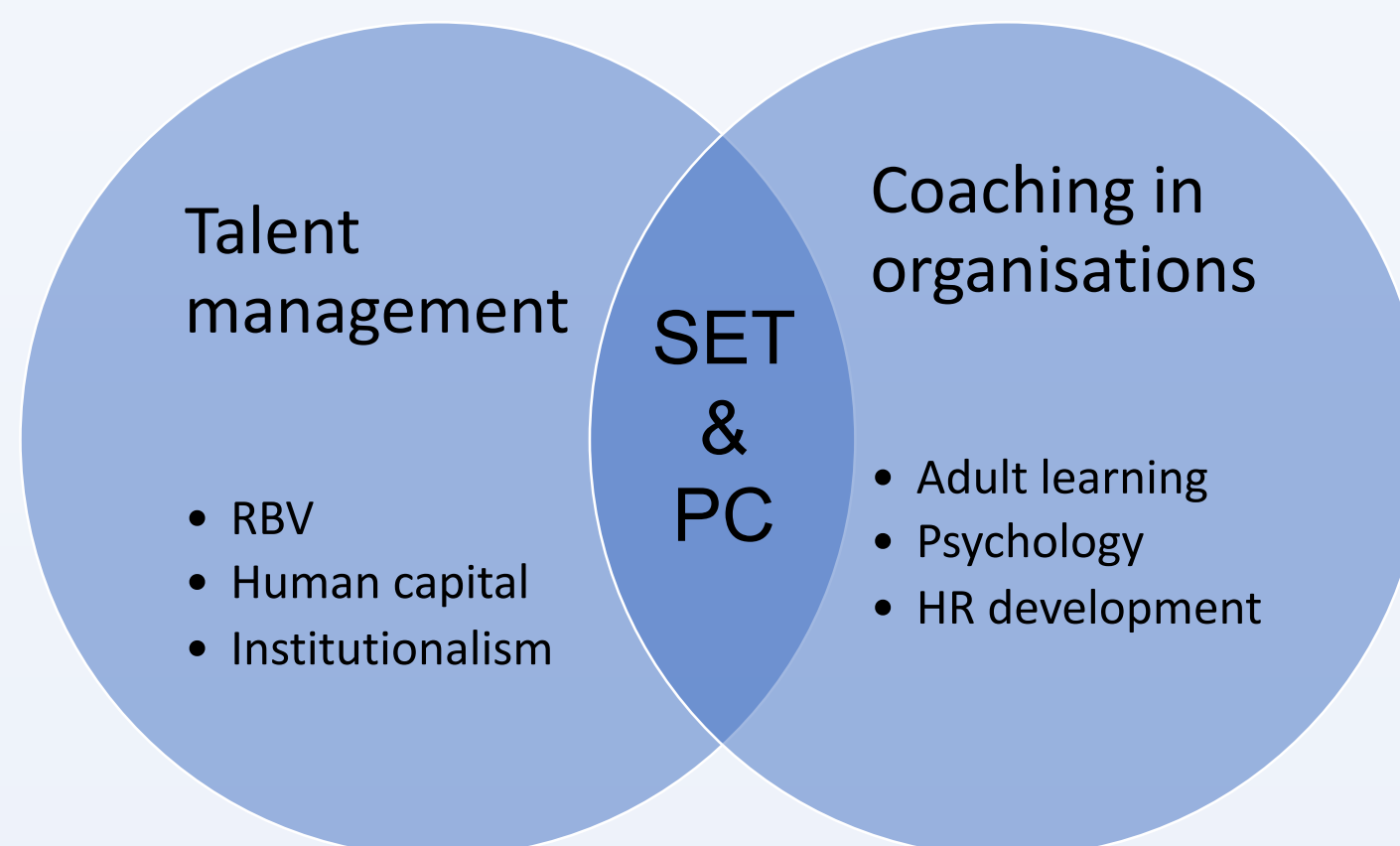
A study focused on **coaching in the context of TM**, and how it is perceived by multiple stakeholders (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009; Ellinger, McWhorter, 2020):

- One American global bank, with a focus on TM in EMEA region comprising about 55 countries
- Four TM programmes targeting junior, middle and senior leaders, identified as 'talent'
- Coaching delivered by internal and/or external coaches
- Purposive sampling to collect the views of multiple stakeholders, including talented employees, HR managers, internal and external coaches
- Total : 30 semi-structured interviews

Theoretical framework

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Psychological Contract (PC) are:

- Widely used in TM studies, and emerging in recent coaching studies (Gallardo and Thunnissen, 2016; Shutte and Sheyn, 2015; Schermuly and Graßmann, 2019)
- Used in this study as a useful lens to make sense of the participants' views: I followed an abductive logic of inquiry



WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

Finding 1: Talent coaching as a social reward

- A rite of passage, especially for leaders transitioning to Managing Director level
- A gratifying career event, although not systematically conducive of career progression
- A relational reward
- A symbol of high status and an enactment of the talent status

So you feel a little bit of love, that they want to spend time and money on you; and that you are not completely unnoticed. (...) We are being recognized and rewarded. (Emma, Talent)

Finding 2: Talent coaching as catalyst for leadership change

- A coaching capacity and capability building
- An unspoken mechanism for the selection of a talent elite
- An alternative to employee relations management and mediation at senior level

Talent coaching is used to broadening the leadership repertoire of managers and moving away from a command-and-control approach. It promotes better quality conversations. (Steve, HR manager and internal coach)

Finding 3: Talent coaching characteristics

- Not a remedial intervention to address performance issues
 - An individualised platform for the development of leadership capabilities based on mutual exchange and long-term relationships
 - Develops the political skills and network to climb the career ladder
 - Talent coach = "advocate, ambassador, sponsor, mentor"
- You realise that the organisation doesn't necessarily have a structure for people who want to peddle faster, because it's a very case-by-case basis how people get to the next point. (Carry, Talent)*

WHAT CONCLUSIONS DO I DRAW FROM MY RESEARCH?

Talent coaching : specific and complex in practice

Talent coaching relies on internal coaching capacities and capabilities, which may vary across EMEA and globally. So, acute need for:

- Embedded digital talent coaching in TM and inclusive TM approach
- Formal recognition and reward for internal coaches
- Awareness of talent coaching as a mutual and reciprocal relationship

Ethical challenges due to imbalance of power and unspoken role of talent coaching for the selection of talent elite in the leadership pipeline. So, 2 critical aspects to consider:

- Systematic coaching training and supervision for internal coaches
- Transparent communication on talent status and the role of talent coaching

The talent coaching matrix

		Senior talent	
		Strategic partnership	Dialogic and mediation
COACHING APPROACH	Non-Directive	Mentoring	
	Directive	Sponsoring	Instructional and feedback
		Junior talent	
		Internal	External
		TYPE OF COACHING	

KEY REFERENCES

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