Project Information

Students on full time Master of Business Administration (FTMBA) programmes typically undergo significant career transition and, for some, this may coincide with life stage transition. Coaching has the potential to provide support to individuals as they seek to manage major transitions in their lives, however research is limited. It would be beneficial to build the evidence base in three key areas: links between adult development theories (Levinson 1986), and coaching; career transition and developing a fuller sense of self (e.g. Ibarra, 2003), and coaching for transition. Polly Parker (2017) indicates that coaching and career transition are rarely explored together, and there are limited studies into the impact of coaching during MBA programmes.

This study used interpretative phenomenological analysis and sought to explore how five FTMBA students experienced coaching during their studies. The three sub-questions were: to what extent is life stage transition apparent in Cranfield FTMBA students; how does coaching enable FTMBA students to make meaning of their sense of self? and how does coaching support FTMBA students during a time of transition? In-depth interviews were conducted and three super-ordinate themes were identified. This study contributes to building the evidence base for coaching and transition and helps to illuminate both how and why coaching can be such a powerful enabler. Implications and recommendations for coaching practice are discussed, encompassing how coaching is conducted as well as what might usefully be explored when supporting individuals in transition. The project is complete and the dissertation was awarded a distinction (MA in Coaching and Mentoring Practice, Oxford Brookes University).

Description of content of contribution

The paper will describe how interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to explore how five FTMBA students experienced coaching during their studies. The rationale for the research and a brief outline of the three areas of the literature review will be provided. The presentation will then describe the methodological approach taken and the three super-ordinate themes which were identified, giving voice to the students' accounts of how the coaching enabled them to make meaning of their sense of self and provided support during a time of transition. Recommendations for coaching practice and for further research will be explored.
Bibliography


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