

## Coaching: Effects, Quality, Evaluation

Report on the 4th International Coaching Conference "Coaching meets Research"

**Over 250 participants from Switzerland, Germany, and Austria attended the 4th International Coaching Conference, which took place on 14/15 June 2016 in Olten, Switzerland. All participants shared a common interest, namely to find out what experts from both academic research and practice had to say about effects, quality, and evaluation of and in coaching.**



No question: The popularity of coaching has been growing and intensifying. The University of Applied Sciences and Arts North Western Switzerland is following this development closely and, with its biannual international conference "Coaching Meets Research", also offers the leading platform for professional discourse on the subject. The conference provides a forum to connect practice and research and supports

dialogue with international participants and speakers. With this in mind, and following the 2012 ("Fields of Practice in Coaching") and 2014 ("Coaching and Society") conferences, the organisers of this year's event focused on "Effects", "Quality", and "Evaluation" as relevant dimensions of professionalization in coaching, asking questions such as: Does coaching actually have any effects? Can the effects of coaching be improved in any way? Are there unintended positive or negative side effects in coaching? What differentiates excellent from good and bad coaching and coaches? How can the effects and the quality of coaching be scientifically evaluated and assessed?

The conference was opened by the President of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts North Western Switzerland FHNW, Professor Dr Crispino Bergamaschi, and the Deputy Director of the Swiss State Ministry of Education, Research, and Innovation, Josef Widmer. As in previous years, the conference was organised by Robert Wegener.

The first plenary lecture was delivered by Dr Christiane Schiersmann, Professor of Education and Counselling at the University of Heidelberg (GER). In her lecture, she used recent findings in research on counselling and psychotherapy to develop basic foundations of a general theory of coachingcounselling. According to Schiersmann, this theory should also provide a central reference point for the further development of theory and practice in coaching. The relationship between recent findings in Positive Psychology and their relevance for the practice of coaching was at the centre of the second keynote lecture by Dr Carol Kauffman, Director of the American Institute of Coaching at Harvard. 13 further speakers provided insights into recent scholarship and practice in four comprehensively structured theme labs on the topics of "Effects", "Quality", "Evaluation", and "Factors of Effect".

The second day of the conference was opened by Dr Michael Loebbert, Head of Coaching Studies at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts North Western Switzerland FHNW. In his presentation on "Factors of Success in Coaching", he argued that the description and study of factors of success could significantly contribute to the improvement of coaching practices.

This keynote was followed by a very fruitful panel discussion on the topic "What Makes a Coach – Quality through Qualification?!", bringing together views and perspectives on the matter by Lutz Salamon (Roundtable of Coaching Associations, GER), Astrid Hasler (Swiss Professional Association of Coaching, Supervision, and Organisational Development BSO), Wolfgang Knopf (Austrian Association of Supervision and Coaching OEVS), and Dr Beate Fietze (Sociology of Professions expert).

The second half of the day was once again dedicated to four theme labs ("Effective Interventions", "Effective Coaching in Organisations", "Effective Organisational Development through Coaching", and "Process Research"), where speakers from different fields of academic research and from the world of practice shared their insights in 13 different contributions. In the final keynote, David Peterson, Director Executive Coaching & Leadership of Google USA, presented his own organisational perspective on the effects, quality, and evaluation of and in coaching. He introduced a very attentive audience to his understanding of coaching and shared his views on the implementation and evaluation of coaching in organisations.

The conference was supported by more than 40 partner organisations (professional associations, institutions of higher education, business companies, media companies, and public supporting organisations) from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. About half of the supporters presented themselves with stalls at the Coaching Marketplace, providing participants with information on the most recent publications in the field of coaching, and, above all, creating a fantastically vibrant atmosphere. As always, the Research Colloquium (with about 100 participants and 10 speakers) as well as the Networking event on the first night, were central to the success of the conference. The post-conference, one-day, workshop with David Peterson on the topic of "Coaching Leaders in Turbulent Times", attended by close to 50 people, was a new, and very insightful and highly inspiring addition to the conference programme.

Coaching has a very viable chance to become a scientifically respected practice and to establish itself as the counselling format of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The field is dynamic and has begun to produce important and visible results and developments, such as the application of electronic media or issues of best practice behaviour, using evaluated video documentation of coaching sessions. At the same time, it is evident that the working relationship between coach and 'coachee' as well as mutual respect in that relationship have become important factors of success and will, most likely, remain so. Research output in the field continues to grow and research and practice have begun to develop a critical dialogue with each other.

People who did not attend the conference in person are invited to purchase a recording of the four keynote lectures, the panel discussion, and the theme labs "Effects" and "Effective Organisational Development through Coaching" for a small fee. ([www.coaching-meets-research.ch/archiv/kongress-2016](http://www.coaching-meets-research.ch/archiv/kongress-2016)).

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Coaching Congress will take place in Olten on 19/20 June 2018.

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[www.coaching-meets-research.ch](http://www.coaching-meets-research.ch)

Olten, 21 June 2016

## Sponsors and Partners of the 2016 Congress

### Main Sponsors

BSO Berufsverband für Coaching, Supervision und Organisationsberatung  
DGSv Deutsche Gesellschaft für Supervision e.V.\*  
EMCC European Mentoring and Coaching Council Switzerland  
FSP Föderation der Schweizer Psychologinnen und Psychologen  
KICK Institut für Coaching und Kommunikation  
OEVS Österreichische Vereinigung für Supervision und Coaching  
SGfB Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Beratung  
ZHAW Department of Applied Psychology, Zurich University of Applied Sciences

### Supporting Organisations

SGSA Swiss Society of Social Work  
SNF Swiss National Science Foundation

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ACC Austrian Coaching Council  
ANSE Association of National Organisations for Supervision in Europe  
DBVC Deutscher Bundesverband Coaching e.V.\*  
DCV Deutscher Coaching Verband e.V.\*  
DGfC Deutsche Gesellschaft für Coaching e.V.\*  
DGSF Deutsche Gesellschaft für Systemische Therapie, Beratung und Familientherapie e.V.\*  
EASC European Association for Supervision and Coaching e.V.\*  
ECA European Coaching Association  
EMCC European Mentoring & Coaching Council Germany e.V.\*  
ICF International Coach Federation Switzerland  
Roundtable der Coachingverbände  
SCA Swiss Coaching Association  
SSCP Swiss Society for Coaching Psychology  
UBIT Fachgruppe Wien Unternehmensberatung, Buchhaltung und Informationstechnologie

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