TAMK
TAMPERE UNIVERSITY
OF APPLIED SCIENCES

COACHING AS A TOOL FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

A case study at Company X

Tommi Leikomaa

ABSTRACT

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu
Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Degree Programme in International Business
TAMK Consulting Academy

TOMMI LEIKOMAA:
Coaching as a Tool for Performance Management
A case study at Company X

Bachelor's thesis 43 pages, appendices 2 pages
December 2016
_____

This thesis was commissioned by Company X to find insights on using coaching for managing performance.

To answer the research questions (1) "Is coaching the way of the future in performance management at Company X?" and (2) "How can coaching be used effectively to monitor performance at Company X?", a literature review was done on both main subject areas: coaching and performance management. This formed the theoretical framework for the thesis. In addition, six semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted on a heterogeneous, purposeful sample. The results from these interviews were reflected against the theoretical framework and subjected to analytic induction.

The main theme emerging from the results was the importance of organisational support in enabling quality coaching conversations in the regular one-to-one meetings. Secondary themes included expanding coaching from individual level to team level, and dealing with resistance towards coaching.

Addressing the first theme, a recommendation to improve the organisational support was made. This recommendation was based on both the theoretical framework and the research findings.

_____

Key words: performance management, performance appraisal, performance review, coaching, human resources management, case study

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

Agile	A twelve-principle manifesto for software development
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration
GROW	Goal, Reality, Options, and Will.
Lean	A systematic method for the elimination of waste within a system
Scrum	An Agile framework for completing complex projects
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, and Time bound
Systems Theory	A science which has the comparative study of systems as its object
TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Theory of Constraints	A managerial framework for continuous improvement

1 INTRODUCTION

Performance management is in the core of human resources management. It is a process, which can simply be defined as a feedback loop of continuous improvement. The purpose of performance management is to improve the performance of the company by improving the performance of each employee. In addition, performance management can be used to steer company culture. The key elements of performance management are goal setting, performance measurement, and performance feedback. These elements are then aligned with the overall organisational goals. The periodical, typically annual or bi-annual, performance appraisal is a retrospective of the employee performance. (Armstrong 2014.)

Performance management process and especially performance appraisal part of the process are in a turning point. The traditional annual and bi-annual performance appraisal cycles are seeing a more frequent, one-to-one coaching driven approaches take over the performance evaluation field (Buckingham and Goodall 2015; Cappelli and Tavis 2016; Lujike 2011). Even big corporations such as Microsoft, formerly a big advocate of the score card system, are changing the way they do performance appraisal (Warren 2013). Previously, these types of changes in the performance management field may have been shrugged off as fads of the typically early adopting technology industry, but the ideology behind them is gaining foothold with traditional industries such as electronics manufacturing. In the world of today, where organisations are striving to be more Lean and apply the teachings of the Theory of Constraints, the traditional approach, which before was accepted as the necessary evil, is increasingly seen as waste. (Cappelli and Tavis 2016.)

This movement away from traditional annual and bi-annual performance appraisals has reached Company X too. A pilot program was running in one of the organisations and the approach for it involved a paradigm shift for the company. A more coaching-oriented approach was used in the pilot program to take the weight off the traditional bi-annual performance appraisal process and to make the appraisal more a session to provide a periodic summary.

Cappelli and Tavis (2016) argue that one reason for the change is that both employees and managers deeply dislike the traditional performance appraisal process. This combined with the fact that it has become more important to retain your talent, because the labour market is currently shifting towards employee driven (Cappelli and Tavis 2016). At Company X the situation was similar; some of the employees were not seeing value in the bi-annual process and some of the managers were unhappy with the amount of work the process required.

1.1   Background

Company X is a large international company with offices in multiple locations. Founded in the early years of the third millennium, they have entertained people for many years. From the large number of games they have released, some have been quite successful. Their player network is formidable, reaching millions of players monthly.

The author had long and diverse history in software development, but they had grown increasingly interested in leadership and management, which lead the author to pursue international business (BBA) studies at Tampere University of Applied Sciences. These studies, combined with the leadership responsibilities they had gained, sparked an interest in performance management and coaching.

The increasing people management responsibilities initiated a period of self-reflection for the author. This was when the author started having concerns about how performance was typically managed, especially the annual or bi-annual performance appraisals. In their experience, the process was unnecessarily heavy and time-consuming. After being introduced to the performance management process at Company X, the author identified some of the same issues they had encountered before. This was when the author started having discussions with the people in the pilot program, introduced in chapter 1, to identify elements they could adopt.

As the pilot program was very local to a part of an organisation within Company X, an opportunity to conduct a case study was identified. More insights were required from a more generic viewpoint. This thesis is targeted to provide those insights, but also to address some of the issues that were identified in the pilot program.

1.2   Case study objective and research questions

The purpose of this case study was to provide a real, tangible, and actionable insights for the development of Company X's performance management. To fulfil this purpose, it would be necessary to get a realistic picture of the current performance management process, especially the performance appraisal process, understand the extent to which coaching is currently employed, and to study if increasing the amount of coaching would be beneficial. This lead to the first research question:

Is coaching the way of the future in performance management at Company X?

It was also necessary to speak with the front people of the pilot to see what kind of issues they might have encountered. One of these issues was, that to change the scope or even replace the traditional process, it would be necessary to provide something quantifiable for the upper management in place of the bi-annual reviews. This was moulded into the second research question:

How can coaching be used effectively to monitor performance at Company X?

1.3   Thesis structure

This thesis begins with introductory chapter one. It explains the background and the motivations for this thesis, as well as the objectives of the research, followed by a short description of what to expect reading forward.

The second chapter is dedicated to presenting the research methodology for this thesis. In the beginning one can find the reasoning behind the decision to make a case study. It also explains the approach taken to literature review and how it serves this thesis. The last two subchapters introduce the research approach taken.

Performance management and coaching are explored in chapter three, which presents the theoretical framework for this thesis. Some performance management models are introduced after a brief overview of the field, before concluding the chapter with a look on performance appraisals. The chapter continues with a part dedicated to coaching:

what the coaches' role is and what kind of skills and abilities are required from coaches. At the end of this subchapter, one can find a more in-depth explanation of one of the common coaching models, the GROW model.

The research data is analysed and results are presented in chapter four. The chapter begins with the approach to analysing the data. The topics in this chapter move from the current state of coaching in the performance management process to possible improvements, before concluding with how to measure performance when coaching.

At the end of the thesis in chapter five, the author will present their conclusions on the research, including the answers to the research questions. Additionally in this chapter, the author will provide their recommendations.

2   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research was selected as the approach for this thesis. The details of the research approach will be described in more depth in the following subchapters. The decision to choose qualitative over quantitative or mixed approach was not clear from the beginning. It was determined quite early on that a mixed approach would be too large to cover within the typical thesis time frame. In this case the value of qualitative research was considered higher, as quantitative approach was seen to require longitudinal component, which would have the same problem as mixed approach.

"Qualitative research is an umbrella term for a wide variety of approaches to and methods for the study of natural social life." (Saldaña 2011, 3). To understand the different areas of qualitative research needed for this thesis it was necessary to conduct more in-depth research on the subject.

2.1   Case study

According to Saldaña (2011, 8–9), case study is a qualitative research genre that focuses on a single unit of analysis. In this thesis' context the unit is organisation. The value of case study comes from the possibility to provide in-depth insights on specific unit and issue. The value of case studies is described in more detail by O'Leary (2013, 194–195), as they state that case studies can have value, if they either help reinforce or turn over existing theories, bring forth previously unseen variables, or have value just by being done, for example, being very relevant or unique.

Generalisation of case study results can be problematic, but not impossible. Saldaña (2011, 8–9) writes that it is up to the researcher in a sense that they can make compelling statements and conclusions, but also the reader as they may be able to realise how the case could be generalised or transferred to another setting. The possibility to generalise the results was considered in the topic formulation, research methodologies, interview questions and data analysis.

Why select to do a case study? Saldaña (2011, 8–9) writes that there are three ways to select a case-study: deliberate, strategic and convenience. The deliberate way means that there is a good opportunity for a focused study, which is the main reason why this thesis is a case study. The strategic way is described to be the way of choice, if there is a common case to study, for example, median or average case. The convenient way is what one may expect it is: the case is convenient because of the setting. This can mean that the researcher is already in the environment where the case can be studied.

Company X was selected as the object for this case study for two specific reasons: it was convenient as the author already worked there, and there was an ongoing pilot program running in one of the organisations within Company X. The author's position in the organisation is in practice related to the disciplines being studied. In their role as a team leader, they are expected to evaluate the performance of their team members, as well as selected peers. As introduced in chapter 1.1, the author had identified issues in the current state of performance management and had discussed them with the pilot group. Suggestion to do the thesis on this subject was well received and quickly lead to a search for appropriate research questions.

2.2   Literature review

Literature review is often called the foundation for the research and not without merit (Lipson 2007, 10; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2008, 61). Sharp, Peters and Howard list two major reasons for conducting a literature review (2002, 82–84).

1. To help with research topic selection.
2. To support research project proper.

This can be interpreted so that a preliminary literature search in the areas of one's interest will help them scope and focus their thesis topic. For this thesis, the area of interest was performance management, especially the recent shifts in performance appraisal and the relation of coaching to the performance management process as made familiar by the articles in chapter 1. These readings can be considered as, what Saunders et al. (2008, 27) call the preliminary search. They also acted as a catalyst to research the field of performance management more in general, supporting the framing of the thesis topic. On the other hand, it lead to a reading list in research methodology, which is not uncommon (Sharp et al. 2002, 83).

Once the topic is selected, the value of literature review is to learn more deeply about the current state of the field of the thesis, but also, if not a bit more superficially, the surrounding fields in order to get some more breadth and points of reference for the research (Saunders et al. 2008, 24–32). Galletta corroborates the value of this approach, as they write about literary review in the context of mastering the semi-structured interviews, which is the chosen method for primary data collection for this thesis and discussed more in depth in chapters 2.3 and 2.4. A focused reading list on performance management and coaching was built and updated throughout the writing of this thesis. In addition, related reading list was kept on surrounding fields, such as leadership and management, and more generally in human resources management.

Galletta writes about the importance of knowledge and personal experience as a source of insights, both of which are supported by good, critical literary review (2012, 11–12). This mandates that the author's lack of first-hand knowledge and experience on the case to be studied had to be considered when assessing the reliability of the results.

A literature review must be conducted critically. This means, that once the review has been conducted there should be an up-to-date picture of the existing research, a clear understanding of the starting point and, if possible, information about ongoing research in the field as well (Saunders et al. 2008, 58–62). It also means a critical treatment of what has been read. O'Leary (2013, 95) writes about assessing the quality of the chosen literary sources and how it is important to choose reliable sources, as the selected sources will affect the credibility of the research. To have a clearer picture of how to read critically and hence pick reliable sources, a search for a concise list was needed. For this exact purpose, Wallace and Wray (2016) have created a list of five questions:

> A. Why am I reading this?
> B. What are the authors trying to achieve in writing this?
> C. What are the authors claiming that is relevant to my work?
> D. How convincing are these claims, and why?
> E. In conclusion, what use can I make of this?
> (Wallace and Wray 2016, 42)

These questions and the quality assessment criteria have been the guidance when selecting sources for this thesis.

2.3   Preparing the interviews

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2008, 320–321) interviews can be divided into three categories: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured.

Structured interviews, or quantitative research interviews, have a predetermined or standardised set of questions. They are suitable for providing quantifiable data and as they are easily repeatable, they provide more reliability than semi-structured and unstructured interviews (O'Leary 2013, 218; Saldaña 2011, 32; Saunders et al. 2008, 320).

Semi-structured, or qualitative research interview, is an in-depth interview that is non-standard. The interviewer will have a list of questions that will frame the themes to be discussed, but allows for probing to occur. The questions may even vary interview to interview based on the context. (Saunders et al. 2008, 320–321.)

Unstructured, or in-depth interviews, do not have any predetermined questions so they provide an excellent opportunity to dive deep in an area of interest. Unstructured interviews can be classified in interviewee lead, informant interviews and interviewer lead, participant interviews. (Saunders et al. 2008, 321.)

Saunders et al. (2008, 321) also state that interviews can further be classified by type of interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, in addition to the medium of communication.

The selected interview approach, highlighted with red, is depicted in figure 1. Face-to-face, one-to-one interviews were seen as the best option to allow anonymity, participants did not receive information on who else was participating, but it would also allow the interviewer to observe body language and facial expressions. In addition, it was seen that due to the sensitive nature of the topics being discussed, in one-to-one setting the interviewees would be more comfortable. The non-standardised, semi-structured ap-

proach was selected as it allows probing questions, while still providing some structure and focus to the interviews.
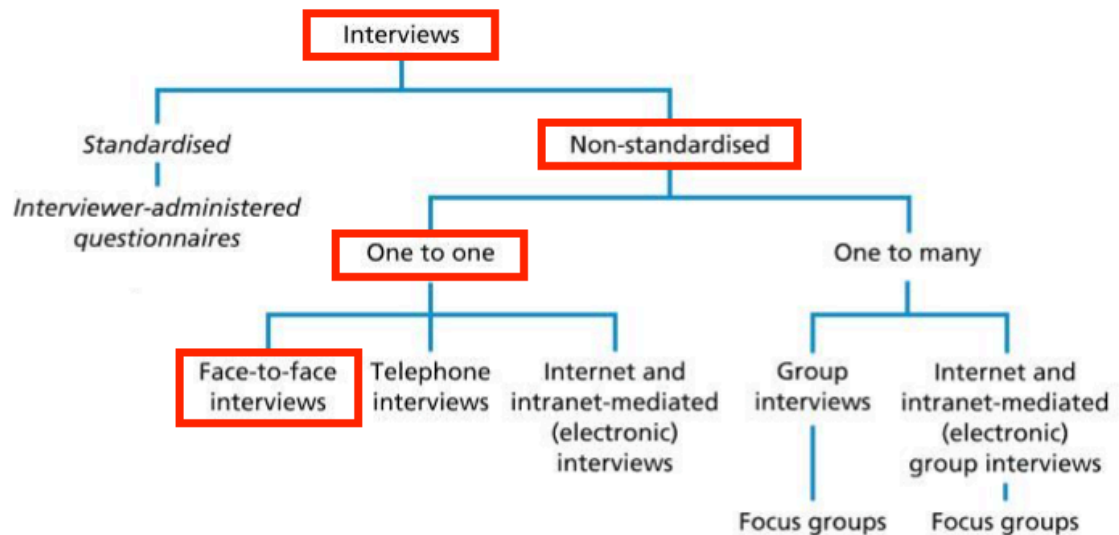

FIGURE 1. Forms of interview (Saunders et al. 2008, 321, modified)

Before designing the questions for the interviews, there are quite a few preparation steps one should take: the type of the interview, main research categories, candidate selection, and decisions such as should the questions be sent beforehand or not.

There are a few strategies for participant selection in qualitative research. Most authors mention convenience sampling. This is a sampling method where the researcher will serendipitously pick any easily accessible participant, which may mean their friends or colleagues (Marshall 1996, 523; Saunders et al. 2008, 241). Judgmental, or purposeful sampling is a method where the researcher selects the participants that are most likely to be useful when answering the research questions (Marshall 1996, 523; Saunders et al. 2008, 237–240). As opposed to pure convenience sampling, with purposeful sampling the researcher must use their skills and knowledge to determine the sample. Due to the nature of qualitative research, most of it is done using purposeful sampling (Collinridge and Gantt 2008 according to Cleary, Horsfall, and Hayter 2014, 473).

Saunders et al. (2008) have further classified purposive sampling into subcategories. When the research is about the edge cases, figuring out the odd ones in the group the suggested sampling method would be what is called deviant sampling. Then again, if the focus of the research is to find common themes, one might consider heterogeneous

sampling. Opposed to heterogeneous sampling there is homogeneous sampling, which focuses on a sample with specific characteristic and studies that sample more in-depth. Critical case sampling is, as the name indicates, selected if one wants to understand a critical case and more specifically, if the critical case can occur in another environment. When mapping out the most common case in a group the suggested approach would be to use typical case sampling. If the purpose of the research is to provide generalizable results, then perhaps selecting typical case sampling would be the best choice. (Saunders et al. 2008, 239–240.)

Saunders et al. (2008, 234) provide a useful diagram for selecting qualitative research approach. It was used to map out the approach for this thesis as highlighted with red in figure 2. Due to the size of Company X, it was not realistic to include everyone in this study. As the focus of this research was to uncover themes and provide insights, it was unlikely that the sample would be representative or that it would provide statistically reliable. While there was a small exploratory component present in this thesis, it wasn't the main purpose, instead the research aimed to be more explanatory and focused on a smaller group of key people to interview. Therefore, purposeful heterogeneous sampling was considered to be the most suitable sampling method for this research.
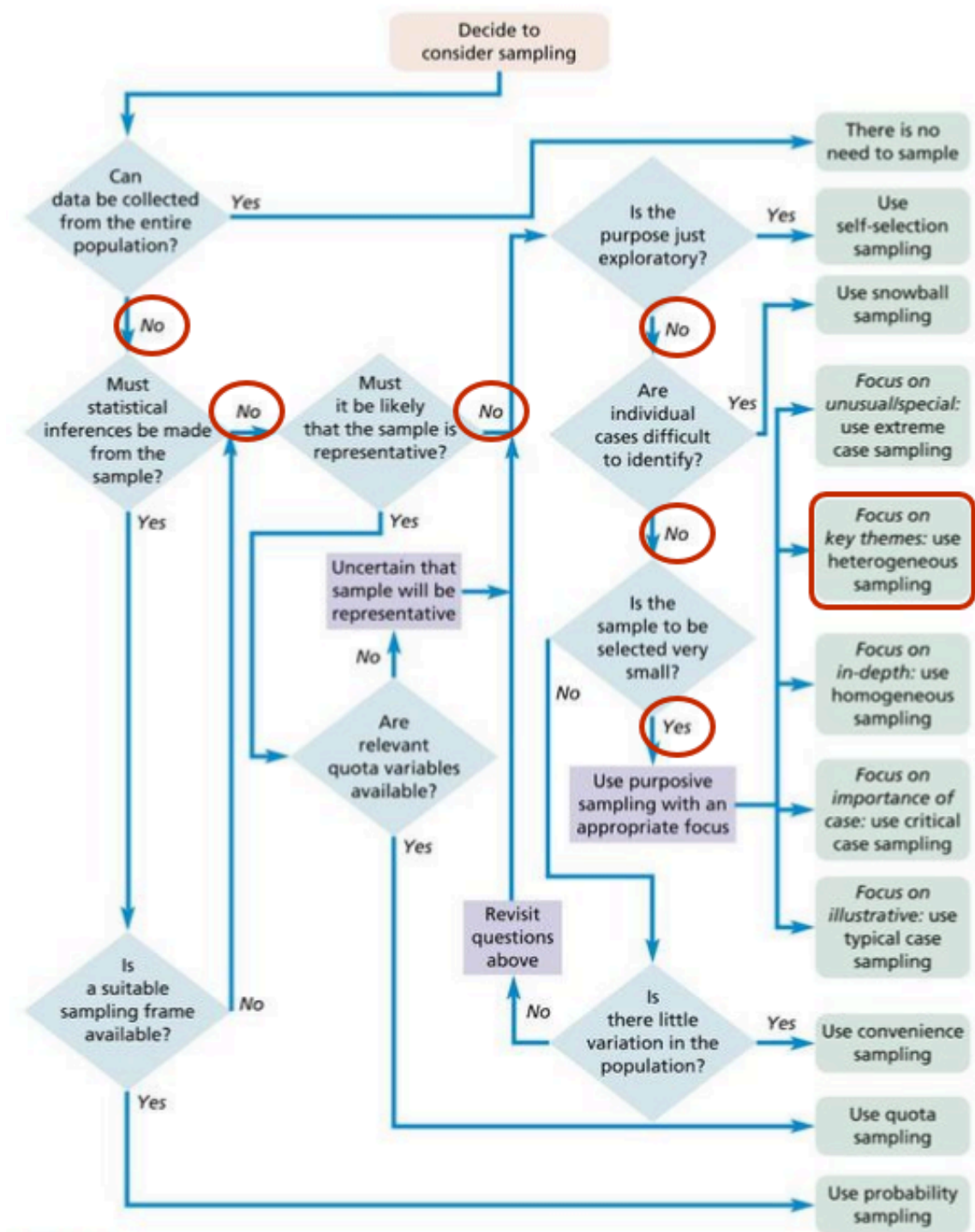
FIGURE 2. Selecting non-probability sampling technique (Saunders et al. 2008, 234, modified)

When conducting a qualitative interview, it is recommended to use open questions, because they give the interviewee a chance to answer the questions broadly and from their own point of view. Open questions usually start with "what", "how" or "why". This was used as the general guidance when designing questions for the interviews, as visible in appendix 2.

The invitation to participate in the thesis was sent out to an author selected, varied group of people to get a purposeful, heterogeneous sample. The turnout was good, with 75% of the invited people agreed to participate. Details of the participants can be seen in table 1.

TABLE 1. Interview participants

Role	Description
Developer team leader	Informal matrix manager for developers in their team. Works closely with developers, designers, artists and producers.
Producer	Line manager for developers, artists, and designers in their team. Works closely with developer team leads, artist team leads, designer team leads, and other producers.
Scrum master / agile coach #1	Manages scrum processes for their team. Coaches individuals and teams, especially in improving the agile processes. Works closely with producers, executive producers, and other agile coaches.
Scrum master / agile coach #2 (pilot group)	Manages scrum processes for their team. Coaches individuals and the team, especially in improving the agile processes. Works closely with producers and other agile coaches. Has a development coach.
Director of engineering (pilot group)	Manages the teams in their organisation. Takes part in planning the agile processes in their organisation. Actively participates in running the pilot program. Works closely with developers and product owners.
Human resources business partner	Wide range of human resources activities. Translates core business activities to people plans. Participates in managing the bi-annual performance appraisal process. Works closely with all the employees in their organisation.

To improve the credibility and to give the participants enough time to prepare in advance, the research questions, as listed in appendix 2, were sent with the invitations to

the participants (Saunders et al. 2008, 328). This typically happened 1 to 2 weeks before the actual interview took place. In one case the questions were not sent beforehand due to a technical problem. In addition, during one of the interviews there was construction work ongoing in the building. These have been considered when analysing their interviews.

As suggested by Saunders et al. (2008, 329), quiet meeting rooms were reserved beforehand to have a peaceful and relaxing environment for the interviews. The rooms were arranged in convenient locations for the participants. In addition, provisions to take notes as well as a beverage was arranged at the location. The participants were notified beforehand how the interview would be conducted, how and where the data would be used, and that it would be made public. The complete email can be found in appendix 1.

2.4 Conducting the interviews

The main technology used when conducting the interviews was audio recording. A digital audio recorder was placed on the table between the interviewer and the interviewee to clearly capture the interview for later analysis. In addition, quick notes were written down on a laptop computer during the interview to later have an overview of what was discussed with which participant. This would enable faster analysis of results (Saldaña 2011, 95).

Saunders et al. (2008, 336) write about interviewing competence, pointing out that good interviewing skills correlate directly with the bias of the data collected. They list essential skills, for example listening and questioning. They also point out that the ability to stop and summarise to make sure the interviewer has understood the interviewee correctly is very important to data reliability. One could argue that qualitative interviews are like coach initiated coaching discussions when following the GROW model, which is described in subchapter 3.2.3.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To better understand coaching and performance management, both were studied individually at first. The history, theories, and models were explored to understand these disciplines well. It was especially important to study the relationship between the two to get a more in-depth understanding of the field and to form a firm foundation for the research.

3.1 Performance management

The performance management process has been defined in as many ways as there are authors writing about it. Armstrong's (2014) definition is a comprehensive one and is thus selected as the definition used in this thesis.

> Performance management is the continuous process of improving performance by setting individual and team goals which are aligned to the strategic goals of the organization, planning performance to achieve the goals, reviewing and assessing progress, and developing the knowledge, skills and abilities of people. (Armstrong 2014)

Armstrong (2014) emphasises the continuous nature of the process and how performance management is inseparable part of line management to begin with. They clarify that unlike performance appraisal; performance management is not an annual or bi-annual HR ritual. Caldwell (2002, 2) further tells us that performance management is not a one-way street, something that the managers impose on their subordinates. They state that performance management is a proactive relationship, a partnership.

3.1.1 Models

Caldwell (2002, 16) presents a five step performance management model, which is depicted in figure 3. It depicts performance management as a continuous loop, a cycle.
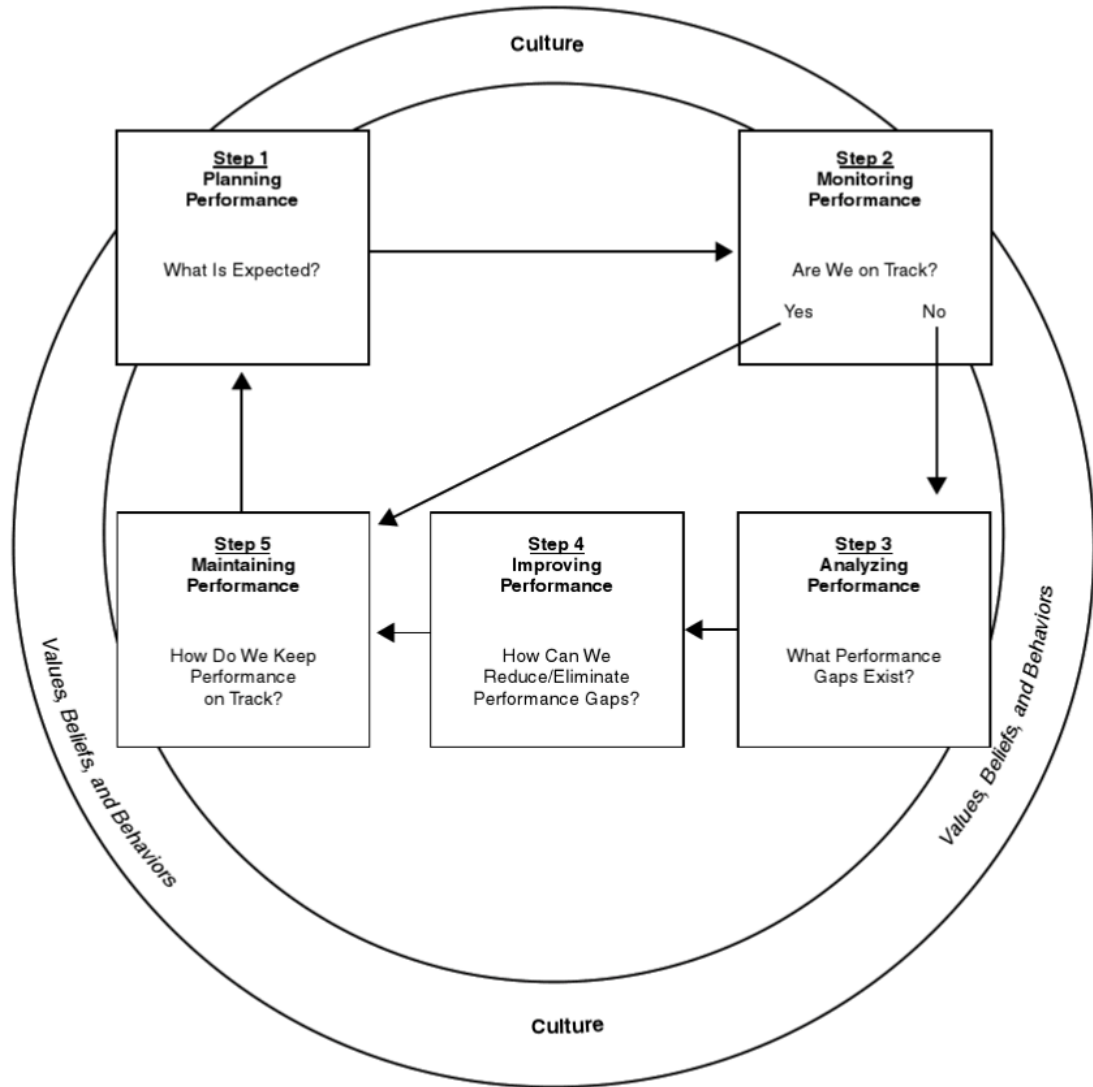
FIGURE 3. Caldwell's (2002, 16) five step performance management model

Armstrong (2014) defines a similar cycle, as seen in figure 4. Their model is a bit more concise having only four steps.
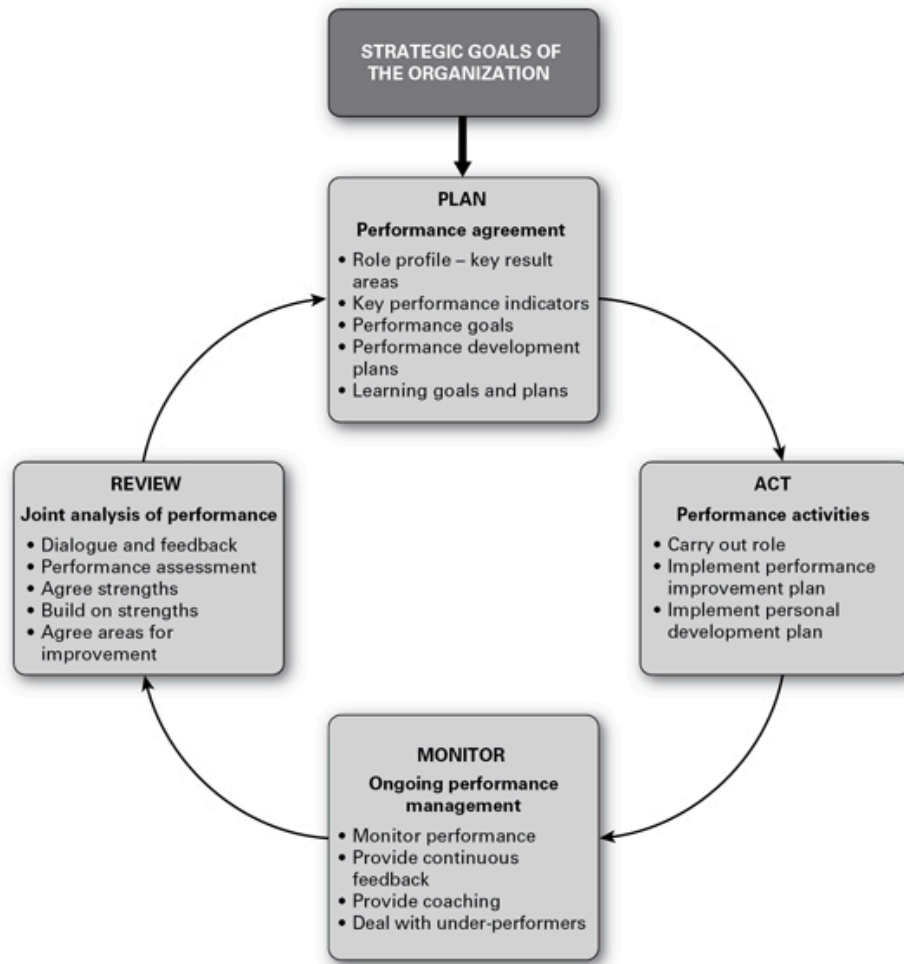
FIGURE 4. Armstrong's (2014) performance management cycle

It is no coincidence that the two models, or cycles, look very similar. Feedback loops are inherently present in many areas of science. In the field of Systems Theory there is an area of study called Cybernetics, which focuses in feedback mechanisms. Cybernetics describes feedback mechanisms using three elements: acting, sensing and evaluating (Appelo 2010, 36). This three-element feedback mechanism can be used to describe how, in a self-organising way, the system can be steered towards desired goals. An example of a system feedback loop, with the three elements illustrated, can be seen in figure 5.
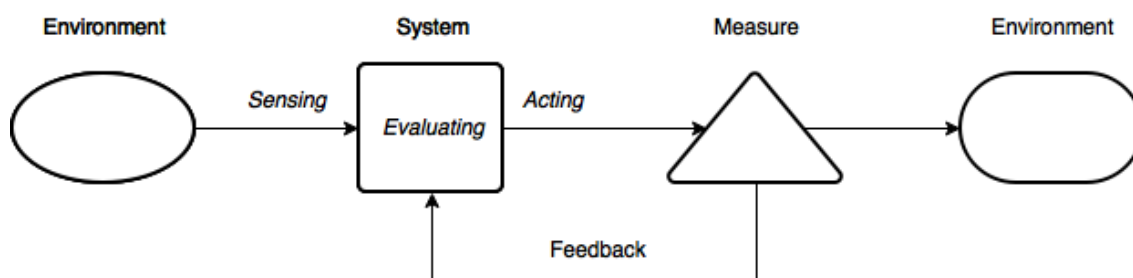
FIGURE 5. System feedback loop

To understand the meaning of feedback loops in performance management, it is worth taking a closer look at the three elements depicted above.

According to Appelo (2010, 36) acting is the interaction with the environment. When observing the feedback loop from the organisation's perspective, acting would be closely related to the plan and review steps of Armstrong's (2014) performance management model. The line manager, on behalf of the organisation, is acting through reviewing and planning to steer the behaviour of the employee.

Sensing is described, by Appelo (2010, 36), to be the input from the environment the observation of the impact which acting causes. It can be linked to the monitor and review steps in Armstrong's model. It is the manager's job to monitor how the employee is executing the goals, which are set in the planning, and bring the observations to the review.

Appelo (2010, 36) writes that the evaluation element in a feedback mechanism means comparing current state of the system to the goals of the system. The review step in Armstrong's model perfectly fits together with the evaluation element. Once the observations from sensing are brought to review, they are analysed for the next goal setting.

Initially no element in the described feedback mechanism was observed to relate to the act step in Armstrong's model. After further investigation, that was found to be untrue, as pointed out by Appelo (2010, 36). In this case, the act step is the environment. The feedback loop from organisational perspective operates in the environment of the employee and in extension in the environment of the organisation. The feedback mechanism will drive change, in both, towards the goals.

It has been established that performance management models are feedback loops, which steer the behaviour of the employee, through self-regulation towards, the goals of both the employee and in extension the organisation.

3.1.2 Performance appraisal

The exact origin of performance appraisal is not known, but one of the earliest reference to performance appraisals is from third century Wei Dynasty in China, the Imperial Rater of Nine Grades (Coens and Jenkins 2002). They were tasked to evaluate the performance of the official family (Armstrong 2014; Monappa and Saiyadain 1996). It is noteworthy that same concerns regarding the integrity of the appraisal were present even then that are still present when discussing the difficulties with modern day performance appraisal. Writings from the period show that, for example, the fairness of the Imperial Rater was doubted (Coens and Jenkins 2002).

Performance appraisals were adopted in the cotton industry and military in the early years of 19th century, slowly gaining ground until 1950's (Coens and Jenkins 2002). With their Harvard Business Review article in 1957, McGregor (1972) proposed a new approach to performance appraisals. It can be argued that together with Peter Drucker's (2011) concept of management by objectives, even though since discredited (Armstrong 2014), together with McGregor's approach started the modernisation of performance appraisals. The key changes towards modern performance appraisal are the introduction of self-assessment as the first step, broadening of the appraisal itself into an analysis, and the idea of using coaching for improving and maintaining the employee performance.

A more recent addition to the performance management process, but typically utilised in the performance appraisal process is the 360° feedback, which is another name for multi-source feedback. It can be defined as a process where feedback is gathered, not just from the subject themselves, but also from people they work with: peers, managers, direct reports, and depending on their role, even customers (Rensburg and Prideaux 2006, 563).

3.2   Coaching

The etymology of the word coach comes from the Hungarian village of Kocs. It is where the word coach comes from for the method of transport, a carriage. In de Haan's (2008, 22) opinion, this describes the discipline well, as coaching is a way of transporting the coachee from the place they are to the place they want to be – from their current situation to the situation where they have reached their goals.

Tracking down the roots of coaching leads to interesting places. According to de Haan (2008, 5) the first coach appears to be a fictional one. In Homer's Odyssey, the goddess Pallas Athene assumes this role to guide mortals in their adventures. They also write how coaching type discussions can be found in the works of great Greek philosophers, like Plato. In support of this, Bax, Negrutiu and Calotă (2011, 2) write that the roots of coaching can be traced to early philosophers and religions. Their example of early coaching is also a fictional work, Aesop's Fables. It can be stated that coaching as a concept is not a recent discovery.

In their book, de Haan (2008, 21) presents some statistics of the word coaching in the title or subtitle of publications. It seems that use of the term coaching grows exponentially, with the first publications being from between 1955 and 1965. There is consensus in the field that the modern coaching stems from the works of Timothy Gallwey, more specifically their The Inner Game book series from 1970's and 1980's (Bax et al. 2011, 3; Whitmore 2010, 10).

John Whitmore was one of the first authors who started writing about coaching in other contexts besides sports. Together with Graham Alexander they are considered to be the fathers of the Goal, Reality, Options, and Will model or GROW model in short (Bax et al. 2011, 3; Crouser 2009, 40). GROW model is analysed further in subchapter 3.2.3.

"Coaching is unlocking people's potential to maximize their own performance." (Whitmore 2010, 10). A very simple statement, yet powerful. It emphasises that coaching is about the coachee, not the coach. It defines the coach as a tool, much like a key that opens locks. It refrains from stating that the outcome of coaching would be performance, rather it is implied since it is all about helping coachee develop themselves to be the best they can be. It is important to understand the difference. Although Starr (2012,

5) defines coaching a bit more practically as series of conversations, the description of the purpose of those coaching discussions is very close to how Whitmore defines coaching.

Today the field of coaching is both wide and deep. One may find some approaches to coaching to be closer to counselling and some approaches to be very focused on specific sport. In this thesis, coaching is mostly viewed from the management and leadership perspective, focusing on the one-to-one coaching rather than team or organisational coaching.

Whitmore (2010) quite rightfully asks whether a manager can be a coach at all. This setting is not without its problems. It may even require a big management style change, but there are some benefits too. The most relevant benefit from the performance management perspective may be that, because of the coaching relationship, the manager is constantly in the loop with the employee. (Whitmore 2010, 20).

3.2.1   The roles of a coach

Depending on which author one listens to, the roles of a coach can be classified and categorised in several ways. Bax, Negrutiu and Calotă (2011, 5–6) list 6 different roles: guiding and caretaking, teaching, mentoring, sponsorship, and awakening. Starr (2012, 9–17) approaches coaching roles from slightly different angle by describing and depicting a scale of influence as seen in figure 6.
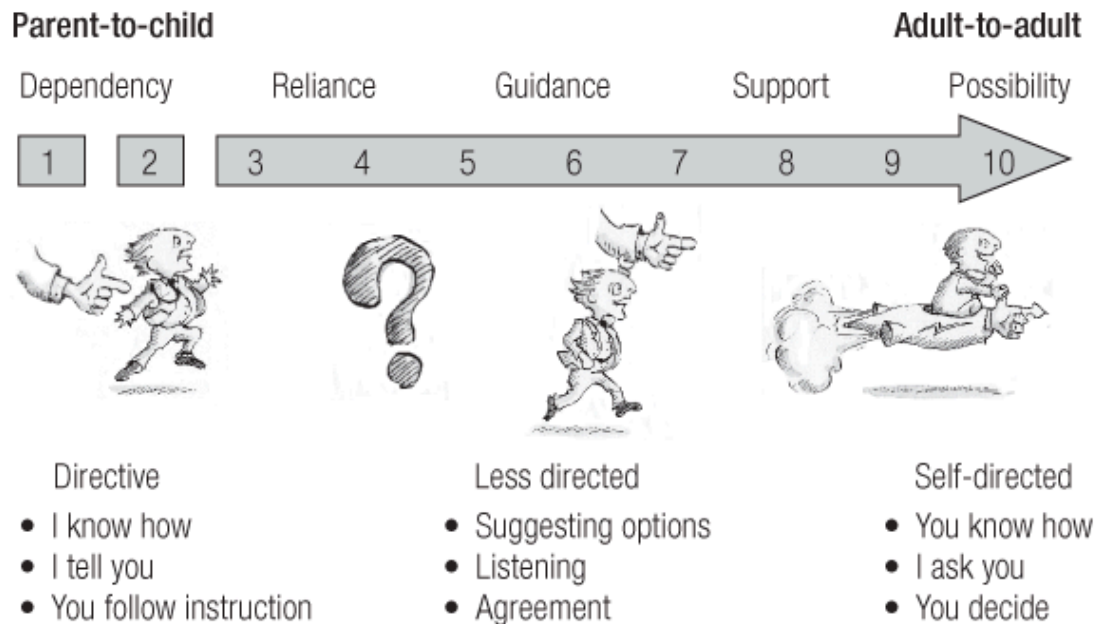
FIGURE 6. Starr's (2012, 15) scale of influence in the context of roles of a coach

Another classification is presented by de Haan (2008, 22). They describe the roles of a coach as a list of activities: transport expert, educator, therapist and organisation developer. Excluding the last, as it relates to the organisation rather than the individual, the first three seem to follow the trend set by the previously mentioned authors. There does not seem to be a common way to classify the roles of a coach, but all the previously mentioned classifications define a scale of roles ranging from coach controlled and directive to coachee lead and supportive. There are exceptions as well. "The coach is not a problem solver, a teacher, an adviser, an instructor, or even an expert; he or she is a sounding board, a facilitator, a counsellor, an awareness raiser." (Whitmore 2010, 40). This view from Whitmore is something that Starr (2012, 119) would call pure coaching.

3.2.2   The core abilities of a coach

Starr's (2012, 45) star of core skills, as depicted in figure 7, was selected as the starting point to start exploring the skills and abilities considered to be at the core of coaching. It is from the coaching in the workplace viewpoint, which was considered to be essential for this research.

FIGURE 7. Starr's (2012, 45) star of core skills

Starr (2012, 49) describes the effect of good rapport through emotions, how something makes one feel. Having good rapport makes one more likely to feel more like themselves and to be natural in a situation. Starr may be oversimplifying when they bundle rapport with trust an openness. As pointed out by Boyce, Jackson and Neal (2010, 917–918), the relationship between coach and coachee is one of the biggest success factors in coaching being more specific would be prudent.

In addition to rapport, trust is at the core of coaching for performance. According to Boyce et al. (2010, 918), trust enables honest and open coaching discussions. One could argue that without trust the coaching relationship has little chance for success.

It is hard to find an author who would not emphasise the importance of listening as core skill for a coach. Most often this means active listening, but Starr (2012, 61–62) is even more specific by saying that the listening should have intention and the listener should concentrate to listening. A good rule of thumb may be that the coach should focus on being present for the coachee (Starr 2012, 62–63).

There is art to asking a question that is at the same time thought provoking but not provocative. Since the core purpose of coaching is to lead the coachee towards deeper awareness, as awareness leads to performance, it is important to understand the sources

of awareness: effective questions. Good coaching questions begin as open as possible to allow probing towards the details. Effective questioning is not just about the questions. Body language, tone of voice, and self-awareness can all affect the answers one may get. (Whitmore 2010, 34,45.)

The flexible style of influence relates heavily to the roles of a coach, already discussed in subchapter 3.2.1. What Starr is after with this core skill is that a good coach does not just take one role or level of influencing, but they will operate on the scale of influence (figure 8), moving horizontally when the situation so requires (Starr 2012, 86–87).
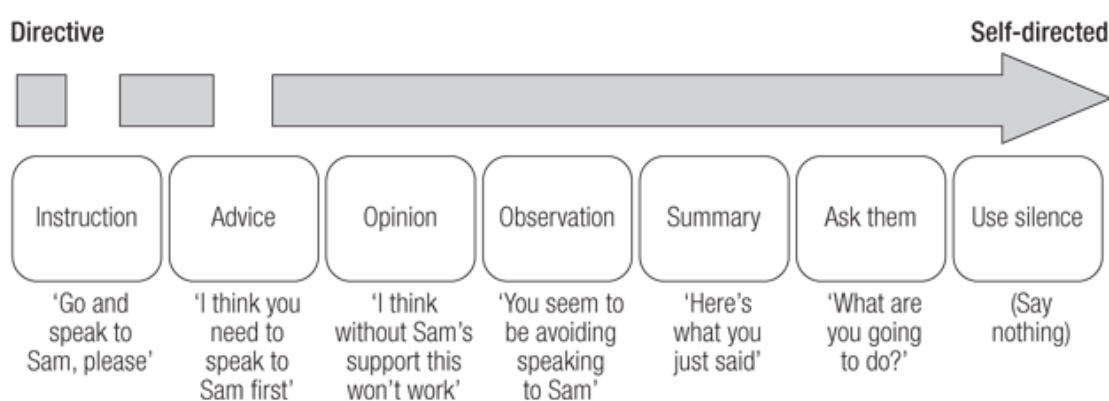

FIGURE 8. Starr's (2012, 87) scale of influence in the context of flexibility of influence

As it is with listening, most authors emphasise the importance of well given feedback in coaching. Whitmore (2010) writes that there are 5 levels of feedback, but only one of the levels satisfies the requirements for coaching. Personal criticism and judgmental comments are basically two sides of the same coin. They aim to hurt without any information for the recipient to better themselves. In the middle level the feedback is not much more than opinions, for example: "I like your hair". The last two levels turn the feedback into questions with the difference in these levels being the quality of the questions being asked. The good kind of feedback will get a neutral, but detailed answer and will help the coachee action it. (Whitmore 2010, 123–126.)

3.2.3   The GROW model

Developed in the 1980's and made popular in the early 1990's, the GROW model has withstood the test of time and can be called the de facto model for coaching (Alexander

2010). This is possibly because it describes the coaching process very well on the higher level and it does not try to define implementations, although Whitmore (2010, 61–62) does suggest some, for example SMART for goal setting. According to Alexander (2010) GROW model is especially good in the context of work. One reason for this is that in working life the people who are being coached are functional individuals and hence coaching them does not require the coach to have training or experience in psychology (Alexander 2010).

The GROW model is typically presented in a circular process form (figure 9). This has perhaps created a misconception that using GROW model in your coaching discussions makes them sequential. This misconception is already pointed out to be wrong by Whitmore (2010, 55) when they introduce the GROW model. In truth they write that it is only sequential for starting a new coaching discussion on a new topic after which it can flow in any direction (Whitmore 2010, 54,67).

FIGURE 9. GROW model illustration, adopted from Alexander (2010)

Whitmore (2010) writes that there are two types of goals in coaching. The first being the goal for each session. This means what the coachee wishes to get out of the specific coaching session. The session may also be initiated by the coach. In this case the coach will be the one who has the goal for the session in mind, but Whitmore (2010) points out that the coachee should also be asked if they also had also a goal for the session.

The second is the overall goal, the goal each session tries to strive towards little by little. It is not to say an overall goal is not achievable within one session, but it is unlikely as overall goals are usually longer term. It is also common that goals change over time and therefore the goals for each coaching session become so important. Whitmore further divides overall goals into performance goals and end goals with the distinction mostly being in how much control over achieving that goal one may have. Although there are several suggestions on how to implement goal setting, for example SMART, the GROW model does not dictate the implementation. (Whitmore 2010, 58–59.)

The reality is an objective snapshot of the current situation of the coachee. Without objectivity, the image of reality can be skewed and will guide the efforts in the wrong direction. To help with keeping objectivity when discussing reality, Whitmore (2010) introduces a communication envelope (figure 10). The benefits of focusing on the descriptive end of the scale, marked with read in figure 10, are reduction in self-criticism and the fact that specific and descriptive observations are more likely to lead into actions. It is especially important to pay attention to this, because typical managerial discussions, marked blue in figure 10, are likely to be on the less descriptive part of the descriptive axis. (Whitmore 2010, 67.)
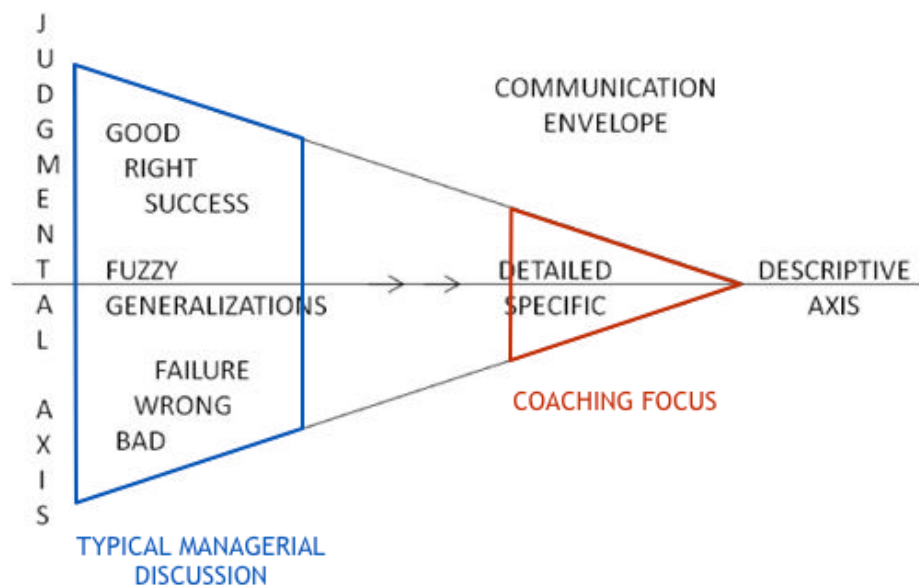

FIGURE 10. Coaching communication envelope (Whitmore 2010, 68, modified)

When looking for options on how to proceed and get reality closer to the goal it is important for the coach to refrain from limiting the search. The coach must be careful not

to inject their own opinions into the discussion or otherwise influence the coachee with the result of them not coming forth with all their suggestions. Whitmore (2010) says that the main idea of options step in the GROW model is to get as broad list of options as possible, not to focus on trying to find the right answer, as any one option that comes up may fuel another option and lead to better quality options. Once there is a comprehensive list of options, deciding which to act on may be difficult. Whitmore (2010) suggests analysing the benefits and costs of each option, maybe using scales to determine their ranking. (Whitmore 2010, 79–81.)

It comes down to the will to decide which options to act on. It may well be that there is already a clearly most valuable option to pick, but in most cases, there will be a few. It is not uncommon for an option to be revealed to be less valuable in this phase as it is when the coachee with the help of the coach really look deeper into the options. The coach should probe into the options – Whitmore (2010) proposes some good probing questions – until the coachee is confident that the action they are deciding to take will help them reach the goal they have set, in a time frame they have set. The coachee needs to be confident that they will be able to complete the goal fully, not partially, and until they will have the support they need, including the availability of the coach, to do the action; not just to tackle any obstacles, but also that they have the required skills to deliver the goal. (Whitmore 2010, 85–88.)

3.3   Coaching in Performance Management

The definition of coaching from chapter 3.2 clearly states that coaching intrinsically includes the element of performance development. Coaching cannot exist without it.

According to Armstrong (2014), coaching is an essential building block of performance management and the skill of an exceptional leader. Where the coaching steps into the performance management process, is through what they call ongoing performance management. In their view, coaching is part of the day-to-day performance management activities the managers are strongly recommended to engage in. This is visible also in the monitor part of the model they present, as seen in figure 4. (Armstrong 2014.)

Caldwell (2002, 98–99) writes about coaching in performance management from the viewpoint of manager as coach. They also see coaching as an integral part of performance management and advocates this by providing a list of four benefits for using this approach. The fourth benefit is the most relevant for this thesis, stating that using coaching makes the employees more self-managing, freeing time for the manager.

Coaching can be formally utilised in performance management by arranging regular one-to-ones and using a coaching model in those discussions, for example the GROW model as described in subchapter 3.2.3. Coaching can also become a transparent part of interaction between the employee and the line manager. It can be seamlessly applied to day-to-day conversations to give the coachee an opportunity to disclose something they wish to discuss, leading to a coaching discussion. Starr (2012, 175–183) calls this "Response Coaching". However, coaching is not the answer to every situation. The line manager must practice awareness, both self-awareness and situational awareness, to be able to apply coaching when it provides value and not to apply coaching when it does not provide value.

Summarising the subchapter, it could be stated that, not only is coaching a part of performance management process, but it is also a part of excellent leadership and therefore great line management.

3.4   Analysis

As mentioned in subchapter 1.2, this research set out to answer two research questions:
Is coaching the way of the future in performance management at Company X?
How can coaching be used effectively to monitor performance at Company X?

To find answers to these questions, two distinct actions were taken: literature review and qualitative interviews. The literature review resulted in the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3, which will be used as a reference when analysing the primary data.

The chosen primary data collection method was audio recording of the qualitative interviews. To prepare the audio data from the interview for analysis, all the recordings were

transcribed, which is the action of converting speech into writing (Saunders et al. 2008, 485). The transcription approach was to have precise data without being too strict about the disfluencies, for example "ums" and "ahs". On the other hand, to avoid risking the reliability of the data, it was chosen that these sounds would be transcribed, if there was any indication that they could be meaningful. The 4 hours and 36 minutes of interviews were transcribed into 93 pages of source material.

O'Leary (2013, 307) suggests a work flow for processing qualitative data (figure 11). The transcribed data was organised by the interview question, including any follow-ups. This was assessed to be enough after evaluating the amount of raw data that was gathered. Whether it is called summarising (Saunders et al. 2008, 491–492) or reducing (O'Leary 2013, 306), processing the raw data into a manageable units of information is recommended.
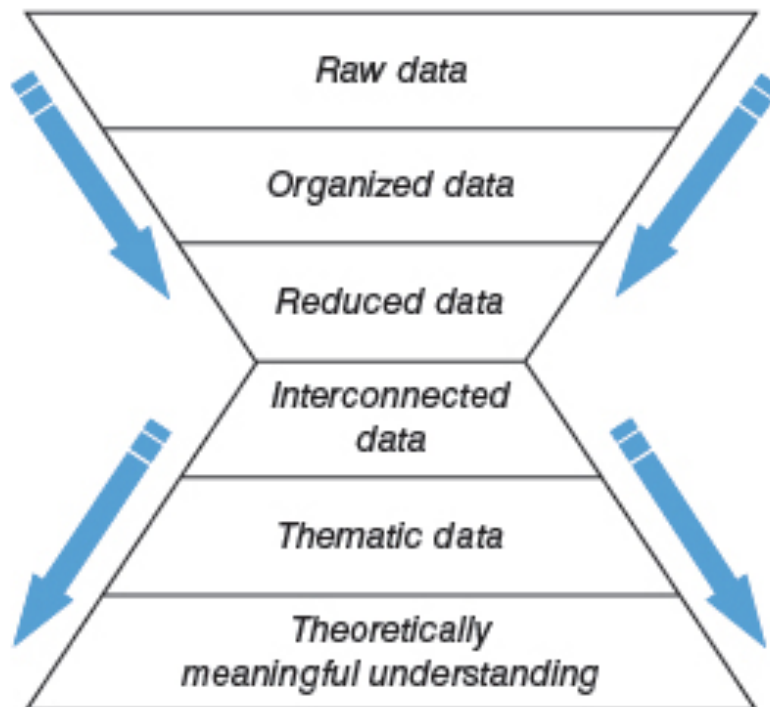
FIGURE 11. How to work with qualitative data (O'Leary 2013, 306)

Due to the nature of case studies and qualitative research based on interviews, the analysis will be more inductive than deductive. It will be deductive in the way that the performance management theories, processes, and models, introduced in this thesis, can be considered established and the data analysis included reflecting the findings against these theories, processes, and models. Moreover, it will be inductive in a way that the

data was analysed also independently to find any themes, which would help find answers to the research questions introduced in subchapter 1.2. The most fitting and hence the main analytical procedure was analytic induction (Saunders et al. 2008, 508).

As mentioned in subchapter 2.3, one of the participants was a human resources business partner. They had been actively participating in forming the current performance management process. To calibrate the findings from the interviews, the answers from this person concerning current state of the processes were considered as the baseline.

4 RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Current performance management process

To get a general idea of how the performance management currently works at Company X, the interviews always started with the question to describe the current process. Typically, the participant's answers started with a description of the bi-annual performance appraisal process and continued with general performance management process (figure 12). Both the mid-year review and the end-of-year review were described by many of the participants to include 360° feedback, which is described in more detail in subchapter 3.1.2.

Set goals → Follow-up → Mid-year review → Refine goals → Follow-up → End-of-year review

FIGURE 12. Current performance management process at Company X

It is notable that the process is not very rigid. The interviewed human resources business partner stated that there are only two formal processes: mid-year review, and end-of-year review. It is, however, strongly recommended that the performance management is an ongoing process throughout the year. The recommended activities and communications are: setting performance and personal goals, setting clear expectations for the role, following up how they are doing, giving constant feedback, and guiding what they should do next. After analysing the interview data, it can be said that the formal parts of the process were well known throughout different disciplines and that the more flexible parts of the process followed the recommendations. There were some distinctions to how the activities and communications were executed, but the elements could be identified.

The current performance management process was not left without critique. The formal bi-annual performance appraisal process was described by some of the participants as unreliable, stressful and hugely expensive. One of the participants argued, that compared to the value they get from it, it does not seem worth it. They indicated that they

were looking for alternatives. These findings are in line with the articles discussed in chapter 1.

4.2   How coaching is currently employed?

From the viewpoint of understanding how coaching is currently utilised in the performance management process, depicted in figure 12, the most relevant elements of this process are the two "Follow-up" blocks. All the participants indicated that these follow-ups are done in regular one-to-one discussions. These discussions were described to be coaching sessions.

The participants with more coaching experience – the agile coaches, the director of engineering, and the human resources business partner – all used GROW-like coaching discussions during these sessions. With these participants, the one-to-ones could be described as coach initiated, due to them being arranged regularly by the coach, but coachee lead. The director of engineering strongly emphasised the importance of having these one-to-ones regularly. In their opinion, that is where the real value for performance management is, not in the formal processes. These are in line with coaching theory introduced in subchapter 3.2.

Outside of these regular one-to-ones coaching was utilised on-demand, for example the developer team leader stated that they use coaching for team building. Concluding from the description the developer team leader gave in the interview, these sessions were almost exclusively coach initiated, yet coachee lead. The value of on-demand coaching sessions is corroborated by the scrum master / agile coach #1 as they describe their views on how the performance management is not just about the formal process, but should happen daily through coaching. This is exactly the approach Armstrong (2014) suggests for coaching in performance management.

Another common theme that surfaced from the interviews was that there is some resistance to coaching. A collection of reasons for resistance, both active and passive, can be seen in figure 13, where the reasons that have been given the most have the largest text. Some of the employees being coached have not understood the purpose of coaching. This could be categorised passive or not deliberate resistance. In addition, active or

deliberate resistance was identified from the interview data. In these cases, the reason for resistance seemed to be related to ego or feeling of superiority. Some of the reasons were multi-dimensional. Lack of respect could be towards the coaching process or the coach, either as a person or their skills. (cf. Smollan 2011.)

FIGURE 13. Active (left) and passive (right) reasons for resistance to coaching

In general, coaching was still observed to bring value to performance management and this was identified as the main theme throughout the interviews. However, there were some differences in opinions as to who the person doing the coaching should be. Most relevant conflict for this thesis was that the scrum master / agile coaches had such a wide gap between their views. One of them had first-hand experience of being both, a manager and a coach, and for them it had worked well. The other scrum master / agile coach was strictly against the manager also being the coach. In addition to seeing conflicts in the same person appraising your performance and doing your coaching, a big concern was raised about coaching being done by untrained line managers who were hired to do a different job.

In the pilot, where a more coaching lead approach has been taken to performance management, there have been promising results in the employee engagement to the performance management process as a whole. The director of engineering attributed this to what they called "little and often", meaning having those regular one-to-ones concentrating on getting small incremental improvements. Having regular one-to-ones was not explicit to the pilot program. The differentiator between the pilot participants and other participants was uncovered to be in the way the coaching was structured. The pilot had dedicated, trained development coaches who were not line managers for the people they coached. Outside of the pilot group, coaching was left as the responsibility of the line manager, if they chose to do it at all. This could mean that the one-to-ones would re-

semble more feedback sessions or even just casual meetings, rather than coaching sessions.

4.3 How can coaching be employed more?

The participants were asked if they could identify additional ways they could employ more coaching in their current role. Inadvertently, considering the topic of this thesis, this question turned out to have meta-level meaning. It was an open interview question with the intention to find ways to more broadly apply coaching, but also to improve the performance of the participant at the same time, which made it also a coaching question.

The human resources business partner indicated that they would like to see managers use more coaching discussions, rather than telling their subordinates what to do. In other words, develop their flexibility of influencing as recommended by Starr (2012, 87). They were not alone with this opinion. Both scrum master / agile coaches shared this view, but put it in a wider perspective by comparing how coaching is an integral part of leadership, a leadership skill. With coaching, in this context, they were not referring to the regular one-to-one coaching discussions, but to those day-to-day and on-demand coaching sessions discussed in subchapter 4.2. These opinions are in line with how authors, who are studying performance management, see the role of line managers (Armstrong 2014; Starr 2012, 24).

The director of engineering would like to extend the use of coaching from individual level to team level. The coaching has been focusing on the individual growth and performance development and that has been helpful in aligning the individuals with the organisational goals, but expanding that to aligning also the teams as a unit has been identified to have potential benefits. Whitmore (2010, 134–147) has identified the same benefit and states that the GROW-model would suit team coaching as well.

4.3.1 Impact on line management and organisation

The starting and running the pilot had already required some changes to the organisation as they had introduced the concept of development coaches. This change has also had

management implications as the line managers must now synchronise performance information with the development coaches as a part of their performance management process.

To improve the coaching discussions in the one-to-ones, many of the participants suggested formal coaching trainings for the line managers. In the scrum master / agile coach #2's opinion, the training should be extensive, more than one day. The need for formal training was also brought up by the participants from the pilot group. The director of engineering stated that the development coaches received training in coaching, but they also pointed out the need for training for the coachees, so they would better understand what to expect from the coaching sessions. In addition, the director of engineering would train the line managers in coaching to achieve the improvements discussed in subchapter 4.3. These findings are in line with Armstrong's (2014) views and what they report as success factors in performance management.

In addition, a need for improving the organisational communication was identified. As discussed in subchapter 4.3 above, the human resources business partner would like to see managers utilise more coaching. Improving the communication between human resources and line management would be key, especially concerning the needs and the expectations, which the human resources, in relation to performance management, has towards line managers.

4.4   Measuring performance when coaching

In the subchapter 3.2, the coaching definition tells us that coaching is a tool for performance management. It is a tool for releasing the coachees potential, but how can one measure performance when coaching?

This was a challenging question for all the participants. The main theme around this question was to keep the formal performance appraisal process, but increase the productivity of the one-to-one meetings by improving the quality of coaching in these sessions. As discussed in 4.2 above, the pilot had promising results on using dedicated development coaches. In addition, the pilot program, per the director of engineering, had found that their model had reduced the effort required for the formal performance appraisals.

Adopting this model was identified as a potential way of achieving the required increase in quality.

A trial with shorter, quarterly intervals to reduce the disruptiveness of the formal performance appraisals was brought up by the human resources business partner. Results for this trial were not available to analyse, so it is not known if they would be relevant for this thesis. The director of engineering also indicated that similar plans were made in the pilot program, but results for that were not available either, partially because the plans were not turned into a formal process, which meant it was not being executed very effectively.

According to the scrum master / agile coach #2, the goals set when coaching cannot always be transferred to goals for performance appraisals. Some of the issues you that arise from coaching, for example improving confidence, are hard to identify as SMART goals. There was also concern about goals such as this being so subjective that the participant would not have as much incentive to try and skew results while coaching, but when the overall performance is being reviewed there is incentive to modify the truth towards a more positive outcome.

5   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Is coaching the way of the future in performance management at Company X?

This research set out to determine whether coaching should be employed, at the current level or more, in the context of performance management at Company X. The current performance management process, the utilisation of coaching, and the possibility to extend the usage of coaching were explored with the participants to find the answer to this question.

From the analysis, it was clear that coaching was utilised, but was generally unsupported outside of the pilot program, which resulted in uneven contributions to performance development, and increased stress and workload during formal performance appraisal periods. All the participants indicated that the regular one-to-one coaching discussions, although they could be improved, bring value to the performance management. Some resistance to coaching had been encountered, but it was considered to be a minor issue and could be resolved with training. It remained undetermined who should be doing the coaching, as there were conflicting views and approaches in use, all of which had yielded positive results. After analysing the data, it could be determined that none of the participants were looking to reduce the amount of coaching, instead most of the participants would like to focus on improving the existing coaching sessions. In addition, expanding the coaching from individual level to team level was suggested.

The theoretical framework supports these findings so a conclusion can be made from the results; coaching is the way of the future in performance management at Company X.

5.2   How can coaching be used effectively to monitor performance at Company X?

The purpose of this research question was to find out whether measuring performance with coaching driven model could change the scope or even replace the formal perfor-

mance appraisal process at Company X. The secondary purpose was to find out if there are ways to improve the current coaching approaches from the perspective of measuring performance, not just driving performance.

Improvements to current state of performance appraisals were identified, including shorter formal performance appraisal process cycle and more productive one-to-one meetings, but neither of these were determined to be enough to completely replace the formal performance appraisal process. The pilot has been successful in executing some of the modern performance management models, where the role of formal performance process is reduced close to a summarising session. This alone addresses many of the concerns raised about the current performance management process, especially the performance appraisal process.

Even though the findings from the pilot program are supported by the theoretical framework, the challenge of how can coaching be effectively used to monitor performance at Company X remains unanswered. It was determined that too many factors, which are not in the scope of this thesis, for example changes to organisational structure, would have to be considered.

5.3   Recommendations

Based on the findings, and the fact that current performance management theory supports the findings, it is recommended that line managers and other employees responsible for coaching others should receive formal coaching training to improve the quality of the regular coaching discussions they have with their coachees. It is also recommended that attitudes towards coaching should be considered, when making hiring decisions for management roles as resistance to coaching, especially from the management side, contributes negatively to building coaching culture in the company. In addition, it is recommended that all coachees get proper introduction to coaching to manage expectations and increase awareness.

Regarding expanding coaching activities to team level or even organisational level, it is recommended that further studies should be conducted.

REFERENCES

Alexander, G. 2010. Behavioural coaching – the GROW model, in: Passmore, J. (Ed.), Excellence in Coaching: The Industry Guide. London; Philadelphia: Kogan Page Limited.

Appelo, J. 2010. Management 3.0: Leading Agile Developers, Developing Agile Leaders. 1st edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Addison-Wesley Professional.

Armstrong, M. 2014. Armstrong's Handbook of Performance Management. 5th edition. Kogan Page.

Bax, J., Negrutiu, M., Calotă, T.-O. 2011. Coaching: A Philosophy, Concept, Tool and Skill. Journal of Knowledge Management, Economics and Information Technology.

Buckingham, M., Goodall, A. 2015. Reinventing Performance Management [WWW Document]. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2015/04/reinventing-performance-management. Read 16-03-06.

Caldwell, C. M. 2002. Performance Management. Saranac Lake, NY: AMACOM Books.

Cappelli, P., Tavis, A. 2016. The Future of Performance Reviews [WWW Document]. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2016/10/the-performance-management-revolution. Read 16-09-12.

Cleary, M., Horsfall, J., Hayter, M. 2014. Data collection and sampling in qualitative research: does size matter? Journal of Advanced Nursing. 70, 473–475. doi:10.1111/jan.12163

Coens, T., Jenkins, M. 2002. Abolishing Performance Appraisals: Why They Backfire and What to Do Instead. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Crouser, T. 2009. Case of Growing. Quick Printing. 32, 40–41.

de Haan, E. 2008. Relational Coaching: Journeys Towards Mastering One to One Learning. 1st edition. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Drucker, P. F. 2011. The Practice of Management. 2nd edition, The classic Drucker collection. London: Routledge.

Galletta, A. 2012. Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond : From Research Design to Analysis and Publication, Qualitative Studies in Psychology. New York: NYU Press.

Lipson, C. 2007. How to Write a BA Thesis: A Practical Guide from Your First Ideas to Your Finished Paper. University of Chicago Press.

Lisa A. Boyce, R. Jeffrey Jackson, Laura J. Neal. 2010. Building successful leadership coaching relationships: Examining impact of matching criteria in a leadership coaching program. Journal of Mgmt Development. 29, 914–931. doi:10.1108/02621711011084231

Lujike, J. 2011. Atlassian's Big Experiment with Performance Reviews | Management Innovation eXchange [WWW Document]. Management Innovation eXchange. http://www.managementexchange.com/story/atlassians-big-experiment-performance-reviews. Read 16-03-06.

Marshall, M. N. 1996. Sampling for qualitative research. Family Practice. 13, 522–526. doi:10.1093/fampra/13.6.522

McGregor, D. 1972. An Uneasy Look at Performance Appraisal. Harvard Business Review. September 1972, 133–143.

Monappa, A., Saiyadain, M. 1996. Personnel Management. Tata McGraw-Hill Education.

O'Leary, Z. 2013. The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project. 2nd edition. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Rensburg, T. van, Prideaux, G. 2006. Turning professionals into managers using multi-source feedback. Journal of Mgmt Development. 25, 561–571. doi:10.1108/02621710610670128

Saldaña, J. 2011. Fundamentals of Qualitative Research, Understanding Qualitative Research. New York: Oxford University Press.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A. 2008. Research methods for business students. Pearson Education.

Sharp, J. A., Peters, J., Howard, K. 2002. The Management of a Student Research Project. Aldershot, Hants, England: Gower.

Smollan, R. K. 2011. The multi-dimensional nature of resistance to change. Journal of Management and Organization. 17, 828–849.

Starr, J. 2012. Brilliant Coaching. 2nd edition. New York, NY: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Wallace, M., Wray, A. 2016. Critical Reading and Writing for Postgraduates. SAGE.

Warren, T. 2013. Microsoft axes its controversial employee-ranking system [WWW Document]. The Verge. http://www.theverge.com/2013/11/12/5094864/microsoft-kills-stack-ranking-internal-structure. Read 16-03-06.

Whitmore, J. 2010. Coaching for Performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose: The Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership. 4th edition. Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. E-mail invitation to the participants

Hi,

Hope you are well.

I'm writing my thesis on Coaching as a Tool for Performance Management and I'm looking for a range of people to interview.

Would you be willing to take part in my thesis?

I would require an hour, hour and a half of your time next week or the week after that.

I would send the question list beforehand to give you some time to prepare.

The interview will be recorded as I need to transcribe it in the appendices.

You would remain anonymous.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me.

Br,
Tommi Leikomaa

Appendix 2. Interview questions

Describe the current performance management process.

What is the role of coaching in your current performance management process?

How would you employ coaching more in your current role?

What kind of improvements would you expect?

What kind of issues would you expect?

How would you measure performance?

How would it impact performance appraisals?

How would you expect fairness of review to change?

How would you expect the change would impact organisational structure?

How would you prepare managers for the change?