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ALL IN THE SMALL PRINT. A BRIEF STUDY OF CONTRACTING ISSUES IN COACHING AND SUPERVISION

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OVERVIEW (1)

Why: Our experience of contracting issues being behind many challenges brought to supervision

How: Surveys on SurveyMonkey collecting qualitative and quantitative data

Who: 100 supervisors (70% female, 71% UK) and 149 coaches (73% female, 69% UK)

Analysis: Using Nvivo software to collate themes

Aim: To share key findings and compare them to your experiences





OVERVIEW (2)

Compare:

- The percentages of supervisors and coaches who believe contracting is an issue in supervision
- Key good practices in contracting with a client/supervisee
- Most common issues that are related to contracting
- Most significant challenges in contracting with clients
- The importance of having a contract in supervision
- The most important things to consider in a contract between supervisor and supervisee

YOUR EXPERIENCES

- Straw poll
- Shared experiences of contracting challenges brought to supervision – pairs and 3s
- Feedback



CONTRACTING ISSUES: COACHES & SUPERVISORS

COACHES

- On average, the 145 coaches answering believed 32% of issues brought to supervision were related in some way to the original contracting with their client
- This was slightly higher at 34% among those who considered themselves executive/business coaches (n=111)
- And this was lowest among the small sample who specialised in personal and well-being coaching only (n=10)

SUPERVISORS

- On average, the 100 supervisors believed 50% of issues brought to supervision were related in some way to the original contracting the coaches did with their client
- This was slightly higher at 51% among those who considered themselves specialising in executive business supervision (n=77)
- And this was lowest at 33% among the very small number, just 4, who specialised in personal and well-being supervision

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UNTIL NOW NO WRITTEN CONTRACTS; CONFIDENCE
AND TRUST FEATURE MY WORK AS A COACH FOR
ABOUT 30 YEARS
(MALE COACH, EUROPE, 10+ YEARS)

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CONTRACTING SETS THE TONE FOR THE WHOLE
COACHING / SUPERVISION RELATIONSHIP AND
AGENDA - HOW THIS IS DONE SETS THE BASIS FOR
WHAT HAPPENS AFTERWARDS, AND IS THEREFORE
VITALLY IMPORTANT
(FEMALE COACH, UK, 10+ YEARS)

GOOD PRACTICES IN CONTRACTING WITH A CLIENT/SUPERVISEE

Top 3 good practice themes in contracting	Coaches (when contracting with a client, n=142)	Supervisors (when contracting with a supervisee, n=99)
1	Shared understanding of the coaching assignment between the coach and coachee (57.7%)	Shared understanding of supervision (67.7%)
2	Clarity of contracting (55.6%)	Supervisor-supervisee relationship (63.6%)
3	Relationship between coach and coachee (42.3%)	Clarity of contracting (54.5%)
4	Clearly defined goals and priorities (33.1%)	Re-contracting (27.3%)
5	Re-contracting (31%)	Clearly defined goals and priorities (22.2%)

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SUPERVISORS ACT AS A ROLE MODEL FOR COACHES
SO IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS THE COACH-
SUPERVISOR CONTRACT EFFECTIVELY, AND TO ADAPT
IT CONSCIOUSLY AND APPROPRIATELY WHEN THE
NEED ARISES

(FEMALE COACH, UK, 10+ YEARS)

MOST COMMON ISSUES ARISING FROM FAILURES, OMISSIONS OR INSUFFICIENT CONTRACTING

Top three most common issues	Coaches (n=144)	Supervisors (n=99)
1	Shared understanding of the coaching assignment between the coach and coachee (96.5%)	Challenges of 3-way contracting (71.7%)
2	Relationship between coach and coachee (48.6%)	Relationship between coach and coachee (69.7%)
3	Fees (34%)	Shared understanding of coaching assignment (62.6%)
4	Impact on client's accountability and commitment (33.3%)	Fees (26.3%)
5	Challenges of 3-way contracting (26.4%)	Impact on client's accountability and commitment (17.2%)

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I DON'T HAVE ONE AND I AM A BIT AT SEA AS TO WHAT SUPERVISION IS MEANT TO BE, WHAT I AM MEANT TO BRING TO IT AND WHAT I SHOULD NOT. I ASKED THE QUESTION AT THE BEGINNING BUT DID NOT GET A CLEAR ANSWER. I AM NOT GETTING THE VALUE I THOUGHT I WOULD FROM SUPERVISION, AND I THINK BETTER CONTRACTING WOULD HAVE ADDRESSED THAT
(FEMALE COACH, EUROPE, 10+ YEARS)

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I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT THIS AND SO FAR THE
SUPERVISION SESSIONS HAVE BEEN PART OF A
GROUP, WITH NO DISCUSSION OF A CONTRACT
BETWEEN US?

(FEMALE, UK, 0 - 2 YEARS)

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CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: SPONSOR/MANAGER
EXPECTING COACH TO BE MESSENGER FOR THEIR
CONCERNS ABOUT THE COACHEE
(MALE SUPERVISOR, UK, 10+YEARS)

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NO SHOW OR POSTPONING SESSIONS AT VERY SHORT
NOTICE (*FEMALE SUPERVISOR, EUROPE, 5-9 YEARS*)

INABILITY TO CHALLENGE EFFECTIVELY (*MALE
SUPERVISOR, UK, 5-9 YEARS*)

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES FACED IN CONTRACTING WITH A CLIENT/SUPERVISEE

Three most significant challenges to contracting	Coaches (n=142)	Supervisors (n=97)
1	Shared understanding of coaching assignment between the coach and coachee (62.7%)	Shared understanding of supervision assignment (71.1%)
2	Quality and clarity in contracting (48.6%)	Relationship between supervisor and supervisee (49.5%)
3	Challenges of 3-way contracting (46.5%)	Supervisee's commitment (29.9%)
4	Coach-coachee relationship (46.5%)	Quality and clarity in contracting (29.9%)
5	Coachee (16.2%)	Financial issues (16.5%)

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GETTING THEM TO BE PATIENT WITH AGREEING
CONTRACT BEFORE RUSHING INTO CLIENT CASES (*MALE
SUPERVISOR, UK, 10+ YEARS*)

KEEP THE FOCUS ON THE SUPERVISEE AND NOT HIS
CLIENT (*FEMALE SUPERVISOR, SOUTH & CENTRAL
AMERICA, 10+ YEARS*)

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I'M A COACH SO I DON'T REALLY NEED SUPERVISING
— I'M JUST DOING THIS BECAUSE I HAVE TO
(*FEMALE SUPERVISOR, ASIA, 0-2 YEARS*)

HOW ESSENTIAL IS A SUPERVISION CONTRACT?

How important is it to have a clear contract between yourself and your ...?	Coaching supervisor... Coaches (n=144)	Supervisees... Supervisors (n=99)
Essential	48.61% (70)	76.77% (76)
Very important	26.39% (38)	14.14% (14)
Important	17.36% (25)	5.05% (5)
Fairly important	6.25% (9)	2.02% (2)
Fairly unimportant	0	2.02% (2)
Unimportant	1.39% (2)	0

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CLEAR - BUT NOT RIGID CLEAR - BUT NOT ONE-
SIDED CLEAR - BUT NOT RATIONAL AND
CONTROLLING CLEAR - BUT NOT HUMOURLESS OR
COLOURLESS
(FEMALE SUPERVISOR, UK, 5-9 YEARS)

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EMPATHY IS VITAL - IF NOT PRESENT THEN ALL THE
CONTRACTING POSSIBLE WON'T CREATE A
TRANSFORMATIONAL SUPERVISION EXPERIENCE - SO
DETAILS OF 'CONTRACT' LESS IMPORTANT - GOT TO
FLOW WITH NEEDS OF SUPERVISEE
(*FEMALE COACH, UK, 3-5 YEARS*)

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IT'S THE PLATFORM FOR THE WORK. THE POINT OF
REFERENCE FOR WHY WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER,
WHAT WE DO, HOW WE DO IT, AND HOW WE WILL
HANDLE ANY STICKINESS IF/WHEN IT EMERGES. THE
SCAFFOLDING FOR THE CRUCIBLE WE WILL CREATE
(*FEMALE SUPERVISOR, AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND, 3-
5 YEARS*)

THE KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER IN A SUPERVISION CONTRACT

Most important things to consider	Supervisee (coach) (n=144)	Supervisor (n=99)
1	Expectations of supervision approach and style (77.1%)	Expectations of supervision approach and style (74.7%)
2	Logistics: frequency, length and location of meetings (54.9%)	Ethics and confidentiality (66.7%)
3	Ethics and confidentiality (49.3%)	Logistics: frequency, length and location of meetings (61.6%)
4	Specified goals and desired outcomes from supervision (36.1%)	Specified goals and desired outcomes (38.4%)
5	Scope: what the supervision will cover and not (28.5%)	Responsibilities of both parties (38.4%)
6	Trust, honesty and rapport (24.3%)	Trust, honesty and rapport (38.4)
7	Fees (22.2%)	Scope: what the supervision will cover and not (37.4%)
8	Boundaries (19.4%)	Fees (36.4%)
9	Responsibilities of both parties (16.7%)	Dealing with conflicts and ending the supervision relationship (16.2%)
10	Dealing with conflicts and ending the supervision relationship (11.8%)	Cancellations (10.1%)

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THE LONGER A COACH IS IN SUPERVISION THE LESS
OFTEN AN ISSUE RELATED TO POOR CONTRACTING
ARISES, AS THEY LEARN TO CONTRACT MORE
SUCCESSFULLY OR RAISE IT
WHEN DRAWING UP AN AGREEMENT
(*FEMALE SUPERVISOR, UK, 10+ YEARS*)

IMPLICATIONS

- Coaches – increased awareness
- Supervisors – increased educative role and role modelling
- Training – more time spent on this area
- Coaching profession and bodies – support development of best practice and increased discussion
- Future research needed



ANY QUESTIONS? YOUR THOUGHTS?



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Please feel free to get in touch to share case studies or find out more



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