“A comprehensive and authoritative overview of authentic, reflective coaching, this is an essential volume for anyone who is serious about the quality and continuous development of their coaching.”

—Professor David Clutterbuck, David Clutterbuck Partnership

“Benjamin Disraeli once said, ‘The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own.’ Erik de Haan and Yvonne Burger have done the coaching community a great service by offering a much-needed panoramic view of the field. Reading this book is a must.”

—Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries, Distinguished Clinical Professor of Leadership Development and Organisational Change, INSEAD

“*Coaching with Colleagues* is ambitious in its depth and range, written with passion and enthusiasm, and rich in metaphor... All in all, it is a rigorous and valuable guide for managers and professional coaches alike.”

—Ann Lewis, Director, Ann Lewis Coaching

“This book will provide a useful perspective for anyone involved in coaching who has learned a collection of techniques and interventions from a variety of methodologies without fully understanding where they come from and how they fit together.”

—Nigel Harris, Partner, Burton Sweet
Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers

“This is a really comprehensive and detailed analysis of the different approaches to coaching. It really ‘brings it all together’. But more than this, the book sets out an agenda for a more integrative approach to coaching.”

—Andrew Atter, Business Coach

“Professionals today, in whatever field, have an increasing need for lifelong learning... What de Haan and his collaborators give us is a clear framework to better organise, supervise and facilitate our own professional development, and to advise our own colleagues and their organisations.”

—Geof Cox, Author and Consultant, New Directions Ltd

Coaching with Colleagues

An Action Guide for One-to-One Learning

Second revised edition

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Preface

Coaching with colleagues

The era of coaching with colleagues

A book about learning with colleagues is entirely in keeping with the spirit of our times. Both the nature and role of ‘work’ have changed radically in the West in recent decades. Where we work can no longer be predicted on the basis of family background and education. How we work changes almost from month to month, if only due to new developments in the field of information and communications technology. What we expect from work is no longer clear either: for most of us, it is not just about earning a living. Work now serves other purposes, for example satisfying our more personal needs (Maslow, 1962) such as recognition, influence, self-expression and self-fulfilment. As a result, we now expect more and more from work and, by the same token, work has come to ‘expect’ more of us. Our working lives are gradually becoming more exciting and interesting. It is becoming increasingly difficult to take refuge behind unique expertise or customised approaches – instead, we now have to find a tailored solution for every job or client, to show more of our personal side in our work and to make that personal side ‘effective’. ‘Work’ is becoming more like ‘school’, in two respects:

- In the contemporary sense of school: a place of training and education, a learning environment or study centre. A place we go to seeking self-development and self-fulfilment.
- In the original sense of the Greek *scholè*: leisure, rest, pleasure and, paradoxically enough, free time and ease. A place we go to find ourselves, to reflect and to spend time doing things that really matter to us.

The illustration in the frontispiece was chosen as a reminder of ancient Athenian civilisation, where ‘school’ was still an intellectual pastime and where one-on-one supervision, not to mention ‘coaching’ of leaders and high potential individuals, emerged and flourished. The photograph shows the entrance to the Temple of Athena Aphaia (the ‘invisible’), erected in the late sixth century BC on the Greek island of Aegina. For us, the two pillars represent the two foundations of a coaching session: the coach and the coachee. The photograph also expresses, for us, the way in which each of these coaching pillars is accompanied by an ‘alter ego’ or ‘guardian angel’ (‘daimonion’ in Ancient Greek), a sort of ‘internal coach’ who whispers reflections and inspiration in your ear.

Not surprisingly, more and more people are feeling the need for a sanctuary where they can reflect on their work, and professionals have higher and higher expectations of such a sanctuary. What they want is a good conversation – a conversation that helps them to think things through systematically and understand them better, to reinforce the connection between themselves and their context, and to help them tackle things differently and more effectively the next time. In the same way as Plato elevated dialogue to an art form for the Ancient Greeks, the aim of many modern professionals is to elevate these ‘good conversations’ to an art form.

Which brings us to *Coaching with Colleagues*, as a sequel to *Learning with Colleagues* (de Haan, 2004). This book is not concerned with performance appraisal, planning or clearing-the-air conversations. Coaching with colleagues goes much further and involves:

- building up a coaching relationship and making it so strong that both parties can say what is really at issue
- paying attention to the link between work issues and the personality of the colleague
- considering fundamentally different working methods and tailoring their contribution to the colleague, issue and context
- being aware of your own strengths, pitfalls and preferred approaches – and knowing what assumptions underpin your coaching style
- exploring and discussing the limits of your effectiveness as a coach, and making this process of exploration and investigation itself part of the helping conversation.

How are you going to stay ‘professional’, if not by means of ‘helping conversations’ with fellow professionals? What are you going to

learn from as a professional? Training programmes and courses, which you have already completed? Textbooks, which are outdated almost as soon as they reach the shelves? Clients and customers, who often aren't quite sure themselves what questions they want to ask you?

In our view, coaching is both the easiest and the most complex form of learning with colleagues. Easy: after leafing through these pages for even just ten minutes anyone can apply the most basic yet effective of methods (see the techniques in Chapter 6). And difficult: in the narrow confines of the one-on-one conversation, every contribution – indeed every facial expression or minor shift in attention – can send the conversation off in a completely different direction. This, for us, is what makes coaching such a subtle and wide-ranging craft.

In our view, coaching is an activity that fits in with both meanings of 'school': the learning environment and the place of leisure. The pleasure lies in taking a playful approach to serious and dramatic issues and, conversely, in a serious approach to fantasy and play. The learning aspect lies in the fact that coaching has an advantage over many other methods of professional development in that it can be organised with and through colleagues (from inside or outside the organisation), it can take place close to the place of work, and it affords an opportunity for much-needed peace and concentration.

The structure of this book

This book, *Coaching with Colleagues*, consists of three parts:

1. Part I, *Context for coaching*, contains a brief introduction to coaching and explains a number of central concepts ('What are we actually talking about?').
2. Part II, *Approaches to coaching*, examines a number of approaches to coaching in greater depth and provides a link to the main currents of psychotherapeutic thinking ('How do you go about it?').
3. Part III, *Reflection on coaching*, illustrates some of the skills of the coach and considers the context within which coaching often takes place ('And who is coaching where?').

Writing this book was a valuable learning process for us, and one which involved a great deal of mutual coaching. Now that the

writing is behind us, we notice that many of our pet subjects have found a home in the book. The final result:

- is integrative, and therefore places a minimum of restrictions on the reader's freedom of choice
- starts from the reader's own coaching practice and the invitation to develop, from a variety of perspectives, a personal approach to coaching
- contains specific checklists and aids as well as references to underlying theory and research
- describes applicable methods and specific, ready-to-use coaching styles
- includes many examples from our own experience of coaching a wide variety of clients.

Besides the full, cover-to-cover reading that we, of course, heartily recommend, the reader can take other routes through this book:

- Readers who are looking for a brief introduction to the subject of coaching and are keen to hone their own abilities and skills as coaches in an organisational setting can opt for the route via Chapters 1 (definitions of coaching, mentoring, supervision, etc.), 3 (conditions for coaching), 4 (structure of coaching relationships), 12 (capabilities of the coach) and 14 (organisation coaching).
- Readers who wish to deepen and broaden their own practice as a more experienced coach can opt for the route via different approaches, applications and frameworks, i.e. Chapters 2 (layered communication during coaching), 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 (different coaching approaches and what works for whom) and 15 (limitations of coaching, both internal and external).
- Readers who wish to develop the role of coach in their own organisation, looking at different approaches and the choice between internal or external coaching, can opt for the route via Chapters 1 (differences between coaching, counselling, mentoring and supervision), 5 (different approaches), 11 (choices between different approaches), 13 (impact of coaching on different learning styles and professional careers) and 15 (limitations of coaching, both internal and external).

The authors as mouthpieces

Who are the authors of an action guide to coaching with colleagues? Developers of coaching methods? Innovators in their field? Coaches with a distinguished record of service? That would be nice. The authors of this book see themselves primarily as editors of work done by others, ‘mouthpieces’ for methods and specialist knowledge which are often as old as the discipline of coaching itself.¹ All of the coaching approaches in this book – other than, perhaps, the IRONIC METHOD which we developed ourselves (see Chapter 9) – have a long history. Our own contribution is to have translated these approaches into simple methods. As often as possible, we include source references to the authors who actually developed the concepts and methods discussed.

While writing this book we were very involved in learning about coaching – through doing it a lot, reading about it and, together with many colleagues, organising seminars on the subject. We would like to thank some of the colleagues who made this possible:

- The business schools Sioo and De Baak for the many opportunities given to us to develop, for the benefit of participants in coaching courses, some of the material for this book. Since 2001 Erik has been involved as a developer and co-trainer of the second module of De Baak’s programme *The Professional as Coach*, and Yvonne and Erik together have been developing and facilitating Sioo’s professionalisation module *Coaching!* since 2002. Both programmes have been running twice a year for several years now, and are attracting considerable interest. On a more personal note, we would like to thank Debbie Molhuizen and Tamara van Duin (De Baak) and Marguerithe de Man (Sioo) for taking on the management of these programmes.
 - Ina Smith and Bill Critchley of Ashridge Consulting and Charlotte Sills of the Metanoia Institute for their ‘mentoring’ in applying many of the ideas from this book in Ashridge Consulting’s programme *Coaching for Organisation Consultants* and for the opportunity to work with verbatim reports (see Appendix B) in the Ashridge accreditation process for professional coaches.
1. Or ‘young’ in fact, compared with any other fields. Coaching – individual consultation, mentoring and supervision – really became a discipline only in the latter half of the twentieth century.

- Sarah Beart of Ashridge Consulting for her idea of applying the ladder of inference method within analytic coaching. We have now gained experience with it ourselves, and the LADDER METHOD has found a home in Chapter 8.
- Lorraine Oliver for her patience in looking for quantitative, ‘outcome research’ articles about coaching, the needle in the proverbial haystack, at which she has been wonderfully successful.
- Our Canadian-Dutch colleague Nico Swaan for countless detailed suggestions for the English translation, many of which made us rewrite the original Dutch text.
- Trevor Ashwin of Curran Publishing Services for exceptionally careful and patient editing, and for coming up with detailed suggestions regarding every single page of the manuscript.
- Our colleagues Charlotte Sills of the Metanoia Institute and Eunice Aquilina of the BBC’s Internal Coaching Services for many helpful and supportive comments and suggestions on the first English draft.
- Selma van Vemde for her ability to bring coaching in all its varied forms – and more! – to life in her attractive illustrations.

In the revised second edition

Our comment at the start of this Preface about the spirit of our times appears to be borne out by sales of this book. The second edition has come along quickly and coaching appears more than a trend. Coaching seems nothing less than a cultural revolution at the intersection between personal development and organisational development. And this book is not only an expression of that revolution, but is increasingly inspiring it as well.

For the revised second edition we have thoroughly revised and adapted this book in line with current requirements. Quantitative research within coaching, which this year marks its twentieth anniversary (after Peterson, 1993), has undergone a great expansion in recent years. In Chapter 11, therefore, we are able to give a more detailed account of this research and what we as coaches can learn from it already. We also emphasise the consensus in the field that it is crucially important for any coach (whether internal and external) to practise with mature and reliable ethics. As a result, we have added to Chapter 15 (the chapter about ethics and boundaries of the profession) ten examples of ethical dilemmas as regularly observed or faced by us in practice, accompanied by our best insights and suggestions.

We have resisted the temptation to write new chapters. In our view, it is precisely the compact structure of this book that makes it so usable as a guide and manual for the practitioner. Moreover, in *Relational Coaching* (2008), Erik has already written a comprehensive follow-up to this book.

We have also added four appendices: Appendix F is the ‘coachee’ version of the coaching behaviours questionnaire from Appendix E, designed to make it easier to collect feedback from your own coachees. Appendix G is an example of a coaching contract. Appendix H is an account of a complete series of coaching sessions. Together with eight new practical examples, this was added in response to requests from many readers. Finally, Appendix I gives an introduction to the very contemporary practice of ‘telephone coaching’, which we see as a positive development.

We hope that, with these changes and adjustments, *Coaching with colleagues* will serve as a modern, up-to-date guide to this exciting field for some time to come.

This book is dedicated to our own coaches with whom we have learned so much: Erik with Ric Oostburg, Gerard Wijers and Anton Obholzer, and Yvonne with Hanneke Elink Schuurman and, last but not least, Peter Janssen.

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