Master of Professional Studies (Learning & Development)

Research Project

Project Title:

Investigating the Feasibility of Creating a Suite of Dedicated Attitude-Themed Support Materials for Coaches Based on the Tripartite Component Model

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Abstract

This document represents the conclusion of an application to be awarded the Masters in Professional Studies (MProf) qualification. The research undertaken relates to investigating the feasibility of creating a suite of dedicated attitude-themed support materials for coaches based on the tripartite component model. Through personal observation of supervising, supporting and delivering qualifications to coaches over more than 10 years I had repeatedly noticed that coaching conversations were increasing focused on affective and behavioural components: how the coachee *felt* and how they *behaved/acted* in certain situations. I felt that cognitive-themed questions, which elicited information about what the coachee *thought* about the given subject were often negligible. Had the marginalisation of cognitive-themed questions not had an impact on the session my research area would have been different, however I had felt for some time that by not establishing some form of balance between the three components of attitude: affective, behavioural and cognitive, that coaching discussions and resultant actions plans were often not as effective as they could have been and in extreme cases, action plans were exacerbating the issue. I have conducted research to establish whether coaches may benefit from a suite of dedicated support materials based on the tripartite model above. In the research, I cite the model as belonging to Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) however numerous others have formulated similar models using the three components, for example Eagly and Chaiken (1998) and Van den Berg *et al* (2006). This inductive research takes the form of a controlled experiment using a blended approach of simulations supplemented by one to one interviews. I begin my research document by introducing my topic and how my interest in it evolved.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Figure 1: The Arnolfini Marriage by Jan van Eyck

One of my favourite paintings has always been *The Arnolfini Marriage* by Jan van Eyck. Painted in 1434, it is an oil on oak which purports to show the Bruges merchant Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife Giovanna Cenami. Currently on display in London's National Gallery, it has been the subject of much debate for centuries. Is the painting an exercise in self-aggrandisement? It is known that fur was an expensive luxury permitted by law only to the upper echelons of society. In her article Ellen Hoe suggests the fur-trimmed garments are indeed intended to project wealth, especially since we see a tree in bloom outside indicating warmth, negating the need for fur. She also suggests the colour of the garments and hangings are significant; red, green, black and particularly blue were the most expensive dyes; using these colours collectively in profusion signified wealth (Hoe, 2007).

Many years ago, I read *The Arnolfini Betrothal: Medieval Marriage and the Enigma of Van Eyck's Double Portrait* by Edwin Hall. Hall's book introduced me to the work of German art historian Erwin Panofsky. Panofsky was fascinated by *The Arnolfini Marriage* and argued it was more than a declaration of wealth: suggesting it to be a marriage certificate. He stated the symbolism of items within the composition validated his hypothesis. The small mirror represented God's all-seeing eye; the dog at their feet represented trust and loyalty (the name 'Fido' often being given to a dog coming from

Figure 2: Erwin Panofsky

the Latin 'fidelitas') and the shoes they have taken off indicating they are in a sacred space (Hall, 1994). We now know that Panofsky was wrong. Writing for *The Guardian* Hannah Gadsby notes how in 1990, a document came to light which certified the Arnolfini-Cenami wedding occurred in 1447, 13 years after the portrait was painted and six years after the artist died (Gadsby, 2016). Many questions remain unanswered.

I begin with *The Arnolfini Marriage* because it illustrates my curiosity and fondness for deconstruction: taking holistic items or concepts and analysing their components. My project centres on such a deconstruction: the concept of 'attitude'. For many years I have been interested in the work of Milton Rosenberg and Carl Hovland. Rosenberg was formerly Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Chicago who also held the Guggenheim Fellowship for Social Sciences whilst Carl Hovland was a psychologist at Yale University who also conducted research for the US Army. Whilst their body of individual and collaborative work is extensive, it is their tripartite model of attitudes, which states attitudes are comprised of three separate elements which I intend to focus on in my project:
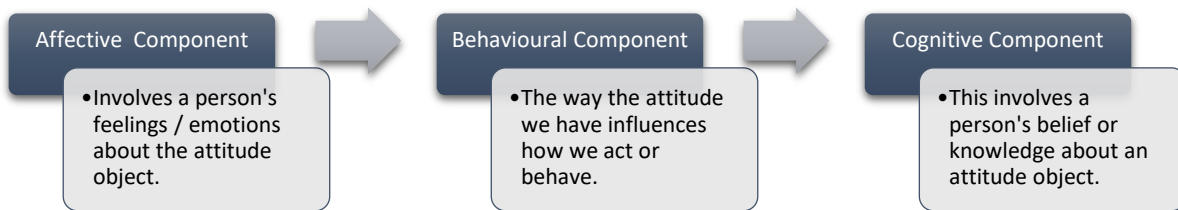
Affective Component		Behavioural Component		Cognitive Component
•Involves a person's feelings / emotions about the attitude object.		•The way the attitude we have influences how we act or behave.		•This involves a person's belief or knowledge about an attitude object.

Figure 3: Adapted from Rosenberg and Hovland (1960)

Much of my professional work involves coaching: either engaging directly in the activity with clients or working with the coaches themselves on supervision, performance reviews or supporting them in gaining recognised coaching qualifications such as those offered by the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). I additionally engage with coaching activity outside of my role, having numerous friends who work as independent coaches. Furthermore, I participate in online coach development activity, such as being a member of the ILM's 2018 *Spotlight* pilot, a new knowledge-sharing platform for professional coaches.

My project seeks to investigate the feasibility of creating a suite of support materials for coaches, based on the tripartite model. In my supervisory capacity, I often see great attention paid to the affective and behavioural (or conative) components of a coaching issue, but I have repeatedly seen the cognitive component marginalised or ignored. I provide an example below (from May 2018 supervision activity) which illustrates the lack of cognitive focus. The client had requested coaching as they felt challenged with confrontational scenarios. I detail below some of the questions asked by the coach:

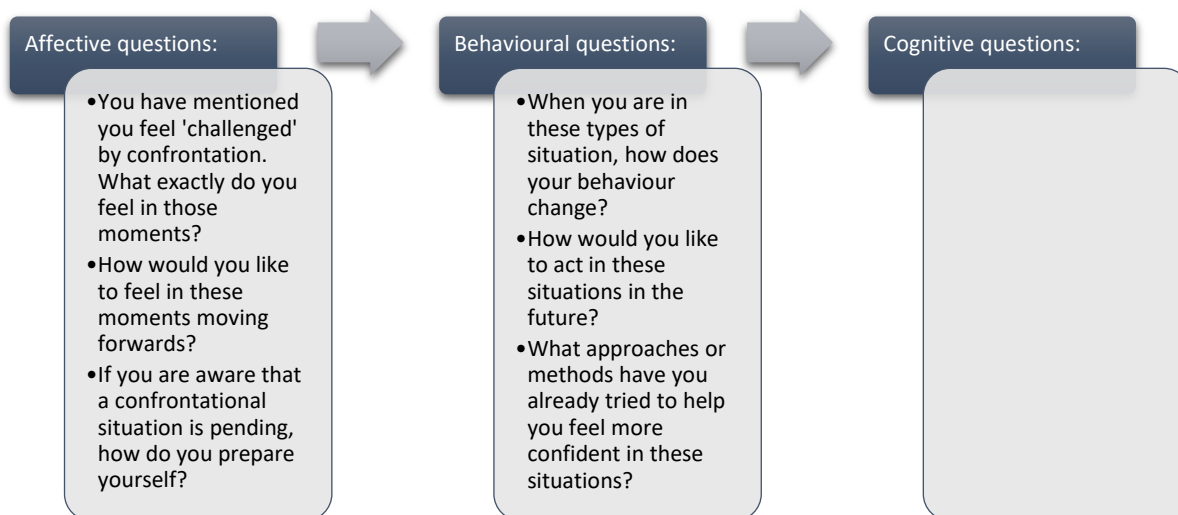| Affective questions:		Behavioural questions:		Cognitive questions:
•You have mentioned you feel 'challenged' by confrontation. What exactly do you feel in those moments? •How would you like to feel in these moments moving forwards? •If you are aware that a confrontational situation is pending, how do you prepare yourself?		•When you are in these types of situation, how does your behaviour change? •How would you like to act in these situations in the future? •What approaches or methods have you already tried to help you feel more confident in these situations?		

Figure 4: Sample from May 2018 Coaching Supervision Notes

Whilst I believe the questions asked stimulated useful discussion and reflection, I consider there to be some important omissions: specifically, cognitive focused questions. Questions which may have enriched the discussion might have been: How would you define conflict? and what do you know about conflict?

I would like to investigate the perceived primacy of affective and behavioural components over cognitive components within coaching. I intend to use the findings from working with a small group of coaches to suggest whether a suite of support materials based on the tripartite attitude component model might enhance future session efficacy: leading to greater personal growth for the coach and a deeper, more productive session for the client. I expand upon this in the forthcoming methodology section.

Whilst the primary focus of my project is to ascertain the feasibility of creating support materials for coaches based on the tripartite attitude component model, the secondary focus is to affect change in regarding awareness of differentiation. I have often heard the words 'attitude' and 'behaviour' used interchangeably. I seek to help coaches understand that attitudes and behaviours are not synonymous. The former is a preference whilst the latter is a situational response: *"the difference between attitude and behaviour…an attitude is a predisposition to behave in a particular way, and behaviour relates to the individual's view as to what comprises the correct action for that situation".* (p.57, Thackwray, 2014).

Whilst the driving forces behind this research fuse my personal interest with the desire to investigate an opportunity to improve the coaching experience and subsequent outputs, I consider my research to be of benefit to multiple stakeholder groups: coaches, coachees, organisations and qualification providers.
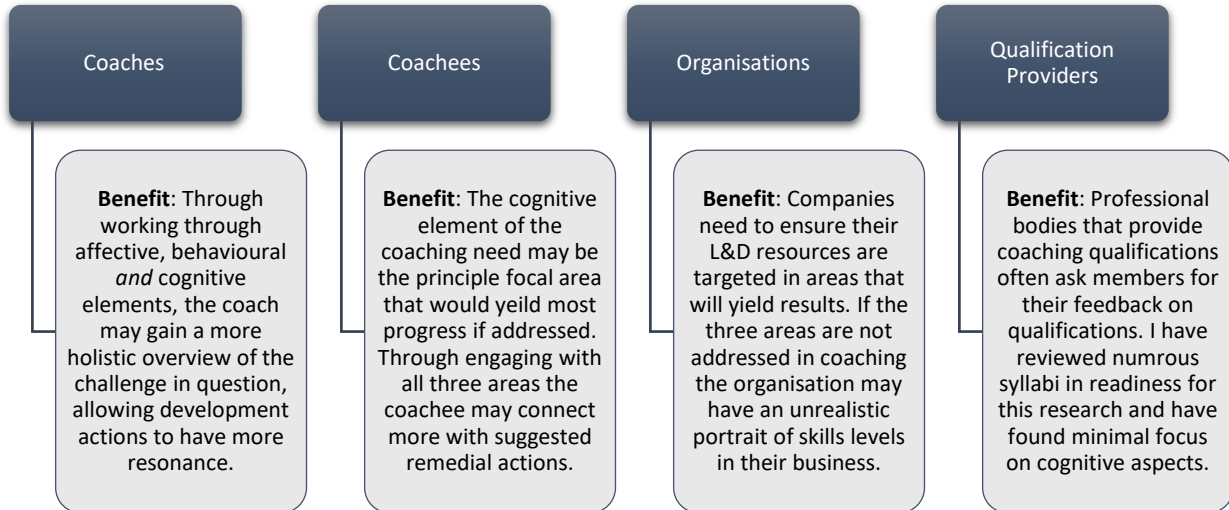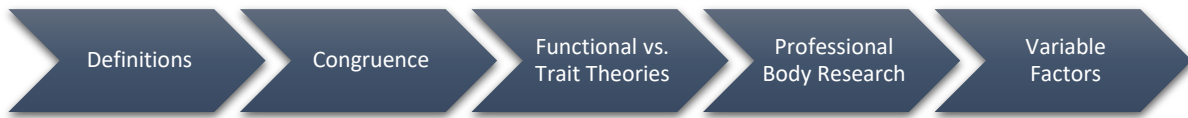
Coaches	Coachees	Organisations	Qualification Providers
Benefit: Through working through affective, behavioural *and* cognitive elements, the coach may gain a more holistic overview of the challenge in question, allowing development actions to have more resonance.	**Benefit**: The cognitive element of the coaching need may be the principle focal area that would yeild most progress if addressed. Through engaging with all three areas the coachee may connect more with suggested remedial actions.	**Benefit**: Companies need to ensure their L&D resources are targeted in areas that will yield results. If the three areas are not addressed in coaching the organisation may have an unrealistic portrait of skills levels in their business.	**Benefit**: Professional bodies that provide coaching qualifications often ask members for their feedback on qualifications. I have reviewed numrous syllabi in readiness for this research and have found minimal focus on cognitive aspects.

Figure 5: Benefits of Research to Different Stakeholder Groups

Chapter 2: Knowledge Landscape

Figure 6: Five Core Focus Areas Within Knowledge Landscape

In attempting to ensure I had a solid understanding of the literature around my research area I identified five focus areas, these are displayed in the graphic above. It seemed logical to begin with definitions.

I made an error at the start of my research. I assumed attitude had an academically agreed definition. It soon became apparent that the spectrum of opinion as to how one might define attitude was considerable. Certain definitions focused on favour attribution, citing attitude to be a tendency to evaluate an entity with favour or disfavour (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), whilst other definitions suggested attitude constituted a enduring organisation of beliefs, feelings and behavioural tendencies towards socially significant objects (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005). This latter definition maps with the tripartite model: beliefs (cognitive elements), feelings (affective elements) and behaviours (conative elements) are the key descriptors. Hogg and Vaughan's definition enhances my confidence in using the tripartite model as the base for my research as it evidences Rosenberg and Hovland are not isolated in their suggested attitude components.

In my quest to investigate the feasibility of creating a suite of support materials for coaches based on the tripartite model, I deemed it important to conduct some research on the relationship between attitudes and behaviours. It was not my intention to undertake a correlational study, however, as previously stated I had often heard the words 'attitude' and 'behaviour' used interchangeably by coaches therefore an understanding of the perceived relationship between the two terms struck me as being prudent. I have engaged with literature which suggests there is little agreement between both psychologists and learning professionals as to the level of congruence between the terms: the answer to the question whether attitudes are related to behaviour can range from 'no' to 'yes, nearly perfectly' (Satish, 1994).

One study which I found illuminating was discussed by Johnson and Christensen who quote LaPiere's study of 1934. Between 1930 and 1931, social scientist LaPiere travelled around the United States with a Chinese couple. At the time prejudice against Asians was significant and racial discrimination laws non-existent. They visited 67 hotels and 184 restaurants. Six months later, the establishments they had visited were sent a letter, asking whether they would accept Chinese guests. Although they were refused entry only once, 91% of the respondents said they were not willing to accept Chinese guests. The study indicated that the cognitive and affective strands of attitudes didn't match with behaviour (Johnson and Christensen, 2010).

I found LaPiere's experiment thought-provoking. For me, it evidenced the danger of assuming thoughts, feelings and behaviours will interlink and complement each other. I return to LaPiere's study later.

Whilst I favour the tripartite model, I sought to gain an understanding of other attitude models which could help me in my research: such model was Lutz and Calder's 'Vector Model'. They represent attitude structure as a two dimensional metric space with one dimension representing an effective component and other representing a cognitive component. They state an individual's attitude is characterised by a value on each of these dimensions (Jain, 2014). Since the output of much coaching is a behavioural amendment, a model which does not contain a dedicated behavioural element is of limited use to me in this research.

I have always felt that attitudes form part of our personality. I therefore engaged with research regarding theoretical approaches to personality. This derived from 2015 supervisory activity notes. I had noticed that many coaches I was working with were endorsing trait theories: advocating the promotion of certain traits (primarily behaviours). Through research I sought to develop an understanding of an alternative: functional theory. My concern with trait theories was based on my belief that one size does *not* fit all; that trait theories collectivise human behaviours and disregard differences. As Norman Anderson, Professor Emeritus at the University of California notes "*Trait theories are inadequate. They study individuals only through group-derived personality traits. They are too narrow for they barely recognise attitudes, moral cognition and other components of personality*" (p.41, Anderson, 2008). Anderson's narrowness is echoed by Costa and McCrae who ask "*What are these traits? Where do they come from? How do they influence behaviour? Even if we had answers those questions, we would not have a complete theory of personality, because there is more to personality than traits*" (p.145, Costa & McCrae, 2003).

In seeking to investigate the feasibility of creating a suite of support materials for coaches based on the tripartite model, I considered it useful to research how attitude components featured in some of the syllabi of established coaching qualifications. I took the ILM Level 3 Award in Coaching as an example. Composed of three units: *Understanding Good Practice in Workplace Coaching* (8577-300), *Undertaking Coaching in the Workplace* (8577-301) and *Reflecting on Workplace Coaching Skills* (8577-303), cognitive and affective components do not appear in the assignment briefs: only 'behaviours and characteristics' are mentioned.

AC 1.2 Explain the role and responsibilities of an effective workplace coach	Referral [ca. 4/16]	Pass [8/16]	Good Pass [ca. 12/16]	Assessor feedback on AC	
	• The roles and responsibilities of an effective workplace coach are listed rather than explained, or are incorrect • There is only a partial (limited) explanation of the roles and responsibilities of an effective workplace coach, or it is incorrect	• The roles and responsibilities of an effective workplace coach are broadly and correctly described, although what is meant by 'effective' is imprecise	• There is an explanation of the purpose of workplace coaching at both organisational and individual levels with a clear understanding of 'effective' and the context is detailed • The principal features of the roles, responsibilities and characteristics of an effective coach are explained in depth		
				/ 16 (min. of 8)	Pass or Referral
AC 1.3 Describe the behaviours and characteristics of an effective workplace coach	Referral [ca. 3/12]	Pass [6/12]	Good Pass [ca. 9/12]	Assessor feedback on AC	
	• The behaviours and characteristics of an effective workplace coach are listed rather than described, or are incorrect • There is only a partial and insufficient description of the behaviours and characteristics of an effective workplace coach	• The principal features of a limited but sufficient range of behaviours of an effective workplace coach are correctly described	• There is a correct and comprehensive description of the full range of behaviours and characteristics of an effective workplace coach		
				/ 12 (min. of 6)	Pass or Referral

Figure 7: Sample from ILM Marking Sheet (Level 3 Award in Workplace Coaching)

Whilst not negating the value of understanding the behaviours and characteristics of an effective coach, is focusing on their behaviours and attributes potentially neglecting how the coach should *think* (cognitive elements) and *feel* (affective elements)? I also reviewed syllabi from other bodies such as the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and again found a lack of focus on the attitudinal requirements of a coach.

Finally, I deemed it important to consider variable factors which may sit under the affective, behavioural and cognitive labels. Three terms were of particular interest. *Valence*: confirming whether an attitude towards the object is positive or negative. *Extremeness*, indicating the degree to which the attitude is positive or negative. Finally, *complexity*: understanding whether the attitude a single attitude or a cluster grouped under one umbrella term? (Singh and Rani, 2017). Understanding these variables struck me as being fundamental. The extremeness variable in particular may prove insightful as how can a coach engage in meaningful discussion without investigating the depth of the attitude/behaviour/opinion. I am keen to investigate whether coaches engage with this variable.

In conclusion, I believe through attempting to investigate the range of definitions of 'attitude', identifying various perspectives on attitude-behaviour congruence, researching various personality theories, engaging with professional body syllabi and considering the importance of variables within attitude components I placed myself in a strong position to undertake research in to my chosen area.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Purpose:

Investigating the feasibility of creating attitude-themed support materials for coaches based on the tripartite (affective, behavioural, cognitive) attitude component model.

Aims:

To suggest how a focus on the tripartite model may lead to more productive coaching sessions.

To raise awareness of the differences between attitudes and behaviours as well as the variable factors which should be considered when addressing affective, behavioural or cognitive components.

Objectives:

To explore how well attitude and attitude components are understood by a selection of coaches.

To identify whether focusing on the tripartite components leads to more mutually beneficial coaching sessions, where a coach has a more detailed, granular and holistic overview of the need and the coachee receives more precisely tailored guidance and support resulting in more effective action plan creation.

Having defined my purpose, aims and objectives I sought to identify the ontological perspective for my research. I began by reading guides to research approaches such as *Introduction to Research Methods* by Dr C Dawson and *Research Methodology*: *A Handbook for Beginners* by Pagadala Devi. I was interested in the difference between objectivist and subjectivist approaches. I found both works insightful, however it was a presentation by Dr. A Raddon at Leicester University's Centre for Labour Studies which helped me greatly. Raddon displayed the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches (Raddon, 2012).

	Objectivism / Positivism	**Subjectivism**
Pro	Economical collection of a large amount of data. Clear theoretical research focus from the outset. Greater opportunity for the researcher to retain control of the research process. Easily comparable data.	Facilitates understanding of how and why. Enables the researcher to be alive to changes. Good at understanding social processes. Allows for complexity and contextual factors.
Con	Inflexible – direction often cannot be changed once data collection has started. Weak at understanding social processes. Often does not discover the meanings people attach to social phenomena.	Data collection can be time consuming. Data analysis is challenging and can be complex. Researcher has to live with the uncertainty that clear patterns may not emerge. Generally perceived as less-credible by 'non-researchers'.

Figure 8: Adapted from Early Stage Research Training: Epistemology and Ontology in Social Science Research

My ontological perspective is certainly subjectivist. I was not seeking to identify the absolute truth, I was seeking a version of the truth which may prove insightful for my intended audience, specifically coaches. Prior to commencing research I also attempted to gain wider understanding on the differences between inductive and deductive research approaches. I learnt the latter is aimed at testing a hypothesis whilst the former is aimed at generating new information from context specific data. Whilst I was using an established

model within my research (tripartite model) I had not formulated a hypothesis; I was using research to investigate feasibility not to definitively answer a specific question.

I chose to conduct my research using a controlled experiment style of study. *The Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching* (CIRT) suggests experimental research is the most appropriate way for drawing causal conclusions, regarding interventions or treatments and establishing whether or not one or more factors causes a change in an outcome: '*this is largely due to the emphasis in controlling extraneous variables. It is a basic, straightforward, efficient type of research that can be applied across a variety of disciplines*' (CIRT, 2015). I chose to undertake a controlled experiment taking the form of working with a respondent pool on a suite of simulations. Confining the simulation subject matter allowed me to glean useful data targeted at my chosen research area whilst minimising potentially irrelevant information. I also considered the potential limitations and disadvantages of a controlled experiment approach. Below I have taken three limitations and suggested how my approach addresses / mitigates them:

Limitation 1: Experimental research can create artificial situations that do not represent real-life situations. This is due to fact that other variables are tightly controlled which may not create a fully realistic situation.

Consideration: My test subjects were aware from the outset that these simulations were being conducted as part of a research project. Whilst the simulations were contrived and sculpted to fit the needs of my research, the underlying themes: unproductivity, performance management and relationship management were themes that each respondent was familiar with. Familiarity with the themes would, I hope, somewhat mitigate distortion caused by artificiality of the simulations.

Limitation 2: Because the situations are very controlled and do not often represent real life, the reactions of the test subjects may not be true indicators of their behaviours in a non-experimental environment.
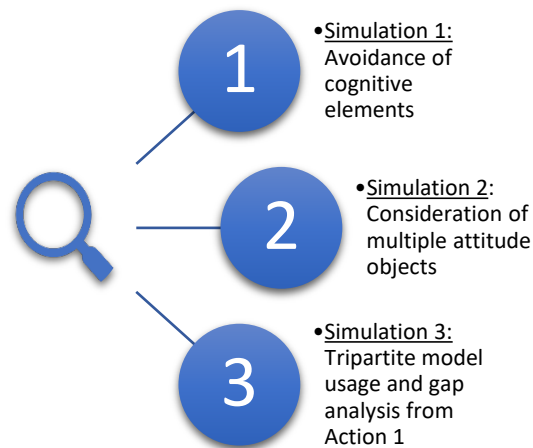
Consideration: This concern was somewhat mitigated through role inversion. I adopted the role of the coachee meaning the respondent was able to adopt their customary position as coach. Part of the coaches responsibility was/is to adapt to the needs of their coachee, they would be doing the same in these simulations as they would in a real-life situation.

Limitation 3: Experimental research is a powerful tool for determining or verifying causation, but it typically cannot specify "why" the outcome occurred.

Consideration: My research is not interested in the 'why' element at this stage. I am keen to gain an understanding of the respondent pool's awareness of various elements: tripartite model, attitude objects etc. At this time, I am focused on the 'what' elements: what is known about the tripartite model? What might/could happen if a coach only focuses on affective/behavioural elements? What attitude objects do coaches focus on? Etc.

Figure 9: Considerations and Limitations of Controlled Experiments (CIRT, 2015)

My suite of simulations was composed of the following elements:

- **Simulation 1:** Avoidance of cognitive elements
- **Simulation 2:** Consideration of multiple attitude objects
- **Simulation 3:** Tripartite model usage and gap analysis from Action 1

Action	Basic Details	Possible Activity Outcomes
1	I will provide a role play scenario to the coach and will assume the role of coachee. I will only make affective and behavioural comments and monitor if cognitive aspects are brought in to play by the coach.	Whilst coaches may not have expressly heard of (or used) the label 'tripartite' before, this activity will highlight whether the components of attitude are being addressed / raised.
2	I will provide another role play scenario as above. The scenario will have an obvious attitude object, however there will be peripheral attitude objects which should be considered in discussions.	Here I attempt to gain data on the coaches holistic approach to attitude objects. Was the core focus on the presumed primary object or were peripheral objects considered?
3	I will repeat the first scenario which this time will be run utilising the three tripartite model components. At the end we will debrief on the differences between this role play and Action One.	Here I seek to get the coaches to comment on differences between Actions One and Three. Did they notice an improvement or difference once cognitive elements were included?

Figure 10: Overview of Simulation Activity

I chose to supplement the three actions above with one to one interviews as they allow an individual's exact words to be recorded and any ambiguities can be clarified either during the interview or once the transcript has been typed. I also value the one to one environment as interviewees are not influenced by others in the group. Also, some interviewees may be less self-conscious in a one to one situation. Knowing our workforce is increasingly multicultural, one to one environments allow questions to be tailored to a respondent's individual linguistic proficiency. Inversely, the potential challenges of using interviews include the fact that they can be very time-consuming: setting up, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, feedback and reporting. Also, different interviewers may understand / transcribe interviews in different ways (evalued, 2019).

I mitigated the time-consumption concern through managing the expectations of my research participants in the Participant Information Sheet (Appendix B). With regards to the additional time requirements, I created a research study plan in November 2018 which built time in to existing commitments so transcribing, analysing, feedback and reporting could take place comfortably. The risk of different interviewers adopting inconsistent transcription approaches was negated by the fact that all were done by myself. I chose to work with a small group of four coaches for my research:

R001	R002	R003	R004
Coaching: 5 years	Coaching: 10 years	Coaching: 2 years	Coaching: 15 years
Sector: IT	Sector: Consultancy	Sector: Independent	Sector: Facilities
Type: Performance	Type: Executive	Type: Mindset	Type: Executive

Figure 11: Segmentation of Respondent Pool

Prior to selecting the size of my respondent pool I engaged with several sources concerning sample group sizes. As this type of research is new to me I deemed it important to understand different perspectives on sample sizes. Much of what I read focused on the benefits of large samples in deductive research (Fiedler and Kareev, 2011) however, because my research was inductive and I was not looking to prove a hypothesis, I considered a small sample to be adequate in allowing me to assess feasibility. I chose my sample group using variable differentiators; length of coaching experience, professional sector and coaching specialisms, this I hoped would allow me to make inferences as opposed to concrete conclusions whose validity would be questionable with a limited respondent pool. Conducting the three fifteen-minute activities with each individual as well as the 30 minute one to one, I have based subsequent findings on a total of 300 minutes' worth of engagement. I have restricted my findings to only the data gathered in this research, I have not factored in existing supervision notes or personal reflection on previous research.
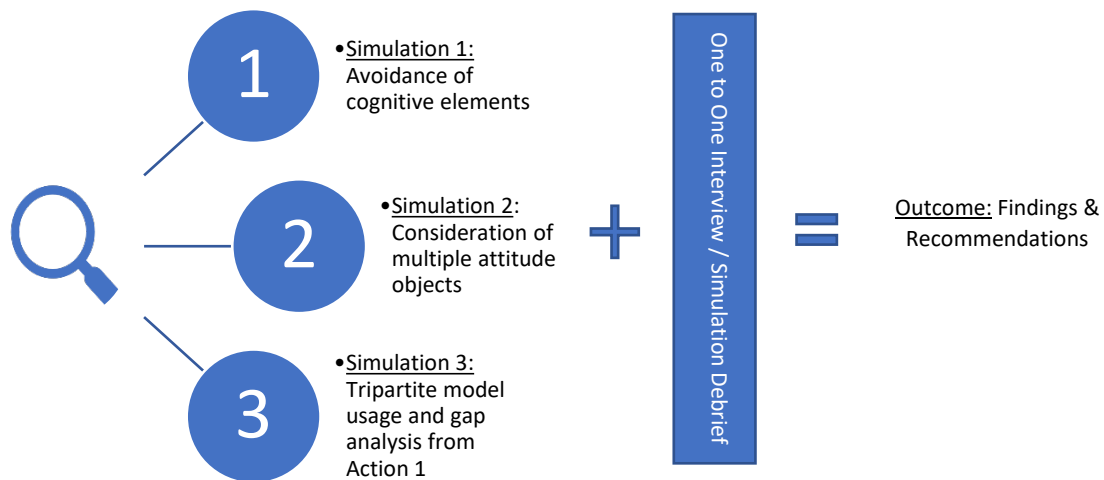
Chapter 4: Project Activity

Figure 12: Research Activity Process Diagram

I begin this section of my document by detailing the scenarios I used within the simulations. I outline below not just the scenario details, but also the creation rationale and the behavioural specification for each.

Simulation 1

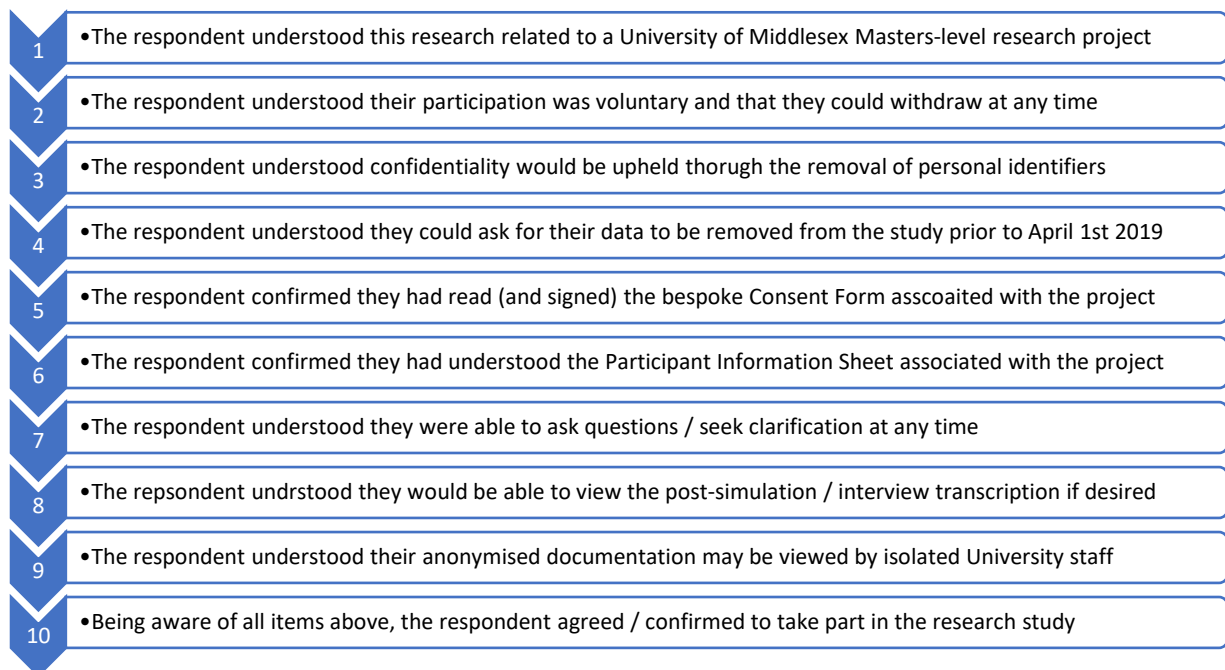|	
Details:	In this simulation you will assume the role of coach. You will be working with Andrew, a 37 year old Account Manager who works for a large charity organisation. He has worked in the organisation for 11 years and has consistently delivered performance results placing him in the top 25% of employees. Client feedback on his behaviour and personality are always highly complementary. Andrew recently applied for the vacant position of Head of Accounts. He was unsuccessful and the position was awarded to his colleague Mark. The lack of success with his recent application has left him feeling unappreciated whilst simultaneously straining his relationship with Mark. Andrew has requested a coaching session to identify ways of positively addressing his feelings as described above.
Creation Rationale:	The simulation details was designed to address an emotive issue (unsuccessful promotion) which I felt would allow me to focus (without seeming contrived) on affective and behavioural responses. In the details I deliberately used the words 'behaviour' and 'feeling' in an attempt to subliminally coerce focus on these two areas. With the absence of a prominent thought-based (cognitive) concern, I was keen to see if the coach would probe what I *thought* about various elements: the role, my future etc.
Coachee Behaviour:	I consistently used affective and behavioural-focused language / statements: examples only: (non-exhaustive list) 'it feels personal that…' / 'I have a hunch that….' / 'I've taken to heart…' / 'In these situations I tend to…' / 'I behave differently when…' / 'I'm sensitive to situations where I…' / 'I know that one of my triggers is…' / 'I sense that….'. If the coach introduced cognitive questions/elements I engaged with them but attempted to steer the conversation back to affective/behavioural elements to gauge how important they deemed my *thoughts* to be around the given subject areas.

Details:	In this simulation you will assume the role of coach. You will be working with Paul who has recently joined an inbound calls sales team at a call centre. Paul is an energetic and dedicated professional. He (along with every other member of the team) has his own caseload and is responsible for converting incoming calls to actual sales. Paul's manager has suggested he requires coaching as he is not 'gelling' with the rest of the team. Feedback from stakeholders outside of Paul's team has suggested he is not overly approachable. Paul's sales figures are lower than average, and his end of probation review is scheduled for a month from today's date. The team has criticised Paul's knowledge of internal process.
Creation Rationale:	The simulation details were designed to examine the respondents' awareness of 'focal objects'. In this case the perceived absence of inter-team harmony and a lack of approachability from Paul had been positioned as dominant issues. However, several wider questions merited discussion too: 1) If each team member has their own independent caseload, how important is team harmony? 2) The team criticize procedural knowledge, yet he is in his probation period. Is criticism fair? 3) One might expect his sales volume to be lower during his probation period. Is criticism fair? 4) Did the coach address only perceived remedial needs or engage with strengths too? (energetic and dedicated were two adjectives used to describe Paul)
Coachee Behaviour:	The true reason for the perceived behaviour is that Paul has worked in sales for many years but has been a remote worker. This is the first time he has worked in a team for over 10 years. Dyslexia has also prevented him from fully grasping some of the policies / processes. I portrayed the coachee as totally unaware of any issues: because to him, he will be acting / working as he always has.

Simulation 3

Details:	Repeated scenario from Simulation 1: In this simulation you will assume the role of coach. You will be working with Andrew, a 37 year old Account Manager who works for a large charity organisation. He has worked in the organisation for 11 years and has consistently delivered performance results placing him in the top 25% of employees. Client feedback on his behaviour and personality are always highly complementary. Andrew recently applied for the vacant position of Head of Accounts. He was unsuccessful and the position was awarded to his colleague Mark. The lack of success with his recent application has left him feeling unappreciated whilst simultaneously straining his relationship with Mark. Andrew has requested a coaching session to identify ways of positively addressing his feelings.
Creation Rationale:	In using the *Simulation 1* scenario again, I was able to undertake a comparative analysis. This time, I ensured an even focus was maintained on considering affective, behavioural and cognitive elements. It is important to note that I had not discussed the tripartite model with the coach at this time: one to one interviews took place after simulations. I was interested to see if the coach noticed any differences in session rhythm, fluidity and productivity once the tripartite model was being used.
Coachee Behaviour:	As in Simulation 1 I initially used primarily affective and behavioural-focused language / statements but as the scenario progressed I interspersed cognitive statements of belief: examples only: (non-exhaustive list) 'it feels personal that…' / 'I have a hunch that….' / 'I've taken to heart…' / 'In these situations I tend to…' / *'I think that…'* / *'I have always believed…'* / *'I know that….'* -

Prior to creating the above simulations I engaged with literature surrounding effective scenario creation. A repeated piece of guidance for effective role plays was to define the experience you want the learners/respondents to have (Silberman, 2007). I had originally intended to conduct a single, longer role play which would incorporate all my avenues of research enquiry. However, after reading guidance by multiple authors I decided I may be in a better position to define the learner experience, as suggested by Silberman, by segmenting my approach in to isolated simulations which would allow a more granular focus on individual themes instead of attempting to unweave strands of data from a holistic mass of information.

In addition to researching simulation effectiveness, prior to commencing the three simulations with each individual respondent I engaged in a limited period of contracting. It is commonly accepted that contracting is a critical activity to ensure a successful coaching engagement (Bennett and Bush, 2014). Whilst I was confident that I had behaved ethically in ensuring respondents were given requisite documentation and information in advance, I took the opportunity of checking key information had been read and understood:

1	•The respondent understood this research related to a University of Middlesex Masters-level research project
2	•The respondent understood their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time
3	•The respondent understood confidentiality would be upheld thorugh the removal of personal identifiers
4	•The respondent understood they could ask for their data to be removed from the study prior to April 1st 2019
5	•The respondent confirmed they had read (and signed) the bespoke Consent Form asscoaited with the project
6	•The respondent confirmed they had understood the Participant Information Sheet associated with the project
7	•The respondent understood they were able to ask questions / seek clarification at any time
8	•The repsondent undrstood they would be able to view the post-simulation / interview transcription if desired
9	•The respondent understood their anonymised documentation may be viewed by isolated University staff
10	•Being aware of all items above, the respondent agreed / confirmed to take part in the research study

Figure 13: Items Discussed During Contracting Phase Prior To Simulations

Each simulation was designed to yield specific data independent from the others. When the data was collectivised and analysed, I believed it would provide a bank of information which would allow me to make an informed inference as to the feasibility of creating a suite of support materials for coaches based on the tripartite model. I detail below the questions I sought to answer in my own mind via each simulation.

Simulation 1:	Simulation 2:	Simulation 3:
How are cognitive attitude components considered in relation to affective and behavioural components within the given scenario? Would the coach recognise when they are being led, consciously or subconsciously, to only focus on affective and behavioural elements? At the end of this scenario, the coach will know I feel and behave in a certain scenario, but do they know what I think about the key subject matter?	The scenario contains positive and pejorative information regarding the subject, was attention paid to both types of information? Did the coach investigate the range of attitude objects present in the scenario or just the principally-placed ones? Was the data interrogated? How did the coach's engaging with the multiple attitude objects (or lack of) shape the flow of the session and the delegates responses?	Will equal focus on affective, behavioural and cognitive attitude components create a more holistic understanding of the issue for the coach? Will there be any differences in session rhythm, fluidity and productivity now all three attitude components are being considered? Despite the coachee engaging with all three attitude component elements, do the coaches mirror this or engage with isolated components?

Figure 14: Questions Aligned to Each Simulation

Having completed the three simulations with each respondent, I typed up their transcript and within 24 hours proceeded to conduct a one to one interview. I segmented these one to one meetings as follows:

Phase 1: Reflection	Phase 2: Discussion	Phase 3: Projection
Duration: 10 minutes	Duration: 15 minutes	Duration: 05 minutes
Aim of phase: Here I sought immediate feedback from the respondent about their thoughts and feelings on the simulations.	Aim of phase: Here I elaborated on the three components of the tripartite model and explained how the simulations had been crafted to yield specific data. I also referred back to the individual respondent's transcript to probe why certain questions had been asked in the various simulations. Of particular interest to me here was understanding if the respondent noted any differences between the first and final simulations.	Aim of phase: Here I sought to understand whether the respondent thought that a suite of support materials based on the tripartite model may prove a useful resource for professional coaches.

Figure 15: One to One Interview Timing Structure

During my research activity, I realised that I was making a significant mistake. I had started to consider research outputs whilst only halfway through data collection. As I began the third respondent meeting I became aware that I was almost pre-empting what I was about to hear. I ran the risk of attempting to mould what I was about to hear to fit the ideas that I was already forming. I paused my research here and

investigated the concept of confirmation bias in an attempt to better understand the error. I engaged with a book which affirmed confirmation bias to be an irrational tendency to search for, interpret or remember information in a way that confirms preconceptions or working hypotheses. It is a type of cognitive bias and a systematic error of inductive reasoning. People can reinforce their existing attitudes by selectively collecting new evidence, by interpreting evidence in a biased way or by selectively recalling information from memory (Miller, Vandome and McBrewster, 2009).

The next step was to investigate ways of overcoming the confirmation bias. It was an article on the workplace well-being and safety website *The Stay Safe Project* which I found particularly insightful. The article suggested we often seek to confirm what we think because we seek validation of what we perceive to be the truth. However, if we frame our own version of the truth as simply one version of it, there is no clash. Other ideas and perspectives become valuable alternative insights as opposed to problems which dilute or distort our held opinions (Cambridge, 2018). I very much engaged with this idea. I stopped considering what I thought the outputs might be and accepted all findings as valuable in their own right. I avoided value attribution of the data until the full data collection process had been completed.

I recorded my combined simulation and one to one meetings using Voice Recorder from the Microsoft Store. One of my participants did not want to be recorded and so notes were taken during the meeting, then transcribed and referred back to the individual to ensure they were content responses had been accurately recorded. Sections of transcript are displayed for evidential purposes in Appendix A.

Having created what I considered to be robust simulations which would yield tightly specific data relevant to my research area, having considered the composition of my research pool and having identified areas of personal growth throughout the research process I considered myself well-placed to undertake my research. I now progress to identify the findings from my research.

Chapter 5: Project Findings

Prior to elaborating on findings, I consider it important to state that whilst the primary focus of my project was to ascertain the feasibility of creating a suite of dedicated support materials for coaches based on the tripartite model, it was not my intention to advocate the primacy of one attitude component (cognitive, affective or behavioural) over the others. Instead, I sought to show how awareness of, and engagement with, a combination of all three components may lead to richer, more rewarding outcomes. I define 'richer, more rewarding outcomes' as a session where the coach has a deeper and more accurate understanding of the coaching need and the coachee feels confident that resultant action plans are precise in their detail and structure due to the consistent understanding of the need between the two parties. In presenting my findings, I take each simulation in turn, fusing simulation data with relevant one to one interview data.
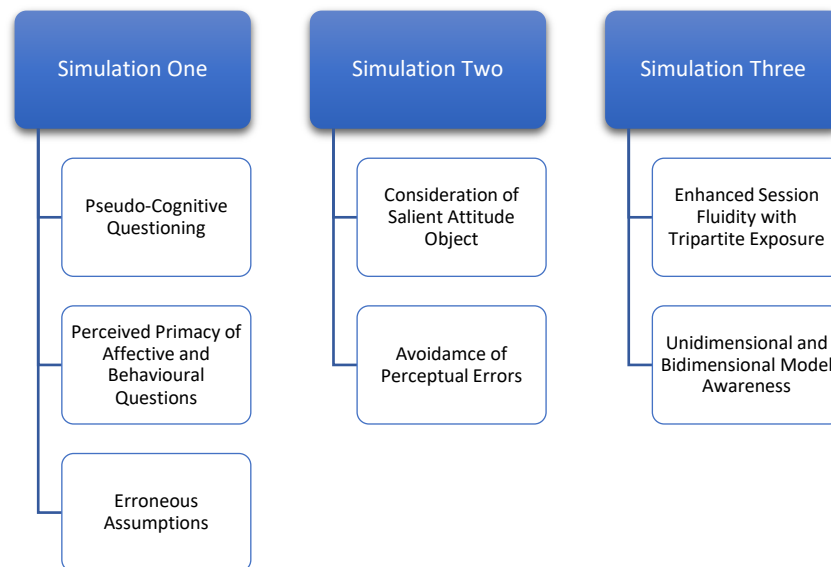
Results Overview

Figure 16: Overview of Research Results

Simulation One:

Precis of activity: *Simulation involving the avoidance of cognitive elements*

Finding 1: *Pseudo-Cognitive Questioning*

50% of respondents engaged in what I am labelling pseudo-cognitive questioning, where a question had the outward appearance of being cognitive, but in reality had a different focus. One respondent (R001) diverted an initially cognitive question to an affective one: 'when you think about the unsuccessful application, how do you feel?' and one respondent (R002) diverted an initially cognitive question into a

behavioural one: 'thinking on the post-application feedback you received, have your workplace behaviours or attitudes changed as a result?'. In the post-simulation one-to-one discussions with the two pseudo-cognitive respondents, I asked them what information they sought from those questions:

<u>Question</u>: 'When you think about the unsuccessful application, how do you feel?'
<u>*Information sought*</u>: R001: 'I wanted to understand what you thought about your recent experience'.

<u>Question</u>: 'Thinking on the post-application feedback you received, have your workplace behaviours or attitudes changed as a result?'

<u>*Information sought:*</u> R002: 'I wanted to gauge whether you thought the feedback you received was justified and if you believed it had impacted your current performance'.

Findings from the simulation may suggest that some coaches believe they are covering cognitive-based questions, enabling them to form an understanding of what the coachee thinks about a certain topic, when in reality the cognitive element is only the packaging: the product (information yielded from the question) is often affective or behavioural in nature. One explanation for the above could be that there is insufficient knowledge as to the differences between affective, behavioural and cognitive elements. However, it is equally possible that the affective, behavioural and cognitive labels are very well understood by the respondents and the findings are the result of poor phrasing or ineffective question construction.

<u>*Finding 2:*</u> *Perceived Primacy of Affective and Behavioural Questions*

From simulation one I tallied the question type frequency of each respondent. The table below identifies the volumes of affective, behavioural and cognitive questions.

Simulation 1	Affective	Behavioural	Cognitive
R001	7	7	1
R002	6	7	2
R003	2	6	8
R004	8	8	3

Figure 17: Response Type Frequency (Simulation One)

As previously clarified, this simulation was designed to focus on affective and behavioural components with a view to seeing how the coach engaged (if at all) with cognitive elements. Purely looking at question volumes, it would appear the simulation was successful at marginalising the coaches engagement with cognitive attitude components. The exception here is R003, for whom the majority of questions were

cognitive. It became apparent during the one to one interview that R003 had recently adjusted the direction of their coaching specialism to what they labelled 'mindset and emotional intelligence coaching', focusing on translating thoughts and ambitions in to action plans for goal accomplishment. As this work is highly thought-based I would anticipate a greater focus on cognitive elements than other respondents. Without negating the value of R003 data, I believe the volume data suggests that cognitive elements may not have been sufficiently addressed. As with Finding One, this could be due to a lack of understanding of the different components, but it may also be that the components are well understood but the coach was led in their dominance of affective / behavioural questions by coachee behaviour. I expand on this below.

Finding 3: *Erroneous Assumptions: A Lesson From the Greek Myths*

Several years ago I was mentored and supervised by a senior coach. In one supervision session I was asked about a key piece of information that I had omitted to gain from a coachee. I was asked whether the data I *had* collected was sufficient to form an impression about the missing information. I reviewed my notes and said yes. The next week I had another session with the same client. I asked a question relating to the missing information and found out my assumption from the previous week had been highly inaccurate.

In my next supervision meeting I explained this to my supervisor who ended our session by suggesting that I read the Orpheus and Eurydice myth. Orpheus, the son of Apollo and Calliope was given a lyre by his father and taught how to play with such proficiency that neither man nor beast could resist his music. Orpheus soon fell in love with and married Eurydice. The myth continues to say that one day Eurydice was wandering in the forest when the shepherd Aristaeus, enchanted by her beauty, started making unwelcomed advances. Trying to escape his attentions she ran and fell, was bitten by a snake and died. Orpheus presented himself to the God of the Underworld, Hades and his wife Persephone and enchanted them with his lyre music, pleading for the return of Eurydice. This resulted in Hades telling Orpheus that he could take Eurydice under one condition: he could not look at her before coming out to the light or he would lose her forever. Orpheus left to ascend to the living world. Starting to believe the Gods had fooled him, a few feet from the exit he turned to look at Eurydice, to see her disappearing forever.

My supervisor, knowing my undergraduate dissertation was based around a reworking of Euripides' *Medea* and that I had an interest in Greek myths, was using a story I was familiar with to make a point about a development area within my practice. Just like Orpheus, looking back and making assumptions had proven dangerous. If I had acted on my own assumptions of the missing information future discussions were likely to have been flawed as they would have failed to understand the coachee's cognitive standpoint. I mention this because with the exception of R003, all respondents expressed their difficulty in verbalising what the

coachee *thought* about the simulation subject matter. Had a range of cognitive questions been asked then looking back may have proven fruitful. This simulation may suggest that missing cognitive questions not only frustrates a holistic overview but could be dangerous in supporting coaches to use affective / behavioural data to form cognitive opinions. Evidence of the above discussion is included in Appendix A.

Simulation Two:

Precis of activity: *Consideration of multiple attitude objects*

Finding 4: *Perception of Salient Attitude Object*

75% of respondents focused their discussions around what they perceived was the salient attitude object, despite other attitude objects being clearly highlighted in the briefing note. In his book Anthony Greenwald refers back to the aforementioned LaPiere study noting how LaPiere *assumed* the salient attitude object was 'members of the Chinese race'. However, the couple (who were described as 'personable' and 'charming') could also have been identified as customers, middle-class persons, as a young married couple and so forth. Greenwald argues there is little justification for assuming that the only (or most) salient attitude-object identification was 'members of the Chinese race' (Pratkanis, Breckler & Greenwald, 2014).

With the exception of R004, all respondents appeared to focus on the dominantly placed pejorative attitude objects: the lack of 'gelling' with the team and the perceived lack of approachability. The positive descriptors (energetic and dedicated professional) were somewhat marginalised by R001, R002 and R003. The briefing note hinted at multiple causes for the coachee's behaviour, many of which were not investigated. The presumed dominance of the motive for the behaviour stifled investigation in to the other possible causes. Only R004 interrogated relevant peripheral factors: the probation period, the reasonableness of expecting high performance when someone is new to a company etc. Again, I refer to Greenwald's analysis of LaPiere's study. He suggests the restaurant proprietor might be concerned that an unpleasant scene with the young Chinese couple could intrude om the meals of other patrons or harm the reputation of the restaurant. The proprietor's behaviour toward the Chinese couple, he notes, might therefore be as much (or more) influenced by attitudes toward those other objects as by attitudes towards the couple. When, as in this situation, additional objects are important, attitude toward the presumably focal object should not dominate. (Pratkanis, Breckler & Greenwald, 2014). I consider findings from this simulation to suggest that support materials focused on greater awareness of attitude objects and behavioural triggers towards attitude objects may prove insightful and valuable.

The concentration on what may be seen as the salient attitude object, as described above, may have a distorting effect on the coaching session. Throughout the simulations I witnessed two additional distorting factors: stereotyping and the Halo / Horn effects. Stereotyping is generalization, or the tendency to assign attributes to a person solely on the basis of a category or group to which that person belongs rather than on individual characteristics. We readily expect someone identified as a professor, carpenter, police officer, poet or surgeon to have certain attributes, even if we have not met the individual. Stereotyping may lead the perceiver to dwell on certain characteristics expected of all persons in the assigned category and fail to recognise the characteristics that distinguish the person as an individual (Lewis, Goodman, Fandt and Michlitsch, 2006). An example of this may be seen in the response from R004 who said on three separate occasions during Simulation One, '*How might an Account Manager*….' – reducing the coachee (myself) to part of a predefined collective bound by norms and expectations. Progressing from stereotyping to the halo/horn effect(s), John Martin suggests '*The halo effect is the bias introduced when attributing all of the characteristics of a person to a single attribute, For example, a person who is a good timekeeper may be claimed to be a high-performing employee in all other respects. This has obvious dangers in forming judgments and deciding actions about other people. In seeking to reduce the number of employees, managers deciding who should stay on the basis of (say) attendance records might result in the loss of more highly skilled and productive workers who have a less 'perfect' attendance record'* (p.91, Martin, 2000). A notable example of this (horn effect) was the approach taken by R001 in Simulation Two. Through question structure and phrasing it appeared that the isolated negative characteristics in the brief had been overlaid on top of the coachee's entire skill set. A sample question being: 'How might your approachability levels help uplift your sales conversion?'. The phrasing of the question left me with the impression that the coach had formed an impression that I was underperforming in all areas without getting to know me.

Simulation Three:

Precis of activity: *Tripartite model usage and gap analysis*

Finding 6: *Enhanced Session Fluidity with Tripartite Exposure*

This simulation repeated the same scenario as the first simulation. This time I added cognitive-focused responses / leading questions in an effort to understand if the coach would notice any difference. At the time of conducting this final simulation I had *not* explained the tripartite model to any of the respondents. In the table below, the black numbers represent the question type volume from simulation one, the red numbers indicate the question type volume from simulation three.

Simulation 1 3	Affective	Behavioural	Cognitive
R001	7 5	7 5	1 4
R002	6 5	7 7	2 2
R003	2 3	6 4	8 7
R004	8 6	8 5	3 6

Figure 18: Response Type Frequency (Simulation Three)

50% of respondents (R001 and R004) displayed a greater balance of the three question types in this simulation. R003 continued to display a strong cognitive-focus whilst R002 displayed minimal difference from the simulation one findings. The one to one interviews proved particularly insightful in terms of isolating the coaches' perceived differences between simulations one and three. A separate section below provides expansive detail on the one to one interview phase.

R001: 'I felt we generated more rapport in this role-play. The conversation felt more natural and I felt our discussions had greater resonance and depth. I felt like you gave me more information this time'.

R002: 'This felt very similar to the first time we conducted the role-play'.

R003: 'For me, we spent more time on your thoughts this time which meant we were able to see where the root of the behaviours lay. I enjoyed this role-play more than the first time we engaged with it'.

R004: 'Our conversation flowed much better this time. I felt we were more focused this time; The first time we were very reactive, focusing on emotion and the 'here and now' immediate responses. This time we were able to be more objective and think we had a better discussion because of it'.

In their book, Susan English, Janice Sabatine and Phillip Brownell describe fluidity and stability, both cited as improvements between Simulations One and Three, as '*the inner condition of the coach*' (p.45, English, Sabatine and Brownell, 2000). This fluidity, in which our attention can flit quickly over a wide range of ideas and perspectives without attaching to any of them, can be quite enlivening. The resulting creativity and resourcefulness is wonderful for generating new ideas, thinking out of the box and questioning long-held assumptions. If a greater awareness of the tripartite model has contributed to an 'enlivening' of the session and enhanced creativity then I consider the findings from the research to indicate that a dedicated suite of support materials based on the tripartite model might prove fruitful and beneficial to coaches.

Finding 7: Unidimensional and Bidimensional Models

A personal understanding of the difference between unidimensional and bidimensional models was a key finding for me in the research. The work of Irving Weiner greatly helped me to understand how the

traditional perspective regards attitudes as being unidimensional evaluations, which express sentiments ranging from extreme unfavourability toward the attitude object to extreme favourability. In other words, this perspective takes the form of (a) favourability, (b) unfavourability or (c) neither favourability nor unfavourability. A person may feel positively or negatively about the object, but not at the same time. This was the perspective to which I subscribed prior to commencing my research. The bidimensional model rejects this and suggests *'that attitudes subsume an evaluative tendency that varies in positivity and a separate evaluative tendency that varies in negativity. Consequently, attitudes can take the form of (a) favourability, (b) unfavourability, (c) neither favourability nor unfavourability, and (d) both favourability and unfavourability toward the attitude object'*. (p.303, Weiner, 2003). It was during the one to one discussion with R003 that I began to question the unidimensional approach. R003 stated their agreement with a particular coaching approach depended on the context it was being used in: '*I like it and I don't*'. Whilst this initially seemed like a throwaway comment, it stayed with me and I began to question whether 'liking' and 'disliking' were mutually exclusive. I again refer back to the syllabi of professional coaching qualifications, the unidimensional model is highly prevalent whilst the bidimensional model is almost entirely absent. From an awareness point of view, I consider coaches' knowledge would be enhanced with an understanding of the different dimensional models as it would allow them to obtain more granular data about a coachee's feelings instead of taking a unidimensional view.

Comments from the One to One Interview Phase

Phase 1: Reflection – Here I sought immediate feedback from the simulations:

R001: I thought the role-plays were well put together. I have certainly worked with clients in situations similar to both briefings.

R004: I very much liked the second role-play. There were some traps in there. Not to catch us out, but we had to look in to what was relevant and what was not. I think more coaches need to be aware of the errors they can make which will detract from the overall succession of your coachee engagement.

Comment: I have highlighted the first comment because it addresses one of the perceived challenges of experimental research as cited by *The Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching* (CIRT) who stated that experimental research can fail to create relatable/real-life scenarios where artificiality stifles natural responses. Respondent feedback would suggest the simulation details were sufficient to engage with fully. The second comment is included because it eliminated an element of personal doubt. At the start of my research I was concerned I was diluting my tripartite focus by looking in to additional items/concepts such as attitude objects and personality variables. As research proceeded I became more confident that all items

within my research were interlinked. R004 (a coach with 15 years' experience) feedback suggests the attitude object focus yielded useful learning.

Phase 2: <u>Discussion</u> – Here I sought to clarify any outstanding questions and introduce the tripartite model:

R002: Looking through the transcript and reflecting now, I thought I asked more thought-based questions than that. I've always believed what someone thinks underpins their actions.

Comment: R002 displayed minimal change in their question-type volume rates. Had the data from the simulations been taken in isolation one might assume R002 did not fully understand the importance of an affective/behavioural/cognitive balance. The one to one interview highlighted that for R002, question formation is a key learning need. The pseudo-cognitive approach was discussed and identified as a recurrent theme in their questioning approach.

Phase 3: <u>Projection</u> – Here I sought opinion as to whether respondents felt a set of support material based on the tripartite model (including other such elements as attitude objects, dimensions etc) would be useful.

R003: *I have found involvement in this process to be stimulating. Whilst I am very familiar with the attitude model, I enjoyed the focus on causes and discussing how we sometimes miss things. I would certainly find some support materials based on what we have discussed to be useful*

Comment: The comments made by R003 suggest that coaches with a specialism in cognitive-dominant specialisms may also benefit from the provisional support materials. Whilst I initially (erroneously) viewed R003's data as a distortion given their existing proficiency with the model, their mention of dimensions greatly enriched my overall understanding and engagement with the data.

Chapter 6: Outcomes and Recommendations

I begin this section by clarifying to whom I am making these recommendations. I am taking the stance that they are items that will inform my ongoing approach to developing coaching materials for my own use when working with clients: in which case my findings may better labelled as 'personal action points' rather than 'recommendations'. Having reviewed my outcomes, I highlight the following four action points:

Action Point One: *Lack of correlation between question type and information sought*

My research has suggested that some of the seemingly-cognitive questions coaches ask may in fact generate affective and/or behavioural data. I labelled such questions 'pseudo-cognitive'. One of my recommendations is therefore to dedicate a section of any proposed support materials to question formation and understanding how to map question construction against information sought.

Action Point Two: *Awareness of pitfalls: assumptions, stereotyping and halo/horn effects.*

My research has suggested that coaches may not be sufficiently aware of the key pitfalls which may hinder the productivity or success of a coaching session. Assumption forming, stereotyping and the halo/horn effects were all, on occasion, evident within the simulations and interviews. A further recommendation would therefore be that in any support materials created as a result of this research, there should be a section devoted to raising awareness of, and overcoming the above named hazards.

Action Point Three: *Attitude object deconstruction and peripheral cause awareness*

My research has suggested that coaches may often focus on a perceived dominant attitude object. Coaches may benefit from an increased awareness of how to deconstruct a 'coaching need' in to various strands which can more easily be addressed. An additional recommendation is therefore to ensure any future support materials encourage coaches to engage with what may initially appear to be peripheral data but is in fact critical to the central issue.

Action Point Four: *Engagement with variables and dimensional models*

My research has suggested that the unidimensional model is extensively adopted by most coaches. An additional recommendation from my research is that coaches are introduced to the alternative model (either through the suite of support materials I am investigating or through separate learning and development) allowing them to possess a wider knowledge base and potentially gain a more granular understanding of a coachee's feelings/beliefs on a particular issue. Until I conducted this research I had not considered that something could be simultaneously favourable and unfavourable, I found this illuminating.

Progressing My Outcomes:

I would now like to briefly comment on two items: potential further investigation hierarchy and how I may take my action points / findings further. Firstly, with regards to a further investigation hierarchy, here I refer to the fact that certain of my action points may be considered more immediate needs than others. I consider Action Point One to be the most immediate need as it focuses on questioning skills and question construction through a detailed awareness of the tripartite model. Actions Points Two, Three and Four are all in some way dependent upon refined questioning abilities from a coach who understands affective, behavioural and cognitive components of attitude. The first support material I would therefore create as a result of this study would be a module on mapping question formation to the tripartite model components.

Secondly, I have given some consideration as to how I may take elements of my research further. Earlier in the body of my research I was critical of the ILM syllabi, noting how 'attitude' and components of attitude received minimal focus. As Head of Centre for my organisation's Approved Centre relationship with the ILM, I have regular audits and meetings with external verifiers, account managers and the central ILM team. I have requested a meeting to bring my thoughts on the lack of attitude focus to their attention. At the time of submission the date for this meeting has not been confirmed. Unfortunately, the *ILM Spotlight* coaching pilot was not extended and so I am unable to investigate my outcomes further in that forum. I am, however, in open communication with many former *Spotlight* participants which may prove insightful.

Options for Further Study:

My research participant pool was very limited to allow me to work with a small group of coaches across a range of variable factors: length of experience, coaching specialism, industry sector etc. I would like to undertake further research with a larger research pool of coaches all working within the same specialism. The data of R003 (whilst useful) may somewhat distort overall findings as a very clear focus on cognitive elements is inherent within that specialism which may not be present in other respondents / coaches. Working with a larger sample group may give greater credibility to findings as different specialisms may engage differently with the tripartite model.

Conclusion:

In summary, I consider my research has indicated that a suite of support materials for coaches, based on the tripartite model may be both necessary and would be well received. My findings allow me to suggest that packaging the tripartite model with learning around attitude objects, variable factors, potential pitfalls and dimensional models may result in a set of materials that may enable coaching sessions to obtain greater depth due to an enhanced understanding of the coachees holistic (affective, behavioural and cognitive) standpoint/position on a particular issue.

Reflection

I have found this research project both enjoyable and challenging. Reflecting on my project I consider myself to have had several successes and to have discovered several areas for future improvement.

What would I do differently next time?

1) Knowledge landscape: I would spend more time on my knowledge landscape. Whilst I did dedicate three months to understanding the literature around my subject, I think I was somewhat narrow-minded in my selection of themes to focus on. As previously mentioned I isolated five focus areas: definitions, congruence, functional versus trait theories, professional body research and variable factors. If I were to restart my research I would use the above as Level 1 headings, then create Level 2 subheadings and so on. Looking back I see the above as too generic. My research may have benefited from me investigating each theme in more depth at the literary review stage. I am content however that the literary research I did was of good quality and gave me a solid foundation on which to build my later work.

2) Research approaches and methodologies: This MProf represents my first attempt at postgraduate research. Whilst I am confident that I have learnt much about research techniques, I would dedicate more time in my future study plan to understanding research approaches in more depth. Reflecting on my project, I am curious to understand and investigate what other approaches I could have tried. Would those alternate approaches have yielded different/better results?

3) Built in 'health checks': I commented in the main body of the text how I had almost started to mould my ongoing findings in to a cohesive set of outputs before I had finished data collection. I have a fondness for neatness and order and started this project (erroneously) thinking that everything had to tie up and interlink. As I progressed through my research, I realised the anomalies, differences and unique occurrences were just as valuable as any other data. Should I undertake postgraduate research in the future I will value all data equally and will not pre-empt results during the data collection phase.

Strengths and self-discovery from undertaking this research project:

1) Crafting simulations: I feel I was successful in creating simulations/role-plays which yielded the data needed for my research. I feel I conducted strong research in to simulation construction and struck a balance between creating scenarios which were relatable yet tightly specific to my research aims whilst minimizing potentially unproductive tangents/information.

2) Time management: In November 2018 I created a study plan detailing hours set aside for studying from November 2018 to April 2019. In keeping to this schedule throughout the six months I feel I have kept steady momentum which I hope has resulted in a satisfactory document. Knowing how work and

operational commitments can interfere with study schedules I added a 20% 'buffer' zone, meaning if my time was taken on unforeseen projects or circumstances, I could stick to my study schedule.

3) <u>Cohort engagement:</u> Whilst this point is slightly external to my solo project, I feel it is important to state that a growth point for me has been the wider engagement with my learning cohort. I can be quite insular with my own project work but discussing ideas and plans with the cohort has certainly enriched my output in my own opinion. The face to face study days have certainly aided my learning.

Limitations of my Research:

As I reflect upon my work I can see how my approach may have limited the extent to which I can use my findings in other areas. I initially considered it a good idea to work with coaches across a variety of specialisms. I was hoping to draw inferences from my findings that could be applied to various types of coaching. In hindsight, I potentially should have considered either:

a) Working with a larger cross-specialism sample: working with one or two individuals from a particular specialism may be useful for data collection but drawing inferences from such a limited pool of respondents may be questionable. Had I wanted to make recommendations for 'coaches' in general I should possibly have considered working with a much larger respondent group, potentially 5-10 respondents per specialism.

b) Working with a particular specialism in a smaller group: the opposite to the above. I could have isolated a particular coaching niche or specialism and worked with that group to ascertain the feasibility of using the tripartite model to create support models. With this approach there may be more credibility of findings and the respondents are all working in the same area.

Regardless of the above, I still consider my research to have significant value in indicating that tripartite model awareness may be of great use to coaches.

General:

<u>Data storage:</u> Undertaking this project has also taught me valuable lessons about data storage. Having collected my data, I stored it in an encrypted file on my laptop. It became apparent whilst writing up my findings that a virus had spread on my computer. A data back-up failed to restore multiple files. Thankfully, prior to the issue, I had already analysed my data and distilled findings. I had also isolated the sections of transcript I wished to display within my appendices and had this readily available along with original copies of signed consent forms and participant information sheets (Appendix B). In future research I will ensure I have separate back-up mechanisms, with data copied to encrypted flash-drives or a secure cloud platform.

<u>Closing comment:</u> I began this document by commenting on my fondness for *The Arnolfini Marriage* by Van Eyck. I cited various commentators who held different opinions on the painting's symbolism,

composition etc. I read vociferously about the painting in an attempt to find 'the' answers, but there are no answers, only interpretations. Conjecture abounds and it is up to the reader/viewer to weigh the different opinions. The lack of definitive answers in no way diminishes the quality of the work. I believe I have discovered something similar in my own project. I started this project convinced I had to find answers and definitive solutions. I was convinced that if I did not find those answers, my project would not be successful. Instead what I have found throughout this project is that there is great interest in what I was investigating, and that the limited pool of respondents I engaged with agreed that support materials in my specified area would be of interest and benefit to coaches.

Appendix A: Transcript Sample (R001)

The transcript section below is displayed for evidential purposes and is taken from my combined simulation and one on one discussion with R001. The extract below highlights the dangers of making assumptions on cognitive standpoints from previously elicited affective and behavioural data. The context for the discussion refers to Simulation One (brief displayed below):

In this simulation you will assume the role of coach. You will be working with Andrew, a 37 year old Account Manager who works for a large charity organisation. He has worked in the organisation for 11 years and has consistently delivered performance results placing him in the top 25% of employees. Client feedback on his behaviour and personality are always highly complementary. Andrew recently applied for the vacant position of Head of Accounts. He was unsuccessful and the position was awarded to his colleague Mark. The lack of success with his recent application has left him feeling unappreciated whilst simultaneously straining his relationship with Mark. Andrew has requested a coaching session to identify ways of positively addressing his feelings as described above.

DB: Was the scenario we used one you were familiar with?

R001:   Absolutely. Promotions have featured in many of the sessions I have delivered with clients.

DB: Can you give me some examples of how promotions have featured in different sessions?

R001:   Either they have applied for a promotion and were unsuccessful or, something I have seen repeatedly lately, is that they were once a team member who has now applied for and been successful in a promotion. They are now managing a team they were once part of and are having trouble with boundaries and performance management.

DB: In the scenario we discussed Andrew's unsuccessful promotion. Did you notice anything about his responses to your questions?

R001:   Is it ok if I respond in the third person? I know it was you, but can I refer to Andrew as 'he', I think it makes things a little clearer.

DB: Of course.

R001:   At the start I felt a lack of willingness to engage with me, however the briefing said it was he who had requested the session. As we started discussing the promotion he opened up.

DB: What did you want to achieve at the start of that first scenario?

R001:   The briefing said he had been working for the organisation for 11 years and had delivered strong performance throughout. I wanted to start the session with, how do I put this? His wellbeing.

DB: Why was that?

R001: In my opinion, high-performing long-servers often get overlooked when it comes to wellbeing and support. It's because they do their job well and have done so for ages. Support resources are often focused on underperformers. I wondered how long it had been since someone connected with him on a wellbeing or emotional level.

DB: Did this approach work?

R001: I think so, yes. The majority of what he was talking about related to his emotional state at the time.

DB: What questioning approach did you use?

R001: I like the NNQ approach: 'next natural question', when he said he was feeling unappreciated, I followed with a question probing that. I tried to filter deeper and deeper using what he was saying to focus my questions.

DB: How would you say Andrew felt about his long-term career prospects after this disappointment?

R001: He's clearly disillusioned and as you say, disappointed.

DB: What does Andrew think about the organisation he works for?

R001: He's questioning whether his loyalty is valued. This may be enough to make him leave.

DB: Do you recall him discussing loyalty and potentially his departure?

R001: I remember him making a comment about how he feels he has dedicated a significant portion of his working life to the organisation.

DB: Might that not be a temporary response to the recent unsuccessful application?

R001: What do you mean?

DB: Andrew has been working at the organisation for 11 years, so clearly he enjoys *something* about the organisation: it may be the people, the culture, the remuneration package or something else…

R001: I agree, his emotional answers were a temporary response, however that event is what is causing the immediate issue for him, so allowing him to process and verbalise those emotions seemed healthy.

DB: You mentioned just now the phrase 'This may be enough to make him leave'. How did you arrive at that impression?

R001: The strength of his feelings on his commitment, approach, historic performance has led him to feel unappreciated, it's a knock on effect that he may want to leave.

DB: He did mention commitment and approach, but any potential departure wasn't mentioned I believe.

R001: It was a distinct impression I gained from what he was telling me.

Appendix B: Sample Signed Consent Form (R003) and Participant Information Sheet

Middlesex University London

Participant Identification Number: .....R003.....

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project:

"Investigating the Feasibility of Creating a Suite of Dedicated Attitude-Themed Support Materials for Coaches Based on the Tripartite Component Model"

Name of Researcher: David Bevens

Supervisor's name and email: Professor Brian Sutton - b.x.sutton@mdx.ac.uk

Please initial all boxes

1.	I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information sheet dated 14th February 2019 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have been given contact details for the researcher.	LDS
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent without giving a reason.	LDS
3.	I agree that this form that bears my name and signature may be seen by a designated auditor.	LDS
4.	I agree that my non-identifiable research data may be stored in National Archives and used anonymously by others for future research. I am assured that the confidentiality of my data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers.	LDS
5.	I understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis and subsequent publication and provide my consent that this might occur.	LDS
6.	I agree to take part in the above study.	LDS

Name of participant: ███████   Date: 27th Feb18   Signature: ███████

Researcher: David Bevens   Date: 27 Feb 18   Signature:

1 copy for participant - 1 copy for researcher

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (PIS)

Participant ID:

Study title

Investigating the Feasibility of Creating a Suite of Dedicated Attitude-Themed Support Materials for Coaches Based on the Tripartite Component Model"

1. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you would like to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the research.

2. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of my proposed research is to examine whether coaches would benefit from a suite of support materials specifically relating to the components of attitude as identified by Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) and others.

3. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. If you do decide to withdraw from the study then please inform the researcher as soon as possible. Please be advised all data is anonymised, your individual data will not be identifiable in any way. A decision to withdraw or not to take part will not affect you in any way.

4. What will I have to do? ~~THREE~~

I would like to complete ~~four~~ THREE short activities with you, each lasting approximately 15 minutes. These will involve coaching simulations where you will assume the role of a coach. There are no correct or expected answers in these activities, the simulations have been created for data collection purposes only and are not scored or marked.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no known risks in you participating in this project. Because the respondents have been selected from diverse backgrounds, there is no common organisational thread. As mentioned above, all data is anonymised.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The information we get from this study may help us enhance future development support options for professional coaches. It may also inform the wider learning and development community of improvements to best practice.

7. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The research team has put procedures in place to protect the confidentiality of participants. You will be allocated a participant code that will always be used to identify data you provide. Your name or other personal details will not be associated with your data, for example, the consent form that you sign will be kept separate from your data. All paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, accessible only to the research team, and all electronic data will be stored on a password protected computer and kept in line with data protection legislation.

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research study will be used as part of a Postgraduate dissertation. The results may also be presented at conferences or in journal articles. However, the data will only be used by members of the research team and at no point will your personal information or data be revealed.

*There was one error on the above form. Section 4 only makes reference to the simulations and not the accompanying one to ones. This was an error on my part on the form. In the pre-meeting verbal briefings the one to one element was clearly discussed with all participants. Participants were fully aware of all elements prior to signing the Consent Form.

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