

Coaching at Work

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BOB GARVEY

The humble man
making big waves
in mentoring

Trust and money are the main themes in the evolution of coaching in Hungary. Coaching started

here about 10 years ago. Trust in this young profession came slowly. It took even longer before Hungarian professional coaches emerged and became respected. Money is also a crucial factor: companies are spending more money on coaching, yet hourly rates are dropping. Privately financed coaching barely exists.

Here are some milestones from those 10 years. The first coaching schools were established in 2003-4, the International Coach Federation (ICF) Hungarian Chapter was formed in 2008 and the first Hungarian coaching book came out in 2009. The first ICF credentials at ACC level were awarded in 2010. There are now around 70 ICF ACC and PCC level certified coaches and two Hungarian MCC credentialled, although neither live in Hungary. The first Hungarian Approved Coach Specific Training Hours (ACSTH) coach school programme was launched in 2012.

Where are we now?

Looking at our achievements and contributions to international coaching during the past few years, we are proud that the Hungarian Chapter won the ICF's 'I Care For' Award in 2012 for a CSR activity, which gave coaching support to 90 staff made redundant when the Hungarian airline MALEV declared bankruptcy. Close to 50 Hungarian coaches participated in this first major coaching CSR project.

Furthermore, we are proud to have a Hungarian on the ICF Global board, and that the Association for Coaching chose to hold its conference in Budapest last month (30-31 October). We



HUNGARY HIGHS

What is the state of coaching in Hungary today?

The profession is young, and trust and money are important factors in its development.

Judit Ábri von Bartheld gives a roundup of how the profession stands – and where it is headed

“Workplace coaching is growing, both in application and importance. This received a boost from Julie Starr’s Budapest workshop”

are grateful that we can learn from the coaching profession through the third annual event series, Coaching Without Borders (CHN), which brings together well-known coaches and leadership experts like John Whitmore, Myles Downey, Professor David Clutterbuck, Robert Dilts, John Blakey, Professor Jonathan Passmore and many others.

Clutterbuck had this to say about Hungary: “The country is at a fascinating point in the development of coaching. There is enough understanding about what coaching can do, but not so much legacy, so it is possible to leapfrog market developments that have happened in Western European countries.”

Hungary has 24 different coach schools, an impressive number for a small country. The most recently established is the Academy of Executive Coaching (AoEC), which earlier this year started offering executive coach training.

These numbers reflect a massive interest in coaching and have contributed to the rise in the number of trained coaches to between 800 and 1,000.

In 2012, the Federation of Hungarian Coach Organizations was established, with eight member organisations representing the vast majority of professional coaches in the country. Dóra Hegedüs, an ICF president awardee, and current president of the Federation, says about its endeavours: “We accepted a common Code of Conduct of the

profession – self-regulation being our most important focus still today. Recently, we launched an online database of trained Hungarian coaches (requiring a minimum 100 hours of coach-specific training or having an international credential) that aims to become the independent yellow pages of the profession.”

The most popular coaching styles are Solution Focus, Transactional Analysis and Gestalt.

Future development

Laura Komócsin PCC, one of the first coaches who played a significant role in the spreading of coaching in Hungary, sees its development as follows:

“Coaching came into Hungary through the needs of multinational companies that first worked with coaches from abroad then later, as qualified and accredited coaches emerged locally, trust developed towards them and Hungarians came to be used for cost-cutting reasons too.

“At the beginning, coaching was the privilege of top executives only, but by now managers throughout the whole organisational hierarchy can benefit from coaching in almost all sectors of the economy.”

Komócsin, with her colleague, invented the first and only Hungarian coaching model: DIADAL (translation: victory). Based on that model she published her book *SPARKLE*. It’s a compilation of dozens of coaching models, tools, resources, examples and case studies.



The economic crisis hit the Hungarian training and coaching market about four to five years ago. The increase in unemployed professionals and coaching’s popularity attracted many unqualified coaches to this young profession, devaluing standards. It is very difficult to live on coaching alone. Those that are successful offer complementary services, be it training, psychotherapy or coaching-related consultancy.

“You have to build a reputation as a well-qualified coach in order to survive. I foresee a period when those who remain in the coaching profession will be those who complement their hard work with continuous learning and who invest in their CPD,” says Ilona Erös, whose Gestalt-based Flow Coach School is in its ninth season.

“There are now several professional means available



locally where coaches can further their education and meet other professionals. Events like CHN, where one acquires international knowledge and experience, or Coaching Camp – a summer event – where Hungarian coaches learn from each other, sharing what one is best at,” she says.

Workplace coaching is growing, both in application and importance. This received a boost from Julie Starr’s Budapest workshop. She was the guest speaker at CHN (which the author founded) last year. Her information was so well received that her book was published in Hungarian. *Brilliant Coaching* (re-titled *Manager as Coach*) came out in January. Many companies now use it as their coaching bible and are inviting Starr to further masterclasses.

In the corporate world, the presence and depth of coaching is

very varied. Nestlé Hungary has done a great deal to cultivate coaching. Its first internal coach training programme, the Nestlé Master Coach programme, was completed in June, with 12 participants, including executives. The second is underway and the third starts this autumn.

Michael Nixon, Nestlé Hungary’s CEO, says this about penetration of a coaching culture in the organisation to empower people. “Coaching builds trust and self-confidence and furthers the existing feedback practice. These are the vital parts of our culture. Trust provides the context for our teamwork. Coaching frees the constraints around what people feel they can do, helps to handle change and supports flexible decision-taking where and when it needs to happen.”

Coaching also supports Nestlé’s

Continuous Excellence programme. In the factories, coaching skills tied to the GROW model are aimed at management to encourage their transition to coach-minded leadership – Nestlé Hungary’s Everyday Coaching programme.

Making tradition

In traditional Hungarian companies, coaching is not a familiar leadership style. Balázs Tóth, HR manager at CG Electric Systems, a 130-year-old company with 900 employees, is the first in the organisation to have become acquainted with coaching. He says: “There is no tradition of coaching, either at local or global level in my company, yet I am happy to say that when I applied to attend the Hungarian AoEC coach diploma programme, I got support, both from my global and EMEA leaders. Now my colleagues feel a positive impact from my new working style – and I enjoy its results.”

There is still room for coaching to take root in small and medium-sized companies. Roland Juhász, a manager and former coaching client, is an active practitioner of a coaching leadership style.

“I spend more time developing and supporting my people. As a result, I am happy with the lasting change I can see in the performance and attitude of my team,” he says.

Juhász is a rare bird, but coaches in Hungary trust that more and more managers will feel the need for coaching. In the meantime, we rejoice that coaching is becoming a recognised profession here. ■

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