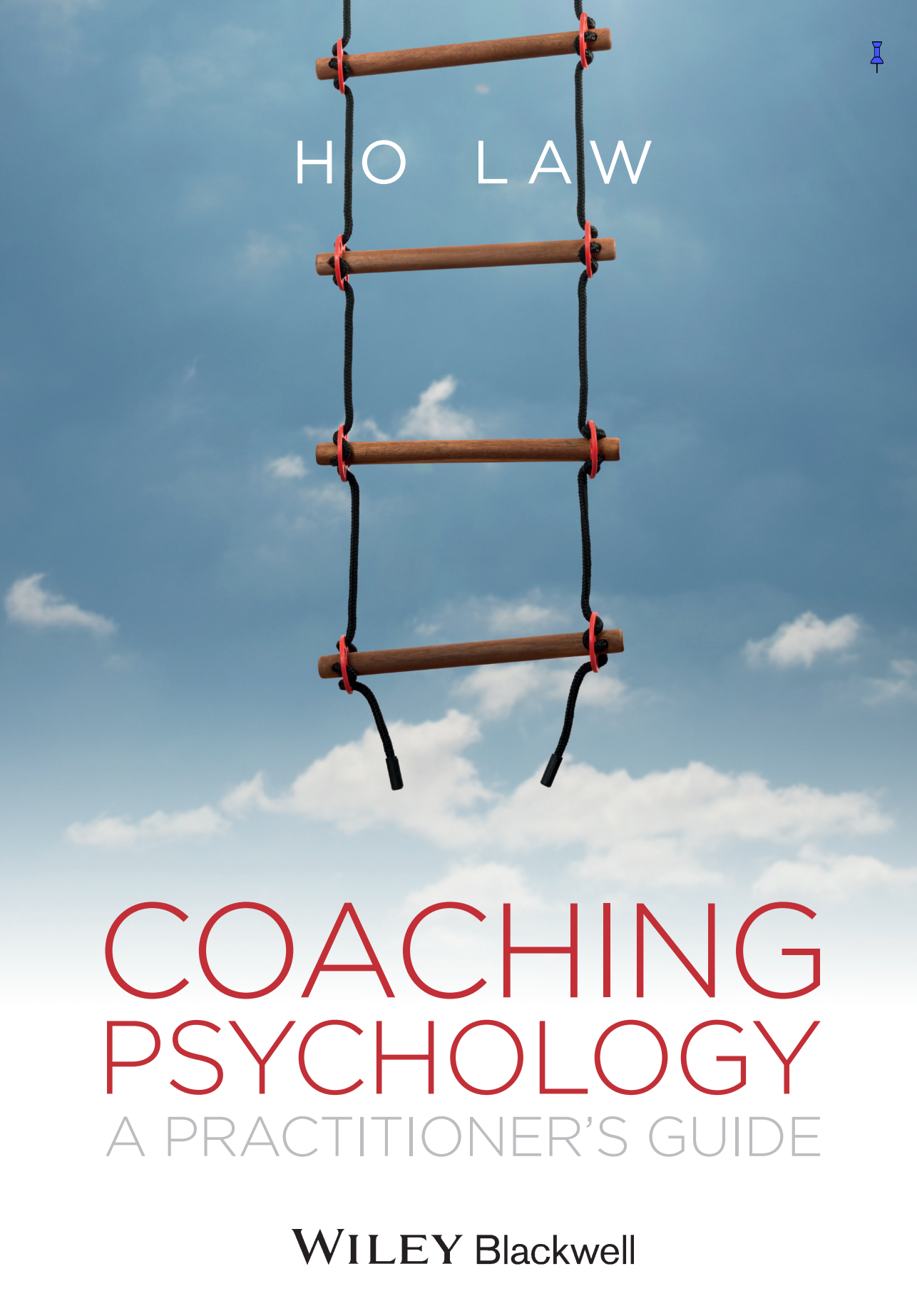
HO LAW
COACHING
PSYCHOLOGY
A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE
WILEY Blackwell

# Coaching Psychology

# Coaching Psychology
## *A Practitioner's Guide*

Ho Law

WILEY Blackwell

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# About the Author

Dr Ho Law is an international consultant and practitioner psychologist, Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Registered Occupational Psychologist, Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society (BPS), Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute (Chartered Manager), Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, and BPS Registered Coaching Psychologist, Chartered Scientist, Chartered Psychologist, Registered Applied Psychology Practice Supervisor. Ho has over 25 years of experience in psychology and management consultancy. He has delivered numerous workshops/conference seminars and carried out consultancy work in the UK and abroad. Ho values diversity in people, respects their cultures and believes in equal opportunities for all. He was one of the first equality advisors to the Assistant Permanent Under Secretary of State in the Home Office, and the Deputy Chair of the BPS Standing Committee for Promotion of Equal Opportunities. Ho is passionate about helping people to develop their talents and achieve their full potential through coaching and mentoring. He is a founding member and Chair (2010) of the BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology; founding director and treasurer of the International Society for Coaching Psychology. Ho has published over 40 papers and received numerous outstanding achievement awards including the Local Promoters for Cultural Diversity Project in 2003, the Positive Image (Business Category) in 2004, and Management Essentials Participating Company in 2005, and is the winner of the first Student-Led Teaching Award (2013) – Best Supervisor. He is the Head of Profession in Coaching Psychology. He is the founder Director of Empsy® Ltd and the President of Empsy® Network for coaching (www.empsy.com). At the University of East London School of Psychology, Ho is

a Senior Lecturer, Co-Programme Leader in the MSc Coaching Psychology Programme, Admissions Tutor, and Leader Tutor in the Distance Learning Programme:

http://www.uel.ac.uk/programmes/psychology/postgraduate/coachingpsychology-dl.htm

Ho is currently supervising two part-time students' PhDs in education at the University of East London; the students are currently working in the United Arab Emirates.

# Foreword

Why has coaching psychology, as a science and a practice, emerged globally in the last few years in so many countries? This is a big question, and this book by Ho Law is part of the evolving narrative and answer to that question. In terms of our performance, be it in life or work, we are, in my view, fundamentally challenged at three levels:

- problem solving
- task/project management and delivery
- people management (both self and other).

Most educational systems address very well the first two of these areas in terms of transmissional learning, skills and knowledge. However, there is a gap apparent in how we manage ourselves and others, which might explain this emergence of coaching and, more recently, coaching psychology as an applied behavioural science in both life and work domains.

This practice we call coaching is about a conversation and the skills of that conversation. Scott (2002) suggests 'that our work, our relationships and in fact our very lives succeed or fail gradually, then suddenly, one conversation at a time'. Whitmore (2002) points to the inherent challenges and opportunity of this coaching conversation in terms of 'unlocking our potential to maximise our performance'. However, coaching psychology as a continually and fast-emerging domain in its own right, is about the evidence-based understanding, not only of this practice and process we call coaching but also about understanding and explaining the interference (Gallwey, 2001), both internal and external, that we humans experience in terms of mastering this conversation with both ourselves and others. Out of

this conversation emerge the values and the goals and the actions which are likely to build on strengths, create a compelling vision for the future and cement relationships.

This conversation is about how best we can harness our individual and collective potential, and perform in the challenging, uncertain, complex and volatile world that faces us in our life and work every day. Stephen Palmer quite rightly suggested in a recent discussion that, 'You can take the coaching out of psychology but you cannot take the psychology out of coaching'. Coaching psychology and how the mind works goes to the very heart of how we manage and lead both ourselves and others.

Ho Law has been a key figure in the emergence of coaching psychology in the UK. In 2005 at a conference organized by the British Psychological Societies, Special Group in Coaching Psychology I was fortunate to begin a conversation with Ho and others, which informed the setting up of the Coaching Psychology Group (CPG) within the Division of Work and Organisational Psychology (DWOP) within the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI). More recently this conversation led to the setting up of a Higher Diploma Programme in Coaching/Coaching Psychology in 2010 and subject to final confirmation, the first Master's programme in Coaching Psychology for graduate psychologists in Ireland. This programme will run from September 2013 in tandem with a similar Master's programme for non-psychologists. Coaching science and practice will, for the first time, come together in Ireland in the School of Applied Psychology, University College Cork. This will be only one of three such programmes in the UK and Ireland.

While the literature around coaching, generally, is extensive, such literature in the coaching psychology space is not as extensive, but is expanding. The ubiquitous beliefs-based approach to coaching is still all too evident and the challenge remains to build on and expand the current evidence base and to professionalize the practice of coaching and coaching psychology.

That is why the contribution of Ho Law and his new practical guide is particularly important and timely. Linking theory to practice and building on his previous publication, *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning* (Law, Ireland and Hussain, 2007; Law, 2014), this companion workbook is the first to provide practical, step-by-step guidance and exercises for the trainee coaching psychologist. It is also an invaluable resource for anyone, including experienced coaching practitioners interested in coaching or CPD and in particular the evidence-based approach of coaching psychology. In this welcome publication, Ho is most certainly applying the theory and putting the evidence base of psychology and adult/child learning into coaching.

Coaching is a language that leaders, managers, educators, health professionals, soldiers and indeed anyone that chooses in awareness to take responsibility for themselves and others, must learn. Coaching psychology is an area of study, research and practice that can add to this language. Coaching psychology is now part of a global narrative. This book is one which adds to our understanding of coaching psychology in practice and one which I will recommend as a core text to my students as they explore coaching and coaching psychology as an effective process for change, growth, improved performance and well-being in life and work.

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# Preface

Coaching is a growing industry and is continuously expanding to new fields. There is a strong interest in coaching practice especially in the context of the current global challenges we face in business, economics, education, finance and human resources. Leadership and coaching leaders in their professional development is increasingly important.

Coaching psychology is emerging as a new discipline. The British Psychological Society's (BPS) Special Group in Coaching Psychology (SGCP) was formed in 2004; and a Register of Coaching Psychologists was set up in 2012 to indicate those practitioner psychologists who have specialist expertise in coaching psychology. In 2008, the Society for Coaching Psychology was founded and in 2011, it was re-named to the International Society for Coaching Psychology.

As interest in coaching psychology continues to grow globally, there is an increasing need to train coaches, psychologists and allied professions to develop coaching psychology as a profession. Coaching psychology as a subject of studies and research is being offered by universities such as the University of East London, University College Cork, the City University London, the University of Sydney and the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, to name a few.

My motivation to write this book is to satisfy the need of providing a book which can serve both seasoned practitioners in coaching or psychology and students or trainees who are studying coaching psychology as part of their learning and professional development. While there are many publications on coaching, there are not many on coaching psychology. What makes the book *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning* (Law, Ireland and Hussain, 2007; Law, 2014) special is that it grounds the model of coaching on learning theories, and offers a dual perspective of coaching and mentoring. This book is designed to follow the same structure and coaching philosophy as *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and*

*Learning*, and offers the reader a wider range of coaching techniques and more in-depth treatment in practical exercises, with a specific focus on helping readers to translate the understanding of theories into their professional practice. For instance, this *Practitioner's Guide* offers additional tools and exercises on gestalt approaches, mindfulness exercises and reflective practice within the coaching context.

While I would strongly recommend you to read *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning* as a companion to this *Guide*, this book is also designed to stand alone for use as a practical guide or workbook to help you to learn and develop as a coaching psychologist. However, I cannot claim that this is a definitive book on coaching psychology for practitioners. As a single authored book, there are bound to be areas of coaching and coaching psychology that it has not covered. The views, philosophy, models of coaching, psychological theories, tools and techniques offered here merely represent some of the knowledge and experience that I have acquired over the course of my own learning and professional development – 30 years in my professional engagements in psychology, and more specifically 10 years in coaching psychology.

Coaching is about learning … I continue to learn in my coaching, teaching, supervision and research; and it is a pleasure to share some of the joy and excitement in learning along the way with my coachees, students and colleagues, which in turn facilitates further learning. Writing this book represents the sharing of those loved experiences and moments of learning and development. I hope you enjoy reading this *Practitioner's Guide* and actively engage in the learning and practice of some of the exercises that are relevant to your work, professional or personal development. I welcome sharing the experience of your learning and practice; feedback and comments are most welcome. Please write to:

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# Acknowledgements

This book was written in parallel with the writing of *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning* over an 18-month period. The 'writing journey' was punctuated with the loss of my father who passed away in Hong Kong on 9 May in 2012, aged 96. I had to travel to Hong Kong to attend his funeral at short notice. I was deeply moved by all the support that I received from my colleagues at the University of East London, who stepped in to do the student supervision, marking and double-marking of the assignments within a very tight schedule; their support has made me feel part of the team and community within which I feel blessed. There is a Chinese proverb which says that it is easy to add icing on the cake, it is difficult to give support to someone in destitution. It is the time of hardship that tests true colleagueship and friendship. I thank them for being such great teams.

My father's middle and first names are Kai Sin which means 'showing' 'kindness'. It resonates with the spirit of coaching and mentoring. I shall hold onto this spirit dearly in my heart and attempt to manifest this unconditional kindness in everything that I do. And within this spirit, I would like to express my gratitude to those who have shown their kindness and helped me along the way when I truly needed them, not only in writing this book but also my life journey.

As in the acknowledgements in *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning*, I shall reiterate here:

There are inevitably many names to acknowledge, including those of family and friends, who have been taken for granted during this period, and many unintentional omissions. So without mentioning every possible individual, I shall list (in alphabetical order) some of those who have continued

to inspire me as well as some of the contributors, the unsung heroes and organizations within the context of my journey in coaching.

Thanks go to:

- Dr Carla Gibbes – Senior Lecturer at the University of East London for her kindness and support.
- Liz Hall – for communicating the concept of narrative coaching to wider professional communities via *Coaching at Work*.
- Trevor Hall, OBE, CBE – who has continued to inspire me in championing equality and diversity in my cross-cultural journey, in my career, and life.
- Professor Stephen Palmer – for his continuous support and updating the Foreword.
- Kaemorine Prendergast – for her kindness and righteousness in championing equality.
- Aquilina Reginald – my former coaching student for helping me to introduce coaching to nursing and contributing to the case study on leadership coaching within the healthcare sector in Malta.
- Dr Donald Ridley – Principal Lecturer at the University of East London, for his support and guidance.
- Christine Stocker-Gibson – for contributing to some of the case studies.
- Michael White, Dulwich Centre – who inspired and trained me in narrative approaches from down under. His spirit will continue to manifest in my narrative coaching.

Organizations that have provided me with support and information for this edition include:

- Association for Coaching.
- British Psychological Society's (BPS) Special Group in Coaching Psychology.
- Chartered Management Institute (CMI).
- European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC).
- International Coach Federation (ICF) for giving permission to publish the results of its Global Coaching Study.
- International Society for Coaching Psychology.

Most of all, I would like to thank all those who I have come across in my coaching/mentoring journey, in many spaces and places, from the place where I live, people of Peterborough, and the neighbouring areas within Cambridgeshire. It was from this place that a number of coaching and men-

toring programmes took place, for communities, for individuals, for private and public organizations. It was from this place that some of the case studies have been consolidated. It was from this place that the Universal Integrated Framework was developed through our lived experience.

And from the place where I work, in particular, I would like to thank all my colleagues in the School of Psychology, University of East London where the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics took place. The place truly embodies the spirit of the games – that is, to inspire individuals to achieve their highest potential – this is the spirit of coaching and mentoring too!

There are many more of you out there who have contributed to my understanding. To you, perhaps the unacknowledged, I offer my thanks too.

Ho Law
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# 1
# Introduction

Hello! A very warm welcome to the introduction of this book – *Coaching Psychology: A Practitioner's Guide*. I assume that you are reading this book because you have either trained in coaching psychology (or related disciplines such as coaching, mentoring, counselling and psychology), or are a seasoned practitioner. The purpose of this book is to provide a guide for practitioners within the field of coaching psychology and its allied professions in coaching and mentoring. Or perhaps you are simply interested in the subject; that is OK too; and I welcome you to this 'journey' of coaching psychology in practice. While based on the key text *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning*, this is a book in its own right and does not assume any prior knowledge. Accordingly, while *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning* is recommended as a valuable companion read, you will find that this book stands alone for use as a practical guide or workbook for your practice and/or continuous self-/professional development. In some ways this book can be seen as the 'inverse' of *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning*, in that the latter offers a detailed account of theory with an overview of practice, while the former offers an overview of theory with a more detailed account of practice. It is anticipated that many practitioners will want to read both books.

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Historically, coaching psychology was applied in the domains of sports and exercise. Recent debate on coaching psychology seems to be around the following areas (Cavanagh and Lane, 2012a,b):

- coaching models
- professionalism
- evidence-based practice.

This book will address each of the above areas.

## Aims

While this book follows the same overall structure as *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning*, its emphasis has shifted firmly to coaching practice. It aims to show you how theories and principles of psychology can be applied in coaching, mentoring and learning for individuals and organizations, and also offers extended examples and practical, step-by-step exercises for you to complete.

## Who is it For?

This book is written for the following groups:

- Readers of *The Psychology of Coaching, Mentoring and Learning* who would like a more practical guide, dedicated to implementation of the ideas.
- Coaches, mentors, trainers and other professionals who may not be psychologists and do not want detailed theoretical material, but require a guide for practice along with a grounding in the psychological theory that underpins the techniques and approaches.
- Psychologists who want to apply their experience to coaching, mentoring and training.

Whoever you are – coaches or psychologists – I hope you will find this book an invaluable resource for your continuous professional development and as a reference for your coaching practice.

## Content in a Nutshell

Chapter 1 aims to guide readers to gain a rapid understanding about the nature of the book and to find the information easily. It provides a rationale

for writing this book with an overall structure and brief description of each chapter. It also provides suggestions of how to use the book for different levels of readers according to their interest, experience and professional competence. Chapter 2 provides a brief outline of the developments of the coaching and coaching psychology professions. It then describes the practical steps of coaching psychology in practice with emphases on awareness of ethical and practical issues.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the core principles of positive psychology and learning theories. The definitions of coaching psychology and its related concepts: coaching, mentoring and learning, are discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 describes how you may introduce a coaching programme into an organization. Chapter 6 first describes the differences between models and techniques, with two examples – GROW and Universal Integrative Framework (UIF); it then provides guidance on how to build your own model and apply it in practice. The techniques and their related practical exercises that fit within the structure of the UIF and the revised Integrative Learning System (ILS) are described in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, respectively. Chapter 9 provides a number of case studies and invites you to collect your own. Chapter 10 describes how you can take steps to evaluate your coaching practice within the evidence-based framework. Finally, Chapter 11 provides a personal reflection and further tips and resources for coaching psychology practice.

## How to Use this Book

Depending on who you are, and your level of experience in coaching psychology, you can use this book in many different ways. For the first reading, you may like to skim through and then return to those elements that you are particularly interested in at a later time. Whoever you are, I recommend Chapter 2 on ethics as a 'must-read' before anyone practises coaching with other people. Once you have understood the ethical principles and relevant theories or concepts, you can pick and choose your exercises to suit your need.

***Exercise boxes*** focus on linking theory to practices. Unlike many other coaching or psychology books, this book contains many exercises to help you to apply your learning into practice. These coaching exercises are relevant to the topic of each chapter.

For those who just want a few 'how to do' tips using coaching psychology, you may simply look at the techniques that you want to learn and practise the 'guided' exercises in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively.

If you are a coaching trainer or tutor and wish to use this book as a training guide, you can first read the whole book to make sure that you

understand all the essential elements, and know where to find things as a reference. Divide your training programme into three parts (beginning – middle – end). Chapters 2–4 can be used as an introduction to your training course. This is an important and yet quite a non-trivial task. You need to succinctly describe the history, epistemology and definition of coaching psychology without going through the details and ask your participants/students to read the chapters afterward as references; explain ethics (using the 6Rs principles in Chapter 2) at an early stage of the training programme and certainly before any exercises are commenced.

If you are a novice, you may like to read this book from start to finish, following its logical progression. Don't attempt to read the whole book in one go. Some of the chapters are quite 'heavy' and even a trained psychology practitioner would find it thought provoking and demanding. Try to devise a reading plan that fits into your personal development, for example, preparing for an examination, or doing a training course, say, over a three-month period.

When reading this book, you may find it useful to make notes along the way of techniques to use in your own life and work. Keep practising and keep a reflective log (a template is included in the Appendix to this book).

# 2

# Current State of Coaching and Coaching Psychology

*Where are you now?*

## Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the developments in coaching and mentoring. You are encouraged to assess yourself in terms of your own coaching practice; identify your strengths and opportunities. In doing so, you will be able to position your practice within the coaching market. By the end of working through this chapter, together with the supplementary reading and practice, you should be able to:

- Gain an understanding of coaching and the coaching psychology profession, its development and why it is a growing industry.
- Describe the key aspects of the coach–coachee relationship in relation to the role of the coach and code of ethics.
- Describe the six ethical principles in relation to the code of ethics.

## Developments in Coaching and Coaching Psychology

### The coaching industry

The coaching industry has grown exponentially in recent years. The total turnover of coaching is estimated to be more than $2 billion globally (ICF & PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2012). It is predicted to continue to grow in spite of

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