



THE TOP FIVE TIPS FOR COACH SUPERVISION

Part 1: Finding a supervisor & establishing a relationship

By Julia Menaul

If you split the word supervision into two, you will see that it's actually quite an apt description. "Super" can be defined as *going beyond, transcending to a higher level or being superior in quality*. "Vision" is *when things come into view or having imaginative insight /wisdom*.

Therefore supervision provides a coach with the space to reflect on their own practise.

The purpose of supervision is largely:

- A way of helping the coach to continually professionally develop
- It provides ethical guidance and support for the coach and consequently benefits the welfare of the client.
- The coach learns to develop their own internal supervisor so they can monitor their own performance
- Provides an unbiased, neutral space where the coach can attend to things that they may be doing with their client unconsciously.
- Helping give expert advice and guidance on when to refer a client onto more specialist help

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) www.cipd.co.uk in 2006 showed that most coaches could see the benefits of supervision for them and their clients (86%), but too few of them were engaging in supervision (only 44%). Those coaches who were members of professional bodies were more likely to have supervision (75%).

Two key reasons for not having supervision are:

1. Supervision is too expensive
2. Not being able to find a supervisor

The following 5 tips aim to help you find the right supervisor for you and then get the best from that relationship.

1. Work out what you expect from supervision

This will help you to form a clear contract for your supervision relationship.

Peter Hawkins and Robin Shoet in "Supervision in the Helping Professions" ISBN 0 335 20117 2 describe 5 different types of supervision:

- i) Tutorial – a supervisor who takes on a tutor role as part of a coaching training programme
- ii) Training –as above but this supervisor may have some responsibility for the work being done with client e.g. Training Manager
- iii) Managerial –the supervisor is the line manager of the supervisee and has some responsibility for the work being done with the client
- iv) Consultancy - supervisor is neither the trainer nor manager and the supervisee keeps responsibility for clients but consults with supervisor when needed
- v) Peer Supervision – supervisees are at the same level either organisationally or in experience.

2. Do your homework - looking for a supervisor

The Association for Coaching advises that a supervisor should be someone who is not only experienced in coaching but also holds a recognised coaching qualification. On the AC homepage, if you type in supervision and the geographical area into the search box and click the drop down box that says “AC Website” then select “on line directory”, you will get all the AC coaches in that area who offer supervision services. You can also make contact with your local AC Co Coaching Forum, to find a supervisor who comes well recommended.

3. Decide on the best method for you.

Supervision is just like coaching; there are various methods for carrying it out.

One to One supervision:

- i) Face to face
- ii) Telephone

Group supervision:

- i) Led by a supervisor
- ii) Led by the peer group

Either of the above can be face to face meetings or tele-workshops

Read *Coaching, Mentoring & Organisational Consultancy: Supervision & Development* by Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith

ISBN: 978-0-335-218-158 to find out more about the advantages and disadvantages of various methods or AC Supervision report

<http://www.associationforcoaching.com/pub/pub.htm>

4. Think about what value you are putting on supervision –it’s not just about money!

Ask yourself why you want to be in supervision and why now? This will help you see the value you are placing on it and how it may fit with your future aspirations as a coach. Is it to differentiate you from other coaches? Is it to get advice for yourself and your client when coming across “tricky” issues?

The AC commissioned some research in 2004 on coaching rates <http://www.associationforcoaching.com/pub/pub.htm> which showed that coaches charged on average between £50 -£70 per hour. This rose to £100 per hour if part of a package/monthly charge. In a business context, the rates could be as high as £125-£250 per hour, again if sold as a package.

The rates charged by supervisors are rather like those of coaches – they vary a great deal. Some coach supervisors feel that it is appropriate to charge the same amount as you would do with clients. Your supervisor is helping you to become a better coach so you may earn more in the long run!

Your supervisor may charge you based on the number of clients and your experience as a coach. For a new coach it may be difficult for them to fund regular supervision. It is worth being prepared to negotiate on this.

5. Make sure you contract about other areas not just fees to get maximum benefit.

A good supervisor will ask:

- What type of clients do you have? Private, corporate, life, business etc
- What type of coaching models/schools do you use? Does the supervisor need to know these or can they bring fresh eyes with different approaches?
- What are the boundaries in our work? e.g confidentiality, naming names, possible conflicting relationships.
- What are the practicalities? Venue for meetings, costs of calls, who phones who, cancellation agreement, advance dates, contracting for a set time period, length of sessions and intervals between sessions.

The AC now recommends 1 hour of supervision per month irrespective of how many hours coaching performed. A good supervisor will help you to look at yourself and your own habitual patterns of behaviour within a number of different settings which may even include group work if you are a facilitator or consultancy work with regular clients.

Read *“Reflective Practise and Supervision for Coaches”* by Julie Hay ISBN 0 335 22063 0

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If you have found this guide helpful and would like further information on any aspect of coaching, please contact: www.associationforcoaching.com

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