

## **Masters of Arts in Applied Coaching – University of Derby, England, 2016.**

### **Title**

Coaching in Leadership Development: How do Norwegian business leaders who have knowledge and/or experience of coaching differ in how they provide leadership compare to leaders who have not experienced coaching?

## Abstract

This dissertation is intended to explore the connections between coaching and leadership development. Through the chosen approach, the research wishes to illuminate a future direction for leadership development in Norway. The central key question is: *What is the current best practice in Leadership Coaching in Norway?*

The second and third questions are more internationally orientated: *What is the current position of Leadership Coaching outside Norway?* Moreover, finally: *How does Leadership Coaching in Norway compare with global best practices?* It appears interesting to take a look at this area's standing, nationally and internationally, to compare and to gain an impression of which options are available.

When asking the research questions, it became possible to appraise the picture and explain what makes the difference between leading with and leading without coaching knowledge. The hypothesis being that, when a leader understands coaching techniques, has insight into how the brain 'behaves', and has knowledge of what makes a person tick, this leader will be able to provide leadership more immediately, comprehensively, motivationally, efficiently and helpfully, than if they were unaware. When leaders are coached, they simultaneously practice a new and different way of reflection. Often, this unconscious way of learning and practice, will grant leaders a useful and efficient means of approaching the individuals or/and team.

This study used interviewing of six Norwegian leaders from various parts of private and public sector. A pilot group was authorised to secure the relevance and critically review the interviewing question in advance of the interviews. It clearly emerges that structured theoretical knowledge combined with research and practice culminates in a way of leadership that underpins employees' motivation, positive critical attitude, confidence, and willingness to change.

This dissertation uses Phenomenological theory and an Inductive approach as methods. The main reason for these choices is the humanistic view and the philosophy of having the individual at the centre. This approach was essential to establish what makes people tick and the suitability of creating development in organisations. The analysis and discussion indicate that there is a commitment among leaders regarding support towards the performance of their role. It appears that the need for backing neither decreases nor increases even though the manager has several years' experience in leadership. Primarily, the leaders appreciate (and require) a coach with theoretical knowledge and practice. Secondly, it was a goal to explore how Applied Coaching beneficially could to be an academic discipline and an independent profession in Norway. It appears plausible that the regulation of education in Applied Coaching contributes to a more stable and well-developed academic environment.

The findings of this research clearly demonstrate the importance of suitable leadership coaching for leaders to assist in their management roles.

Whether the number of people who call themselves business coaches, is increasing or decreasing, is not the foremost issue, but instead what level of quality these coaches hold.

The dissertation makes recommendations on how to continue towards an academic education in Coaching in Norway. Further research is advised for this theme.

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