



## Message from the President

Dear Fellow Coaches,

This issue of the Newsletter features an article on coaching supervision which brings up the topic of professional certification. In my discussions with colleagues we all come to the conclusion that although coaching certification may not be the most important factor in the current selection of coaches by corporate clients in Asia Pacific but having a certification certainly increases credibility. The other point is that the coaching industry is mostly self-regulated and although there exist some national guidelines for codes of conduct and coaching standards in some countries but the industry has yet to be subject to government regulations and supervision.

Encouraging coaches to obtain their credentials and to abide by ethical standards is a first step toward maintaining the reputation of the industry. APAC has a code of ethics that all members are encouraged to abide to as well as a process to be followed in case charges of ethical misconduct are filed against any member. Furthermore APAC will certainly be studying ways to encourage and assist its coach members obtain their certifications. The views of the membership will also be sought on this matter in the months to come.

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## Coaching in Hong Kong – any different?

by Charlie Lang

Hong Kong is known for its fast pace, long working hours, multicultural workforce and liberal economy. Being one of the first twenty or so professional coaches in Hong Kong back in 2002, I wondered how this dynamic market would accept coaching as a new way to support and develop people.

Fast forward to 2011, a bit less than a decade later, there are an approximate 200-250 professional coaches practicing in Hong Kong and the number keeps growing rapidly as half a dozen coaching schools train new professional coaches every year.

The more than tenfold growth of the number of coaches seems dramatic and I'm often asked if there are now already too many coaches on the Hong Kong market? I then draw comparisons with more developed coaching markets such as the US, UK, Australia, Germany, etc. and point out that there is still a 5-10 fold upward potential before Hong Kong reaches a similar coach density as these more developed coaching markets. And these markets are also still growing...



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So for now, there is no need to worry about a saturation of coaches in Hong Kong, but the question is, are the people in Hong Kong, especially the locals, really ready and willing to be coached? Do we need to consider any differences when coaching Hong Kong people compared to coaching people in other locations? How important are language and cross-cultural concerns when coaching Hong Kongers?

Since my company's and my practice is exclusively focused on the executive / corporate coaching market, I'm not in a position to share any experience related to life or personal coaching. The following statements are exclusively related to executive or corporate coaching and may not similarly apply to life coaching.

### Language

While it tends to be easier for anyone to be coached in their mother tongue, I found rarely any issues when coaching local Hong Kong managers in English instead of Cantonese. That's probably because most senior managers or executives in Hong Kong speak excellent English and therefore usually don't face any language barrier when being coached in English.

### Cross-Cultural Considerations

While I found that on staff level, employees might be more resistant to being coached by their superiors – mostly due to trust issues and fear of being accountable – I never faced any major roadblocks for local executives to be coached by me as a European. In most cases, indeed I found the local Hong Kong coachees to be very open to the idea of being coached, especially once they understood what coaching really meant.

Does it take a Chinese to coach a Chinese? This question is often asked and the answers vary from “definitely” to “not at all”. My answer is usually ‘it depends’: In my opinion, the background of the coachee, the coachee’s work environment and the coaching purpose should be considered before answering this question.

For example, if the coachee is a local executive who wants to develop his EQ, then the cultural background of the coach seems secondary as long as the coach has sufficient understanding of the specifics of interacting with local employees. If the coachee, however, wants to become more engaging with a purely local workforce, a local Chinese coach might be more suitable.

### Coaching or Mentoring?

It is often said that due to the Confucian heritage, most Chinese would prefer mentoring over coaching, i.e. that they expect advice or at least significant sharing. Also, that the coach should be more senior than the coachee which is typically a characteristic of mentoring.

My experience is that after explaining the coachees and other stakeholders the principle of ownership and the rationale why coaches abstain from giving advice and share only to ‘add on’ after exhausting the coachee’s own resourcefulness, local Chinese coachees tend to be equally appreciative of the coaching approach like Westerners.

### The future of coaching in Hong Kong and Greater China

The level of awareness of what coaching really is and how to make best use of it is continuously maturing among corporate decision makers, not

least because an increasing number of them have undergone significant coach training or even international coach certification themselves. For professional coaches that means that they, too, need to step up their professional qualifications and become more skillful and professional to stay at the forefront of this emerging market.

*Charlie Lang*

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## Annual General Meeting Announcement

All APAC members are kindly invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held Wednesday 19 October 2011 between 7-8 pm Singapore time.

The AGM is of importance as it is the only teleconference meeting organized for all members once a year.

At this AGM a new list of Executive Committee Members will be elected to manage APAC for the next 2 years.

## PEER GROUP COACHING CCEU CREDITS

APAC’s Peer Group Coaching  
is awarding  
**ICF Continuing Coaching  
Education (CCE) credits!**

**Join the monthly  
PGC Sessions**  
and gain valuable CCE  
hours while you learn!

For dates and details, email  
PGC chair Julius Ordonez at:

[julius@benchmark-consulting.net](mailto:julius@benchmark-consulting.net)

## Jimmy Cricket sits on our Shoulder! Supervision is a professional necessity

By Pascale Reinhardt, Honorary President of the Société Française de Coaching<sup>1</sup>.

*A former investment banker, and a professional coach for the past 12 years, Pascale Reinhardt belongs to the «second generation» of coaches in France. Supervision has been and still is essential to her practice as a coach and to her personal development.*

*Pascale Reinhardt was the president of SFCoach, France's leading professional coaching association until March 2011, and is now involved in creating common ground with other professional coaching associations in the world.*

Supervision has been central to many professions, from social work to counseling, and from psychology to nursing but only recently have we seen the beginnings of research and training in coaching supervision.

The Société Française de Coaching has been requiring that its members undergo supervision since 2001 and supervision is mandatory for accreditation. Supervision is a necessary aspect of the ethical practice of coaching, and also helps a coach to build his or her professional identity. It is also now part of the Codes of Ethics required by many HR professionals taking on a new coach.

Supervision can be defined as “the process by which a coach with the help of a supervisor, can attend to understanding better both the Client and their wider system and themselves as part of the Client-coach system, and by so doing, transform their work and develop their craft”.<sup>2</sup> In other words, supervision allows a coach to analyze and to work on his/her professional practice with the support of a more experienced coach. The supervisor helps the coach step back from his/her professional practice in order to look at it from another point of view and to renew his/her approach to coaching.

For the coach, it is also an opportunity to acquire new knowledge and to receive support in moments of doubt.

In the same way that we are told to exercise more and eat healthily so that it becomes an integral part of our lifestyle, supervision is not only “nice to have” but also a necessary and crucial part of being a coach. In my experience, it became as important and useful as undergoing further training.

This one and a half hour monthly supervision session is always the best opportunity, for me, to question my own outlook in the wake of a specific assignment, as well as to grow further –

both personally and professionally. It has become a necessity, a “hygienic routine”, that allows me to explore what I would otherwise leave in the shadows. It also allows me to measure the evolution of my beliefs, skills and successes.

Whether individual or collective (I have experienced both, and each has different advantages), these regular supervision sessions oblige me to keep an eye on my practice while I am working with my clients. Agreeing to be a regular supervisee obliges me to constantly question the tools I am working with (why and when?), and to be able to collect, “on the spot”, useful materials/questions which I will bring up during my monthly supervision sessions. Supervision greatly helped me on several occasions, to look at myself in a deeper way to understand some of the patterns that emerged throughout my entire work with clients, rather than focusing on specific client issues. Jimmy Cricket sits on my shoulder...

### How does it work?

Drafting a regular contract, abiding by the same confidentiality and ethical rules we use with our clients is a must. Before each session, I reflect on three issues I have come across, attempting to formulate them easily and to find how they are linked – they always are.

### Who are the supervisors?

My own supervisors have not

necessarily been professional coaches themselves; I have also been supervised by renowned therapists with a systemic understanding of the tripartite relationship of a coaching agreement, and in the case of group supervision I seek a supervisor with excellent facilitation skills.

I am a supervisor myself and I must also admit that my own client work is refreshed and revitalized by what I learn from my supervisees.

Most Coaching Associations only recommend that a supervisor hold a recognized coaching qualification. Until recently there has been a dearth of supervision qualifications aimed at coaching professionals, although there is not really enough variety of specific training for this to be a selection factor; we generally rely more on word of mouth, search for a specific field, or study what people have written to choose supervisors. Beware, though, that a supervisor can be neither a colleague, nor one's own therapist. Peer groups can be regarded as a supervision option.

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<sup>1</sup> Société Française de Coaching: [www.sfcoach.org](http://www.sfcoach.org). Documentation in English downloadable.

<sup>2</sup> Coaching, Mentoring And Organizational Consultancy: Supervision and Development. Hawkins P., Smith N., McGraw Hill, UK, 2009.

## APCC Conference 2012

Simon McKenzie (Mac), APAC Co-Chair;  
Denise Wright, APAC Deputy Chair

On the back of the hugely successful APCC Conference 2010, the momentum is underway for the APCC Conference for 2012.

The dates have been set for **6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> September 2012 in Singapore**. A number of achievements have been delivered so far:

- A joint organising committee has been recruited with an extensive ambassador network around the world. The main teams within the organising committee are structured around the following priorities: event management, sponsorship, bookshop, programmes and speakers, public relations and ambassadors. Each team has now key people in place, though we are looking for more people who want to be a part of this journey, especially in the areas of marketing and public relations (please contact Denise or Mac if you are interested.)
- Joy Ventures, the impressive conference management team for 2010, have been reselected as the key partners for 2012.
- Two exciting hotels have been shortlisted to host the conference and final negotiations are underway.
- Enabling processes and measures of success have been agreed by the organising committee, which will guide and motivate our work throughout the next 12 months.

The next big priority is to agree the higher aims and theme of the conference. Both ICF and APAC members have sent in many ideas of what is important to them. The analysis of these ideas has started and the outcomes of this will be

disseminated over the next month or so.

One of the most interesting insights that has come out so far from the requests of the members is to use the conference not only as a means to enhance and develop each coach's capability and impact through the sharing of techniques, methods and research, but also to use the conference as a vehicle to stretch the impact and boundaries of coaching in Asia-Pacific. More of this will follow.

As before, if you would like to support this conference in any way, please contact Denise or Mac directly. Thank you.

Simon McKenzie (Mac) and Denise Wright

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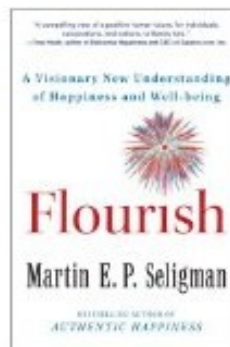
## Book Review: Flourish

By Martin E.P. Seligman

One of the godfathers of positive psychology, Seligman uses this book to weave together the various threads of his life's work as a clinician and academic working across the fabric of society: with families, schools, the military, public health services and the corporate world.

Published in April, this is Seligman's first book for 10 years. In that time, he's been on a journey of reflection, discovery, deconstruction, delivery and design that—in my view—takes his original *Authentic Happiness* theory into far stronger territory.

Let's be clear. Seligman deplors what he calls "happyology" or the idea that life should be like a yellow smiley face. His work grapples fearlessly with



how human beings can believe in possibility and grow from setbacks.

As an executive coach working extensively with bankers, lawyers and accountants, I had struggled to reconcile the mood-based constructs published previously as *Authentic Happiness* with the personalities and drivers I encountered most often in those industry sectors. "Flourish" extends that original theory, with ideas that sit well with that client group. Known as "PERMA", the theory of well-being rests on five foundation stones:

**P** — Positive emotion: happiness and life satisfaction, pleasure, ecstasy, comfort, etc.

**E** — Engagement: Did time stop for you? Were you completely absorbed in the task?

**R** — (positive) Relationships: being with others, acts of kindness to others

**M** — Meaning: belonging to and serving something you believe is bigger than the self

**A** — Accomplishment: achievement, winning, mastery and success for their own sakes.

Alongside its conceptual strengths, the book details useful tools and exercises. I continue to apply them with clients and they move quickly from awkwardness to resonance and stickiness. With this book, Seligman takes personal risks, brings academic rigour, offers clinical evidence and launches a compelling call to arms.

What can I say? I'm a believer. Read and decide for yourselves.

Sally Dellow  
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*Flourish: A New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being—and How to Achieve Them* by Martin E. P. Seligman, Ph.D., the Fox Leadership Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, the director of the Positive Psychology Network, and former president of the American Psychological Association.

Published by Nicholas Brealey Publishing  
ISBN: 978-1-85788-569-9 (Amazon paperback price US\$15.95)

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- A global voice for Asia's coaches
- Unique regional community
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Share the benefits;  
sign up your colleagues  
today!

Contact: KF Tang on [kwaitang@gmail.com](mailto:kwaitang@gmail.com)

We welcome ideas and submissions for future editions  
of the APAC newsletter

Please contact [edith.coron@eoc-intercultural.com](mailto:edith.coron@eoc-intercultural.com)

### New Members

A warm APAC welcome to:

- Kevin Gan - Malaysia
- Alex Eunkyeong YU - Korea
- Kay Han Tay - Singapore
- Trevor Williams - Singapore
- Kenny Toh - Singapore
- Poorani Thanusha - Singapore

### APAC Exco 2009-11

**President:** Dr Woraphat Arthayukti  
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**1st VP:** Belinda Merry (Australia)

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