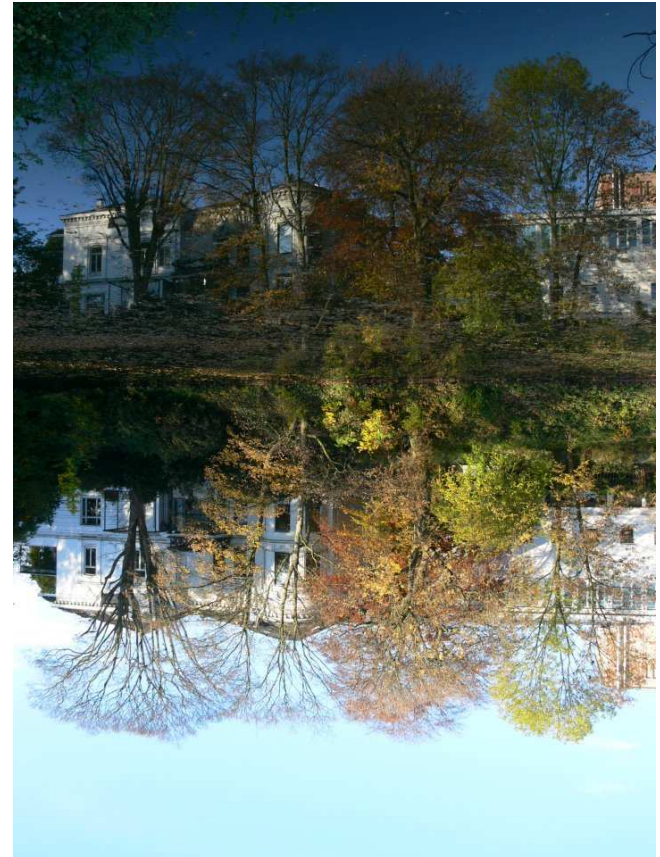# U N I K A S S E L V E R S I T Ä T

Negative effects of coaching and their causes from the perspective of organizations

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The way through…

- State of research
- Why looking at the dark side?
- Design of the study
- Results of the study

State of research – positive effects and impact factors

- business coaching is booming
- the request and the implementation of coaching in business contexts as an instrument of leadership and employee development is increasing continuously
- companies are investing high sums of money into coaching procedures

- Research on the efficacy of coaching and the impact factors is a new an heterogeneous field
- Results show that coaching is effective and can lead to very positive effects for the clients

(Ely et al., 2010; De Haan, 2013; Grant, 2013; Theeboom et al., 2014)

State of research – negative effects and their causes

- Negative effects and their causes have barely been adressed in research
  - Negative effects appear as additional or „indirect" findings
- First studies explicitly focusing this field show that diverse negative effects can occur for the clients
- These studies explore the perspective of coaches (and clients)
- The causes can emanate from different factors
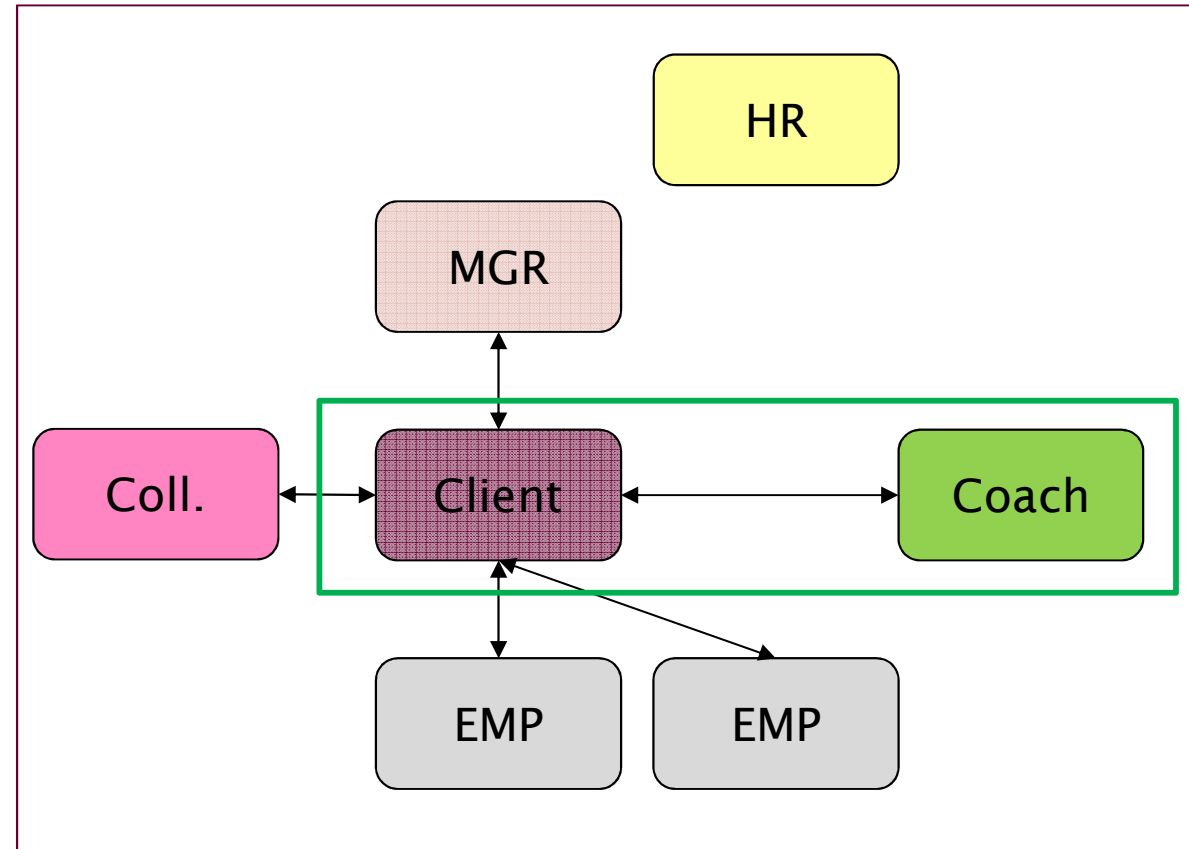
(Jansen et al., 2004; Feldman & Lankau, 2005; Grant, 2007, Seiger & Künzli, 2011; Künzli, 2013; Schermuly et al., 2014)

Negative effect

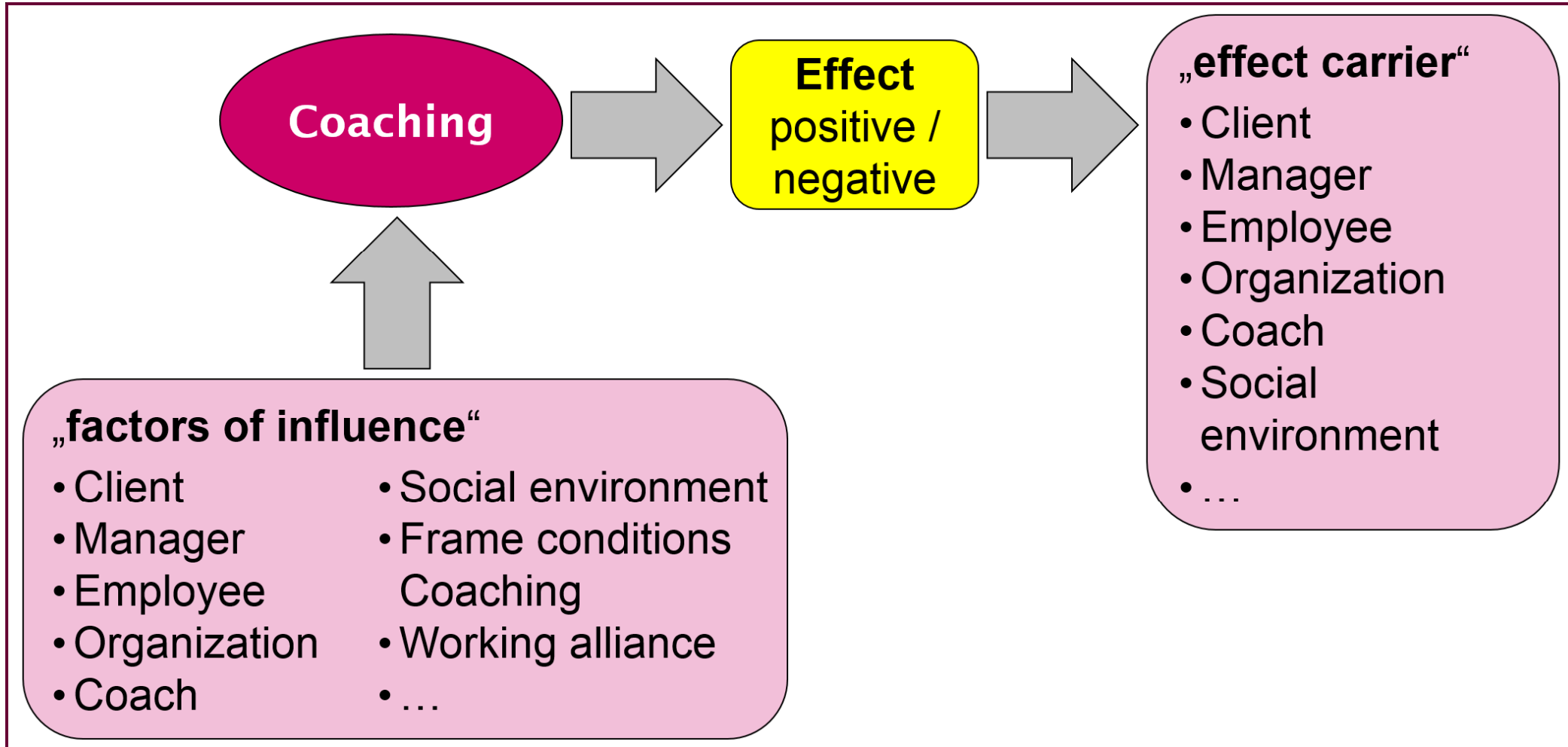- Categories from psychotherapy research (Hoffmann et al., 2008)
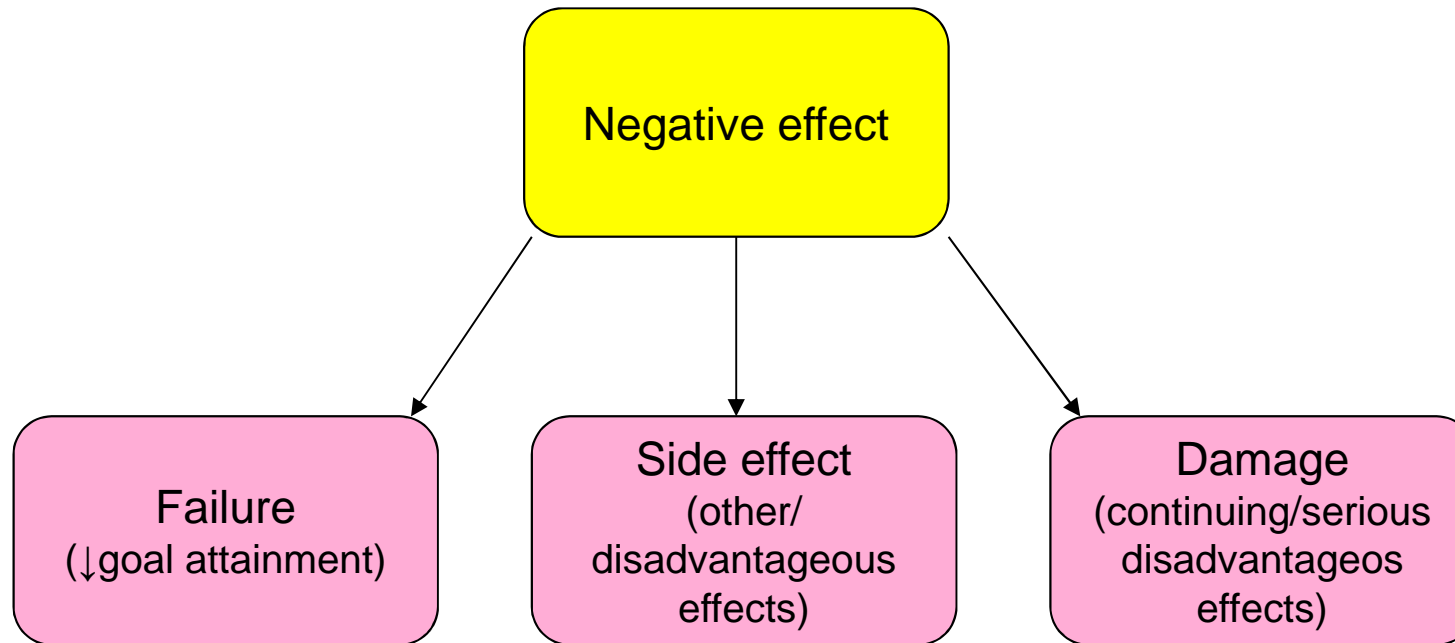
- Following the German Medicine Act: directly caused by the coaching, appearing parallely or directly after the coaching procedure (Schermuly et al., 2014, referring to § 4 paragraph 13, German Medicine Act)

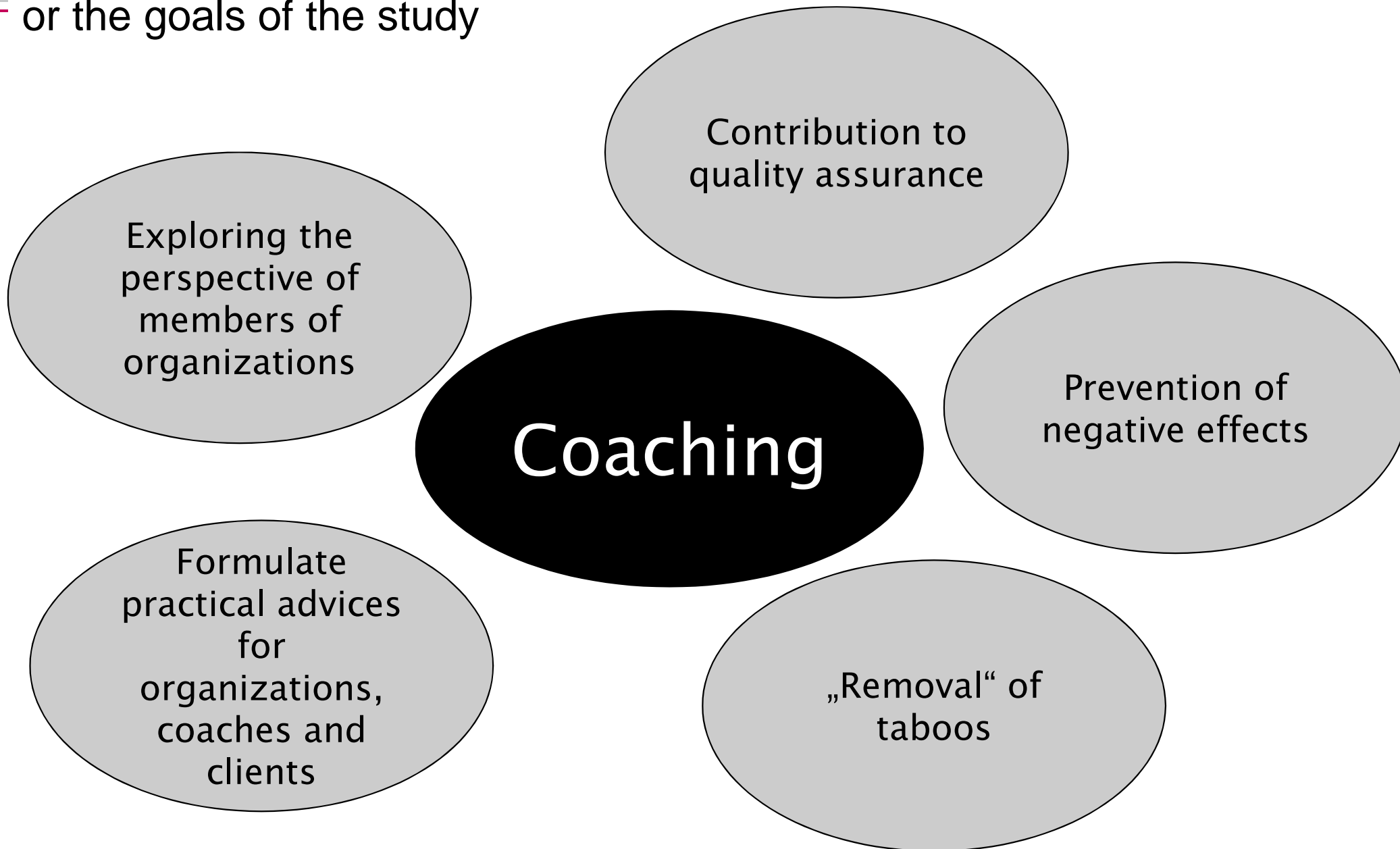# State of research – causes for negative effects

- The causes – or the risks – that affect the efficacy can emanate from the client, the coach, the quality of their working alliance, the coaching process or organizational factors
- Causes of negative effects are more often externally attributed (75%, by coaches)

(Schermuly et al., 2014)

„Factors of influence" and „effect carriers"

Coaching → **Effect** positive / negative → **„effect carrier"**

„effect carrier"
- Client
- Manager
- Employee
- Organization
- Coach
- Social environment
- …

„factors of influence"

• Client	• Social environment
• Manager	• Frame conditions Coaching
• Employee	• Working alliance
• Organization	• …
• Coach	

Why looking at the „dark side" of coaching?
or the goals of the study

Coaching

Contribution to quality assurance

Exploring the perspective of members of organizations

Prevention of negative effects

Formulate practical advices for organizations, coaches and clients
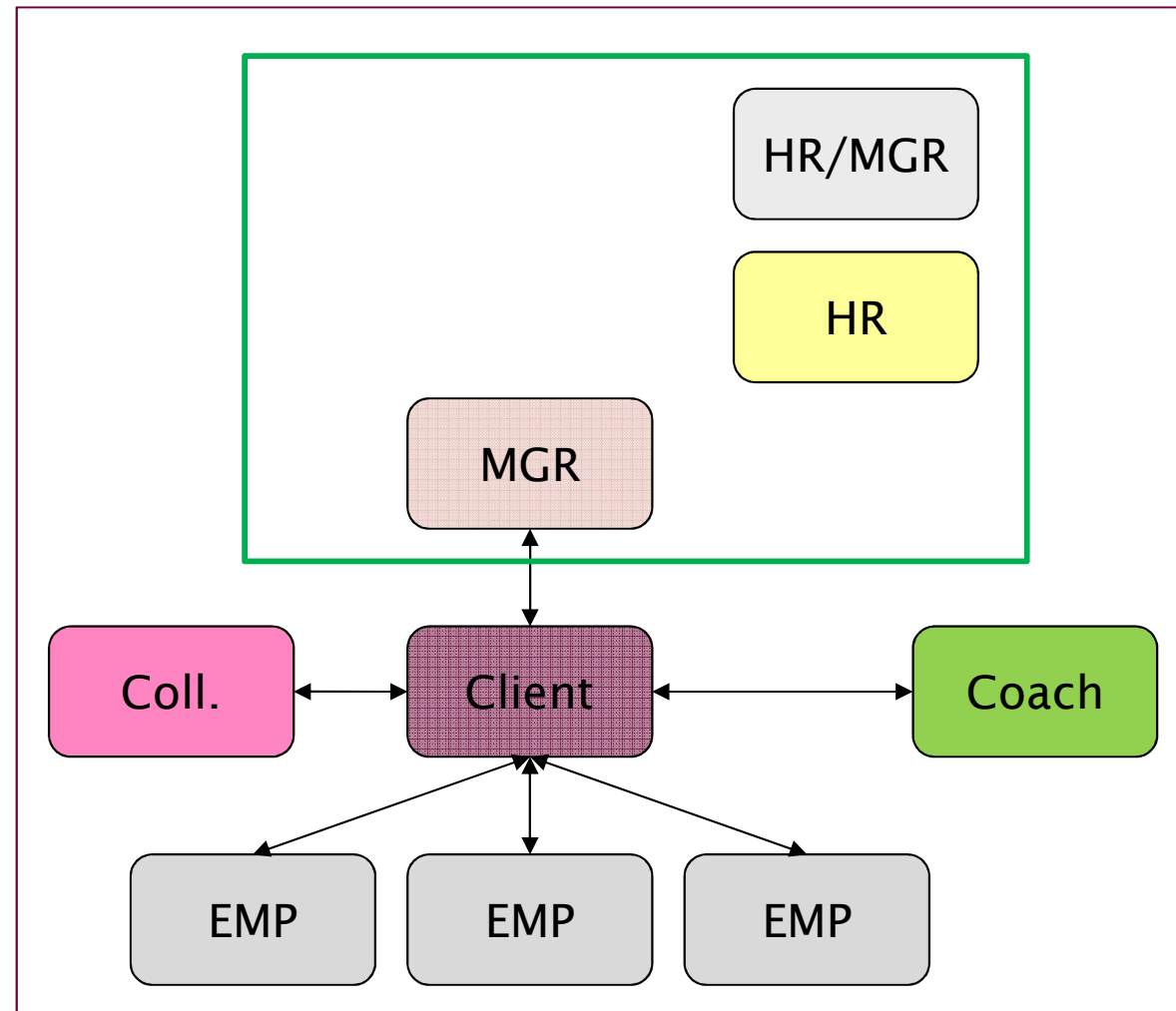
„Removal" of taboos

Focus of the study / participants

- Organizational perspective
- Economic enterprises
- Concluded coaching procedures
- Individual coaching

Study participants:
- HR-specialists who arrange coachings „distanced view"
- MGR whose subordinates have been coached "closer view on the client"
- HR/MGR "dual view"

Design of the explorative qualitative study

- Get an impression of the organizational perspective on negative effects of coaching and their causes
- Semi-structured expert interviews
- Method of analysis: Qualitative content analysis
- Inductive approach

- The results of the explorative pilot study will be the base for the development and validation of a questionnaire and a quantitative survey

Sample of the qualitative study

	MGR	HR	MGR/HR	Total
N	3	6	6	15
Age Ø	42,3	48,2	47,2	46,6
Gender	f:1 / m:2	f:4 / m:2	f:0 / m:6	f:5 / m:10

- Six large enterprises
- 2.500 – 274.000 Employees, Ø 104.765
- 12 face-to-face-interviews in the organizations, three phone-interview

Results

- 18 negative effects
- 18 causes
- Differences between the groups:
    - HR and HR/MGR: more than one example per interview
    - MGR: in general one example per interview
- Negative effects are almost always positive for others – a matter of perspective
- Negative effects / side effects can occur, even if the coaching procedure was successful
- Exploring the organizational perspective brings new insights
- No general cause-and-effect relationsships found yet.
- Expectations towards the coaching results seem to have a big influence on the perceived efficacy

Results – negative effects

Negative effects

- MGR does not feel well about the development of the client/new conflicts

- Client cancels job, professional reorientation

- EMP/colleagues do not feel well about the development of the client/new conflicts

- Organizational surrounding does not feel well about the development of the client/new conflicts

- Costs / ROI

- Confusion/uncertainty of the client

- Sustainability / initial worsening

Results – causes / factors of influence

Factors of influence

- Attitude of the Org./MGR towards coaching, „Coaching-Culture"
- Client: Lack of willingness / motivation; ability to reflect
- Coach: behaviour / working method
- Coaching: wrong instrument
- Insufficient goal definition / clarification of assignment
- "wrong" recipient
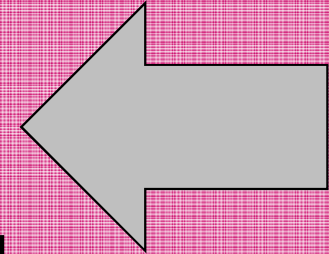
Thank you for your attention!

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