ENHANCING STUDENT LEADERS’ EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE THROUGH
MULTI-DIMENSIONAL EXECUTIVE COACHING:
A PRAGMATIC CASE STUDY APPROACH
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VERONICA B. ZAK-ABRANTES
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APPROVED:
__________________________________________
Cary Cherniss, Ph.D.

__________________________________________
Daniel Fishman, Ph.D.

DEAN:
__________________________________________
Stanley Messer, Ph.D.
The first goal of the present study was to examine the use of executive coaching as a method to enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies. The second goal of the present study was to investigate whether a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies increased after the leader received coaching. The pragmatic case study approach (Fishman, 1999) and the multi-dimensional executive coaching process (Orenstein, 2007) were adapted for use with three participants at a large, east-coast university. There was mixed support for the first goal of the present study; the degree to which the executive coaching methodology could be adapted to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies varied among the three cases. There was also mixed support for the second goal of the present study. Although there was some evidence that the student leaders changed in positive ways as a result of the coaching, the evaluation design made it impossible to assess the extent to which emotional intelligence competencies changed. Based on experience with the three cases, certain factors were identified that appear necessary in order to create success for the type of executive coaching described in this study for benefiting university groups. These "critical success factors" include: (1) the participant’s openness and commitment to the coaching process; (2) a clearly designated supervising manager who is involved and supportive of the entire coaching process; (3) the use of an empirically based 360-degree assessment tool; (4) the consultant’s knowledge and training in organizational and clinical psychology, encompassing individual, group, and systems levels of functioning; (5) the consultant being self-aware and able to engage in the clinical "use of self" (Alderfer, 1985); and (6) the employment of an empirically based evaluation measure.
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I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family, Dave Abrantes, my husband, Wladyslaw and Jurek Zak, my parents, Bronislaw and Zena Zak, my grandparents, Pauline and Pawel Dynak, my sister and new brother, and my in-laws, Manuel and Helena Abrantes. This dissertation is theirs as much as it is mine. Their unwavering love and support over the years has provided me with the confidence and determination to pursue and, ultimately, achieve my goals. Serdecznie dziekuje za wszystko!

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to examine the use of executive coaching as a method to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies. Executive coaching has become a popular method for enhancing leaders’ emotional intelligence competencies in organizations (Cherniss & Adler, 2000). Typically, executive coaching is offered to senior level executives and managers in work and organizational settings. However, there is little research that has examined the use of executive coaching as a method to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies within a university setting.

Additionally, the second goal of the present study was to investigate whether a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies increased after the leader received coaching. Specifically, the efficacy of the executive coaching process was evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively through a questionnaire and interview (cf. Alderfer & Brown, 1972; Orenstein, 2006). It is hoped that this information can be used to benefit student groups in university settings.

Before the present study is described, an overview of emotional intelligence, leadership and its relationship to emotional intelligence, and executive coaching as a methodology to potentially enhance emotional intelligence are examined below.
Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman’s *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter more than IQ* (1995) generated great interest in various organizational settings and continued research in emotional intelligence (see Bar-On, 1997; Boyatzis, 2006; Caruso, Mayer, & Salovey, 2002; Cavallo & Brienza, 2004; Cherniss, 2006; George, 2000). Two distinct approaches to emotional intelligence have emerged in the literature. The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso model represents the “abilities approach” and focuses on abilities to process information about emotions. On the other hand, the Bar-On and Goleman-Boyatzis models represent the “emotional and social competency” approach and focus on personal qualities and traits associated with emotional and social competencies. The “emotional and social competency” approach was selected for the present study; emotional and social competencies are likely to be stronger predictors of performance than emotional intelligence in many cases (Cherniss, 2010).

The “abilities approach” defines emotional intelligence as “the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others” (Mayer et al., 2000, p.396). The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso model is comprised of four interrelated abilities: perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

The first ability focuses on identifying emotions in oneself and others (Lopes et al., 2003). For example, emotions can be identified through facial expressions, tone of voice, body language, and other cues. The ability to identify emotional information can help to assess certain situations, whereas the ability to express one’s emotions may lead
to effective communication. The second ability focuses on using emotions to influence
cognitive processes which may contribute to the quality of decision making and other
processes. The third ability focuses on understanding emotions (e.g., knowing that certain
events will trigger certain emotions). Understanding emotional processes may help one
determine how to respond in certain situations. The fourth ability focuses on managing
one’s own emotions and others’ emotions (e.g., reframing a negative situation to make it
tolerable for a group). This ability may help to diffuse interpersonal or group conflicts,
deliver critical feedback without hurting the recipient’s feelings, and generate excitement
or motivation in others to accomplish a task.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT; Mayer,
Salovey, & Caruso, 2002) was developed to offer an objective measurement and
assessment of people’s actual abilities related to emotional intelligence. The MSCEIT
assesses how well people perform on two tasks for each of the four dimensions or
abilities of emotional intelligence. Some examples of the tasks include identifying
emotions in facial expressions and understanding blends of emotions. It has been argued
that self-reports have several limitations including self enhancement, faking, and weak
correlation with ability tests (Brackett & Mayer, 2003).

On the other hand, the “emotional and social competency” approach to emotional
intelligence (i.e., Bar-On and Boyatzis-Goleman models) focuses on personal qualities
and traits associated with emotional and social competencies. Goleman’s model was
strongly influenced by the work of McClelland (1973) who was more interested in
specific competencies than in intelligence. Specifically, McClelland proposed that
superior performers in a particular role in a particular organization should be studied and
compared to average performers. The personal qualities or traits that most strongly distinguish the two groups should then be identified. This approach was used in over 20 years of applied research. Spencer and Spencer (1993) proposed a generic competency model based on this research, and Goleman then linked the emotional and social competencies from their model to his emotional intelligence framework (see below).

Goleman (1998) initially grouped these competencies into five components of emotional intelligence at work: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize and understand one’s emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives as well as their impact on others. Indicators of self-awareness include self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, and self-deprecating sense of humor. Self-regulation is the ability to control or redirect one’s impulses and moods that may be disruptive. Indicators of self-regulation include trustworthiness, comfort with ambiguity, and openness to change. Motivation is the passionate pursuit of goals at work that is not limited to extrinsic factors such as money. Indicators of motivation include strong achievement drive, optimism, even when faced with danger, and organizational commitment. Empathy is the ability to understand others’ emotional makeup and demonstrates the capability of treating people based on their emotional reactions. Indicators of empathy include expertise in building and retaining talent, cross-cultural sensitivity, and service to clients and customers. Social skill entails managing relationships, building networks, finding common ground, and building rapport effectively. Indicators of social skill include effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, and expertise in building and leading teams.
Recently, Goleman and Boyatzis partnered with the Hay Group and updated the Emotional Competence Framework with the development of the Emotional and Social Competence Inventory (ESCI). They have consolidated Goleman’s original five components of emotional intelligence to include four dimensions and twelve competencies (see Appendix A). The first two dimensions and respective competencies are categorized under Personal Competence. The first dimension is self-awareness and includes the emotional self-awareness competency. The second dimension is self-management and includes the emotional self-control, adaptability, achievement drive, and positive outlook competencies. The remaining dimensions and respective competencies are categorized under Social Competence. The third dimension is social awareness and includes the empathy and organizational awareness competencies. The final dimension is relationship management and includes the influence, inspirational leadership, coaching and mentoring, conflict management, and teamwork and collaboration competencies.

Bar-On’s “emotional and social intelligence” is another model that represents the “emotional and social competency” approach (1997, 2006). Bar-On sought to identify the traits and skills that people use in order to successfully adapt to various demands in life. The five components in this model are intrapersonal skills (e.g., ability to express oneself), interpersonal skills (e.g., ability to be aware of, understand, and relate to others), adaptability (e.g., ability to adapt to change), stress management (e.g., ability to solve personal problems), and general mood (e.g., ability to deal with strong emotions).

“Trait emotional intelligence” is the most recent model to emerge and to represent the “emotional and social competency” approach (Petrides, Pita, and Kokkinaki, 2007). It includes many of the personal qualities proposed in earlier models
of emotional intelligence and posits that trait emotional intelligence is a personality trait. This model is comprised of four components: well-being (self-confidence, happiness, and optimism), sociability (social competence, assertiveness, and emotion management of others), self-control (stress management, emotion regulation, and low impulsiveness), and emotionality (emotional perception of self and others, emotion expression, and empathy).

Several measures have been developed to measure and assess emotional and social competencies. For example, the ESCI is a 360-degree assessment that consists of 72 items related to the above competencies (Gowing & O’Leary, unpublished paper). The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) is a self-report measure used to assess the emotional, personal, social and survival components of intelligence (Bar-On, 2000). The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) is a self-report instrument used to assess all 15 facets of trait emotional intelligence (Petrides et al., 2007).

The Boyatzis-Goleman model, along with the ESCI measure, was selected for use in the study over the other options for several reasons. A few studies have found that the MSCEIT is positively correlated with some measures of leadership effectiveness in some contexts (Cherniss & Adler, 2000). However, the emotional and social competency based approach is a better predictor of superior job performance across different job types (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Effective leadership stems more from the emotional and social competencies that build on emotional intelligence than from emotional intelligence alone. For example, one of the basic dimensions of emotional intelligence is social awareness or the ability to identify emotions in oneself and understand emotions in others. Individuals who are strong in this dimension are likely to demonstrate a high level
of service orientation. Critically, the “service orientation” competency contributes to superior leadership performance more than does the underlying social awareness dimension of emotional intelligence. Two other limitations of the “abilities approach” include the subjective determination of right and wrong answers on the MSCEIT and the feasibility of translating these responses into real life situations (Brackett & Mayer, 2003).

While the Bar-On and trait emotional intelligence models also represent the “emotional and social competency” approach, several questions have been raised about these models and measurements (Cherniss, 2010). The EQ-i is a self-report instrument which measures personality traits not typically categorized as emotional intelligence abilities and does not measure emotional perception and understanding. The EQ-i also appears to have a high degree of overlap with personality measures (Brackett & Mayer, 2003), which suggests that the EQ-i may not be measuring something unique. Trait emotional intelligence has emerged as a “second generation model” that builds on already established models of emotional intelligence and is also measured by a self-report measurement (Cherniss, 2010). A significant limitation of the self-report instrument is that people often do not correctly judge and assess their own abilities, especially if they lack self-awareness about their own abilities (Cherniss, 2010). Other limitations include self enhancement, faking, and weak correlation with ability tests (Brackett & Mayer, 2003).

On the other hand, the Boyatzis-Goleman model uses a multi-rater approach to measurement of emotional and social competencies (i.e., ESCI). This type of measurement requires other people to rate the focal person’s emotional and social
Emotional Intelligence and Executive Coaching

competencies. Potential rating biases are minimized because several raters are asked to participate and are in different roles (e.g., boss, peer, subordinate).

Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

So what does effective leadership look like? Leadership theory and literature describe that effective leadership consists of the following components:

- Development of a collective sense of goals and objectives and how to go about achieving them;
- Instilling in others knowledge and appreciation of the importance of work activities and behaviors;
- Generating and maintaining excitement, enthusiasm, confidence, and optimism in an organization as well as cooperation and trust;
- Encouraging flexibility in decision making and change;
- Establishing and maintaining a meaningful identity for an organization (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Locke, 1991; Yukl, 1998)

Emotional intelligence may facilitate leaders’ ability to carry out all of these activities (George, 2002).

The examination of emotional intelligence and its relationship to leadership practices is evident in the literature (Cherniss, 2006). For example, Goleman claimed that the most effective leaders have a high level of emotional intelligence (1998). Specifically, nearly 90 percent of the competencies that were identified as critical to superior performance were related to emotional and social intelligence. Moreover, the higher the rank of a “star performer” in senior leadership, the more emotional intelligence competencies contributed to his/her effectiveness as a leader.

Emotional intelligence measures have been used in empirical studies to demonstrate the link between emotional intelligence and effective leadership (Boyatzis &
Sala, 2004). For example, 92 college principals in the United Kingdom completed the 360-degree, multi-rater ECI. The school’s retention rate was significantly correlated with self-awareness (r=.20) and social awareness (r=.18). The ECI was also used to correlate performance as a measure of salary level in a separate study. Forty Turkish financial managers completed the ECI and their results were correlated with salary level. The Pearson correlation coefficients were as follows: self-awareness (r=.30), self-management (r=.37), social awareness (r=.43), and relationship management (r=.40). In another study, 100 managers from a restaurant chain in the United Kingdom were assessed using Bar-On’s EQ-i. The EQ-i scores were found to predict guest satisfaction (r=.50) and annual profit increase (r=.47; Bar-On, 2004).

Several studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness as measured through other established rating systems and competency frameworks. In one study (Slaski & Cartwright, 2002), the EQ-i was used to assess 320 managers working for a major retailer in the United Kingdom. The managers also completed a General Health Questionnaire, which measures emotional well-being, the Queensland public agency staff survey used to measure psychological health, a brief subjective measure of stress, and the retailer’s own management competency framework, which consists of 16 success factors (e.g., setting objectives, planning and organization, etc.). Significant correlations indicated that managers who scored higher in emotional intelligence demonstrated better management performance as well as better health and well-being.

A large-scale study was also conducted at Johnson & Johnson Consumer & Personal Care Group (JJC&PC Group) to assess whether there are specific competencies
that contribute to high-performing leadership (Cavallo & Brienza, 2001). Three hundred and fifty-eight managers around the globe were asked to complete a 183 question multi-rater survey that consisted of the J&J leadership competency model, the Standards of Leadership (SOL), and the ECI. Results indicated that the higher performers scored significantly higher than average performers in the following emotional competencies: Self-Confidence, Achievement Orientation, Initiative, Leadership, Influence, and Change Catalyst.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership was also examined in the Ontario Principals’ Council leadership study which involved 464 principals and vice principals (Stone, Parker, & Wood, 2004). The school administrators completed the EQ-i and a 20-item multi-rater leadership questionnaire which was used to measure performance. Results demonstrated that several key emotional and social competencies (e.g., self-awareness, interpersonal relationships) differentiated leaders who were rated as above average or below average.

The link between competency frameworks based on aspects of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness has also been demonstrated in research by McClelland (1998). A competency model was developed for executives at a large food and beverage organization. The competency model included emotional intelligence competencies such as empathy, organizational awareness, and self-confidence. Specifically, 10 of the 12 competencies were social and emotional ones. A group of leaders who demonstrated 6 of the 12 competencies were compared to a group of leaders who did not. Leaders who demonstrated the 6 competencies outperformed goals by
almost 20 percent, while leaders who lacked in the competencies underperformed goals by almost 20 percent.

Emotional Intelligence and Executive Coaching

Can leaders’ emotional intelligence be enhanced, and if so, how? Executive coaching has become a popular method for enhancing leaders’ emotional intelligence in organizations (Cherniss & Adler, 2000). However, there have been few executive coaching approaches that have been stringently evaluated. One exception is the executive coaching program offered by Personnel Decisions International (PDI). PDI consultants have coached 2,500 managers around the globe. Their coaching strategies consist of forging a partnership with the client and others, inspiring commitment, growing skills, promoting persistence, and shaping the environment (Peterson, 1996). The first strategy, forging a partnership, focuses on building trust and understanding with the client. In order to accomplish this, the coach must learn how the client views the world, explore the client’s goals, understand the client’s perceptions about his / her work situation, establish clear expectations about confidentiality, and reiterate the coach’s commitment to the client and process. The second strategy, inspiring commitment, focuses on building insight and motivation around the client’s personally relevant goals. In order to accomplish this, the coach must help the client get information that is personally relevant to achieving those goals: goals, abilities, perceptions, and standards. The third strategy focuses on growing skills. In order to accomplish this, the coach helps the client to build new competencies through the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. The coach helps the client grow new skills by spacing the practices and by promoting active experimentation. The fourth strategy, promoting persistence, focuses on building stamina
and discipline to ensure sustainability. In order to accomplish this, the coach must be a talent agent, manage the mundane, fight fear of failure, and break the habit cycle. The fifth strategy, shaping the environment, focuses on building organizational support to reward learning and remove barriers or resistance. In order to accomplish this, the coach must interact and provide guidance to other members of the organization who are key to the client’s development (e.g., organizational sponsors).

PDI offers three different types of coaching: targeted coaching, intensive coaching, and executive coaching (Peterson, 1996). Targeted coaching involves a practical and skill-based approach that focuses on one or two key developmental areas. Intensive coaching is comprehensive and involves multiple developmental areas and complex personal and organizational issues. Executive coaching is relationship-based and involves consultants who serve as objective advisors to senior executives.

Empirical studies have shown that PDI’s coaching process results in significant changes that are apparent for at least two years after coaching (Peterson, 1993a, 1993b; Thompson, 1996).

On the other hand, Orenstein’s (2007) multi-dimensional executive coaching approach is grounded in a strong conceptual framework and proposes a process that can be applied to potentially enhance an individual’s level of emotional intelligence. The conceptual framework (i.e., Guiding Conception) consists of four fundamental premises. The first premise defines executive coaching as the consultation to a person within an organizational role about that person’s performance; in other words, the consultation involves the person, the organization, and their constant interaction. The second premise focuses on the existence, importance, and role of unconscious forces in a person’s
behavior. The third premise explains that an individual’s behavior is embedded in organizational, group, intergroup, and interpersonal behavior. Individual behavior also influences and is influenced by forces at each of these levels. Lastly, the fourth premise states that the executive coach or consultant is subject to the same forces when entering an organization, and consequently, use of self is a critical tool in the executive coaching process.

The executive coaching process phases include entry, facilitated change, and conclusion of coaching (see Method for the process in further detail; Orenstein, 2007). The entry phase consists of initial exploratory meetings with the client to assess the client’s openness to the process, joint goal-setting meetings with the client and the client’s supervisor, and formal contracting. The phase of facilitated change consists of a formal assessment that is drawn from multiple perspectives including a psychodynamic interview with the client, 360-degree feedback interviews, and observation of the client and client system. The coaching objectives are set after the client has received the 360-degree feedback results and then the client and consultant move into formal coaching. The interventions used during formal coaching are drawn from behavioral methods, cognitive methods, psychodynamic methods, and/or organizational methods. The final phase concludes coaching between the client and consultant. The coaching objectives serve as the primary means to measure the participant’s progress. The client and consultant reflect on the process and determine how the learning and behavior will be sustained.

Critically, Orenstein (2006) posits that executive coaching efficacy can be measured empirically through the use of a well-established methodology from the field of
Questionnaire is a multi-rater instrument that evaluates the coaching process
quantitatively and qualitatively. The content of the instrument is based on the languages
and experiences specific to the client system under study. In other words, the content of
the instrument is developed specifically for each individual client system; the content for
this survey is not based on a standardized set of items used across various client systems.
Advantages of this approach include maximized relevance to the client system and
decreased distance between respondents and consultants which leads to a greater
openness and responsiveness in the respondents. In one particular case study, Orenstein
(2006) demonstrated that a coaching client was rated by others showing statistically
significant behavior change most related to the client’s particular coaching objectives.

The Orenstein (2007) executive coaching model was selected for use in the
present study for several reasons. First, this model is grounded in a strong theoretical
framework in the field of Organizational Psychology which demonstrates that executive
coaching is a multi-dimensional intervention; the consultation involves the person, the
organization, and their constant interaction. While the PDI approach recognizes the role
and value of organizational influences in the executive coaching process, the
methodological foundation stems from cognitive-behavioral psychology (individual
level) and pragmatic research on individual change (Peterson, 1996). Second, the
Orenstein (2007) model requires a comprehensive formal assessment which provides the
basis for the coaching; the same assessment is used consistently with all coaching clients.
On the other hand, PDI’s assessment phase will vary based on the different type of
coaching and may not always include the same assessment measures (Peterson, 1996).
Lastly, the Orenstein (2007) model uses an Empathic Organic Questionnaire to critically evaluate the efficacy of the executive coaching process at the client’s agreement. On the other hand, the PDI approach to follow-up varies depending on the type of coaching the client is receiving (Peterson, 1996).

*Emotional Intelligence, Student Leadership, and Executive Coaching*

While there has been a great deal of research on leadership in many different contexts, there has been relatively little research on student leadership. Students are increasingly taking on leadership challenges in their roles in career and technical student organizations (Reese, 2008). Some of these leadership abilities and challenges include entrepreneurship, small business management, human resource management, team-building, perception management, personal growth, how to process thoughts and feelings effectively, the “social savvy” of leaders, organizational knowledge and tools, and interpersonal communication. For example, the Business Professionals of America is a career and technical student organization that recognizes the importance of student leadership. The mission of the Business Professionals of America is “to contribute to the preparation of a world-class workforce through the advancement of leadership, citizenship, academic, and technological skills” (Reese, 2008, p. 19). Critically, leadership roles in student organizations offer students the opportunity to develop leadership skills, apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom, build self-esteem, and prepare students for “real-life” work roles in business and organizational settings.

There is little research that has specifically studied the relationship of student leadership and emotional intelligence and more specifically, the use of executive coaching as a method to enhance student leaders’ emotional intelligence. Does a student
leader’s level of emotional intelligence increase after receiving coaching? What is the impact of the coaching approach on the student leader? How does the student leader use what he/she learns from the coaching? How might this experience benefit student groups in university settings?

The present study investigates (1) the use of executive coaching as a method to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competency; and (2) whether a student leader’s emotional intelligence competency was increased after receiving coaching.
CHAPTER II

Method

Participants

Participants in the executive coaching program were three undergraduate student leaders attending a large, public, east coast university. A fourth participant withdrew at the outset of the study due to her overwhelming work load. The author was the consultant for all three cases and received clinical supervision from a more experienced psychologist throughout the entire coaching process for all three participants. The consultant regularly met with the psychologist to discuss the progress of all three cases, identify and resolve any issues, problems, or concerns, analyze hypotheses, and debrief the consultant’s experiences and Use of Self (Alderfer, 1985).

As part of the recruitment process, undergraduate students were asked to provide their perceptions around emotional intelligence and executive coaching so that the consultant better understood and assessed the needs of the participants (cf. Bryden-Miller et al., 2003). The consultant selected participants based on the following criteria: 1) the student was in a leadership role within a student organization; 2) the student had a basic understanding of emotional intelligence; 3) the student had an appreciation for emotional intelligence; 4) the student had a desire to improve his / her emotional intelligence; and 5) the student was willing to commit to the coaching process to the best of his / her ability. The consultant met with eight participants who initially expressed interest in the study.
Participants were recruited by contacting references provided by the consultant’s personal contacts in the university’s Residence Life organization and other university organizations.

**Design**

A multiple, pragmatic case study approach (Fishman, 1999) allowed for in-depth examination of participants’ progress during the course of the executive coaching program and the various ways in which the executive coaching influenced the participants in their work and personal lives. The pragmatic case study method allows the psychological events of the client to be examined within the particular and natural context in a structured approach. Critically, the pragmatic case study focuses on the needs of the client and not on a process, idea, or principle:

> Whether the client is an individual, a group, or an organization, the responsibility of the practitioner is to help improve the client’s functional effectiveness. The practitioner does not choose the issue to examine: the client does…Each problem must be addressed as it occurs in nature, as an open, living process in all its complexity, often in a political context that requires certain forms of acquisitions and prohibits others. All functionally important influences on the process under study must be considered. (Peterson, 1991, pp. 426-427)

The pragmatic case study method is comprised of the following key elements (Fishman, 1999). The pragmatic paradigm *begins* with the particular client presenting his / her specific goals and problems. Specifically, the particular discrepancy between the current state and desired state is identified. The “guiding conception” of the goals to be attained is informed by previous research and relevant experiences of the consultant. A summary of the program that stems from this “guiding conception” is also included. In the present study, the goals to be attained manifested as “Areas for Development” which were derived from the 360-degree interviews (for further details, see *Procedure*). The
Areas for Development were operationalized according to the corresponding emotional competency in the ESCI framework. For example, if the presenting problem focused on the client’s tendency to erupt in anger during meetings, then the presenting problem would have been defined as a lack of *emotional self-control* or ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses (Hay Group, 2007). The “goals” of the executive coaching were identified as the “coaching objectives” and were derived from the Areas for Development.

The remainder of the pragmatic case study method includes the case context, program description, stakeholders, outcome measures, the rationale for choosing the study situation, case boundaries and relation to other cases, stakeholder values and goals, measures and data collection procedures, and quality of knowledge procedures (Fishman, 1999). The program’s impact is described by including narrative evaluation data and analysis of the “guiding concepts.” The pragmatic case study ends with application to other cases.

The pragmatic case study method was selected for this study for the following reasons (Fishman, 1999). First, the pragmatic case study method uses positive, “goal-attainment” terms instead of problem-focused, “deficit” terms used in other approaches (e.g., positivist). The “goal-attainment” language targets a desired state, while the “deficit” language focuses on a client’s particular discrepancy. Second, the pragmatic case study method begins with and focuses on the client and his/her particular presenting goals and problems. The consultant then uses previous research and a “guiding conception” to better understand the client’s needs and to develop a specific and direct action plan for the client based on his/her needs. Results from the individual cases are
shared with the program service providers and impact the functioning of a particular program. On the other hand, the positivist approach begins with general, objective, and demonstrated laws of human behavior (i.e., basic science) which are then studied in natural problem settings (i.e., applied research). There is no opportunity to provide individual case results back to basic science because the positivist approach only considers results across groups of individual cases.

Procedure

The executive coaching process phases included entry, facilitated change, and conclusion of coaching (Orenstein, 2007; for an overview of the process, see Appendix B). The first contact between the consultant and participant initiated the entry phase (see Appendix C for a script of the initial meeting). If the consultant and participant agreed to meet, the next step was to have a preliminary meeting between the consultant and participant in the participant’s office. During this meeting, the consultant was responsible for exploring the participant’s openness or resistance to coaching, explaining the executive coaching process (phases, steps, confidentiality, differences between coaching and therapy, and the role of the consultant), observing the participant’s behavior, assessing the comfort level between the two, and experiencing what it is like to enter the participant’s organization. The preliminary meeting was followed by a joint goal setting meeting in which the consultant and participant agree on what should be accomplished in the coaching process.

The final stage in the entry phase was written contracting (Orenstein, 2007). A formal informed consent was submitted to the participant for approval (See Appendix D). The informed consent included the coaching plan which was prepared based on the
discussions in the initial meeting and included the steps of the coaching process, the number of hours for each step, and the total hours. The informed consent also outlined confidentiality requirements.

The next phase of the executive coaching process was facilitating change (Orenstein, 2007). Information during formal assessment was gathered from multiple perspectives. The life history interview allowed the consultant to learn about the participant’s influential life events, including potential information about parents, siblings, place of birth, school and work experiences, age, and life stage. A life history interview was used instead of the unstructured psychodynamic interview because it allowed the consultant to gain additional, relevant information about the participant that could realistically support the coaching process in a short, predetermined timeframe (i.e., five or less formal coaching sessions). On the other hand, the psychodynamic interview explores psychodynamic themes of unconscious processes, neurotic conflicts, and defense mechanisms which could be further explored during a longer term coaching relationship as outlined in Orenstein’s (2007) approach (i.e., twelve sessions).

The 360-degree interviews allowed the consultant to understand what perceptions existed around the participant’s emotional competencies (Orenstein, 2007). A minimum of three 360-degree interview participants were required for the 360-degree interview process. In the first case, the 360-degree participants included one advisor, one co-leader, and three peers. In the second case, the 360-degree participants included were one athletic coach, one co-captain, and three teammates. The confidential, semi-structured 360-degree interview protocol was based on the Emotional Competence Framework (Hay Group, 2007) and Orenstein’s (2007) 360-degree interview protocols (see Appendix E for
the 360-degree interview protocol and Informed Consent). Notes were taken by the consultant during all of the meetings with the coaching participant, including the unstructured interview and the 360-degree interviews. Phrases were carefully reviewed and selected, and no identifying information about the interviewees was collected in order to maximize their confidentiality. Observation and Use of Self (cf. Alderfer, 1985) were utilized during the formal assessment as well as during the entire coaching process.

After the formal assessment was completed, the consultant began the feedback process which consisted of three components: feedback preparation, the oral feedback report, and the written feedback report (Orenstein, 2007). During feedback preparation, the consultant gathered and analyzed data from the 360-degree interviews. Specifically, the data were analyzed in the followings ways. First, data for each question from all interviews were compiled. Data items for each question were then counted for frequency; if a data item did not appear in two or more interviews, it was omitted. For example, if only one 360-degree participant described the coaching participant as “overly emotional,” then the data item was not included. However, if two or more 360-degree participants similarly described the coaching participant as “overly emotional,” then the data item was included. Data were again examined to determine any repeated ideas. Themes that emerged from these repeated ideas were identified. Relevant phrases or quotes were listed under each theme. These themes and supporting materials were organized in the following ways: Context, Role Expectations, Complex Areas (i.e., strengths and areas for development) and Developmental Areas, and Advice. The consultant and supervising psychologist reviewed the report and considered observations and Use of Self Data. The
The consultant then delivered the results of the 360-degree interviews in a meeting of up to two hours which allowed for discussion, questions, and interpretations (Orenstein, 2007). The participant was reminded that what he/she would hear were others’ perceptions, the sources of the information would be kept confidential, and that the feedback itself would be considered confidential; no one else besides the participant would have access to the report. The consultant informed the participant that he/she would receive a written report and thus, notes were not necessary. The feedback was delivered orally, beginning with general and positive information and ending with specific and critical information. The information was shared in the same way that it was organized on the report: Context, Role Expectations, Complex Areas (i.e., strengths and areas for development) and Developmental Areas, and Advice. Throughout the meeting, the participant was encouraged to interrupt, share thoughts and feelings, and explore interpretations of the results. The participant’s responses provided the consultant with information about how the feedback was being received (e.g., openness, defensiveness). At the end of the report, the consultant debriefed the participant and asked about his/her thoughts and feelings (e.g., What was surprising to you? What was most gratifying? What concerns you? Is anything unclear?).

The written feedback report was finalized and given to the participant following the oral feedback meeting (Orenstein, 2007; see Appendix F). The written report provided the participant with the opportunity to further absorb and ask questions about the results. When the participant was satisfied with the report, the feedback was used to
formulate coaching objectives around emotional competencies during the objectives setting meeting.

The objectives setting meeting allowed for the determination of what would be accomplished in the coaching process (Orenstein, 2007). Critically, the objectives setting meeting also highlighted the participant’s ownership of the process. Lastly, the objectives provided a venue for evaluating the participant’s progress and offered a clear measure of when coaching is complete. During the actual meeting, the consultant and participant reviewed the feedback and the participant selected the most relevant areas based on the following criteria: (1) personal importance, (2) degree of impact in altering others’ perceptions, (3) degree of impact on other developmental areas, and (4) likelihood of achievement within the particular organizational context. The objectives were SMART (i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound). Since the coaching objectives were derived from the Areas for Development on the feedback report, they were operationalized according to their corresponding emotional competency. For example, a participant may have chosen to “work on managing his/her emotional reactions during meetings.” This coaching objective corresponded to emotional self-control or the ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses (Hay Group, 2007). Coaching objectives were not confidential; the participant may have chosen to share them with a peer or an individual in an advisory role.

The pragmatic case study method (Fishman, 1999) involves a process of matching theoretical approach to the individual participant., using the assessment, formulation, and limited number of available coaching sessions for this matching. Based on the participants’ assessments, formulations, coaching objectives and available coaching sessions, cognitive-behavioral theory informed the coaching sessions of the two participants in the current study who
completed the coaching process. Persons's cognitive-behavioral model provided the foundation for this work.

Persons' (1989) case formulation model conceptualizes psychological problems occurring at two levels: overt difficulties and underlying psychological mechanisms. Overt difficulties are defined as “real life” problems and some examples include depressed mood, difficulty in personal relationships, an inability to travel on airplanes, or anxiety about one’s work. On the other hand, the underlying psychological mechanisms are the cause of the overt difficulties and usually are expressed by at least one irrational belief about one’s self. For example, someone who is experiencing anxiety at work and has a depressed mood holds the belief, “If I try something new, then I will fail.”

Overt difficulties can be described in terms of three components: cognitions, behaviors, and mood (Persons, 1989). Cognitions include automatic thoughts, images, dreams, daydreams, and memories. Behaviors include overt motor behaviors, physiological responses, and verbal behaviors. Mood is referred to as the person’s “subjective report of his emotional experience” (Persons, 1989, p. 4). The three components of a problem are usually related. For example, if someone expresses he has a depressed mood, then he also would likely show signs of related cognitive and behavioral problems.

The role of environmental factors is also important (Persons, 1989). Dysfunctional cognitions, mood, and behaviors do not solely cause problems. For example, if someone holds the belief “If I try something new, then I will fail,” and holds a job that involves repetition and familiar tasks, then that person may not experience anxiety or distress at work. However, if this person’s job changes and she has new
responsibilities, then she may begin to experience anxiety, change in mood, and stress.
Therefore, environmental and situational factors play a role in triggering underlying beliefs and the related overt difficulties.

In addition to cognitive-behavioral theory, several other theoretical frameworks were important in guiding and influencing the participants’ course of coaching.
Embedded Intergroup Relations Theory (Alderfer, 1986) influenced the consultant’s examination of the participant’s individual behavior within his / her student organization from multiple levels of analyses (e.g., intergroup). Role theory (Levinson, 1959; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Krantz & Maltz, 1997) influenced the consultant’s understanding and analysis of each participant’s role through the examination of the participant’s expectations for his role within the student organization, peers and others’ expectations for the role, and the degree of congruency between both sets of expectations.

Formal coaching began after the objectives had been set and agreed upon (Orenstein, 2007). While coaching began at the moment of the initial contact between consultant and participant, specific interventions were now utilized. The effectiveness of the formal coaching was dependent on the consultant’s thorough understanding of the participant and organization, purposeful, and regularly scheduled meetings, and a detailed knowledge of various coaching techniques. The structure of the formal coaching sessions was as follows: (1) participant and consultant reconnect, (2) participant updates consultant on what has occurred in the organization since their last meeting, (3) participant shares his/her experiences with the homework assignment, (4) consultant assists the participant in analyzing the factors that fostered or inhibited the completion of the homework assignment and how that can be addressed in the future, (5) consultant
assigns a new homework assignment, and (6) consultant and participant schedule the next session.

Selecting and using the most appropriate and effective intervention(s) for a particular participant (i.e., client) is the consultant’s responsibility during the phase of formal coaching (Orenstein, 2007). Cognitive-behavioral theory offers many interventions targeted at direct behavioral change (Persons, 1989). Examples of behavioral methods include modeling (i.e., demonstrating the desired behaviors), behavioral experimentation (i.e., testing the desired behaviors in the workplace), role playing (i.e., practicing the desired behaviors in a similar setting), self-monitoring (i.e., observing oneself in a specific situation in order to behave in a desired way), self-reinforcement (i.e., rewarding oneself for enacting desired behaviors), breaking tasks into small parts, and visualization (i.e., imagining oneself enacting desired behaviors). On the other hand, cognitive interventions target changing problematic cognitions (e.g., maladaptive thoughts). Examples of cognitive methods include challenging negative thoughts (i.e., exploring the validity of negative thoughts which inhibit positive change), journaling (i.e., writing about one’s own experiences), positive self-talk (i.e., talking to oneself that promotes positive change), readings (i.e., gaining knowledge about a particular subject through specific books and articles), reframing (i.e., thinking about a situation from a different perspective), and reflection (i.e., exploring one’s reactions to a situation).

The final phase of the executive coaching process concluded coaching (Orenstein, 2007). As mentioned previously, the coaching objectives served as the primary means to measure the participant’s progress during the final meeting. The first goal of the final
The meeting was for the participant to share his/her subjective evaluation of the degree of achievement in regard to the coaching objectives. The second goal of the meeting was for the participant and consultant to reflect on the actual process of the coaching and explore its strengths and areas for development. The consultant asked a series of general questions in order to avoid potential demand characteristics. General questions include: What was the coaching experience like for you? What are your thoughts, feelings, and reactions? What were the strengths of the coaching process, if any? What were the areas of improvement of the coaching process, if any? What would you recommend as a way to extend these findings?

The efficacy of the executive coaching process was also evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively through the means of an Empathic Organic Questionnaire (cf. Alderfer & Brown, 1972; Orenstein, 2006). The content of the instrument was derived from the qualitative 360-degree interview data, and was quantitatively evaluated via statistical analyses using the following process: (1) designing the instrument; (2) selecting respondents; (3) administering the instrument; (4) analyzing the data; and (5) evaluating results (Orenstein, 2007).

The following steps were used in designing the instrument (Orenstein, 2007; see Results for more detail). The client’s feedback report and coaching objectives were reviewed. Based on that review, two broad categories were selected. The first category consisted of the items relating to the coaching objective and the second category consisted of items relating to the control category, which were unrelated to the coaching objective. A control category was included in order to address discriminant validity and to reduce the likelihood of potential demand characteristics of the respondents. The
control category consisted of items selected from the participant’s strengths and was unrelated to the coaching objective (see Results for further detail). Quotes and phrases that were relevant to those two broad categories were selected from the qualitative 360-degree interview data. These quotes and phrases were translated into questionnaire items by conveying a single thought for each item. Each item was expressed negatively and positively in order to eliminate any potential respondent bias (Miller & Fagley, 1991) and there were an equal number of items for each of the two broad categories.

An open-ended question was also included in order to enhance reliability and convergent validity (e.g., Please reflect on your interactions with Alex approximately 5 to 6 months ago. Briefly describe what Alex was like as a leader in your organization; Orenstein, 2007). Responses from the open-ended questions were compared to the numerical item responses in order to ensure that positive responses matched positive statements and vice versa. All of the open-ended data were copied and compiled into a single document.

The impact of the coaching was evaluated by asking the informants to first indicate what the participant was like before the coaching began by including past-tense items and then to indicate what the participant was like after the coaching was completed by including present-tense items for both categories (Orenstein, 2007; see Appendix G for instrument and Informed Consent). The items were also randomized. If the coaching was effective, there should be a positive increase for the items that were related to the coaching objectives but no change in the items related to the control.

Respondents were then selected by the participant (Orenstein, 2007). Respondents adequately represented the participants’ relevant others in the organization, including
previous 360-degree respondents as well as respondents who had not previously participated in the 360-degree interviews. The total number of respondents per participant was five. The participant consulted with the consultant about the selected respondents to ensure diversity (e.g., age, gender, race) as much as possible.

The consultant administered the questionnaire to the respondents (Orenstein, 2007) approximately one month after the final termination meeting with the participant. The participant first contacted the respondents to notify them that the consultant would be contacting them about the questionnaire. The consultant administered the questionnaire via Zoomerang, a confidential online survey tool. Participants received an e-mail invitation with a link to the questionnaire. The introduction of the online questionnaire reviewed the purpose of the questionnaire, confidentiality, and the respondents’ voluntary participation. Participants were asked to provide their consent electronically. Participants individually completed the questionnaire at their personal computers. The results were stored privately in a Zoomerang account which was only accessible by the consultant.

The results of the questionnaires were then analyzed (Orenstein, 2007; see Results for more detail). Negative items were reverse scored. A paired samples t-test was performed on the past-tense and corresponding present-tense items.

Lastly, the results were evaluated (Orenstein, 2007). The coaching was considered successful if statistically significant changes occurred for items in the first category (i.e., items related to the coaching objective) but not for items in the control category. A copy of the results was provided to the participant during a face-to-face meeting if at all possible. If this was not possible, then a phone call meeting was arranged. The consultant
and participant had the final report, either in hard copy or on a computer screen, during the entire meeting. The reaction of the participant was documented during the meeting.

Coaching sometimes concludes for other reasons (Orenstein, 2007). For example, the participant may find the coaching process too difficult or does not believe it is possible to change. The consultant must then attempt to meet with the participant to determine whether this is a plea for help, an affirable resistance, or legitimate wish to end something undesirable. If the participant refuses to meet, the consultant must accept the participant’s final decision.

In the present study, only one of three cases reached all of the stages of the coaching process. One of the other cases grew increasingly complex near the final stages of the coaching process. The coaching participant began to develop a highly tense and anxious relationship with her athletic coach and essentially did not want him involved any longer in the coaching process. She grew so overwhelmed with stress, that the consultant recommended counseling in the final coaching meeting. Pushing the process forward (i.e., administering the questionnaire), including the participant’s coach in the process, and the participant’s potential reaction to additional feedback (from the questionnaire) would have been potentially harmful to the participant.

The remaining case concluded after the delivery of the 360-degree feedback for the following reason. The 360-degree process was delayed for several months due to various factors within the coaching participant’s organization. By the time the feedback was delivered to the coaching participant, she was about to graduate college and had left her position within the student organization.
Each particular case was written up in a form adapted from the Suggested Author Guidelines for submission to *Pragmatic Case Studies in Psychotherapy* (http://pcsp.libraries.rutgers.edu/index.php/pcsp).
CHAPTER III

Results

The Case of Alex

1. Case Context and Method

This case study describes the course of coaching for Alex, who began a new role as Vice Chair in a large, student organization at a public, east-coast university. Alex was referred to the consultant about the student leader executive coaching opportunity by a mutual professional contact. He expressed interest in participating and potentially enhancing his emotional intelligence. He said that this opportunity would also support him in his new role as Vice Chair within the student organization.

The purpose of Alex’s student organization was to continuously improve the experience for all students residing on-campus on all four campuses of the university. The student organization had implemented and facilitated various programs and advocacy groups based on the needs of the students. Additionally, the student organization had also become actively involved in the residential community through various initiatives. Lastly, the student organization had identified that there are many leadership and growth opportunities for students who wish to become involved.

The structure of the student organization was hierarchical and spanned across four campuses at the university. The Executive Board consisted of thirteen members including a President, Vice President, Directors, Treasurer, Secretary, and Advisors. In addition,
there was a General Assembly that consisted of the Executive Board members and Vice Presidents from every residence hall. The General Assembly met weekly and was led by the President. The General Assembly discussed and voted on changes to the constitution, received updates on events and initiatives in the residence halls, and utilized committees for targeted efforts within the university and community. There was a Chair and Vice Chair for each of the four campuses. The Chair was responsible for working with the campus residential council on programming and advocacy initiatives. Alex began his role as Vice Chair for the largest campus at the outset of the study. Alex described the Vice Chair position as a role that had existed but had never been fully utilized on that particular campus. The Vice-Chair was responsible for supporting the Chair on programming and advocacy initiatives. In addition, there were also Hall Directors, Hall Representatives, and Advisors throughout all four campuses.

The consultant identified Alex as an appropriate candidate for the student leader executive coaching study for the following reasons. Alex was about to begin a new student leadership role, had expressed a desire to learn more about emotional intelligence and potentially enhance it, and was willing to commit to the coaching process to the best of his ability.

2. The Client

Alex was a White male in his early twenties who had recently transferred in from another university at the outset of the study. Alex had declared a double major and was enjoying classes and university life. He joined the student organization in order to learn more about the university, become more involved in residential life and in the community, and to further develop his leadership skills.
3. Assessment of the Client’s Goals, Strengths, and History

For a complete overview of the structure and number of sessions with Alex, please refer to Table 1. The first contact between the consultant and Alex initiated the entry phase during the summer of 2009 (see Appendix C for a script of the initial meeting).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Days since first session</th>
<th>Length of session in minutes</th>
<th>Goals of session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Preliminary Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Joint Goal Setting Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Life History Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>360-Degree Feedback Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Objective Setting Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Final / Evaluation Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Follow-up</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Empathic Questionnaire Evaluation Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Preliminary meeting.* Based on that initial phone conversation, the consultant and Alex agreed to have preliminary meeting at a quiet location on-campus at the beginning of the fall 2009 semester. This same location was used for the remainder of the meetings with Alex and his peers. During the meeting, Alex explained the purpose of the student organization, the organizational context and structure (see “Case Context and Method” for further detail), some information about his new role as Vice Chair, and what programs and projects he would be involved in the coming year.
The consultant noted several key takeaways and observations about Alex from the preliminary meeting. Alex appeared to be a considerate, thoughtful, friendly, and eager person. He indicated that he did not know much about emotional intelligence or executive coaching, but was very interested in the opportunity. In particular, he expressed that the coaching process would allow him to “learn about what I can improve” and his “areas for development” as a student leader. He also expressed that most often his peers will approach his Chair, Liz, or his full-time staff advisor, Lisa, before they approach him. He would like to change this dynamic and had already asked Liz to include him on key communications. He was responsive and open to sharing information about himself. For example, he mentioned that as part of the summer leader training within the student organization, he completed the Gallup’s Strength-Based Leadership assessment and was willing to share the report with the consultant as an additional source of information about himself. Following the meeting, Alex e-mailed the report to the consultant. The report’s findings indicated that he scored strongly on the “Relationship Building” theme as opposed to the “Executing,” “Influencing,” or “Strategic Thinking” themes. During the preliminary meeting, he also expressed a desire to become more involved in university life through his role in the student organization as well as a participant in the executive coaching process. The consultant felt comfortable interacting with Alex and believed that Alex also felt comfortable with the consultant. The consultant and Alex decided to proceed with the executive coaching process and agreed upon the next steps described below.

*Joint goal setting meeting.* The preliminary meeting was followed by a joint goal setting meeting in which the consultant, Alex, and his “Chair / Co-chair” agreed on what
should be accomplished in the coaching process. Alex decided to invite Liz, the Chair of
his particular campus and a fellow undergraduate student, to the joint goal setting
meeting because they would interact the most throughout the year. Liz would also
primarily establish Alex’s priorities, tasks, and responsibilities as Vice Chair. Alex and
Liz received supervisory support from a full-time professional staff hall advisor, Lisa,
who encouraged Alex and Liz to independently lead their campus’ particular efforts
within the student organization. Lisa referred to Alex and Liz as “co-chairs” instead of
Chair and Vice Chair. At the consultant’s request, Alex and Liz informed Lisa about the
executive coaching opportunity. Lisa fully supported Alex, Liz, and other peers’ (e.g.,
360-degree interview participants) participation within the student organization.

The joint goal setting meeting was an opportunity to outline the expected
outcomes, a realistic timeframe, and to request ongoing feedback and support from Liz
(Orenstein, 2007). Liz identified that she would like a partnership with Alex in the
coming year; both partners should “split the work, and that Alex would be more involved
in the financials and secretary work before going into other aspects of the role.” Liz
described Alex as “really good at balancing” workload and suggested the arena of
planning as a possible area of focus for Alex in the executive coaching process. Liz also
mentioned that she hoped this year would provide Alex with the experience he would
need if he were to pursue the Chair role next fall. Liz also mentioned that Lisa was more
of a resource than a direct supervisor, which confirmed Alex’s perception of Lisa’s role
within the student organization. Liz agreed to commit her support to Alex’s participation
in the executive coaching process.
In addition, the joint goal setting meeting was an opportunity to observe the interactions between Alex and Liz (Orenstein, 2007). Alex and Liz appeared to be nervous at the beginning of the meeting. The consultant briefly explained the purpose of the meeting, what the executive coaching process would look like for Alex, and how Liz would be able to support Alex. The consultant also admitted that this type of meeting could be potentially awkward in order to normalize the situation for Alex and Liz. Alex and Liz both let out a chuckle and admitted that they were a bit nervous and had never met with each other in this way to talk about Alex’s goals and potential areas for development. This seemed to lower their anxiety and the conversation moved forward. Alex allowed Liz to drive more of the conversation and he played a passive role in the meeting. The consultant noticed that Liz appeared confident and comfortable in her role as Chair. Alex remained respectful and thoughtful in his comments and responses which was consistent with his behaviors from the preliminary meeting with the consultant. The dynamic between Alex and Liz seemed to support what Alex mentioned in his preliminary meeting; Liz or Lisa tend to be approached first by others within the student organization.

The preliminary meeting also provided additional information about a possible discrepancy in role expectations for Alex. Specifically, Alex’s official role was “Vice Chair,” but Lisa referred to Liz and Alex as “Co-chairs.” Also, Liz’s behavior in the meeting indicated more of a hierarchical relationship although she seemed to genuinely and fully support Alex in his role.

*Life history interview.* Alex seemed confused about what purpose this information would serve in the coaching process. The consultant explained that there are
multiple influences that can impact one’s performance and behavior in any given role and that this information would be helpful for the consultant to know as the coaching process moved forward. Alex saw how this could be helpful and agreed, but the consultant still sensed a bit of confusion and further explained that this would make much more sense as the process moved along.

Alex began by describing his family of origin. He was born in a large city and moved with his family to a suburb when he was two-years old. He has a twin brother. He said that his “mom was primarily there” and that his Dad worked a lot as a business analyst. Throughout grammar school and high school, Alex said he did not like the “crowd.” When asked about what he meant by that, Alex said that most of the students in school were “materialistic and concerned about fancy cars.” He joined the track team later on in high school and received the opportunity to meet new people. Alex felt like “he found people he could relate to.” He also said that joining the track team helped him with his time management. While he was in high school, he did not necessarily want to go on to college. However, his aunt suggested a relatively small, neighboring state school and Alex decided to apply and, ultimately, attend. Alex’s brother applied to different colleges, but decided to go to the same college as Alex. Alex “hated the people and atmosphere” at this college and his brother also did not like the people at the college. Alex decided to transfer out of this college and into his current university. His brother also transferred to the same university. Alex said that he very much enjoyed his new university. He felt that he could be more involved, the classes were more challenging, and he did not feel as intimidated as he did at his previous college. At his current
university, Alex thought about switching his major. He was taking classes in both areas and would later decide what he was interested in pursuing.

Alex also felt more of an affiliation to his Jewish identity by becoming more involved with the Jewish community at his current university. He decided to go on a trip to Israel and this was his first time traveling outside of North America. His mother was supportive of the trip and his grandmother was happy that Alex decided to take the trip. Alex’s brother also went on the trip and this was the first time in their family that anyone visited Israel. Alex did not know much about his family history other than the fact that his great-grandparents were forced to leave their home countries in Europe. During the trip to Israel, he attended classes from the morning to early afternoon, and then he went sight-seeing and exploring. There were about forty people on the trip. He seemed to enjoy the trip and experience.

The consultant noted key observations and insights about Alex from the life history interview. Alex felt a bit guarded at first in sharing this information and his confusion about why this type of information could be useful in the coaching process. At the same time, he was friendly, willing to learn, and ultimately decided to share his life story with the consultant. Alex may not have fully trusted the consultant at this point which would not be unusual since this was only the third session with the consultant.

Not surprisingly, it appeared that Alex was at the stage in his life where he was exploring his interests, career goals, and identity and organizational group memberships. For example, Alex had not really thought about college, but his aunt suggested a college, and as a result, he decided to attend that college. He then decided to apply and transfer to his current university because he was not happy. When he first started at his new
university, he met Liz informally who suggested he apply for the Vice Chair role, and he did. Alex also admitted that he spontaneously decided to visit Israel. Lastly, Alex seemed unaware to a certain degree of the impact of his decisions on his twin brother’s decisions. His brother ultimately decided to attend the same college as Alex, transfer when Alex did, and visit Israel because Alex decided he wanted to visit. This suggested that Alex has had a greater impact on others around him than he thought. Specifically, he appeared to downplay his own value and significance to others and confidence in himself.

360-degree interviews. A key component of the formal assessment was the 360-degree interview which allowed the consultant to understand what perceptions existed around Alex’s emotional competencies and leadership skills (Orenstein, 2007). After describing the process and who the participants should be, the consultant explained that Alex should introduce the project to his peers and then request their participation as interviewees. The consultant also explained that the entire process would potentially take up to a month to complete, and that their coaching meetings would start again after the 360-degree process was completed. However, if Alex had any concerns or questions during that time period, he was encouraged to reach out to the consultant. Alex then provided a list of willing participants and their contact information to the consultant via e-mail following the life history interview. Alex’s 360-degree participants included Lisa, his full-time staff advisor, Liz, his “Chair / co-chair,” and three peers within the student organization.

The consultant individually met with each participant in a quiet location and took notes during the interview. The consultant noted the following insights and observations from the interviews. First, the consultant was surprised to hear about the scope of Alex’s
responsibilities and contributions within the student organization from his peers and supervisor. While Alex described some of these responsibilities and projects in the initial meetings, his descriptions were modest in comparison to the descriptions of his peers. His work appeared to have a significant impact within the student organization. Second, there was an overwhelming desire for Alex to maximize his potential within his leadership role. Third, each of the interviewees had a fair understanding of the purpose of the interview and the overall coaching opportunity which indicated Alex’s ability in explaining the process to others and taking ownership for the process.

After the formal assessment was completed, the consultant began the feedback process which consisted of three components: feedback preparation, the oral feedback report, and the written feedback report (Orenstein, 2007). During feedback preparation, the consultant gathered and analyzed data from Alex’s 360-degree interviews. For Alex’s complete feedback report, please see Appendix F.

360-Degree feedback delivery. The consultant then delivered the results of the 360-degree interviews in a 90-minute meeting which allowed for discussion, questions, and interpretations (Orenstein, 2007). In particular, Alex’s strengths included his communication skills, persistence in striving to improve, persuasion, organizational skills, (emotional) self-awareness, and the ability to sense other people’s feelings and perspectives. Alex’s areas for development included leadership and flexibility.

Throughout the meeting, Alex was encouraged to interrupt, share thoughts and feelings, and explore interpretations of the results (Orenstein, 2007). Alex’s responses provided the consultant with information about how the feedback was being received (e.g., Alex’s openness). At the end of the report, the consultant debriefed Alex and asked
about his thoughts and feelings. Alex was surprised to learn about several of his perceived strengths including persuasion and organizational skills. He was pleased to hear that he communicates well and that he is persistent, self-aware, and considerate about other people’s feelings and perspectives. He was also surprised about the “Advice” and, in particular, that his peers were very interested in hearing his opinions, having him take on challenges, maximizing his potential, and becoming more confident. Alex’s reaction to this advice, combined with the information from his life history interview, suggested an opportunity for Alex to build confidence in himself and leadership abilities. Alex did not express surprise when hearing about his “Area for Development” around leadership and flexibility to change and agreed these could be potential areas he could work on improving. Alex did not express any specific concerns, but was eager to hear the “results” which is how he described the feedback. His overall reaction and behavior throughout the meeting indicated his openness and receptivity to the information, even if some of it was pleasantly surprising to Alex. He expressed gratitude for the feedback information and recognized its value.

The written feedback report was finalized and e-mailed to Alex following the oral feedback meeting (Orenstein, 2007; see Appendix F). The written report provided Alex with the opportunity to further absorb and ask additional questions about the results. When Alex was satisfied with the report, the feedback was used to formulate a coaching objective during the objective setting meeting.

*Objective setting meeting.* The objective setting meeting allowed for the determination of what would be accomplished in the coaching process (Orenstein, 2007). After much discussion and consideration, Alex decided that he would like to “take up his
authority by leading and facilitating the next weekly hall representative meeting.” Typically, these meetings were facilitated by Liz and Alex played a supportive / observant role, took notes, etc. Alex’s objective was SMART (i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound). Since the coaching objective was derived from the Area for Development on the feedback report, it was operationalized according to the corresponding competency (i.e., “Leadership”). The coaching objective was not confidential. Alex decided to share his objective with Liz and Lisa in order to gain their support and ensure they did not have any concerns about it. Lisa and Liz were enthusiastic and supportive of the objective. Lisa even went on to suggest that Liz and Alex rotate facilitation of the meetings on an ongoing basis. Alex stated that he was excited to lead a meeting on his own, but also was beginning to experience anxiety.

4. Formulation and Coaching Plan

Based on the information gathered from Alex’s life history interview, 360-degree interviews, and the consultant’s observations and hypotheses from the initial meetings, Alex appeared to be an eager and enthusiastic individual who also underestimated the value of his opinion to a certain degree, lacked confidence in his leadership abilities at times, and was hesitant to take on some challenges. From a cognitive-behavioral perspective (Persons, 1989), Alex’s underlying mechanisms pointed to a lack of self-confidence and assertiveness. For example, Alex struggled to differentiate himself from his twin brother many times in his life (i.e., college decisions and personal identity exploration). Alex also felt like an outsider during high school and early college. At his current university, he was exploring new opportunities through his role as Vice Chair which was a way to differentiate himself from his brother who was not a part of this
Emotional Intelligence and Executive Coaching

student organization. Alex’s attempt “to become more involved” in his current university life through his role in the student organization and in the executive coaching opportunity was a way for Alex to address or even counter his previous feelings of being an outsider. Specifically, he was also about to try something he had never done before – lead and facilitate a meeting on his own. The uncertainty and potential anxiety about trying something new was also important to consider in this case.

From an organizational systems perspective, Alex attempted to operate, define, and take up his role as Vice Chair within a complex organizational system. The student organization was a large organization that spread across a sprawling university consisting of four campuses. Each campus had its own culture within the student organization, although the intent from the highest leadership was to move toward a unified organization across the campuses. Expectations for the Vice Chair / Co-Chair role also differed across the campuses and the Vice Chair role at Alex’s campus had been inactive until he took up the role. Alex’s campus was deemed the “most progressive” and “active” campus out of all four campuses. In addition, there were discrepancies in expectations for Alex’s role from his supervisor and peers. Specifically, some expected him to partner with Liz, while others thought he only had to support Liz and be responsible for secretarial duties. As a result, the conflicting expectations and complex organizational culture and system fostered an uncertain environment for Alex who already lacked confidence and assertiveness.

In light of Alex’s assessment, the above formulation, and the limited number of available coaching sessions, cognitive-behavioral theory was adapted and applied to address Alex’s coaching objective. It is important to note that executive coaching is
different from clinical therapy (Orenstein, 2007). The goal of executive coaching is to consult about an individual’s performance within an organizational role, while the goal of therapy explores underlying central beliefs and family of origin dynamics in addition to overt difficulties. Specifically, the coaching plan focused on Alex’s overt difficulties only, or his “Area for Development.” The coaching plan for Alex would involve three coaching sessions which would utilize targeted behavioral and cognitive interventions in order to help Alex obtain his specific coaching objective within the determined timeframe. The final meeting would conclude the formal coaching.

5. Course of Coaching

Coaching session 1. Formal coaching began after the objective was set and agreed upon (Orenstein, 2007). Alex updated the consultant on what had occurred in the student organization since the last meeting. There were a number of initiatives that Alex was involved in that were progressing well. Importantly, Alex confirmed that he would be leading and facilitating the weekly hall representative meeting which would take place in two weeks.

The consultant then shared the agenda for the coaching session, indicated how long their coaching session would last, and noted that next steps would be identified at the conclusion of the session. The consultant asked Alex if he had any questions or concerns and encouraged him to raise any questions or concerns throughout the session. First, the consultant asked Alex to describe what the purpose of the weekly hall representative meeting was and what a typical meeting looked like. The consultant probed with questions regarding who attended, where the meeting took place, how the meeting was opened and documented (e.g., minutes and agenda), what sample topics of
discussion were, how long the meeting lasted on average, how the meeting was led and facilitated, what roles different members played, how questions were answered by the facilitator, and how the meeting ended. The consultant asked these questions for two primary reasons: (1) to gain a full understanding of the purpose and typical structure of the meeting; and (2) to make note of what information Alex offered voluntarily and what information had to be probed by the consultant. The former would assist the consultant in appropriately assisting Alex in his preparation for the meeting, and the latter informed the consultant about the degree in which Alex had considered the different factors involved in facilitating a meeting.

The consultant then asked Alex to describe what his role as a facilitator would be. After some discussion, Alex identified that his role would be to facilitate and guide the meeting based on a predetermined agenda, act as a resource to the members of the meeting, and answer and field questions to the best of his ability. At the end of the coaching session, the consultant assigned a homework assignment to Alex and asked Alex to list the steps he would use in order to structure and facilitate the meeting. He was also asked to bring a copy of the agenda for the next weekly hall representative meeting if it was available. Lastly, the consultant and Alex scheduled the next coaching session.

The consultant utilized the behavioral intervention of modeling, and specifically the consultant as model, during the first formal coaching session (Persons, 1989; Orenstein, 2007). The consultant wanted to gather as much information as possible about the weekly hall representative meeting and took the opportunity of the first formal coaching session to employ the behavioral intervention of modeling in an implicit manner. By structuring the coaching session, providing an agenda at the outset of the
coaching session, asserting the consultant’s role as meeting facilitator, following the agenda, stating the expected length of the coaching session and adhering to time boundaries (i.e., starting and ending on time), taking notes, and concluding the session with actionable next steps (e.g., homework assignment), the consultant acted as a model to Alex. The purpose of the first formal coaching was to demonstrate several important behaviors and to address key components in facilitating an efficient and productive meeting.

Coaching session 2. During the second formal coaching session, Alex updated the consultant on what had occurred in the student organization since the last meeting. Again, the consultant then shared the agenda for the coaching session, how long their coaching session would last, and that next steps would be identified at the conclusion of the session. The consultant asked if Alex had any questions or concerns and encouraged him to raise any questions or concerns throughout the session. The consultant and Alex then reviewed his homework assignment. First, Alex shared his list on the steps he would take to structure and run the weekly hall representative meeting: 1) Open/start meeting on time; 2) Use an icebreaker to open the meeting; 3) Stick to the agenda; 4) Have a member take minutes; and 5) End on time. The consultant positively reinforced Alex by stating those were all excellent components to use and consider when facilitating a meeting. The consultant relied on her previous professional experience to additionally offer the following suggestions in order to reinforce and supplement what Alex listed: 1) Prepare and review the agenda ahead of time; 2) Start the meeting on time; 3) Use an optional icebreaker to kick off the meeting; 4) Review and stick to the agenda; 5) Use a “parking lot” as a way to capture tangential ideas or questions; 6) Be transparent (e.g., if you don’t
know the answer, say so, and find out the information later); 7) Assign someone to take
minutes; 8) Summarize and review the next steps at the end of the meeting; 9) Allow five
to ten minutes for additional questions and concerns; 10) End the meeting on time; and
11) Have fun throughout the meeting! By listing these components, the consultant and
Alex broke apart a complex meeting event into specific, manageable, and attainable steps

The consultant then used role-playing strategies to help Alex carry out his new
behaviors and prepare for his meeting in the coming week (Persons, 1989). This exercise
allowed Alex to experience what his new role would be like in front of another person in
a safe environment. The consultant encouraged Alex, asked different questions to enact
different hypothetical situations, and positively reinforced Alex throughout the coaching
session through her responses and comments.

At the end of the session, the consultant asked Alex how he was feeling and if he
had any other questions or concerns. Alex said that he felt excited and nervous about the
meeting, but felt prepared to facilitate. It was up to Alex to decide if he wanted to use
some/all of the meeting suggestions that were discussed during the coaching session. This
also reinforced Alex’s ownership of the coaching process. The consultant identified that
Alex’s homework assignment would be to facilitate the meeting and be prepared to
discuss his experience in the next coaching session, which was also scheduled. The
consultant wished Alex much luck.

Coaching session 3. During the third formal coaching session, the consultant
shared the agenda for the coaching session, how long their coaching session would last,
and that next steps would be identified at the conclusion of the session. The consultant
asked Alex to reflect on his experience of facilitating the weekly hall representative meeting. Alex appeared happy and eager to discuss the meeting. Overall, Alex thought the facilitation went well. He stated that the meeting started and ended on time, that he used the agenda, “got people back on track” when needed, asked someone to take notes, and did not use the “parking lot” because he did not think it was necessary. His full-time staff advisor, Lisa, played an observer role. Alex initially thought he “did alright,” but when he later debriefed with Lisa, she thought he did more than “just alright and did a great job.” He was pleased to hear that.

The consultant and Alex discussed the factors that fostered and inhibited his ability to facilitate the meeting (Orenstein, 2007). He identified that the coaching sessions, role-playing, and list of tips for a successful meeting made him feel comfortable and prepared. He also said that support from Liz and Lisa were very important. On the other hand, he said that his feeling of anxiety could have potentially inhibited his ability to facilitate the meeting. At the end of the third formal coaching session, the consultant asked Alex to think about the overall executive coaching process in preparation for the final meeting.

In addition to role-playing and modeling interventions used in previous sessions, the behavioral experimentation intervention (Persons, 1989) was utilized when Alex facilitated the weekly hall representative meeting. Alex was able to test out his desired behaviors in his organizational setting. The cognitive intervention of self-reflection allowed Alex to retrospectively explore his feelings, experience, thoughts, and reactions to the meeting he facilitated (Persons, 1989; Orenstein, 2007).
Final / evaluation meeting. The final phase of the executive coaching process concluded coaching (Orenstein, 2007). The first goal of the final meeting was for Alex to share his subjective evaluation of the degree of achievement in regard to the coaching objective. Alex stated that he believed he achieved his coaching objective by facilitating the weekly hall representative meeting. He was able to acquire a new skill and try something he had never tried before. Personally, he believed he did well and he also received positive feedback from Lisa. The consultant had to probe when asking Alex about how he thought he did. Although Alex had remained a thoughtful and modest person throughout the coaching process, he appeared to become more comfortable and familiar in his role as Vice Chair as the coaching meetings progressed.

The second goal of the meeting was for the consultant and Alex to reflect on the actual process of the coaching and explore its strengths and areas for development (Orenstein, 2007). Alex identified that the 360-degree interview process and feedback were strengths of the coaching process. He stated that this was a rare opportunity to receive this type of feedback from his supervisor and peers. He also stated that he appreciated the consultant’s guidance around forming his coaching objective. When asked about areas for improvement within the coaching process, Alex stated that it would have been helpful to receive more clarification and guidance on how to select participants for the 360-degree interview process. His organization was comprised of a large number of members and it was difficult to decide and select who should be involved. Alex did not have any specific suggestions on how to extend these findings.

The consultant then requested that the potential impact of the executive coaching process be evaluated further through the means of a survey (i.e., Empathic Organic
Questionnaire; cf. Alderfer & Brown, 1972; Orenstein, 2006). Similar to the 360-degree interview process, Alex was asked to provide a list of willing participants who would complete an online evaluation survey. The consultant informed Alex that he would be contacted approximately one month after their final meeting about next steps. The consultant expressed her gratitude for his participation and commitment to the coaching process, her pleasure in working with Alex, and wished him much success in the coming month. This final meeting concluded the coaching process between the consultant and Alex.

6. Concluding Evaluation of the Coaching Process and Outcome

The following steps were used in designing the instrument (Orenstein, 2007). Alex’s feedback report and coaching objective were reviewed. Based on that review, two broad categories were selected: Empathy and Leadership / Taking up Authority. Quotes and phrases which were relevant to those two broad categories were selected from the qualitative 360-degree interview data. These quotes and phrases were translated into questionnaire items by conveying a single thought for each item (e.g., *He was aware of other people’s feelings*). Each item was expressed negatively or positively in order to eliminate any potential respondent bias (Miller & Fagley, 1991) and there were ten items for each of the two broad categories. An open-ended question (i.e., *Please reflect on your interactions with Alex and briefly describe what Alex is/was like as a leader*) was also included in order to enhance reliability and convergent validity. A control category (i.e., Empathy) was included in order to address discriminant validity and reduce the likelihood of potential demand characteristics of the respondents.
The impact of the coaching was evaluated by asking the informants to first indicate what Alex was like before the coaching began by including past-tense items and then to indicate what Alex was like after the coaching was completed by including present-tense items for both categories (Orenstein, 2007; Appendix G for instrument and Informed Consent). The items were also randomized. If the coaching was effective, there should have been a positive increase for the items that were related to the coaching objectives but no change in the items related to the control category.

Respondents were then selected by Alex and adequately represented Alex’s relevant others in the organization, including previous 360-degree respondents as well as respondents who had not previously participated in the 360-degree interviews (Orenstein, 2007). The total number of respondents was five. The consultant administered the questionnaire to the respondents approximately one and a half months after the final termination meeting with Alex.

Lastly, the results were analyzed and evaluated (Orenstein, 2007). The first category consisted of the items relating to the coaching objective (i.e., Leadership / Taking up Authority) and the second category consisted of items relating to the control category (i.e., Empathy), which were unrelated to the coaching objective. Statistically significant items appeared only in the Leadership / Taking up Authority category, which consisted of items related to the coaching objective (see Table 2). There were no statistically significant items in the control category (i.e., Empathy; see Table 3).
Table 2
Behaviors directly related to coaching objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean Past</th>
<th>Mean Present</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He strongly demonstrates confidence in his role.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is &quot;guarded&quot; or does not speak up during meetings. (R )</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He does not voice his opinion during meetings. (R )</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He does not see his perspective being valuable. (R )</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is too open and easygoing. (R )</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He voices his opinion when he feels strongly about something.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He works to his full potential.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He puts himself &quot;out there&quot; in meetings.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He leads meetings on his own.</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3
Strength (control category)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean Past</th>
<th>Mean Present</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He is aware of other people's feelings.</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He dismisses other people's perspectives. (R )</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He considers people's feelings.</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He recognizes when other people are upset.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He functions as the mediator in a group.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He does not recognize the &quot;mood&quot; of the group during meetings. (R )</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He does not consider other people's perspectives. (R )</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He dismisses people's emotions during meetings. (R )</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He does not recognize when the group gets upset during meetings. (R )</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He uses humor to lighten the mood when a meeting becomes tense.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(R ) indicates reverse scored item.

Empathic questionnaire evaluation meeting. A phone call meeting was arranged with Alex in order to discuss the questionnaire, review the results, and clarify any questions. The consultant reviewed the coaching process and the purpose of the
questionnaire, explained the survey’s design, and reviewed the results. The consultant asked Alex to focus “on the story that the numbers tell.” Alex continued to effectively demonstrate positive behaviors in his leadership, and showed significant change in the area that was identified as a developmental opportunity (i.e., Taking up his leadership / Asserting his authority). The consultant and Alex had the final report, either in hard copy or on a computer screen, during the entire meeting. The reaction of the participant was documented during the meeting. Alex was pleased to hear the results and reported that he was doing well in school and in his role as Vice Chair. The consultant asked again if he had any additional questions and wished him well in his future professional endeavors. Alex again reiterated his gratitude to the consultant.

The consultant also received an e-mail from Lisa, who was Alex’s full-time staff advisor about Alex’s participation in the executive coaching process. The e-mail stated:

Thanks Veronica. Thank you for doing this for Alex, it is clear that he has learned a lot from the process. THANKS, Please let your teacher know that if she is ever in need of students or staff members to serve as subjects to send me an email. I think this is such an amazing opportunity for students and also for staff members to get feedback and get a closer look at themselves.

Lastly, the consultant learned about Alex’s progress within the student organization approximately one year after the beginning of the study. Alex had elevated to the Chair leadership role of the student organization and decided to remain involved for another year.

_The Case of Jane_

1. _Case Context and Method_

This case study describes the course of coaching for Jane, who was a co-captain of a female athletic team at a public, east-coast university. Jane was referred to the consultant about the student leader executive coaching opportunity by a mutual
professional contact. She expressed interest in participating and potentially enhancing her emotional intelligence and leadership skills in her role as co-captain of the athletic team.

Jane’s athletic team had existed for 83 years and had gained much success at the conference and national levels. Recently, the team finished in second place at the Conference Championships and in 18\textsuperscript{th} place at the National Championships, which was the highest team finish in the program's history. Over the course of the 83 years, the team had been directed only under six head coaches. At the outset of the present study, the team was under the direction of the sixth head coach who had been in the role for over ten years.

Jane described the size, composition, structure, and schedule of the team as follows. The team was comprised of 30 women, of which 29 actively practiced and one was injured. There were eight seniors, two juniors, and the rest of the team was comprised of underclassmen. Jane said that a typical day consisted of 1.5 hours of practice in the morning, cardio exercise in the afternoon, and then an additional two-hour practice three days during the week. In addition to practicing six days a week, Jane and the team were involved in various fundraising and social events (e.g., team-building camping trip). Jane excelled in one performance area and had a few existing injuries at the outset of the study. Although she had a few injuries, she did not change her practice and workout schedule because she did not want to “be viewed as a slacker by the other girls” and because she “holds high standards” for herself. There were also five other women on the team with chronic injuries. The team was led under the direction of a head coach, Bill, a new assistant coach, Sandra, and an additional specialty coach, Mark. Sandra was a recent addition to the coaching staff and had requested a meeting with Jane
and her co-captains before making the formal announcement regarding Sandra’s appointment as assistant coach to the team. Jane thought many of her teammates appeared to “have respect for her [Sandra].” Lastly, the team nominated fellow teammates for the three captain positions on an annual basis. Ultimately, the head coach made the final decisions and Jane agreed that “it was good that the final decision came from Bill.”

Jane also described the recent termination of the male counterpart team. Jane joined the women’s team when the men’s team was still in existence. The women and men used to practice together, challenged each other, and held the other team accountable through the creation of “team expectations.” When the news broke that the men’s team was to be terminated, Jane “wanted to save the guys’ team.” Jane felt the women’s team had a different dynamic when the men’s team was in existence. She suspected this change was partly due to the new wave of underclassmen that joined the women’s team after the termination of the men’s team. She described that team members “should be held accountable for their actions” and that “people are ‘soft’ on our team.”

The consultant identified Jane as an appropriate candidate for the student leader executive coaching study for the following reasons. Jane was about to begin a new student leadership role on an athletic team, had expressed a desire to learn more about emotional intelligence and leadership skills, and was willing to commit to the coaching process to the best of her ability.

2. The Client

Jane was a White female in her early twenties who was beginning her fifth year on the athletic team and senior year in college at the outset of the study. She also was
interning in an athletic administrative office. Jane was interested in marketing and journalism. She was debating whether to pursue a law degree or MBA after graduation and was interested in becoming a sports agent. However, she expressed concern about being rejected by the predominantly male field of work. She identified herself as “the type of person who wants to lead.” She hoped to answer some of these questions during her senior year, including whether or not she would keep her current sport in her career/life after graduation.

3. Assessment of the Client’s Goals, Strengths, and History

For a complete overview of the structure and number of sessions with Jane, please refer to Table 4. The first contact between the consultant and Jane initiated the entry phase during the summer of 2009 (see Appendix C for a script of the initial meeting).

Table 4
Overview of Jane’s sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Days since first session</th>
<th>Length of session in minutes</th>
<th>Goals of session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Preliminary Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Joint Goal Setting Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Life History Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>360-Degree Feedback Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Objective Setting Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Coaching Session 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Final / Evaluation Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Preliminary meeting.* Based on that initial phone conversation, the consultant and Jane agreed to have preliminary meeting at a quiet location on-campus at the beginning
of the fall 2009 semester. This same location was used for the remainder of the meetings with Jane and her peers. Jane described the athletic team, the organizational context and structure (see “Case Context and Method” for further detail), some information about her role as captain, the team’s goals for the upcoming year, meet schedule, and additional social activities.

The consultant noted several key takeaways and observations about Jane from the preliminary meeting. Jane appeared to be a determined, competitive, and extraverted person. For example, she did not change her workout and practice schedule so that she would not appear to be a “slacker” even though she had a few injuries. She held high standards for herself and for the overall team. She seemed to be nostalgic for how the women’s team functioned when the men’s team was still in existence. At the same time, several of her comments demonstrated a strong commitment and “protection” of her fellow teammates. She took her role as captain seriously and was dedicated to the sport. The consultant felt comfortable interacting with Jane and believed that Jane also felt comfortable with the consultant. The consultant and Jane decided to proceed with the executive coaching process and agreed upon the below next steps.

Joint goal setting meeting. The preliminary meeting was followed by a joint goal setting meeting in which the consultant, Jane, and Susan, one of Jane’s co-captains, agreed on what should be accomplished in the coaching process. Jane decided to invite Susan to the joint goal setting meeting because they would interact frequently as co-captains and because Jane expressed comfort in including Susan in the coaching process. The consultant had initially asked Jane about the possibility of including Bill in the joint goal setting meeting and in the overall coaching process. Jane confidently stated that she
would prefer not to include Bill in the joint goal setting because she did not have the same comfort level with him and, ultimately, Bill was not her “boss.” However, Jane recognized the importance of Bill’s role as head coach and would think about including Bill in the 360-degree process. According to Jane, Bill was aware of the executive coaching opportunity and that the process would involve the consultant meeting with other teammates. The consultant noted that this was the first time Jane had expressed such a strong reaction and resistance to formally include Bill in the coaching process.

Because the executive coaching written contract did not explicitly state who should be invited to the joint goal setting meeting and this was not a typical work setting, the consultant respected Jane’s decision to invite her co-captain. The potential issue with the head coach would be brought up at an appropriate time in the near future as an opportunity to explore and better understand the dynamic of Bill and Jane’s working relationship.

The joint goal setting meeting was an opportunity to outline the expected outcomes, a realistic timeframe, and to request ongoing feedback and support from Susan (Orenstein, 2007). As a captain of the team, Susan expected Jane to take into consideration “what Bill and Sandra want, what the girls want, and to be a mediator.” Jane should be the person that “girls come to talk to.” Susan also expected that it would be important to work with Susan and the third co-captain so that the three captains “came across as a unified front” to the rest of the team and to make compromises when needed. Susan recognized that Jane was “a good fitness leader” and reminded her that “not every person will be able to do what you [Jane] do.” Susan also described the captain’s role as that of a “motivator.” Jane also recognized the importance in delivering messages to the
team “in the right way.” Jane and Susan also talked about utilizing the new assistant coach, Sandra, as a resource if they did not feel comfortable talking to Bill. Susan agreed to support Jane in the coaching process and as a fellow co-captain.

In addition, the joint goal setting meeting was an opportunity to observe the interactions between Jane and Susan (Orenstein, 2007). Jane and Susan appeared to be nervous at the beginning of the meeting. The consultant briefly explained the purpose of the meeting, what the executive coaching process would look like for Jane, and how Susan would be able to support Jane. The consultant also admitted that this type of meeting could be potentially awkward in order to normalize the situation for Jane and Susan. This seemed to lower their anxiety and the conversation moved forward. Susan and Jane appeared to be comfortable with each other and both played active roles in the conversation. Jane listened to Susan and agreed with many of the comments that Susan made. The consultant noticed that Jane remained confident and outgoing which was consistent with her behaviors from the preliminary meeting with the consultant.

*Life history interview.* Jane began by describing her family of origin. She grew up in a quiet suburb and was the youngest of six sisters. Three of her sisters were her father’s daughters from his first marriage. Jane stated that she was “close” with the two sisters that she grew up with and saw them a couple times a year because they lived in different parts of the country. Jane stated that she also had a close relationship with her mother. She attended public schools with 200 graduating students in her middle school and with 700 graduating students in her high school. Jane was always active in athletics and joined a middle school band “by force” by her parents who said the opportunity would “open Jane’s mind.” Jane’s parents were both retired by the time Jane was 10 years old. Jane
described her father as being “unable to relax,” active in “Church stuff,” “Mr. Mom,” and always went above and beyond with whatever he was involved in. Jane’s mother was younger than her father and Jane enjoyed having her mother “around.” Her parents were “always around.”

Jane became interested in her current sport because of one of her older sisters. Jane joined a local YMCA when she was about six- or seven-years old. Her sister was involved in the sport and Jane described her as “less competitive” than herself. In middle school, she joined the team and developed her potential for the sport in high school. Jane was also involved in other sports beside her current sport in her earlier years. She was involved in cross-country and was a top runner in elementary school. In seventh grade, she was also on the gymnastics team and her mother asked that she pick one sport to focus on, because three sports “were too much.” Although Jane competed well in gymnastics and made it to the states in middle school, she decided to focus on her current sport because it “felt like she had a natural ability.” She mentioned that she had a “fight” with her first coach in her current sport, because the coach pushed her too hard. Her first coach was a female in her mid-thirties. Her parents did not allow Jane to quit and she said that she “hated her parents for a month” because of it. However, she met new people on the team and she got along with the new coaches on the club team. There were two new coaches, both males in their early thirties. She felt a lot happier and described the new coach as “laid back.” She described herself as “fast” in the sport and initially wanted to go professional after college. At the outset of the study, she was not as confident about pursuing a professional career in the sport and was thinking about law school. She said that she could see herself as a coach in the sport for part of her life.
Jane described herself as “energetic, always needing something to do, and having a fast metabolism.” She said that she felt “nerdy in school, but felt ‘cool’ when she joined different athletic teams.” She said that she was picked on by older students when she was a freshman in high school. All of her sisters were involved in sports and “only dabbled with sports in college.” Jane was the only sibling to formally compete on a college team.

Jane continued to train intensely and then got injured. She was very frustrated with the injury and felt that her dream “was taken away from her.” She began to experience chronic injuries and pain as she transitioned into college. She was recruited to join the sports team at her current university and described the changes she experienced in her freshman year. There was a significant increase in her training and simultaneously, she was adjusting to the college experience. During her sophomore year, she experienced chronic pain and competed in the national and international championships. She was eventually placed on muscle relaxers, but the pain worsened. Jane decided to take time off during her junior year. She described that time as an “emotional rollercoaster.” She was ready for the Olympic trials but could not compete. Her significant achievement was making the National team. When she returned to her college team, she did not get along well with her teammates so she decided to go home for the summer after her junior year in college. When she was at home that summer, she did not practice, “did not talk to anyone for two months, and it was great.” She decided to re-join the team because she liked the sport and believed she did well in the following year. She reflected about the impact of her “emotional rollercoaster” year on her mother. She felt that she burdened her mother with her problems and described her mother as being very supportive. At the outset of the study, Jane said that she liked the new girls on the team and learned how to
compete with her injuries, and was content if that would be the extent of her athletic career.

The consultant noted key observations and insights about Jane from the life history interview. Jane expressed no concerns about sharing her life story with the consultant and was responsive to the consultant’s questions. Jane was consistently involved in several, simultaneous activities outside of school. The consultant was impressed, surprised, and to a degree, concerned, at Jane’s ability to balance these various activities which began at such a young age. Clearly, her parents were a strong influence on Jane’s decisions and each played a significant, albeit, different role in those decisions. Her father seemed to be a constantly active person, even in retirement, who would not allow Jane to quit an athletic team. Her mother, conversely, appeared to be consistently supportive and, at one point, firmly requested that Jane select and focus on only one sport to keep Jane from becoming overwhelmed. Although Jane indicated that she had a close relationship with her mother, she seemed to be unaware to the degree that her father’s work ethic and drive influenced her decisions to become involved in various sports and, perhaps, even influenced the intensity that she brought to her current sport (i.e., relentless training despite injuries).

The consultant was also surprised to hear about Jane’s optimistic and upward drive in reaching the Olympic trials, only to be devastated when she learned that she would be unable to compete because of her injuries. This was clearly a significant life event which caused Jane to reevaluate her dreams, goals, and importance she placed in the sport. Her dreams shattered when she realized that her participation in the sport, if any, would be drastically different than what she had hoped for previously. At the same
time, this event allowed Jane the possibility of exploring different career goals and interests, whereas, previously, her current sport was essentially “her entire life.”

360-degree interviews. A key component of the formal assessment was the 360-degree interview which allowed the consultant to understand what perceptions existed around Jane’s emotional competencies and leadership skills (Orenstein, 2007). After describing the process and who the participants should be, the consultant explained that Jane should introduce the project to her peers and then request their participation as interviewees. The consultant also explained that the entire process would potentially take up to a month to complete, and that their coaching meetings would start again after the 360-degree process was completed. However, if Jane had any concerns or questions during that time period, she was encouraged to reach out to the consultant. Jane then provided a list of willing participants and their contact information to the consultant via e-mail following the life history interview. Jane decided to include Bill as a 360-degree interview participant after the consultant explained the potential importance of the head coach’s perspective and involvement. A total of five participants were interviewed and included Bill, the head coach, her two co-captains, and two teammates.

The consultant then began to contact the 360-degree interview participants and received a prompt response from Bill who requested to meet with the consultant before the 360-degree interview process began. The consultant agreed and met with Bill in his office within a week from Bill’s response. Jane was also informed about the meeting and she did not express any concerns. The consultant introduced herself, explained the executive coaching opportunity and the 360-degree interview process in detail, and answered Bill’s questions. Bill stated that he was aware of Jane’s involvement in the
executive coaching opportunity, but wanted to meet with the consultant to learn more. He expressed interest in having some type of meeting with Jane and the consultant, if Jane was open to it. He wanted to make sure Jane “was on the right path” and wanted to be involved in the process. Bill said that Jane “means the world,” enjoyed seeing her develop and grow, and was interested in continuing the development of her captainship on the team. Bill said that he has a “great relationship” with Jane. He felt comfortable with the process and the consultant scheduled a time for his 360-degree interview.

The consultant had a few key takeaways from the meeting with Bill. First, Bill contacted the consultant to learn more about the consultant and to review the coaching process in detail. This demonstrated Bill’s accountability for the women’s team, protective nature, and perhaps to an extent, the limited degree of Jane’s explanation of the process to Bill. Second, Bill spoke highly of Jane’s role as a captain, her contributions to the team, and identified that he had a great relationship with Jane. This perception was directly contrasted with Jane’s lack of respect for Bill’s coaching style and her apparent unease and discomfort with Bill as head coach. Third, the meeting provided information about Bill’s high expectations and standards of the team’s performance. At the beginning of the meeting, the consultant commented on the team’s achievements which were demonstrated by the many awards and trophies in Bill’s office. Bill responded by saying that “it was not enough.” Fourth, Bill explicitly asked to be a part of the coaching process. This was not surprising to the consultant because Bill, ideally, would have been the member within the team to support Jane in this opportunity, given the nature of his role. However, this caused a dilemma for the consultant because Jane did not want Bill to
be very involved in the coaching process. Jane stated that she took on this coaching opportunity independently.

The consultant individually met with each participant in a quiet location and took notes during the interview. The consultant noted the following insights and observations from the interviews. First, Jane appeared to be a strong, determined, and driven individual who had high / similar expectations for her teammates. Second, several participants thought that Jane had a great relationship with Bill. Third, Jane also appeared to “take on a lot” by herself and did not share or delegate responsibilities easily.

After the formal assessment was completed, the consultant began the feedback process which consisted of three components: feedback preparation, the oral feedback report, and the written feedback report (Orenstein, 2007; see Method for further detail). For Jane’s complete feedback report, please see Appendix H.

360-degree feedback delivery. The consultant then delivered the results of the 360-degree interviews in a 90-minute meeting which allowed for discussion, questions, and interpretations (Orenstein, 2007). In particular, Jane’s strengths included her leadership skills, communication skills, persistence in striving to improve, persuasion, organizational skills, and persistence. Jane’s areas for development included self-awareness, sensing other people’s feelings and perspectives, and sharing responsibilities.

Throughout the meeting, Jane was encouraged to interrupt, share thoughts and feelings, and explore interpretations of the results (Orenstein, 2007). Jane’s responses provided the consultant with information about how the feedback was being received (e.g., Jane’s openness). At the end of the report, the consultant debriefed Jane and asked about her thoughts and feelings. Jane was surprised to learn about one of her perceived
strengths - persuasion. She seemed pleased to hear about her strengths, but remained modest. She was not surprised when she heard about her “Area for Development.” For example, she recognized that her “emotions can sometimes take over” and that she likes “when things are logical” which may appear that she “is set in her ways” to others. Jane did not express any specific concerns with the feedback and appeared to be open and receptive. She expressed gratitude for the feedback information and was interested in the overall assessment.

The written feedback report was finalized and e-mailed to Jane following the oral feedback meeting (Orenstein, 2007; see Appendix H). The written report provided Jane with the opportunity to further absorb and ask additional questions about the results. When Jane was satisfied with the report, the feedback was used to formulate a coaching objective during the objective setting meeting.

 Objective setting meeting. The objective setting meeting allowed for the determination of what would be accomplished in the coaching process (Orenstein, 2007). After much discussion and consideration, Jane decided that she would like to “clarify her role as a captain with her head coach, Bill.” Jane’s objective was SMART (i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound). The coaching objective was derived from Jane’s Role Expectations and from one of Jane’s Areas for Development, “Sharing Responsibilities.” Jane had never formally asked Bill about his expectations for her as a captain.

 Over the course of the meetings with the consultant, Jane had expressed frustration with certain situations because she was unclear as to what Bill expected of her as a captain and that she, perhaps, was taking too much responsibility on as a captain. For
example, there was a team member who tended to arrive late to practice and missed a
couple of practices. Jane felt strongly about this situation and felt that the team member
violated team policies. She did not think Bill was appropriately addressing this team
member’s behavior and raised her concern to Bill. Bill responded that he had spoken to
the team member and was aware and in control of the situation. Jane felt frustration
because she thought that she should raise these types of issues to Bill and expected a
stronger response from Bill. In addition, the role expectations which emerged from the
360-degree interviews were broad and potentially in conflict with some of the implicit
expectations Jane received from Bill. Lastly, the role clarification would ideally and
potentially address Jane’s negative perception of her working relationship with Bill.

4. Formulation and Coaching Plan

Based on the information gathered from Jane’s life history interview, 360-degree
interviews, and the consultant’s observations and hypotheses from the initial meetings,
Jane appeared to be a determined and competitive person who also lacked emotional self-
awareness to a degree, held high and potentially unrealistic standards for herself and
others, challenged authority at times, and was unclear about her role as captain. From a
cognitive-behavioral perspective (Persons, 1989), Jane’s underlying mechanism pointed
to a lack of self-worth; if Jane did not succeed in everything she attempted, she was less
of a person. For example, Jane became involved in multiple, competitive sports at a
young age, was not allowed to quit, and pushed herself in training despite chronic
injuries. Jane said that she was picked on in school and only felt “cool” when she joined
the sports teams. As a result, Jane developed a high degree of persistence, drive, and
determination which ultimately climaxed during her junior year of college when she had
to completely take a break from the sport. It was only during her later years in college that she slowly began to realize that there were other career goals and opportunities to explore and it seemed that she began to redefine “achievement” and “success.”

From a group and systems perspective (EIRT; Alderfer, 1986), Jane attempted to operate, define, and take up her role as captain within a complex group and organizational system. For example, the women’s team had changed in the past few years. Specifically, norms, expectations, and rules changed (e.g., team breakfasts), while others stayed the same (e.g., drinking policy). The men’s team no longer practiced with the women’s team and so the group was female-dominated. Additionally, there was a divide between the “old guard” and the “new guard.” Jane was a part of the “old guard” who held on, to a certain degree, to the “old” norms, rules, and team expectations. The suprasystemic influences of the greater sport reinforced the competitive and intense nature of the sport. Additionally, many team members had multiple roles (e.g., team member, friend, captain, roommate), and the personal and organizational boundaries were loose. Because of these multiple roles, team members spent a significant amount of time together every week throughout the season. Lastly, the role of captain was expanded from one captain to three co-captains. The expectations for the co-captain role varied across the team. For example, one of the role expectations was to “enforce team rules, norms, and expectations” but it was unclear how Jane was to demonstrate this behavior. In fact, she received a contradictory expectation from Bill. As a result, the conflicting expectations and changing team dynamic fostered a complex environment for Jane who struggled to achieve and surpass perceived expectations. If the expectation was unclear or
conflicting and Jane was unable to meet or exceed the expectation, she may have begun to question her self-worth.

In light of Jane’s assessment, the above formulation, and the limited number of available coaching sessions, cognitive-behavioral theory was adapted and applied to address Jane’s coaching objective. It is important to note that executive coaching is different from clinical therapy (Orenstein, 2007). The goal of executive coaching is to consult on an individual’s performance within an organizational role, while the goal of therapy explores underlying central beliefs and family of origin dynamics in addition to overt difficulties. Specifically, the coaching plan focused on Jane’s overt difficulties only or her “Area for Development.” The coaching plan for Jane would involve five coaching sessions which would utilize targeted behavioral and cognitive interventions in order to help Jane obtain her specific coaching objective within the determined timeframe. The final meeting would conclude the formal coaching.

5. Course of Coaching

Coaching session 1. Formal coaching began after the objective was set and agreed upon (Orenstein, 2007). Jane updated the consultant on what had occurred in the team since the last meeting. Importantly, Jane confirmed that she would like to clarify her role as captain with Bill in her upcoming and regularly scheduled one-on-one meeting.

The consultant began by asking Jane to think of a time when she had a challenging interaction with Bill. Jane decided to use the example involving the team member who tended to arrive late to practice and missed a couple of practices. Jane felt strongly about the situation and felt that the team member violated team policies. She did not think Bill was appropriately addressing this team member’s behavior and raised her
concern to Bill. Bill responded that he had spoken to the team member and was aware and in control of the situation. Jane felt frustration because she thought that she should raise these types of issues to Bill and expected a stronger response from Bill.

The consultant asked Jane to reflect on how she brought up her concern about the team member to Bill. What was her approach? What words did she choose, if she remembered? Jane reflected on this experience and said that she was direct with Bill, strongly stated that the team member was violating team policies, and expressed frustration at Bill’s response. The consultant asked Jane to “put herself in Bill’s shoes” during that conversation. How would Jane have reacted as a coach if one of her captains approached her in this way? Jane began to understand Bill’s perspective as head coach and why he may react in certain ways to her questions and concerns. However, she did not know how to raise concerns to Bill without him getting defensive.

The consultant then offered suggestions about how Jane might approach her upcoming one-on-one session. First, the consultant acknowledged that the regularly scheduled, one-on-one session provided a natural opportunity to explore her role as a captain on the team with Bill. Second, the consultant offered specific suggestions on how to seek clarification of her role in a non-threatening and open-minded manner. For example, Jane might say, “Since this is my first time as a captain on the team and I am eager to be successful, I would like to better understand what your [Bill’s] expectations are for me as a captain on the team.” The consultant then said Jane should stop, wait, and actively listen to Bill. If Jane were to phrase it differently, point the finger at Bill, express her frustration and confusion, or jump in and disagree with what he was saying, she probably would have elicited a defensive reaction from Bill. Jane agreed that this would
be a good approach to use and began to take notes. The consultant encouraged Jane to take notes and use the notes in her meeting with Bill.

The consultant then used role-playing strategies to help Jane carry out her new behaviors and prepare for her meeting in the coming week (Persons, 1989). This exercise allowed Jane to experience what her approach would look like in front of another person in a safe environment. The consultant encouraged Jane, asked different questions to enact different hypothetical situations, and positively reinforced Jane throughout the coaching session through her responses and comments.

In addition to role-playing, the consultant utilized the cognitive intervention of reframing (Persons, 1989; Orenstein, 2007). Specifically, the consultant asked Jane to think of a specific example that demonstrated when she had a challenging interaction with Bill. After analyzing Jane’s role and behaviors in the interaction, the consultant asked Jane to think about the interaction in a different way (i.e., from Bill’s perspective). This intervention allowed Jane to think about the impact of her communication style and behaviors on others. This also provided an opportunity for Jane to empathize with Bill or understand his emotional reactions better (cf. Goleman, 1998).

At the end of the session, the consultant asked Jane how she was feeling and if she had any other questions or concerns. Jane said she felt prepared to talk to Bill after practicing with the consultant. It was up to Jane to decide if she wanted to use some/all of the suggestions that were discussed during the coaching session. This also reinforced Jane’s ownership of the coaching process. The consultant identified that Jane’s homework assignment would be to explore the question of her role as captain in her
meeting with Bill and be prepared to discuss her experience in the next coaching session, which was also scheduled. The consultant wished Jane luck.

**Coaching session 2.** Jane updated the consultant on what had occurred on the team since the last meeting. She began to share her experience of the one-on-one meeting with Bill. Bill began the meeting by asking her, “Do you want me to be your head coach?” Jane was surprised to hear this question, but answered, “yes.” They then began to discuss team events and Jane appropriately raised her role clarification question. Bill responded by saying that he expected Jane to support him as a head coach. He welcomed her feedback, but asked that she approach him privately and in confidence, as opposed to challenging him in front of the team. Bill stated that he is ultimately responsible for the team. Jane said the conversation with Bill helped her to better understand what Bill expected of her, but also helped her become aware of Bill’s perspective and placed “herself in his shoes.” Jane used her notes and tried to really listen to Bill’s perspective. She felt that the tools from the first coaching session helped the conversation be “open.”

The consultant expressed that she was glad to hear Jane found the meeting productive and helpful. In order to further provide support, the consultant suggested a three-way meeting with Jane, Bill, and the consultant for a couple of reasons. First, it would provide the consultant the opportunity to observe the interactions between Bill and Jane, which could help inform other interventions. Second, the consultant would be able to help facilitate the discussion, if needed. This was the second time the consultant brought up the three-way meeting as an option. Again, Jane said that she did not want to have this type of meeting. She said that Bill would act differently in front of the consultant and that it would not be a “true” representation of how “he acts.” She did not
feel comfortable having the meeting with Bill, did not trust him, and did not want him to be that involved in a project she initiated on her own.

The consultant respected Jane’s wishes and moved on with the session. Jane was asked to make a list of situations when she felt misaligned with Bill on what she should or should not have been doing as a captain. The consultant would review the list with Jane in the next coaching session in order to prepare Jane for follow-up conversations with Bill about her role.

In addition to role-playing and reframing interventions used in previous sessions, the behavioral experimentation intervention (Persons, 1989) was utilized when Jane raised clarification questions about her role with Bill in their one-on-one meeting. Jane was able to test out her desired behaviors in her organizational setting. The cognitive intervention of self-reflection allowed Jane to retrospectively explore her feelings, experience, thoughts, and reactions to the one-on-one meeting with Bill (Persons, 1989; Orenstein, 2007).

Coaching session 3. Jane updated the consultant on what had occurred on the team since the last meeting. She also said that she had thought a great deal about the consultant’s suggestion to have a three-way meeting with Bill and had changed her mind. Jane decided she would like to have the three-way meeting because it would be a good opportunity for the consultant to observe her interactions with Bill. The consultant was glad to hear that Jane wanted to have the three-way meeting and would discuss the next steps at the end of the coaching session.

Jane then shared her list of situations when she felt confused in her role as captain. First, she was unclear as to what her role was regarding the attendance policy.
Jane brought up the previous example she shared about her teammate who was late and missed practices. Second, she was confused about her role in selecting the team apparel. She had initially surveyed the team for their “wish list” and shared the list with Bill. Bill was supposed to review the list and make a decision based on necessity and budget. Sandra would then place the order for the team apparel. Jane had not heard an update on the team apparel decision and had followed up with Bill. She said that Bill gave her a “weird” reaction when she asked about the team apparel order. Third, she was not sure how she should address the Drinking Policy. Because many of her teammates personal and organizational boundaries overlap greatly, Jane was often aware when certain team members were drinking and they were not supposed to drink during the season. Jane wanted to gain clarification around what she should do with this information. The consultant positively reinforced Jane for listing these opportunities for clarification. By listing these components, the consultant and Jane broke apart a complex goal (i.e., role clarification) into specific, manageable, and attainable components (cf. Persons, 1989).

At the end of the session, the consultant requested that Jane introduce the three-way meeting as a part of the executive coaching process to Bill, and if he agreed, coordinate a time for the meeting. Prior to the meeting, the consultant and Jane would have a brief conversation to prepare for the three-way meeting and answer any questions Jane may have had.

**Coaching session 4.** Jane updated the consultant on what had occurred on the team since the last meeting. Jane also informed the consultant that she was working on scheduling a time with Bill, since he was open to having the meeting. The consultant and
Jane then reviewed the list of situations when she felt confused in her role as captain and clarified any additional questions.

The consultant then discussed the format of the three-way meeting. The consultant would open and introduce the meeting, review the coaching process, and explain the purpose of the three-way meeting. Then, Jane would, again, share her coaching objective and continue the conversation about her role. She would ask for Bill’s feedback on how to handle the situations in her list and actively listen to Bill. The three-way meeting would close and the consultant and Jane would reconnect in their final meeting.

The consultant then used role-playing strategies to help Jane carry out her new behaviors and prepare for the three-way meeting in the coming week (Persons, 1989). This exercise allowed Jane to experience what her approach would be like in front of another person in a safe environment. The consultant encouraged Jane, asked different questions to enact different hypothetical situations, and positively reinforced Jane throughout the coaching session in her responses and comments.

At the end of the session, the consultant asked Jane to finalize the meeting day and time with Bill and to review her notes on how to approach the three-way meeting. The consultant and Jane had one more coaching session scheduled before the three-way meeting was scheduled to take place.

Coaching session 5. Jane began by stating that she had changed her mind and did not want to proceed with the three-way meeting. She explained that her issues with Bill grew intense over the last few weeks and, in particular, the last week, and was very upset about the way Bill had been treating her. She felt that he had disrespected her in front of
her teammates and she was at a loss as to what else she could do differently. At this point, Jane began to cry and was clearly troubled by what had been happening with Bill. Jane went on to explain that she had always been critical of Bill’s coaching style, but that it had become much more of an issue for her this year, perhaps because she was a captain. Jane revealed to the consultant that she had submitted a formal complaint about Bill to the new athletic director and associate director approximately one month ago.

Jane continuously reiterated that she did not want to meet or deal with Bill anymore. There were only about two months left in the season and she planned on only interacting with him when necessary. If she were to meet with Bill for the three-way meeting, she said that she would only be meeting with Bill for the sake of the consultant’s research. Jane also said that she was under an enormous amount of stress and exhaustion because of final examinations. She apologized to the consultant and was worried that her decision “would ruin the dissertation.”

The consultant empathically listened to Jane and allowed her to share her thoughts and feelings. The consultant was greatly concerned to see the dramatic change and apparent distress in Jane. The consultant first said that she was very sorry to hear that the situation with Bill had worsened and that Jane was under a great deal of stress. The consultant expressed her appreciation in Jane’s honesty and went on to reiterate that it was certainly up to Jane to decide what the next step in the process was. The consultant gently reminded Jane that the purpose of the coaching process was to support her in her role, and if Jane did not feel comfortable with a certain aspect of the process, that was completely acceptable. The consultant thanked Jane for her concern about the research study, but said that Jane’s well-being and comfort with the process were the primary
goals of their work together. The consultant reassured Jane that this would not have a negative impact on the research study since Jane seemed very concerned about it.

After the consultant and Jane discussed her concerns, the consultant agreed that this would be an appropriate time to begin to end their coaching relationship. It was clear that Jane was feeling overwhelmed, stressed, and strongly averse to continuing any type of interaction with Bill. The consultant suggested that she would follow up with Bill since he was expecting a meeting to be scheduled. This would also be an opportunity for the consultant to update Bill on the status of the coaching process since he had initially requested to be involved with the process. Jane did not have any concerns with the consultant having a final meeting with Bill. Jane and the consultant scheduled their final meeting.

*Meeting with Bill.* The consultant contacted Bill and scheduled a meeting within one week of the fifth coaching session with Jane. The consultant met Bill in his office and reviewed the coaching process since it had been almost two months since their initial meeting. The consultant explained that the three-way meeting was a part of the coaching process and the purpose would have been to provide support to Jane as she worked to clarify her role as a captain on the team. Bill seemed relieved to hear this because he was concerned that Jane did not feel comfortable enough to meet with him alone about her questions. There appeared to be a miscommunication in what Bill thought was the purpose of the three-way meeting.

Bill then asked the consultant what the symptoms of bipolar disorder are. The consultant politely inquired why Bill wanted to know. He then went on to explain that he was very concerned about Jane. Last week, she “broke down crying” in his office, asking
if it would be possible for her to miss a practice because she had to study for her final examinations. He said that this was not the first time he had noticed dramatic changes in her behavior during a short timeframe. The consultant recommended that Bill could talk to Jane about his concerns and offer the contact information to professional counseling services that were available on-site at the university. The consultant strongly discouraged Bill from referring to “bipolar disorder” or any other specific term, and that he should only speak from the facts of the situation. Bill thanked the consultant for the recommendation.

The consultant stated she would begin to terminate the coaching relationship with Jane in the next couple of weeks and thanked Bill for his involvement in the coaching process. Bill expressed his gratitude to the consultant for her work with Jane over the past few months.

*Final/evaluation meeting.* The final phase of the executive coaching process concluded coaching (Orenstein, 2007). The final evaluation meeting took place after Jane’s finals were over and she had decided to take a much needed, relaxing vacation over winter break. Jane seemed to be in a better mood, but still “fragile.” The first goal of the final meeting was for Jane to share her subjective evaluation of the degree of achievement in regard to the coaching objective. Jane stated that she started to gain a better understanding of what was expected of her as a captain on the team. She also said she gained an appreciation for Bill’s perspective as the head coach.

The second goal of the meeting was for the consultant and Jane to reflect on the actual process of the coaching and explore its strengths and areas for development (Orenstein, 2007). Jane identified that she liked being able to talk about personal issues
and concerns on the team with the consultant. Jane said that the consultant helped her to learn what is important, and that she could handle and prioritize issues. It gave her the confidence to handle problems and concerns. At this point, the consultant explained that there were other ways to continue to receive support through resources such as counseling if she found the coaching process useful. The consultant shared the phone number for the university’s counseling services. Jane thanked the consultant for the information.

Jane also thought the 360-degree process was valuable and it increased her self-awareness. It was helpful to hear what her peers’ perceptions were. When asked about areas for improvement within the coaching process, Jane stated that the involvement of Bill in the process was difficult. She felt that this coaching opportunity was a personal process and she did not fully trust Bill with her insecurities. She explained it would have been helpful to know about the degree of Bill’s involvement earlier on in the coaching process. She, again, reiterated, that she was only willing to have the three-way meeting with Bill for the sake of the research study, but was relieved that her decision would not impact the consultant’s research. Jane did not have any specific suggestions on how to extend these findings, but thought the coaching process was valuable and could be used with other athletes who had different or better relationships with their coaches. The consultant expressed her gratitude for her participation and commitment to the coaching process, her pleasure in working with Jane, and wished her much success in the rest of the season, school year, and graduation. This final meeting concluded the coaching process between the consultant and Jane.
6. Concluding Evaluation of the Coaching Process and Outcome

The consultant did not request that the potential impact of the executive coaching process be evaluated further through the means of a survey (i.e., Empathic Organic Questionnaire; cf. Alderfer & Brown, 1972; Orenstein, 2006) for the following reasons. Jane began to develop a highly tense and anxious relationship with her coach and essentially did not want him involved any longer in the coaching process. She grew so overwhelmed with stress, that the consultant offered and recommended counseling services to the participant. Pushing the process forward (i.e., questionnaire), including her coach in the process, and her potential reaction to additional feedback (from the questionnaire) would have been potentially harmful to Jane.

Approximately four months after the conclusion of coaching with Jane, a new head coach for the women’s team was announced. Bill vacated the position after more than ten years. The reasons for Bill’s departure and/or the newly appointed head coach were unknown to the consultant.

The Case of Laura

1. Case Context and Method

This case study describes the course of coaching for Laura, who began a new role as a Manager in a large, student organization at a public, east-coast university. Laura was referred to the consultant by a mutual professional contact. She expressed interest in participating and potentially enhancing her emotional intelligence and managerial skills in her new role within the student organization. She also expressed an interest in increasing the “community feel” within her team.
The purpose of Laura’s organization was to “create a department that prides itself on its work with students and its service to the community” (Staff Handbook, 2009 – 2010, p.3). The organization’s role was to develop various partnerships and seek input from student colleagues within the department who are members of different student organizations, fraternities, and sororities. The organization also worked actively to support the university’s commitment through diversity and defined seven social justice actions. Staff members who were a part of this student organization had the opportunity to develop and grow skills that would be invaluable in their academic and professional pursuits.

The structure of the organization was hierarchical and spanned across four campuses at the university. The organization was comprised of both professional, full-time staff members and student staff members. The centralized Administrative office of the organization included an Executive Director, Business Manager, Assistant Business Manager, and Administrative Assistant. Each campus was comprised of several Assistant Directors, Associate Directors, and Administrative Assistants that supported the various functional areas of the organization (e.g., Event Services). Student staff members supported different functional areas including guest service, telephone service, and house crew.

Laura’s role was Manager of House Crew at one of the four campuses at the outset of the study. There were 12 area managers at her particular campus, 50 across the entire university, and 100 staff members in total. Laura would supervise and train about 12 to 15 staff members who set up and executed all events at that particular campus. She would receive regular supervision from a full-time, professional staff member. Laura had
been involved with the organization in various roles over the past couple of years and had moved up to the role of Manager. She enjoyed being a part of the organization and hoped to develop her managerial skills through the coaching process.

The consultant identified Laura as an appropriate candidate for the student leader executive coaching study for the following reasons. Laura was about to begin a new student leadership role in a large, complex organization, had expressed a desire to learn more about emotional intelligence, managerial skills, and team development, and was willing to commit to the coaching process to the best of her ability.

2. The Client

Laura was an Asian female in her early twenties who was beginning her senior year in college at the outset of the study. She was also the photo and art editor of a university Asian newspaper that focused on social-political issues. She devoted approximately five hours a week to the newspaper and worked about 20 hours a week in the student organization. She expressed that she was uncertain about her plans after graduation, but was very interested in pursuing work similar to her current student leadership role within a university organization.

3. Assessment of the Client’s Goals, Strengths, and History

For a complete overview of the structure and number of sessions with Laura, please refer to Table 5. The first contact between the consultant and Laura initiated the entry phase during the summer of 2009 (see Appendix C for a script of the initial meeting).
Table 5  
Overview of Laura’s sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Days since first session</th>
<th>Length of session in minutes</th>
<th>Goals of session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Preliminary Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Second Preliminary Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Life History Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Joint Goal Setting Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>360-Degree Feedback Delivery &amp; Final Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preliminary meeting. Based on that initial phone conversation, the consultant and Laura agreed to have preliminary meeting at a quiet location on-campus at the beginning of the fall 2009 semester. This same location was used for the remainder of the meetings with Laura. Laura described the organizational context and structure, information about her role as manager, her expectations for the process, and some of her goals and tasks (see “Case Context and Method” for further detail).

The consultant noted several key takeaways and observations about Laura from the preliminary meeting. Laura appeared to be a determined and eager individual who had a clear appreciation for structure, rules, and policies. For example, Laura shared several examples of systems and practices she used with her staff. This was not surprising to the consultant given the degree and extent of Laura’s responsibilities and scope of work. Laura also appeared to hold high expectations for herself and her staff. For example, she interviewed for a higher-level position (i.e., facility / building manager), but received an offer for a Manager position. She expressed that she was disappointed with her current position.
Laura also revealed that she had recently encountered problems with an ex-boyfriend who was “stalking” her. The consultant was surprised to hear this personal information from Laura during their first meeting. Laura appeared to be clearly distressed about this situation. The consultant suggested that Laura could receive support through the university’s counseling services and resources. Laura thanked the consultant and said that she had been receiving counseling since she broke up with her ex-boyfriend. Laura shared this information with the consultant because she thought it would be important for the consultant to know since it might impact their work together.

Overall, the consultant felt comfortable interacting with Laura and believed that Laura also felt comfortable with the consultant. The consultant and Laura decided to proceed with the executive coaching process and agreed upon the following next steps.

**Second preliminary meeting.** The preliminary meeting was followed by a secondary meeting with Laura. Following the preliminary meeting, Laura invited her supervisor, Tom, to the joint goal setting meeting that would have been scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time. Laura kept in touch with the consultant via e-mail and informed the consultant that Tom’s schedule was very busy and that he would be unable to join them in an upcoming meeting. She would continue to coordinate a time for the meeting in the next few weeks.

The consultant decided to meet with Laura to learn more about the organization and her expectations for the coaching process during a secondary meeting. Laura continued to share more information about the organization’s structure, staff handbook, rules and policies, and staff training. She expressed a desire to become a mentor to her staff and she hoped they would “approach her about anything.” She went on to say that
she had recently informed her supervisor and, then, her staff about her “ex-boyfriend / stalker problem” during the first meeting of the semester. When asked by the consultant why she shared that information with her staff, Laura responded that she was concerned that her ex-boyfriend might have “showed up at a student center” and she might have reacted in a strange way in front of her staff. Because a component of her job involved interacting with the “university public,” she wanted to ensure her staff was aware of the situation.

Laura also shared a couple of examples that had recently occurred within the organization that were concerning to her. First, she described an incident in which a Manager missed a mandatory training and, as a result, was fired. The manager complained to “higher ups and was able to get her job back.” Laura strongly felt that this was not fair and was not appropriate. The consultant asked her to think about why she thought the behavior was allowed and how could she learn from the experience. Could she apply her own learning from this experience in her management of staff? For example, the consultant asked Laura if she thought her staff may have similar questions about fairness within their own team. Laura said that she “never thought about it that way” and it would be helpful for her to think about in anticipation of similar questions and dilemmas she might experience with her own staff.

Laura went on to describe a recent disagreement she had with her new supervisor, Tom. Laura was in charge of overseeing an event for a fraternity and was concerned about two of her staff members who also happened to be friends with some of the fraternity members present at the event. She was concerned that they may not adequately fulfill their responsibilities because they were among friends at the event. She shared her
concern with Tom and, according to Laura, Tom indicated that Laura was “being stereotypical.” Laura said that the fraternity was comprised of predominantly Black members, the two staff members she was concerned about were Black, and Tom, her supervisor, was Black. Laura was frustrated because she thought she had shared a legitimate concern about her staff members’ performance at an event. The consultant asked Laura if she had shared some of these thoughts and concerns with Tom and she said she had not. She mentioned that she had a great relationship with her previous supervisor. The consultant suggested that it appeared Laura and Tom were in the initial stages of developing their working relationship and still learning about each other’s “styles.”

The consultant noted additional observations about Laura from the secondary meeting which validated some of the observations from the preliminary meeting. First, it appeared that Laura’s personal and organizational boundaries were loose to a certain degree. She had informed the consultant in the first meeting about her ex-boyfriend and later informed her staff about the potential problem. She also expressed a desire for her staff to approach her about any of their problems. While it would have been appropriate for staff to talk to Laura about work-related issues and concerns, Laura did not make this distinction. This was not entirely surprising to the consultant since Laura and her student colleagues held multiple roles (e.g., student, staff member) and the boundaries might not have been clear. Second, it appeared that Laura was “testing” out her new relationship with her supervisor, which was evident by their disagreement. Based on this meeting, it seemed that Laura’s interpersonal and managerial style complemented her previous supervisor’s style well, but not necessarily with her current supervisor. Third, Laura
sincerely wanted to develop team cohesion among her staff and, simultaneously, was rigid in her adherence to policies, rules, and fairness.

*Life history interview.* Laura said that most of her family lived in the nearby state and that she lived with her parents when she was home from college. She had one brother who was studying “many of the same things” as the consultant and her brother reiterated that the 360-degree interview and feedback process was a well-known process and tool. Laura also shared that she had been raised by her parents in a disciplined way.

Laura did not share much about her life story, even when probed by the consultant. This was somewhat surprising to the consultant given the fact that Laura had shared a personal part of her life with the consultant in the first meeting (i.e., ex-boyfriend problem). The consultant hypothesized that Laura might not have seen the value of sharing this information since there was not a direct or obvious link to her current role. The consultant also respected Laura’s reactions and resistance because she was in counseling and did not want to potentially “push” Laura into sharing information she did not feel comfortable sharing at that point in the process. However, the consultant noted that it appeared that Laura valued her brother’s opinion and sought his advice. Also, Laura was raised in a disciplined environment which might have influenced her structured approach in her management style.

About half way through the meeting, Laura asked if she could discuss a pressing issue she had with an upcoming training session. This was a clear indication that Laura wanted to change the direction of the conversation. The consultant respected Laura’s request and spent the rest of the meeting helping Laura to brainstorm ideas on how to engage her staff through upcoming training opportunities.
At the end of the meeting, Laura said that she was still in the process of scheduling a time for the joint goal setting meeting with Tom. In the meantime, the consultant also requested that Laura introduce the 360-degree interview process to Tom.

*Joint goal setting meeting.* Approximately one week after the secondary meeting, the consultant received an e-mail from Laura. She indicated that she had spoken with Tom about the 360-degree interview process and he did not want the process to move forward until he spoke with his superior. Laura also indicated that she had still been unable to coordinate a time for the joint goal setting meeting. The consultant contacted Laura and explained that Tom’s request was a legitimate concern and it seemed that he was concerned about the well-being of his staff. Laura seemed somewhat frustrated that the coaching process would be placed on hold until the joint goal setting meeting took place and Tom received approval from his boss to move forward with the 360-degree interview process. At that point (i.e., four weeks from the preliminary meeting), the consultant asked Laura if she could contact Tom directly in order to help facilitate the scheduling of the joint goal setting meeting. After a few e-mails and voicemails, the consultant managed to schedule a time for the joint goal setting meeting in Tom’s office, which was to take place approximately three months after the preliminary meeting.

The joint goal setting meeting was an opportunity to outline the expected outcomes, a realistic timeframe, and to request ongoing feedback and support from Tom (Orenstein, 2007). The consultant explained the executive coaching process in detail including the phases, steps, confidentiality, differences between coaching and therapy, and the role of the consultant. Specifically, the consultant focused on the 360-degree interview process and confidentiality requirements in order to address Tom’s potential
concerns. Tom appeared to be supportive of Laura’s participation in the coaching process and was willing to be a participant in the 360-degree interview process. Tom indicated that he would follow up with his boss about the 360-degree interview process and would be in touch with the consultant.

In addition, the joint goal setting meeting was an opportunity to observe the interactions between Tom and Laura (Orenstein, 2007). The majority of the meeting involved the consultant explaining the process and answering Tom’s questions. Laura played a passive role during the entire meeting and did not offer many comments or reactions.

Following the meeting with Tom, the consultant and Laura met to briefly review the next steps and discuss updates within Laura’s organization. At this point, the fall semester was coming to a close. The consultant and Laura decided to begin the 360-degree interview process at the beginning of the spring semester, pending approval from Tom’s boss. Approximately one week after the joint goal setting meeting, Tom informed the consultant that he had received approval from his boss to move forward with the 360-degree interview process.

360-degree interviews. A key component of the formal assessment was the 360-degree interview which allowed the consultant to understand what perceptions existed around the Laura’s emotional competencies and leadership skills (Orenstein, 2007). After describing the process and who the participants should be, the consultant explained that Laura should introduce the project to her peers and then request their participation as interviewees. The consultant also explained that the entire process would potentially take up to a month to complete, and that their coaching meetings would start again after the
360-degree process was completed. However, if Laura had any concerns or questions during that time period, she was encouraged to reach out to the consultant. Laura then provided a list of willing participants and their contact information to the consultant via e-mail. Laura’s 360-degree participants included Tom, her full-time supervisor, and two peers within the student organization.

The consultant experienced significant difficulty in obtaining responses from Laura’s peers within the student organization about their interest in participating in the 360-degree interview process. The first peer did not respond to the consultant’s initial request and follow up requests at all. Several follow up messages were required in order to obtain responses from Laura’s two peers who ultimately decided to participate. Due to the resistance and delay in responses, the 360-degree interview process took approximately two and a half months to complete.

The consultant individually met with each participant in a quiet location and took notes during the interview. The consultant noted the following insights and observations from the interviews. First, the consultant’s perceptions of the scope and amount of Laura’s work were confirmed. Second, Laura was perceived to be rigid in her style, objective, and “always going by the book.” Third, several of the 360-degree interviewees indicated that Laura should learn to relax and “not take things so seriously.”

After the formal assessment was completed, the consultant began the feedback process which consisted of three components: feedback preparation, the oral feedback report, and the written feedback report (Orenstein, 2007). These themes and supporting materials were organized in the following ways: Context, Role Expectations, strengths
and Areas for Development, and Advice. For Laura’s complete feedback report, please see Appendix I.

360-degree feedback delivery. The consultant then delivered the results of the 360-degree interviews in a 90-minute meeting which allowed for discussion, questions, and interpretations (Orenstein, 2007). In particular, Laura’s strengths included her communication skills, persistence in striving to improve, persuasion, organizational skills, persistence, self-awareness, sensing other people’s feelings, and an ability to resolve and negotiate disagreements. Her area for development included her managerial style.

Throughout the meeting, Laura was encouraged to interrupt, share thoughts and feelings, and explore interpretations of the results (Orenstein, 2007). Laura’s responses provided the consultant with information about how the feedback was being received (e.g., Laura’s openness). At the end of the report, the consultant debriefed Laura and asked about her thoughts and feelings. Laura was surprised to learn about a few of her perceived strengths including her communication skills, persuasion, and self-awareness. Laura seemed confused by one component in the Area for Development – the perception that she was “very strict” and not flexible enough in her role. She thought that this was a “gray area.” Laura did not express any specific concerns with the feedback and seemed to be pleased with the results. She expressed gratitude for the feedback information and was interested in the overall assessment. The written feedback report was finalized and e-mailed to Jane following the oral feedback meeting (Orenstein, 2007; see Appendix I). The written report provided Laura with the opportunity to further absorb and ask additional questions about the results.
Due to several organizational delays in the overall coaching process, the 360-degree feedback delivery took place at the beginning of May, approximately seven months after the preliminary meeting. The consultant offered to extend their work together and proceed with coaching sessions in the summer, but it was up to Laura to determine if she wanted to continue the coaching process. Laura informed the consultant that she would be graduating from college, her position with the organization would end in May, and that she would be traveling for the majority of the summer. The consultant offered to work with Laura in the fall if she was interested and available. Laura said that she was planning on volunteering for a national non-profit and would reach out to the consultant if it was appropriate. Laura thanked the consultant for the offer.

Since this was likely the final meeting in the coaching process with Laura, the consultant asked Laura to reflect on the actual process of the coaching and explored its strengths and areas for development (Orenstein, 2007). Laura identified that she thought the 360-degree process was important and helped her to learn about others’ perceptions of her management style. She thought the process, overall, was very helpful in addressing problems and thinking about things from a different perspective. She was disappointed that the coaching process could not be fully completed. She did not offer a specific way to extend these findings. The consultant expressed her gratitude for her participation and commitment to the coaching process, her pleasure in working with Laura, and wished her much success in her career plans after graduation. This final meeting concluded the coaching process between the consultant and Laura.
4. Concluding Evaluation of the Coaching Process and Outcome

The consultant did not receive a request from Laura in order to continue the coaching process.
CHAPTER IV
Discussion

Overview of Results

The first goal of the present study was to examine the use of executive coaching as a method to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies. Executive coaching has become a popular method for enhancing leaders’ emotional intelligence competencies in organizations (Cherniss & Adler, 2000). Typically, executive coaching is offered to senior level executives and managers in work and organizational settings. However, there is little research that has examined the use of executive coaching as a method to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies within a university setting.

The second goal of the present study was to investigate whether a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies increased after the leader received coaching. Specifically, the efficacy of the executive coaching process was evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively through a questionnaire and interview (cf. Alderfer & Brown, 1972; Orenstein, 2006).

There was mixed support for the first goal of the present study; the degree to which the executive coaching methodology was adapted to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies varied among the three cases. Alex’s case reached all of the stages of the coaching process. Jane’s case grew increasingly complex near the final stages of the coaching process and did not reach the evaluation stage.
Laura’s case concluded after the delivery of the 360-degree feedback due to significant organizational delays.

There was also mixed support for the second goal of the present study. Although there was some evidence that the student leaders changed in positive ways as a result of the coaching, the evaluation design made it impossible to assess the extent to which emotional intelligence competencies changed. This goal was primarily impacted by whether or not all stages of the coaching process were reached. In Alex’s case, the results of his Empathic Organic Questionnaire revealed statistically significant change only in the items related to the coaching objective (see Table 2). There were no statistically significant items in the control category. In Jane’s case, the final evaluation meeting indicated that she had begun to clarify her role as a co-captain and that she had demonstrated some competence in Empathy (i.e., she gained an appreciation for Bill’s perspective as the head coach). In Laura’s case, there was some indication that she had increased her self-awareness which was demonstrated by her reactions to the 360-degree feedback report. Results relating to both goals will be discussed in further detail below.

*Appropriateness of Executive Coaching Methodology for Student Leaders*

Adapting the executive coaching methodology requires the participant’s constant openness, willingness, and commitment to the process. Overall, it was apparent that the three participants in this study were generally open to self-development, learning, and new ideas. The consultant also received positive feedback about the participants through mutual contacts which validated the consultant’s initial impressions. The participants continued to demonstrate their commitment throughout the process by their responsiveness to the consultant’s communications, engagement in the 360-degree
interview process, attempts to complete homework assignments to the best of their ability, transparency in meetings, attendance of coaching meetings, and receptivity to different forms of feedback. The consultant was also impressed at each of the participant’s level of engagement in light of all other roles and responsibilities (i.e., full-time student). Each participant’s level of engagement could be attributed to the participants having a clear understanding of the expectations of the coaching process, individual motivation and aspiration, and a high degree of achievement (e.g., strong academic records, involvement in multiple activities). However, there was significant resistance to the process in two of the three cases. Jane resisted the involvement of Bill, the head coach, in the executive coaching process for various reasons. In Laura’s case, there was significant organizational resistance to the executive coaching process. For further information, see below.

Since the executive coaching methodology is typically utilized in traditional organizational and work settings, the identification of the client’s supervising manager is a relatively easy task. The manager plays an important role in the executive coaching process by providing ongoing support and feedback to the client (Orenstein, 2007). However, it was not initially apparent who Alex’s supervising manager was in the student organization for the following reasons. First, the definition of a student organization inherently implies that the organization is led by students who likely are peers and/or have similar levels of leadership experiences. Second, Alex did not have a clearly designated manager within the student organization.

Ultimately, Alex decided to involve Liz, his “Chair / Co-Chair,” in the executive coaching process. Liz demonstrated her openness to participate in the process through her
involvement in the Joint Goal Setting meeting, her participation in the 360-degree process, her willingness to rotate leadership responsibilities with Alex (i.e., facilitation of meetings), and her participation in the Empathic Organic Questionnaire. Additionally, Alex and Liz’s full-time professional staff advisor, Lisa, enthusiastically supported their involvement in the executive coaching opportunity. Lisa had previously participated in a similar executive coaching opportunity and shared very positive feedback about her experience. It was likely that her positive experience influenced her support of Alex’s participation in the present study.

However, the ambiguity or lack of a clearly designated manager could negatively and significantly impact the executive coaching process. The identification of Jane’s supervising manager proved to be problematic and complex for the following reasons. First, the nature of the student organization differed drastically from that of a typical work setting. Jane was a member of an athletic team comprised of coaches, co-captains, and teammates. She was clear in stating the difference between the structure of the athletic team and a typical work setting. She used this rationale to defend her selection of a co-captain for the role of supervising manager in coaching process, while, ideally, a head coach would have fulfilled that role. Second, Jane gradually revealed her lack of respect, trust, and authority for Bill, the head coach, which further supported her decision to ask one of her co-captains to be her supervising manager in the coaching process.

Throughout the entire coaching process, Jane struggled to “comply” with the components of the coaching process (e.g., the involvement of Bill), while holding on to her own opinions and perceptions of Bill. This struggle climaxed toward the end of the coaching process when Jane grew so distressed that she wanted to significantly limit, if not
eliminate, her interactions with Bill. Third, the coaching process critically revealed that there were conflicting expectations for Jane’s role among the various sub-groups of the athletic team. This was likely a systemic issue that impacted intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup behaviors. Paradoxically, Jane understood that Bill could play an important role in helping to clarify her role, but she resisted his involvement in the coaching process and, ultimately, in the pursuit of her coaching objective.

It was also possible that the executive coaching process may have exacerbated Jane’s condition and/or her relationship with Bill. For example, Jane began to express her lack of trust, respect, and authority for Bill and she was not sure why she felt so strongly about Bill that season. She stated that she had formed some of these opinions previously, but only began to feel strongly about them during that season. Jane agreed that it may have been because she was in a captain’s role and felt more of a responsibility to address them on behalf of the team. However, the executive coaching process, and in particular, the recommendation to involve Bill, may have also influenced Jane’s perceptions of Bill to more strongly manifest. This information alludes to the importance of the nature of the relationship between participant and “supervising manager” when engaging in the executive coaching process.

In Laura’s case, the designation of the supervising manager in the coaching process was clear to Laura, the consultant, and her supervisor, Tom. It was primarily apparent because Laura’s student organization most closely mirrored a typical work setting. The organization was comprised of both professional, full-time staff members and student staff members and it had an explicit business purpose and function. Laura’s
case also differed from the other two because she had an explicitly assigned supervisor who was a professional, full-time staff member with managerial experience.

While the designation of Laura’s supervising manager in both the student organization and the coaching process was apparent, the relationship between Laura and Tom significantly impacted the coaching process. The initial meetings revealed conflicts between Laura and Tom who had just started to work together for the first time. She shared several examples that indicated clashing expectations, work styles, and, even, personalities. This may have led to the significant delay in scheduling a Joint Goal Setting meeting and, subsequently, placed the entire coaching process on hold for several months. When the consultant attempted to get in contact with Tom and schedule the Joint Goal Setting meeting herself, she was able to understand what it might be like to work with Tom. For example, it took several follow-up phone calls and e-mails to receive a response from Tom. At the same time, the consultant was ultimately able to schedule and plan the Joint Goal Setting meeting, which may have indicated a communication issue between Tom and Laura.

However, once the Joint Goal Setting meeting was held, Tom indicated his support for the coaching process and Laura’s participation. For example, he obtained approval from his boss and communicated this update quickly to the consultant so that the coaching process could move forward. Tom responded to the consultant’s request for the 360-degree interview and shared critical feedback about Laura in her role as Manager. This positive change in Tom’s responsiveness and behavior indicated the importance of the Joint Goal Setting meeting. It also indicated that the consultant’s explanation of the
process was critical in establishing an understanding and demonstration of support from Laura’s supervisor / organization.

Overall, Orenstein’s (2007) multi-dimensional executive coaching approach was critical in guiding all three cases. The conceptual framework (i.e., Guiding Conception) consists of four fundamental premises. The first premise defines executive coaching as the consultation to a person within an organizational role about that person’s performance; in other words, the consultation involves the person, the organization, and their constant interaction. The second premise focuses on the existence, importance, and role of unconscious forces in a person’s behavior. The third premise explains that an individual’s behavior is embedded in organizational, group, intergroup, and interpersonal behavior. Individual behavior also influences and is influenced by forces at each of these levels. Lastly, the fourth premise states that the executive coach or consultant is subject to the same forces when entering an organization, and consequently, use of self is a critical tool in the executive coaching process. Each of these premises influenced the cases, although some aspects were more salient in some cases than in others as discussed below.

Critically, the 360-degree interviews allowed the consultant to understand what perceptions existed around the participant’s emotional and leadership competencies within the organization (Orenstein, 2007). This process was central to the executive coaching methodology because it reiterated one of the premises of multi-dimensional executive coaching which states that the consultation involves the person, the organization, and their constant interaction. At a minimum, the feedback from the 360-degree interviews influenced each participant’s level of self-awareness. Each participant,
in his or her own way, indicated that the 360-degree interview and feedback process was helpful and a benefit of the coaching process.

In each case, system dynamics influenced the clients, and the 360 interviews were valuable in clarifying those dynamics for both the consultant and the participants. In Alex’s case, the consultant’s interactions with Alex, Liz, and his other 360-degree participants offered significant insights about the underboundedness of the organization. Each university campus had its own culture within the student organization, although the intent from the highest leadership was to move toward a unified organization across the campuses. Expectations for the Vice Chair / Co-Chair role also differed across the campuses and the Vice Chair role at Alex’s campus had been inactive until he took up the role. Alex’s campus was deemed the “most progressive” and “active” campus out of all four campuses. In addition, there were discrepancies in expectations for Alex’s role from his supervisor and peers. Specifically, some expected him to partner with Liz, while others thought he only had to support Liz and be responsible for secretarial duties. As a result, the conflicting expectations and complex organizational culture and system fostered an uncertain environment for Alex who already lacked confidence and assertiveness.

In Jane’s case, the concept of embeddedness offered insights about the complex nature and functioning of the athletic team. For example, the women’s team had changed in the past few years. Specifically, group norms, expectations, and rules changed (e.g., team breakfasts), while others stayed the same (e.g., drinking policy). The men’s team no longer practiced with the women’s team and so the group was female-dominated. Additionally, there was a divide between the “old guard” and the “new guard.” Jane was
a part of the “old guard” who held on, to a certain degree, to the “old” norms, rules, and team expectations. The suprasystemic influences of the sport reinforced the competitive and intense nature of the sport. Additionally, many team members had multiple roles (e.g., team member, friend, captain, roommate), and the personal and organizational boundaries were loose. Because of these multiple roles, team members spent a significant amount of time together every week throughout the season.

In Laura’s case, the consultant’s interactions with Laura, Tom, and the 360-degree participants offered significant insights about the simultaneous underboundedness and overboundedness of the organization. For example, Laura’s description of her managerial style and approach with her student staff indicated that her personal and organizational boundaries were loose to a certain degree. She shared her personal “stalker” problem with her staff. She also hoped her staff would “approach her about anything” as opposed to limiting her interactions to her staff’s professional concerns and issues. The conflicts between Laura and Tom indicated that expectations and roles had not been explicitly clarified at the outset of the study.

On the other hand, the organization also appeared to be overbounded in some ways. For example, the consultant experienced significant resistance when attempting to enter the organization over the course of the coaching process. It took several months to schedule a Joint Goal Setting meeting and an additional few months to receive responses to 360-degree interview requests. In addition, Tom had to obtain approval from his supervisor before the 360-degree interview process could move forward.

The executive coach or consultant is subject to the same forces when entering an organization, and consequently, use of self is a critical tool in the executive coaching
process (Orenstein, 2007; cf. Alderfer, 1985). The consultant constantly relied on her thoughts, feelings, and reactions during the entire executive coaching process as sources of information about what it was like to be a member of each of the participant’s organizations. For example, the consultant was confused when she heard the conflicting expectations for Alex’s role during the 360-degree interview process. She was able to empathize with Alex who was new to this role and was struggling to take it up within a complex organizational system. During the initial meeting with Bill, the consultant learned about Bill’s high standards for the team. The consultant was better able to understand what it was like for Jane to live up to those expectations as a captain and member of the team. During the entire coaching process with Laura, the consultant constantly faced resistance from the organization and often became frustrated. This allowed the consultant to understand how this type of resistance could impact Laura’s ability to effectively perform as a Manager.

Enhancement of Emotional Intelligence Competencies

The degree to which a student leader’s emotional intelligence competency or competencies were increased after receiving coaching varied among the three cases. This goal was primarily impacted by whether or not all stages of the coaching process were reached. In Alex’s case, the entire coaching process was completed. The results of his Empathic Organic Questionnaire revealed statistically significant items only in the Leadership / Taking up Authority category, which consisted of items related to the coaching objective (see Table 2). There were no statistically significant items in the control category (i.e., Empathy; see Table 3).
Using the Orenstein (2007) approach to evaluation in this case made it impossible to assess the impact of the intervention on the emotional intelligence competencies. In order to evaluate the impact on emotional intelligence competencies, a specific measure of emotional intelligence competencies should be included in addition to the organic questionnaire used in Orenstein’s approach. However, the design and results of the present study indicated that positive change occurred in the first case with Alex. The ability to “take up one’s authority effectively” is an important leadership competency, even if it is not considered an emotional intelligence competency.

The executive coaching process ended after the final evaluation meeting in Jane’s case and, subsequently, impacted the efficacy of her coaching process and the likelihood of Jane attaining her coaching objective. The final evaluation meeting indicated that she had begun to clarify her role as a co-captain with Bill (i.e., Jane’s coaching objective), although the initial coaching plan was not completed (i.e., the three-way role clarification meeting did not occur). Like Alex, Jane decided to select a coaching objective that was not explicitly related to a single competency in the Emotional Competence Framework (Hay Group, 2007), but appeared to be a systemic issue impacting her relationship with Bill and her ability to effectively function as a co-captain on the team.

Toward the end of the coaching process, Jane decided to significantly limit, if not eliminate, her interactions with Bill, which impacted the effectiveness of the coaching process and the likelihood of her successfully attaining her coaching objective. However, the psychological well-being of the participant superseded the requirements of the executive coaching process and, as a result, the consultant began to terminate the coaching relationship and recommended counseling services to Jane.
There was also some evidence that Jane began to demonstrate some competence in Empathy, although this was not an explicitly stated coaching objective. In the first coaching session, the consultant utilized the cognitive intervention of reframing (Persons, 1989; Orenstein, 2007). Specifically, the consultant asked Jane to think of a specific example that demonstrated when she had a challenging interaction with Bill. After analyzing Jane’s role and behaviors in the interaction, the consultant asked Jane to think about the interaction in a different way (i.e., from Bill’s perspective). This intervention allowed Jane to think about the impact of her communication style and behaviors on others. This also provided an opportunity for Jane to empathize with Bill or understand his emotional reactions better (cf. Goleman, 1998). Jane said the conversation with Bill helped her to better understand what Bill expected of her, but also helped her become aware of Bill’s perspective and placed “herself in his shoes.” During the final evaluation meeting, Jane stated that she had gained an appreciation for Bill’s perspective as the head coach.

Critically, the common, cognitive-behavioral oriented dimension of the Guiding Conception (Persons, 1989) supported Alex and Jane in their progress toward the attainment of their coaching objectives. The assessment, formulation, and limited number of available coaching sessions provided the rationale for matching the participants to this approach. In Alex’s case, the interventions of modeling, and specifically the consultant as model, role-playing, behavioral experimentation, breaking a complex goal apart into manageable steps, and self-reflection were utilized. In Jane’s case, the interventions of role-playing, reframing, behavioral experimentation, self-reflection, and breaking a complex goal apart into manageable steps were utilized. These cognitive-behavioral
interventions allowed for the possibility of the participants’ realistic and targeted progression and self-development.

In Laura’s case, the executive coaching process ended after the delivery of the 360-degree feedback results due to organizational delays and barriers which significantly impacted the effectiveness of the coaching process. While organizational delays are frequently the norm rather than the exception, a more flexible timeframe (i.e., more than 15 weeks) could be useful when engaging in a coaching opportunity. As a result, Laura was unable to identify a coaching objective and move forward with coaching sessions. However, there appeared to be some indication that she had increased her self-awareness in the final meeting. This was demonstrated by her reactions to the 360-degree feedback report. For example, Laura was pleased to hear about some of her strengths, but also expressed surprise at some of her strengths and areas for development. She also identified that the process, overall, was very helpful in addressing problems and thinking about things from a different perspective.

Overall, there appeared to be some positive change in all three cases. However, the amount of change and the type of change varied in each case. Due to the constraints discussed above, the Empathic Organic Questionnaire was utilized in only one case to measure the type and amount of change. There was a missed opportunity to effectively measure change in the other two cases.

Future Directions

While the present study began to explore the adaptation of the executive coaching methodology to the student leader population, there are aspects that could be further investigated in future research. For example, the identification and role of the supervising
manager could be examined in detail. The inherent definition of a student organization allows for the ambiguity in designating who the supervising manager would be. In two of the three present cases, the role of the supervising manager inhibited the progression of the executive coaching process and provides evidence that points to the importance of the supervising manager in the executive coaching process.

Another direction for future research could be to extend the length of the executive coaching process (cf. Orenstein, 2007). The extension of coaching sessions might allow for further development of the consultant-client relationship and trust. Also, increasing the number of coaching sessions would allow the consultant to further utilize cognitive-behavioral and systems-oriented approaches as well as the psychodynamic approach.

Lastly, different measures of emotional intelligence competencies for use with the student leadership population could be further investigated. For example, the present study utilized a pragmatic, case study approach and a semi-structured interview process that allowed the participant to identify a coaching objective derived from developmental areas that either stemmed from emotional and social competencies and / or broader leadership competencies. Previous research has identified several measures of emotional intelligence competencies used in typical work or organizational settings which could be adapted for use with student leaders. For example, the ESCI is a 360-degree assessment that consists of 72 items related to the emotional and social competencies (Gowing & O’Leary, unpublished paper). In addition to the organic questionnaire utilized in Orenstein’s (2007) approach, the ESCI can be used in future research with student leaders as a multi-rater evaluation measure of emotional and social competencies.
Conclusion

There was mixed support for the first goal of the present study; the degree to which the executive coaching methodology could be adapted to potentially enhance a student leader’s emotional intelligence competencies varied among the three cases. The present study demonstrated that there is a potential for use of the executive coaching methodology with student leaders within a university setting. However, there are several influencing factors that either support or inhibit the successful completion of the coaching process as well as the participant’s achievement of the coaching objective. If the critical success factors are incorporated in the applications, it appears that this executive coaching process could be extended as a tool to benefit university groups. These critical success factors include (1) the participant’s openness and commitment to the coaching process; (2) a clearly designated supervising manager who is involved and supportive of the entire coaching process; (3) the use of an empirically based 360-degree assessment tool; (4) the consultant’s knowledge and training in psychology, including Organizational and Clinical as well as individual, group, and system; (5) Use of Self (cf. Alderfer, 1985; Orenstein, 2007); and (6) the use of an empirically based evaluation measure.

There was also mixed support for the second goal of the present study. Although there was some evidence that the student leaders changed in positive ways as a result of the coaching, the evaluation design made it impossible to assess the extent to which emotional intelligence competencies changed. The results of the present study pose several important questions and leave the door open to future research.
References


APPENDIX A

The Updated Emotional Competence Framework (2007)
(Based on the new ESCI)

Personal Competence

SELF - AWARENESS

1. Emotional self-awareness: Recognizing one’s emotions and their effects. People with this competence:

   1. Know which emotions they are feeling and why
   2. Realize the links between their feelings and what they think, do, and say
   3. Recognize how their feelings affect their performance
   4. Have a guiding awareness of their values and goals
   5. Aware of their strengths and weaknesses
   6. Reflective, learning from experience
   7. Open to candid feedback, new perspectives, continuous learning, and self-development
   8. Able to show a sense of humor and perspective about themselves

SELF - MANAGEMENT

2. Emotional self-control: Managing disruptive emotions and impulses. People with this competence:

   1. Manage their impulsive feelings and distressing emotions well
   2. Stay composed, positive, and unflappable even in trying moments
   3. Think clearly and stay focused under pressure

3. Adaptability: Flexibility in handling change. People with this competence:

   1. Smoothly handle multiple demands, shifting priorities, and rapid change
   2. Adapt their responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances
   3. Are flexible in how they see events

4. Achievement drive: Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence. People with this competence:

   1. Are results-oriented, with a high drive to meet their objectives and standards
   2. Set challenging goals and take calculated risks
3. Pursue information to reduce uncertainty and find ways to do better
4. Learn how to improve their performance
5. Are ready to seize opportunities
6. Pursue goals beyond what’s required or expected of them
7. Cut through red tape and bend the rules when necessary to get the job done
8. Mobilize others through unusual, enterprising efforts

5. Positive Outlook: Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks. People with this competence:

1. Persist in seeking goals despite obstacles and setbacks
2. Operate from hope of success rather than fear of failure
3. See setbacks as due to manageable circumstance rather than a personal flaw

Social Competence

SOCIAL AWARENESS

6. Empathy: Sensing others’ feelings and perspective, and taking an active interest in their concerns. People with this competence:

1. Are attentive to emotional cues and listen well
2. Show sensitivity and understand others’ perspectives
3. Help out based on understanding other people’s needs and feelings

7. Organizational awareness: Reading the currents of emotions and political realities in groups. People with this competence:

1. Have insights into group social hierarchies
2. Detect crucial social networks
3. Understand the forces that shape views and actions of clients, customers, or competitors
4. Accurately and objectively read situations and organizational and external realities

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

8. Influence: Wielding effective tactics for persuasion. People with this competence:

1. Are skilled at persuasion
2. Fine-tune presentations to appeal to the listener
3. Use complex strategies like indirect influence to build consensus and support
4. Orchestrate dramatic events to effectively make a point

9. **Inspirational Leadership**: Inspiring and guiding groups and people to work together toward common goals. People with this competence:

   1. Articulate and arouse enthusiasm for a shared vision and mission
   2. Step forward to lead as needed, regardless of position
   3. Guide the performance of others while holding them accountable
   4. Lead by example

10. **Coaching and Mentoring**: Sensing what others need in order to develop, and bolstering their abilities. People with this competence:

    1. Acknowledge and reward people’s strengths, accomplishments, and development
    2. Offer useful feedback and identify people’s needs for development
    3. Mentor, give timely coaching, and offer assignments that challenge and grow a person’s skills.

11. **Conflict management**: Negotiating and resolving disagreements. People with this competence:

    1. Handle difficult people and tense situations with diplomacy and tact
    2. Spot potential conflict, bring disagreements into the open, and help deescalate
    3. Encourage debate and open discussion
    4. Orchestrate win-win solutions

12. **Teamwork and collaboration**: Working with others toward shared goals. People with this competence:

    1. Balance a focus on task with attention to relationships
    2. Collaborate, sharing plans, information, and resources
    3. Promote a friendly, cooperative climate
    4. Spot and nurture opportunities for collaboration
APPENDIX B

Proposed Coaching Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Week(s)</th>
<th>Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Meeting (1 hour)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Goal Setting Meeting (1 hour)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic Interview (1 hour)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360 Degree Interviews (3-4 1 hour meetings) and Feedback Analysis</td>
<td>4 – 5</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback (2 hours)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Setting Meeting (1 hour)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Session 1 (1 hour)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Session 2 (1 hour)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching Session 3 (1 hour)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching Session 4 (1 hour)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching Session 5 (1 hour)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Facilitating Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final/Evaluation Meeting (1 hour)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Concluding Coaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Estimated Hours: 16

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1 Adapted from Orenstein (2007)
APPENDIX C

Script for Initial Meeting with Participant

Introduction to Emotional Intelligence and Executive Coaching

Thank you for meeting with me today. I am studying Organizational Psychology at Rutgers University and would like to speak to you about an exciting research project. I would like to examine the potential enhancement of emotional intelligence through multidimensional executive coaching. Such enhancement has been found to be associated with improved management and leadership skills. Before I tell you more about this research project, I’d like to know if you have heard of emotional intelligence or executive coaching? If so, what does emotional intelligence or executive coaching mean to you?

Emotional intelligence has been defined as the ability to perceive and express emotion, understand and reason with emotion, and control your own emotions as well as the emotions of others. For example, if a fellow student is experiencing difficulty with a certain task, can you sense what he/she may be feeling? Can you think of why emotional intelligence might be important in a student organization? Do you have any questions about emotional intelligence?

Executive coaching involves forming a helping relationship between a client who has a leadership position within an organization and a consultant who uses a wide variety of behavioral methods that help the client achieve a mutually identified set of goals to improve his or her performance within that organization. Executive coaching services are offered to a wide variety of leaders in corporations, public settings, private settings, and non-profit organizations and often are very expensive. Executive coaching provides you with the opportunity to learn more about yourself and may help you become more successful in your important role as a student leader. Do you have any questions about executive coaching or about the ways it may benefit you?
APPENDIX E

Semi-Structured 360-Degree Interview Protocol

Thank you for meeting with me today. The purpose of this interview is to explore your experience and perceptions of <Participant> in his/her role at <Organization>. Do you have any questions about the purpose of the interview?

I would like to take a few minutes to review the process we will follow for the interview. The length of the interview will not be longer than 60 minutes. As for interruptions, such as phone calls, it would be helpful if you would hold your calls until the interview is complete. It would also be helpful if we could keep the door closed for privacy.

Confidentiality: Each individual’s statements will remain completely confidential. Nothing will be reported back in a way that would identify you as the speaker.

Voluntary: Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose to end the interview at any point. You may also choose not to answer a specific question.

Before we begin do you have any questions?

Participant: ________________________

Date: _________________________

1. How long have you known ________? In what capacity?

2. How often do you interact with _______? For what purposes?

3. Please describe ______’s role as you understand it.


5. How comfortable are you working with ______? What is the best thing about working with ______? What would you change about working with ______?

6. Have you learned anything from ______?

7. If you were to give ______ advice, what would it be?

8. If you were making the hiring decision for ______’s job, would you hire him? Why or why not?

__________________________

Adapted from Emotional Competence Framework, Hay Group (2007) and Orenstein (2007)
9. Please comment on his/her effectiveness in the following areas.³

- The ability to recognize his/her own emotions and their effects on others.
- The ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses
- The ability to be flexible in handling change.
- Striving to improve.
- Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks
- Sensing others’ feelings and perspectives.
- Reading the currents of emotions in groups.
- The ability to persuade others effectively.
- The ability to inspire and guide people to work together toward common goals.
- Sensing what others need in order to develop.
- The ability to negotiate and resolve disagreements.
- The ability to work with others toward goals.

10. Please comment on his/her effectiveness in the following areas⁴:

- The ability to plan certain tasks or projects.
- The ability to be organized.
- The ability to effectively share responsibilities with others.
- The ability to communicate well with others.
- The ability to motivate others around a particular task or project.
- The ability to lead others, provide guidance, and direction.
- The ability to effectively interact and relate with others.

11. Is there anything else that wasn’t asked that should have been? Is there anything else that would be helpful to know?

³ Specific examples will be used to frame questions.
⁴ Specific examples will be used to frame questions.
STUDENT LEADER COACHING FEEDBACK

Alex

CONFIDENTIAL
STUDENT LEADER COACHING FEEDBACK

“Alex”

Organizational Context

- Four campuses appear to have their own cultures within the student organization, although the intent is to move toward a unified organization across the campuses
- Expectations for the vice-chair/co-chair role appear to differ across the campuses
- “A” Campus is viewed as the “active” and “progressive” campus
- “A” Campus Vice-Chair role has been inactive until this year

Role Expectations

- Partner with Liz as co-chair
- Be a liaison between hall reps and Chair
- Support Chair as Vice-Chair
- Responsible for secretarial duties
Strengths

Communication

• Communicates well ("clear," "concise," "positive")
• Asks for clarification when needed
• Listens well

Striving to Improve

• Consistently strives to improve ("perfectionist," "passionate")

Persuasion

• Able to persuade others

Organizational Skills

• Strong organizational skills ("very organized")
• Punctual ("always on time")
• Plans well

Persistence

• Persists despite setbacks and obstacles
• Maintains positive attitude

Self-Awareness

• Recognizes own emotions and effects on others
• Knows his limits

Sensing other people’s feelings and perspectives

• Aware and considerate of other people’s feelings and perspectives
• Reads the mood of a group very well ("a moderator," "recognizes when others are upset")
Complex Areas

Leadership

- Friendly and Personable
- Approachable
- Motivator (“energetic”, “motivating”)
- Active
- Trusting (“trusts administration and hall reps”)
- Good partnership with Liz (“tag team duo”)
- Open (“willing to listen”)
- Lacks confidence at times (“can be guarded”)
- Does not realize his full potential (“has amazing potential”)
- Does not always view himself as an equal (“should see his voice as being valuable”)

Flexibility

- Very open to change
- Handles change well
- At times, is too “open and easygoing”
- Does not always voice his opinion (“doesn’t put himself out there”)
Most Common Advice

- Don’t be afraid to take on a challenge

- Maximize your potential (“take a higher position next year,” “be more ambitious”)

- Be more confident (“don’t worry about other opinions too much”, “share your opinions in the group”)

Dear Evaluator:

The purpose of this evaluation is to discover the effects, if any, of leadership coaching on behaviors of those who undergo the process. Therefore, your perceptions in the past and present are crucial.

This evaluation has four sections:

- Section I asks you to reflect on your interactions with Alex approximately 5 to 6 months ago and to describe his leadership behavior at that time.

- Section II contains a series of statements about past behaviors. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements in relation to Alex.

- Section III asks you to reflect on your interactions with Alex currently and to describe his leadership behavior at the present time.

- Section IV contains the same statements about present behaviors. Again, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each in relation to Alex.

All of your responses will be treated with complete confidentiality.

Thank you for your participation.
EMPATHIC ORGANIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Section I

Please reflect on your interactions with Alex approximately 5 to 6 months ago. In the space below, briefly describe what Alex was like as a leader in your organization. Then, please answer the questions in the following sections.
# EMPATHIC ORGANIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Section II

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about Alex as they describe his behavior approximately 5 to 6 months ago. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box.

**Key:**
1. Disagree completely
2. Disagree somewhat
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree somewhat
5. Agree completely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. He was aware of other people’s feelings.</td>
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<td>2. He strongly demonstrated confidence in his role.</td>
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<td>3. He dismissed other people’s perspectives.</td>
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<td>4. He considered people’s feelings.</td>
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<td>5. Sometimes he was “guarded” during meetings.</td>
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<td>6. He had the ability to recognize when other people were upset.</td>
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<td>7. He did not always voice his opinion during meetings.</td>
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<td>8. Sometimes he did not see his perspective being valuable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. He functioned as the moderator in a group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. He did not recognize the “mood” of the group during meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Sometimes he was too open and easygoing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. He always voiced his opinion when he felt strongly about something.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. He did not consider other people’s perspectives.</td>
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<td>14. He worked to his full potential.</td>
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<td>15. He put himself “out there” in meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. He dismissed people’s emotions during meetings.</td>
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<td>17. He often led meetings on his own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. He did not recognize when the group got upset during meetings.</td>
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<td>19. Sometimes he lacked confidence as a leader.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. He used humor to lighten the mood when a meeting got tense.</td>
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5 Coaching Objective category: Leadership / taking up authority
Control category: Empathy
SAMPLE EMPATHIC ORGANIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Section III

Please reflect on your interactions with Alex currently. In the space below, briefly describe what Alex is like as a leader. Then, please answer the questions in the following sections.
SAMPLE EMPATHIC ORGANIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Section IV

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about Alex as they describe his behavior currently. Please place a check mark in the appropriate box.

Key:
1. Disagree completely
2. Disagree somewhat
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree somewhat
5. Agree completely

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<td>1. He is aware of other people’s feelings.</td>
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<td>2. He strongly demonstrates confidence in his role.</td>
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<td>3. He dismisses other people’s perspectives.</td>
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<td>4. He considers people’s feelings.</td>
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<td>5. Sometimes he is “guarded” during meetings.</td>
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<td>6. He has the ability to recognize when other people were upset.</td>
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<td>7. He does not always voice his opinion during meetings.</td>
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<td>8. Sometimes he does not see his perspective being valuable.</td>
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<td>9. He functions as the moderator in a group.</td>
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<td>10. He does not recognize the “mood” of the group during meetings.</td>
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<td>11. Sometimes he is too open and easygoing.</td>
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<td>12. He always voices his opinion when he feels strongly about something.</td>
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<td>13. He does not consider other people’s perspectives.</td>
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<td>14. He works to his full potential.</td>
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<td>15. He puts himself “out there” in meetings.</td>
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<td>16. He dismisses people’s emotions during meetings.</td>
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<td>17. He often leads meetings on his own.</td>
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<td>18. He does not recognize when the group gets upset during meetings.</td>
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<td>19. Sometimes he lacks confidence as a leader.</td>
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<td>20. He uses humor to lighten the mood when a meeting got tense.</td>
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6 Coaching Objective category: Leadership / Taking up authority
Control Category: Empathy
STUDENT LEADER COACHING FEEDBACK

Jane

CONFIDENTIAL
STUDENT LEADER COACHING FEEDBACK

Jane

Organizational Context

- Team has changed over the years
  - Some team norms, expectations, and rules have changed (e.g., breakfasts), while others have stayed the same (e.g., drinking policy)
  - The men’s team no longer practices with the women’s team; female dominated group
  - Captainship is now shared among three team members
- Many team members have multiple roles (e.g., team member, friend, captain, roommate)
- The team spends a great deal of time together every week

Role Expectations

- Lead and be a role model for the team
- Mediate between coach and fellow swim team members
- Help create a positive team environment
- Enforce team rules, norms, and expectations
- Coordinate team apparel
- Support and organize social activities
Strengths

Leadership

- Passionate about team’s performance and concerns ("love of sport", "competitive personality", "is tough when needs to be", "passionate about team issues")
- Approachable ("receptive", "can approach Cat")
- Vocal ("strong opinions")
- Driven ("hard worker", "very determined")
- Has a great relationship with Bill ("knows how to interact and talk with Bill")

Communication

- Effective communicator with team
- Able to articulate team issues or concerns well to Bill
- Listens

Striving to Improve

- Consistently strives to improve ("top of the line")
- Encourages others to do also strive in their improvement

Persuasion

- Able to persuade others effectively ("gets people on board", "gets through the agenda")

Organizational Skills

- Strong organizational skills ("One of the most organized people I know")
- Follows through with tasks

Persistence

- Very persistent despite setbacks and obstacles ("gave up one stroke and excelled in another")
- Willing to do what it takes
Complex Areas

Self-Awareness

- At times, is aware of her emotions and the impact of her emotions on others
- Sometimes does not notice the influence she has on other team members
- Struggles with letting go of certain emotions at times

Sensing other people’s feelings and perspectives

- Willing to listen
- At times, is conscious of others’ feelings and opinions
- Can be set in her ways
- Doesn’t always read the group’s mood or others’ feelings
- Can be “removed” from the team

Sharing Responsibilities

- Driven and likes to “take on everything”
- Has shared and “bounced” ideas with other captains
- Challenge in sharing responsibilities with others and “letting go”
Most Common Advice

- Remember to listen to other perspectives and people’s feelings
- Don’t take on too much as a captain
- Appreciate the respect you have from others on the team
APPENDIX I

STUDENT LEADER COACHING FEEDBACK

Laura

CONFIDENTIAL
STUDENT LEADER COACHING FEEDBACK

Laura

Organizational Context

- Multi-campus organization

- Student centers provide programs, facilities, and services that promote social, cultural, educational, and recreational interests of university community

- House Crew is responsible for touring buildings regularly, adhering to room set-up standards, and setting up AV equipment

- Many managers and staff members are also students

- Appears to be a lack of understanding among staff members about a manager’s role

Role Expectations

- Manager of House Crew unit at X campus

- Set up event schedules

- Supervise staff who set up and execute all of the events

- Ensure that staff members are aware of their assignments and complete assignments

- Train staff
Strengths

Communication

- Communicates well (“gets her point across”)

Striving to Improve

- Consistently strives to improve (“never a second rate job”)

Persuasion

- Able to persuade others (“institutes policy changes well”)

Organizational Skills

- Strong organizational skills (“always prepared”)
- Strong planning skills (“carries a binder with event schedules, work schedules, and class schedules”)

Persistence

- Persists despite setbacks and obstacles (“makes sure the job gets done regardless of what happens”)

Self-Awareness

- Recognizes own emotions and effects on others (“doesn’t take out feelings on others,” “controls herself”, “puts herself in check”)

Sensing other people’s feelings and perspectives

- Aware and considerate of other people’s feelings and perspectives (“very good at perceiving other people’s feelings”)

Ability to resolve and negotiate and resolve disagreements

- Helps mediate disagreements between staff members (“can talk to staff members factually”)

Managerial Style

- Team builder (“builds relationships among team,” “used team building exercises”)
- Approachable (“can talk to her about any problem”)
- Dependable
- Reliable
- Competent (“knows what she’s doing”)
- Motivator (“able to motivate staff”)
- Adaptable (“accommodates event changes as much as possible,” “keeps moving,” “change doesn’t stop her”)
- Very strict (“black and white,” “objective,” “follow the rules or don’t follow the rules”, “goes by the book”)
- High expectations for staff (“not everyone is an over-achiever”)

Complex Area
Most Common Advice

- Be more relaxed. (“Don’t take some of the things that people say and do personally,” “Don’t take things to heart,” “Don’t take things so seriously”)

- Set boundaries with staff. (“Understandable that it may be difficult to supervise peers”)