



Theme-Lab «Coaching in Organisations», 12th June 2018

### **Maternity Coaching in Multinationals**

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#### **Project Information**

The following project is part of a Dissertation submitted to Oxford Brookes University in 2016 for the partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts (Coaching and Mentoring Practice).

It explores how maternity coaching can complement organisational maternity benefits across various managerial levels in two large organisations operating in the UK, Germany and India. In an empirical action research study, mothers and line managers were interviewed to understand their salient issues. Based on these interviews and additional input, for example from coaching practitioners, a maternity coaching programme was developed. Three coaching cycles with four mothers per cycle were carried out. The feedback they provided at the end of each cycle along with further data, for example from coaching supervision, helped to develop and refine the programme. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the interviews and feedback.

The findings indicate that maternity coaching can act as complementary means to existing maternity benefits by supporting mothers on an individual level that cannot be attended to otherwise. The combination and interplay of support measures results in an improvement of the transition back to work, the organisations' reputation and ultimately the retention of mothers.

This study provides an evidence-based maternity coaching programme that can be re-applied in similar settings. Thus, the findings not only further the maternity coaching evidence base but could be relevant in other business sectors or similar return scenarios.

The study was awarded a distinction (2016) and won the APECS (Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision) prize for best dissertation (2017).

#### **Description of content of contribution**

The paper's content is concerned with three areas that contribute to answering the research question how maternity coaching can complement organisational maternity benefits:

Improving the understanding of the return-to-work experience (What are the themes that can be identified when women transition back to the workplace?)

Further understanding how maternity coaching can impact the transition process (What elements should a maternity-return coaching programme contain and how should coaching sessions be structured?)



Understanding the interplay of support measures (What are the benefits of structural organisational and individual support measures? Should they be used in combination or is either a structural or an individual support measure sufficient? How does one affect the other?)

## Biography

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## Personal information

**Christine Vitzthum** is an independent coach. She holds an MA in Coaching and Mentoring Practice from Oxford Brookes University and her areas of expertise include parental coaching, career development, leadership and transition coaching. She draws on experience in several Multinationals and SME in Germany, the UK and Australia.

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**Jérôme Wend** works as an independent executive coach. He is a coaching expert in leadership, transition and parental coaching. His international employment background is with Multinationals as well as SME on an upper management level. He holds a MA in Business Coaching from Dr. Bock Coaching Akademie in Berlin.

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