

**Cerni, T. (2015). Guided reflection model: How executive coaching can assist organizational leaders enhance their creativity, innovation and wisdom. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 3(4), 495-504.**

The quest to obtain and maintain a competitive edge on the part of an organization often instills high expectations and other burdening constraints on organizational leaders. Such constraints often serve to stymie critical self-reflection and, subsequently, innovative thinking on the part of these leaders; who often simply defer to performance reviews and other evaluative processes as a substitute for such self-reflection.

A 2015 article out of Australia, published in the *American Journal of Educational Research*, sought to evaluate the value of executive coaching in assisting leaders to develop their sense of creativity and inner wisdom by grounding them in an understanding of separate cognitive systems underpinning rationality and experience. The author hypothesized that a combination of context, affect and self - dynamically influenced by these systems - can serve to heighten this sense of creativity, and used Cognitive-Experiential Theory (CET) - a theory based on the notion that separate, bi-directional and interacting systems govern both rationality and experience - to make this case.

Though theoretical in nature, and requiring, in the author's own submission, further empirical testing to bear out specific provisional claims, the article provides a number of key insights of relevance to the burgeoning scholarship of coaching. The CET framework provides evidence that leaders are influenced by both their rational and experiential systems, and both have a bearing on the leader's sense of creativity. However, the degree to which either system is in operation is highly context dependent, and reflects a sum total of environment, emotional influences and self-awareness. Moreover, creativity and a subsequent sense of innovativeness hinges on a range of different mental processes operating in concert in a zig-zagging fashion; shaped by the ideas, beliefs and values that are drawn from individual experience and the meaning attributed to that experience.

The practical implications for these conclusions are that coaching practitioners can work with organizational leaders to enhance their sense of creativity by bringing the right skill set, creating the right context, engendering as much positive affect as possible, and helping the coachee to develop a deep understanding of their self. The executive coach can unlock many of the contents of consciousness hidden in the recesses of the coachees mind by encouraging psychological risk-taking, helping them to attain greater emotional intelligence, and developing a sense of realism about self and life. By helping the coachee balance their rational and experiential systems in effective harmony, they can help to unlock the creative potential of the coachee.