

What is E-Coaching?

Definition of E-Coaching

Coaching, of course, is about purposeful interactions between a coach and the person or persons being coached. E-Coaching moves the process online and expands the possibilities. Some e-coaches call what they do “distance coaching,” “distance mentoring,” or even “telementoring.” What’s interesting here is that online experiences and tools are the fundamental way of supporting the coaching relationship.

The concept of e-coaching can be defined as the practice of coaching through technology (Kamphorst, 2017). For example a human coach uses technology as a mode of communication to get information about a coachee’s behavior or to give feedback. Or more specifically according to (Ribbers & Waringa, 2015) as: “E-coaching is a non-hierarchical developmental partnership between two parties separated by a geographical distance, in which the learning and reflection process is conducted via both analogue and virtual means.”

With upcoming new technologies one of the parties could be potentially of artificial descent. This approach could foster the self learning abilities of students and relieve/support lectures. Some of these E-Coaching Systems can be found in Health (Banos & Nugent, 2018) and lifestyle (Yousuf et al., 2018) applications.

Conclusion

To conclude there are two interpretations of E-Coaching:

1. The usually coaching in a digital way supported by information and communication technology
2. A coaching approach through an artificial coach implemented in E-Coaching Systems

The first one can be supported through known technologies such as online conference tools (e.g. Zoom, Skype, Hangouts etc.), Chat Systems (e.g. Whatsapp, Rocket.Chat, Slack, Mattermost etc.) and collaboration tools (e.g. Basecamp etc.). These applications enable coaching sessions without the need of a face-to-face interaction. The second understanding is harder to implement and lacks the human flexibility to switch topics. There are approaches which foster specific fields of interest like fitness, health/nutrition or social skill coaching but the adaptability to other use cases are very limited.

First prototypically Research has been done to flexibilise the architecture behind AI Coaches but nevertheless if the needed application is not already available to build one from scratch is a resource intensive task.

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