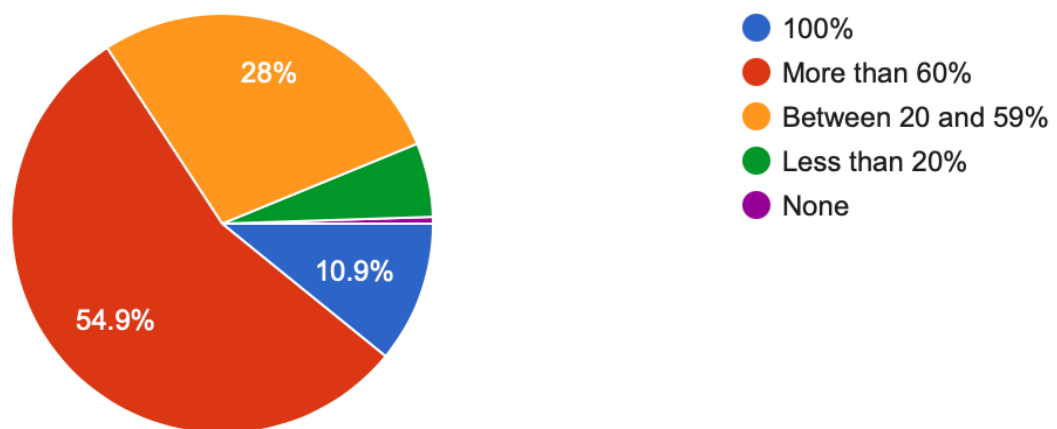


Coaches helping clients with work-life balance issues – results of a survey

Many thanks to the nearly 200 of you, who completed our short survey on client's work-life balance (WLB) issues. The survey confirmed that this is a critical area of competence for coaches, while challenging some other assumptions. Here is a short headline summary of the results.

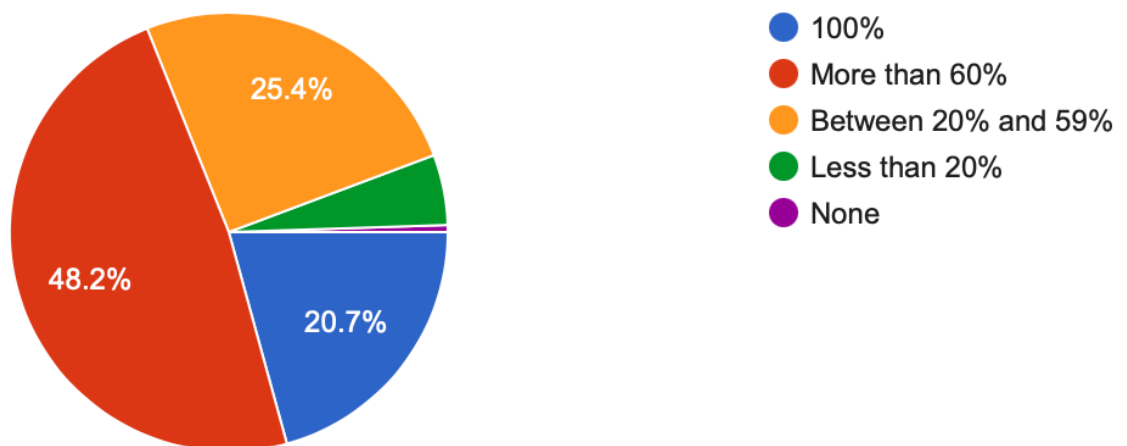
1. What proportion of your clients want at some point to explore issues of work-life balance?

Not surprisingly, the proportion was relatively high overall, as the numbers below show. Slightly more than one in ten coaches reported that all their clients had work-life balance issues; while less than 10% reported that under a fifth of their clients presented WLB issues. An interesting question here is the extent to which this difference relates to the kind of client, the focus of coaching, or other phenomena.



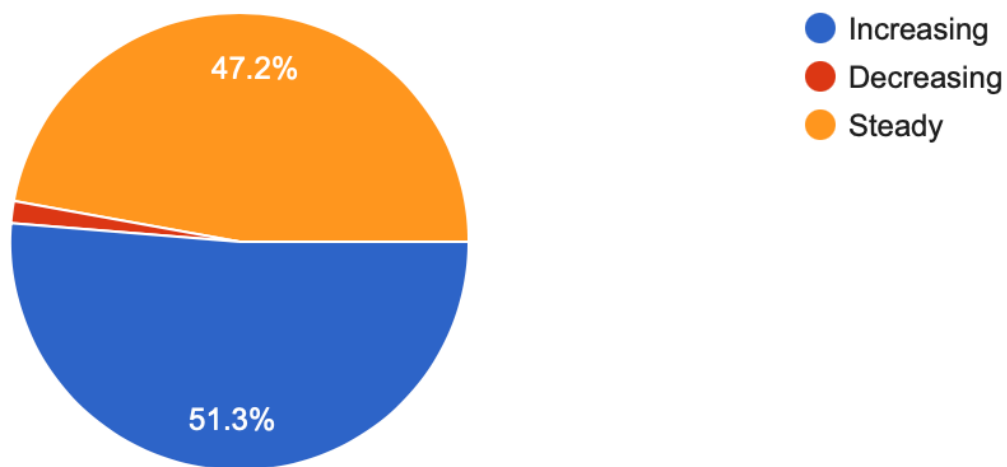
2. How often are these clients presenting related issues, such as burnout, stress, indecision, sleep deprivation, imposter syndrome or loss of identity?

More than two-fifths of coaches report that their clients, who have WLB issues, also report more serious symptoms. This is significant, because these symptoms may take coaching to the boundaries of therapy, with the associated ethical and skills implications of operating there.



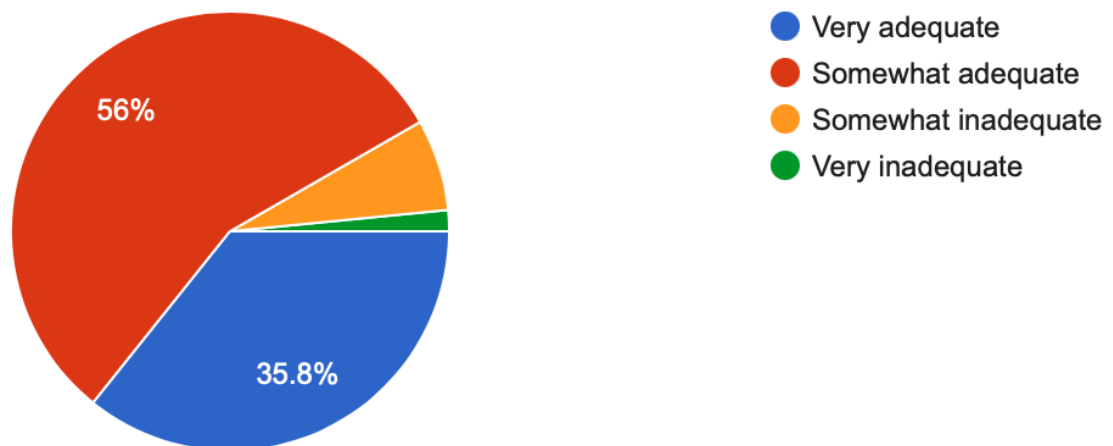
3. Is the frequency of work-life balance issues rising in your practice?

51% of our coaches reported increasing frequency – in line with the expectations that gave rise to the survey. Only 3 (1.5%) saw a decrease. Until now, there has been a lack of specific data about this aspect of employee well-being.



4. How adequate do you feel is your toolkit for helping these clients restore greater balance?

The majority of coaches felt they had a “good enough” toolkit to deal with this aspect of client need, with only 4% reporting that their toolkit was somewhat or very inadequate.



5. What tools do you find most useful?

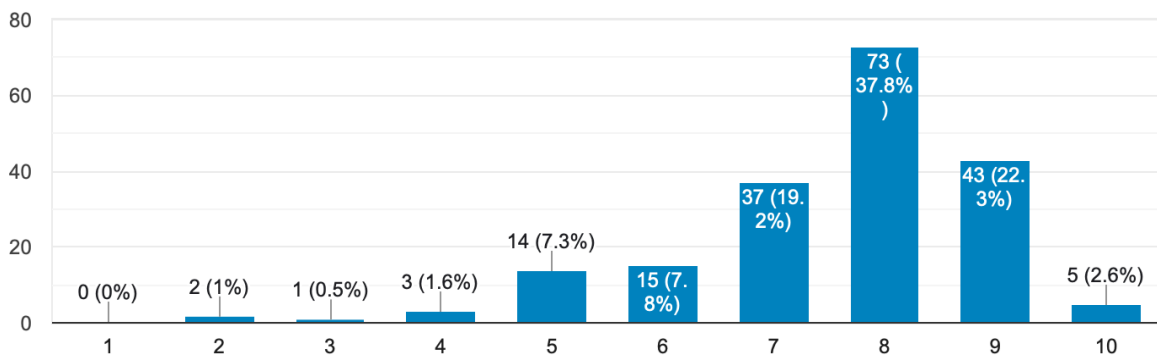
Not surprisingly, there was a wide range of tools, with the wheel of life and priority setting tools mentioned frequently. Some coaches, who had specialist training in areas such as trauma management, found these to be particularly helpful.

6. In what areas, if any, would you value acquiring new tools?

Similarly, while roughly two-thirds of coaches felt their toolkit was already good enough, others suggested a wide variety of areas for further development. These included specific training in resilience, burnout, imposter syndrome, complexity, energy management and new insights from neuroscience.

7. How would you score yourself (out of 10) as a role model for good practice in managing work-life balance?

Overall, coaches scored themselves remarkably highly as role models for work-life balance. This may in part be related to the nature of the coach's role as a life choice – and to how the nature of the work makes us aware of work-life balance tensions.



Summary

The enduring prevalence of work-life balance issues suggests that this will continue to be a significant part of coaching practice in coming years. A superficial view of the data might suggest that coaches are generally complacent about their relevant skills, but digging deeper into the responses indicates a willingness to absorb new tools and approaches as these arise. This is a fertile area for research – in particular, into the dynamics of client systems, organisational systems and the interface between them.