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## **KEYNOTE PRESENTATION**

**9th International Congress of Coaching Psychology, London, 10-11  
October, 2019**

### **Coaching Psychology from a Second Wave Positive Psychology Perspective with Strengths-based Appreciative Coaching for Leaders**

**Dr. Ceri. M. Sims (ceri.sims@bucks.ac.uk)  
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A central feature of positive psychology coaching is identifying and developing individual strengths (Linley, Woolston & Biswas-Diener, 2009; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Snyder & Lopez, 2009). Although positive psychology coaching (PPC) has been shown to improve management effectiveness (Evers, Brouwers & Tomic, 2006) and productivity (Olivero, Bane & Kopelman, 1997) as well as increasing flourishing (Grant, 2007), limitations of PPC have been an avoidance of the 'dark sides' of people which have been shown to impede healthy interpersonal relationships, learning and growth (Nelson & Hogan, 2009). There is also evidence that leaders may already be playing to their strengths in excess to the detriment of their team, with these 'lopsided' leaders being at risk of derailing rather than bringing positive outcomes (Kaiser & Overfield, 2011). Thus, leaders in senior positions may need to learn to identify risks in overplaying their strengths, regulate them and even downplay them in certain situations.

Positive Psychology has recently moved into a second wave or PP2 (Held, 2004; Ivztan et al., 2015; Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014; Lomas & Ivztan, 2016, Wong, 2011) that incorporates the darker human states more explicitly into its agenda. Sims (2017) has identified a range of techniques a PP2 coach can apply that adopts this more holistic approach to PPC.

There is evidence to show that being with the coachee through discomfort during strengths coaching is more helpful than avoiding these difficulties (Clifford, 2011). Appreciative Coaching (Orem, Binkert & Clancy, 2007) from Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2017; Lewis, 2011) is discussed as a way of adopting a radically appreciative gaze for working with resistance and shadow in coaching (Crestani, 2015; Fitzgerald & Oliver, 2012).

This keynote presentation discusses an Appreciative Coaching programme with a senior leader that incorporates Strengthscope® assessment and feedback for the identification of strengths underplayed, strengths in overdrive and limiting weaknesses in leadership development.

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Strengthscope: <https://www.strengthscope.com/>

### **Biography**

Dr Ceri Sims, PhD, PG Cert HE, CPsychol, is Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Buckinghamshire New University ([ceri.sims@bucks.ac.uk](mailto:ceri.sims@bucks.ac.uk)). She is chartered by the British Psychological Society and is on their register of coaching psychologists and a member of the ISCP. She was a research scientist for the Medical Research Council and has also taught and researched at Durham, Newcastle, London and Middlesex universities. Her PhD and early research background was in developmental psychology with a focus on young children and children with atypical developments. She has researched and published on a range of topics, including developmental disorders, multicultural perceptions of well-being, personality and communication, inclusive leadership and coaching psychology with recent publications in peer-reviewed coaching and applied positive psychology journals (*The International Coaching Psychology Review*, *The Coaching Psychologist* and *The European Journal of Applied Positive Psychology (EJAPP)*). She is also on the International editorial board of *EJAPP* and has acted as an editor on various psychology journals, including recently for the *International Journal of Listening*).

Dr. Sims leads modules on Bucks New University's Masters in Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) course, runs a 'Positive Psychology in Coaching' course and Leadership Programme for NHS trusts. She is also an external examiner for the Applied Coaching and Positive Psychology Masters degree at the University College Cork as well as a member of the advisory team for the ISCP's International Centre for Coaching Psychology Research. As a self-confessed 'Pracademic', Ceri's interests are in bringing the rich background and rigour of psychology, (positive psychology in particular), to the artful and creative practice of Coaching Psychology. She is the director of the coaching company Positive Minds Alliance Ltd.