

## INTENSIVE EVENING ON ETHICS

EMCC Finland organised an intensive and successful evening on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 about ethical issues regarding mentoring and coaching.

The audience consisted of members of the three main coaching /mentoring associations in Finland: EMCC, ICF and SCY (Finnish coaching association). Our presenters were Pia Pihlajasaari, researcher Doctor of psychology, Vesa Nuorva, head of training, Doctor of Theology and Marianne Borg Hyökki, sr. coach, PCC, CMC.

The sponsor of the facilities was the Family Federation of Finland, an organisation in the social and health sector. Their mission is to promote the well-being of families, youth and population by providing services, acting as an advocate and carrying out research. The federation has a Centre for Multicultural Expertise, which supports immigrants and professionals working with immigrants and ethnic minorities. The centre runs the WOMENTO program that offers mentoring for educated, female immigrants.

Our program was based on three ethical viewpoints

- 1) Research view: What the latest research tells us about ethical organisational culture, ethical stress (caused by ethical dilemmas) and turnover of leaders.
- 2) Pedagogic view: Is it possible to teach ethics?
- 3) Senior coach's view: How to deal with ethical dilemmas as coach / mentor?

This was followed by a panel discussion led by Toni Hinkka, CEO at CXO Oy, to give participants the opportunity to participate in the discussion and ask questions.

### Highlights of the presentations

**Pia Pihlajasaari**, looked into the relations between ethical organizational culture, ethical strain i.e. stress caused by ethical dilemmas such as "I don't know what is the right thing to do" OR "I know what is ethically right - but I 'm not allowed to do it" and the impact on job turnover.

Key findings

- 1) Ethical organisational culture supports employees and prevents stress / burnout
- 2) High personal authority to act ethically improves well-being of the employees
- 3) Ethical organisational culture promotes low turnover of personnel
- 4) Ethical role models are extremely important (message for leaders!)

Overall, the results showed that an ethical organizational culture has a significant impact on occupational well-being and remaining in the same workplace.

**Vesa Nuorva** tackled the question “Is it possible to teach ethics?”

Vesa has reached the conclusion that it is not possible to teach ethics, but teachers should rather model the right behavior as ethical behavior will be absorbed by seeing it demonstrated.

“Ethical behaviour requires empathy - and empathy can be learned only by studying art.”  
(Nussbaum).

Vesa also mentioned a research that was carried out in the US - where business schools increased teaching ethics - but found out that behaviour in business life didn't become more ethical.

His presentation inspired us as a reminder of how interesting the perspectives of Nussbaum, Phillips and Kohlberg on ethics are.

**Marianne Borg Hyökki** is one of the coaching pioneers in Finland

She emphasized the importance of as coach / mentor to

- find out what kind of organisational culture your customer has
- work in a way that enables transparency and clarity – avoid twisting the truth.
- recognize the signs of peer pressure.
- always sign a written agreement with your client.
- have a supervisor /third party to reflect your work with.

The feedback of our event was outstanding and the participants found the evening professionally very beneficial.