



## Solidarité pour l'Ukraine – 01/05/2023- numéro 15 – Wrong track

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The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (iriv) is associated to the international solidarity for Ukraine attacked by Russia on 24th February 2022. After a pandemic that has weakened democratic countries with the disturbing rise of conspiracy theories and hate speech on social networks, we do hope this war in Europe will be an opportunity to reflect on a new solidarity, among European and international allies. This issue is the fifth for 2023 and the 15<sup>th</sup> since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. In the theatre play "The Lady of the Sea" published by the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen in 1889, the main character, Dr Wangel summons Professor Arholm to understand the strange behaviour of his wife who is moving further and further away from him. He realized by exchanging with his guest that he was on the wrong track – the

explanation he had found (a disappointed love between Arnholm and his wife) was wrong. Sometimes people who know everything about your life are wrong about your behavior. We ask ourselves in this issue about the virtues and setbacks of coaching. In a first point, we explain the «rules of the art» of a successful coaching that can be very fruitful to prepare leaders but disastrous when the working hypotheses are biased. In a second point, we study the facets of a “Russian-style” coaching; in a third point, we tackle the Ukrainian resistance to this long, brutal and repetitive strategy. In conclusion we wonder about the consequences of a failure in coaching.

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\* le logo a été dessiné par Caritas Canada en février 2022

## Rules of the art

A coach was initially “in sport the person in charge of the training of a sportsman or a sportswoman, or of an entire team” (French dictionary «The Robert» edition of 1990). Coaching has become a widespread professional practice that has spread to all sectors of social and economic life – culture with “voice” coaches, psychology with “personal coaches”, education with “school coaches”.

According to the International Coaching Federation (ICF), the first coaching association, founded in 1995 in the United States (in 1999 in France), which brings together the world’s first professional coaching network with tens of thousands of members, a presence in 148 countries, on social networks and a YouTube channel (1), coaching is based on four values: professionalism (skills), humanity (emotional intelligence), collaboration (team spirit), and equity (fair play). Professionalism includes “responsibility” (of one’s actions), “respect” (for one’s “trainees”), “integrity” (of the process with critical feedback), “competence” (know-how) and if possible “excellence”. Humanity is associated with “knowing how to be” (savoir-être) - “kindness,” “compassion,” and “respect to all,” but especially to the trainees. Collaboration is defined in relation to other coaches by committing to building a social bond that strengthens the coaching community. Equity is about implementing “fair processes” that produce “equality for all” that includes the idea of equal opportunity.

When an international organization wishes to recruit a candidate with “high potential”, to entrust him/her with sensitive and strategic missions, it is normal to put him/her through different stages of evaluation, a demanding process that does (normally) call for qualified coaches and may enrol for several years (the more sensitive the position, the longer the period). Three essential conditions must be met. The first condition is a relevant temporality – the longer the process, the more the assessment becomes that of the process and the coaches because high-potential candidates are highly critical (based on their experience and skills). The second condition is an appropriate coach profile – it must match the candidate’s profile; if they send a caricature feedback to the trainee (defiant or even rude coaches), coaching turns into rivalry and sloppy confrontation. The third condition is the neutrality of the process - coaching prescribers (organization leaders or team of psychologists, psychiatrists, or cognitive scientists working for the organisation) must be impartial, their judgment must be objective, at least honest. Any choice is subjective, it is therefore necessary to ensure that a monitoring or steering committee of the candidate associates as many members in his/her favour as in his/her disfavour. The ideal is a perfect neutrality. The protocols serve in a scientific approach to guard against bias or «noise» (2) mentioned in the book «Noise» co-written by a specialist in cognitive psychology and behavioural economics (Daniel Kahneman); a professor in a business school HEC Paris (Olivier Sibony) who teaches strategy and decision-making and a Harvard law professor who worked for the Obama administration (Cass R. Sunstein). Plurality of skills is essential for a proper selection process.

## Coaching « the Russian way »

Unsurprisingly, “Russian-style” coaching is not an example of good practice. When we look at the three conditions we have looked at previously, it is overwhelming.

Time is the first indication that the process implemented was not effective and appears to have been flawed from the outset. For three years (2019-2022), we have already pointed out that the specialists summoned (psychologists and other behavioural strategists), have made bad assumptions about the personality of the candidate Volodymyr Zelensky. The process seized in early 2022 to become frankly brutal with a war declared on February 24. But all analysts recalled that the smear campaign against Ukraine had begun before the election of President Zelensky. The war really began in 2014 after the Maidan revolution when the Ukrainians dared to ask for their inclusion in the European Union and already courageously expressed their will for democracy and freedom. The consequence was the occupation and then annexation of Crimea by Russia and the war lurking in the Donbass, with Russia relying on Russian-speaking «partisans» who demanded a rally to the «Russian big brother».

When President Zelensky was democratically elected, he was already regarded with reservations and even with caution by the “Russian experts”, who were therefore not neutral. Their basic assumptions were from the outset to disqualify him. It was illusory to make him believe that they would one day consider him a legitimate interlocutor and that they would grant his requests. They had decided to suppress him if not physically (several attempts aborted since the beginning of the conflict) at least symbolically by constantly discrediting and denigrating it. They did not skimp on resources and took their time to implement their plan.

The qualification of the “coaches”, the slurs and barkers in the pay of the Kremlin hawks (4), is the last clue that allows us to conclude that the “coaching” of Russia towards Ukraine started in 2014 aimed at brutalizing, submitting to annihilate a “candidate”, Ukraine, which they never considered legitimate and which they worked to denigrate, attack, building the perfect profile of the «beast to be slaughtered». This hostile attitude was clearly expressed by the thurifers of the Russian regime who did not miss an opportunity to insult the Ukrainian president by using foul or gravelly words.

The Russian methods are no different from those of the USSR. The French historian H  l  ne Carr  re d'Encausse in a book published in 1980: «Le pouvoir confisqu  » (5) had denounced the excesses of «brejnevisme» (governance by president Brejnev) defined as «a regime that perpetuates the confiscation of power by the Party». A world enclosed by «political power and its relations with the forces that assure its power: the police and the army». Curiously the historian who had been so far-sighted about the USSR was blinded by Putin’s Russia. She did her “*mea culpa*” after the beginning of the war in Ukraine, which she had not foreseen, like many other experts, and even French “military intelligence” (6).

## Ukrainian resistance

The Ukrainian resistance to Russian “coaching” is edifying. President Zelensky’s strategy has not yet borne fruit, but the spirit is good and constructive. He has been able to avoid the coarse pitfalls and traps set by his Russian “friends” from the beginning.

The Ukrainian president left with the best of intentions. He is not naive, but he was inexperienced for the position of political leader, which he had never exercised in real life. He only had one fictional rehearsal with his show. All the ingredients were gathered to prepare him to carry out his project - to bring Ukraine into the camp of Western democracies, fighting against the endemic corruption of certain political or economic leaders (under the influence of Russia) and by rallying Ukrainian and international (Western) public opinion to his cause. He would never have imagined war but was preparing for a confrontation, a “*mano a mano*”. Russian designs since Vladimir Putin’s accession to power in 1999 have never been peaceful - wars in Chechnya, Georgia, Syria, Crimea, and Donbass. The Ukrainian President also noted the lack of attention of his Russian counterpart when they met in Paris, which did not bode well for the future.

Volodymyr Zelensky never failed to recall his commitment and did not allow himself to be crushed in the literal and figurative sense. He may have made mistakes, he was just starting out, but the spirit was honest and frank. He didn’t play a character, he sincerely believed in it. He did not break his word – bringing his country into the western camp. He did not deviate from his goal. He also did not yield to the sirens of ease, who could, for example, have made him lose his guard in the face of massive and repeated pressure from “false friends” to make him assume a bad role. He is not under the command of any foreign leader. American President Trump did not hesitate to blackmail him, suspending financial aid to Ukraine in 2019 during the presidential campaign against candidate Joe Biden who was fortunately elected and became a main ally (7). Volodymyr Zelensky resisted enormous pressure. He has not cracked since the beginning of the war when he did not have any military training and did not expect to lead a country in such extreme conditions, with constant attacks on his life and probably those of his family. On the contrary, he strengthened himself, he proved that he had steel nerves. He transformed himself physically, he forced himself, he gained authority without ever losing his humanity. The emotion sometimes pierces under the breastplate he forged, but it is momentary and never prevents him from persevering.

In a series of five articles published by the French daily newspaper “Le Monde” (8) on “Volodymyr Zelensky, the Kiev resistance fighter” on the occasion of the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine, journalists write in the fifth opus “By deciding not to leave the Ukrainian capital, the president, who hated war and did not want to believe in it, not only foiled the Russian plans of attack, he revealed himself to the world and offered himself a destiny.” The difference is striking with his Russian counterpart, «master coach»: «when Putin lives recluse in ultra-protected bunkers, Zelensky shows himself in the heart of his city, in the open air, and multiplies the escapes».

## The « too much » coaching

International organizations that engage with selected “candidates” want anonymity. Their emissaries are the only witnesses of their intentions. Anonymity is a double-edged sword, when emissaries are not up to the task, when “coaches” slip up because they don’t have the required skills (intellectual, psychological, or manners), the selection process turns into a disqualifying machine with all the slippage that such a mechanism implies that ultimately turns against the organization. It is in turn evaluated by the candidates, disappointed by so much relentlessness and invaded by a singular impression of immense waste. “*Much ado about nothing*” (9). International organizations can rest assured that candidates with “high potential” know how to bounce back and benefit from even disappointing experiences. In a way, they agree with the organisations that selected them - they had the material, but their experience and skills will be used by others, people who will appreciate them. The evaluation process was therefore not in vain.

Has the Russian regime thought of the alternative of offering benevolent, constructive coaching, in a word «intelligent» coaching to Ukraine? According to some analysts, Vladimir Putin’s strategy is intentionally brutal because he does not only want his adversary to be defeated but also his annihilation so that the eventual survivors do not even have the idea of revenge and retaking arms. Since his first war in Chechnya, he has made strong allies in his own image, such as Chechen President Kadyrov who appeared in Ukraine, a “free electron, a belligerent satrap” that portrays “his warrior zeal and loyalty to Vladimir Putin” (10) *ad nauseam*. Evgueni Prigojine, boss of the Wagner group, mercenaries sent to the most perilous areas of operation is just as sulfurous.

The resistance of President Zelensky and Ukraine to such a repetitive and tedious brutality is remarkable. There is talk of democratic fatigue in Western countries where abstention is constantly increasing in elections, in France as in Europe. If Europeans and Westerners were attacked by Russia and its authoritarian allies, would they take up arms with the same courage? Would they oppose the same resistance or yield to the false sirens of pacifists? Such is the bet and the hypothesis of Vladimir Putin who is convinced that democracies would not resist long. He has lost, for the moment, in Ukraine, a dress rehearsal of a battlefield that could expand, but in other European countries?

In Henrik Ibsen’s «Lady of the Sea», the main female character, Elida Wangel, the doctor’s wife, tempted by the sirens of a foreign sailor, finally wakes up. She decides to join her husband who gave her the most precious gift: freedom «which goes hand in hand with responsibility» declare in chorus all the characters of the play in a «happy end» that we dared not hope for anymore.

Let us wish the same happy end to Ukraine but especially to the Western camp - that it does not engage on a «wrong track».

- (1) Henrik Ibsen ,« La Dame de la mer » , Oslo, 1889
- (2) International Coaching Federation - <https://www.coachfederation.fr/icf-coaching/?en-reloaded=1>, consulté le 25/02/2023
- (3) , D. Kahneman, O. Sibony & Cass R. Sunstein (2021) “Noise”, Paris : Odile Jacob (pour la traduction française ; New York , Boston, London Little, Brown Spark pour la version originale)
- (4) Documentaire de Kristian Kähler et Saskia Geissler, « Ukraine-Russie et la guerre de propagande », Arte, diffusé mardi 14 février 2023
- (5) Hélène Carrère d’Encausse (1980) « Le pouvoir confisqué », Paris : Flammarion
- (6) On se souvient du limogeage du chef du renseignement militaire français en mars 2022- le général Eric Vidaud a quitté son poste de directeur du renseignement militaire (DRM), notamment à cause de sa gestion de l’invasion russe en Ukraine- <https://www.bienpublic.com/defense-guerre-conflit/2022/03/30/le-directeur-du-renseignement-militaire-francais-limoge>
- (7) Le fils du président Joe Biden a été employé par une entreprise ukrainienne ; Donald Trump a insinué qu’il avait bénéficié de la position de son père et s’était laissé acheter par les oligarques ukrainiens
- (8) Ariane Chemin et Rémy Ourdan « Volodymyr Zelensky, le résistant de Kiev »- Les cinq vies de Volodymyr Zelensky, Le Monde, 24 février 2023
- (9) William Shakespeare « Much ado about nothing”, Londres, 1599.
- (10) Pierre Sautreuil , “Guerre en Ukraine : le président tchéchène Ramzan Kadyrov, le fou du tsar », La Croix, 06/11/2022

## Contacts utiles

Pour aider l'Ukraine, voici une liste d'associations & ONG - **Source** : <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/actualites/A15542>

**Support Ukraine** – une plateforme accessible sur - <https://www.supportukraine.co/>

**Croix-Rouge Française** - [Croix-Rouge française](#) pour des dons financiers, en soutien de la Croix-Rouge ukrainienne, au Comité International de la Croix-Rouge - <https://www.croix-rouge.fr/Nos-actions/Action-internationale/Rechercher-un-programme/LA-CROIX-ROUGE-FRANCAISE-EN-UKRAINE>

**Médecins sans frontières** - [fonds d'urgence](#) dans les pays limitrophes de l'Ukraine et cherchent à faire entrer du matériel médical et du personnel. - <https://soutenir.msf.fr/faire-un-don/~mon-don>

**Secours populaire** - lance un appel aux dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine .- <https://don.secourspopulaire.fr/ukraine/~mon-don>

**Protection civile** - un appel aux dons pour financer d'autres besoins (défibrillateurs, respirateurs, groupes électrogènes, etc.) : <https://don.protection-civile.org/soutenir>

**Fondation de France** - lance un [appel à la générosité](#) pour soutenir les centaines de milliers de personnes affectées par le conflit en Pologne et en Roumanie - - <https://dons.fondationdefrance.org/solidarite-avec-les-ukrainiens/~mon-don?>

**Agence des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés** - situation d'urgence de niveau 3 pour la crise en Ukraine, le plus élevé. L'UNHCR a renforcé ses opérations en Ukraine et dans les pays voisins, our la soutenir, vous pouvez faire un don : [https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine?\\_cv=1](https://donner.unhcr.org/fr/fr-fr/urgence-ukraine?_cv=1)

**Unicef** - un besoin urgent de financement pour répondre aux besoins essentiels des enfants Pour faire un don sur le site Unicef.fr - [https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322&\\_cv=1](https://don.unicef.fr/b/mon-don?cid=322&_cv=1)

**ONG Care International** - un [formulaire en ligne de dons d'urgence à l'Ukraine](#) pour apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations et aux réfugiés - - [https://soutenir.carefrance.org/mon-don/~mon-don?ns\\_ira\\_cr\\_arg=IyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyPkJ6HFA1Y69SN8wBpGdbU49oyB0t9PJwOohrrNCWZ1E1xvYyuCP14dJQ2nrY0C9CFXInHRxueOqPBpQ7tkkn%2F&private\\_server\\_time=1672227862538&cid=13&\\_cv=1](https://soutenir.carefrance.org/mon-don/~mon-don?ns_ira_cr_arg=IyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyMjIyPkJ6HFA1Y69SN8wBpGdbU49oyB0t9PJwOohrrNCWZ1E1xvYyuCP14dJQ2nrY0C9CFXInHRxueOqPBpQ7tkkn%2F&private_server_time=1672227862538&cid=13&_cv=1)

**L'ONG française ACTED** organise des convois humanitaires pour l'Ukraine

**association Solidarités International** – une [collecte des fonds](#) pour envoyer des convois de vivres et biens de première nécessité, distribuer de l'eau et des repas aux réfugiés - [https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880&\\_cv=1](https://dons.solidarites.org/b/mon-don?cid=880&_cv=1)

**Plan International**, en Pologne, Roumanie et Moldavie, pour apporter aide matérielle et psychosociale aux jeunes ukrainiens et à leur famille, et [sollicite des dons](#) pour ce faire.- <https://formulaire.plan-international.fr/urgence-ukraine/~mon-don>

**L'Aide médicale et caritative France-Ukraine** - envoi de convois d'aide humanitaire, des soins aux blessés, des échanges de savoir-faire médical, une aide psychologique et organise des colonies de vacances pour les enfants orphelins - HelloAsso - <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/aide%20medicale%20caritative%20france%20ukraine/collectes/aider-ukraine-amurgence-help-ukraine/don>

**Le Comité d'aide médicale Ukraine** - réfugiés en transit dans l'ouest du pays, et collecte fonds, médicaments et équipements pour l'hébergement et les soins via ses partenaires français, l'association SAFE et l'organisation FONDEMOS. - <http://www.cam-z.org/en/news/121/>

**JeVeuxAider.gouv.fr** est la plateforme publique du bénévolat, - une page dédiée Mobilisons-nous pour l'Ukraine. - <https://www.jeveuxaider.gouv.fr/engagement/benevolat-ukraine/>

**Les Banques alimentaires** - une aide d'urgence à apporter aux frontières de l'Ukraine, dans les pays frontaliers accueillant des réfugiés - <https://www.banquealimentaire.org/urgence-ukraine>

**La Protection Civile et l'Association des maires de France** ont établi une [liste](#) (lits de camps, sacs de couchage, lingettes, conserves, pansements hémostatiques, solutions antiseptiques ...).

**L'Association des maires de France** a dressé les [lieux de collecte](#) à travers toute la France. Les Maires de France appellent à la [solidarité avec l'Ukraine](#). De nombreuses villes de France organisent des collectes de produits de première nécessité - <https://www.amf.asso.fr/documents-les-maires-france-appellent-la-solidarite-avec-lukraine/41122>

**La plateforme officielle** « *Je m'engage pour l'Ukraine* » lancée le 8 mars 2022 par le gouvernement pour accompagner les Français souhaitant héberger chez eux des Ukrainiens réfugiés et accueillis en France. - <https://parrainage.refugies.info/>

Les associations, fondations, entreprises et collectivités territoriales peuvent utiliser ce [formulaire en ligne](#) pour renseigner leur capacité d'hébergement. - <https://www.demarches-simplifiees.fr/commencer/hebergement-personne-morale-ukraine>

**Bibliothèque sans frontière (BSF)** - Depuis le début de l'offensive russe en Ukraine, BSF se mobilise et déploie, partout en Europe, des solutions d'urgence pour l'accueil et l'intégration des populations réfugiées. « Bonjour France » est une application pour smartphone innovante et totalement gratuite, qui propose un apprentissage accéléré du français depuis l'ukrainien, disponible depuis le 19 octobre 2022.

<https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/2022/10/14/bsf-lance-bonjour-france-une-application-innovante-dapprentissage-du-francais-pour-les-refugies-ukrainiens/>

La mission catholique de l'Eglise polonaise en France suggère également le lien suivant : <https://mission-catholique-polonaise.pl/polska-we-francji/pere-brzys-la-mcp-lance-une-initiative-nationale-pour-aider-lukraine/> - **Source** : conférence des évêques de France