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COACHING INTRODUCES RUSSIA TO A NEW SOURCE OF ENERGY

VIKKI BROCK

(Editor's Note: Vikki Brock has graciously prepared a number of brief stories from her book: *The Sourcebook of Coaching History*. Each month during 2014, the *Peer Bulletin* will include one of these stories. Note: Links typically are for current work of group or individual.)

Coaching in Russia evolved from large group awareness training ([LGAT](#)) through [est](#) and [Lifespring](#) in the late 1980s. [Svetlana Chumakova](#), a pioneer of coaching in Russia, attended est classes taught by Werner Erhard and was general manager for Lifespring Russia between 1993-1996. In 1996 she and five other trainers formed their own company to bring personal development to business. In 1997 Chumakova hired a coach from California, and enrolled 14 people in Erickson College's [NLP program](#).

Marilyn Atkinson, founder of Erickson College in Canada, began working in Russia in 1991. She first taught NLP to groups of 200 to 300 people, and later helped develop the coaching discipline itself. Svetlana Chumakova co-founded [International Coaching Academy](#) in 1998 in Moscow after she completed "The Art and Science of Coaching" at [Erickson College](#), and was certified by them in 1998.

To expand her perspective, meet coaches and learn new models, Chumakova attended the first ICF European conference in Switzerland in 2001. In 2002 she met [Sir John Whitmore](#) at the ICF conference in Spain and invited him to teach Coaching for Performance in Russia. She went on to found the Russian Chapter of the ICF in Moscow in 2002. During the early years, the chapter had few people, yet by 2010



graduates from the International Coaching Academy took over responsibility for the chapter as the successors to Chumakova. Since then, students from the Baltic countries have founded their own ICF chapters.

In November 2002 Russia held its first of four ICF conferences, with 120 attendees in St. Petersburg and 250 in Moscow. Keynote speakers were [Zoran Todorovic](#) and [Marcia Reynolds](#), the then-current ICF President. In 2003 Chumakova earned her ICF Professional Certified Coach designation, followed in 2006 by her ICF certification at the Master Certified Coach level.

Chumakova opened up Russia to coaching by starting the conversation, bringing in education, and creating community. She also translated coaching books into the Russian language, including *Co-Active Coaching* (Whitworth, et. al.), *Coaching for Performance* (Whitmore), *Becoming a Professional Life Coach* (Williams & Menendez), and *Coaching with Backbone and Heart* (O'Neill).

When asked why she started the coaching movement in Russia, Chumakova said: "I saw people with huge potential who didn't have the opportunity to grow and flower in the authority of the country. Coaching is most useful for Russian people to reach inside. The hearts and minds of Russian people are more than oil and gas."



(This article is available as a PDF [here](#).)