



Our coaching ethos

As Corporate Coaches, we focus on helping people to excel in work situations. We know the day will come when clients say “thanks - I can go it alone now”. We also know they will come back to us when things change and they are faced with new challenges. Our work makes a difference to our clients, the people who work around them, and their families.

We offer coaching in the following situations:

Senior corporate executives

A tailored programme of coaching suits business leaders who believe that courses won't meet their unique development needs. They also feel they don't want to discuss their development needs with anyone inside the organisation, perceiving this as a sign of weakness.

Small businesses owners

Business people often have no one to bounce their ideas off. They are also conscious of the value of their time and expect to see a rapid return on their investment. Coaching provides them with someone to brainstorm with.

Newly appointed managers

Nearly half of newly appointed managers feel that they are not adequately prepared for their new roles. (1) We use coaching to assist them in:

- clarifying objectives
- developing key skills
- building their confidence.

Career management

In the past, career paths were much easier to recognise. Organisations managed people's careers for them. These days, organisations are flatter, more complex and subject to greater change, so career planning is more difficult. Coaching enables people to actively manage their careers.

Management team coaching

Team coaching is becoming increasingly popular, particularly at Board level, recognising the importance of effective working relationships. We work extensively with senior teams to assist them in developing their strategy, developing their decision making capability and generally improving team effectiveness.

Why coaching?

Coaching is valuable in organisations for the following reasons:

- With tighter controls on expenditure, HR managers must demonstrate return on investment. Recent research found that management training alone increased the productivity of participants by 22%. Once training was supported by coaching, the productivity improvement increased to 88%. (2)
- Senior managers are expected to identify for themselves what they should focus on. However, they often focus on work that they are confident and familiar with; in other words, the work of the more junior role from which they have been promoted. Coaching can help them to shift this focus.

- The flexibility of coaching is one of its major strengths. In our practice we offer a blend of face-to-face, telephone and email support to suit clients' needs. Coaching can be stand-alone or combined with other interventions, such as management training. Coaching can be developmental or remedial i.e. used to accelerate the performance of a potential high flier or improve the performance of a manager who is struggling.
- Coaching is popular because it reflects today's society:
 - Our struggle to balance what we wish to do with what we are obliged to do
 - Increased organisational complexity and change resulting in increased job complexity
 - Breakdown in traditional respect for authority - managers need to be more accomplished at influencing people; they need greater emotional intelligence
 - People expect lifelong learning and development rather than training just at the beginning of their careers.

How we work with clients

Contracting

In corporate coaching there are often three parties in the coaching relationship: the coach, the client, and the person who is paying the bill. Our coaching contract, which is agreed by all three parties at outset, includes:

- Expected outcomes
- Costs
- Contact time to be provided and whether face-to-face and/or by phone and e-mail
- Location for face to face work
- Support required from within the organisation
- What we expect of them and in return what they can expect from us
- Confidentiality (It is essential that the client can talk to their coach in the full confidence that what they discuss will not be reported back to their boss. We recommend that the client should write a regular evaluation report for themselves and their boss to discuss.)

Adapting our coaching style

We find that coaching in the workplace ranges between a more directive approach that draws on our coaches' experiences and knowledge, to a more therapeutic approach. We seek to detect the best approach for that client at that time and to adapt our coaching style accordingly (or refer the client on if they need support that we cannot provide). We introduce a range of tools and models into our coaching as appropriate to the needs of each client rather than slavishly following a prescribed formula approach.

Evaluating the impact

Evaluation is a challenging activity. We often use 360 degree feedback in addition to more results-based measures. Used at the outset of a coaching programme to establish the current reality, it can be used again at the end to help the client to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

References:

- 1) Executive Coaching: What makes a great executive? (The Hay Group - 2002)
- 2) Executive Coaching as a Transfer of Training Tool: Effects on Productivity in a Public Agency by Olivero, Bane and Kopelman (Public Personnel Management - 1997)