



Executive Coaching - Going Beyond the Façade

***'The goal of coaching is the goal of good management: to
make the most of and organisation's most valuable resources.'***

Harvard Business Review

www.execdevelop.com



What is Executive Coaching?

“Executive Coaching is a motivating and interactive work-related process focused in helping and supporting an individual improve their performance, develop their skills, and their behaviour.”

Executive coaching is a dynamic and powerful means of development that is:

- Person centred;
- Goal-specific;
- Short-term (6 months);
- Time limited;
- Action-orientated;
- Objective in nature; and
- Utilises on-going feedback.

It is important to recognise that executive coaching is very different to, and should not be confused with, ‘life’ coaching, mentoring, counselling, and psycho-therapy.

Why Use Executive Coaching?

There are six key reasons to chose coaching over more traditional means of development for executives and key senior people these being (in no particular order):

- The often lonely and isolated nature of senior executives in many organisations, commonly exacerbated by travel and globalisation, means that these key people can greatly benefit from an independent party that can help them to either re-engage in or continue to learn through providing challenge and support;
- Many senior executives consider that they have ‘made it’, believing that because of this they have little to learn or improve. To be seen to go away from work on a development course can be an admission of ‘weakness’ or give off a perception of ‘failure’ to others. The nature of an executive coaching relationship is private, confidential and avoids the ‘public gaze’;
- The increasing business need for ‘leadership’ and key ‘soft skills’ have often not been learned or embedded through business school and in-house or external development programmes. The personalised and objective approach of an executive coaching interaction has been found through research to be far more effective in the acquisition and development of leadership and ‘soft’ skills.
- The pace of change, particularly over recent years, has meant that the skills of many executives have ‘depreciated’. All skills unless kept up to date depreciate and in times of rapid change the rate of depreciation rapidly accelerates meaning that many senior executives need to update and learn new



skills on an ongoing basis. Executive coaching provides an ideal way of addressing this depreciation, accelerating new learning, and the development of new key skills.

- Time is of a premium for most senior executives and taking time away from work for traditional development approached is an imposition in an already busy diary schedule. Sessions with an executive coach can easily be scheduled in and around diary commitments especially through video conferencing.
- The need to implement business strategy and lead organisations, business units, and brands is an ever increasing demand being placed upon senior executives today in an highly competitive world, yet organisations and their executives have an historically poor record in strategy implementation and particularly the generation of performance. The challenge, support and feedback process of a coaching relationship is a highly effective way of helping senior executives in these key areas.

Typical Executive Coaching Opportunities and Situations

Executive Coaching is a powerful means of addressing a number of the personal related issues that affect individual, and subsequently, organisational performance. Those listed below are typical opportunities and situations:

- To help a senior person better understand themselves and the impact of their mindset on their leadership style;
- To support a senior person into a new or different role;
- To help a senior person improve their performance;
- To help an executive with the implementation of corporate strategy;
- To accelerate the personal development of a 'high potential' individual;
- To help underpin the effective implementation of organisational change through supporting an executive through the issues of transition involved in any process of change;
- Help with the integration and personal issues of transition and change involved with different nationalities moving around and taking up senior positions in global organisations;
- Help avoid the personal and financial costs involved with executive 'derailment';
- Provide the role of an impartial confidant—an 'outside friend' - to senior executives and board members.



The Executive Coaching Process

There are six main phases in every coaching interaction:

1. Coach briefing, entry and contracting with the individual (the coachee);
2. Identifying and assessment of the issues to be addressed;
3. Agreement of goals to be achieved (3-4 max) — An agreed 'coaching plan';
4. Enacting of actions by coachee to achieve goals;
5. Review and discuss actions and goals against plan, agree new goals if appropriate;
6. Work towards agreed exit.

Phases 3 to 5 form the ongoing 'coaching cycle' whilst phase 2 may be revisited if required particularly as goals may be achieved and possibly replaced with new goals. The aim from the outset is to work towards phase 6 and the exit of the coach.

Coaching Contract

Any coaching contract should be focused entirely on meeting the agreed goals of the coachee in as short as time as possible, ideally a maximum of 6 months.

The coaching contract is agreed prior to the first coaching session and covers the contracting relationship; identification of the issues to be addressed; the goals; and an outline 'coaching plan'.

The 'coaching plan' forms the framework for the ongoing coaching interaction. It is usual for the coach and coachee to meet once a month for one to two hours but also for ongoing discussions to take place via phone, email, and video conferencing as generated by the coachee.

Both a 360° Feedback instrument and the Beliefs and Attitudes Mindset questionnaire are usually used to help people better understand how their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours impact their relationships, their leadership, and their performance.

To learn more please contact Howard Betts at howardbetts@execdeveop.com or by calling him on his mobile: 07899903324.

You may like to learn more by visiting: www.execdevelop.com

'Everyone needs a coach. It doesn't matter whether you're a basketball player, a gymnast, or a bridge player' - Bill Gates

