



Case Study – Executive Coaching

Situation

Peter is an experienced senior manager responsible for a significant UK wide service operation that is undergoing fast paced change. He felt that the changes presented both opportunities and risks for his department and wanted to explore how he could develop his approach to ensure the best possible outcome for all concerned.

The initial request was for a mentor/coach to provide support and challenge in the areas of:

- ▶ Initiating significant and fundamental change
- ▶ Painting the picture clearly for others
- ▶ Capturing the imagination and inspiring others
- ▶ Overcoming obstacles
- ▶ Delivering at pace

During the course of the first conversation it became clear that Peter already had many of the competencies outlined by the original objectives and that led to a reframing of the coaching goals around behaviours and relationships, including:

- ▶ Clarifying the situation to identify where to concentrate attention
- ▶ Enhancing key relationships
- ▶ Making the capability and future potential of the department visible

Success would be measured by national recognition for his operation and positive personal feedback for Peter (e.g. a favourable performance review).

This change in emphasis is not unusual and part of the role of a coach is to help a client to determine the precise areas that they want to work on, supported by some clear objectives and measures.

Approach

Having established that coach and client could work with each other, the rest of the first meeting was spent understanding the background to Peter's situation and sharing some models to act as a common framework for a more detailed analysis.

In terms of structure it was agreed to keep the process fairly loose and meet every two to three months for around three hours. Peter left the meeting with commitments to apply the analytical models discussed and bring the results to the next meeting.

Each subsequent meeting typically included:

- ▶ A catch up on progress made and how the situation has developed
- ▶ Review of outcomes resulting from the commitments made last time
- ▶ Agree the areas that Peter wanted to work on this time around
- ▶ Work on those areas
- ▶ Review the models or profiling instruments applied
- ▶ Input any new models or profiling instruments
- ▶ Summarise insights and contract commitments for next time

Six coaching sessions of 2-3 hours duration were held over the course of a year.

The coaching environment enabled Peter to be open and provided positive challenge to stretch his thinking. Peter was able to critically review what was going well and where he needed to try a fresh approach. Simply setting time aside with a competent coach brought clarity to his situation at work and the opportunity to test thoughts and ideas about possible actions in a safe environment.

Tangible Outcomes

A combination of enthusiasm for the department and collaborating with other managers towards common goals enabled Peter to achieve:

- ▶ Enhanced working relationships both up and down the organisation
- ▶ Prestigious national award for the department
- ▶ Personal recognition in the form of a positive performance review and bonus
- ▶ A clear sense of how future possibilities might be achieved

The opportunity to engage in an open and honest dialogue in a confidential and structured environment was felt to be pivotal.

To protect client confidentiality, the names of people and organisations in this case study have been changed. Should you wish to speak to "Peter" or any of our other clients for the purposes of understanding more about the benefits of our approach we would be happy to arrange it.

You can read more about our approach to coaching on the Services pages of this site.