

INTRODUCTION TO EXECUTIVE COACHING

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

What Is Executive Coaching?

As an executive coach I partner with you in a growth-focused, thought-provoking and creative process that is designed to assist you in producing substantial, positive results in your personal and professional life. I come alongside you by seeking to elicit solutions and strategies from you, believing that you are naturally creative and resourceful. My role is to provide support, encouragement and accountability to enhance the skills, resources, and creativity that you already possess.

Why Does Executive Coaching Work?

It is effective because of three unique features:

- **RELATIONSHIP:** The core strength of coaching comes from genuine trusting relationship. Clients often count their coach as one of their closest advocates.
- **COLLABORATION:** Client and coach become a powerful, synergistic team for pursuing change as they work together on the client's goals.
- **STRUCTURE:** Rarely does significant progress happen in an individual's life without a specific plan. The coaching relationship helps provide the support necessary to pursue goals in a truly systematic and focused way.

Who Works With an Executive Coach?

Leaders of all ages, stages of life and backgrounds can benefit from executive coaching. This can include leaders who are looking to take their performance to the next level, those who have recently been promoted, who are new to the organization or leaders who are facing obstacles to achieving their peak performance. Whatever your situation may be, coaching provides an opportunity for meaningful growth and success.

What is the Focus?

Coaching works in any area of interest. In a successful coaching relationship, you set the agenda and I concentrate on keeping that the focus of all of our work together. We will work to identify your unique set of innate talents and strengths, acquired skills and knowledge and life experiences. These, along with the company's goals and objectives will provide the context for determining the most appropriate road map for achieving the desired growth outcome.

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Benefits of an Executive Coaching Relationship

1. **Ownership** – An executive coaching relationship breeds ownership because of the structure of the relationship. It is a relationship of equals that powers a process of learning and discovery for the client. “One of the most significant findings from adult learning research...is that when adults learn something naturally instead of ‘being taught,’ they are highly self-directing [i.e. they feel ownership and act on it]...What adults learn on their own initiative they learn more keenly and permanently than what they learn when being ‘taught.” (Malcom Knowles, *Designs for Adult Learning*, page 10)
2. **Motivation** – True motivation is the natural product of ownership. When a person decides what is most important to them and commits to action there is no need for outside motivation.
3. **Productivity** – One study has shown that organizations that provide coaching as a follow-up resource to training events (e.g. seminars, workshops) are four times as likely to meet their goals. Another study revealed that more than 3/4 of executives who had been trained in coaching reported better working relationships with their direct reports, and more than half reported improvement in productivity, team work, job satisfaction and conflict resolution. What would this kind of result be worth to your organization?
4. **Sustainability** – Coaching is not a cookie-cutter approach that leads to hit or miss results because of trying to make people what they are not. It is an approach that is based on the unique talents, strengths and acquired skills and knowledge of the person being coached. Therefore, the rate of success and the ability to repeat that success in the future with other individuals is much more reliable.

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Characteristics of a Coaching Relationship

Co-partnership between the Coach and the Client

- You and I are **equals** and are **mutually** involved in making the coaching relationship successful.
- I **come alongside** you with an attitude of serving your needs and agenda.

Personal Growth and Change is Affirmed

- **Safe** and **supportive** environment is created. **Honesty** is expected.
- I have a **genuine** concern for your client's success and well-being.
- I use **skillful** direct communication and feedback for the greatest **positive impact** for you.

Responsibility and Stewardship Belongs You

- I trust **you** to be **responsible for your own** goals and action steps created.
- You take responsibility to **follow-through** for your own decisions or action steps.

Believing the Best

- I genuinely believe in your **abilities**.
- I will **accept you** and take a non-judgmental stance toward you in the process.

Intentional Focus is on Your Distinct Design

- **Strengths** are championed.
- **Uniqueness** is respected.
- **Self-awareness** is encouraged.

Exploration/Discovery Encouraged through Active Listening and Powerful Questions

- Safe environment for exploration and discovery of new possibilities and avenues.
- Support and affirmation for new goals and behaviors helps you design actions.

Integrity, Authenticity, and Sincerity are Marks of the Relationship

- Coach demonstrates integrity, authenticity and sincerity.
- Coach keeps commitments.
- Trust is a central standard of the relationship.