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Getting the Best from your Corporate Coach

Your Guide to Ensuring Success Through Corporate Coaching

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Defining What You Want From Coaching

What is Coaching?

Coaching is a goal-centric, results-orientated approach to professional and personal development. It involves dynamic interaction through which the coach works with the client to identify options and take actions that move him/her towards clearly defined outcomes.

Coaching is thus clearly distinct from mentoring, training, consultancy, counselling and therapy.

Measuring Results

As with any development strategy, the impact of coaching is difficult to measure post-event if measures of success are not agreed up-front and so it is important to consider, before even engaging a corporate coach, what your objectives are and how you will monitor progress and measure success.

How do Organisations Measure Success

Research amongst City of London financial institutions by recruitment specialists Morgan McKinley and Vicki Espin of CECO indicated that just 54% of respondents actually measured success of their coaching programmes with just 30% able to assess the influence on bottom-line performance, suggesting that the success, or otherwise, of much corporate coaching activity is unknown. And yet, those companies which do measure success can see clear results.

Key Questions to Consider

1. How is the context for success created?
2. How will you measure success?

Some Key Tips to Consider

- Be clear about the value coaching will add to the business;
- Think about quantitative and qualitative measures;
- Consider appropriate mechanisms for capturing success criteria;
- Ensure your investment is sustainable and consistent.

3. Where do you expect coaching to have maximum impact? The individual, the team, the division, the organisation as a whole?
4. What are your key criteria for selecting the most experienced coaching provider?

Some Key Tips to Consider

- Whether you need a specialist coaching partner rather than a generalist development company which offers coaching as just one of its activities;
- Who will have the depth of experience to meet your business objectives;
- Their ability to demonstrate coaching on demand;

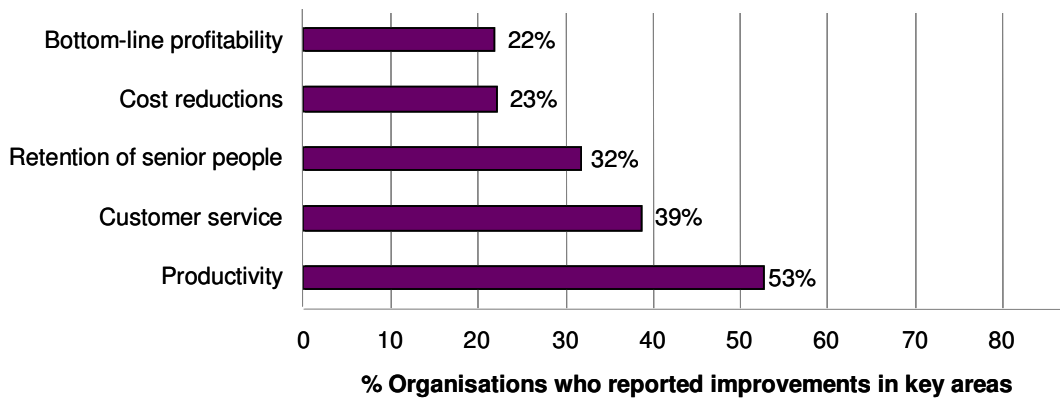


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- The currency of their thinking, clear process, best practice and leading edge approaches;
- Their ability to evaluate the impact of coaching and to advise you on the best approach to ROI for your business.

An experienced corporate and executive coach will be able to help the organisation identify appropriate measures of success which align with strategic objectives and values as well as those for the team and individuals.

A study of Fortune 100 Companies highlighted areas in which respondents identified bottom-line improvements.





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Selecting Excellent Coaches

National Occupational Standards

National Occupational Standards for Coaching and Mentoring in the Workplace have been established by ENTO (www.ento.co.uk). Working with a Steering Group comprised of experienced professionals and practitioners and which included Vicki Espin, a key objective was to set these standards to provide HR professionals with a clear framework to guide them in the selection process for the coaching providers.

The values which underpin these standards and which corporate coaches should be expected to hold, and which are detailed on the ENTO website, are to:

- Demonstrate empathy, sensitivity, compassion and respect for the coachee or mentee;
- Be a self-reflective practitioner and undertake continuing professional development;
- Act in an open, honest and ethical way and agree those ethics with all relevant parties;
- Establish and maintain professional relationships with all key stakeholders to ensure no conflict of interest;
- Demonstrate a willingness to question own understanding, assumptions, beliefs, and values;
- Respect boundaries and confidentiality;
- Demonstrate unwavering belief in the inherent potential of all individuals to learn, develop and achieve higher performance;
- Recognise that the responsibility to change lies with the coachee or mentee;
- Act in a way which balances the needs and interests of all key stakeholders;
- Recognise the potential of all individuals to learn and develop value diversity in all its forms;
- Recognise the boundaries of coaching and/or mentoring and to be aware that referral of the coachee or mentee to other qualified professionals may be necessary;
- Encourage the independence of the coachee or mentee.

Measuring Results

Having decided the objectives of your corporate coaching programme, you will want to know that the coaching provider you choose is able to demonstrate a track record of achieving success with other clients, both for the client organisation and for the individual coaching recipients.

Consider whether their experience of demonstrating return on investment is a core aspect of the way they work or simply in response to clients' requests.



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Key Questions to Consider

1. Where and when did the provider and coach receive their training?
2. Can they provide testimonials from previous and/or existing clients?
3. Can they provide evidence of an internationally recognised accreditation?
4. What Continuous Professional Development activities does the coach undertake?
5. Can the coach demonstrate a combination of academic learning and practical corporate experience?
6. What are the coach's fundamental philosophies and beliefs about people and organisational performance?
7. What are the coach's basic coaching philosophies?

Managing the Coaching Relationship

The success of a relationship between your organisation and your coaching partner will be underpinned by:

- A clear discussion with each individual client's sponsor to define the measures of success;
- A clear contract between the coach and each individual coaching client within your organisation.
- A clear contract between your organisation and the coach including, as a minimum:
 - An agreed definition of coaching;
 - Agreed measures of success;
 - Client confidentiality;
 - The roles in the relationship for the coach, client and sponsor;
 - The number and length of individual coaching discussions;
 - Agreed feedback methods to the sponsor and organisation;
 - Agreed methods and timescales for evaluation of the coaching contract.



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Your Route Map to Hiring Excellent Corporate Coaches

