

"The Soul Woman"

GROWING PROFITS THROUGH PEOPLE



The Power of Executive Coaching

We live in a world of twenty four seven, where in business today many executives do not have the time or inclination to attend training programs.

The higher the person goes within the organisation, the less likely he or she will open up and talk about their needs. Executives need a safe place to discuss their concerns and celebrate their successes.

Coaching is a place where executives can feel vulnerable as well as strong. To me coaching is all about creating an active partnership where progress is discussed, roadblocks are explored, beliefs are shared and goals are set. Coaching is a process not an event.

Great coaches will coach executives to be more conscious of their habits, body language and the effect they have each day on their staff in the workplace. Coaching is just as much about awareness as it is about action. To me the two keys to coaching are focus and discipline. What we focus on every moment of our lives is what we become. This discipline helps us reframe our old habits.

Phyllis Sisenwine recently said that "coaching is the fastest growing motivational approach worldwide for achieving personal success. Coaching is quickly becoming the leading tool that successful people use to live extraordinary lives."

According to the Harvard Business Review, annual spending on coaching in the United States is now estimated at roughly one billion. Why? The number one reason is, people are so caught up in hurry, sickness and coaching helps them look at the bigger picture, work smarter not harder and create a work life balance.

I have been coaching a senior banking executive since January of this year, during our first meeting I noticed how he kept a rigorous pace, up at 5am in the morning, arriving at work at 6.30am after one hours drive, always the first to be in the office and the last to leave at night. Over the past six months he just never had enough time and as a result, he was always cancelling meetings and was rarely on time. At weekends he was too tired to enjoy his children. He was overwhelmed and he knew it. How had coaching helped him?

- He has identified his energy drains and now works smarter not harder each day.
- Every day he has built in some quiet time for himself.
- The third strategy he is currently using is visualisation techniques and long-term goal setting.

He had got so busy 'doing' what he had always done, that he didn't have the time to be the person who he really wanted to be.

Executive coaching is all about giving support as the person follows through. People come to coaches because they want to improve their lives or get support needed to

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complete some big projects. Great coaches ask powerful questions, they listen deeply and give honest feedback. With that kind of support people can do great things.

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I would like to finish this article by including essential skills to being a world-class coach today.

The 1st skill is to listen

Great listeners don't only listen, they hear with their ears, eyes, heart and mind. Part of the listening process of coaching is the strategic use of silence, not hijacking the conversation.

The 2nd skill is clean questioning

World-class coaches are great at asking the right questions. Effective, purposeful questioning awakens the executive's awareness and creates an environment of self-directed learning.

The 3rd skill is story boarding

World-class coaches encourage executives to set action plans, focusing on the present and story boarding the future through using a variety of different tools.

The 4th skill is personal responsibility

Human beings are by nature great starters; coaches help their coachee become great finishers. When an individual takes personal responsibility magic happens, coaching is all about helping people do what they want to do. It is accountability that accelerates performance and it is accountability that closes the gap between what we know and what we do.

The 5th skill is recognition

It is the coaches job to fuel the passions of the executive by highlighting what the person is doing well as it will give them confidence to make further changes in their lives.

I would like to finish with a quote that came from the Fast Company Magazine.

'Executive Coaches are not for the meek. They are people who value unambiguous feedback. If coaches have one thing in common it's that they are ruthlessly result-oriented.'