

BUILDING BETTER TEAMS THROUGH EXECUTIVE COACHING

FROM THE DAWN of publicly held corporations, CEOs and upper-management executives have been placed on a pedestal. Too high to touch, too strong to falter, too knowledgeable to need help. Unfortunately, this stereotype perpetuated for far too many years to count, leaving many CEOs and executives at a disadvantage. However, the public recognition of executive coaching several years ago has taken a sledgehammer to the base of that pedestal, and has broken ground on a new era of "CEO training."

I've personally seen how this stereotype has dealt an unfair blow to many a corporation. Through years of providing coaching to top corporate officers and executives across the country, I've found that holding fast to the "untouchable" persona triggers a domino effect that faults the corporation, the executive, and those on their team. So why then, are so many organizations still cloaking their leaders in a blanket of supposed omnipotence?

The general consensus of the past was that public opinion and corporate loyalty remained higher if there was a perception that all officers and executives could do no wrong. However, that consensus is extremely outdated. Today more trust, more loyalty, and stronger team values are exhibited when employees see their leaders and officers continually improving themselves. When upper-management portrays an image of teamwork by admitting fault, improving skill sets, and

leading by example, everyone benefits.

Especially after recent corporate improprieties, employees and stockholders alike have taken a strong stance that those in charge not

only be more visible within the corporation, but that they also be better trained in a plethora of areas.

Many officers and executives struggle (unbeknown to others) with job requirements for which they simply never received formal training. Because many people exhibit sheer brilliance in the area of their expertise, they are assumed to be qualified in all the nuances of leadership. This

is a dangerous and unfounded assumption.

Executive coaching can play a pivotal role in changing the status quo. For example, the following issues are regularly raised when I speak with executives:

- I don't feel I communicate what I am thinking effectively.
- I want to be able to do my job better.
- I feel stuck, frustrated and sometimes blocked.
- I'm lost when dealing with office politics.
- I really need help with handling stress on the job.
- Managing my time better is a problem.
- Procrastination is often a problem for me.
- I'm uncomfortable delegating to others.
- I have no idea how to fire someone.
- I feel like I've been given too much work, but I'm not sure what to do

▶ *continued on page 4*



LETTER FROM KATHI GRAHAM-LEVISS

In today's business environment, we are all finding a need to repurpose every asset we have. Especially in light of what's going on in our world today. In all actuality, it's a good lesson to learn. Discovering how to do more with less is a skill that benefits everyone within an organization ... from the CEO to the mailroom clerk.

However, streamlining productivity and shaving expenses is not always easy. The thought of having to decrease expenses while at the same time boosting morale due to world events can be quite a trick! It takes some creative thinking in order to continue to serve your company and your clients well. It takes some experience to see the multi-purpose value of your people and resources, while keeping spirits high and avoiding negative feelings.

This is precisely where one of XB Coaching's greatest (and most rewarding) challenges lies. When our team of coaches assists an organization in accomplishing its goals for repurposing assets, the sense of triumph – for everyone – is almost overwhelming.

Please accept my personal invitation to visit XB Coaching's newly designed web site at www.xbcoaching.com. Take a few moments to browse around, and then contact us for additional information on how we can assist you with getting the very most out of the resources you already possess.

PEOPLE-READING SKILLS FOR SALESPEOPLE:

SUBTLE LITTLE CUES THAT CAN HELP YOU CLOSE MORE SALES

AS SALESPEOPLE, we constantly hear that we must know our prospects and sell to them in the way in which they want to be sold. However, within the short time span of an initial meeting or lunch, we don't have much time to observe, much less make qualified decisions about the communication methods of those we meet.

The DISC Behavioral Profile can offer some much needed assistance in making quick assessments.

Using the cues below, you can easily gather some basic information to help you tailor your sales approach "on the fly" and potentially close more sales.

Dominance Style

LOOK FOR:

- Expensive clothing
- Little to no jewelry
- A large desk with awards prominently displayed
- A fast walking pace with arms swinging and head in the air
- A stance with one foot in front of the other, with weight on front foot
- Often has one or both hands in pockets
- Sits with one ankle rested on one knee

HOW TO SELL:

- Keep your distance physically and emotionally ... they are all business
- Be direct and to-the-point
- Take a results-oriented approach
- Provide win-win solutions
- Use logic
- Give the bottom line first... don't overuse data

Influence Style

LOOK FOR:

- Designer clothing and a very well kept appearance
- Wears jewelry with social affiliations (clubs, associations, charities)
- Office decorated with memorabilia from friends
- Walks moderately slow - may run into things due to not paying attention
- Stands with feet apart, probably swaying
- Will either talk with hands or have hands in pockets
- Sits with legs crossed ... one leg bouncing

HOW TO SELL:

- Allow time to socialize, lighten up & have fun
- Ask for feelings and opinions about product/service
- Use touch (forearm or back)
- Approach in a friendly, non-threatening way

Steadiness Style

LOOK FOR:

- Casual dress
- Company logo or years of service jewelry
- An office filled with family snapshots and a homey feel
- A slow walking pace ... dropping eyes and head when approaching someone
- Stance similar to the Dominance style but with weight on back foot and hand on hip
- Likes to sit with legs hooked around chair legs, legs crossed at ankles and stretched out, or crossed and underneath body

HOW TO SELL:

- Be patient
- Draw opinions from them
- Allow time for discussion
- Show how solutions benefit them
- Give clear definitions

Compliance Style

LOOK FOR:

- Conservative clothing of high quality
- Jewelry bearing professional or technical affiliations, "real" gold, diamonds, etc.
- Functional office décor
- Fast walking pace, stepping quickly around obstacles
- Stands slightly sideways with arms folded or hand on chin
- Sits sideways in chair with legs crossed (no movement), or calf rested on leg with arms crossed in front, resting on one hand, or covering mouth

HOW TO SELL:

- Use data and facts
- Examine arguments from all sides
- Don't socialize
- Disagree with the FACTS, not the PERSON
- Avoid "new and improved," stick to proven ideas
- Do not touch!
- Allow time for them to think

While this information is obviously not all encompassing, it will give you some excellent insight into the communication styles of prospects. It will also help you avoid some costly mistakes when selling.



Tool of the Month

Mentoring Programs That Define the Future

CORPORATE MENTORING IS certainly not new. Since the implementation of apprenticeships of old, those who need to learn have followed in the footsteps of those who are successful. However, not all mentoring programs are created equal.

The end result should be the nurturing, shaping, and molding of employees into strong, confident executives who benefit your organization. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Without a proper foundation, mentoring programs meet a dismal fate.

WHEN DESIGNING YOUR CORPORATE MENTORING PROGRAM, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- **Behavior** – The behavioral styles of the mentor and mentee are both important factors. Communication between the two must be open and unhindered. Take the time to discover the behavioral styles of those involved in your mentoring program. This can help assure that both parties get the most from the experience.
- **Choice** – Rather than dictating what will and will not be included in the mentoring program, offer a few elements of choice. It is a proven factor that those who help create a program support it more fully.
- **Application** – Make sure you have a clear goal in mind of what the mentoring program is to accomplish. Amazingly enough, many organizations simply go through the paces of instructing mentees on policy and procedure. If your goals include creating ethical executives, fostering creative problem solving skills, or focusing on teambuilding strategies you'll need to make an effort to include segments in your program that instill those behaviors.

Rather than just “assigning” employees to work with higher-ups, invest some time in the design and implementation aspects of your mentoring program. The results will be amazing!

Need help with your mentoring program? Feel free to contact us for additional information on effective corporate mentoring services for your firm.

The road to success is based on the choices you make. There will be many challenges. Face them one at a time, and you'll go further and farther than you ever dreamed. Learn to see the invisible opportunities where other people only see visible limitations. You grow by building on your strengths. By getting better at the things you're already good at. Become good enough and you become an expert. Experts stand head and shoulders above everybody else. Say YES to your big dreams, and your whole world changes. You succeed when you do what it is you know. Take action, and the purpose will be revealed.

CONGRATULATIONS... to **Michael Goldberg** for completing the DISC teleclass and for receiving his DISC Certification.



Want to improve your skills, but don't have time to attend a traditional workshop or seminar? Consider teleclasses from XB Coaching. Through the use of telephone bridge lines and the Internet, you can receive interactive training without ever leaving your office. All you need is an Internet connection and a telephone. Visit www.xbcoaching.com today for a complete list of available teleclasses and topics.



Dr. Jim Harris offers some exceptional ways to retain employees (thus lowering turnover rates and the high cost of acquiring new, qualified employees). One of his ideas is to offer open communication. Dr. Harris states, "Employees are more loyal if they feel their opinions and ideas are listened to and encouraged. They want to feel like they are *in the loop*."

When was the last time you asked your staff for input about why you do things a certain way and how those ways can be improved or developed?

BUILDING

continued from page 1 ◀
about it.

- I find myself reacting emotionally instead of professionally.

While you may be aghast at the responses, you would be surprised at how many executives and corporate officers fall into at least one of these categories. I liken this scenario to parenthood. It is assumed that, if you've given birth to a child, you also know how to raise him/her. In the corporate world, if you have been promoted to upper-management, it is assumed that you've been adequately trained for the position at some point along your career path. And while many have been, this is not always the case.

While executive coaches help to instill communication skills, improve confidence and better equip officers and executives for their ever-changing roles, they also lend an ear. You'd simply be amazed at the depths of isolation there are at the executive level. The phrase "lonely at the top" doesn't even begin to approach how shut off upper-management can be. They are expected to know everything and need nothing. This is where executive coaches perform their most important duty ... they

lend an ear.

Executive coaches also play a great role in offering encouragement and support to those in executive positions. While most employees have co-workers and supervisors to support them, officers are in a class by themselves. They are the stopping point... the final destination. Coaches fill the gap.

As the positive reports continue to roll in from the trenches, there is little doubt that executive coaches will continue to play a vital role in corporate life. In fact, many firms are now including executive coaching as part of officer and executive benefits packages. And why not? If the coaches' strategy of "taking it from the top" causes a chain reaction of greater teamwork and loyalty all the way down through the ranks, we - as coaches - will offer a payoff well worth the cost of the initial investment.

Kathi Graham-Leviss is a Certified Coach and Behavioral Analyst who assists companies with defining and developing the roles and practices of their executives and officers. Visit her Web site today for additional information on executive coaching.
<http://www.xbcoaching.com>.

XB COACHING ANNOUNCES A POWERFUL NEW PROFILE

THE ATTRIBUTE INDEX is a powerful new business tool designed to provide accurate insight into a person's strengths and areas for development.

As you know from using the Managing for Success – DISC profile tells you HOW a person will perform in the job. It profiles their behavioral style. The Personal Interests Attitudes and Values tells you WHY a person behaves. It profiles their internal motivation. The Attribute Index tells us WHAT a candidate will focus on.

The Attribute Index is a mathematically accurate assessment that objectively identifies how our mind interprets our experiences. And it identifies how we are most likely to react in any given situation. Basically it examines "how we think". It helps us to make judgments about anything. In turn, this allows us to translate these measurements into quantitative scores that can then be more easily understood, compared and applied to the daily world.

For your Complimentary Attribute Index please contact XB Coaching at support@XBCoaching.com or call 401-682-2859.