**Executive Coaching**

**An Overview**

**What is it?**  Executive coaching is a series of one-on-one sessions between a coach and an executive (coachee). The aim is to enhance the on-the-job performance of the executive.

**Typical Goals**: Typically a coach is brought in for the development of a high potential that is seen as being technically astute with outstanding business acumen and needs to develop his/her interpersonal skills, i.e. communication skills, presentation skills, ability to influence others, managerial skills and other skills that are often considered “soft” skills. Studies are mounting to support the notion that the differentiator between average performance and outstanding performance are these “softer” or emotionally intelligent related competencies.

**The Process**: To see sustained improvements, coaching tends to last approximately six to nine months, although some clients prefer to start off with a 3 month coaching agreement and then evaluate progress before continuing on for additional months. The coach and coachee meet weekly for 60 - 90 minutes at the start of the process and might meet bi monthly once some progress is made; this is usually after the three month mark.

**Defining the Objectives:** Initial objectives are created by the coachee with input from his/her manager and HR when appropriate. The objectives are updated and refined once the coachee has had a chance to collect and review feedback. Final coaching objectives are established and agreed to by coachee and his/her manager.

**Getting Feedback**: An integral part of the coaching process is increasing the awareness of the coachee through a 360 feedback process. The coachee, along with their manager, identifies anywhere from 10 – 25 people to participate. The coach will guide this process and encourage the selection of raters be of key stakeholders whom can provide well rounded feedback. The Emotional Competency Inventory is one such instrument, and requires people to rate the coachee on 18 competencies and provide verbatim comments on overall strengths and weaknesses. The coach will review and assist the coachee in interpreting the results of this survey. Turnaround time is approximately 2 weeks for the completion of this survey once raters have been identified.

There are a number of other 360 assessments that can be used; selecting one depends on the type of competency the coachee needs to improve. Additional self assessments i.e. Hogan Assessment, MBTI and Social Styles are also used to increase the self awareness of the coachee.

**Creating a Development Plan:** Once the final objectives are defined, the coach will guide the coachee in creating specific actions he/she will take to accomplish the objectives. It is important to note that the coachee is the primary source for creating both the objectives and development plan, with the input of the coach. Once finalized, the development plan is shared with the manager by the coachee. It typically takes about a month and a half to complete the process of creating objectives, selecting raters, conducting the survey, reviewing the feedback and creating the development plan.

**Measuring Progress:** The sole responsibility for updating the manager on the progress of the coaching is the coachee. This is typically done in the form of emails and one-on-one meetings. The coachee is encouraged to share themes of the feedback and development plan with key stakeholders and to solicit their feedback on their progress. A meeting with the coach, manager, HR and coachee is held at the end of three months to review progress and solicit input.

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| alessi headshot 1.jpg | **Jeanmarie Alessi**  **Representative Coaching Assignments** |

The SVP of Internal Compliance for the Global Wealth Management division of a fortune 100 financial services company. Client was hired with the promise of being promoted to a Managing Director within her first year and it was now four years later and she had not received this promotion. In an effort to retain the coaching client and support her in the promotion process a coach was hired. 360 degree feedback from the Emotional Intelligence Inventory and qualitative feedback collected by the coach from key stakeholders revealed that the coaching client needed to reframe how she negotiated with internal auditors to implement her vision of controls and be more strategic with her networking. Coaching client was promoted to Management Director after a year of coaching.

The Director of auctioning at a large auction house. Client was a high performing manager that was receiving negative feedback on how he came across in meetings to peers. Client desired to be promoted to Senior Vice President and the organization wanted to support him with coaching. The Emotional Competency Inventory revealed that he needed to improve his relationship with his manager and some peers and change the way he positioned himself in the organization. Client was promoted to Senior Vice President with in a year.

Senior Manager of a fortune 100 marketing organization. Client lost a major account because of his inability to delegate effectively and manage his frustration with a new account manager from the client side. Client was spiraling down with lack of confidence and a negative self image. We worked on regaining his confidence level through assessing his long and productive career in the industry. Client worked on better understanding his triggers for frustration and inability to let go of control. Client was able to bounce back from an adverse experience and begin to improve his image by delegating more and managing his frustrating levels.

The financial officer of a fortune 100 financial organization. Client made presentations to the Chief Financial Officer and needed to improve his professional presence when responding to difficult questions and impromptu conversation within the meetings. Videotaping and coaching around dealing with emotional reactions helped the client to be able to enter the meetings more relaxed and respond more confidently to challenging questions and to gear his presentations more to his specific audiences needs. Client continues to receive positive feedback from his CFO and his immediate manger and has been given added responsibility because of this improvement.