

HOLLYWOOD COACHING

“WORKPLACE COACHING IS ABOUT LEADERSHIP”

A key theme of coaching for the workplace is about being an effective leader. To remain a follower requires little in the way of skill or imagination, but today even the humblest worker is likely to be called from time to time to the role of leadership.

There is, of course, no gene for leadership. Among the countless numbers of leaders, few are instinctively effective. And those who need the most help with this responsibility find little challenge or support within the organization. No one has time to mentor them. Who will offer honest feedback? Who will remind them of simple truths and best practices?

Those for whom leadership is the primary task—CEOs, CFOs, COOs, CAOs, CIOs, CTOs, other executives, directors, and managers—**find themselves in a paradoxical bind.** If they insist on their authority, they stunt the growth of others. If they require obedience, they invite revolt. If they consult only themselves, they are accused of arrogance. If they consult widely, some will assume that they have no opinions and no authority. The art of facilitative leadership is not only crucial in this age, but also very complicated to perform. (From **Leadership Coaching for the Workplace** by Timothy Bentley & Esther Kohn-Bentley)

“THE ESSENCE OF EXECUTIVE COACHING”

The essence of executive coaching is helping leaders get unstuck from their dilemmas and assisting them to transfer their learning into results for the organization. Coaches bring the kind of trained yet natural curiosity of a journalist or an anthropologist to the leader’s work situation. In addition coaches typically:

- Share conceptual frameworks, images, and metaphors with executives.
- Encourage rigor in the way leaders organize their thinking, visioning, planning, and expectations.
- Challenge executives to their own competence or learning edge.
- Build leaders’ capacity to manage their own anxiety in tough situations.

By *executive* I mean leaders who are in the top and upper levels of their organizations—the CEOs, vice presidents, plant managers, and executive directors of organizations. I define the executive’s job in three broad areas:

- **Communicating the territory**, that is, the purpose, the vision, and goals of the organization to key constituencies, and outlining opportunities and challenges.
- **Building relationships and facilitating interactions** that result in outstanding team performance.
- **Producing results and outcomes**, more from the direct efforts of others than from his own efforts.

Executive coaching is the process of increasing the leader’s skill and effectiveness in accomplishing these three responsibilities of leadership. (From **Executive Coaching with Backbone and Heart A Systems Approach to Engaging Leaders with Their Challenges** by Mary Beth O’Neill)

“COACHING IS LIKE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT”

Coaching is no magic carpet. It requires dedication and hard work from the coachee. Those who receive the most benefit are those who have chosen their coach carefully and then invested a considerable amount of courage in the process. Because coaches tend to be ruthlessly oriented to results, they are not for the meek, warns Claire Tristram, in the magazine *Fast Company*. “They’re for people who value unambiguous feedback. ...Executive Coaching isn’t therapy. **It’s product development, with you as the product.**”

In the magazine *Report On Business*, observer Tracy Johnson offers her take on the coach: “Part work shrink, part nag, part new-age feel-good hand-holder, part confidant.” She called coaching “the latest competitive edge... the meeting of traditional business and psychology.” (From **Leadership Coaching for the Workplace** by Timothy Bentley & Esther Kohn-Bentley)

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