



## *Invest in high-impact leaders: Executive coaching.*

### *Why use coaching services?*

Effective leaders drive organizational success. While executives bring a wide range of competencies and experience to their jobs, they are often placed in challenging situations that require them to expand their capacities. *Enlisting the services of a coach to support executive development is an investment in high-potential leaders, a cost-effective means of retaining talent, and often the most efficient way to provide executives with the skills to navigate a complex corporate environment.* Our executive coaching process helps leaders leverage their strengths, work through impediments, and improve their performance - and, by extension, the performance of the organizations that they lead.

Examples of executives who might benefit from coaching include:

- The technically skilled content expert who is having difficulty making the leap to manager/leader
- The newly engaged executive adjusting to a different set of rules, expectations and relationships than in her previous environment
- The strong performer in a transition environment, responsible for leading and responding to organizational change

### *Our coaching principles.*

- **We view executives as individuals working within a system.** An executive's performance is determined partly by her knowledge, skills, and style, and partly by the forces within the organization. Often, our objective is to help the executive form a more effective fit between her personal style and background and the standards of the work environment.
- **We work towards specific, attainable, relevant outcomes.** *The outcome of coaching should be the attainment of performance goals that relate to success in the present situation.* Some examples: learning to listen and accept input from peers and subordinates; adopting a style that fits better with one's superior or with the corporate culture; navigating effectively through a transition period.
- **We respect confidentiality.** The 360-feedback and the verbatim content of the coaching meetings are confidential, to ensure the participating executive a secure environment. However, the action plan that outlines the objectives

of the coaching plan is shared with the sponsor.

**We engage the sponsor's participation.** At specific points in the coaching process the sponsor - usually the candidate's superior - is actively involved. The sponsor:

- Initiates the coaching intervention and clarifies his expectations
- Signs off on the list of participants in the 360-degree assessment
- Reviews the Action Plan with the candidate to ensure that it reflects organizational expectations
- Receives periodic updates from the coach on the candidate's progress.

## *Steps in the coaching process.*

**Initial Meetings:** We meet with the project sponsor, then with the coaching candidate, to determine coaching objectives.

**Assessment:** Based on our initial interviews, we decide what instruments (360-degree surveys, self-assessment, personality profiles, etc.) will be used to learn more about the candidate. We also investigate the demands of the organization's culture, expectations for leaders, and the standards that determine success in the organization.

**Feedback:** A customized written report summarizes the survey results (i.e., perceptions of the candidate's assets as well as those qualities that are compromising performance). The candidate also receives a personal briefing by a coach with the experience and skills to communicate potentially challenging or sensitive information in a digestible style. *Our goal is to provide the candidate with feedback data in a manner that enables him to hear it, integrate it, and utilize it to improve performance.*

**Action Planning:** The coach works with the candidate to create a detailed developmental action plan. The plan applies the coaching objectives to workplace situations and also focuses on self-maintenance skills - e.g., soliciting feedback and clarifying expectations from supervisors - for ongoing performance improvement.

**Implementation:** Once the action plan is complete, the coach motivates and helps the executive to follow through on the coaching objectives within the organizational environment. The executive works on practicing and learning new skills that suit the demands of the environment, and speaking frankly about the resistance he may experience in his attempt to change and develop.

**Reassessment:** After a period, clients often reassess to monitor progress, identify achievements, and redirect their focus - where necessary - to developmental areas needing additional efforts.