



Executive Coaching

The Rise and Rise of Executive Coaching

In the past 10 years it has become increasingly popular to hire coaches for promising executives or newly promoted senior managers. Research in the US indicates that there are at least 10,000 coaches operating in business today, a figure that has increased 5-fold since 1996 and which is expected to exceed 50,000 by 2007. Whilst the numbers may be smaller in Europe, similar trajectories of growth have been experienced. The economic downturn has had some impact on this growth in recent years, but there remains an active interest in executive coaching which is increasingly being seen as a serious business tool. Along with the benefits and popularity of executive coaching come a number of issues that individuals and organisations should be aware of. At DISCOVERY we guide our clients through the process to make sure that it will produce the results that they want and that we are ultimately measured upon.

Choosing an Executive Coach – The DISCOVERY Approach

The choice of a consultancy practice or an individual to undertake an executive coaching assignment can be difficult if there are no standards of practice. Similarly, the confidential nature of the work often means that past references cannot be taken. At DISCOVERY we use an approach that provides both confidence and results for our clients. We advise them to follow the guidelines below - 'referring to the ORACLE':

- **Objectives.** Before considering coaching as an intervention, ask yourself a few questions. Is coaching really going to be the best solution? Are your development needs clear? We spend time working with the client to agree outcomes and measures to assess whether coaching is the right option.
- **Rapport.** For coaching to deliver its promises it is necessary to find a person with whom you have a rapport. Trust, confidence and chemistry are as important as the individual's business skills and experience. Our prospective coaches will meet with clients on a no-fee basis to talk about their training, companies they have worked with and their philosophy..
- **Approach.** It is important to agree the approach and consider the logistics. A good coach should impress with their presence, strong interpersonal skills, genuineness, maturity and ethics. DISCOVERY coaches are also familiar with a variety of assessment tools and learning processes. Our normal coaching relationships last between 6-9 months with meetings on a 4-6 weekly basis.
- **Confidentiality.** The Coach should work for the 'coachee' and not for the organisation, even though the latter may be paying. Confidentiality is therefore assured. In some cases we work with a number of coachees in one organisation and there it's of the essence to assure confidentiality within the consultancy practice.
- **Licenses/legitimacy.** In the absence of national accreditation, it is important that the coach is qualified and accredited in the tools they are using and that they abide by a recognised code of ethics such as e.g. the BPS in Great Britain. Our coaches are accredited in a range of methods and diagnostics, such as NLP, Transactional Analysis, MBTI and DISC.
- **Evaluation.** A fundamental precursor to any coaching relationship is an agreement about how success will be measured. We identify the process and method of evaluation at the outset. This can be achieved at a number of levels but will include how the coachee has fared, how well the coach has performed and any impact on business results.

If you would like to see more details of our approach and some more tips about choosing an executive coach then please contact [rob.james\(at\)discovery-consult.com](mailto:rob.james(at)discovery-consult.com)