

Adding Value to the Coaching Process

By Jack Keogh

Executive Coaches work with busy professionals and entrepreneurs who want to stay focused and on target to their goals while staying sane and balanced.

When people first come to the conclusion that they need improvement in certain areas of their lives they go through a multi-step process. The first step is always Acknowledgement. A person cannot begin the process of effectuating change until he or she acknowledges the need for change in a certain area, or that a certain aspect of life or business is not yielding the results desired from the efforts put forth.

There are certain times when executives benefit most from coaching. One of these times is when they feel the need to change their behavior in order to achieve a long term benefit for the organization. They may need the change either for themselves or for their teams. Coaching is particularly effective in times of change for an executive. What are some of those times?

Change can include promotions, stretch assignments, and other new challenges. At such times an independent sounding board (the coach) is beneficial in helping achieve a new level of performance. Often, succeeding in a new role requires acquiring or fine-tuning skills that have been underutilized in the past. Coaches help sharpen those skills, particularly when there is a sense of urgency caused by the change.

But coaching is not just for tackling new assignments. It can also play an invigorating role, creating new ways of confronting old problems. This often includes dealing with stress, frustration and burn-out..

Life coaching is a practice with the aim of helping clients determine and achieve personal goals. Life coaches use multiple methods that will help clients with the process of setting and reaching goals. Many adopt a holistic approach:

- Their perspective is that all parts our lives are integrated and that no one lives in a closed system
- The goal is to move from having an ordinary life to an extraordinary life
- Coaching is about re-invention rather than change
- The coaching process brings together the diverse elements of life creating synergy and balance
- Coachees learn to connect with what is most important to them
- The Coaching process usually starts with discovery, which creates awareness, which should lead to action

Coaching is not targeted at psychological illness and coaches are neither therapists nor consultants.

Executive Coaching draws on techniques developed in management consulting and leadership training. Life coaching also draws inspiration from disciplines including

sociology, psychology, positive adult development, career counseling, mentoring and other types of counseling.

Life coaching does not delve into diagnosing mental illness or dysfunction. Indeed, more often than not coaches are described by their clients as "sounding boards" and "motivators". Clients are looking for a coach who will listen and give honest feedback. The top three issues in which clients seek help are time management, career and business. In my company, we are constantly on the lookout for efficient and effective methods to facilitate the process of Acknowledgement. We know that until our coaching clients are motivated to identify and commit to the changes they need to make they will not achieve their stated objectives.

A new listening program – called Solisten -, created by the developers of the Tomatis Method, can add significant value to the coaching process by facilitating the required emotional state to achieve change. Solisten is the most comprehensive technology of all existing portable auditory stimulation programs. Solisten Listening Programs rely on the discoveries of the French ear, nose and throat specialist Dr Alfred Tomatis, who pioneered psychoacoustics over 50 years ago. The Solisten Listening Program uses electronically modified music to re-educate the listening system, by stimulating and improving the way in which we process auditory information and thus the way that we listen and communicate. How does this relate to coaching?

Many people experience listening challenges and do not realize it. These difficulties can include not being able to process sound to its full potential. The inability to process sound correctly can affect brain functioning, causing problems in attention and behavior, communication skills, co-ordination, energy levels, learning abilities and sensory integration.

People can be trained to improve or enhance their ability to process sound, and to overcome weaknesses or further develop listening related skills. Listening to the program literally exercises and tones tiny muscles in the ear and helps to build stronger multi-sensory pathways in the brain, improving its ability to process sound and enhance communication, cognitive abilities and develop emotional intelligence.

The Solisten Listening Program uses electronically modified music to re-educate, stimulate and improve the way in which the brain processes auditory information. The ability to differentiate between certain frequencies is a pre-requisite for language development and for the processing of all auditory information reaching the brain.

Coaches can use the Solisten Programs to help their coachees maximize their capacity for communication, by giving or restoring to the individual his or her full potential as a listener. Coachees, using the portable device under the supervision of a coach who has trained as a Solisten Licensee can achieve surprising gains in attention and behavior, reduced stress, improved communication skills, co-ordination, energy levels, learning abilities and sensory integration. In other words, they can restore their sense of “well-being” which dramatically adds value to the coaching process.