

High Performance Series: Executive Coaching Equals Accelerated Growth



It is common for Executives to feel lonely and even inadequate in their roles. Where do they turn to develop their own skills, especially in a fast changing and dynamic environment? Many executives have come to see great value both for themselves and their companies.

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© June 2024

Executive Coaching: A Catalyst for Leadership Growth and Success

REAL LIFE APPLIED

John, newly promoted to CEO of a fast-growing tech company, quickly felt overwhelmed by the immense responsibility. Although he had years of leadership experience, this role brought new challenges and heightened expectations from the board. He began doubting his decisions and feeling isolated, unsure how to navigate the complexities of his new position.

Recognizing the need for support, John turned to an executive coach. In this confidential space, he could express concerns and brainstorm solutions without fear of judgment. His coach helped him clarify his responsibilities, prioritize challenges, and develop strategies to manage his role effectively. Through regular sessions, John regained confidence, becoming more decisive and resilient.

The impact was transformative. His renewed focus and leadership positively affected his team and the company, demonstrating the profound value of executive coaching. By providing a safe environment for reflection and strategic thinking, coaching empowered John to meet the demands of his role and lead with clarity and confidence.

It is often said that "It's lonely at the top," and for many senior executives, this sentiment rings true. Leading an organization while managing the livelihoods of hundreds or thousands of people brings immense pressure to perform at peak levels at all times. New challenges emerge daily, leaving little time to explore all options and gather the data necessary for confident decision-making. Executives often need to think through issues thoroughly and respond swiftly, knowing their decisions can mean the difference between success and failure. In this high-stakes environment, executive coaching has become a breakthrough resource for many leaders.

An Essential Tool

Executive coaching has become an essential tool for leaders looking to accelerate their growth, transition smoothly into new roles, and address complex challenges. Numerous examples demonstrate how effective executive coaching can lead to significant positive outcomes for both leaders and their organizations.

For instance, senior leaders who engaged in executive coaching successfully enhanced their strategic vision and decision-making capabilities. Through coaching, they were able to explore ideas confidentially, brainstorm solutions, and receive unbiased feedback, all in a secure environment. This access to a trusted advisor not only improved their ability to lead but also strengthened their emotional intelligence and resilience, critical attributes in high-pressure roles.

A study involving senior executives highlighted that executive coaching led to improved focus, better alignment of leadership behaviors, and enhanced accountability. These leaders reported that coaching provided a unique space to discuss challenges openly without fear of judgment from peers or subordinates. This allowed them to address issues more effectively and implement changes that had a lasting impact on their teams and organizations. In fact, some executives reported a 20% increase in leadership

effectiveness, which they attributed to the safe space coaching provided.

Leadership Evolution

In a fast-changing and rapidly growing organization, executives must continuously evolve and grow as well. Often, they are called upon to address growth issues and complexities they have never

dealt with before. If they do not grow alongside the organization, a fast-growth environment may leave them behind. An executive coach can help leaders identify needed areas of growth and work with them to develop their leadership capabilities as the company expands. Without this development, executives may find themselves unable to meet the demands of a growing organization, which could hinder both their success and the company's.

REAL LIFE APPLIED

Samantha, a successful executive at a financial services firm, found herself navigating a new landscape after her company was acquired by a larger organization. Confident in her abilities and accustomed to working independently, she was initially reluctant when the new company required her to work with an executive coach. To her, coaching seemed unnecessary, given her track record of success.

However, as she began her sessions, Samantha started to see the value of having a confidential and objective resource. Her coach, a seasoned executive with diverse experience, provided insights that challenged her thinking. Over time, Samantha realized that some of the strategies that worked well in a smaller company weren't as effective in the larger, more complex environment.

With her coach's guidance, Samantha began to adapt her leadership style, reconsider her approaches, and explore new ideas that better suited her new role. The coaching relationship became more than she ever expected, offering her not only professional growth but also a trusted confidant who could provide perspective without any internal bias.

Through this experience, Samantha recognized the profound impact that executive coaching could have, even for a leader who had always been independent. It helped her transition successfully into her new role and thrive in a much larger company.

What to Consider in an Executive Coach

When selecting an executive coach, it's important to consider several key factors to ensure a successful coaching relationship. There are some internationally recognized certifications today (e.g., ICF, EMCC, ICA, etc.) that are helpful indicators, but most coaches will have their own "set of tools" as well and shape their relationships based on their own experiences. Here are some key factors to consider:

- **Experience:** A solid track record of success, particularly with executives in similar roles or industries, ensures the coach understands the unique challenges of leadership.
- **Methodology:** The coach should have a clear, proven approach that aligns with your personal and organizational goals while fostering a confidential and trusting environment for candid discussions.
- **Objectivity:** A coach who is objective and bold, providing candid feedback and holding you accountable, is essential for driving real growth and development.



Recent thought leaders in the field have emphasized the value of coaching. For instance, a Harvard Business Review article notes that coaching isn't just about improving weaknesses but is increasingly used to harness and amplify leaders' strengths. The benefits include not just personal

development but also broader organizational success as leaders become more adept at navigating challenges and driving growth.

Summary

As more organizations recognize the value of executive coaching, they are seeing the benefits in terms of better decision-making, improved team dynamics, and more robust leadership pipelines. For executives considering coaching, it's worth noting that the process is highly personalized, tailored to address specific needs and goals. Whether it's enhancing strategic thinking, managing transitions, or improving communication skills, the right coaching partnership can make a substantial difference in a leader's journey.

In summary, executive coaching offers a powerful pathway for leaders to grow, adapt, and thrive. Research shows that even the most well-connected executives benefit from the objective insights of an experienced coach who provides the right atmosphere and catalyst for growth. There is no reason to be lonely at the top.

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 <p>Rick Hasty has been a management consultant, executive coach, and facilitator to senior executives and their teams for more than 30 years, working with leadership teams in multi-industries in North America and throughout the world. He is an author and keynote speaker on the important topic of leadership development.</p> <p>He formed LNG after serving in management roles at PwC for 12 years. He previously founded Conequity Resources, a management consulting firm acquired by PwC in 2010.</p>	 <p>Aaron Andrade has 20 years' experience as a senior leader, executive coach and management consultant creating organizational development programs that increase employee engagement, develop leaders and achieve business goals.</p> <p>Working in multiple industries, his coaching and team building strategies have received recognition in leading companies like The Boston Globe, Year Up and the U.S. Army where he was awarded a bronze star for his service in Iraq.</p>