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The Achieve Coaching Model® - A Systematic Approach to Greater Effectiveness in Executive Coaching
by Dr. Sabine Dembkowski and Fiona Eldridge

Dr. Sabine Dembkowski and Fiona Eldridge personally researched and analyzed what actually occurs during sessions facilitated by effective coaches. After studying various coaching models, they used their findings to develop their Achieve Coaching Model®, a systematic seven-step process that has produced outstanding results in real life coaching assignments.

↘ **Complete Article**

COLUMN
The ROI of Business Coaching Revisited
by Bronwyn Bowery-Ireland

Failing to gather a range of information from their clients prior to the commencement of the coaching process can inhibit a coach's (and client's) ability to evaluate ROI. Learning what data to gather and how to gather it will provide support in measuring your coaching results.

↘ **Complete Column**

COLUMN
Building Business Through Partnerships
by Denise Trifiletti

If you want to generate more income, as well as have more time for yourself, developing *strategic business partnerships* can assist you in accomplishing both objectives. Denise Trifiletti's new column provides some helpful advice.

↘ **Complete Column**

FROM THE EDITOR
Do you find yourself overwhelmed by a seemingly inexhaustible supply of virtual information? As our electronic mailboxes reach gigabyte proportions, it can be incredibly challenging to pinpoint the information that is most relevant or helpful to us.

↘ **Complete Letter**

COLUMN
Assessment Corner
by Roberta Hill

Many coaches may shy away from assessments if they are concerned about answering "technical" questions about the tool. Once you understand the basic elements, you will improve your confidence in this area.

⬊ **Complete Column**

SUCCESS STORY
Playing on a Bigger Stage - A Branding Firm Expands, Winning Ovations from Partners and Clients
by I. Barry Goldberg and Martin Thoma

Thoma Thoma is a branding and marketing firm making the leap from local shop to regional powerhouse with a global client base. A unique team/individual coaching format called The Leaders' Trek™ has helped them unlock potential in their organization and lay the groundwork for a national practice.

⬊ **Complete Article**

POLL RESULTS
I consider spiritual intelligence to be relevant to my business.

Results from our Fall Issue
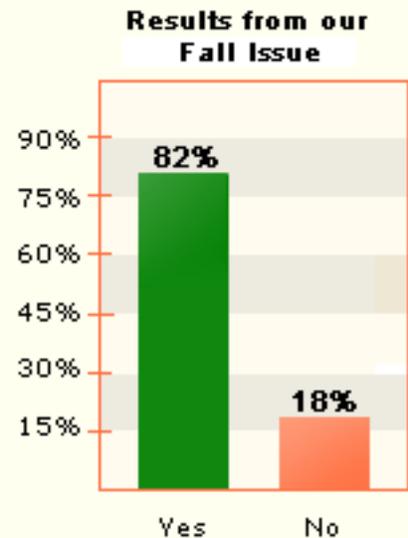
DID YOU KNOW?
…That major newspapers are in danger of folding?

⬊ **Complete Article**

GET THE EDGE
What Are Your Critical Success Factors?
by Anita Pathik Law

Can you identify the essential factors that are critical to your business success? In addition to identifying those critical success factors, coaches must also be aware of four foundational elements that are often overlooked when developing a sustainable business model.

↘ **Complete Article**

HOT TOPICS
Coaching for Spiritual Intelligence (Part 2 of 2)
by H. Les Brown, *BCW* Regular Contributor

Spiritual intelligence grounds internal values to universal (spiritual) principles. While business coaching is mainly concerned with external values and behavior, coaching for SQ becomes relevant when internal values are needed to determine appropriate conduct. Coaching for SQ can also assist with exposing deeply held principles and creating clear, powerful personal mission statements.

↘ **Complete Article**

HIRING A BUSINESS COACH?
If you are new to business coaching, you may wonder what actually happens in a typical business coaching session. Here is an overview.

↘ **Complete Article**

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
Are you a WABC Member? Did any of the *Business Coaching Worldwide* articles stimulate thought or a desire to take action? Discuss it with your business coaching colleagues in the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches All Members' eCommunity!

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BUSINESS BOOK REVIEWS
The Battle for the Soul of Capitalism
By John C. Bogle
With Forward by the Honorable Peter G. Peterson

Corporate scandals, under-funded pensions, and the arrest of top executives are all a part of modern corporate culture. But, it has not always been this way, and it does not have to be this way today. In **The Battle for the Soul of Capitalism**, John C. Bogle details how the financial system undermined social ideals, damaged trust in the markets and robbed investors of trillions.

⬚ **Complete Review**

Coming In Our Next Issue!

Movers and Shakers: Identified by Business Week as one of the most influential practitioners in the history of leadership development, world-renowned executive coach Marshall Goldsmith shares some perspectives on the business coaching profession and discusses some unique approaches to business coaching practices. Learn more about Marshall in the WABC Coach Directory.

Get the Edge: Lyn T. Christian, who specializes in coaching entrepreneurs and small business owners, shares a methodology for coaching clients through the fears they experience when they strike out on their own. Learn more about Lyn in the WABC Coach Directory.

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The Achieve Coaching Model® - A Systematic Approach to Greater Effectiveness in Executive Coaching
by Dr. Sabine Dembkowski and Fiona Eldridge

Introduction

Everyone in the business coaching profession agrees that executive coaching works. However, according to *Coaching and Buying Coaching Services* (London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2004), an even greater impact, more sustainable results and increased effectiveness can be achieved when a systematic approach to executive coaching is applied.

Novice coaches wonder if effective, experienced coaches possess mysterious methods for

producing magical results. In fact, the genuine trust that renders coaching effective is created when both coach and client have a clear understanding of the coaching process and methodology. We have always believed in the value of such transparency, and have made it a cornerstone of our practice. To validate our belief, we conducted research and monitored our own coaching results.

In order to determine and define what actually happens in sessions facilitated by an effective coach, we observed and analyzed transcripts and video tapes from executive coaching colleagues in the US, England and Germany. We investigated how the coach achieved results, what specific actions the coach took to improve executive performance, and what distinguished an effective, experienced coach from a novice. Our observations, analysis and study of various coaching models led to our development of the seven-step Achieve Coaching Model$^®$, which has been applied successfully in some of the finest organizations in the world.
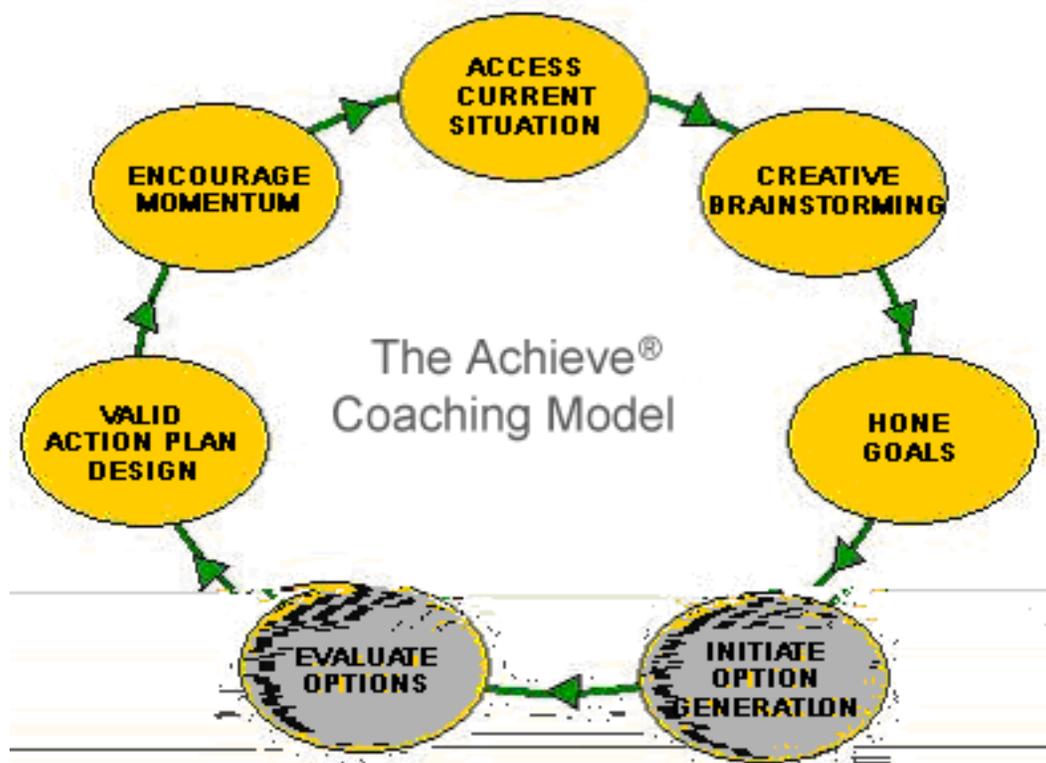
Application of the Achieve Coaching Model$^®$

A brief description of each of the seven steps follows, along with insights into the skills and techniques employed by an effective coach at each stage.

Step 1: Assess the current situation
In this step, the executive is encouraged to reflect deeply about his or her current situation. The enhanced self-awareness obtained by describing that situation helps in identifying areas to address, and provides a useful context for the sessions ahead. However, the most important benefit of this step is the client's opportunity to reflect on past events, enhance understanding of what specific actions contributed to the current situation, and how those

actions may have stimulated specific responses in others.

Key coaching behaviors

- Makes informed use of assessment instruments (without relying solely on those instruments) to gain an understanding of the client's situation
- Expresses sincere interest in the client's life stories
- Takes time to understand the situation from the client's perspective
- Listens deeply so that the client is fully engaged and feels genuinely understood and valued
- Creates a sense of connection and comfort, fostering a climate of openness and trust
- Observes and registers all verbal and non-verbal communication

Step 2: Brainstorm creative alternatives to the client's current situation
This phase broadens the executive's perspective and creates a sound foundation for the development of creative solutions and behavioral change. The objective is to increase the choices available to a client who is facing a challenging situation.

One of the most pressing issues for clients is the feeling of being "stuck" in a particular situation with no visible alternate course of action available. In some circumstances, particularly in times of heightened stress, perspective can narrow, resulting in mental and emotional "tunnel vision." The effect resembles a confrontation with a massive wall--nothing is visible but that wall.

An effective coach draws the client back and restores a broader perspective, which is a prerequisite for the next stages in the coaching partnership. Absent creative brainstorming, the client continues to circle and repeat the same patterns of behavior. Essentially, the first natural reaction in this "stuck state" is to do "more of the same."

Key coaching behaviors

- Utilizes a variety of tools and techniques to interrupt the client's habitual patterns, thus breaking the "stuck state"
- Surprises clients with creative, unexpected questions
- Brainstorms a variety of alternatives to the current situation, probing beyond initial responses to unearth a broad spectrum of options

Step 3: Hone goals
In Step 3, the client forges alternatives and possibilities into specific goals. This is the stage at which SMART goals are created and/or refined, and it is essential that the principles of effective goals formulation be taken into account. This is more difficult than it may first appear. Most executives are very aware of what they do not want. However, they frequently find it highly challenging to specify exactly what they do want. In this step, the coach helps

the executive to clearly articulate specific, desired results.

Key coaching behaviors

- Encourages precise definition of goals (in positive terms)
- Takes time to develop SMART goals
- Works with the client to develop goal(s) with high personal meaning and relevance
- Ensures that the goals are, in fact, the client's
- Develops a specific set of measurements with the client to provide clear evidence of goal achievement

Step 4: Generate options for goal achievement
Having decided upon a specific goal, the aim at Step 4 is to develop a wide range of methods of achieving it. At this point, the purpose is not to find the "right" option, but rather to stimulate the client to develop an abundant array of alternatives. No option, however seemingly appealing, should form the sole focus of attention. At this stage, the quantity, novelty and variety of the options are more important than their quality or feasibility.

Key coaching behaviors

- Exhibits confidence in the process and works with the client to develop alternative pathways to the desired goal
- Uses a broad spectrum of techniques and questioning styles to stimulate the client to generate options
- Provides space and time for the client to think creatively
- Ensures that the client "owns" the options generated

Step 5: Evaluate options
Having generated a comprehensive list of options, the next step is for the client to evaluate and prioritize them. As is the case in Step 3, "Hone Goals," this is the stage at which an experienced coach can guide the executive towards developing focus. Without a well-defined focus for action, the executive is unlikely to move forward effectively.

We have found that executives who are skilled at evaluating options for their business objectives often find it difficult to apply the same techniques to their private lives. In such situations, the coach can serve to remind the client of the value of these techniques, and encourage their application on a personal level.

Key coaching behaviors

- Encourages the client to develop personally meaningful criteria for the evaluation of options, since these criteria form the basis for option selection
- Probes the client to develop a comprehensive evaluation of each option
- Ensures that the key options and their evaluation are fixed in writing for future reference

Step 6: Design a valid action plan

As one coach described it, "This is where the rubber meets the road!" At this stage, a concrete and pragmatic action plan is designed. One of the main advantages of executive coaching in industry and commerce is that it provides "just in time" learning and development when and where an executive needs it. This stage of committing to a plan means that the executive is ready to take action.

With many executive development programs, the challenge is translating "classroom learning" into everyday practice. Coaching helps bridge this gap, and the executive commits to taking action using newly acquired skills.

Key coaching behaviors

- Creates a detailed action plan with the client
- Works with the client to check the feasibility and achievability of the plan
- Fixes the action plan in writing
- Ensures the client's commitment to the action plan

Step 7: Encourage momentum

This is represented as the final stage in the Achieve Coaching Model$^{®}$. While the final step in a coaching partnership may be to facilitate the client's execution of the defined action plan, the role of the coach in encouraging momentum between coaching sessions is equally important.

As a US coach explained, encouraging momentum is a "crucial part of the process. Until the new behavior becomes the new reality, it remains difficult...executives who are in the transformation process need encouragement and reinforcement." We have found that it is important to reinforce even the smallest steps, since this helps to build and maintain momentum and increase the executive's level of confidence. Cumulative small action steps create the critical mass necessary to accomplish the desired goal. Sustainable change is easier to achieve with continuous reinforcement and encouragement.

Key coaching behaviors

- Demonstrates continuing interest in the development of the client
- Organizes regular "check-in/keep-on-track/follow-up" coaching sessions
- Takes measures throughout the coaching program to avoid dependency, and knows when to end the partnership

Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to describe and provide insights into the practical application of the Achieve Coaching Model$^{®}$. Coaches can use the model to structure their coaching sessions and coaching programs without confining the coach to a "straightjacket" which inhibits flexibility and individuality. For those considering hiring a coach, the model provides a transparent, forthright description of coaching methodology. It can also help potential clients to evaluate coaches when choosing those with whom they wish to work.

Source:

"Coaching and Buying Coaching Services." 2004. *Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.* London. Available at http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/lrnanddev/coachmntor/coachbuyservs.htm?IsSrchRes=1

Sabine Dembkowski, Ph.D is based in Cologne, Germany. Following a successful career as a top management consultant at A.T. Kearney and Monitor Company, Sabine founded The Coaching Centre, an international consultancy for executive coaching and leadership services. Read more about Sabine in the WABC Coach Directory. Sabine can be reached by email at sabinedembkowski@thecoachingcentre.com.

Fiona Eldridge is the Director of The Coaching and Communication Centre. She is a Master Practitioner and Certified Trainer of Neuro Linguistic Programming. Fiona has appeared on television and radio and frequently contributes to newspapers and journals. Learn more about her work at The Coaching and Communication Centre. Fiona can be reached by email at fionaeldridge@coachingandcommunication.com.

Collecting Data - An Important Factor in Calculating ROI
by Bronwyn Bowery-Ireland

I am sometimes surprised to learn that coaches are failing to gather a range of information from their clients prior to the commencement of the coaching process. In the absence of such information, how is it possible to calculate an ROI?

In the early 70s, Donald Kirkpatrick introduced a model for evaluating the benefits of training. This same model is used today by training and human resources departments to evaluate the ROI of coaching. The model has four levels:

1. Reaction: How well did the client like the coaching?
2. Learning: What principles, facts and techniques did the client learn?
3. Behavior: What changes in job behavior resulted from the coaching?
4. Results: What were the quantitative results of the coaching in terms of reduced costs, improved performance, improved efficiency, etc.?

Each level in the model requires information from both the client and the organization. In order to be of value, the information must be gathered before, during and after the coaching process.

In an article entitled *An ROI Method for Executive Coaching: Have the Client Convince the Coach of the Return on Investment* (2005), Mary Beth O'Neill outlines a method for engaging the client in taking responsibility for the gathering of this data. By taking ownership of their learning and measuring their progress and outcomes, clients support their own development through the coaching process.

A recent client of mine began to keep a reflective journal of each of our coaching sessions. In this journal, he identified different areas on which he wanted to comment (leadership, finances, emotions, family, learning, and ideas). After each session, he would record what he had learned about himself during the coaching or note something that had stimulated his thoughts or feelings. This journal became an invaluable resource for the client, as he would often revisit entries that were several months old, reflecting on how much he had changed and the progress he had made.

He and I took the outcomes he had recorded in his journal and applied them to Kirkpatrick's model. The Results (Level 4 of the model) showed improvement in his leadership style, his interaction with his staff, the speed with which he could think creatively, and his understanding of self on an emotional level.

With all of this in mind, what data should you be gathering? Be very clear and specific about what, why and when you require any data from your client or from the organization. Provide a clear context for the use of the information.

A list of potentially useful data to gather is provided below. This list is by no means exhaustive:

- Strategic goals and initiatives of the organization
- A description of the organization's vision
- A coaching needs analysis, which is similar to a training needs analysis. (This information could be obtained via interview, and could then form the basis for a case study.)
- HR data (e.g., absenteeism, occupational health and safety measures, performance reports)

- An audit of your client's skills
- Assessments measuring the client's emotional intelligence, team role, leadership style, etc.
- Any financial results that are directly or indirectly impacted by your client's role

Once you have captured your data, apply it to the different levels of Kirkpatrick's model.

One small but rather important tip is to remember that coaching results occur in both the short term and the long term. ROI calculations sometimes focus solely on the "now," computing gains, savings, and losses as of the completion date of the coaching partnership. Yet the benefits of coaching continue long after the coaching relationship has ended. Building in an evaluation at the completion of the coaching process, and then re-evaluating results at subsequent time intervals, will provide you with some excellent information. And, if the client takes ownership of the process and can see the benefits for him or herself, the result is a great win-win for both of you.

Source:

O'Neill, Mary Beth. 2005. "An ROI Method for Executive Coaching: Have the Client Convince the Coach of the Return on Investment." *International Journal of Coaching in Organizations* 3:39-47.

Bronwyn Bowery-Ireland is the CEO of International Coach Academy, an international coach training school. She has been an executive coach for over 10 years. Read more about Bronwyn in the WABC Coach Directory. Bronwyn can be reached by email at bron.bi@icoachacademy.com.

The Power of Partnerships: The Key to Increasing Sales, Margins, and Profits
by Denise Trifiletti

Powerful partnerships are the key to improving sales revenues, margins and profits. They are also the best way for you to exponentially increase your business success. Why is this so?

Partnerships can increase your:

- Qualified leads and word-of-mouth referrals
- Differentiation and competitive edge
- Credibility and effectiveness
- Close ratio and margins

Let's explore what partnerships really are by first defining the term. The one I prefer is this: *A partnership is a relationship between two or more organizations whereby everybody contributes, and everybody wins. Risks and rewards are shared, and neither party gains strictly at the other's expense.*

As you consider new ways to grow your business, remember that building such "Power Partnerships" can give you maximum sales results while being more cost-effective than any other marketing strategy.

You can build or improve partnerships with your clients, prospects, networks, employees, and vendors by asking yourself, "How can I improve my attitude, skills and knowledge to become efficient and effective at building such partnerships?"

Think of a specific partnership you would like to establish or strengthen. Explore the possibilities of a breakthrough by calling that individual. A potential Power Partner must be a decision-maker, have a problem that you can solve or a need that you can meet, and be willing and able to spend some valuable resources (time/money/energy) on a solution. Ideally, a Power Partner will also fill a gap or meet a business need that you have.

Once you have determined that the potential for a partnership exists (I call this qualifying), you should meet, one-on-one, with that prospective partner. Agree on an agenda, including a discussion of:

- Partnership benefits (goals)
- The parts you both will play in the relationship (roles)
- The values and standards which will guide your relationship (operating principles)
- How you will define and measure your results (wins)

When you use this approach, it is critical that you ask in-depth and open-ended questions regarding each of these four areas. Why is that? Asking in-depth questions can provide you with a complete understanding of your potential partner, enabling you to explore a variety of ways of creating a truly powerful partnership. Perhaps you barter or co-market the products or services you each provide. You may pay each other for referrals that result in actual business. You can also define your expectations in great detail, to avoid surprises in the future. You can ask your potential partner to quantify the value of the anticipated benefits or "wins" resulting from this partnership. Knowing your value proposition enables you to better understand the advantages you bring to the partnership, allowing you to price and negotiate for optimum margins.

Building a powerful partnership means taking the possibilities inherent in the partnership to the highest level, allowing all involved to reap benefits and win. Wins may be monetary and/or intangible, professional and/or personal. Quantify the value of the wins so you can measure your results. Measuring your wins validates the fact that you have achieved the goals that both you and your partner defined and pursued.

How Partnerships Increase Leads and Referrals:
View yourself as a "consultative salesperson" with a large network of strategic referral partners who offer various quality products and services. When meeting with a client or prospect, you ask questions that unveil many needs, and perhaps some of them lie outside your product/service capabilities. You introduce your strategic referral partners to your prospect, and they may be able to meet the prospect's needs. Thus, you gain a satisfied client who refers more business to you--and who may also provide you with a testimonial. You receive referral fees or other remuneration from your partners in recognition of your efforts. It's an all-win proposition! Meanwhile, your strategic referral partners are driving other potential clients to you. How much business can you handle?

How Partnerships Increase Credibility and Effectiveness:
Armed with a host of top-quality solutions offered by your partners, you are confident in asking questions about a wide range of client/prospect needs. You are not pushing a single product or service; rather, you are focused on solving their problems by sincerely attempting to meet their needs. Asking questions is the key to sales effectiveness. In a consultative role, you can help them to discern their challenges, explore the value of the options you provide, and assist them in determining their best solutions. Some of those solutions may come from you and some may come from your partners. This approach renders you credible, trustworthy, effective and valuable.

How Partnerships Increase Your Competitive Edge:
You distinguish yourself from your competition by providing a true value-added service to your client--a host of solutions through your referral network. Unlike others, you are a "one-stop-shop," providing a resource that saves your prospects/clients time and money.

How Partnerships Increase Your Close Ratio, Sales Revenues and Margins:
Your partnerships will allow you to close more business. By asking a host of questions, you will confirm the value of your solutions, which leads you to employ value-based pricing (pricing based on your client's perception of the value of your offerings). You need not lower your prices to get more business, and you may even be able to charge more.

A good test of whether you are ready to take the next step towards establishing powerful partnerships is to assess the following:

- Do you have an abundant "all-win" *attitude* and belief in the possibilities of partnerships?
- Do you employ the *skill* of asking in-depth questions to really understand your partner?
- Do have the *knowledge* to jointly develop goals, roles, operating principles and a method for measuring wins? Can you apply that knowledge effectively?

Developing powerful partnerships is the key to increasing your sales, margins and profits. This approach has been proven effective, and it can work for you!

Denise Trifiletti, a business coach and an accomplished leader in the fields of sales and training, is the co-founder of [Dynamic Destiny Partnerships, LLC](#) and the founder of [Women's Community, LLC](#). Her most recent book is *Create the Business Breakthrough You Want: Secrets and Strategies of the World's Greatest Mentors* (Mission Publishing, 2004). Denise can be reached by email at denise@womenscommunity.com.

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Psychometric Rigor Simplified: Understanding the Basics
by Roberta Hill

In my last column, I talked about the importance of ensuring that some psychometric rigor had been applied to the specific instrument that you planned on using. I also encouraged you not to get caught up in the statistics of assessments. This time, I thought it would be important to provide an overview of the three elements that comprise psychometric rigor: reliability, validity and social desirability. People often ask, "How valid is this assessment?" The very term "valid" can be a misnomer. In most dictionaries, there are a number of definitions. Some of the aspects include:

- Legal efficacy - This becomes an important consideration if the test is being used for selection and recruitment, but it is less important in developmental coaching.
- Well-grounded, meaningful and relevant - Most assessments attempt to measure some aspect of "personality" based on a particular theory of human development and interactions. If the underlying principles behind the tool are questioned, or if the tool is looking at something not pertinent to your clients, it may not be suitable for them.
- Sound and convincing - No matter how "valid" a tool may be, if it is not perceived by the client as being correct, the information will usually be ignored.

What is Psychometric Rigor?

1. Reliability (PRECISION) determines how well the items on a scale accurately reflect the scale itself. *In layman's terms, does it actually give the same results if taken by the same person on different occasions?*

While there are a few different measures of reliability, the most common and easiest to measure is Test Retest Reliability or Stability. This refers to how well an instrument yields consistent results, usually over a time period of six months. Scores range between 0.00 and 1.00. For simplicity's sake, think of this as a percentage measurement of how often the same results will occur. Look for scores over the .75 range.

2. Validity (ACCURACY) determines the extent to which the association among the scores represents the theory and model on which the instrument is based. ***In layman's terms, does it actually measure what it says it measures?***

Validity establishes the confidence with which we can interpret any given result on a given test. Validity is obviously a much more complex question than reliability, and is ultimately a more important issue. Unfortunately, determining accuracy is not only more complex but also much more expensive to determine than reliability is, and validity studies are not conducted as often as reliability studies are. Note that there are at least five different types of validity:

- **Content Validity or Face Validity** - a person's perception, usually from the appearance of the instrument, that it is likely to measure something meaningful.
- **Predictive Validity** - measures what it claims to measure.
- **Concurrent Validity** - relationship to some other concrete criteria.
- **Convergent Validity** - results on individual instruments are compared to results obtained on other instruments that measure abilities in the <u>same ability domain</u>.
- **Divergent Validity** - results on individual instruments are compared to results obtained on other instruments that measure abilities in <u>different ability domains</u>.

If this sounds too technical for you, don't worry. While I do understand most of what this means, it has been over 25 years since my last proper statistics class at university, and I no longer can decipher the mathematics myself. I just look to see what studies have been done and check whether or not the researchers claim that the results fall within acceptable norms.

Most assessment providers will claim high marks for content validity. This simply means that the person who took the instrument perceived that the results obtained were accurate. While not as relevant scientifically, this is an important component for coaches to consider. When using a tool, we want it to be personally meaningful and convincing for our clients, in the hope that they will be motivated to use the information provided.

3. Social Desirability (TRANSPARENCY) determines how easy it is to fake the results. This third and final significant measurement component is very important when the assessment is used as a test for recruitment or selection. This measure will not apply to most of the assessments used by coaches, however, since it is not perceived as relevant for our uses.

As a coach, it is helpful to understand what is meant by psychometric rigor and to know whether the pertinent studies have been conducted. It is not compulsory for us to be able to interpret or explain what the statistics mean. Most people, including coaches, just want to feel confident that the instrument is based on some sound scientific principles and that it will prove meaningful in practice.

Roberta Hill, MBA, is a Professional Certified Coach (PCC), as well as a Professional Mentor Coach (PMC) and Certified Teleclass Leader with Corporate Coach U International. Roberta owns www.AssessmentsNow.com, an online assessment provider with a network of more than 40 qualified coaches worldwide. Read more about Roberta in the WABC Coach Directory. Roberta may be reached by email at roberta@wghill.com.

Playing on a Bigger Stage - A Branding Firm Expands, Winning Ovations from Partners and Clients
by I. Barry Goldberg and Martin Thoma

The Business/The Organization

Thoma Thoma is a branding and marketing consulting firm founded and owned by Martin and Melissa Thoma in Little Rock, Arkansas. The company had spent the past three years restructuring its services and repackaging itself as a "brand growth consultant." As activity began to increase and its new positioning gained traction, the leadership team understood that in order to make the leap to bigger markets and clients, they would have to re-engineer everything from basic beliefs to key processes and organizational accountabilities.

The two principals suffered from what might be termed "entrepreneuritis." Since they had founded and built the company, they knew how to do every job in it--so they did. It was clear to the entire team that the two newly promoted directors would have to mature quickly, establishing and maintaining accountability for their departments, if the principals were to relinquish their habitual hold on details. The principals needed to focus on the big picture if the firm was going to live up to its full market potential.

The Partnership

The principals knew that creating this envisioned change would take sustained effort and unprecedented persistence. Barry Goldberg, executive coach and founder of Entelechy Partners, had recently shared his vision for a year-long coaching process for leadership teams with Thoma Thoma's principals. They all agreed that Barry would coach the group and each individual for a year, integrating concentrated off-site team experiences with bi-weekly individual leadership coaching.

The Challenge

While the Thomas and their team had some ideas about what they wanted to accomplish, the design of both individual and group development plans clarified those challenges. Using The Leadership Circle Cultural Profile™, the organizational challenges were the first to be clarified:

1. Thoma Thoma was such a nice place to work that everyone took it for granted. Even employees indicated that more demanding performance standards would be beneficial.
2. While the vision was clear and compelling, employees lacked confidence in the company's ability to execute in a purposeful manner.
3. Employees valued the firm's commitment to work/life balance. However, they also agreed that additional drive would translate into increased productivity and client satisfaction. Those ends could be accomplished without turning Thoma Thoma into the sweatshop stereotypical of the industry.

Each of the four individuals involved in the coaching process also established an individual development plan based on personal strengths and opportunities. Issues common to the group included:

1. Discomfort with direct communications concerning work standards, deadlines and internal processes.
2. A desire to apply linear processes to creative development, gaining significant improvements in scale and efficiency.
3. Significantly differing business perspectives between the creative team and account management.
4. The need for clear accountability, including the transfer of more responsibility from principals to directors.

The four clients made their own behavioral contributions to each of these group issues. They also had opportunities for individual development. Perhaps the most powerful catalyst for change, however, was their willingness to work together to alter collective patterns of behavior through their individual participation in the program.

The Approach

The Leaders' Trek™ for Thoma Thoma started in April 2005 with a three-day offsite session focused on group coaching. As the team engaged in real work, coaching interventions centered on the first two individual development goals listed above. The team was coached on giving and receiving difficult feedback. Working very specifically with Speech Acts, the group engaged in re-engineering key processes through direct communication and clear agreements.

The major outcome of the "BaseCamp™" experience was that the entire leadership team took responsibility for organizational change. They brought their new, well-practiced skills back to the office, where individual coaching centered on unique development plans for each executive. Creative Director Derek Wacaster explained, "My coaching work focused on building greater confidence and taking larger ownership of my position--things critical to my success. From the very first session, I experienced an internal change that resulted in richer interaction with my teammates and significantly enhanced my contribution to the firm."

By involving the entire leadership team, this coaching format had a major impact not only on individual development, but on specific relationships among the team members as well. Common frameworks for bonding patterns, balance and communications delivered a growing set of tools for dealing with new issues. Common language and newly honed skills allowed the leadership team to become independent and self-sustaining, assimilating new capabilities very quickly. As a result, ever deeper material could be explored in coaching without creating dependency on the coach for sustained behavioral change.

The Value Delivered

The value of the Thoma Thoma team's experience with The Leaders' Trek™ can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively:

- Roughly one half of operational duties previously held by principals have been successfully delegated to directors. Work continues in this regard.
- All key processes have been re-engineered as "scripts," and ownership for each process is vested in a "producer/director" who is accountable for process execution.
- All employees now understand and embrace the focus on quality work completed on deadline, and exhibit a high appreciation for that value in the work environment. (One employee declined an offer at a competing shop for considerably more money.)
- Principals are focusing on higher leverage strategic activities, spending much more time and attention on developing relationships with client CEO's.
- Implementation of new discipline in the firm's sales process has improved its close ratio from roughly 30% to nearly 60%. Thoma Thoma is more focused on pursuing the right opportunities, grooming its referral network and ignoring low-potential pitches.
- After three months on The Leaders' Trek™, Thoma Thoma increased its monthly sales target by 70%. From May 2005 through October 2005, it hit the new target five months out of six, missing it by only 10% in September.

Throughout this period of increasing business and financial performance, employees report more energy, greater enthusiasm, higher morale and growing esprit de corps. And Thoma Thoma is still viewed as caring and nurturing--an exceptional place to work.

I. Barry Goldberg is the founder of [Entelechy Partners](). His coaching practice focuses on senior leadership teams and high-potential executives. Barry holds a Graduate Certificate in Leadership Coaching from Georgetown University. Read more about Barry in the [WABC Coach Directory](). Barry can be reached by email at [barry.goldberg@entelechypartners.com]().

Martin Thoma is a Principal in [Thoma Thoma](), a brand growth consultancy. Martin is widely published on the subject of branding. He is an English and journalism graduate of the University of Arkansas. Martin can be reached by email at [martin@thomathoma.com]().

GET THE EDGE
What Are Your Critical Success Factors?
by Anita Pathik Law

The Critical 20%

"True effectiveness is the ability to create results in such a way that one may duplicate them time and time again." This definition, based on my experience in applying the work of acclaimed author Stephen R. Covey, is both accurate and pragmatic.

Sustained success is not accidental. In fact, the Pareto Rule, more commonly known as the 80/20 Rule, states that approximately 80 percent of our success can be directly attributed to approximately 20 percent of our efforts or activities. Essentially this means that for the average person working a 40-hour week, 80 percent of successful outcomes are attributable to only eight hours of activities.

Given this statistic, which eight hours of your effort and time are specifically and directly contributing to your success? Do you know? Furthermore, if you are not reaching your goals,

are you aware of the specific strategies you must implement to reach those goals? What are the actions that, if performed both consistently and superbly well, will lead to your desired results? These constitute your critical success factors.

Identifying Your Critical Success Factors

Let's do a simple exercise. On a piece of paper, write down all of the things that are critical to the success of your business. That list may be extensive--strategic planning, networking, product and people development, defining your target market(s) and the value of your services, marketing and sales, relationships and strategic alliances, referrals, systems and processes, customer service, time management and productivity, brand identity, financing and cash flow, technology, leadership, communication, innovation, and/or problem solving.

After you have completed your list, your next step is to prioritize the items it contains. Each of these "first-tier critical success factors" then leads to what I call "second-tier success factors." For example, what are the critical success factors that contribute to effective sales? Time management? Productivity? Could you then break those second-tier functions down to a third-tier level? Absolutely! Are there some overlaps? Of course!

Now comes the tough question: Are you and your employees investing time and effort in the factors that directly contribute to success?

Where Do You Stand?

To evaluate how well you are doing, rank your prioritized success factors and then, one by one, assess your performance on a scale of one to ten. This simple exercise will identify areas which require focus, as well as reveal strengths you can leverage.

I recently conducted a poll which revealed that 53 percent of the 260 respondents identified sales and marketing as the number one critical success factor in their business. Despite this consensus, would-be entrepreneurs continue to provide poor service and inadequate follow-through, impacting repeat business and referrals--two factors which drive sales over the long term. In such cases, evaluation of performance (and taking action on that evaluation) is vital.

Foundational Forget-Me-Nots

Regardless of the type of client--from solo entrepreneurs to high-powered Fortune 100 company executives--I have seen some interesting patterns emerge with clients who find themselves dissatisfied with their results. While these "foundational forget-me-nots" (FFMN's) may be considered the "softer" side of business, they ultimately lead to hard results. Four of the top FFMN's are:

1. **Self Awareness:** Being oblivious to personal strengths and weaknesses can lead to ineffective focus. Leaders who possess a high degree of self awareness know what they are good at and what they're not. They leverage their strengths and compensate for areas of "weakness" by engaging others who can offset those weaknesses by contributing their unique talents. For example, if writing is not your forte, find someone who can do it for you. I recently reviewed a memo a CEO addressed to his

staff. It was so poorly written that recipients focused on the grammatical errors rather than on the intended message. He not only wasted time composing a memo that failed to translate into desired results, he also damaged his credibility as a leader.

2. **Passion:** Since passion is connected to one's core belief about the business and the clients served, a lack of passion on the part of a leader will ultimately have a negative impact on the organization. Leaders who pursue their passion experience a high level of self confidence and job satisfaction. Translated into a sense of purpose and direction, applied passions can lead to a well-defined value proposition and ultimately to a fulfilling goldmine in business. Connecting the workforce to their passions and leveraging their talents is just as critical.

3. **Alignment:** Once the value proposition is defined, the systems are in place, and the strategies are ready for execution, it is time to align one's resources. The first step is to identify the resources required (time, effort, talent, technology, processes and finances). Aligning those resources in a way that directly feeds the strategic priorities of your company is of paramount importance in sustaining success.

4. **Focus, Execution and Accountability:** A reputation for "All talk, no action" is lethal to success. While designing a set of strategies that map out the critical path to desired results is crucial, the execution of those strategies in a deliberate and focused way is ultimately what achieves the dream. Benchmarking, accountability measures, rewards, recognition, and continuous evaluation will assist you in accomplishing your critical objectives. You can't manage what you don't measure. High-performing individuals and cultures continuously measure the progress and impact of their efforts. Systems of accountability, whether for a solo entrepreneur or a 50,000-employee company, are tantamount to performing ongoing audits of relevant and focused activity.

In closing, defining your critical success factors and devoting time, planning and attention to them in a measurable, consistent way is the recipe for success. In the long run, though, lack of persistent focus on awareness, passion, alignment and accountability will render results difficult, if not impossible, to maintain.

Anita Pathik Law is CEO of [Dare Dreamers, LLC](#) and co-founder of Self Management Coaching. The second edition of her book, *The Power of Our Way: A Path to a Collective Consciousness*, was published in January 2006. Her mission is "to move individuals and organizations out of thought and into action™." Learn more about Anita in the [WABC Coach Directory](#). Anita can be reached by email at anita@dare-dreamers.com.

Coaching for Spiritual Intelligence (Part 2 of 2)
by H. Les Brown, *BCW* Regular Contributor

"Our spiritual intelligence (SQ) gives us access to the principles that provide the foundation for the establishment of a sound moral value system," states Danah Zohar, author of *SQ: Connecting With Our Spiritual Intelligence*. In my last article (BCW: Winter 2005), I introduced the concept of "spiritual intelligence." Now, I'd like to consider three specific questions regarding coaching for SQ in a business context:

1. Are questions of values relevant to the workplace?
2. Are there situations in which coaching for SQ is necessary?
3. If so, what approach is appropriate?

Values
In determining whether questions of values are relevant to the workplace, we must recognize that people operate with two separate but interrelated sets of values--one relates to the external world of behavior, while the other refers to the internal world of intention.

Traditionally, business coaching has limited itself to the realm of behavior. Generally, the realm of intention (personal motivation and purpose) has been considered "off limits" in business coaching. Therefore, in this context, coaching for SQ might be deemed inappropriate.

However, consider how the appropriateness of conduct in the corporate environment is determined. Explicitly acknowledged or not, this is a question of values, and it is critical in determining which behaviors are encouraged and which are prohibited. Generally accepted social and corporate values such as punctuality and dress are usually presented as norms of expected behavior, rendering questions of values relevant to the workplace.

Co-existing with external, social, and corporate values, however, are the internal, cultural and personal values which transcend mere behavior. These internal values govern intention and establish the alignment of individual purpose with universally applicable principles such as goodness, truth and beauty. When we speak of SQ, we are referring to this capacity for alignment.

Surprisingly, when external and internal values conflict, external values generally prevail. What's more, immediate values (e.g., corporate policy) will triumph even over accepted social norms. In 1960s experiments conducted at Yale University, Stanley Milgram demonstrated that 65% of "good" people would deliver a lethal electric shock in obedience to orders from a perceived "superior." The same dynamic was displayed in 2001 when, in obedience to a corporate policy of "profit at any cost," traders at Enron deliberately engineered rolling power blackouts across California--callously disregarding the safety and well-being of the people affected.

When to Coach for SQ

Business coaches can readily assist individuals in aligning their behavior with corporate values, and can assist business leaders in aligning their corporate policies with broader social norms. Ordinarily, dealing with personal issues in a business context is unnecessary. However, it becomes necessary whenever external behavior must be aligned with internal values. Two such examples are resolving an individual's ethical conflicts with corporate guidelines, or establishing ethical corporate policies.

In the first example, individuals benefit from developing a strong, clear moral compass when confronted with the powerfully persuasive forces present in the workplace. When the dictates of conscience conflict with the demands of the company, coaching can help with the decision to accept the demands, to oppose them, or to depart from the corporate environment in question.

In the second example, a corporate culture will largely mirror the personal values of its leadership. The values that continue to set Southwest Airlines apart from its competition are the direct result of the personal influence of its founders, Rollin King and Herb Kelleher. For business leaders who strive for excellence, it is not sufficient merely to comply with prevailing social and corporate norms. Ethical excellence calls a corporation and its leadership to work to a higher standard--a set of values based on internally discovered and deeply lived (i.e., spiritual) principles. Coaching can facilitate executives bringing these principles to the forefront and expressing them with clarity and purpose.

How to Coach for SQ

If coaching for SQ fulfills a legitimate need, what approaches might be appropriate? One method is to obtain information directly from the client via respectful questions about personal beliefs. However, this straightforward technique relies heavily on the client's level of self-knowledge, and thus may not yield the best results.

A personal values inventory represents a more comprehensive approach and it supplies an

entrée to a discussion of fundamental principles. Another alternative is to start with a dialogue about which issues in the corporate environment most disturb the client. This creates an opportunity to explore the underlying values and principles that are most deeply felt and most closely held.

SQ in Practice

Certified Master Coach Lyn T. Christian specializes in working with existing and prospective entrepreneurs. Her clients often ask for SQ coaching when they have difficult decisions to make, especially when they are preparing to cut the corporate umbilical cord and strike out on their own. Lyn says, "When clients are struggling to make decisions, it's important to ask them, 'Where do you go when you need to access perceptions that dwell more deeply than your logical thoughts?' It's important to discuss how they make their decisions and then help them to anchor themselves back to those spiritual realities that provide clarity. It's difficult for a coach who lacks a spiritual basis to ask a client to go to the deeper places."

SQ is invaluable when executives are embroiled in personal crises. In such cases, coaching may shift focus, helping clients to find spiritual "ground" and maintain professional balance when the going gets rough. When the crisis has passed, coaching can return to a more

purely professional orientation. SQ is important for coaches as well--one reason Lyn strongly recommends that coaches have coaches: to help them to "stay in their integrity" during difficult times.

Conclusion

Spiritual intelligence involves emotion and intuition as well as intellect and reason. An effective coach should be prepared to use his or her own intuitive SQ in the discovery process. The goal of coaching for SQ goes well beyond the simple discovery of core principles--it must lead to the development of a personal "mission statement" which defines those principles that are inspirational enough to be life-motivating. When clients totally embrace those principles, they are liberated from the force of persuasive external influences, and are free to set a clear course for a positive (personal or corporate) future.

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H. Les Brown, MA, CFCC, Researcher for *Business Coaching Worldwide* and co-founder of ProActivation, is an innovator and change strategist who helps clients to effect deep and lasting change in their personal and professional lives. Read more about Les in the WABC Coach Directory. Les can be reached by email at lbrown@proactivation.com.

By the 1960s, private retirement plans owned $16 billion worth of stocks or four percent of all shares outstanding. By 1970, they owned $67 billion or eight percent of all shares. By 1990, $631 billion or 20 percent of all shares were owned by private accounts, and today, that amount has grown to $2.4 trillion or 17 percent of all equities. Another eight percent is now owned by state and local retirement plans. This means today that a grand total of $3.7 trillion or 26 percent of U.S. stocks are owned by public and private retirement plans.

This change coincided with the move away from traditional corporate pension plans and toward profit-sharing and 401(K) plans. This rise in defined contribution plans played a major role in the growth of the mutual fund industry, and both of these developments have heralded the institutionalization of investment in corporate America.

Business Book Review™, provides access to over 600 expertly written, eight-page summaries of the top best business books, including many timeless classics from the 1990s forward. This library is constantly expanding with 40 new BBR summaries added each year. WABC Full Members have access to the complete BBR Library ($145US value) as part of their current WABC membership package; WABC Affiliate Members will be able to purchase access to this library for a special price. WABC Members Access | Public Access

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FROM THE EDITOR
Battling Information Overload
by Donna Mills

Do you find yourself overwhelmed by a seemingly inexhaustible supply of virtual information? More than at any other time in history, the quantity of data to which we have access is mind-boggling. As our electronic mailboxes reach gigabyte proportions, it can be incredibly challenging to pinpoint the information that is most relevant or helpful to us. It is our goal at *Business Coaching Worldwide* to cut through the clutter and deliver that relevant, helpful content in a straightforward fashion, absent the advertisements and product offerings that often permeate no-fee publications.

This issue of *Business Coaching Worldwide* focuses on practical business strategies that are universal in application, regardless of the size or scope of the enterprise involved. To assist with the problem of "information overload," we are introducing a recurring feature--a professional review of a current, cutting-edge business book. WABC's new alliance with Business Book Review™ provides a valuable timesaving option to WABC members. Business Book Review™ culls through the volumes available and selects only the top one percent to present to their subscribers. Each issue of BCW will contain a review of an up-to-the-minute selection.

As we move forward in 2006, I sincerely seek the feedback of our membership in determining content for *Business Coaching Worldwide*. Please take advantage of the opportunity to submit an article for consideration for publication, or forward a "Letter to the Editor" to let us know what you'd like to see in your eZine. Our goal is to become the eZine that you don't want to miss, despite an inbox bursting with other options. Without your input, our ability to meet that goal and create the type of publication you crave is limited. So please let us know--my first priority in my new position as Editor of *Business Coaching Worldwide* is to address those subjects that are of paramount interest to our readers.

Finally, I want to thank Wendy Johnson for her warm welcome to the WABC community, and extend my heartfelt respect and thanks to Sara Hurd. As her successor, I can only marvel at the generosity of spirit and exceptional organizational skills she has displayed in effecting a smooth transition in editorial responsibilities. Sara has left some big shoes to fill. I'm hoping my feet will grow to accommodate them over the remainder of 2006!

Donna Mills, BA, CFCC, is editor of *Business Coaching Worldwide*. As the owner of Creative Clarity, Donna helps her clients to discover their authentic purposes, define goals that are aligned with those purposes, and design and implement strategies for their achievement. Read more about Donna in the WABC Coach Directory. Donna may be reached by email at editor@wabccoaches.com.

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Did You Know...

That major newspapers are in danger of folding?

On December 11, 2005, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on the plight of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the 140-year-old journalistic mainstay of the San Francisco Bay Area. The *Chronicle* suffered a 16% drop in subscriptions between April and September of 2005, and nation-wide other newspapers are losing an average of more than two percent of their subscribers annually.

This is not strictly a North American phenomenon. One of Germany's most celebrated dailies, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, suffered such severe reversals in ad sales that it was brought to the brink of bankruptcy in October of 2002. In Manila, the owners of *Today* and *Manila Standard* opted to merge their businesses last year, publishing a single paper to minimize losses and make a profit. In Paris, government subsidies to national newspapers

are keeping them afloat.

What is causing the problem? "The components of what we historically know as the newspaper have become unbundled," says Warburg Pincus, managing director of Mark Colodny. Google and Yahoo can offer sharply targeted local ads, craigslist has free classifieds, and news is available at no charge on the Internet.

The defection from the printed daily is particularly significant among younger, techno-savvy readers, a majority of whom garner their news from their laptops rather than from newspapers. Internet sites post stories recommended by other readers, navigation to information of choice is readily available, and the classified listings are up-to-date and easily accessible.

The exception to the "rule of readership decline" is Asia. According to the 2005 edition of the World Association of Newspapers' annual survey of press trends, the world's three largest newspaper markets are China (93.5 million copies sold daily), India (78.8 million), and Japan (70.4 million). Asia enjoyed an overall 4.1% circulation increase in 2004. Of the world's top 100 daily circulation newspapers, three-quarters are published in Asia.

Why is Asian newspaper readership growing, while it is declining in North America and Europe? According to Internetworldstats.com, as of November 21, 2005, 35.5% of Europeans and 68.2% of North Americans had access to the Internet. But in Asia, only 9.2% of the population was online.

Will this trend towards increased newspaper readership change as the Internet makes further inroads on Asian communications media? Only time will tell.

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HIRING A BUSINESS COACH?
What Happens in a Typical Business Coaching Session?

During a typical business coaching session, the business coach and the client engage in a continuous progression of *conversations, observations* and *practice*.

Conversations evolve around the business coach's exploration of the client's current issues. The coach challenges any entrenched thought patterns or assumptions which serve to reinforce the status quo, since such entrenched patterns hinder or block the client's ability to achieve new goals and objectives.

Observations include noting inconsistencies between the client's stated goals and objectives and his or her counterproductive actions. Insightful, high-performance feedback facilitates the client's increased awareness of his or her operational style and discovery of the most effective ways to produce desired change. The client also needs to provide feedback to the business coach in order to ensure that the coaching relationship is consistently serving the client's ability to meet objectives.

Practice includes a variety of action-oriented business coach interventions or client activities or assignments designed to assist the client in achieving enhanced business performance. These may include coach-client role plays, assignments to be carried out between sessions (e.g., reading, researching, journaling, self-care initiatives), client attempts to deal with a conflicted work relationship, etc.

A specific coaching session may or may not include all of these phases, depending on the current stage of the business coaching program and the nature of the issues being addressed. In terms of time, appropriate session length is determined by the nature of the client's goals and objectives, time pressures on the part of the client, and budget considerations. Individual business coaching sessions are typically 30 to 90 minutes in length.

Find out more about: [hiring a business coach](#).

Join the Conversation

Are you a WABC Member? Did any of the *Business Coaching Worldwide* articles stimulate thought or a desire to take action? Discuss it with your business coaching colleagues in the Worldwide Association of Business Coaches All Members' eCommunity!

Your eCommunity is the place where you can collaborate with other professionals online, where we encourage open and uncensored discussions and where you can receive immediate notification whenever someone responds to your postings.

Want to ask a business question? A business coaching question? WABC eCommunity offers you one of the fastest and easiest ways to connect with and learn from your colleagues around the world!

http://www.wabccoaches.com/members/forum

WABC Coaches In the News!

Barry Zweibel, MBA, CEC, had an article published in the April 2005 issue of T+D Magazine, a publication by American Society for Training & Development (ASTD). The article, "A Strategic Coach," described the benefits of coaching, defined how coaching works, and gave some guidelines for choosing a coach. View the article at http://www.ggci.com/publications/ASTD-April-2005.pdf. | WABC Coach Directory Profile

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