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Does coaching produce sustainable behavior change?

Yes

No

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FEATURE EVENT

[Global Convention on Coaching \(GCC\)](#)

July 2007 - July 2008

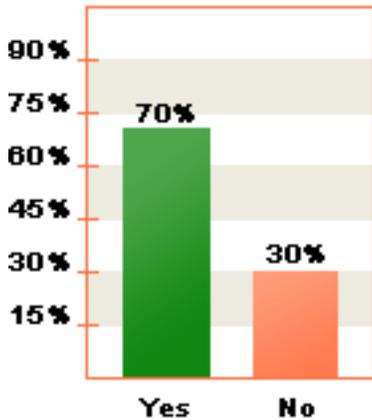
Standardizing and professionalizing the business coaching industry—it's our ongoing goal at WABC. Now it's a focus of one of the most ambitious international coaching forums ever, the Global Convention on Coaching. WABC is a key participant. Learn what the GCC is and how you can participate.



↘ [FULL DETAILS](#)

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Have you ever coached someone who didn't want to be coached?



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Get the Edge

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How can we prepare for the challenges presented by our increasingly intercultural business environment? There are three key questions we should address to help us become more culturally aware.

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[Coaching Models for Business Success](#) by Sunny Stout Rostron

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Coaching in a Family Business

By Jean Claude Noel

Family businesses account for 50 percent of the GDP in the United States, representing the full spectrum of American companies from small to large including 35 percent of Fortune 500 companies. They cover 60 percent of the nation's employment and 78 percent of new jobs created. The same is true in Europe where many businesses have a long tradition of family ownership or control. Other parts of the world show similar trends with a very active entrepreneurial spirit in Asia in particular. Global brands such as Gucci, LVMH and Wal-Mart, among many others, are controlled by families.

Yet, business coaching tends to be focused on public companies, leaving aside family businesses. This might be due to a lack of interest, need or simply awareness on either side. Whatever the cause, the result is the same: missed opportunities for both coaches and family businesses.

The potential impact of coaching in a family business environment is great. And while some aspects of coaching as a component of leadership development will be similar irrespective of the type of business, family businesses have some specific elements that differentiate them from other organizations.

Factors of Differentiation in Family Businesses

Loyalty, trust, values and commitment are common characteristics contributing to establishing a strong culture and sense of affiliation in a family business. This does not mean that these elements are absent in non-family businesses, but they clearly do not have the same intensity.

Another important aspect of differentiation in a family business is the generational component. While the transfer of knowledge through generations has virtually disappeared from other organizations as a result of a much higher turnover rate, the natural flow of generations dominates family businesses. In fact, this is one of the main reasons for potential coaching interventions.

These elements combine into an important factor, which is the background of coaching situations: a complex 'universe' of stakeholders, beyond the existing groups in any form of business

ownership. The family implications can appear in many different forms:

- Family as an ownership entity, organized or not as a family council
- Family members directly involved in the business
- Family members not involved in the business but active in family affairs
- Passive family members still interested from a financial perspective
- Family as such with the complexity of relationships between grandparents, parents, children, uncles, aunts and cousins, not to mention 'additions' through marriage, at times considered as a separate group

Other groups include independent directors, who frequently play an influential 'behind-the-scenes' role and obviously non-family employees, managers and executives. Close relationships may also exist within the community as well as with clients, suppliers and consultants (mainly family business consultants).

Careful Contracting

When considering a potential coaching assignment with a family business, these considerations are not just 'nice points of awareness,' but are in fact central to any type of intervention. The coach needs to pay particular attention to contracting, especially at the pre-contract stage. The frequent lack of experience of family businesses with coaching and the paramount importance of trust are additional reasons for the coach to be fully conscious of the relevance of his/her ethical and professional standards.

This preliminary stage is necessary to determine the objectives and expectations for the potential coaching assignment, which include the following:

- Are the coachee and/or group of coachees willing participants?
- Is coaching the right type of intervention?
- Is the coach the right fit for the organization?

These questions may not seem fundamentally different from any typical coaching situation; however, the answers are critical. The potential risks tend to be greater in a family business environment not only in terms of outcome but also of professional reputation. Furthermore, taking time to establish trust will favorably impact the selection process.

Such a complex environment requires a combination of different coaching skills and competencies, which include the following:

- Solid business experience at a senior level, enabling the coach to assess business challenges and competitive environment
- Ability to build trust in relationships
- Life experience which provides appreciation of generational issues
- High level of 'cultural' awareness
- Last but not least, a 'clinical' perspective, which will help to understand the behavioral drivers and group dynamics

In all types of coaching interventions in family businesses, it is recommended to build an initial

phase of extensive interviews prior to finalizing the objectives of the intervention. Feedback from these interviews will often lead to a different set of objectives from those presented in the first briefing. This process provides greater clarity and objectivity and enables the coach to reach a better alignment by integrating the various perspectives from different stakeholders. Through the interviews, the coach also shapes a good picture of the context.

As a final point on contracting, it is generally preferable to build the proposal on agreed total fees for services provided rather than on a time basis. Discussing time spent is a distraction and a potential source of unnecessary discussion, which is best avoided. Family businesses tend to be very fair in contracting this type of assignment.

The following examples of intervention will illustrate some of the practical coaching situations in a family business.

Coaching in a Leadership Transition

This is probably the most common type of coaching intervention in a family business and the best suited for professional business coaches. Family businesses find the most difficulty in a transition from second to third generation. Deciding on the timing for a transition, selecting the right candidate, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the potential successor, and setting the strategic direction for the business while attempting to address the expectations and preferences of family members can be an excruciating experience!

An individual coaching intervention will typically arrive at the end of this process, which may have run for several years. Coaching the new or future CEO will focus on changing behavior, helping the coachee identify potential gaps in knowledge or experience, navigating the business and family environment, and addressing specific professional or personal situations.

While coaching tends to focus on areas for development, family successors are often unaware of their strengths, which may have been inhibited over years of building up defense mechanisms. Coaching can help the new leader 'be himself' and shape his own style rather than 'cloning' his family predecessor.

Coaching a family business leader should be primarily situational and practical rather than conceptual. Awareness of the impact of the change on the preceding generation is a key factor even though the 'client' is the new leader and not the family as a whole.

There are a number of variations from this typical framework, including coaching non-family successors or coaching other family members with an executive role in the organization while a transition is taking place.

Facilitating Family Groups

One may assume that family members know each other well and communicate effectively, but reality is often quite different! Family members interact as individuals and as a group with different sets of expectations, priorities and levels of understanding of business issues. These differences alone can make any discussion a challenge.

Facilitating family sessions using group coaching techniques in small groups of five with a

professional coach can help families identify and focus on their common purpose. The 'clinically oriented' group coaching process developed at the INSEAD Global Leadership Centre allows a more open exchange in a 'safe' and confidential environment. This process is action driven with participants committing to personal and collective action plans. Another important outcome is an increased level of awareness of how to recognize and leverage differences.

This approach used effectively with diverse groups of senior executives obviously also finds its application in the business itself at the group executive committee level or other senior management groups.

Practicing Coaching as a Way to Communicate and Learn

Applying coaching principles as a way to change behavior and improve communication is another variation of working with families. This method, used in large family reunions, involves a session on basic coaching principles and practical exercise in trios with each participant playing the role of coach, coachee and observer.

This works surprisingly well when helping families to improve their listening and observation skills, to consider other opinions and to see each other in a different light. In a recent family program involving 35 participants representing three generations in the same family, the scene of an 18-year-old participant coaching his 71-year-old grandfather was a wonderful example of learning through generations.

These are just a few illustrations of how coaching can be applied in many different ways to the family context. However, we must always remember that coaching is not a universal solution. Keeping boundaries is another important aspect to constantly keep in mind in a family environment.

This type of coaching can be an extremely rewarding experience. It is an amazing source of learning and an opportunity to build long-lasting relationships with clients. Indeed, my own interest keeps shifting from the 'standard' corporate world to the much richer experience of working with family businesses.

Coaching family businesses also brings to light for me what is coaching and what is not. Coaches are not business or family consultants or therapists. In the words of Galileo Galilei, as a coach of businesses and of family businesses in particular, 'You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him discover it within himself.'



Jean Claude Noel is President of executive coaching and consulting firm Atrium Consulting LLC. Jean Claude Noel is adjunct clinical professor at INSEAD, program director at the INSEAD Global Leadership Centre and a member of WABC. Learn more about Jean Claude in the [WABC Coach Directory](#).

Sustaining Rapid Growth and Ensuring Future Success: Why the Ohio March of Dimes Engaged an Executive Coach

By **Todd A. Uterstaedt, SPHR**

The Business/The Organization

Founded in 1938, the March of Dimes is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. They fund programs of research, community services, education and advocacy.

The Ohio division is a multi-million dollar organization led by state director, John Banchy, who has ten direct reports in five remote offices.

The Partnership

During John's tenure at the March of Dimes—first as the Cincinnati chapter's executive director for four years, and then as the Ohio state director for the last two—the organization has risen from one of the lowest ranking divisions to a top performer. In this time, Cincinnati's WalkAmerica has improved from a \$375,000 walk to a \$1 million walk. It is now ranked #16 of 1,100 walks around the country.

John has always experienced positive performance reviews and success. At the March of Dimes, he makes great strides and reaches or exceeds the benchmarks on profitability and productivity set by the organization. But John wanted to take the division to the next level with a goal to be the best in the country.

John encouraged his direct-reports to get a coach to help them in this venture, but found he first needed to set the example.

John engaged me to assist him with these goals.

"Your experience and background in varied fields, your experience coaching strong leaders and your commitment and trust were big factors in choosing you," John told me.

The Challenge

To take the chapter to the next level, John's priority was to grow as a leader and go from simply leading and managing well to completely embracing the role of an executive leader.

"I want that \$1 million walk and the other \$4 million in revenues to be sustainable," John said. "I also want double-digit growth in our chapter each year, without increased expenses."

The Approach

For the first three months, coaching centered on John's self-awareness and how to understand,

appreciate and leverage hidden strengths in ways that create organizational value. He also worked on developing executive level competencies that would enhance his strengths in strategic planning.

"This process forced me to be honest with myself," John said. "It helped me see what my strengths are and then look critically at the things that can derail my success."

John learned to uncover, appreciate and leverage different perceptions, styles and strengths of direct reports. His ability to construct an effective talent management process that focuses on hiring, developing and retaining key leaders was enhanced. Crucial to that success was fostering an organizational culture focused on career and professional development. John also learned how to employ some of the evidence-based team development practices in the workplace.

The engagement helped John understand how expectations influence leadership style. During the process, he also worked on enhancing interpersonal communication techniques.

He said, "The coaching helped me adapt to any situation I encounter. Now I step back and look at a situation differently than I would have before. This can be hard. Managers can get caught up in that 'results now' mentality, especially when there is the need to perform and pressure to turn things around right away. During these times, it's hard to let folks do things in a different way, even when you know they can be successful, simply because you're in a time crunch.

"Now I better understand that you can get to the same goals by traveling different paths. Everyone on the team brings different skills and different core competencies, and can be successful in their own way if I give them the opportunity to do things in a different way."

John created a very open and honest dialogue with his direct reports and that was noted when peer interviews were conducted. Everyone was candid, open and honest because they genuinely respected and appreciated John and wanted to help. This open environment enabled John's direct reports to be engaged in such a way that provided richer feedback for consideration. John paid attention to the data.

As a coach, my role was to provide him with a clear, thorough knowledge of the tools we used both prior to and after their completion. These tools included The Chally, The Center for Creative Leadership's 360-degree assessment entitled Benchmarks and The Birkman.

What made the difference was the fact that John was highly engaged in the process, always did his homework, had great questions, took things seriously while being eager to learn and was open to new ideas.

The Value Delivered

After the ten-month engagement, John realized and set several benchmarks for future success:

- Putting new effort in the way volunteers are recruited, trained and 'career-pathed' or groomed. Volunteers are the foundation for the organization's success.
- Growing revenues from WalkAmerica, which were up 16.1 percent in 2006 over 2005. Revenues are projected to increase an additional 14+ percent in 2007.
- Continuing to reduce expenses.

- Increasing total public support and revenues by over eight percent each year.
- Chapter profitability was up ten percent in 2006 and is expected to exceed all 2007 budget goals, while again anticipating double-digit revenue growth in and beyond 2008.
- Chapter board giving (\$1,000 or more) was at 100 percent in 2006 (a first) and again in 2007, thanks to new communication approaches with the more than 100 board members representing the five Ohio divisions.
- Turnover of team members has been almost eliminated. The current team is in place to provide for continued growth.
- Utilizing everyone's strengths to their fullest potential continues to be a priority for the state chapter.

"Every expectation I had prepared for in my quest to go from a good manager and leader to a senior executive was exceeded," reported John. "In fact, my direct reports and the organization's national leadership team have both commented on my positive professional growth without even being aware of our coaching relationship.

"This coaching engagement will forever benefit me and the organization. If you asked me a year ago, I would have never thought this. But this engagement changed my career!"



Todd A. Uterstaedt, SPHR is president and CEO of Baker & Daboll, LLC in Cincinnati, Ohio. The company uses a Strengths-First philosophy that encourages leaders to focus on their talents and apply them in ways that create personal and organizational value. Learn more about Todd A. Uterstaedt, SPHR at www.bakerdaboll.com and in the [WABC Coach Directory](#).

GET THE EDGE

'Psychopath' or 'Narcissist': The Coach's Dilemma

By Paul Babiak, PhD

Coaches are sometimes presented with a client whose narcissism, self-centeredness, arrogance and insensitivity to others makes them wonder if they are, in fact, dealing with a psychopath. Some clients may arrive with notice from their organizations that they are 'snakes in suits.' How can you tell if your client is a psychopath? How can you be sure?

A proper diagnosis is a complex affair. Psychopathy is a personality disorder, which we now know comprises 20 traits—some readily observable and some not—as measured by the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL-R), a forensic assessment instrument developed by Dr. Robert D. Hare. Identification is not straightforward or easy, and requires in-depth interviewing of the subject, verification of behavioral data as contained in written records (360 degree feedback and personnel

files for the case of the corporate psychopath; criminal records for those incarcerated) and much experience. It is also customary to seek a second opinion or bounce your suspicions off a seasoned colleague when making this determination.

Psychopathy vs. Narcissism: Two Personality Disorders Often Confused

Both psychopaths and narcissists, unfortunately, come across as self-absorbed, arrogant and insensitive—making differentiation difficult. However, there are some clues to the difference that the coach can look for.

The Psychopath

The most obvious traits of the psychopath are charisma, charm and a grandiose sense of self-worth, all somewhat positive traits. Many people actually like and are attracted to psychopaths whom they have just met, only to discover conning, manipulation and deceit—the dark side of this disorder—down the line. Unfortunately, in business coaching situations, it is quite common to find a blend of these traits among executive clients—in the form of self-confidence, assertiveness and influence skills—and to misinterpret them.

The Narcissist

Narcissism is a personality disorder, one of ten documented in the psychological literature. The common understanding is that narcissists are 'in love with' themselves and see the world as revolving around their thoughts and needs. To narcissists, the world is their audience, and everyone they meet—and everything that happens—is centered on them. Thus, we describe narcissists as self-centered, selfish, demanding and self-absorbed; yet, they can also be quite charming as well, having learned how to please their audience. True narcissists make up only about one percent of the general population—the same base rate as psychopaths. They are drawn to careers that allow them to receive the attention and power they crave, and to exert influence over others, reinforcing their perceived self-importance, the same as the psychopath; hence, it is not surprising to find a large number of both drawn to executive-level jobs.

The 'Normal'

The diagnostic problem (and subsequent coaching problem) is further complicated by the fact that most 'normal' (non-narcissist) executives also possess some feelings of superiority, entitlement and need for attention. But, these are typically at moderate levels and, while they may be viewed as narcissistic, they can better be described as narcissistic tendencies, rather than full-fledged narcissism. In fact, some degree of ego strength and self-efficacy is a good trait among executives and can lead them to success.

Clarifying Muddy Waters

How is the business coach to avoid the confusion? If you suspect your client has psychopathic tendencies, look for other signals. To separate the narcissist from the psychopath, one must go further into the traits and characteristics that they do not share. Of the 20 psychopathic traits and characteristics of the psychopath, those that can be gleaned in the context of a normal coaching session include:

- *Pathological lying:* Psychopaths can and will lie about many things, even those things you or I would not waste time lying about. Lying can often be uncovered through the many inconsistencies in their 'story' as it evolves over the course of a coaching engagement. If you tape record your sessions, try to follow their pattern as it twists and turns in response to

your questions and challenges. At some point, it no longer sounds like resistance, but rather game playing. While the psychopath will talk a good game about integrity and honesty, his or her behaviors will speak of pathological lying.

- *Emotional poverty*: Psychopaths are unable to feel, express or even understand normal human emotions (there is physiological evidence supporting this). Thus, they will be unable to express the range of emotions (except anger and rage) you would find in others. Even though some successful psychopaths can mimic some emotion, they do not do a good job of it. Many display a very flat affect while describing events that others would be hard-pressed to discuss without some emotional display. Or, they will overact the emotion, going beyond what is 'normal' for any given emotional situation. Look for remorse and empathy; you won't find them in the psychopath. They are cold inside and have no conscience as we understand it.
- *Blaming others*: This is a very common trait that becomes more evident as sessions go on. While most clients who blame others for their difficulties will eventually 'get over it' and take responsibility for their own actions, psychopaths will not. (Note: If they seem to, watch out for the lying and manipulation as noted above.)

Coaching Approaches to Try

The responses to coaching will be different among these three types, which can also help to clarify who they really are and further guide the coach in his or her strategy.

Coaching someone with narcissistic tendencies involves education and feedback about the negative effects these traits have on others, and helping the client learn how to better manage them. This 'normal' executive (with a healthy amount of ego strength) will, after initial resistance and pushback, move into solution-space, focusing on improving his or her effectiveness both personally and professionally. Perceived competence and self-efficacy are very important to this individual and are useful levers toward improvement and continued success.

True narcissists are more problematic, as helping them often involves delving deeper into the psyche. Underneath the bravado and attention-seeking, they are not all that self-confident or sure of themselves. Rather, they suffer with intense feelings of inadequacy with which their audience helps them cope. Because lack of self-confidence is not often a trait of successful executives, it is imperative that these feelings be hidden from peers, subordinates and coaches. The narcissist will find negative feedback demoralizing and exhibit emotional responses based upon the perceived challenges to his or her personality. Much coaching work will revolve around helping the narcissist resolve internal conflicts and regain the approval of his or her 'audience.'

Venturing into clinical areas while working with narcissists is difficult because it may be out of the comfort zone of the coach. Yet, the prognosis is good if they work with a coach and therapist who focus on helping them rebuild their self-concept in the face of negative feedback. They are often open to and can learn new behaviors which in their minds can help them regain the support from the audience they desire.

The psychopath, on the other hand, while similar in appearance to the narcissist on the surface, is not plagued by such unconscious dynamics. Rather, psychopaths do not need an audience. They are, for all intents and purposes, their own audience. Seeking and demanding power and attention is not driven by a need for reassurance, but by a means to manipulate those in the surroundings; they are consummate game players. The psychopath takes the floor and arrogantly demands respect as a way to manipulate others.

The true psychopath can be expected to react quite negatively to the feedback and begin to attack the organization, its members and ultimately the coach beyond normal expectations in such situations. Eventually though, clever psychopaths will switch their approach. They will mimic more appropriate behaviors and begin to look like they've taken the coaching to heart and are benefiting. They will try to subtly con or manipulate the coach into seeing their own point of view and seek collusion with the coach to help them convince others of their progress. Talented psychopaths—and I argue they must be talented on many fronts to have achieved their current level—want to learn more effective ways to manipulate those back at the office.

Lasting Change or Not?

In general, both 'normal' and narcissistic executives will eventually focus on the real work of improvement, while the psychopath will be more interested in how to use new behaviors to better manipulate (a typical attack pattern is: set someone up for failure, blame him, unseat or defeat him, gloat).

Unfortunately, should the coach take on the challenge, accurately assess the person and the situation, effectively resist manipulation attempts and focus on behavior change, these changes, in my experience, will be short-lived. A 'good report' from the coach is the psychopath's goal, and once attained, it's back to business as usual. And, if it suits his or her bigger purpose (long-term manipulation of the organization), a psychopathic client may ultimately attack the integrity and professional status of the coach.

Clearly, coaching a psychopath is risky business. The executive coach should think very carefully when deciding whether to continue the coaching relationship with someone he or she believes is a psychopath. It may be prudent at times to decline the 'invitation' to play the game, and instead end the relationship.



Paul Babiak, PhD is an I/O Psychologist and president of HRBackOffice, an executive coaching and consulting firm. Paul is the co-author of *Snakes In Suits: When Psychopaths Go To Work*, HarperCollins, 2006. Paul can be reached by email at Babiak@HRBackOffice.com.

Photo by Joan Bedard.

Tips for Marketing Coaching Services to Small Business Owners

By Lynda C. Hess

With the number of small businesses in the United States soaring annually, there is a huge opportunity to offer business coaching services to these entrepreneurs.

Many of these owners started their business because they had a strong technical skill (programming, painting, being a doctor) or a hobby (cooking, fixing things) that they thought they could turn into a profitable business. The problem is, where there may have been passion, there wasn't business acumen. This is where small business coaches can fill a vital role.

The business size this article will cover is a company with between 5 and 50 employees where the owner is very involved in the day-to-day operations. The kind of services needed by many of these companies are business improvement services—how to implement a marketing plan, how to control the finances, who/how to hire, deciding what to delegate, etc. While some might call this consulting, I believe it's better called coaching, because it generally entails helping find the problems and sticking around to help implement the solutions. This is a step beyond what most typical consultants do.

So what are the challenges in selling business coaching services to this market segment? These companies are generally tightly controlled by the owner who gave them birth. They've managed to get this far in life by relying on themselves. This mentality creates special hurdles when trying to sell services that they may desperately need but don't want to admit they need.

Given these unique challenges, I'd like to offer some tips I've learned about marketing to small business owners.

1. *Face-to-face.*

Meet them face-to-face. Because so much about improving their baby (their business) involves trusting you, owners have to believe they'll be able to work with you. They want to meet you, test you, and see if they think they can trust you. While stay-in-touch mailing programs can be used as a follow-up tool, there needs to have been a face-to-face experience initially.

2. *Target market.*

In order to meet people directly, select a target market that you can regularly see and have access to on a consistent basis. This generally means picking an industry that has an association where members have monthly meetings and their membership list is available to members. Attend meetings, become involved and contact this group regularly.

3. *Good target market.*

Select a target market that has a problem they are willing to spend some money to solve. And then, make sure this problem is one that you are equipped to help them solve. For example, if knowing where their cash is going is a key issue to this market, you must have

a strong financial background.

4. *Be an expert.*

Another reason to find a niche market is because you must become an expert. People won't pay big bucks to a generalist. You will need to understand the owners' industry and know the pains they experience trying to grow a business in their market. With credibility, you can establish yourself as someone who knows what they need.

5. *Offer faster fixes.*

Self-starting business owners generally think they should be able to read a book and figure out how to 'fix' their businesses. While for some this may be true, the best thing to do is to appeal to their sense of getting it fixed faster with your services. How will they know what book to use? How will they know what part of the book to apply? How will they know how to use skills they haven't shown they have to date? An outsider can quickly determine the top areas that need help and get to work on them in a unique way for their company.

6. *Clear prospecting process.*

Have a process that you follow to take people through your qualifying phase. Use steps like: initial contact, short introductory phone call, face-to-face meeting and then contract signing. Make sure the prospect knows your process. This will put you in charge and help you control the time given to prospects as well as make you seem like a real pro.

7. *Use an assessment.*

Most people aren't familiar with business coaching and want to understand how you'll work together. I use a full-company assessment to find strengths and weaknesses and then turn these into a 90-day goal-setting tool. This is also a good selling tool. People like to do assessments on themselves and see where they stand.

As well as tips, here are some marketing cautions:

1. Don't work with start-ups. They don't have much money and really don't know what they don't know yet!
2. Don't work with companies that have been in business for more than five years and are still smaller than five employees. If the owner hasn't figured out how to let go and grow in that amount of time, he/she won't with you either.
3. Don't take everyone as a client. Make your prospecting process be a hurdle that prospects must follow in order to be your client. If they miss appointments with no explanation during this phase, odds are they're not going to follow through on larger assignments.
4. Don't make your fee a big secret. If that part is going to scare them away, do it as early as possible in the process.

While this is a challenging market with whom to work, the rewards are significant because you're dealing directly with the person in charge. Once you've earned their trust, chances are you'll be their friend and advisor forever.



Lynda Conrady Hess is the owner of Alpha Business Coaching, LLC a small business coaching practice. She works with business owners who are frustrated because they are working too hard, not seeing enough money flow to the bottom line and don't know why. Lynda can be reached by email at LCHess@AlphaBizCoaching.com and also at www.AlphaBizCoaching.com.

COLUMN

[A Global Workplace](#)

Cultural Awareness: Preparing for the Global Workplace

By Nerella Campigotto

Since global reach is a reality for most of us in our business environment, we are faced with challenges and implications that affect how we communicate, negotiate, collaborate and make decisions. For coaches, trainers and consultants it adds an extra dimension when our clients are dealing with the same conundrum. The global workplace is one where we work in multicultural teams (sometimes virtually), lead intercultural employees and/or deal with customers across cultures. We cannot possibly become experts in the myriad of cultures we touch in our daily lives. So how can we best prepare ourselves to meet this challenge? The key, I believe, is to build awareness of the cultural nuances that surround us. To do this, we must ask ourselves three questions:

1. What Is Culture?

The first step is to examine what exactly we mean by 'culture.' Not an easy question to answer, but culture is certainly more than just traditions, customs and etiquette. Ultimately, the culture of a particular group is defined by the 'values' of the people who form the group. This has developed over centuries, if not millennia, and is based on history, politics, religion, ethics, class distinction, regional differences, hierarchy...the list goes on. Furthermore, culture isn't just how members of a particular society live, but also how they view others in their respective cultures. The concept of culture is essentially a subjective one, adding to its mystique.

2. Do You Know Your Own Culture?

Analyzing your own culture is often the best thing to do in the quest to attain awareness, especially when viewed through the eyes of someone from another culture. In doing so, we must take into account not only our own ethnicity, but the influences of others that have touched our lives and continue to do so. Most societies are impacted by the increasingly fluid movement of people across the globe and the instant information supplied by the Internet.

3. How Do Cultures Differ?

There are numerous studies that look at the characteristics of various cultural groups, but the work

of Geert Hofstede is perhaps the best known among students of cultural diversity. His research concluded that there are five major areas of cultural variation. These essentially assess attributes such as tolerance of hierarchy, individualism versus collectivism, masculine versus feminine traits, the need of formality or rules, and long-term versus short-term orientation. Of late, there has been some criticism that the cross-cultural training industry emphasizes differences and stereotypes, thereby aggravating the challenges encountered in the global business environment. There may be some truth to this, or is this criticism perhaps driven by a sense of political correctness that may itself be a cultural trait of the West? For many people it may be easier to seek understanding by focusing on the similarities found in other cultures as a starting point. After all, we are dealing with human nature and many traits are shared by all cultures. In my experience however, I have found it easier to deal with cross-cultural conflict and challenges once I have accepted that there are attributes and characteristics that differentiate us. I personally welcome the differences found in various societies, and I am particularly interested in the nuances between similar cultures. What a boring world it would be without these differences!

If you are interested in learning about a particular culture, or more about your own, I would suggest you visit the website for the Centre for Intercultural Learning (part of the Canadian Foreign Affairs Department) at www.intercultures.gc.ca. Government sites such as this will often have ample information intended for people doing business in foreign countries. To find out more about Hofstede's work and analysis of each country he studied, see www.geert-hofstede.com. Of course, another great way to learn is to simply ask others about their culture.

Clearly, culture is a complex matter that is best understood through intercultural dialogue; the challenges it brings are best met by being flexible, open-minded and aware.



Nerella Campigotto is president of Boomerang Consulting Inc., a firm that helps you grow your business internationally. Boomerang Consulting offers services such as market entry strategies, international business partnering and intercultural communication. Nerella can be reached by email at nc@boomerangconsulting.com.

COLUMN

Ask the Expert

A regular column responding to readers' questions by sharing stories from the offbeat life of coach's coach Dr. Xavier Fink (his mother calls him Melvyn) as his colleagues interact at the sharp end of the business world.

Question: I am using a 360-degree feedback report with one of my clients. How should I translate the results into a behavioral development plan?

Answer: With the greatest of care, even when presented with the simplest of feedback. Always validate your raw data and never try to modify any behavior without understanding its full business logic.

First read the story then consider:

- What questions should Matilda have asked, and when?
- Did Matilda do a good job or a bad job?
- What important differences are there between business coaching and behavioral coaching?

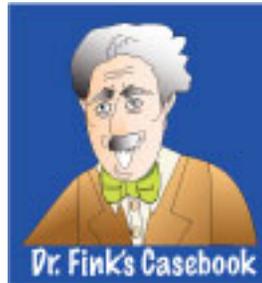


Illustration ©
Janet Schatzman 2007

Matilda's Bittersweet Taste of Success Putting Feedback in Context

By Laurence S. Lyons, PhD

"It's the best coaching work I've ever done," she says brightly. "Dr. Fink, I just have to tell you about it."

We're sitting at an airport coffee bar having unexpectedly bumped into each other between connecting flights. Matilda is the most logical, systematic, and intense person I know. Now that she's absorbed in telling her story, I casually take the opportunity to bite into my double cinnamon. Fortunately American Airlines is going to enforce a time limit on this conversation.

Matilda tells me about Frank, the sales director at a medium-sized company. Apparently Frank is a saint except for one major flaw.

"All the data agreed," she says. "Seven people said exactly the same thing. Three different psychometric tests confirmed identical deviant behavior: Frank's great; he just gets distracted in board meetings. He'd turn up late. While the rest got busy talking big issues—like the move to the new building—there was Frank sitting in the corner cuddling his laptop and answering emails. He'd frequently wander out of the meeting, sometimes for as long as 20 minutes, to place some phone call. It drove the rest of them nuts. Naturally, as a great salesman, Frank was always polite. Just absent. As they all said, distracted.

"Everyone around him agreed what was needed—get Frank fully engaged in board meetings. He'd become Mr. Perfect and I'd get to be recognized as a great coach."

Matilda pauses, eyebrows raised, an expectant expression covering her face. Perhaps she's seeking sympathy or my permission to go on? I manage to respond with suitable ambiguity: my body language could equally be taken as a sign of collegial consent or pure contentedness with my delicious Danish.

"So we get straight to work. Of course, he resists at first. Don't they all? He puts up all kinds of stupid arguments about how he's indispensable; he's the rainmaker; how important he is and so on. I wasn't surprised—his profile indicated he had too high an opinion of himself. And his favorite color is yellow! Can you believe that? Most people go for something bold: red, blue, even green. But yucky yellow? Howd'ya figure that?"

I explain that nature has made the human eye most sensitive to yellow, which is why it's used in warning signs. Yellow indicates action. And also danger.

"Anyhow we eventually agree on our coaching contract and arrange the sessions. One hour every Tuesday and Thursday over two months. Half of the meetings had to be on customer premises because that's how Frank likes to work—close to his clients. After eight visits, I'd done it. I'd checked all the boxes. I'd fixed Frank."

"You fixed Frank?" I want to check the factual accuracy of her assertion. "Yes, that's right," she informs me. Matilda confirms that Frank had been well and truly fixed.

"Oh, yeah," she says, "fixed for sure. At the next board meeting Frank turns up right on time. No laptop. No cell phone. Not only that, Frank joins in the discussion. Better than that, he leads it."

She pauses to grab my forearm just as I'm about to raise my cup. She looks directly at me, and I notice her eyes welling up. What she is about to say is sure to be profound. Her measured words arrive slowly.

"Frank made a real contribution." A teardrop. She waits for some response. I close my eyes and nod sagely. "What was that?" I ask in my gravest tone.

"They were discussing how many basins to put in the new men's washroom," Matilda continues. "The finance guy wanted to penny-pinch and suggested they install only two. But Frank, I am so proud of Frank...."

She falters, clearly overcome with emotion. The grip on my arm tightens. A full flood of tears streams down her cheek. It's now apparent that I won't be drinking for quite some time.

"Frank made the case for three. He acknowledged that the initial outlay would of course be greater, but successfully argued that with more available basins people would spend less time in the washroom. The small one-off capital investment would pay for itself almost immediately, improving productivity each and every day on an ongoing basis. Not to mention the hygiene factors, as the HR director put it.

"They voted with Frank. Unanimously. Frank got them their extra basin. The chief executive told

me afterwards that Frank put forward the most compelling proposition he'd ever heard; it went to the very heart of the business's key performance indicators."

With this release of tension in her narrative, the restraint on my arm relents. My coffee has a definite Colombian tang to it.

"So you must be pleased with the outcome," I suggest tentatively. Matilda fumbles with her purse.

"Not exactly," she says. "Although it's the best work I've ever done, I'm not sure if I'll get paid for it."

"You don't think you'll get paid?" I ask in astonishment. "Why ever not?"

Matilda pulls a flight ticket from her bag.

"Well, it's kind of strange," she ventures, "but on the very same day as the board meeting, Frank's biggest client wants to place this huge order, one that might save the company. So she calls Frank's assistant to clear up one final detail. It turns out that her query is trivial, and normally Frank would have had no difficulty in booking the sale on the spot."

"Didn't Frank's assistant interrupt the meeting so that he could come out just to clinch the deal?" I ask in sheer amazement.

"Of course she did," says Matilda, "but after all my intensive training to prevent him getting distracted in board meetings, Frank flatly refused to take it. At the moment the call came through, Frank was talking toilets. Now they're in liquidation."

Matilda gets up to go as the New York flight calls.

**Do you have a question for Dr. Fink?
Please send it to bcweditor@wabccoaches.com.**

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Laurence S. Lyons, PhD, unlike Dr. Fink and his friends, is a real person and internationally renowned expert in organizational transformation and leadership development. He is a member of WABC's International Advisory Committee. A library of his work is available at www.lslyons.com. Read more about Larry in the [WABC Coach Directory](#).

COLUMN

[Coaching Models for Business Success](#)

Can Coaching Produce Sustainable Behavior Change?

By Dr. Sunny Stout Rostron

Part 1 of 3

Coaching is a relatively new profession, so this topic has yet to be exhaustively studied. Until we have reliable research from a wide variety of organizations, no one can guarantee that behavior change is truly sustainable as a result of coaching. However, based on research currently available, there are certainly guidelines for coaching that can help ensure that behavior change is indeed sustainable.

To address this question, I have spent the last four years researching how the coaching conversation helps the client to make breakthrough shifts in thinking, feeling and behavior that significantly impact their performance at work. An equally important question is: how can we actually measure the effectiveness of the coaching intervention—is it just through sustained behavioral change and improved performance? Influencing factors are our cultural worldview and the individual assumptions that drive our behavior.

Cultural Worldview

Our understanding and relationship with the world takes place within our own cultural framework. Because our relation to things is determined by our own individual experiences, intentions and assumptions, our worldview does not necessarily align with those of our peers. This is one of the primary motivations for coaching.

Coaching practitioners either work with an existing coaching model, or develop their own individual model to look at the individual client's concerns in a structural way. A 'coaching model' is a metaphor or analogy for both the coaching conversation, and for the overall coaching intervention—whether across a 20-hour, six-month or a one-year period. Instead of seeing everything as the client's personal, emotional or internal issue, problems can be seen as part of an overall situation or worldview. It is important that coaches adopt a structural approach that is flexible and suitable to the client and the context.

Assumptions and Existential Issues

Because coaching is a relationship-based process, the coach must be as aware of their own

potential assumptions as well as those of the client. Ideally coaches divest themselves of their own limiting paradigms, so that they can more effectively question and probe the client's articulated reality and assumptions.

In existential philosophy, all human beings must create meaning for their own lives. Existentialism stresses freedom of choice and taking responsibility for one's actions. Existential issues that arise in the coaching conversation, such as 'freedom,' 'meaning and purpose' and 'choice,' are aligned to anxiety. From an existential standpoint, clients can find themselves in a crisis when decisions have to be made that may fundamentally impact their lives. This requires the coach to be conscious of her own fallibility as she probes the client's articulated reality or interpretation of his experience. Empowering and disempowering assumptions underlie what people say and do, and the coach's fallibility is part of that process.

An existential goal is that of a whole life lived: this is to approach the client as a whole, professionally and personally, working with emotional, rational and spiritual intelligence to understand how they impact self-awareness, self-management, cultural competence and social awareness.¹

Working with the client in the coaching conversation, from this point of view, is about coming to a new way of understanding ourselves and our interaction with the world and all systems of which we are a part.

The GCC (Global Coaching Convention)

You may wish to check out www.coachingconvention.org to take part in a global dialogue on the development of the coaching profession. The GCC is a virtual platform for nine global working groups and consultative bodies who are researching the practice and training of coaches worldwide. The GCC is an international forum to create a collaborative framework that represents every stakeholder group (consumers, practitioners, educators, professionals and industry bodies). The nine areas to be explored are:

1. Mapping the field
2. Current research agenda
3. Knowledge base for coaching
4. Training guidelines for programs
5. Evaluation of coaching interventions
6. Core competencies
7. Code of ethics
8. Selection of coaches and management of coaching engagement
9. Professional status of coaching

Guidelines for Sustainable Behavioral Change

Based on my doctoral research, here is a brief description of ten key coaching guidelines for achieving sustainable behavioral change which impact performance. In my next columns I will explore these ten guidelines further:

1. **Build the Relationship**

A relationship develops as a result of the 'coaching conversation,' with client issues and concerns teased out by the skill of the coach's interventions.

2. **Learn from Experience**

Working with our own individual experience is a key to learning. In actively reflecting on

experience, coach and client draw meaning from experience, literally entering into a dialogue with 'experience,' turning it into useable knowledge.²

3. **Understand the Role of Others**

Coach and client need to be aware of the powerful role of others in the work they do together. A danger of not understanding the 'system' in which the client operates is that the coach risks becoming another part of that system.

4. **Develop EQ**

The development of emotional intelligence cannot be underestimated in the business coaching environment.

5. **Be Flexible**

Spontaneity is important, so beware of using a formulaic approach in your coaching.

6. **Make Your Ethical Code Explicit**

Part of a coach's code of ethics is to honor confidentiality in the coaching conversation; the client entrusts the coach with confidences, and must feel safe to do so.

7. **Be Coached Yourself**

Create a plan for your own development, no matter how qualified you are.

8. **Measure Coaching Results**

Take measures of the outcomes of coaching from different perspectives.

9. **Create a Development Plan with Goals**

The coach is responsible for ensuring that goal-setting conversations get the best results.

10. **Debrief and Survey**

Identify for each individual client and the client organization overall what has shifted during the coaching intervention, and determine what new behaviors are visible and how performance has improved.

¹ Dana Zohar, author of *Spiritual Intelligence*, defines spiritual intelligence (SQ) as the intelligence we use to imagine how things could be better. SQ is what we use to transform situations, to look for meaning in our lives, to find a sense of purpose. [Stout Rostron, S. 2002. *Accelerating Performance, Powerful New Techniques to Develop People*, London: Kogan Page.]

² Boud, D., and N. Miller, eds. 1996. *Working with Experience, Animating Learning*. London: Routledge.



Dr. Sunny Stout Rostron is executive director of Resolve Encounter Consulting, with 15 years experience as an executive coach. Sunny is chair of the Research Agenda for the Global Coaching Convention and president emeritus COMENSA (Coaches and Mentors of South Africa). Author of *Accelerating Performance, Powerful New Techniques to Develop People* (Kogan Page 2002) and a contributing author to *Sharing the Passion, Conversations with Coaches* (AHT, 2006), her new book about executive coaching is due in 2008. Learn more about Sunny in the [WABC Coach Directory](#)

Based on the Evidence

Where's the Evidence? First Steps into the Literature

By Dr. Annette Filler-Travis

Research: Let's take a minute to reflect upon what that word means for us as coaches. Do we think of it as remote from practice, constrained by a set of rules and 'paradigms' that leave us cold, or is it a wonderful opportunity to explore, update and deepen our practice?

As a professional researcher and coach, I have supervised many coaching practitioners during their Masters degrees. Most have started their research with some trepidation and a sense that they were entering into another world, with a new vocabulary and a set of rules about which they knew little. It seems that we, as researchers, have done a good job of mystifying our trade!

Yet, as the coaching profession develops, we are becoming increasingly aware that we need to delineate coaching from other offers in the market; identify the real value we can bring to our clients; and be able to advise the buyers of coaching on which coaching interventions are fit for their purpose. To do this we need to have evidence of what works and how. In effect, we need a thorough grounding in both the theory and practice of what we do and the research which underpins it.

We should be happy therefore that the number of studies and research papers on coaching is steadily increasing. The first research article, which looked at 'coaching' as a discrete activity, was written in the 1930s and focused on coaching in a sales force. Publications then averaged one or two per decade until the 1980s when interest picked up. Since then, there has been a near exponential increase in publications. We now have specific journals for general interest coaching articles and research papers. There has also been a corresponding increase in Doctorate theses on coaching-related subjects. This does not, of course, include the vast range of books on coaching that draw heavily from the research. Although they are of great use to their readers, they generally do not report new research, but draw upon the established research literature. As a consequence, I have not included them in the figures. Within this wealth of text, the most popular type of article is descriptive reporting of a coaching intervention and single case studies, although there is a move to more empirical evaluations of case and group studies.

But are they of equal value and how do we know what is good research and what is not so good? How do we know what should influence our practice and our advice to clients?

One place to start when considering these issues is to identify the research question being asked and whether the evidence presented would convince you enough to change what you do, i.e., what is the purpose of the enquiry/research and the perspective from which it is being asked?

This is not a trivial question so it is worth working with an example. If I was to ask: *Does coaching improve the performance of executives?*

Then, assuming we are all agreed on what constitutes coaching (which may be a big assumption!), there are still two words in the question that have a variety of meanings depending upon your perspective—these are 'improve' and 'performance.'

From the perspective of an HR professional managing the coaching intervention 'improved performance' may mean:

a) An increase in the scores of the executives on 360 degree feedback

For the manager of the coachee, it may mean:

b) A 10 percent increase in sales

And from the viewpoint of the coach it may be:

c) The perceived satisfaction of the executives that they have addressed the issues identified in the coaching contract

Just from consideration of these three perspectives, I can identify three different ways of conducting this enquiry. For (a) I may consider 360 degree feedback before and after a coaching intervention; for (b) I may look at sales figure before and after; whereas for (c) a series of interviews with coaches after coaching would be one way of hearing their views. For the sales manager, the interviews with the coachees will be of limited value whereas the coach will find them highly informative.

Obviously these are simplifications, but they illustrate just how the particular perspective of the researcher and the end user will define the value of the answer and whether the research has fulfilled its purpose.

In a similar manner, a single case study can provide a rich picture of a particular intervention allowing a deep exploration of the context, attitudes and outcomes for the individuals concerned. But the purpose and perspective of the intervention may be highly specific to the case under investigation and have little to offer another organization in another context.

A reflection on the purpose and perspective of the research we access will often sort the wheat from the chaff and identify what has real value for us in our individual practice. It will nearly always also reveal a wealth of further questions. The old adage in this case is true—our answers only provide for further questions. It is at this point that many of us consider entering the field of enquiry ourselves and undertaking practitioner research. In my next column, I will talk about the real benefits both to practice and the profession of practitioner research.

If you would like to add your comments on this piece or would like to share your favorite research study (we do all have them) then please send them in, and I will be happy to add them to the 'Worth Reading List' below, which will be a consistent feature of this column.

Worth Reading

To get a general overview of the research into coaching and how it has evolved over the years, reading the following article is an excellent start. It is a free download from the web address included here.

Grant, Anthony M., and Michael J. Cavanagh. 2004. "Toward a Profession of Coaching: Sixty-five Years of Progress and Challenges for the Future." *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring* Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring): 1.

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/education/ijebcm/home.html>



Dr. Annette Fillery-Travis is a senior researcher and education coach with the Professional Development Foundation. The author of more than 60 research articles and studies, her recent book *The Case for Coaching*, presenting a literature review with research case studies and interviews from over 20 organizations on coaching efficacy, was published in 2006 by CIPD, UK. Annette can be reached by email at Annette.fillery-travis@pdf.net.

COLUMN

Professional Selling

Business Development, Networking, Marketing. It's Still SELLING!

By Barry Trailer

Part 1 of 2

We worked with a bank many years ago and the executive who brought us in to do sales training said, "This is great. We really need what you guys have. Only one thing: don't call it 'selling.'" Many professionals are uncomfortable with the term 'selling' and prefer to say they're doing business development or marketing or are simply networking with other associates. What's wrong with saying you're selling?

ox y mo ron (noun)

a phrase in which two words of contradictory meaning are used together for special effect, examples: 'wise fool' or 'legal murder' or 'jumbo shrimp'

Professional Selling: Oxymoron?

For many trained professionals the notion of selling can be uncomfortable or, worse, unattractive. There can be a number of reasons for this, not the least of which is a negative buying experience they may have had in the past with a pushy or annoying sales rep. These and other stored images can combine with a sort of righteous indignation that "Our work speaks for itself," and that self-promotion is a reflection of a personal or professional deficit.

This article attempts to surface associations that may be hindering your ability to sell your services—and feel good about doing so.

professional (adjective)

engaged in an occupation as a paid job rather than as a hobby; very competent; showing a high degree of skill or competence

sell (verb)

make people want to buy something: to increase the sale of or the demand for a particular product

Let's start right there with this notion of 'making' people do or want to do anything. That doesn't seem right and, in my view, it isn't. In workshops when I've asked participants what images or words come to mind when they hear the term salesman or saleswoman they'll offer: pushy, assertive, money driven, glad hander, insincere, etc.

Who would want to be part of that club? And yet there is this countervailing truth in business that: Nothing happens until someone sells something. How to reconcile this important fact with a desire to be of service but not a pest?

Business in general and coaching in particular are grounded in relationships. Many abuses and sloppy behavior have gone down in the name of 'relationship selling.' A model we've presented over the years to help clarify and structure this discussion is the level of relationships graphic depicted in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Level of Relationships

This model is useful for a couple reasons. First, identifying the various levels helps locate where one is in relationship. If, for example, you've heard yourself saying, "We're being used for a lot of

free consulting here," this actually implies a mid-level relationship. The problem is not the consulting piece; the problem is you're doing it for free.

The pyramid also helps convey the notion that the mass is largely weighted toward the bottom of the pyramid; that is, there are many more vendor relationships than actual partner relationships, though people will often mouth the word 'partner' when they really have a vendor or supplier relationship.

There are business components that increase as you move up through levels of relationship. Among these are trust (which is synonymous with credibility), access to others (players, departments, projects, etc.), repeat or add-on business, references and referrals, to name a few.

And there are things that decrease as you move up through levels. Price sensitivity (though this may never go away entirely), numbers of competitors, the significance of a particular credential or certification, time to close a particular piece of business and more (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: Business Components and Level of Relationships

If you now consider these things that are increasing along with those that are decreasing, you'll find they are all very good for business—your business. And this model also forms the basis of our definition of selling: Establishing and elevating relationships over time.

We have found in working with groups in the past, that this definition is much more acceptable than the notion of making or convincing people to want something. So, how best to move up and enjoy the increase of these various elements? If we return to the levels of relationship pyramid once more and rotate it 90 degrees (see Figure 3), we see how we can add value, increase our contribution and, therefore, elevate both our discussions and our relationships.

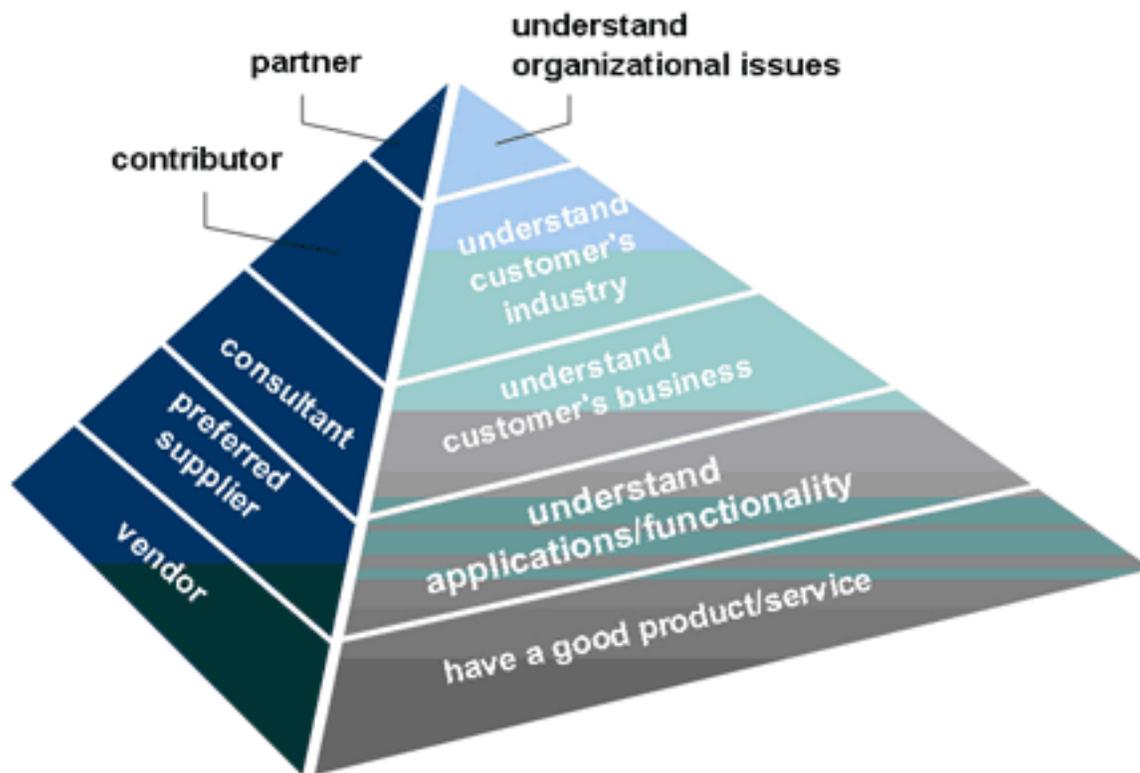


Figure 3: Relationship Pyramid

Simply stated, the more you know about a company, its customers, its industry and competitors (and your own), the more you bring to the table. The better you are able to understand the pressures your prospective clients are facing and situations they're confronting. Your immediate reaction may be that you can't possibly know this much and that you needn't have to, because coaching is really about facilitating and drawing out what is going on with (and within) your client. It is my premise that in taking this stance you are limiting your ability to ask truly relevant questions or to understand the full meaning and implication of your clients' answers.

This does not mean that you need to become an expert at manufacturing and insurance and advertising if you have clients in each of these areas, but I do mean to suggest that the more conversant you are with the major pieces in motion in these industries, the better you can sell—and, by extension, coach.

In my next column, I'll discuss a second challenge to selling professional services, maintaining an ongoing sales initiative.



Barry Trailer is managing partner and co-founder of CSO Insights, a research firm specializing in benchmarking how companies leverage people, process, technology and knowledge to optimize the way they market and sell to customers. CSO Insights' survey of over 7,500 sales effectiveness initiatives has become the benchmark for tracking the evolution of how the role of sales is changing, the challenges that are impacting sales performance and how companies are addressing these issues. www.csoinsights.com

Coaching Great Leaders

Does Anyone Ever Really Change?

By Marshall Goldsmith

Are you ready? The million dollar question for anyone in the coaching field is: "Does anyone ever really change?" I was first asked this perfectly reasonable, and for me life-altering, question by a Fortune 100 company executive vice president for whose company I was preparing training sessions. I'm not sure why he asked me this question. Perhaps he had an eye on the training budget? It's hard to say. At the time, though, I had trained thousands of people, received fabulous feedback about my coaching, and I had dozens of letters from people who believed they had changed. I was a successful coach; I had worked with some of the best companies in the world, and nobody had ever asked me this question. Worse than that, it had never even entered my mind. I never went back to these companies to see if my training sessions had had any effect or if people actually did what they had promised to do in the training sessions. I had just assumed that they understood the benefits of my imminent wisdom and would do what they had been told.

I took immediate action. I became Mr. Follow-Up. I scoured all the research and went back to my client corporations, assembling data that answered the question, "Does anyone really change?" My pool of respondents eventually numbered 86,000 participants, involving eight major corporations, each of which had invested millions of dollars a year in leadership programs. As I studied the data, three conclusions emerged:

1. *First, not everyone responds to executive development, at least not in the way the organization desires or intends.*

Some people are trainable; some aren't. At the eight companies I surveyed, I asked participants at the end of each session if they intended to go back to their jobs and apply what they had learned. Nearly 100 percent said yes. However, a year later, when I asked their direct reports to confirm that these leaders had applied the lessons on the job, 70 percent said yes, leaving 30 percent who said their bosses did absolutely nothing! Why would 30 percent of executives go through the training, promise to implement the changes and then do nothing? Quite simply, most of the time they were just too busy and too distracted by the day-to-day demands of their jobs to implement what they had learned. This led me to my second conclusion.

2. *There is an enormous disconnect between understanding and doing.*

Most leadership development revolves around one huge, and false, assumption: If people understand, then they will do. Don't believe me? Take a look at the adamant smoker. This person knows that smoking cigarettes is bad for his health, but refuses to quit. However, this insight didn't tell me if the 70 percent who understand and do actually got better. That's when I realized the missing link was follow-up, not only in my training concepts, but also in getting people to change. I rewired my objectives and began measuring people to see not only if they got better, but why. Tracing five of my eight companies to measure the level of follow-up among the executives, I found the results were astonishingly consistent. When leaders did little or no follow-up with their subordinates, there was little or no perceived change in the leaders' effectiveness. When leaders consistently followed up, the

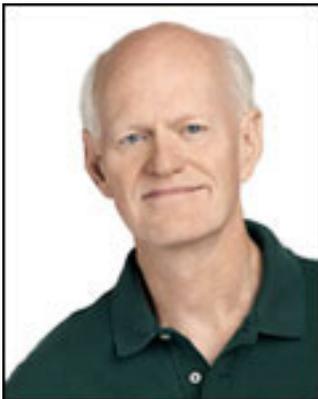
perception of their effectiveness jumped dramatically. This led to me to the third conclusion.

3. *People don't get better without follow-up.*

Leaders who don't follow up aren't necessarily bad leaders; they are just not perceived as getting better. Follow-up shows you care about getting better. It shows you value your coworkers' opinions. Following up consistently, every month or so, shows you are serious about the process and that you are not ignoring your coworkers' input. Think about it. A leader who seeks input from coworkers, but ignores it or doesn't follow up on it, quite logically will be perceived as someone who doesn't care much about becoming a better leader.

My experience discovering the value of follow-up taught me a fourth and final very valuable lesson: Becoming a better leader (or a better person) is a process, not an event. Executive development is more than an event, training program, motivating speech or inspiring retreat. It doesn't happen in a day. It doesn't happen because someone understands the training. Leaders develop over time and the only way to know if someone is getting better by actually doing what they learned at a training program is to follow up. Follow-up turns changing for the better into an ongoing process—for leaders, their people and their teams.

(For the complete methodology, statistical results, the companies involved and my conclusions, please see "Leadership Is a Contact Sport: The Follow-Up Factor in Management Development," written with Howard Morgan, in *Strategy and Business*, Fall 2004.)



Marshall Goldsmith, MBA, PhD, founder of Marshall Goldsmith Partners LLC, is a world authority on helping successful leaders achieve positive, lasting behavioral change. His executive coaching expertise has been highlighted in *Forbes*, *Fast Company* and *Business Week*. The most recent of his 22 books is *What Got You Here Won't Get You There* (Hyperion, 2007). Learn more about Marshall in the [WABC Coach Directory](#). Marshall can be reached by email at Marshall@MarshallGoldsmith.com.

Practical Intelligence *The Art and Science of Common Sense*

By Karl Albrecht

Review by Lydia Morris Brown, *Business Book Review*TM

Determining that IQ, as a singular measure of competence, could no longer be supported, Harvard professor, Howard Gardner, proposed (in *Frames of Mind*, 1985) a range of key competencies, which he calls *multiple intelligence* (MI). Daniel Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence* (1995) popularized Gardner's notion and instigated widespread interest in the developmental possibilities of the MI model.

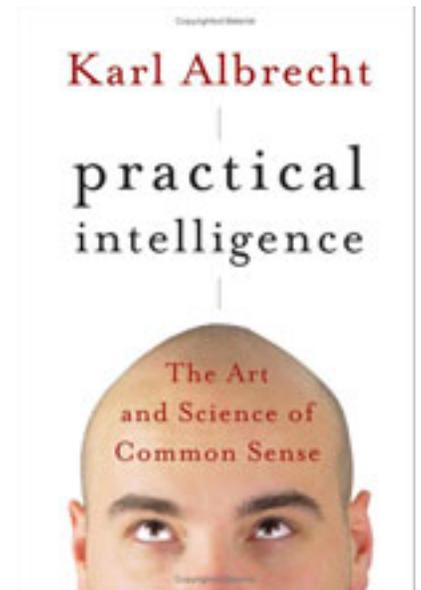
In 2005's *Social Intelligence*, Karl Albrecht explored "Social Intelligence" (SI), a dimension of MI, which he defined as both the ability to get along with others and a set of practical skills for interacting successfully in any setting. A year later, Goleman followed suit with his own treatment of the subject.

With the steadily growing acceptance of the idea of MI, and the popularity of Emotional Intelligence and Social Intelligence, Albrecht believes the next category to explore would seem to be "**Practical Intelligence**—the mental ability to cope with the challenges and opportunities of life" (i. e., the art and science of common sense).

His **Practical Intelligence** explains how the notion of PI, which is based on the principle that thinking is a bodily function, qualifies as one of the essential life skills, incorporating a wide range of mental processes, capabilities, and habits for coping with life's challenges and opportunities. It offers a conceptual framework for defining and describing it, and outlines how to develop the skills to think more clearly and effectively while helping others upgrade their own mental abilities.

Albrecht demonstrates that when people understand that thinking is a whole-body event, they can begin to upgrade their mental flexibility, affirmative thinking, semantic sanity, and idea valuing (i.e., their mental software). These key aspects of the way individuals process information profoundly influence almost all their other mental processes and enable them to put their natural range of mental skills to effective use.

Once individuals begin to realize the need to improve these upgrades, continually, they can understand better how to make good use of the four "mega-skills": the range of divergent and convergent thinking, abstract and concrete thinking, logical and intuitive thinking, and rational and emotive thinking. Albrecht positions them as polarities—contrasting mental processes that



complement each other—with both alternatives to be used to the fullest.

Thus, Practical Intelligence speaks to Albert Einstein's observation: "No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it. We must learn to see the world anew." And, it demonstrates that "human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives" (William James, pioneer of modern psychology).

Ultimately, however, Albrecht has an even loftier motive—that PI, as he defines and explores it, could serve as a unifying concept around which to structure the discussion of what some are calling the American restoration agenda. This agenda is a set of priorities for bringing back some key values, traditions, and institutions that many feel have been lost in the "dumbing-down" of the American culture. Given this objective, the book is especially offered to those who can promote the teaching, application, and appreciation of common sense in our culture. Its explanation of how PI qualifies as one of the central life skills can help:

- parents teach their children how to use their minds more effectively everyday;
- teachers and educators change the focus of education from teaching students what to think to teaching them how to think;
- mental health professionals learn to view human adjustment through the prism of practical mental competence;
- executives, managers, and business consultants learn the importance of making organizational intelligence, both individual and collective, a high priority;
- political leaders raise the level of discourse needed to encourage schools to implement the teaching of common sense concepts and skills;
- media personalities provide the leadership needed to raise the level of discourse in the popular media, renouncing the practices that pander to fear, ignorance, and bigotry.

And, of course, the book can help these influencers educate themselves about PI and upgrade their own PI skills.

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Introducing the New *Business Coaching Worldwide* eZine

By Sarah McArthur

As the 'new kid on the block' here at *Business Coaching Worldwide (BCW)*, I am very excited to launch this first issue of 2008. The *BCW* team has spent several months in the planning, development, design, and production stages and here, at last, is the result of our hard work. I hope you are as pleased with the outcome as I am.

First you'll notice a new look and a cleaner design that lends itself to easier navigation. Go exploring! Check out the links and navigation buttons. You should find just one click will take you quickly to your desired location.

Content-wise you'll still find the feature, 'Get the Edge,' 'Hot Topics' and the Business Book Review. February's feature is written by Jean Claude Noel who delves into the intricacies of coaching family businesses. Paul Babiak has written an interesting 'Get the Edge' article you don't want to miss, "'Psychopath' or 'Narcissist': The Coach's Dilemma," and Lynda C. Hess gives us "Tips for Marketing Coaching Services to Small Business Owners" in this issue's 'Hot Topic' article.

In addition to Marshall Goldsmith's ongoing column 'Coaching Great Leaders,' there are five new columns for you to explore. Annette Fillery-Travis reveals the lighter side of business coaching research in her column 'Based on the Evidence,' while Nerella Campigotto investigates the globalization of the workplace in her column 'A Global Workplace.' In her column, Sunny Stout Rostron illustrates different 'Coaching Models for Business Success.' Barry Trailer discusses the significance of 'Professional Selling' in his new column, and Dr. Melvyn Fink answers reader questions with help from Laurence S. Lyons in the column 'Ask the Expert.'

I hope you enjoy this issue of the eZine. And as always, I look forward to your comments, feedback and, most of all, your [Letters to the Editor!](#)



Sarah McArthur is editor of *Business Coaching Worldwide*. Founder of [*sdedit](#), Sarah has nearly 20 years experience in the publishing field as a development and managing editor and writer. With numerous books and articles to her credit, she has become an expert in the fields of management, leadership, executive coaching and human resources. Sarah can be reached by email at bcweditor@wabccoaches.com and sarahmc@sdedit.com.

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