



# SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS & EXECUTIVE COACHING

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**AN OVERVIEW**

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# When it comes to your own development and potential business success, doesn't it make sense to work with an executive coach who understands the uniqueness of your responsibilities and challenges?

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Our personal coaches are experienced leaders and guides, who can help you succeed in a new role or elevate your effectiveness in a current position.

Senior-level executives, directors or managers can benefit from executive coaching because we tailor your development program to your responsibilities, goals and the challenges you face.

Our coaching experts help executives:

- **DEVELOP** foresight, anticipate trends, prevent problems and develop strategies,
- **CREATE** and communicate a vision for the organization,
- **UNDERSTAND**, work with and/or change organizational values to meet current market needs or trends,
- **LEARN** how to empower people and work units, while helping the organization stay on course and sustain and build momentum, and
- **UNDERSTAND** your strengths, skills, underdeveloped areas, and more, so you can hire people who augment your talents.
- **TRANSLATE** leadership changes into bottom-line changes.

At WCW Partners, we have a proven track record and solid approach to executive coaching – in person, over the phone or through the Internet. Learn more about our executive coaching approach, the ease and flexibility of working with us and the benefits to you.

# EXECUTIVE COACHING

## OUR APPROACH

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Our executive development process is highly specific and extremely flexible to the individual's needs and the needs of the company. We work carefully with you to understand your unique challenges and needs before we set up a plan and agreement that works for everyone. This might include in-person, phone, or Internet coaching, or a combination of the three.



# THE COACHING PROCESS

## KEY STEPS

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Because individuals are unique, one approach doesn't work in all situations. However, the coaching process usually includes these basic components:

### **UNDERSTAND CLIENT'S NEEDS**

Our coach meets with the individual to be coached (if that person is making the direct invitation for coaching help) to understand the client's needs and objectives. The meeting might also include the coaching recipient's supervisor (board chairman, CEO or other key managerial role) or an executive committee. During this meeting, the client provides the context we need to move forward with recommendations – for example, the situation that prompted the coaching invitation and the client's vision of the future. If our client is the supervisor, executive committee or human resources, we hold a brief session with the executive to be coached to understand his needs. After this information-gathering stage, the coach determines the appropriate assessments to use and the type of coaching that's needed.



## **DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENTS**

The coach will administer one or more assessment instruments to identify productive and nonproductive behavior. These might include a 360-degree leadership assessment, personality assessment or management style assessment depending upon the person's responsibility level. An organizational assessment, group interviews, values assessment and other assessment methods or tools might also be considered. The person, situation and climate of the organization (health, culture, norms, etc.) will help us determine which assessment tools will be most beneficial. Bottom line: we are very careful to choose the right tools and we're thoughtful about how we apply them.

## **DEBRIEF**

Coaching often begins with learning how to receive and accept feedback. In debriefing sessions, our coach shares the results of the data gathering so the executive begins to learn how she affects those around her. These are often problems that have been ignored, but can be safely addressed with guidance and care.

## **DEVELOP LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The executive will collaborate with his supervisor and coach to identify appropriate learning objectives – for example, building more effective working relationships with his supervisor, peers or subordinates; assessing the individual strengths and vulnerabilities of a new work group; or building trust with other departments. With his input, we will use the assessment results and the learning objectives to design a development plan that addresses the issues most important to his success as a leader.

## **DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT ACTION LEARNING PROGRAM**

An individual or team action learning program helps the executive learn within the broader context of his development plan. The coach helps the executive identify learning opportunities from real projects that are tied to the organization's strategy – for example, researching new markets; developing, driving or contributing to turn-around programs for business units; or launching a start-up.

## **COACH AND TRAIN TO PERFORM**

Once the action learning program has been designed, instructors or coaches will help the executive develop the skills necessary to be successful. These could include how to do research, interviewing, communication and presentation skills.

## **REVIEW ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The client's supervisor will hear reports from the coaching recipient and give feedback on her progress based on the agreements and process outlined at the beginning of our coaching relationship. While this can be a delicate situation, by establishing a standard of honest and frequent communication from the start, there should be no surprises. This should be a constructive discussion that positions the executive for additional success.

## **REASSESS**

About nine months to a year from the beginning of our work together, we reassess the executive's performance to evaluate his progress. We might include some of the original assessments and also interview peers, direct reports and supervisors. This follow-up ensures that the executive is using the skills and these skills are producing the desired effect. The reassessment could result in changes to the development plan.

# COACHING METHODS

Depending on objectives and the organization's environment, we employ a variety of coaching methods to help executives elevate their performance. These include, but aren't limited, to:

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## → STRATEGIC PLANNING.

We work with the executive in “planning the plan”, and facilitating team involvement in its development and execution.

## → SHADOWING.

We accompany the executive on her rounds and observe her behavior. A feedback session afterwards gives us the opportunity to share our insights and suggest changes.

## → PROBLEM-SOLVING.

Once a problem has been identified, we help the executive develop a solution. After the solution has been implemented, we provide feedback on the results.

## → PROCESS-BUILDING.

We help them design a process to do things in a new or different way. This eliminates frequent changes and decision-making on the run.

## → SCRIPTING.

Developing scripts for handling specific situations enables the executive to learn to respond effectively to others.

## → SKILLS TRAINING.

This could involve helping the executive learn a new skill, such as making an effective presentation.

## → READING.

We stay up-to-date on current management literature and theory and can assign executives topics for study in areas they need to strengthen or become more familiar with.

## → ORGANIZING.

Providing a plan to help an executive manage time, priorities, the office and support staff helps many executives be more effective immediately.

## → MENTORING.

We ask some executives to work briefly with a mentor to learn a new skill.

## → TEAM-BUILDING.

Improving the effectiveness of the executive's team can also boost his effectiveness. This could include helping the executive write a plan for his team to follow.

## → DELEGATING.

Many executives need to be coached on what, when and how to delegate to others. Developing delegation skills can substantially improve an executive's effectiveness.

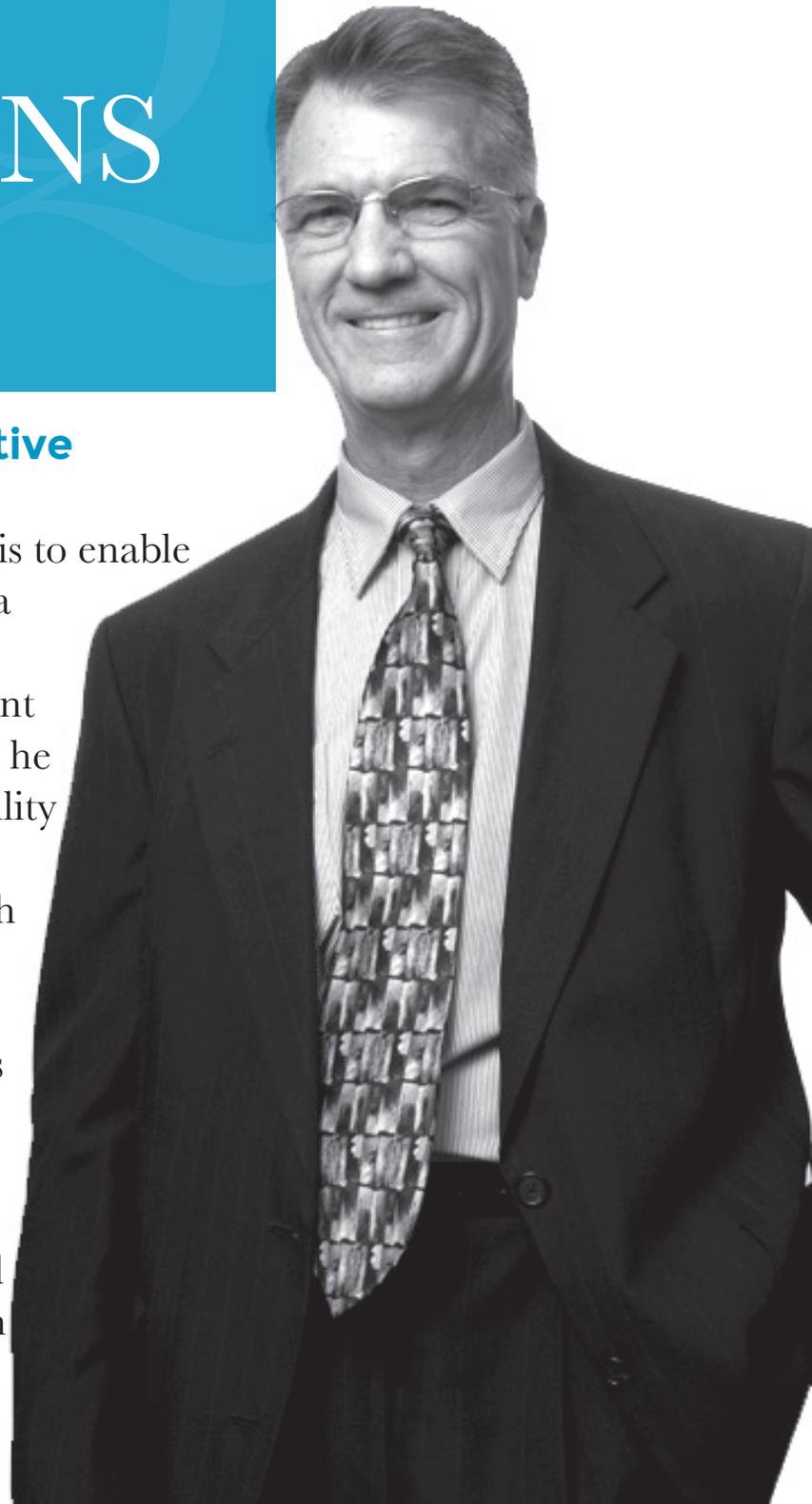
## → MANAGING CONFLICT.

Confronting and resolving conflicts frees up energy and time. We teach the executive how to prevent conflict and how to diffuse it once it occurs.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **What is the goal of the executive development process?**

The aim of the development process is to enable the coaching recipient to function as a self-directed and effective individual, who wants to continue his development beyond the coaching relationship. As he progresses, more and more responsibility for the learning activities shifts from the coach to the executive. The coach works with the executive's supervisor and staff to develop strategies that will help him continue and sustain his progress. We also help the executive write and negotiate a development plan (up to three years) with self-monitoring activities. Monitoring and feedback points are built into the plan to allow the coach's involvement.



### **Is executive coaching only for executives?**

Not at all. We get calls to work with high-potential middle managers and new managers, who are still in transition and can benefit from support and guidance, and we often work with managers or executives, who are simply committed to continuous learning.

### **Is executive coaching only for problem executives?**

It may be used for executives who are not performing adequately or executives in transition. Problem executives are those who have behavior patterns that cause trouble in the organization or exhibit skill deficiencies that inhibit their effectiveness. Executives in transition are those who have moved or are about to move from technical jobs to management jobs. They also may include executives who are moving from line management to areas of greater and more abstract duties. Coaching is a way to enable them to make a smooth transition.

### **Is coaching only for individuals?**

Group coaching is an effective way to build teams and individuals at the same time. Coaching is generally more effective when there is a combination of individual and group coaching activities, because executives and managers are required to work collaboratively with others. In most corporations, the lone wolf executive is an anachronism. Working with others to develop more effective skills requires getting and giving feedback in constructive ways.

### **Why not send the executive to a seminar?**

Some skills can be learned in groups, but most executive skills require behavior changes that are not taught in seminars. The most effective learning experiences are those that take place in the work environment. If the executive changes, others around him or her must alter their behavior to support the changes. Most research indicates executives learn best when they deal with situations in their own company.

### **What role does the executive's supervisor (CEO, chairman, board committee, etc.) play?**

There are a variety of ways the supervisor contributes to the success of the executive's coaching experience: as an encourager; as an honest, but constructive, source of information and feedback; and as someone who is willing to modify his own behaviors, if necessary, to ensure his executive's success.

As an encourager, he can help to establish an optimistic and rewarding work environment, where the executive can gain confidence as she grows.

As a source of information, he can provide essential insight into his executive's behavior, as well as concrete, anecdotal information the coach needs to design effective learning experiences. And, he can support the executive with direct feedback on her progress.

Sometimes, the supervisor has unrealistic expectations of the executive, or his style may poison her growth. As someone who is also willing to model change, he can cooperate with the coach to refine his management methods and style.

### **What does the executive coach do?**

A coach is an experienced guide – an executive, counselor, teacher and resource center – who is able to look objectively at your behavior. By helping you focus on particular problems and by developing a relationship with you, your coach can help you achieve positive, long-lasting results more quickly.

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