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Enhancing Effectiveness: Coaching Managers, Professionals, and Leaders

Objectives:

- 1) To accelerate and optimize the development of key contributors to the organization
- 2) to build high performance leaders and future leaders who can fulfill the organization's vision, goals, and business strategy; to maximize managerial bench strength and overall organizational capability have the right person for the right job at the right time
- 3) to link the behavior of high-impact contributors to the business plan
- 4) and to retool command-and-control managers into effective leaders of the flattening, information-based organization

How We Do It

Specializing in optimizing human performance, our firm has designed a powerful individual coaching program that integrates our core competencies:

- Advanced **expert systems** that enhance psychological testing and assessment
- Computerized **360-degree technology**
- Keen **diagnostic skills**
- Advanced **rapport-building** methods
- **Accelerated** development strategies
- Motivating and creating **true behavioral change**

By integrating these performance development technologies, we assist the candidate in assembling the three essential ingredients for high performance **feedback** (both broad and deep), multi-lateral **motivation** to make changes, and **change partners** for their development initiative. Together, these three elements serve as the infrastructure for a Blueprint for Action, which guides the candidate's achievement of measurable results.

Design Methodology

The program is designed around the principles of **adult learning** and around the structure of the adult learning cycle. It's now well established that adults:

- Prefer **self-direction** when involved in learning and development.
- Improve their performance best through experience, experimentation and low risk; adults develop most effectively and most efficiently **on the job**.
- Develop only when there is a **clearly perceived need** (i.e., pressure) to change. In essence, learning for adults is a response to problems and challenges.
- Are competency-based learners, in that they are motivated to learn and change only when they can apply the learning in a pragmatic way to immediate circumstances. That is, **utility rules**.

- Can also be motivated to learn by appealing to personal growth and gain, i.e., **WIIFM** (What's in it for me?).
- Can also be inspired to develop if **enhanced self-esteem** and/or empowerment are part of the deliverables.

The adult learning cycle is integral to the adult learning model. The four key steps in the cycle are:

- Assess
- Plan
- Act
- Reassess and Refine

Given this structure, our Enhancing Effectiveness Program unfolds as follows:

I. Assess

Conduct a series of life-career interviews with the candidate, focusing on:

- personal and work history
- interpersonal experiences
- attitudes, values, and interests
- aspirations
- assess the candidate, using an array of business-based psychological inventories and 360 degree tools, most of which are computer analyzed.
- Integrate performance management data into the assessment.

II. Plan

- Deliver an in-depth, confidential debrief of all assessment findings.
- Identify the candidate's key strengths and areas in need of development, as they relate to personal aspirations and to the business strategy.
- Clarify inner motivators for change and inner resistances to it. Harness the former and neutralize the latter. Clearly specify WIIFM and WIIFOrg.
- Synthesize findings into a **Blueprint for Action**
 - Detail the **specific behavioral changes** desired - precisely what does the candidate want to continue, start, and stop doing? Computerized assessment reports serve as an invaluable resource for development activities. In addition, we take advantage of dozens of activities for development-in-place (i.e., activities that do not require a job change).
 - Identify all the **benefits** that will accrue to one self and to the organization when the change objectives are achieved.
 - Similarly, identify all potential **impediments** that could hinder the change effort - inner, interpersonal, organizational, and so forth.
 - Specify the **action steps** that will be required to achieve the prescribed changes.
 - Determine how to enlist the involvement of others. Change requires support from others, playing an array of roles coach, mentor, colleague, friend, role model, counselor, protegee, advocate, and so forth. **Change requires change partners.**
 - Establish **time frames** and **metrics**, against which progress is measured.

III. Act

- Recognize and reciprocate with those who gave feedback to the candidate. Enlist one or some as a change partner.
- Debrief candidate's manager and involve them in refining the Blueprint for Action.
- Begin action experiments during real-time, day-to-day work life, then debrief and further refine with coach.
- Adopt high-impact behavioral change techniques.
- Measure progress against plan. Design simple and practical feedback loops into work routine.

IV. Reassess and Refine

This final phase of the adult learning cycle works best when it is hard-wired into the Action Phase of the cycle. By designing monitoring and evaluation tools, the candidate can regularly reflect on progress and then recalibrate the Blueprint for Action.

Final Thoughts

If people are truly the primary resource of a company, as most organizations assert, then they must be managed and developed like other assets. It's really not unlike the management of any asset portfolio. That is, every person is like an individual portfolio with a strong potential for either managed growth or sub-par performance. The portfolio, however, is at least partially opaque, as regards its assets and liabilities. We have the expertise, though, to "value" the portfolio. If one is to optimize the asset-liability mix, the portfolio must first be valued, that is, assessed for its strengths and weaknesses. Then after this initial appraisal, we are in an excellent position to optimize the potential of that individual's set of assets. The optimization process involves maximizing the person's strengths, minimizing their weaknesses, and adding new "assets" to their portfolio (i.e., skills, behaviors, and attitudes), in order to maximize performance and protect against downside risk.

Whether we're talking about the development of key contributors, the turnaround of potential derailers, careerpath development, or even teambuilding, there is one strategy that is more effective than any other. People *can* change, but the most substantive and permanent change is realized when people develop *from the inside out*. This is the surest way to prepare and motivate someone to accept the new change opportunities made available to them. Consequently, whenever we're working to enhance an "individual human resource portfolio," the surest strategy is to begin at the beginning and focus on the *inside* (that is, self-awareness and self-understanding) before the *outside* (that is, skillbuilding and on-the-job development). This change strategy has proven to be a more certain way of assisting people through the process of behavior change, self-development, and performance enhancement.