

Isn't It Time We Stopped Talking About Coaching?

There are so many misnomers about coaching and so many practitioners piling in with their myriad array of interpretations and disciplines that it's easy to get hung up on the discipline of coaching rather than the desired outcome.

Organisations are increasingly embracing coaching as a method of supporting people to address relationships, performance, career challenges, and issues about wellbeing. It is a task often outsourced to external executive coaches but more frequently coaching is also provided by internal coaching functions.

As coaching evolves as a discipline, there are more and more models of coaching for the practitioner to get to grips with. Do they have a preference for a non-directive approach or a more challenging style of coaching, are they inclined to look to the past for answers or stay firmly in the present? Throw in the array of psychometric tools and exercises now available to coaches and you have a heady cocktail, which can leave even the best of coaches with a bit of a fuzzy head, let alone the organisational sponsor looking for a coaching solution.

With the best of intentions, and often with blind faith that coaching will add value, organisations plough forward and offer coaching skills training for their managers. What they (at times) expertly achieve is to give the manager the skills to hold a 1-to-1 coaching session, typically following a model specifically or loosely based upon John Whitmore's GROW model – and this of course has its place. The model is designed for 'Executive Coaching' conversations which normally occur behind closed doors. They are private, and the objectives and outcomes are often invisible to the organisation. Maybe a relationship improves, or an individual achieves a long awaited promotion or takes a new career direction.

These are nice results, but they are hardly transformative for the organisation, and the return on investment is either small (effecting the 'few') or just becomes merely a matter of guesswork.

But what if, instead of teaching your leaders and managers how to carry out a coaching session that focuses all of the attention and investment on one or two individuals, you were to remind yourself what it is you hoped to achieve from the coaching investment at the outset?

(And if you haven't defined that yet – maybe this is a good time to start!).

Rather than becoming consumed by confusing coaching methodology, consider what you could achieve if you took a more pragmatic commercial approach:

5 THINGS TO DO INSTEAD OF TALKING ABOUT COACHING

1. Identify what your organisation wants to achieve
2. Clearly outline what you will measure
3. Agree how you will measure and report results, in a clear and tangible way
4. Describe how coaching will help your leaders and managers adopt the behaviours required to achieve this
5. Choose a development solution that will build this capability in your leaders and managers in a sustainable way

We think you'll discover that the executive coaching model just doesn't cut the mustard in the same way that an all pervasive '**enquiry-led**' approach will undoubtedly do so.

Notion's MD, Dominic Ashley-Timms, explains that, "An 'enquiry-led' approach helps people to question preconceived assumptions, take ownership, and challenge the nature of contribution. This increased stimulation will lead to more creative, innovative and productive ways of thinking and unblock and unleash capabilities. The capacity to continually raise the bar in terms of innovation and commercial impact - the true mark of high performance - could be unleashed if every member of every type of team was equipped with the ability to ask insightful questions."

To truly take advantage of coaching as a business driver, throw open those meeting room doors and let coaching pervade the fabric of your organisation. Take the focus off the employee, and help your leaders and managers **develop coaching as a leadership style** so that it touches **every person, every relationship** and every decision in the organisation, in a real and sustainable way.

Focus on the nature of coaching, its raison d'être – to release motivation, creativity and resourcefulness through purposeful enquiry, not for one but for all. An 'enquiry-led' approach taken at an organisational level silences the unnecessary noise around coaching and transforms it from a conversation into a way of being.

Coaching doesn't have to be confusing and it doesn't (and shouldn't) be an isolated activity. It can occur in the moment, at multiple times, between everyone, in every day operational environments.

To create genuine change and real return on your coaching investment, you just need to get clear about your goals and take ownership for releasing the resourcefulness and momentum of the people within your organisation through purposeful and powerful questions.

For more information about how to implement an 'enquiry-led' approach to create a sustainable coaching culture call Notion on +44 1926 889885 or visit our [click here](#).

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