

Coaching Value Research

Title

Identifying a best practice checklist for setting up a corporate coaching programme

Summary

This report is the first report in a series of investigations into how companies and organisations can get better value from coaching.

We asked 25 key HR professionals to answer a series of questions about coaching so that we in turn could put together a checklist of questions which would help anyone setting up a coaching programme.

The questions we've developed are designed to help coaching programme owners make their coaching more effective and efficient, and therefore increase the value of them to their organization.

We will test and refine these questions in future studies.

Introduction

The discussion about evidence based coaching and the value that coachees and organisations gain from coaching has been going in the literature for a while now without resulting in any solid findings or data on the topic. There are several models and studies which have been introduced (e.g. Kretzschmar, 2010¹) in order to understand the readiness of clients for coaching and the effectiveness of the coaching interventions. However, the practice of coaching still remains not only misunderstood by many but also misused as a "miracle solution" for corporate problems or "quick fix" for deeper personal issues requiring counselling or other types of interventions.

We set out to conduct research which would help us untangle the issue of what coaching actually is, how it is understood by practitioners as opposed to the writers and academics in the field of coaching. Also, how the process of coaching and coaching interventions can be driven or hindered by the organisations and the participants. These questions are the top level considerations which need to be understood first in order for coaching to be either effective or sabotaged by the blockers. Companies which want to get the true and maximum benefits and

¹ Kretzschmar, I. (2010) "Exploring Clients' Readiness for Coaching". International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, Special Issue No.4, October 2010, pp. 1-19.

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value from coaching need to consider these two aspects of their environment and only then set out to design the coaching programme. In order to aid this process, we investigated and presented top considerations which organisations need to address when setting up a programme.

In this research, we set out to answer the following questions:

- 1) The most common descriptions of corporate coaching
- 2) What are the key drivers?
- 3) What are the key blockers?
- 4) What are the top consideration when setting up a programme?

Which in turn would enable us to develop:

- 5) A best practice checklist for setting up a corporate coaching

We hope that the report will be of use to anyone involved in setting up and running corporate coaching programme.

Research methods

Our research and data collection was conducted with senior HR professionals responsible for coaching in 25 companies. The companies selected were a cross section of international and UK large and medium sized companies. The majority of the respondents were HR Directors responsible for coaching, supplemented by HR Vice Presidents and HR managers, also responsible for coaching in these organisations. Interviews lasted on average 45 minutes with each respondent and all interviews were fully confidential.

We asked our respondents a consistent set of questions based on the report's purpose and recorded and then fully transcribed their responses. We then analysed our findings following thematic analysis.

Key findings

Our analysis of the interviews led to the following definitions and descriptions of the four themes we investigated.

1) Description of coaching

While there were different descriptions of coaching the theme that emerged was that coaching was like good parenting. It's about developing individuals so they perform at their best and become as self-sufficient as possible in their current and future roles.

Internal or external coaches can both provide effective coaching, which is more effective depends on the situation.

2) The key corporate drivers for coaching

The key corporate driver for coaching is increased business performance and profits. Effective coaching can lead to increased individual and team performance which leads to increased competitive advantage, innovation, and sustainability. In turn these lead to increased business performance and profit.

3) The key blockers to corporate coaching

The key blocker is lack of perceived need. Other blockers include poor leadership, micromanagement, organizational culture, lack of trust between leaders and managers, bureaucracy, lack of funding and lack of understanding what coaching is and how to use it. An additional blocker identified was a belief that leaders and managers were already coaching effectively, when they clearly weren't.

4) Top considerations in setting up a corporate coaching programme

The key consideration is leadership by example and acting as coaching role model when appropriate. This entails having the ability to adopt coaching style when and as required. Other considerations include: 1) understanding and agreement to what coaching is and isn't 2) Supportive organizational culture and climate 3) Clear process for mapping culture and environment 4) Alignment between organizational strategy and tactics and the coaching 5)

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Capturing the learning from the programme so it can be used in future programmes 6) Clear confidentiality guidelines.

A best practice checklist for setting up a coaching programme

Following from our data, we've identified a checklist for setting up effective coaching programmes:

- 1) Do the coaching objectives fit with our strategic and tactical objectives?
- 2) How will completion of the coaching process impact both the coachee, their future career performance and the organization
- 3) What process will the coaching follow to ensure the objectives are met?
- 4) How will the programme be communicated to all those involved
- 5) How will progress be measured and over what timescale?
- 6) How will the learning from the programme be used in future programmes?
- 7) Have clear confidentiality guidelines been established?

Conclusions and Recommendations

Our research and findings identify a robust set of answers and top considerations which organisations need to address when setting up a programme.

The understanding of the key blockers and drivers for coaching is essential for any company wanting to start and introduce a coaching programme. These blockers and drivers are distinctive for every organisation, but our set of general and top level questions can help to identify them and provide specific answers to these considerations.

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Thank you. All individual answers are strictly confidential