

Do I need an Executive Coach?

Why do executives need coaching? More importantly why does anyone need a coach? Is it because we are all human and have hurdles and blockers, which we desire to overcome? The demand for coaching at all levels of an organisation is increasing since coaching not only helps with specific hurdles, but raises self-awareness. This self-awareness generally opens minds, raises confidence for tackling larger and more complex problems/hurdles.

Coaching is both an enabler and an accelerator. Even the greatest leaders will freely admit that they have sought coaching help on their journey. A recent television interview showed that Tony Blair had even asked Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United Coach, for help with a specific hurdle. The key point here is that running a business is a journey to performance and excellence. This means that we will all need specific help at points in time during our journey.

A more important question is: what do executives expect from a coach? The purists say that a coach is a facilitator and that this is their only role - a means of coaching anyone to a better place. This is correct and with a skilled coach will be very powerful, releasing results, with the coaching client moving on quickly. This will be done in a sustainable manner, with the coaching client owning the outcome.

Executives are busy people, with heavy agendas and minimal free time. Their expectations will be high and they will want results quickly. There are specific coaching processes that can move coaching clients to where they want to be in one sixty minute session.

An executive coach can also provide advice and guidance on business. They can empathise with the specific situation based on previous experience, while still maintaining the coaching process. An executive coach can accelerate the process, by planting the appropriate seeds, without giving all the answers. In addition to specific coaching sessions, they can also coach before and after key meetings which can be very powerful, given the stress on the executive agenda. Many also still work as a senior consultant to stay in touch with business trends.

To go back to the original question, the answer is clearly yes. There is a belief that the coaching relationship has to be long term, but this is not the case. This certainly adds value, but would probably be more of a mentoring role. It is perfectly acceptable to have different coaches for differing challenges, and to change over time. The coaching relationship can be short or long depending on the requirements.

The key to all of this is quick, effective and sustainable change. High end coaches can deliver this with specialist processes. The Energy Leadership Index (a very powerful tool for an individual to understand how they present themselves at work or in their personal life) with debrief and follow up coaching, can significantly raise self-awareness, and be the foundation for sustainable change.

To find out more about executive coaching please contact **John Cockburn-Evans** of **Accendit Coaching**:

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