

## **Keeping you In Touch with the Latest Developments in Coaching**

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Much has evolved within the Coaching profession since our publications last year (*Regulatory Review June 2003; ESRA Rapporteur September 2003*). They were aimed at raising awareness of what Coaching is and how it contributes as a valuable learning and development tool for ourselves our teams and organisations. This article is aimed at bringing you up-to-date with this growing industry, helping you to ensure you choose the right services, and giving some insight into where Coaching is heading.

***Coaching is here to stay!*** That was the resounding message received at this year's Human Resources Forum which brought UK and European VPs, Directors, Opinion Leaders and Formers together for the first time.

***For what reason?*** It would seem for a number of reasons. Not least that having come through the recession period of the past 2-3 years, organisations are now realising that it is not enough to only focus on 'top talent' and making the 'best' even 'better'. With skilled people ready to leave at the first good offer, companies also need to concentrate on retaining and developing staff at all levels, if they are not going to risk the costly process of recruitment and re-training. Mike Johnson author of a book soon to be released 'The New Rules of Engagement' provides interesting research on how we could be heading for a 'truly mutinous crew of employees'<sup>1</sup>. With the emphasis of many moving towards 'life-work balance' rather than 'work-life balance', business needs to be supported through this by re-engaging those that have recently been left behind.

This is never more apparent than when Technical Specialists are given people management responsibilities and teams to lead without additional training - often expected to deliver the results they did as expert project managers. It poses some key questions: Are people projects? Can we apply the principles of project management to people management? If not, then why are organisations surprised when Specialists struggle and teams flounder? How valuable would it be to have ongoing training through the first six months and/or One-to-One support from a professional Coach during the role transition?

In reality, we need to be following our leaders in drug discovery by taking an individualistic look at learning and development needs and a holistic look at methods - applying the most appropriate solution at the right time. As a result, coaching is becoming an essential tool once training is over<sup>2</sup> and companies are acknowledging its value.

In recent research conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD), 90% of respondents believed 'coaching is a key mechanism for transferring training skills into the work force' and 96% believed that 'when coaching is applied appropriately, it can positively influence the bottom line'<sup>3</sup>. This is great from our perspective. However, like any growing industry, it is important to differentiate the good from the bad and 'applied appropriately' is a fundamental element of this result.

### ***Ensuring you get an Appropriate Service***

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<sup>1</sup> Johnson, Mike; *The New Rules of Engagement: Life-Work Balance and Employee Commitment*; to be published by CIPD 11 October 2004

<sup>2</sup> The Noortman & Goffin View: A commentary on Trends in Talent Acquisition March/April 2004; [www.noortgoff.com](http://www.noortgoff.com)

<sup>3</sup> Gilbert, Thomas; *Continuing Professional Development, Spotlight: PARN*; Issue 47, 10 May 2004

For that reason professional bodies within the industry ie. Association for Coaching (AC), European Coaching and Mentoring Council (EMCC) and International Coaching Federation (ICF) are interacting with the aim of creating consistency in Coaching definitions, ethics, standards, guidelines and complaints procedures. As a founder member of the AC and member of the EMCC, Unicus complies with their ethical standards and professional approach to Coaching. As part of our collaboration with TOPRA we take seriously our commitment to raising your awareness of the latest developments by contributing to the AC's Organisational Development (OD) Team. This team is engaged in hosting regular Breakfast Seminars and recently launched the AC's 'Guidelines for Coaching in Organisations. This comprehensive document will help you in ensuring that you get the appropriate service. It covers crucial topics such as:

**Definitions of Coaching** – answering such questions as 'what type of Coach do I want eg. a Career Coach, an Executive Coach, a Business Coach, a Personal Coach? And when should I use a Coach rather than a Trainer?

**Quality Standards** – ensuring the right person for the job is chosen in terms of experience, qualifications and very importantly, rapport with you, and that an ethical and measurable process is followed.

**Contracting** – enabling you to be clear on what a contract should contain, Data Protection Act (DPA) compliance and Disciplinary Procedures

**Relationships and Commitments** – the need for agreeing with all involved, clear objectives, roles, responsibilities, boundaries.

The Guidelines also incorporate a comprehensive Coaching Evaluation Form which we would use to measure quality and ensure continual improvement. In parallel with the Guidelines the Evaluation Form also provides a useful check list at a first meeting to help you select the most appropriate Coach, by asking questions such as:

- How well did the Coach listen and reflect on what was said?
- How well did she/he understand and contribute appropriate solutions to our needs?
- Was there rapport?
- Do I feel comfortable in his/her presence, could I trust him/her?
- Would she/he challenge me assertively or be overly aggressive or too timid to push me when I need it?
- What questionnaires/self-assessment tools could she/he use to help me/my team member better understand ourselves?
- How will the Coach help me/my team member monitor achievement?
- Is this Coach a good role model?

Be clear yourself about what would be the right answers for you.

Coaching is here to stay because it plays a huge role in the combined needs of an individual's development and so by default, the organisation's growth and the business' success. With the rapid expansion of Coaching within the UK, it is important to ensure that you are getting the best ethical and professional service. Established Coaching bodies are there to guide and protect you. Unicus continues to play its part as an active member of the AC - keeping you and your organisations in touch.

*For more information on AC Breakfast Seminars please contact [ODTeam@associationforcoaching.com](mailto:ODTeam@associationforcoaching.com) or [AGriffiths@Unicus.co.uk](mailto:AGriffiths@Unicus.co.uk)*