

SIX KEY TRIGGERS THAT MIGHT MEAN YOU NEED A COACH

The use of executive coaching by organisations to provide support, and hence improve the performance of its people, continues to grow. However, despite this growth, most senior people have not had access to coaching and they are not clear when coaching might be helpful.

I was recently asked by a senior business services leader, who I had coached, what were the “triggers” that he should look out for to indicate that further coaching might be useful. The short answer to this is in times of change; either change in your role, or when a change in thinking and behaviour is required.

More specifically, in our experience, coaching works best in the following situations:

1. PROMOTION - YOU NOW HAVE TO MANAGE OTHERS

If you’ve been working as an individual contributor and have now been moved into management for the first time, there will be an adjustment period as you learn to accomplish tasks through others. This is particularly difficult for professionals who have progressed in their careers to date as a result of their technical expertise. Instead of focusing on the technical aspects of your profession, you now need to focus on guiding and leading others. You may also need to brush up on some soft skills, like getting buy-in, following through, building trust and communicating well.

A McKinsey, 2018 article “successfully transitioning to new leadership roles” reports on how little is done to help new leaders transition into new roles and suggests some basic ideas on how they can manage this themselves. It also mentions – almost in passing – that one approach by organisations can double their chances of success “some methods— for instance, **tailored executive coaching and customised assimilation plans—have been shown to double the likelihood of success**, but only 32 percent of organisations use them.”

2. YOU NEED TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE OF YOUR PRACTICE

Through our work we noticed that what often separates the high performers from the rest is their ability to take time out, step back, think about their strategy, and how their actions support the achievement of their key priorities. We continue to notice the one thing leaders really value most is the time to not only think about their business, but to do so with someone who had been in their world and

who fully understands their realities. Someone who is a sounding board, supports, encourages and challenges them to improve themselves and their business. This time goes beyond just normal “thinking time” to be real “value added time” as they were able to take a break from the demands of the day and think through the issues that were a key priority.

3. YOU NEED TO DEVELOP A NEW SKILL - OR HELP SOMEONE ELSE TO DO THE SAME

A coach can help with any self-limiting behaviours, such as being a perfectionist, being fearful of change or being a micromanager. These behaviours need to be curtailed or corrected lest they prevent your career from progressing, or even leading to your dismissal. If an employee under your charge has a self-limiting behaviour, it could reflect on you as their supervisor. A coach can advise you on how best to guide your employee and close the gaps in their workplace behaviour.

4. THE WHOLE LEADERSHIP TEAM NEEDS SUPPORT

The success of your practice will be limited/restricted by the capacity of its leadership team. Sometimes it's not just you or a single person that needs help - an entire team, practice area or firm may need some coaching to reach the next level. In these situations, a coach can review the current situation and then act as a facilitator to ensure everyone is on the same page and focused on growth. A coach can work with team members individually to address their personal gaps and then work with the entire group to educate everyone, think through strategic initiatives and get commitment from everyone to follow through.

5. YOU AREN'T GETTING PROMOTED

Sometimes, talented individuals can struggle to make the changes in their behaviour and hence performance necessary to make it to partner. This is when an experienced coach can help give the support needed to make the grade. Typical issues covered include the following:

- Specific behaviours that are holding you back; for example, initial impact
- Unclear business or personal cases that need help to think through
- Uncertainty about the promotion process
- Unclear about the mind-set switch from employee to owner

6. YOU'RE FEELING BORED OR STALE IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE

At certain times in your career you may start to feel dis-engaged or even bored. You've been in the same role for a while and aren't being challenged. You're not sure where you want to go next. In our experience, successful professionals will go through these periods at some point in their career. This is when you need to be refreshed, challenged and supported by a coaching programme that allows you to:

- Step back, refresh and re-engage
- "Get up on the balcony" and examine your career from a big picture, long term perspective, identifying key patterns, themes, core drivers and strengths
- Identify short and longer-term career goals and development plans for accomplishing them
- Better understand leadership potential and explore new opportunities and career transitions.

If any of these situations are familiar to you, please contact us for a no obligation meeting to discuss how we might help you and your team.



IAN PATERSON

Call: +44 (0)7979 707 938

Email: ian@coteconsultants.com