



Excel Leader Advisory Letter

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Excel's Mission Statement

We help executives create and sustain a high performance, values-based work culture by fully engaging the talents of all associates to deliver world-class results and achieve higher profits.

Thought for August

The leader's role is not to control people or stay on top of things, but rather to guide, energize and excite.

-Jack Welch

This month, I want to talk about coaching and the value that it can bring to your business. A good coach is trained to help clients get from where they are now to where they want to be more quickly. In other words, coaches help clients achieve their desired outcomes more efficiently than they can often times achieve on their own. Although a coach can become a "trusted advisor" to a client, the coach should not be confused with a consultant. Rather than being the "expert" and providing all the "right" answers to the client, an effective coach utilizes the inherent wisdom and knowledge that the client already possesses to develop alternatives, set goals and priorities and achieve desired outcomes. The important difference here between coaching and consulting is that the client arrives at his or her own conclusions with the help of a good coach and retains ownership and accountability for results. The coach operates by being in the moment with the client, often asking probing questions to assist the client in getting to the desired outcome.



Let's now discuss some of the tangible benefits or outcomes that coaching can bring to executives and their organizations:

1. Greater clarity. Coaches help their clients gain clarity in critical areas such as articulating their mission/purpose, values, and goals. As well, an effective coach can help the client draw a clear connection between mission/purpose, values, goals and daily tasks. In other words, a coach can assist by highlighting those areas where a client's daily task activities are or are not closely aligned with mission, values and goals. This is an important step in the client's success journey and overall life balance.

2. Greater focus. Sometimes, we all experience that feeling of being overwhelmed by tasks or circumstances. That is an understandable place to be but not a place to dwell for long. That's where a good coach comes in by helping the client focus on the significant few goals, tasks or activities that are going to bring the most gain and be most closely aligned with mission and values...the Pareto Principle in action!

3. Improved decision-making skills. One of the essential prerequisites to making effective decisions is ensuring that all reasonable alternatives have been explored. Again, this is where a good coach can prove to be a very valuable resource by helping the client brainstorm ideas to formulate and explore all viable alternatives.

4. Enhanced creativity. This is a very important area in business as it involves being open to new ideas and approaches to solving problems. Here again, an effective coach can assist the client by asking "what if" questions and brainstorming with the client to explore novel options and possibilities. The coach can also encourage the client to take time away from exhaustive demands and regenerate which enhances creativity. As well, the coach can support the executive client by encouraging the client to "declutter" the work area which will also bolster both focus and creativity.

5. Improved work/life balance. This brings us back to values. The coach can work with the busy executive to make sure that his/her values include all aspects of life: Relationships, Career, Spiritual, Financial, and Health/Physical. Also, the coach can assist the executive by helping him/her ensure that daily tasks are once again aligned with goals. In other words, the effective coach can help hold the executive accountable for actions that support family, health and spiritual growth as well as professional and financial goals.

To summarize then, an effective coach can be a true trusted advisor to an executive client by being a good listener, being in the moment with the client and making sure the client is both heard and validated. A good analogy that fits effective coaching is that the coach acts like a “mirror” to help executives see themselves as others see them. As I look back over my business career, I can certainly count many blessings, friends and experiences. However, one of the few course corrections I would make if I had it to do over again would be to find and hire a good coach and trusted advisor. I know that I certainly would have benefited from that type of valuable feedback. I would sincerely recommend that you consider a coach in your future developmental plans both for yourself and your organization.

As always, I encourage readers to drop me a line anytime at mike@excelleadership.net with reactions and questions. Have a great month and we'll talk to you in September. Best regards.

Join our Web-based “community” devoted to open and honest discussions on topics related to leadership challenges and solutions. To join, simply visit TheExcelLeadershipGroup.net and click on “Community.”



phone: 309-370-5040

e-mail: mike@excelleadership.net

website: www.excelleadership.net

*Experience what **coaching** can do for you and others
on your company's leadership team.*