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# hda Review



DELIVERING BUSINESS SUCCESS THROUGH PEOPLE SOLUTIONS

## Taking Coaching to the next level – a formula for cascading coaching down the organisation

Clayton Glen - Director HDA

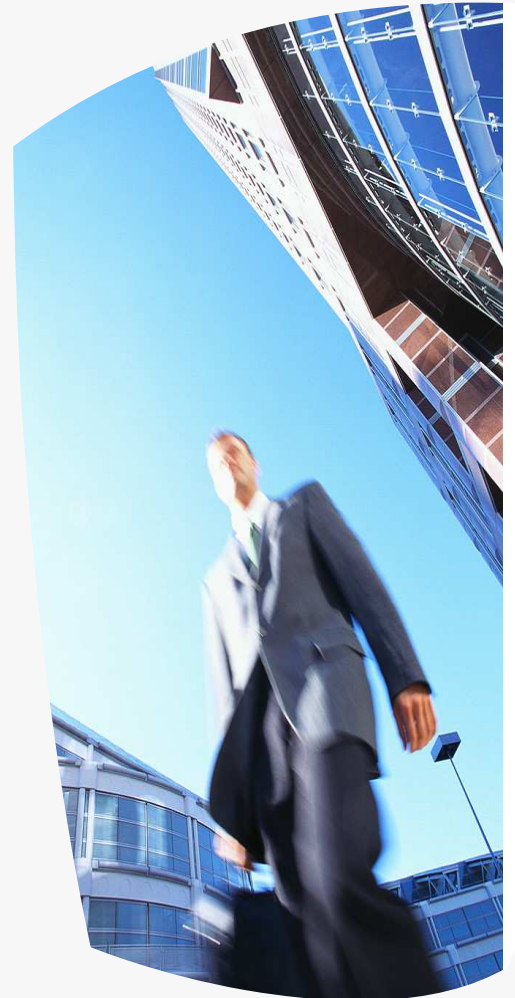
*One-to-one coaching can be very powerful at levels below senior manager level, but, as it is a relatively expensive leadership development intervention, it is as important to ensure that the following elements underpin coaching provision at these levels, as they do at senior levels:*

**a business case** - can a strong and compelling business case (eg. sustainable and measurable improvement) be put forward for coaching at these levels, vs, say experiential, project or classroom-based support? Coaching is a compelling developmental alternative because of its strong record, but is not always economically feasible vs other alternative developmental opportunities at lower levels.

**clear individual talent to be developed** - are there any questions about whether individuals within the group/cadre to be coached are likely to benefit less than others from a positive coaching approach? Just as with senior managers, coaching money should never be spent on staff that are *unlikely* at the outset to benefit from coaching support. Coaching outcomes are always most powerful when applied to those with high potential and those already identified as talented, strong performers. At senior levels, the starting point is often, 'this person is not performing, but we cannot afford for them not to be successful', or 'we cannot afford for them to leave'. At less strategic levels, urgency is likely to be lower, and hence the business case for coaching is likely to be weaker.

**a bespoke approach to individual development** - are there both broad organisational themes underpinning the planned coaching at these levels, as well as clear individual objectives, based on individual performance development needs, or is the latter weakly defined. If individual development objectives are difficult to articulate, then coaching is likely to be the wrong development tool to pull from the developmental tool bag.

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### Upcoming HDA Briefings:

Career Ownership - May 08

Executive Coaching - June 08

Employer Branding - July 08  
(in conjunction with the CIPD)

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# Win-Win-Win: How HDA ensures coaching success

HDA's has developed a reputation over the past ten years as a highly successful outcomes-focused coaching provider in one-to-one and group formats, with a strong record of sustainable and measurable behavioural improvement. More recently, we have created a 'win-win-win' formula to describe our one-to-one coaching approach. This approach recognises that coaching is about three parties achieving successful outcomes: the person being coached, the organisation they work for, and the coach themselves. This last area is often overlooked when judging coaching success, but when combined with the first two, it adds significant value to the process.

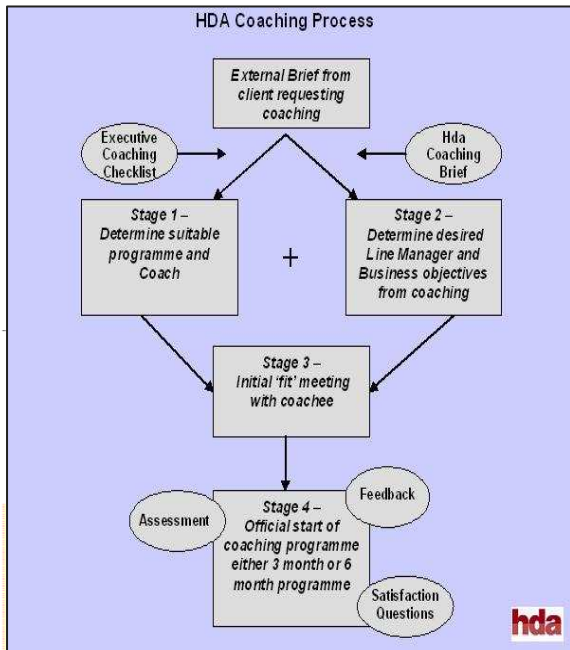
Although the process can differ depending on circumstances; the general approach is the same and always involves taking a full brief from the corporate client to ensure that business objectives underpinning the need for individual or team coaching and facilitation are clear, and that the client organisation has a clear understanding of the benefits of coaching, and has clearly articulated its business case for coaching on this occasion.

At HDA, we believe that it is very often essential for coach and coachee to then meet (telephonically or face-to-face) before the coaching assignment begins, to ensure that there is 'fit', as coaching success is underpinned by solid relationships of trust. It is at this point that the likely 'win-win-win' formula is best tested.

Following the initiation of an HDA coaching programme, the coach provides regular feedback (within the bounds of client confidentiality) to the HDA quality assurance team. The coachee is also given opportunities to provide feedback; whilst the organisation is kept updated with regular mid-programme and end-programme updates.

HDA measures coaching success in a number of ways, including by ensuring that:

1. The coachee is set clearly defined and measurable goals and/or success criteria at the start of the process, in conjunction with the coachees' manager and sometimes the coachee's peer group. At the end of the programme, progress against these goals and success criteria is measured with the coachees' manager (and sometimes the coachee's peer group) to indicate the effectiveness of the coaching intervention;
2. The coachee undertakes an assessment (e.g. peer 360), at the start of the process. At the end they re-take the test and improved scores can indicate the effectiveness of the coaching intervention; and
3. The coachee provides feedback, mid and post programme against their personal set of developmental objectives, and determines whether the coaching relationship has provided measurable personal leverage



## HDA Case Study: Executive Coaching a European MD & COO - Chemicals Manufacturer

*The main goal for the COO was to help him optimise his effectiveness and visibility while performing both a line management and a project leadership role.*

The client was a major chemicals manufacturer based in Europe and with a large UK presence, mainly on the south coast. HDA was asked to be part of a beauty parade selection for coaching the European MD and COO. This was managed by the HR contact who drove the initial selection process. This itself caused some initial challenges as it restricted access to the MD and COO. Eventually HDA won the assignment to coach the COO (HDA has since started working with the MD as well). The business context was that the European masters were putting pressure on the UK in terms of profitability and required a rapid turnaround in terms of results. The COO had been put in charge of this 'turnaround project'. The organisation was managed with an unusual combination of tight hierarchical reporting for mainstream business plus a loose matrix management construct for all project work.

### Business Issues

- The COO needed to rapidly develop his leadership skills in order to influence a team drawn from a matrix structure within which he had no direct authority
- The COO also needed help on creating a culture of mutual accountability and support within his own team of direct reports
- The relationship between the COO and the MD was one of 'cosy collaboration' and this seemed to be less than effective from a business results perspective



Senior HDA Coach—Dennis Preston

### Business Value Obtained from Coaching

- Understanding his natural leadership style and building on those strengths and then introducing new ideas for influencing across a matrix structure gave the COO practical techniques to experiment with and feed back during the coaching assignment
- Rapid progress was made with the COO in helping create a new way of working with his team, based on open challenge and a better understanding of each others strengths
- Regular, structured business meetings were introduced with his boss, the MD, and these evolved to incorporate giving and taking of feedback on performance

### Business Outcomes

- The COO and his team stabilised the falling UK results and although the 'turnaround project' was not complete by the end of the coaching assignment, the COO had received (and solicited) strong positive feedback on his contribution
- Moving out of his comfort zone the COO increased his visibility within the organisation and started to network more effectively and advocate his role and position within the wider business community.

# Creating a Coaching Climate

By Judith Devries, Director of Learning for  
Challenger Business & Executive Coaching  
(HDA's US Partner)

*Every significant study of effective managers concludes that those managers, who get the most out of their teams, spend a high proportion of their time and energy coaching others. Effective managerial coaches are able to delegate more, to create a stronger sense of purpose within the team and to motivate the performance of others. Even more important, perhaps, they free up time so that they can focus on the most important tasks, instead of fire-fighting or doing jobs that could be done by their direct reports.*

*The stark reality, however, is that most managers put very little effort into coaching. Even though the company may have provided coaching training for them, unless there is a robust coaching climate, there will be very little overall impact on the performance of the business, on retention of talent, or on the achievement of strategic goals.*



So what exactly is a coaching climate? You will know you have a coaching climate when:

- Personal growth, team development and organizational learning are integrated and the links clearly understood
- People are able to engage in constructive and positive confrontation
- People welcome feedback (even at the top) and actively seek it
- Coaching is seen as a joint responsibility of managers and their direct reports
- There is good understanding at all levels about what effective developers and developees do
- Coaching is seen primarily as an opportunity rather than as a remedial intervention
- People are recognized and rewarded for their activity in sharing knowledge
- Time for reflection is valued
- There are effective mechanisms for identifying and addressing barriers to learning
- People look first inside the organization for their next job (a typical average would be that only one in five does so!)
- There are strong role models for good coaching practice

So how do you create a coaching climate?

- By ensuring that all managers have at least the basic skills of coaching
- By equipping all employees with the skills to be coached effectively
- By providing an Advanced Coaching Skills program for senior managers and HR staff

- By developing a cadre of master coaches— people with a natural talent for developing others, who are willing to take on the additional tasks of being a role model, coaching less able peer managers in coaching skills and, in some cases, being an upward coach to more senior managers
- By providing opportunities to review good coaching practice
- By recognizing and rewarding managers who demonstrate good coaching behavior and commitment to coaching
- By measuring and providing feedback on the quality, relevance and accessibility of coaching
- By ensuring that top management provide strong, positive role models
- By identifying cultural and systems barriers to developmental behaviors

## **Ensuring that all managers have at least the basic skills of coaching**

Just running a training course isn't enough. Managers need to put what they have learned into practice. Initial needs should be with opportunities to review each coaching session and to reflect upon feedback from the coachee. Good practice typically involves either follow up group sessions, or the use of a master coach to sit in on coaching sessions and provide immediate feedback.

## **Equipping all employees with the skills to be coached effectively**

Coaching works best when the coachee is both a willing and an informed participant. The more the coachee understands about the coaching process, the easier it is to help the coach help them. For example, effective coachees learn how to phrase questions in ways that will elicit the kind of help they want. Greater impact can also be gained by regarding coaching as a team activity (most coaching is actually done by peers, not superiors, anyway) and engaging the whole team in learning how to make coaching a day to day activity.

### **Providing an Advanced Coaching Skills program for senior managers**

The more senior a manager is, the more important it is that they coach well – the costs of mistakes and lost talent rise exponentially the higher up the organization one goes. An Advanced Coaching Skills program builds on the existing knowledge and competence of the manager, providing a range of techniques and approaches that broaden his or her portfolio of responses

### **Developing a cadre of mastercoaches**

The core process is action learning – participants share the learning burden and explore issues together in a series of meetings. There are also opportunities for contributions of knowledge from outside experts. At the end of the program, they have the confidence and competence to act as real champions for coaching.

### **Recognizing and rewarding managers who demonstrate good coaching practice**

If managers, who do not coach or invest significant effort in developing others, still receive promotions and high rewards, it

sends a very negative message. Some organizations are now making developmental performance an integral part of their succession planning and annual bonus systems.

### **Measuring and providing feedback on the quality, relevance and accessibility of coaching**

It's important to have a clear picture of what coaching is happening, and how effective it is, especially from the perspective of the coachee. Identifying pockets of good and poor practice allows for remedial action.

### **Ensuring that top management provides strong, positive role models**

A positive example from the top is critical. Unless people see that top managers are investing in their own development, and in coaching others, their own motivation will inevitably be muted.

### **Identifying cultural and systems barriers to developmental behaviors**

The excuses managers give for not devoting sufficient time to coaching or to encouraging coaching between members of the team are many. At the top of the list is usually inadequate time and much can be achieved by helping managers develop better skills of prioritizing, general time management and establishing regular and sacrosanct periods of reflective space.

Other barriers to coaching behavior are often more subtle – for example, a general reluctance to address difficult behavioral issues, or to admit to weaknesses. Initial research to establish these most common such barriers can prove invaluable. From this understanding, it is possible to conduct educational and motivational campaigns and to coach managers to overcome their own specific barriers. Also highly relevant is the perception by managers of overall supportiveness of the organization towards development activity. Again, this is something that can be measured and used as a broad benchmark of progress towards a coaching culture.

### **The need for a coherent approach**

Establishing a coaching climate, then, requires a much more concentrated, integrated approach than most companies have applied. For real change to happen, managers need a progressive level of skills improvement, just-in-time sources of advice, pressure from coachees, positive role models and a supportive environment.

Cost-wise, however, such an approach may be less expensive than continually training and retraining managers, who continue to behave largely as they have always done. It is certainly more likely to produce results.



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## **Continued from page 1 - Taking Coaching to the next level – a formula for cascading coaching down the organisation**

**clear manager buy in** – is the coachee's manager prepared to put in the up-front effort to set clear coaching objectives (both behavioural and business outcomes-focused), and is the manager interested enough to monitor progress and to engage with the coach during the coaching support process? Also – is the manager prepared to set aside reasonable coaching time. If not, then any coaching support is likely to be sub-optimal to the organisation in terms of the achievement of specific business outcomes.

**coach-coachee chemistry** – assuming that there is a business case, that identified coachees are considered to be strong performers, that there is clear intent to achieve broad business objectives via individualised development, and that there is clear manager buy-in, then the final determinant of likely coaching success at this level is a great chemistry match between coach and coachee. Unless due care is given to creating a great match between coach and coachee, (as for coaching at senior levels), then any coaching support is likely, at best, to be sub-optimal, and at worst, unsuccessful, as a poor coach-coachee match is likely to lead to poor engagement, buy-in and commitment by the coachee.

Cascading one-to-one coaching below senior levels can be expensive, disruptive and disappointing if managed poorly; but developing a strategy within the above guidelines can be a useful first step to developing, engaging and retaining emergent talent within the organisation.

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# Success Strategies for Senior Executives

## Career Net International



HDA, with over 25 years' human capital and career consultancy experience throughout the UK and internationally, is a founder member of CareerNet International (CNI).

**CareerNet International (CNI)** is a network comprising leading outplacement and career management consultancies throughout Europe, the United States, South America, Asia and Australasia.

CNI meets every 4 months at a partner location to develop its international marketing strategy, and to agree quality expectations in respect of planned projects. In October 2007, HDA hosted the CNI Conference in London.

At the London Conference, some CNI members provided their recommendations on the most important **success strategies for senior executives** in their countries who wish to be successful in their next role:

### Uwe Kern: CEO-SKP (Germany)

- To show *what* they are really standing for - what is their offer to the job market?
- To show that they understand the needs of their potential next employer
- To be able to explain what they are likely to bring to the new organisation

### Bert Langerweij: Director-Van Ede (Netherlands)

- Demonstrating self confidence
- Demonstrating listening, responsiveness, inspiration
- Demonstrating a non hierarchical approach

### Gerry Sargent: SVP-Challenger (US)

- Demonstrating gained-experience
- Demonstrating vision of the future
- Demonstrating willingness to listen and change behaviour

### Rolf Erny: CEO-Trans-m-ag (Switzerland)

- Build on personal strengths
- Reflect truly the reason for the separation from

previous roles and make the right conclusions

- Have a vision

### Vivenka Leppanen: Senior Consultant-PIB Personnel (Finland)

- Conscious self awareness
- Concentrate on temperament and work role fit
- Concentrate on temperament and work culture fit

### Federico Maracci: Senior Consultant-CB&A (Italy)

- To maintain and further develop learned networking know-how as a permanent career strategy
- To better analyse their new company 'scenery'

### Clayton Glen: Director-HDA (UK)

- Determine what impact I want to make in my next role
- Determine whether I have the required talent to achieve this impact
- Position myself clearly and develop a consistent set of behaviours ('personal brand?')
- Focus on blending day-to-day delivery excellence with conscious effective networking

Via its CNI partners, HDA is able to seamlessly deliver large-scale global career transition and related projects, with HDA providing the central project management, client reporting and quality assurance relationship, whilst our international partners deliver career consultancy and related services, applying their knowledge of local markets.

In this regard, over the past 36 months, HDA has settled clients in a range of international locations, including the USA, Canada, Germany, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Greece, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Australia, Turkey, Israel and South Africa.

**HDA provides consultancy solutions in:**

- Talent Management
- Career Transition

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