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## TAKING CARE *of* BUSINESS

Building a vibrant corporate coaching culture



**Internal vs. External  
COACHING**

**LEADING HEALTHY  
CORPORATE &  
TEAM CULTURE**

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# TAKING CARE of BUSINESS

Building a vibrant corporate coaching culture



**How do organizations decide that coaching is for them?**

**Who is the decision maker inside the organization and how do they choose and implement a coaching program? How do coaches market and get into corporate coaching programs? What are the different types of coaching required in corporations?**

**What qualifications and tools do you need to be a corporate coach?**

**Join us as we explore coaching in corporations.**

# YOU AS TEAM COACH

Coaching teams in today's corporations

By Pam Van Dyke, PhD, PCC

As organizations have become more and more knowledgeable about coaching, they have become more involved in the *what, who* and *how* of coaching. This change has been positive because it has forced the field of coaching to mature in its dialogue about coaching approaches, methodologies, philosophies and standardization of competencies (i.e., PCC Markers) – all things that have helped to strengthen our field.

As this evolution has taken place, more and more coaches have sought to expand their coaching offerings to include team and/or group coaching. This expansion has in turn encouraged more accredited coaching schools to begin to offer courses in team and group coaching. This is goodness! Having felt like a voice crying in the wilderness for over 10 years regarding more-than-one-coaching, I am elated that we are finally having the dialogue and looking for ways to train coaches beyond the basics. When I think of why team

coaching and why now I have come up with the five top reasons that I see within organizations:

## 1 Innovative Leadership Development Option

For years organizations have offered off-the-shelf leadership development programs. While for some these have been very effective, for others not so much. Providing coaching for teams provides an innovative approach to leadership development to those who might not otherwise experience coaching.

## 2 VUCA - Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity

Although this acronym has become a trendy managerial term, it speaks to the ever-changing nature of our work environment. Most corporations today are experiencing VUCA in a variety of ways, which, in turn, has forced organizations to stay on their toes regarding providing the right kind of assistance to keep their workforce productive.





**3 Cost Effective**  
In recent years coaching within organizations primarily started at the C-Suite level or the executive level (or however the organization defined 'executive', i.e., director, vice president or senior vice president).

As these individuals experience the benefits of coaching, there has been an interest in cascading the experience further down into the organization. This is especially true for organizations who are seeking to create a coaching culture.

Fast forward to 2019 and now more and more organizations are offering coaching to other levels within the organization as a way to develop and retain their talent in a cost-effective manner.

Team coaching allows other levels of the organization to experience the benefits of coaching. It has become a win-win. Employees on teams get exposed to coaching and the organization benefits from the productivity that follows.

*Employees on teams get exposed to coaching and the organization benefits from the productivity that follows.*

**4 Multi-generational**  
It is not uncommon for organizations to have four different generations within their workforce, (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z). In fact, in rare circumstances, there could be five generations, i.e. Silent Generation. This convergence of different generations can produce some tricky situations when they find themselves on the same team. Team coaches are often called in to assist in helping teams leverage these different perspectives.

**5 Millennial Mindset**  
The influx of millennials in the workplace has helped to change

how organizations train and develop their leaders. Millennials can be defined as those who were born between 1981 and 1996, which currently puts them between the ages of 23 and 38 in 2019.

This group of employees grew up differently than previous generations. Most were involved in extra-curricular activities after school in which they consistently were on teams interfacing with a 'coach.' They are used to regular feedback, which is given in a supportive way.

This has forced organizations to offer training to their leaders to equip them to possess more of a *coaching style* of leadership. In that vein, team coaching has become a natural way to improve; in fact, in some situations it has become an expectation.

#### SELF-AWARENESS

Since more and more organizations are leveraging the power of coaching in their workforce, it has created more opportunities for coaches who wish

to expand their coaching offerings beyond just individual coaching.

I am a big believer in equipping oneself in the areas of specialization. Continued education should be coupled with one's interest in the services offered; no *winging it* allowed. Adding to and sharpening one's tool kit will only help to ensure effectiveness.

#### FAMILY IS YOUR FIRST TEAM

Although you have heard it before, it is important to reiterate here. Your early experiences regarding your first team, which is your family of origin, matter. Whether your family experiences were positive or negative or a combination of both,

they can impact how you *show up* as a team coach.

Taking time to reflect on what you learned from your family and how they can either help or hinder you as a team coach would be time well spent.

Use the questions below to help reflect on your first team.

#### Communication

What were the communication patterns in your family? Did family members communicate open and freely with one another or were the communication patterns subversive and covert.

- How did you learn how to communicate?
- As a coach, what do you need to learn or unlearn about communicating and communication patterns in order to be effective?

#### Conflict

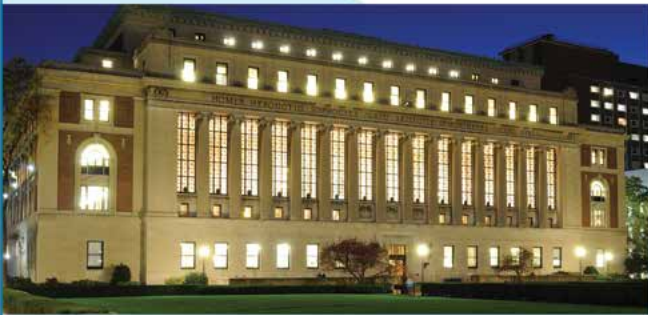
Where there is more than one person, you have the potential for conflict. We are not all the same and from time to time we are going to disagree. Conflict is natural, necessary, neutral and in some cases needed in order to grow and develop.

- How was conflict handled in your family? Was it embraced, avoided or distorted?
- As a coach, how comfortable are you when things get heated and people disagree?

#### Cohesive

The dictionary tells us that cohesive means how things unite and fit together. In families this is sometimes measured by how close a family is with one another. Some families seem to naturally mesh and fit together while others have to work at it.

- Do you know what it feels like to be in a tight-knit family? Was the level of closeness something that was important to your family?



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- As a coach, are you aware when a team lacks cohesion and the feeling of closeness among members? If so, do you have the necessary skills to help a team experience cohesion?

### Committed

You've heard the saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." High-performing teams get things done. History is filled with examples of committed teams doing miraculous things.

- What happened in your family when things got difficult? Did people leave or did they roll up their sleeves and get going?
- As a coach how will you help a team get and stay committed when the chips are down?

### STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH YOURSELF

In this age of digital bombardment and multi-tasking, it is imperative that practitioners make it a habit of staying up to date with themselves. It is easy to quickly lose touch with ourselves and how we are feeling; we're focused on our clients, after all.

Taking a break to spend time with ourselves to simply think and reflect on how we are feeling, what we are doing, why we are doing it and how we are doing is all central to being self-aware practitioners.

Here are a few habitual activities I practice and encourage:

- Sit with yourself at least once a day, even if it is for 5 minutes to just "check in" with yourself, be cognizant of how you are feeling.
- Put some goodness in, either through meditation, prayer or positive readings.
- Take personality assessments when given the opportunity, don't allow yourself to get rusty just because you've "already taken the MBTI" seek out other assessments that can give you



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- insight into yourself and others.
- Practice a program of rigorous honesty with yourself. Although it may be easier to push things under the carpet or delay a crucial conversation, don't, life's too short. Practice what you preach.
- Value "deep work" practices, i.e. – be a disciple of depth in a shallow world. Take time to "turn off" the world of distraction around you and crave going beyond the surface.

The discipline of staying up-to-date with yourself will sharpen your ability to be in tune to others around you. As a team coach, a critical skill is being able to pick up on what is being said and what is *not* being said. Those who practice self-reflection and awareness are more sensitive to the surroundings of what is happening with others.

### CREATE SAFETY

I often ask my team coaching students to describe the atmosphere the last time they hosted a soiree or party. What things did you do or not do to make the guests feel comfortable? What things did you do to create the kind of atmosphere you wanted? You can also flip this exercise to reflect about a soiree or party that you attended that was uncomfortable, it is equally helpful.

These actions and behaviors are some of the same type of behaviors and actions you can do when coaching teams and/or groups.

Here are a few tips for creating safety in teams:

- Be yourself – when you are at ease it models the role for others to be as well.
- Be predictable – say what is going to happen and then act accordingly.

- Eliminate distractions.
- Take time to survey the surroundings for possible barriers to safety, i.e. space, seating, logistics, soundproofing, etc.
- Create an open emotional space, demonstrate behaviors that connote being non-judgmental.
- Answer questions and concerns in a timely manner.
- Model the role around being open and transparent.

None of what I have included in this article is rocket science; it is instead practical things that can easily be accomplished if we make an effort to do so. Use this article as a refresher and add some of your own thoughts and ideas. Ultimately, we owe it to our clients, whether they be in a one-on-one, team or group setting, to be in tip-top practitioner shape to help ensure they get the most out of their coaching engagement. •



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