

## *Executive Coaching – Your Secret Weapon*

**Y**ou've read the news about coaching: the high ROI, the buzz about this CEO and that Director having his and her own executive coach. But you still don't see how a coach could help YOU.

*Well, have you ever:*

- Thought your career was going along smoothly and suddenly hit a bump in the road?
- Gotten the promotion you'd been wanting and found yourself struggling when you realized the new job wasn't quite what you expected?
- Felt your organization transforming all around you and not knowing how to change your own leadership style to keep up?
- Needed to improve your performance – and quickly – to shoot for a promotion?

There was a time when executives turned to training programs or mentors to handle these situations.

*Continued on page two – Coaching*

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

1. *Executive Coaching – Your Secret Weapon*
1. *Job Benchmarking and Candidate Assessments*
3. *One Minute Ideas*
4. *Employment Laws You Should Know*
4. *Schedule of Public Courses*

All articles, quotes, and material in this newsletter are copyrighted. © 2008. No part can be reproduced in any form without specific written consent from copyright holder(s). All rights reserved worldwide.



*Are You Ready For An  
Executive Coach?*

## *Job Benchmarking and Candidate Assessments – What's the Deal?*

**T**he use of job benchmarking and job candidate assessments has grown in recent years. What are they, and why should you care?

Job benchmarking is the process of characterizing what behavioral style, motivators, and talents a job calls for. Job benchmarking allows us to “let the job talk”, and identify what the ideal candidate looks like. Candidate assessment is the flip side of the job benchmark. The candidate assessment looks at the behavioral style, motivators, and talents of an individual. There is a third component that links the other two – the gap analysis – that makes clear those areas where the candidate is not a good fit for a job. Viewed another way, the gap analysis shows where the job is not a good fit for a candidate.

Why use assessments? Studies show that a good fit between a candidate and a job is a key factor in job satisfaction, productivity, and retention. Nobody likes getting turned down for a job, but ultimately making sure a person is a good fit for a job is a win-win proposition.

From an employer's perspective the cost of employee turnover is calculated at between three and five times the person's annual salary. It is a hidden cost of doing business, and one that is easily avoided.

From an employee's perspective, if you are in the right job, you will be happier, less stressed and more productive.

*Continued on page three – Benchmarking*

*Continued from page one – Coaching*

And for newer executives who need to work on foundational skills, they did the trick.

Unfortunately, these "one size fits all" options rarely fit for long. Because, generally speaking, only about 25% of the content will actually apply to your situation. And as the pace of business increases and executives move from organization to organization more frequently, that just won't cut it.

In fact, the higher up the ladder you get, the more individualized your learning needs become.

And that's where coaching fits in. Coaching offers a totally customized approach to developing your leadership, management, personal and technical skills.

Coaching is a collaborative relationship between coach, client and company. Generally, they meet to determine the goals for the coaching. Then, the coach harnesses the client's unique set of knowledge, skills and abilities to help them formulate and execute a plan to achieve their goals.

For my executive coaching clients, I'm both a sounding board for new, innovative ideas and a mirror for new insights and awareness. I've also seen how coaching can re-energize clients when they're faced with adversity in reaching their goal.

Like a mentor, a coach will also share their own knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences when appropriate. And, unlike many mentoring relationships, the coach maintains objectivity and invites the client to use this input only if they're applicable.

No matter how similar the experience may seem, it's not my job to tell my clients to do things exactly the way I did them. It's my job to ask questions that uncover the client's own wisdom and insights, to help them to think through various actions, and then to serve as an accountability partner to ensure they follow through on the actions they commit to do.

I've had many clients refer to me as their 'secret weapon.' I don't know about a 'weapon' but I do know that having someone totally focused on your success and who's only goal is to help you achieve your goals can be a huge asset in your arsenal!

*Continued on next column –*



Before you decide to work with your own executive coach, do your homework and find one that's the best fit for you. Here are a few suggestions:

### **Choosing Your Coach**

- Write a job description. Think ahead about the goals you're trying to achieve by hiring a coach. How will you know the coaching was effective? What are the outcomes you're looking to achieve?
- Match your experience. Review the coach's biography for the education, knowledge and work experiences that are relevant to your specific goal. NOTE: Sometimes the best fit will be a masterful coach who has absolutely no specific knowledge of your area of expertise.
- Interview coaches. The connection between the coach and the client is the real key to coaching effectiveness, so look for someone that you 'click' with. Notice if you feel like you can share openly and honestly without judgment.
- Check for credentials. Coaching is a self-regulated industry and anyone can offer it. Look for coaches who have specific coach training and/or certification.
- Compare your philosophies. Understand the coach's style, philosophy and process and ensure it fits with you.
- Check references. Ask to speak with past clients about the successes they had while working with this coach.
- Cost it out. Coaching rates vary, with some coaches charging by the hour and some charging for a flat-rate package.

You're going places in your executive career, and you could get there a lot faster by working with a coach. After all, your career isn't the same as everyone else's, so why settle for a training program that is?

If you're interested in exploring a coaching relationship contact Bill Burtch at Harmony for consultation at 901-272-7390 or

[bburtch@harmonycc.net](mailto:bburtch@harmonycc.net)

---

*If you think you can, you can. And if you think you can't, you're right.*

– Henry Ford

Continued from page one – *Benchmarking*

If you are in the wrong job, your performance won't be as good, and you will end up leaving the job, or being asked to leave.

The engine behind this whole process is the assessment tool. Most assessment tools have an origin in human development theory, but the good ones have been validated in the real world and have an amazing degree of accuracy and utility.



**An assessment is:**

- ✓ A great source of insight into a person's behavioral style, motivators, and talents
- ✓ An excellent way to "let the job talk"
- ✓ A useful tool to coach an individual, or to assist an individual in guiding and directing their own personal development
- ✓ An integral part of candidate screening and a complement to a resume, work references, and job interview

**An assessment is NOT:**

- ✓ An IQ test
- ✓ A test of job-related skills and knowledge
- ✓ The only criteria used in determining the fit between a candidate and a job
- ✓ A substitute for a resume, work references, and job interview

Assessments are great tools. However, like all tools, they are only as effective as the people using them. In looking at assessment tools as either an employer or employee, work with someone who knows how to use and interpret the assessment in an effective way. If your reaction to an assessment is "NO way!" and not "Aha!" seek a second opinion. Ask your spouse, co-worker, peers, etc... read your assessment and get their opinion. You may be surprised!

*Our perceptions of our self are often different than how others perceive us.*

Adapted with permission from author David E. Smith, Performance Dynamics Systems.



## Web Site Of The Month

[U.S. State & Local Gateway](http://www.usa.gov)

This site contains tons of links to state and local government sites.

You can browse through current government issues, go to the reference room to learn more about different subjects, or click on the link that takes you to the Federal Web Locator.

It also has information for US Citizens, Businesses, Non-Profits, Government, and US Visitors.

[www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov)



# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## Contribute In Meetings

Do some of your employees contribute more at staff meetings, while quieter members hold back?

To achieve more balance, inform staffers in advance that you'll be directing specific questions to them.

Once you've given quieter employees fair warning, call on them.



## Games People Play

You can crack down on computer game playing in your office and still maintain morale.

Set up "games-only" computers in the lounge or lunchroom for staff members to use on their own time, during breaks and at lunch time.

harmony

Coaching & Consulting



1650 Faxon Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38112

Tel: 901-272-7390

E-mail: [bburtch@harmonycc.net](mailto:bburtch@harmonycc.net)

Visit Our Web Site at:

[www.harmonycc.net](http://www.harmonycc.net)



## Employment Laws You Should Know

**Adverse Employment Action** is any action taken by an employer that negatively affects an employee's job, for example, demotion, firing, discipline or failure to promote. In most employment discrimination cases, the employee will have to prove that the employer took some sort of adverse employment action in order to win.

**Affirmative Action** includes efforts by employers to remedy past discrimination in the workplace or an industry by making a special effort to hire women or members of certain minority groups. Most private employers are not required to conduct affirmative action, and in fact, may violate the law by doing so. Government employers and contractors, in contrast, are often required by law to institute affirmative action programs.

**Bona Fide Occupational Qualification ("BFOQ")** is a job requirement, such as a specified age or sex, or the ability to lift a certain weight, that is potentially illegal because it excludes a protected class of people, but which is proven to be in good faith and legal under the circumstances. The successful use of a BFOQ defense is rare.

Contact your legal representative for more information and/or clarification.

*I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen.*

— Frank Lloyd Wright



---

## Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
So You Want To Be A Professional Coach	July 17, 2008	6:30 – 8:30 pm	<a href="http://umce.memphis.edu/">http://umce.memphis.edu/</a>
The Coaching Clinic	October 30 – 31, 2008	8:30 am – 5:00 pm	<a href="http://www.harmonycc.net/coachingclinic.asp">www.harmonycc.net/coachingclinic.asp</a>

