

ENHANCE YOUR CAREER



Four Things Coaches Need to Know about Executive Coaching

Ray Zentis, one of the executive coaching facilitators and experts at IOD, recently discussed with me what he believes executive coaches should do to be successful in their work.

Ray has worked in leadership positions at corporations in Pennsylvania, California, Illinois, and Florida for more than 30+ years. He has been a Vistage Chair from 2000 to 2014 with more than 14,000 hours of one-to-one coaching sessions with senior leaders.

His advice to executive coaches is given below:

Get your own house in order

Before setting out to coach others, a coach should clearly understand what his/her own 'perfect life' looks like. It is a useful exercise to describe your perfect life in the present tense, three to five years into the future. After having done that, the coach can better help the person being coached (the coachee) to optimize their own life.

What the coachee wants must be in sync with the coachee's life situation

If the coachee wants to achieve goals which do not fit with the coachee's current or near term life situation, success is unlikely. The coach must help the coachee understand the barriers faced and help the coachee clearly identify what must be done to achieve the desired goal..

Ray relates the situation where an inside sales person wanted to become the regional sales manager in another part of the country where a position had opened up. The barriers to the move were a lack of experience in the role of sales manager and a lack of knowledge of the territory. The solution came when the coachee was guided to recognize the leadership skills needed to manage a sales territory. A few years

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later, the coachee who had updated the skills needed to be successful, was able to take over his own sales territory.

As a coach, you are not supposed to come up with all the answers

Often, companies fail to understand the difference between a coach and a consultant.

Coaching is an activity wherein a coach, in a trusting, non-judgmental environment, leads a client – via an intentional process of questioning, listening, paraphrasing, and encouragement – to arrive at a conclusion or plan of action using knowledge, experience, and resources possessed by the client. The key to the success of an executive coach is to be skillful in leading the client to finding the answer.

Consulting is an activity wherein the consultant brings new knowledge, processes, or resources not known to the client to resolve a need of the client.

Ray's coaching has helped many executives to identify and overcome barriers which has led to significant growth in companies. Often he has little information about the markets, services, or organizational structures of those companies. The key to Ray's success in coaching has always been to enable executives develop their leadership styles, management processes, and organizational systems through questions, listening, paraphrasing, and encouragement.

People do things for emotional reasons

A very important sentence appears in the book Psycho-Cybernetics written by Maxwell Maltz. "Human beings *always* act, perform, and feel in accordance to what they *imagine to be true* about themselves and their environment." What this says is that everyone acts and behaves a certain way for emotional reasons. Logic and rational talk often does not work with coachees. You have to understand their emotional states and talk to them accordingly.

Ray feels that these points are critical for an executive coach to address in his/her practice. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ray Zentis at ray@rayzentis.com.

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