

When you invest in training and communicating your organization's vision, how do you ensure that profitable changes in the workplace are realized and sustained?

Coaching is being explored as the solution to increase accountability so that training and strategic planning initiatives lead to improved performance. This article is part 2 of four discussions on how to create an effective coaching program by:

- 1) identifying what great coaches do and providing guidelines to determine whether coaching would benefit your organization;
- 2) **finding great coaches who can ensure that your people become skilled at inspiring accountability;**
- 3) incorporating software to build an affordable coaching program that will generate sustained results; and
- 4) overcoming the reluctance by employees to provide and to receive coaching.

Great coaches can train your in-house people about their approach to inspiring accountability. In his book, **Good to Great: why some companies make the leap...and others don't**,¹ Jim Collins states that great companies develop leaders, generation after generation, from within their ranks. Collins also finds that many companies flounder when a celebrity leader brought in to the organization, leaves or retires. Similarly, great coaches understand that their ultimate test is whether they can inspire sustained and exceptional performance by setting up a system that can work independently of their consulting. Great coaches do not seek dependency – they strive to work themselves out of a job.

To find a great coach, look for a person who has a systematic approach. Great coaches use a specific sequence in which they analyze a situation and plan their training program. This allows employees to

quickly grasp the standards that need to be achieved and the steps that will lead to long-term success. The basics are built systematically, one on top of the other.

Avoid coaches who overwhelm people with too much information. It is simplicity that allows people to create change. An overview of the process for creating improvement, and a detailed understanding of how to accomplish the first step is more powerful for people than a detailed description of everything there is to know about a topic.

Also, beware of the guru or celebrity coach who demonstrates skilled performance but does not include beginner exercises. People will be excited by the expert's personality but will not likely be successful in performing the skills. For example, Steven Covey is a celebrity coach whose influence

supports his systematic approach, **7 Habits of Highly Effective People**,² in which each step is broken down into manageable exercises. Unfortunately, too few coaches invest the significant amount of time required to break down their skills into a systematic and easy-to-learn process. The best coaches to employ have a user-friendly approach to learning and can train in-house people to create a long-term coaching solution.

1 Collins, J. **Good to Great: why some companies make the leap...and others don't.** HarperCollins Publishers Inc: New York, NY, 2001.

2 Covey, S. **7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change.** Simon & Schuster: New York, NY, 1989.