

New Opportunities for Coaching in Organizations

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The numbers speak for themselves: According to the *2013 Executive Coaching Survey*, conducted by the Center for Leadership Development and Research at Stanford Graduate School of Business, Stanford University's Rock Center for Corporate Governance, and The Miles Group, 34 percent of CEOs and 51 percent of senior executives receive coaching. Meanwhile, according to *Building a Coaching Culture*, ICF and the Human Capital Institute's (HCI) 2014 study of coaching in organizations, 43 percent of respondents reported that their organizations employed internal coaches and 60 percent said coaching was available to their high-potential employees. While Leadership and Executive Coaching remain areas of business with a huge potential, coaching is spreading into organizations' lower levels, creating new opportunities for coaches.

Renewed Demand for Coaching in Organizations

Increasingly, organizations view coaching as a way to retain talented employees and enhance leadership development and soft skills.

Talent Retention

While the recovery from the 2008 recession has been slow, it has been steady. Since 2009, nine million new jobs have been created. Many talented managers now see opportunities for advancement with or outside of their organization. In a dramatic shift from earlier in the century, one of the main challenges now facing most executive teams is attracting and retaining talent. The cost of turnover is high, particularly when high-potential employees leave. This is an area where an organization's approach to training and development can make a difference.

Wage increases and financial incentives alone are unlikely to keep talent in organizations. Research suggests that the most common reasons for an employee to leave a company have nothing to do with compensation: Lack of opportunities, boredom, lack of challenge or poor work/life balance are cited as reasons for 70 percent of departures. Dissatisfaction with compensation accounts for less turnover.

And here is where coaching comes into play: Not only do corporate coaches develop high-potential employees by preparing managers for promotion and addressing derailing behaviors, but they also reinforce a manager's commitment to the company. Managers and employees need to feel that they belong to the organization, and that they grow at a personal level. In focusing on personal and soft skills, coaching keeps employees engaged, with 2015 data from ICF and HCI revealing that 60 percent of employees in organizations with strong coaching cultures rate themselves as highly engaged.

Leadership Development

Leadership, performance and change management are key areas of coaching for organizations, with research conducted independently by HCI and jointly by ICF and HCI citing leadership development, change management and onboarding as some of the most frequently cited reasons for organizations to utilize coaching.

Executives and the c-suite remain the main targets for coaching in companies, and the potential in these areas is huge. According to the Stanford survey, approximately 33 percent of CEOs of large organizations receive coaching and 100 percent of CEOs are open to change based on external feedback. Furthermore, boards of directors are recommending coaching for directors and CEOs with increasing frequency.

Improving Soft Skills

Aside from the traditional areas of talent retention and leadership skills, soft skills, such as communication, teamwork and decision-making, have recently been recognized as profitable areas for improvement within companies. In that area, the role of coaches is to help employees be more self-aware. For example, as a coach you may support a client in cultivating the ability to offer effective feedback or participate productively in a team. Organizations have begun to understand the value of building a culture of coaching at all levels, and the potential in that area is huge: According to ICF and HCI's 2015 study, *Building a Coaching Culture for Increased Employee Engagement*, only 13 percent of participating organizations were classified as having a strong coaching culture. This untapped niche opens a full range of new opportunities.

Opportunities for All

Savvy business-generating coaches learn to align and promote their services with the emerging needs and trends in organizations.

Veteran practitioners who already have the experience of delivering Executive Coaching to CEOs or c-suite leaders can leverage the new niche of entry-level and mid-level managers as a way to broaden and diversify their portfolios. This same target presents the greatest opportunity area for aspiring coaches seeking to build their experience in the corporate setting.

What product can you create as a coach to demonstrate your value and generate new business in the organizational setting? Creating and delivering a unique presentation or workshop can demonstrate to organizational decision-makers, such as human resources directors, how you can support their strategic goals and contribute to a high return on investment for coaching.

Get your foot in the door. Start small. Be concrete. Focus on a target area of growth and create a program that is bound to make a noticeable change. There is a world of improvement needed in most organizations. Pick your challenge, and go for it!

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