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Newsletter for Executives & Leaders

Leveraging Executive Coaching Through Integral Learning Systems

Coaches can provide significant leverage with respect to executive success. They can focus on four aspects of functioning in an organization: (1) power, (2) accountability, (3) authority, and (4) responsibility.

With these and other models of emotional intelligence, coaches can guide the results being driven by executive performance and development.

Without a doubt, we are concerned and directed by these models, skills, roles and results. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg in really understanding the value and leverage to be gained as a result of executive coaching in a learning system. In order to leverage executive coaching fully, we have to assess and amplify the role of integral intelligence. A system of Strategy Focused Developmental Coaching assures executive results as it applies to knowledge formation, retention and learning.

Executive Coaching is More than Behavioral Work!

In fact, most of the current paradigms of executive coaching/consulting probably encompass no more than single loop learning: performance against a set of expectations without a corresponding shift in governing variables, or what we'll call problem solving. Framing this concept of single loop learning (Argyris & Schon) is the shift to double loop learning. While this is not a new concept, learning how to learn while objectifying this process is another matter. In order to leverage executive coaching and double loop learning, we'll have to focus on more than just behavior.

A Definition of Emotional Intelligence in a Business System

The capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions in ourselves and others. An emotional competence is a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that contributes to effective performance at work.

Essentially (taken from Goleman):

- Understanding Yourself
- Managing Yourself
- Understanding Others
- Managing Them



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There are a couple of key points that allow us to understand and guide executive coaching depicted by this model.

1. First, we have to understand that most executive coaching is done as a result of a deficiency of social actions or social skills (relationship management).
2. Secondly, if we examine the model, we see that social actions are arrived at only after they are grounded in self-action and awareness of self and other.

How We Move Through the E.I. Hierarchy

(Boyatzis, Case Western University)

- With self-awareness, a person has a 50-50 chance of demonstrating self-management. Without self-awareness, a person has virtually no chance of demonstrating self-management.
- With self-awareness, a person has a 38 percent chance of having social awareness. Without self-awareness, he or she has an 83 percent chance of lacking social awareness.
- The research is clear: *Self-awareness* is the necessary underpinning of both self-management and social awareness.

Most Coaches are Trained as Problem Solvers

Looking for gaps in performance is a part of the traditional coaching repertoire. This pulls most coaches unconsciously into deficiency-based solutions that focus on weaknesses, rather than developmental solutions surrounding strengths or appreciation.

The key reasons to be concerned with increasing emotional competence (taken directly from research at Hay McBer):

- Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the differentiating factor in success
- 90 percent of the difference between outstanding and average leaders is linked to EI
- EI is two times as important as IQ and technical expertise combined
- EI is four times as important in terms of overall success

Behavior Plus Governing Variables = Leverage!

We are not going to abandon addressing social skills and behavior. However, leverage exists when we look to a deeper and more complex cause-and-effect relationship. As identified through the emotional competency models, awareness is a causal factor in self and other action.

Behavior becomes a signal used to hone in on required development while providing valuable feedback on perceived progress.

If we remember Einstein's comments that problems created at one level require solutions from a different level of awareness, we can see a need for a developmental as well as performance or behavior-based approach to executive coaching.

Yet, understanding these issues is largely an activity of the neo cortex and not enough. There are other "how-to" issues that have to be considered in order to leverage executive coaching requiring learning in our limbic system (the emotional brain). As coaches help executives focus on understanding how behavior is only one component of emotional competence, leverage increases as deeper learning systems come into awareness.

Integrating Four Learning Systems

Single Loop Learning – performance against a set of standards with no shift or change in governing variables of that performance. Merely making someone accountable for behavior is a single loop or performance-based approach.

Double Loop Learning – performance & developmental change with a shift of expectations generated from a shift in governing variables. Double loop learning requires the coaching interaction to take into consideration the governing variables or norms, as values and limits of the behavior. A shift in the governing variables leads to a subsequent shift in behavior, either through a shift in expectations or a shift in the behavior as a reflection of changing values, norms or limits in the mental models.

If the coaching interaction includes four domains of effects, the mental models of the behavior are considered in personal, professional, business and network (system) domains and across four perspectives: internal, external, financial and developmental. Merely taking a systems approach will aid double loop learning as you expand the number of perspectives to be considered by the executive when answering questions or considering where they are in the system.

If we don't take a multi-dimensional or integral approach, we lose a good deal of the leverage that can be created by examining the governing variables in a broader context. This one factor is a distinction between single and double loop learning and is critical to understand and leverage in executive coaching.

Triple Loop Learning – performance, change & transformation after a contextual shift in identity. This level of learning is critical for executive development. So much of what happens in organizations has a tendency to confuse the barriers

between what we do and who we are. This muddying of the water between self and duty or results becomes a key point for leverage in executive coaching. We are not what we do, however most of the time all indicators are pointed in that direction.

Clearly, this form of learning is difficult, complex and requires self-awareness. If we revisit the EI model outlined earlier in this discussion, we can see that self-awareness leads or becomes a precursor to all other clusters of emotional competence. What appears to be a deficiency in social skills is often masking a deeper, more complex deficiency in self-management, social awareness and the most difficult to master: self-awareness.

The Center for Creative Leadership indicated at one point that the number one cause of executive failure is lack of impulse control. Notice that impulse control stems from a lack of self-awareness overriding the ability to self-manage. If in fact self-awareness has this degree of leverage, then executive coaching can realize significant leverage by developing self-awareness and self-management, because it leads to competence in relationship management according to Goleman (*Primal Leadership*, 2002).

Staging 4ourth Loop Learning – Transcendence. This learning system (*4ourth Loop*) is the most difficult learning to assimilate and can only be assimilated once the triple loop learning cycle is in awareness. A degree of consciousness, learning or awareness must be attained to be able to hold in objectivity the multi-dimensional streams of consciousness required in the fourth level of complexity.

Understanding the four learning systems working in parallel requires the ability to view more perspectives and more variables simultaneously. To the extent we can take a vantage point where personal, professional, business and network systems are perceived as an ecology of behavior, we can enter *4ourth loop learning systems*.

While we may not be able to conceptualize this fully, by becoming aware of the existence of these multi-dimensional streams, our awareness of our own role in these systems is placed in context. This re-contextualization in view of multiple streams of consciousness aids the ability and leverage of the executive coaching interaction to produce higher, more sophisticated levels of integral or emergent awareness. Because of the connection we see with the EI Matrix, we can postulate that higher more sophisticated levels of self-awareness produce higher and more sophisticated levels of behavior as a natural design.

Why are Learning Systems Leveraging?

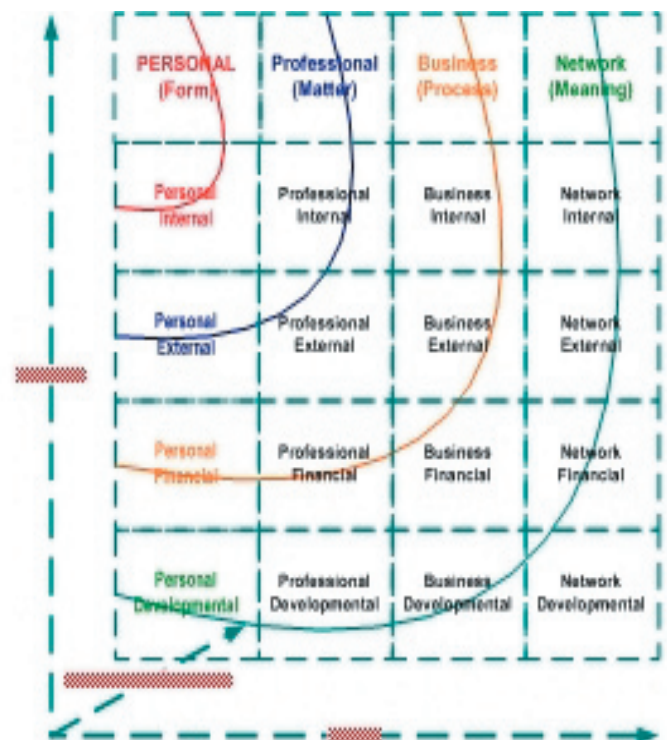
Leverage comes from the ability to foster more increasingly sophisticated—emotionally competent—behaviors with greater impact on the system through advanced stages of learning. This is created through *strategy focused developmental coaching* interactions directed at enhancing self-awareness.

A Strategy Focused Approach is:

(Adapted from the *Five Principles of Strategy Focused Organizations* by Kaplan and Norton):

- Mobilized through executive leadership
- Operationalize what really matters
- Alignment with ALL agendas
- EVERYONE participates
- Continuous conversations

Domain/Perspective Matrix (Bingo Card)



4 Domains Of Effect

Personal
Professional
Business
Network

4 Perspectives in a Business System

Internal (Business Processes)
External (Demand/Value Chain)
Financial (\$ Metrics— usually trailing indicators)
Developmental (Innovation, learning & growth)

Linking the EI Conceptual Model to Learning Systems

Contrast the EI Theory of Performance Model with Learning Systems:

Self Awareness	Social Awareness	Look at how these two tables overlay each other...	Triple Loop Learning	Double Loop Learning
Self Management	Social Skills	What we have is almost a direct match in terms of learning and competence	Double Loop Learning	Single Loop Learning

While there is a not a perfect one to one correlation in some respects of these two learning systems as they are mapped one to the other, the leverage is identified. Triple loop learning has more leverage than double loop learning in achieving single loop results, as does self-awareness, to either self-management or social awareness in achieving social skills. Integrated approaches have much more opportunity for success than only behavioral approaches to leveraging executive coaching.

We're concerned about creating leverage in executive coaching for several reasons.

- Rising complexity and discontinuous change are creating the need to learn—and to know how we learn in different ways.
- Knowing how we know and what it means to know is vital to self-generating or emergent leadership.
- Executive performance and development has a direct effect on personal, professional, business and network results over time.
- ROI in Executive Coaching is critical to organizational well-being and competitive positioning in a global marketplace.
- Developing a continuous stream of effective leaders is critical to the current performance and future agility of business and networks.

We have discussed that leverage occurs in several ways in the types of executive coaching interactions our executive coaches can co-generate:

- Using the EI Matrix to understand where to focus coaching interactions and developmental issues.
- Understanding how learning systems provide sophistication in learning to learn faster and deeper.
- Knowing the various forms of complexity and how complex interactions can surface as well as provide developmental subject/object conversations.
- Utilizing a strategy focused developmental coaching system to integrate facets of personal, business and network effects.

When we understand and can combine the elements of these interrelated systems, we find that the executive coaching interaction can produce leverage in creating increased levels of emotional competence, more sophisticated learning and deeper levels of self and social awareness which leads to improvements in social skills such as identified by researchers and writers that are critical to executive performance and development.

While this may seem simple, it is not easy. Rewriting our neurophysiology as we do in change requires us to literally change our motivation at times. Not only is motivation almost entirely unknown at a conscious level, it is very difficult to shift core motives. Yet, this system of development can accomplish exactly that degree of difficulty over time using self-directed learning agendas and strategy focused developmental coaching plans. As a result, it yields greater leverage from our strengths, while limiting the degree of subjectivity or embeddedness which produce most of our limiting behaviors.

This system allows us to become consciously competent. It helps us learn to learn, learn to know and when to know the difference between an embedded strength and reality. Leaders today are required to become teachers. They are required to surface and extend a teachable point of view. This can be accomplished through strategy focused development coaching systems.



...A Methodology for Awareness, Purpose, Competence, Well-Being and **RESULTS!**

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