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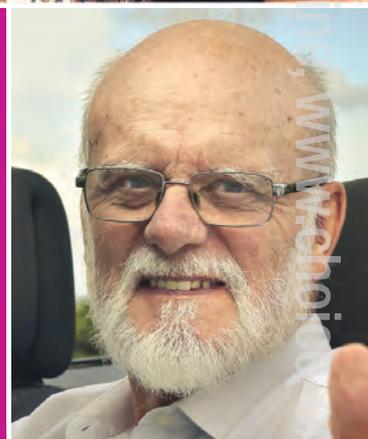
Coaching Across Generations

What we need to know about generational differences

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Remote-based Coaching

Elements that facilitate great outcomes for remote-based clients

By Christopher Paterson, BA, PGDIP



We hear a lot about ‘disruptive innovations’ and observe how technology has precipitated a major shift in the coaching landscape. While the purists resist and the early adopters adopt, we have found that adapting to this new medium while being consistent with our coaching methodology and values has been an important part of our growth. Remote coaching has allowed us to expand into the U.S. and Asian markets and support remote areas of our own geographically dispersed country here in Australia.

From a background in business psychology, our coach-

ing solution has been designed around the fundamentals of behavior change. This combines the art (soft skills) and science (measurement) of coaching to facilitate tangible and observable development outcomes. Adapting the art while also sticking to the science has allowed us to deliver the same compelling outcomes for our remote clients as our ‘in person’ clients. For example, in our career transition business, our remote clients transition their career in the same timeframe with the same increase in remuneration compared to clients whom we meet in person.

In this article, I will share the three key elements that have had the greatest impact on delivering powerful outcomes for our remote clients.

1. Maps & Outcomes

Having structured Master Action Plans [MAPs] in place for each coaching engagement adds the rigour that we need to define and measure behavior change with specific on-the-job examples. Each client works on two to four MAPs detailing the action plan in 'observable behaviors.' Translating actions into observable behaviors takes discipline from the coach, and this is particularly critical in measuring outcomes for remote based clients.

An example of this is the action to "connect more with my staff". While the right intent is there, in this case the ob-

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servable behavior is "I'll have a weekly meeting or call with each staff member". The action is subjective, the observable behavior is objective and binary, meaning it is either achieved or not; yes or no; 1 or 0.

This structure allows the remote coach to have targeted and focused meetings with the client based on the achievement of these MAPs with specific examples and the impact that this has had. Barriers to achievement are also discussed with the same level of focus on the actual objective.

With a well-structured MAP and regular reviews, the 'outcome report' generated at the end of the engagement is a celebration of the accumulated progress and success. The client now has a large bank of evidence that we can use to demonstrate the incremental actions taken, specific evidence of behavior change and the tangible impact that this has had on the business. Finally, correlating this evidence with the desired business outcomes allows us to achieve that elusive measurement of return on coaching investment [ROI].

In addition, managing the outcome report process remotely allows us to stay connected with both the client and the customer in a compelling and commercial way. This also protects our brand from the local competition, resulting in

repeat business even though we haven't met the key procuring stakeholders in person.

2. Wellness at Work

The neurological science and our own experience shows that a client's wellness profile is either a facilitator of their behavior change or a barrier to their success. As such, we have built a wellness model that can be deployed in person and remotely.

The focus on cognitive, emotional and behavioral wellness ensures that clients are making good decisions on all fronts. The behavioral component of this is defined by a wellness guide, which we use with our remote clients to scorecard their wellness profile. By engaging in a conversation about wellness at the start of the program, we are able to facilitate a client's wellness plan in parallel to their MAPs. Further, an online wellness check at the beginning and end of the program keeps remote clients accountable and provides us with the evidence that we need to assess the impact we are having.

Our research study in 2014 showed that clients were able to reduce their stress levels by eight percent and their workload pressure by 16 percent in six weeks just by making good decisions on their wellness plan – both statistically significant results at .05 and .01 confidence levels respectively for the statisticians.

3. Meeting Cycle & Length

To maintain momentum and accountability, we have found that both a shorter meeting cycle and meeting length have been highly effective for our remote clients. While our face-to-face clients have one- to two-hour meetings weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, our remote clients have 30- to 60-minute sessions more frequently. This regularity embeds the coach into the client's life, and the consistency of contact makes up for any inherent engagement or rapport loss due to proximity. Overall, the time utilization is the same across the program; the style is adapted to suit the need.

Every client is different. However, we have found that these three elements have allowed our remote clients to experience the same powerful development results linked to tangible business outcomes. In fact, the added convenience of this medium has driven an increasing proportion of our local clients to request a blend of in person and remote sessions.

As a business, the discipline and rigor we have implemented in remote coaching has opened up new markets and increased our scalability exponentially. We are by no means an early adopter, but we are not the laggard either, and remote coaching is an embraced feature of our solution mix that we see increasing over time. ●