



Leadership Transition – Building Leadership Competencies for Successful Transition into a New Role

Coaching Context

The coaching intervention was designed to support the transition of the coachee into a new role over 6 months. As head of the purchase function for a Global manufacturing organization, the coachee was responsible for sourcing raw material, appointing vendors who would deliver quality at the right cost, partnering with business on new projects or product innovation and playing a key role in driving the cost reduction program which was mission critical for the company.

The Challenge

The Coachee had been asked to step into this new role as soon as the previous role incumbent had left the organization; the management felt he had the potential to deliver in the role.

The 360-degree feedback however had a different story to tell, key developmental gaps identified included: lack of problem solving ability, inability to delegate tasks appropriately, giving constructive feedback, acknowledging team contribution, ability to manage interpersonal conflict, create a vision for the function and inspire and motivate team to go the extra mile. In a one to one meeting with a focus group, the team complained of bias and favoritism and one or two key team members had tendered in their resignation as well.

Coaching Approach

At the onset, a psychometric tool was used to assess leadership competency potential and co-relate it with the 360-degree feedback. The co-relation was 100%. The next step was to adopt a focused approach to work with the coachee to address key leadership gaps.



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The intake session, which captured the coachee's history, revealed the coachee's leadership philosophy was influenced by specific life experiences, and the meaning he had derived was that leadership symbolizes power, control, and authority. In our deepening sessions, we touched upon his vision for self and team, which he shared metaphorically as a song "All I have to do is Dream." Slowly, the coachee realized that leadership is about being in service to a cause beyond self and meaning of the song extended to others viz. "All I have to do is to inspire people to dream" and a leaders role is to help them realize their aspirations."

Based on our work together, the coachee had a team session, where he highlighted his leadership struggles, shared his vision for the function, and asked for support. This earned him respect and his vulnerability touched many people. As next steps, we worked to address specific competency gaps and supported the coachee to establish specific rituals and practices, which helped the coachee, translate his leadership intent to action.

An interesting practice was developed to engage the team, each members strengths were printed (Clifton strengths finder) on Tea / Coffee Mugs, so each time they had a meeting with each person holding his / her cup, he was aware whether he was sufficiently engaging them in a conversation or a task with the intent to leverage their strengths.

"Client Speak"

The key stakeholder at the final review meet remarked, "This clearly works! Make a note of it and circulate it to others so that other can also benefit from it"

The Feedback from the Coachee:

"I would like to sincerely thank you for helping and supporting me in my Leadership journey. Although the Leadership concepts are known and are available in lots of books, tutorials etc. but your method of helping me to explore the true meaning of leadership was really effective.

You trusted and believed in me and helped me initially to unwind and untangle from negative thoughts. After this you supported me in building a platform for me to explore and experiment various aspects of leadership behavior and relationship management. The practices coached by you are simple and I am implementing almost 60% of what you coached me. It is helping me and my team a lot!!"

An informal connect with the coachee after almost 2 years revealed he was doing fine and the entire team was performing as a highly cohesive work unit and exceeding performance expectations.

Perspective on Leadership Transition

Leadership transition need to be planned in advance to ensure talent is ear marked for critical roles and given enough time to transition seamlessly into the new role. It may be prudent to assess talent for specialist / generalist or business roles with focus on creating a talent pipeline. However what is even for critical is using the right psychometric assessment to predict performance

in the targeted role and adopt a competency-based approach to develop potential. Finally, an action-learning component needs to be integrated with the development plan to get a fair understanding of the role incumbent's ability to contribute in the new role in the future.

Need more information?

To discuss how you can customise a Coaching Program for Leaders for your organisation:

Call: + 91 9920 052 172 or mailus@human-network.in

About Us

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