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**Some Key Differences Between Life and Business Coaching**

By Kevin Ecclesine

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**SOME KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LIFE AND BUSINESS COACHING**

When guidance is needed to elicit a peak performance, many people turn to coaching. Whether it is on the field or in the office, or for hobbies, personal or professional reasons, successful people from all walks of life have been using this valuable tool to achieve their goals quickly and effectively for years. This may explain why new trends have emerged in which many adults are turning to life coaches in their off hours to search for personal fulfillment, while still others opt for a much different type of coaching at work to enhance their skill sets, expand their potential and make their employees more effective in their roles in the company.

But how does one differentiate between life coaching and business coaching? One major difference is that life coaching focuses on more personal issues, while in business coaching you anchor the work in business objectives. The accountability is with the client and his or her internal advocate so that what they are working on is improving their leadership skills and ultimately the business bottom line. It does not solely revolve around the client as it does in life coaching. For instance, in life coaching a client's goal may be to lose weight, but if they choose not to work out or eat properly, it doesn't affect the bottom line of anything other than his or her own personal goals, whereas when individuals being professionally coached don't meet the obligations they've agreed to, there are extensive evaluations conducted throughout the process and the lack of expected results can resonate throughout an organization.

Business coaching is a developmental process designed to help individuals and teams achieve and sustain top performance in ways that are linked to the organization's needs. Recently this type of coaching has taken on whole new connotation in the modern workplace. The opinion of coaching has come full circle in corporate America. Today, it means that a company is interested in investing in its employees' high potential.

Another key difference between life and business coaching is in the reporting structure—in life coaching it is just between the coach and the client, whereas in business coaching the contract involves the coach, the coachee and that person's manager. An alliance is created that is clearly understood and driven by the client so that confidentiality and accountability can be built. But you should never have a situation where all parties don't agree on the level of disclosure—you can't

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effectively coach someone if they say, 'You can't tell my boss anything. In fact, most professional coaches encourage collaborative meetings and teach their clients to share information about the process themselves, so it is reported from the client and the coach.

While life coaching directives tend to be mapped out with the individual's goals in mind, specific or vague, business coaching can offer measurable improvements for both the person being coached and the organization itself. It can come from an external source or from someone trained to provide it within an organization. Of course, to stay competitive in today's economy, it is imperative for organizations to utilize their resources to the fullest extent. However, today's leaders have had to do more with less, and in focusing on driving forward they often subsequently spend very little time developing their people. That's a trap many leaders fall into—being busy can feel productive, yet actually slowing down and using your resources more efficiently can lead to much higher productivity. Some leaders can forget that there is a great deal to learn from their people.

One of Lee Hecht Harrison's programs called Coaching Practices for Leaders focuses directly on an organization's management level—to provide tools to hold productive coaching conversations, more effectively reach their direct reports, and ultimately retain their key talent and maximize their potential. Experts have identified several key areas that leadership skills fall into: people skills, business skills and overall effectiveness. In most cases the business skills and effectiveness are in need of less development than people skills. This is the area where most leaders are lacking. These very necessary people skills come into play for those in leadership roles when holding development conversations, bringing up issues about performance (positive or negative) and remembering to maximize their 'people resource' by really listening and paying attention to what their team is thinking. Business coaching targets the individual organization's direction and strategy to make the most of a company's most valuable assets—its employees. Coaching should be anchored in the business objectives of an organization. You should establish coaching relationships with enough process in them to meet the individual's needs and still ensure a significant return on investment for the organization as well as the individual.

Kevin Ecclesine is the vice president of leading career management services company Lee Hecht Harrison's Grand Rapids, Michigan office.

### **Team Coaching To Business Coaching, It Gets You In The Game**

**By Michelle Freis**

Coaching is a process of teaching and directing. The one who directs is known as the 'coach'. To grow within a society and to learn proper skills to establish and perform, coaching is very necessary. At every stage and in various aspects of your life, you will find a need for coaching. It imparts knowledge, discipline and skill to perform wherever there is a requirement.

There is no definite line of coaching as coaches are independent to select the type and structure of coaching. Encouragement, inspiration and advice constitute the base of a coaching technique. These elements are present in all types of coaching (like sports, business, personal and career coaching). An approach towards coaching should be very responsible and disciplined because it requires patience

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and hard work. It is a very traditional method and starts at a very informal level where parents teach their children. Generally elders are regarded as good coach for the young ones who are passing through a learning stage. Here are few definite types of coaching that differ from one another with regards to features, functions and time period.

**Personal coaching:** When a person offers individual coaching to a client then it is personal coaching or "life coaching". A mutual understanding is established between the client and the coach and the coach carries forward with a definite progress plan. Constant feedback is given to the client and this type of coaching can enter an informal level. A coach analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the client and works towards repair and rebuilding.

**Team coaching:** A single client is replaced by a team in team coaching. A coach takes care of a particular team and prepares a chart of progress for each individual and an indicator of group performance. This is a better learning process as the clients can learn a lot from each other. Moreover, a collective effort is always better than singular approach.

**Business coaching:** Business coaching is completely focused at assisting a business owner towards a distinct and efficient business plan. A business coaching can be operated in any department of commerce, from traditional business and entrepreneurial start-up business to e-business. Unlike other coaches, a business coach needs to be completely aware about the current advancements and changes in the business scenario.

**Career coaching and executive coaching:** Perhaps career coaching is one of the most common coaching types. Almost every student needs guidance to build a satisfying career for him or her. There are many queries and difficulties in students' life and sometimes they are unable to handle the situation. Executive coaching is professional type of coaching to impart skills, strategies and professional (according to the profession) behavior to the executives.

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