FEATURE ARTICLE

Consider the Layers – DEVELOP INNOVATION Capability Successfully
by John Brooker

12 Steps to Building a Fabulous Coaching Business
by Ruby McGuire

How to Improve an Already Successful Business
by Anne Bachrach

Why Start-ups Fail and What You Can Do To Guarantee Your Success
by Skye Sanders

How to Get In Touch with Your Inner Coach
by Lynn Robinson

SECTION: COACH TOOLS

The Power to SPEAK UP!
by Yasmin Vorajee
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Welcome to yet another exciting edition of the International Coaching News (iCN) online magazine! For our 10th edition our theme is Business Coaching. This edition is loaded with content on a variety of relevant topics on how Business coaching helps owners of small and medium sized businesses with their sales, marketing, management, team building and so much more.

The ICN is proud to have collaborated with several renowned international columnists, expert coaches and best-selling authors to provide insights on business coaching. In this edition it contains some content definitely worth a read, for example, our feature article from John Brooker in the United Kingdom ‘Consider the Layers – Develop Innovation Capability Successfully’, where John provides excellent guidelines to develop a successful innovative programme and urge employees in the organisation to stop talking about innovation and just innovate. In our Coaching Tools Section ‘The Power to Speak Up’ by Yasmin Vorajee from Ireland, reminds us that speaking up is a muscle that has to be constantly exercised so keep at it. Another noteworthy article is ‘12 Steps to Building a Fabulous Coaching Business’ by one of our star contributors Ruby McGuire from the United Kingdom. She gives us insights on helping coaches build their businesses the right way. She encourages us to work on building confidence and skills as a coach so that you are the best you can be. ‘Why Start-ups Fail and What You Can Do To Guarantee Your Success’ by Skye Sanders, draws on the causes of start-up failures and what you should do to avoid them. From authors Kim Morgan and Geoff Watts ‘Mind the Gap – Avoid Falling Into The Trap Of the Impostor Syndrome’, they discuss how coaches can help their clients close the ‘Impostor Syndrome gap’ by having them walk through their career timeline, focusing on the successes and achievements throughout their career and particularly noticing their part in them. ‘Marketing Plans That Motivate - Setting up the Perfect Marketing Plan for you’ by Cheryl Oribabor from the USA, imparts in her article that the perfect marketing plan should pinpoint motivating factors that inspire you to achieve your specific goals in a way that offers you the freedom to be yourself, make genuine connections and establish authentic relationships. Each of our columnists, too numerous to mention, have taken some really interesting perspectives, and I would encourage a thorough read-through this edition.

Just like all our other editions, this edition is not just an interesting read, but it provides you with helpful coaching tools, personal development ideas and professional development techniques to grow your business.

We hope you enjoy this edition and I look forward to receiving your feedback!

Best wishes,

Leeann

Leeann C. Naidoo
iCN Division Head

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Want a Coaching Niche that will Accelerate Your Business and Your Reach?

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THE 80/20 RULE

The 80/20 rule in marketing puts into motion that 80% of your profits are coming from 20% of your products or services. With your top products or services being the focal point of your sales and profits, how can you make these products or services even better? So, how do you make them stand out more than they are? Take into consideration what is making you the most sales is what people are looking for most. You have created something that is in demand. So how do you create even more demand for it?

START FOCUSING

Start to focus on these successful products or services that are making your business successful and start improving on them. Ask your clients for feedback on your website: Is there anything that we can do better and improve upon? What is it that you like about our product or service? Did you choose us over someone else? If so, what did you like better? Clients love to give feedback, and whether it is good or bad feedback from your clients it is an important part of your business success. You want to keep your clients coming back and you want them to tell their friends about how wonderful your products or services are. People like the personalised interaction. Offer to include them in a drawing for a prize for their feedback (for example, an iPad, iPod, iPod Mini, etc.).

If your top sellers are different than the other products or services are, why not focus on that certain niche? By focusing more on what the best sales items are you will increase your profits. Add more products or services that support the top sellers or improve on them.

How to Improve an Already SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

by Anne Bachrach (USA)

You already have a successful business and you have good repeat clients and word-of-mouth clients. You are successful at making a profit. Have you ever thought of improving your already successful business so that you can be number one or in the top 10 or 20 firms in your niche? There is nothing wrong with wanting to improve your business strategies in order to have your already successful business even more successful.
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF AND SET GOALS

Your clients certainly believe in you and your company so why don’t you believe in yourself even more? We all know that by believing in yourself, you are more self-confident and self-reliant. When you are confident with what you are doing you are going to be successful in whatever goals you want to achieve.

Goal setting should be taken in baby steps. Short term goals turn into long term goals. You already had goals set when you started your business and what you need to do now is to upgrade those goals for a more successful business. Write down your new goals on how you are going to improve your business and outline how you are going to go about reaching those goals. Goals need to be modified from time to time to ensure your business grows successfully and doesn’t just stay stagnant. Ideally, you would create a business plan with key business metrics that you execute every year – all year long.

BALANCING WORK AND HOME

When you are a business owner it can be difficult to find an equal balance between home life with your family and life with your business. You don’t want to end up spending more time at work than at home as this will put more unwanted stress on your life. Stress can negatively impact your work and your home life. Stress causes mistakes, lack in productivity, and can even ruin your business reputation.

You don’t want to be married to your work, you want to be married to your wife or husband. As a business owner your family is the most important part of your business as they are part of your support group.

Make sure you always take the time for your family and friends. This not only strengthens your family bonds and affirmations, it also helps you find that balance between work and home life that will make you an even more productive business owner. When you are happy at home and happy at your business, you will be able to achieve your goals quicker and more efficiently.

Remember, believe in yourself, believe in your product or service, believe in your team, make goals that are attainable, and balance your home and work life. Following theses simple steps will turn your already successful business into an even more successful business so you can be happier than you are today.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Anne M. Bachrach is known as The Accountability Coach™. She has 23 years of experience training and coaching. Business owners and entrepreneurs who utilise Anne’s proven systems and processes work less, make more money, and have a more balanced and successful life. Anne is the author of the books, Excuses Don’t Count; Results Rule!, and Live Life with No Regrets; How the Choices We Make Impact Our Lives, and The Work Life Balance Emergency Kit.
The Biggest Challenge for Coaching in 2015? **Business Growth**

by Malcolm Nicholson (United Kingdom)

_Business coaching continues to evolve and diversify in its approaches. However, the biggest issue facing many businesses in 2015 is transforming themselves into organisations capable of growth. What should business coaches be doing in response?_

Let’s start by looking at the big picture. At the time of writing, the economy at a global level looks vulnerable, with growing geopolitical risks occurring. But there is talk of growth, led by the US economy. Many companies are cash rich and need to gain bigger market share. Going forward, this could give companies the ability ‘… to invest in people, raise productivity, and rebuild trust and confidence.’ (Goldman Sachs, Outlooks 2015).

However, most leadership teams in place today have cut their teeth during the near apocalyptic scenario created by the 2009 economic meltdown. Whether you have or have not been through a recession before, there has never been anything like the current period of economic turbulence. During this period, the approach to running a business became inwardly focused – cutting spend, costs and managing the balance sheet. Over the subsequent years, a successful leadership career was measured by success in operational consolidation, optimization of existing resources, not taking risks and generally an ability to ‘batten down the hatches.’ This has consequently become many people’s ‘success formulae’ – in other words their default approach to running an organization.

The current message from the top of many businesses flies in the face of that. Private Equity owners and boards are looking to drive growth. Capital (human and financial) moves to where it gets its best return.

The biggest hindrance to growth is likely to be the ability of the leadership teams themselves. ‘If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see everything as a nail.”

So organisations are beginning to discover the hard way that there are major differences between a business plan and an executable plan your organization can deliver. This is causing a tension in organisations, highlighting the difference between ‘leading growth’ and the all the rhetoric that can surround it.

There is now a greater need for intellectual diversity amongst boards, who will often have hunkered down, bonded and worked together in the same manner to do a good job weathering the storm. This diversity needs to come in the form of complimentary but differing skills to the group norm.

So, if a company wants to keep the same board, then it absolutely needs external help. There again if an established board brings in new blood, there will likely
be a polarization of the ‘veterans’ and the ‘rookies’ who “don’t understand what we’ve been through.” Peter Drucker was right when he said “culture eats strategy for breakfast”.

Rare is the group of people that can get through these situations unaided. Leadership teams are becoming more short term and transactionally focused as they struggle to deliver in an increasingly complex, regulated and interconnected environment. As we have seen, existing approaches are unlikely to be robust or flexible enough to keep the business where it is, let alone get it to the next level.

Individually and collectively, leadership teams now need to accelerate through the mental gears and tap into the latent talent already available – a new set of skills, not to throw out the old but to build and round out their previous approaches. Good coaching is ideally placed to facilitate this and should be a value adding cornerstone, enabling the team to provide leadership and contribute at a level that is greater than the sum of the parts. An opportunity for boards and leadership teams to develop through challenge in a controlled and safe environment is infinitely preferable to the challenge that will be presented by the market environment.

This lack of focus on the mental gear shift is summed up by a leading European academic who said “…[here is] a contradiction that affects most managers every day: learning is the most celebrated neglected activity in the workplace.” (1)

External interventions by coaches should ideally be at a combined one to one and group level. A key element that I have found to be missing in leadership teams is an understanding of the need for demonstrating personal growth and change as part of this process. This reticence is driven by many varied, nuanced and highly individual elements, which include the need to maintain control, not showing weakness, politics in the group, self image of being paid for what they know now, task orientation, performance momentum leading to no time to reflect, status quo with peers and a need to please the top person.

A word of caution for the inexperienced coach: working with teams of seasoned executives is significantly more taxing and complex – and with greater room for derailment - than working with individuals. The need for the coach to comprehend, evaluate and steer what’s going on in the room needs to be processed and responded to at a number of different levels.

I tested these ideas out with a colleague, Andy McCann. (2) He was in agreement and added, “The coach must absolutely leave any ego driven needs to appear quick witted or decisive at home. The priority is to nurture the individuals and group as a whole towards consensus and agreement and action. To achieve this the coach must be able to adapt their attention to embrace the group as an entity; to be flexible and skilled enough to narrow this attention in line with an individual’s donation of ideas and thoughts; and then to widen it quickly again in order to attend to the group dynamic.”

He continued “This provides the coach with some challenges, including intuitively knowing how to manage the variables in both expression and contribution. A lack of clear and open communication and contribution can be a sign that individuals are withdrawing, pulling back into themselves and away from others. This is frequently to a perceived need for self-protection, which in turn can lead to a form of social loafing, where individuals hide within a group.”

Consequently, I have found that the ability to help individuals accept the need for personal growth is best achieved in the one to one level. This environment also gives good insights into what is going on ‘under the bonnet’ in the board setting.
TYPICAL OUTCOMES THAT SENIOR TEAMS WANT TO WORK TOWARDS INCLUDE:-

• Gaining clarity on what they want to achieve and why.
• Developing and agreeing an identity and a modus operandii at a process and behavioural level; Understanding a common set of behaviourally based priorities and objectives; commitment to them and their implementation.
• Building an environment to increase performance across the entire organisation.
• Developing trust and communication between the senior team to enable resilience and robust working relationships, especially in stressful periods.

Having got clarity on what they need to do differently, leaders need to engage and communicate to the organisation and key stakeholders – they need to symbolically demonstrate leadership change in order to accelerate the growth cycle.

What is meant by ‘symbolic change’ in this context? Bolman & Deal in their 4 Frames model say:

Symbolic managers and leaders believe that the most important part of their job is an inspiration—giving people something that they can believe in. People will give their loyalty to an organization that has a unique identity and makes them feel that what they do is really important. Effective symbolic managers and leaders are passionate about making their organizations the best of their kind and communicate that passion to others. They use dramatic, visible symbols that give people a sense of the organizational mission. They are visible and energetic. They create slogans, tell stories, hold rallies, give awards, appear where they are least expected, and manage by wandering around. Bolman & Deal (1991, p. 364)

In other words they look at organizational life not analytically but by treating it as theatre to engage the heart and head of its people by creating meaning and faith in the organisation. These, essentially phenomenological perspectives, are typically directed towards longer term change and a real engagement in the coaching process by the senior leader.

However, there is a paradox here as there is also a need to match control and process with the business activities. Too little and “stuff” – big or small -will fall off the conveyor belt. Too much and the message and the business will be stifled. Communication will go underground and there will be a fatal disconnect between the stated intent and the activities of those executing the strategy. Andy McCann added “There is little doubt the best performing organisations in business - and sport - maintain a dual focus towards factors within their control and longer term planning during both successful periods and times of significant challenge.”

So, the biggest challenge for businesses in the foreseeable future will be growth in a changing marketplace. Great coaches and great coaching can have a tangible impact on the ability of organisations to thrive in their rapidly changing and demanding marketplaces.

Reference:
1. Gianpiero Petriglieri, Associate Professor of Organisational Behaviour at INSEAD,
2. Andy McCann is in demand as an adviser, mentor and performance coach to high performing individuals in diverse professions, including some of the UK’s highest profile international sports stars and coaches. Consultant to the Welsh Rugby Union and staff member for the Wales Team at the 2011 Rugby World Cup. http://dnadefinitive.com/dna-family/andy-mccann/

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Malcolm Nicholson is the owner and Coaching Director for Aspecture, and has worked successfully with a wide range of senior business people for over 15 years, enabling them to improve business results through transformational changes. (see www.aspecture.com). To find out how he can help your organization contact him at malcolmnicholson@aspecture.com or on +44 1932 267597.
There’s a scary statistic which stares every wannabe entrepreneur in the face when they are deciding whether or not to make the leap from the “safety” of a J.O.B to the uncertain, perilous world of the start up.

That statistic is the number of start-ups which fail in their first two years. The actual statistics vary depending on industry and location but they all tell the same story.

When you consider that start-ups are considered to be “engines of growth” for the economy, providing jobs to the population that statistic becomes even more disturbing.

Not only do they provide jobs for others, they also allow the founders to express their passion and their gifts in a way that benefits the world which has to be better than working for wages in a job you don’t care about, for a company that does not care about you.

So the question is, what can we learn from start-ups that succeeded and how can we adopt those principles to guarantee our success?

We will use the “consultants approach” and diagnose the problem before defining the cure so you come away with actionable strategies that guarantee your success.

5 CAUSES OF START-UP FAILURE & WHAT YOU SHOULD DO TO AVOID THEM

There are five critical areas to focus on if you want to guarantee the health of your business regardless of what industry you are in.

We’re going to take a look at each of them in detail:

Cause of Failure #1 - Leading with ideas before problems

Entrepreneurs tend to be the idea guys and gals which can be the seed of their success, but similarly it can also be their biggest downfall.

Start-ups which fail are usually driven by the founder who is too attached to their original idea. The way it usually plays out is that the founder has their “Newton moment” where the idea makes its way into their mind by way of some divine inspiration and from there they’re inflexible and unrelenting in the execution of the idea.

Where those admirable traits fail the start-up is when the business launches without any consideration of the problem that they are trying to solve. One of the biggest problems I see in new businesses is that they don’t have a clear idea of a problem they are trying to solve and how their product or service does that for their customer.
Leading with the idea is rarely the right approach. Instead you should seek to solve real problems faced by your target market. To know what problems they face you need to talk to enough of them and you’ll start to see the patterns.

To make a success of your start-up you need to focus on problems before defining the solution, just like we’re doing right now.

You’ll find you generate more and better ideas when you focus on the problems as your brain gets to work both consciously and subconsciously to find a solution.

Even if you do start out with an idea, the research phase which focuses on understanding your customers problems will tell you if your initial idea is viable, needs pivoting or is a complete no-go.

Having this information at the outset is essential to the success of your business.

**Cause of Failure #2 - Solving too small a problem**

Businesses that appreciate the need to solve a problem have a head start on the idea-only crowd but the scale of the problem they solve is also very important.

To gain traction in a market and to get people excited about talking to you it’s important to solve a problem which is big enough otherwise people won’t find the time to talk to you.

The trick is to search for the pain. Where you find pain you will find problems and the more painful, the more motivated the person will be to solve them.

Bigger problems are more expensive to solve also which means you can generate more revenue from the same number of sales. It’s actually harder to make smaller sales than it is to make larger sales, so you may as well spend your time solving a bigger problem.

By doing this you will generate the level of revenue you need to keep the doors open with fewer customers which is essential in the early days when you are still making a name for yourself.

Focus on finding the biggest pain points your market faces (by talking to them) and then use your creativity to define a solution that can really solve their problem.

**Cause of Failure #3 - Not validating the concept**

Validation is the process of obtaining market feedback that tells us whether or not the idea, concept or product we have created is going to work or not.

A lot of start-ups take after the corporate giants who commission market research and focus groups. What they don’t realise is that the insight garnered from these groups rarely has a direct impact on sales.

Big corporations can afford to swallow that cost and even launch products which don’t sell. You can’t afford to do that.

People in the focus groups will tell you it’s a good idea and that they would buy the product but run if ask for the money there and then.

Instead, try to validate your concept or idea by taking it to market the old fashioned way and testing the response.

Don’t build any marketing materials or websites or anything, instead just go out into your target market and pitch your offer to them. The goal should be to generate a couple of sales within 48 hours based on the idea alone.

To find people to talk to, go back to the people you did the initial problem discovery with and pitch them. A sale is only counted if the money is physically in your bank.

If you get 2-3 sales in 48 hours then you know you’ve validated the concept and you are good to go.

If you did not look at the feedback from the people you spoke to and either make the changes they requested and pitch them again or accept the idea isn’t viable.
Cause of Failure #4 - Time spent on Things That Don’t Matter

When you’ve just started out you need one thing and one thing only: sales.

Without sales you don’t generate any revenue and without revenue it’s hard to pay the bills to keep the doors open.

Despite knowing this, too many start-up founders spend their time on other, less important activities such as creating content and building websites for example.

These are “non-income generating activities” and they should never be prioritised ahead of anything which can generate revenue.

If you alone are the business and without you the other stuff doesn’t get done then you have two options:

1. Complete income generating activities first each day and only then do other tasks. If revenue is too low increase the level of the income generating tasks until it does.
2. Outsource repetitive work via sites like elance.com using affordable, quality virtual assistants who can take on the burden when you need some help

Spend your time wisely by focussing on the activities which sustain your business at the expense of everything else until they are complete.

Cause of Failure #5 - Fear of sales

The last and possibly biggest cause of failure is fear of selling.

Many people view sales as “sleazy” and picture the used-car salesman in his ill-fitting suit trying to twist your arm to get you to buy, though the truth is sales doesn’t have to be like that.

It’s only when you don’t know how your product or service solves a problem for your customer and you don’t know how to present it that people resort to persuasion tactics rather than genuine conversations.

The fear of sales comes from a fear of rejection. You can dramatically reduce the level of rejection you get by solving a real, big problem in a way your market wants at a price point that is less than the perceived value they get from buying it.

When you get those things right, the sales conversation becomes easier so focus on making the offer a “no-brainer” and understand how to present your offer so that the prospect understands that.

When you do you will find you will get polite a “no” rather than the abuse which is often the biggest fear.

Reframe the sales process in your mind; it’s not about you gaining and someone else losing it’s actually about you solving a real problem for someone and nothing else.

When you can justify to them that the money you ask is far exceeded by the value they receive in return you’ll never have trouble making sales again and the fear will dissipate.

IN SUMMARY

These lessons can be applied to any business to give you the success that you want, so remember the rules and follow them and you can be assured of a clear path to the business that you really want.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Skye Sanders teaches coaches and success-minded entrepreneurs how to generate more income through their business by teaching them how to package and demonstrate their expertise. He teaches coaches and business owners about the psychology of marketing that you have to get right before you work on offers and copy. From there he focuses on positioning them as an expert the eyes of your market and teaching you how to demonstrate your value. Then he uses that to help them work backwards from an income goal to give strategic plan which shows exactly what one needs to do each day to achieve your goal.
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**What coaches and consultants say about TalentBuilder 360**

“I have used Talent for Growth’s 360 feedback tool with several clients across various industries. It is simple to administer, clear to interpret and very easy to feedback. In some clients we have used a generic set of competencies, in others Talent for Growth worked with us to customise the 360 feedback questionnaire to their own competencies and behaviours. I would thoroughly recommend the tool as well as the excellent service provided by Talent for Growth.”

_Roger Minton, Interim Head of Learning & Development, Petrofac_

“The TalentBuilder 360 is a brilliant tool for coaches to increase their clients’ self-awareness through straightforward, insightful reporting, leading to meaningful conversations. Talent for Growth provide great advice and great service.”

_Howard Rich, Partner, Motion Learning_
One of our main jobs as coaches is helping others have harmonious and productive relationships with important people in their lives. However, how much focus have you placed on the most important relationship of all — the one with your “Inner Coach”? It’s also called by many names; intuition, inner guidance, wisdom within, and the voice of your soul.

Whatever you call it, learning to listen to its insight requires two things: a practice that facilitates quieting your mind, such as meditation, prayer, or communing with nature; and an understanding or discovery of how you receive answers. Intuition is one of the most common ways of receiving this wisdom. It’s your “Inner Coach.”

When you are struggling with something in your life, you want to fix it. You will probably do anything to get out of the stress of the experience. But what if this conflict is really asking you to sit with the pain and listen to its message? What’s really going on? What is the experience trying to teach you? If you can get to the heart of it, you’ll prevent it from coming back in another form. So before you take action, be still and listen within. Your Inner Coach would like some time to be heard.

**Pockets of Quietude**

Best-selling author and management consultant Jim Collins, recommends creating what he calls “pockets of quietude” in your schedule. These can be small periods of time marked off on your schedule for self-reflection. It’s an appointment with yourself to find an inner calm, tap into your centre, and find time for creative solutions to difficult problems.

Pockets of quietude can also take the form of a day off, a few hours for a quiet lunch, or simply meditation time when you need creative inspiration and self-reflection. Taking those pockets of time can just be a moment of brief prayer and contemplation. You might ask yourself questions such as “What’s the most loving response to this situation?” or “How could I view this issue from a more spiritual perspective?” Pay attention to any intuitive response that makes you feel more peaceful or clear.

The dictionary defines intuition as “quick and ready insight.” It comes from the Latin word “intueri” which means to “look within.” Intuition tells you what you need to know, when you need to know it, providing valuable insight into yourself, your coaching clients and your business. It’s a connection to your soul. When you ask your intuition for insight, you’re tapping into your Spirit and seeking wise guidance.

**How do you receive intuitive information?**

Intuition communicates in different ways to each of us. Following are some of the ways it makes itself known.

**INNER VOICE** — Many people report a “still, quiet, inner voice.” Your intuition will always communicate with you in a compassionate, loving manner that is perceptibly different from your normal inner chatter.

**DREAMS** — Keep a pad of paper and pen beside your bed. Before you drift off to sleep, state simply, “I need information about ____.” Write down your dream when you awaken to discern the guidance you have received.
EMOTIONS — You may simply “feel right” about a certain course of action. Or you might experience a sense of distrust about an individual or situation. Get in the habit of checking in with your emotions before making a decision. “How am I feeling about this choice?”

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS — You may have heard of it referred to as a “gut feeling.” However, there are many ways your body can communicate with you. Think back on when you have made a good or bad decision. How did you experience it in your body?

INSTANT KNOWING — you may receive a sudden flash of understanding. People often report that these knowing come when they least expect them — taking a shower, walking the dog, doing the dishes.

SYMBOLS — It’s often said that “A picture is worth a thousand words.” You might receive a symbolic impression of a rocky road if you choose “Path A.” If you choose “Path B,” you may see a clear, well-paved road in your mind’s eye.

Inner Coach Exercise:

Intuitive information comes to you most easily when you are in a relaxed state of mind. To get into a receptive mood close your eyes and take a few slow, deep breaths.

Bring to mind an issue or problem you are trying to solve. Ask your intuition a question about your concerns. Phrase your question in a way that evokes more than a “yes or no” answer. Below are some examples:

- “How can I communicate more effectively with my client?”
- “What could I do to increase my business this year?”
- “What’s my right next step?”
- “What do I need to know about this issue?”

Write down any impressions you receive. You may find that intuitive insight will not pop into your mind right away, but will come hours after doing this exercise.

Assessing Intuitive Data

Let’s say you have a choice to make and it must be made now. You have researched, asked questions and have all the facts in front of you. But you still don’t know what to do. Your next step requires intuitive input. Here are three questions to stimulate that guidance.

1. **What am I ready to act on right now?**

Your decision may require a small step, not a huge leap. Quite often when you take a step forward, more information becomes available to you. Many people report that as they make an intuitive choice toward what proves to be a correct decision, events begin flowing more easily and effortlessly.

2. **Which of my choices has the most “vitality?”**

Think of the options you have before you. Which one are you drawn to? Is there one that leaps to your attention and captures your interest? You may experience a visceral charge about pursuing this course of action. Remember — kinesthetic or physical sensations are one of the ways that intuition communicates.

3. **How do I feel about my choices?**

Do you feel excited or passionate about one of your choices? This is one of the ways that intuition will point you in the right direction. Conversely, if a choice makes you feel depressed or discouraged, or you feel a great deal of resistance, you are ignoring a strong intuitive message if you continue on this path.

Like any skill, the more you practice, the better you will get. Make the time to routinely check in with your intuition and you will be rewarded with faster, stronger and more accurate insight. The benefit? You will notice positive things begin to happen . . . in your life, and not so incidentally, in your coaching business.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Lynn A. Robinson, M.Ed., is a leading expert on the topic of intuition. Through her work as an intuitive advisor she’s helped thousands of people discover their life passion, achieve their goals, and create business success. She’s also a speaker and bestselling author whose latest book is *Divine Intuition: Your Inner Guide to Purpose, Peace and Prosperity*. She’s also the author of *Trust Your Gut: How the Power of Intuition Can Grow Your Business*. To learn more about her books and intuitive readings, visit [http://LynnRobinson.com](http://LynnRobinson.com)
When you qualify as a coach you are really excited to get started, you know that you now have all of the skills you need to help people change their lives. You cannot believe how amazing coaching is and want to share all you know with the world and wonder why you didn’t train years ago. The problem a lot of coaches face though is that they are not prepared for the massive learning curve of running their own business. They think that they will open their coaching practice and people will come running. I liken it to opening a shop in the countryside – unless you tell everyone about it nobody will know you are there. When the clients don’t come so many coaches drop out, believing in can never happen. I am here to tell you that you can be successful but you need to get the foundations of your business right, and yes there’s a lot to learn.

My mission as a coach for coaches is to rid the world of grumpy people! To achieve this I help coaches build their businesses the right way so that they set themselves up for success and don’t give up on coaching. More people coached = more happy people. Ta-da mission accomplished! By taking small steps and building the foundations of your business you will have everything in place to make your business work. Below I share 12 steps from my online Coaching Rocks Bootcamp to getting it right.

**STEP 1 – GET STARTED**
- Determine the business practicalities you need to consider – business type, data protection
- Do some physical and mental decluttering to get yourself ready for success
- Work on your self-care – set aside time every single day to work on you. I cannot stress the importance of self-care enough, which is why it’s step one. It’s very easy to throw yourself into your business, give of yourself to your clients, friends and family and forget to take care of you. By spending time on you first you will have more to offer.

**STEP 2 – VISION**
Work out the purpose & vision for your business. Align your values to your business. People so often miss out this step. You need to know what you’re aiming for and ‘why’ you’re in business. When things are not going so well it will keep you motivated. Notice I shared with you my big ‘why’ when I talked about my mission. Knowing that, plus my overall business vision and plan, keeps me going when I’m not having such a good day. Running your own business can be a rollercoaster, mixed with excitement, challenging times and a daily dose of pushing through your fears. Keep your vision in mind all the time.
STEP 3 – NICHING

Get really clear on your ideal client, where you will find them and what your message is. In order to stand out from the crowd you need to know who you are, what you offer and how you can help. What makes you different? Why would people buy from you as opposed to all of the other coaches out there? The clearer you are on this the easier it will be to get clients. It does not mean your niche will not change or evolve over time, because it may, but it will make it much easier for you to market to the right people with the right messages. It may take time to figure out. It took me over a year and let me tell you endless hours of contemplating, coaching, conversations and scraps of paper. Take notes as you work with clients and start to identify who you enjoy working with and what you help with the most. What skills, knowledge and experience can you combine? It might be coaching and weight loss, coaching and marketing. What do you already know that you could help others with?

STEP 4 – PRICING & PACKAGING

Pull together your pricing and packaging. Don’t just think about charging an hourly rate. Think about creating packages with added value, this will help you to leverage your time and in turn generate more income. If it’s just you there are only so many hours in a day, by building value and not just charging by the hour you are able to work with more people and create that business you dream of.

STEP 5 – DIGITAL SETUP

Start setting yourself up online. Identify what you need – website/blog/social media? I would say you need all of them. Create a basic profile on the various social media platforms so that people can find you and then work with the ones you enjoy and also remember to be where your ideal clients are.

STEP 6 – NETWORKING

Online/offline? Have a strategy for your networking – follow-up, follow-up, follow-up. People often think that if they’re only working offline they don’t need to network online and vice versa. The combination of both will serve you well. Do the one you enjoy the most, and choose the right networking groups. If you are a corporate coach then choose more formal networking groups. If you are a life coach find the groups that are less formal.

STEP 7 – DISCOVERY SESSIONS

Set up discovery sessions; know what you will ask, how you will overcome objections and what you will do before, during & after each session. It’s not about doing a hard sell to your potential clients but knowing what package/service you can offer that will help them.
**STEP 8 – DISCOVERY SESSIONS**

Pull together a pack with your terms & conditions, supporting documents for clients. Standardise and automate what you can save you repeating the same work over and over again.

**STEP 9 – SELLING**

This is something that you have to master in order to build your business. Our experience is often sleazy salespeople pushing things onto us. It does not have to be that way. When you are working for yourself it can be difficult to promote ‘you’. Try to think of it as offering an exchange of money for the services you offer. Work out how best you can communicate how you can help and serve people with your offerings.

**STEP 10 – BUILD YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE**

Build your online presence through quotes & images, guest posts, your website and social media posts.

**STEP 11 – MARKETING**

Market your business through list building, auto-responders, and newsletters, networking events, articles & guest posts. Choose avenues to reach your ideal clients.

**STEP 12 – PR & INCOME STREAMS**

- Start using some simple PR strategies to promote your business
- Think about how you might leverage your time through various income streams

Coaching is an amazing profession but let’s be honest you want to make money from it so take the time to get the foundations of your business right and then you will attract the right clients. You will also need to spend some time working on building your confidence and skills as a coach so that you are the best you can be. A combination of passion and income – the perfect formula!

Remember one of your biggest USP’s (unique selling points) is being the fabulous you! People buy from people they know, like and trust. Don’t just go all out and copy what others do, bring more of you into your business.

*Drop me an email to let me know what your big ‘why’ is/will be for your business.*

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Ruby McGuire works with coaches to help them build their coaching confidence, skills and business. Her big mission is to rid the world of grumpy people. The more coaches that stay coaching the more people get coached = happy people with happy lives.

Ruby is a self-confessed chocoholic and vanilla coffee addict. Married to her soul mate, mum to a teenage daughter and two grown up stepdaughters, plus a little dog. Website: [www.rubymcguire.com](http://www.rubymcguire.com)
‘Impostor Syndrome’ is the feeling that we are not as good as others think and that this will be found out. Many people feel this way and, in fact, when we give case study presentations about this topic, it is not uncommon for members of the audience to come and see us afterwards exclaiming ‘You were talking about me!’

In short, people with Impostor Syndrome tend to be harder on themselves than they deserve to be and more generous in their views of others.

Many people experience the feeling that they are an ‘Impostor’ and the insecurity this creates is often a major factor that drives success. By constantly striving to prove themselves, ‘Impostors’ impress their colleagues with their dedication and thoroughness and, because their feelings inspire extreme conscientiousness and greater effort, this usually results in even more success, which in turn results in even greater feelings of being an Impostor!

As with all of the traits we see within our coaching practices, Impostor Syndrome has the potential to contribute to one’s success while simultaneously threatening to become a trap. Our objective is to help our clients find a healthy balance.

Sometimes these feelings of insecurity can stem from childhood events such as failing a school exam. Our role as coaches can be to coach our clients to revisit those events and help bring them to bear on the early event all their adult wisdom, experience, logic, reasoning and compassion in order to re-evaluate the experience and see it for what it was, back then.

Many people with Impostor Syndrome minimise their achievements and maximise their deficiencies. They often put their achievements down to factors outside of their control. They might say, ‘I was lucky’ or ‘if only they knew the real me and what was going on’. This is

SOME CLASSIC SYMPTOMS OF IMPOSTOR SYNDROME INCLUDE:

- Having an inability to internalise your accomplishments.
- Feeling that other people have an overinflated view of you.
- Attributing any success you have to luck or just being in the right place at the right time.
- Being fearful of being ‘found out’.
- Looking more at what you can’t do, rather than valuing what you can do.
not because of a sense of humility but simply because they struggle to internalise their achievements.

One person we know who has tackled his own Impostor Syndrome over the years is BBC Business Correspondent Joe Lynam. His turning point came when, during the banking crisis, he had broken the story that Ireland was in negotiations with the EU for a bailout.

“I was due to break this story again on the Ten O’clock News that night but, just before we were about to go live, the Irish government – a democratically elected and credible Western government – came out and flatly denied it. They effectively called me a liar and I knew my career was on the line.”

This was the point where he had to really evaluate whether he was an Impostor or not. He remembered being ‘behind the scenes’ at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2003 and being in a room with the OPEC Secretary General, Prime Ministers and Heads of State who all had their guard down, not thinking the press were there.

‘Some of these important people were sitting on their own looking nervous, sheepish even, and I realised they are just human beings. I realised that governments are just a collection of humans too – they make mistakes and they lie just like any other humans.’

In essence, the key to bringing Impostor Syndrome into balance involves reducing what we call the ‘Impostor Syndrome Gap’. The ‘Impostor Syndrome Gap’ is the difference between the perception of self and the perception of others. Coaches can help their clients to close the ‘Impostor Syndrome gap’ by having them walk through their career timeline, focussing on the successes and achievements throughout their career and particularly noticing their part in them. As coaches, we also encourage our clients to seek out feedback from people they respect and practice accepting compliments. Think of a compliment as a gift that somebody is giving you. You would not reject a birthday present from someone, would you? Impostor Syndrome is one of the twelve most common traits that we see in our coaching practice. All of these traits contribute to our clients’ successes but, at times, can become a trap for them.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Kim Morgan is the owner and Director of Barefoot Coaching Ltd. Kim was awarded Coaching Person of the Year 2012 and is a visiting research fellow on coaching at the University of Chester.

Geoff Watts is a leadership and performance coach and is a regular keynote speaker about coaching, collaboration and change. He is a member of the ICF, NCP and ABP.

Together they have co-authored *The Coach’s Casebook: Mastering the twelve traits that trap us* (published February 2015).
In the world of business - targets and deadlines are everything, right? What about at the expense of your health?

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What do we mean when we are talking about ‘being balanced?’ Although there are many definitions when I am talking about being balanced I’m referring to you allowing yourself quality time for each aspect of your life. Being so deeply engrossed in one area of your life often means that you are neglecting other areas of your life; which may be more important.

If you are being pulled into one specific area of your life, you may not feel grounded, or calm, or clear-headed, or even motivated. You may feel overwhelmed and as though your life is out of control.

**Balance? How do I start?**

Creating balance involves all elements of your life – internal and external.

Your internal elements include you; your mind; your heart; your health; and your spiritual element.

Your external elements are those elements which involve other people and other places. They include your work; your social activities; your significant other; your family; and fun!

Asking yourself how much you give and how much you receive in each element is as simple as answering these questions:

- **TIME FOR ME** – how do I allow myself time for everyone else, for the activities that I want to do, for the things I want to be involved in, and balance giving myself enough time?

- **MIND** – how do I challenge myself intellectually while creating opportunities for

Having identified the elements of your life, there are two ways in which balance is achieved:

- Looking at the individual element and understanding how much you give vs. how much you receive.
- Looking at the whole wheel using the Coaching Wheel of Life technique.
my mind to rest?

- **HEART** – as someone who is known to be a giver, I have learnt to ask myself ‘if I am always giving to others, what am I receiving from them or others?

- **HEALTH** – am I looking after my nutrition, exercising properly, while allowing myself treats and rest?

- **WORK** – what balance do I push myself to achieve and be successful verses seeing the bigger picture and enjoying the ride?

- **SOCIAL** – how do I allow myself to balance having a fully enjoyable social life while allowing myself time for me?

- **SIGNIFICANT OTHER** – how do I create the quality time for my significant other and myself, while allowing all the other areas of my life to remain balanced?

- **FAMILY** – how do I fulfil my family responsibilities, while creating healthy boundaries?

- **FUN** – how do I create the time for the things I truly enjoy doing while making sure that I don’t overdo it?

The Coaching Wheel of Life technique allows you to understand how balanced (or not) your whole life is.

Often the challenge with balances comes from balancing the combination of the internal, the external, the personal, and the professional elements of your life.

Work; whether you are an employee, a boss, self-employed, a sub-contractor, an entrepreneur, or a combination of some or all of these; is a huge part of everyone’s life today; and comes with a huge expectation. In decades gone by when someone left work at 5pm or thereabouts, they were not contactable – they were able to walk away and move from their professional and into their personal life. With today’s technology your professional life can now easily become part of your personal life. Emails received on your mobile phone! Constant access to the internet! Telephone calls at all times of the day or night – well do you switch your mobile off?

**Balance? How do I introduce balance?**

There are many tools and techniques that you can use, but for today the simplest way to introduce balance into your life is to actively use these steps:

1. Become aware of absolutely everything you are doing and not doing.

2. ‘**NO**’ is a complete sentence! If you want to say ‘no’ to something, say ‘no’ without feeling as though you have to explain yourself.

3. Identify your own dreams and aspirations. If you don’t, who will?

4. Create your own goals. If you don’t create your own goals, who will create them for you?

5. Identify and embrace change. It’s easy to say that you want to have a more balanced life, but if you don’t identify and embrace the changes you have to make, will you be able to?

6. Set priorities. These are your priorities and
you can use something like this Management Matrix.

7. Boundaries. It is important that you lay the groundwork to set your boundaries between your personal and professional life.

8. Evaluate your decisions. Sometimes decisions are made focusing on what other people want or require. This may be the right thing to do, but only if you have fully evaluated the decision.

9. Trust your intuition or your ‘gut-feel’. If in your inner being you truly feel that you want to do something or not do something, follow your intuition.

10. Plan your time and include time for you! A little relaxation goes a long way.

11. Be level headed – it’s very easy to impact your own time and balance of life when something challenging or negative happens. Deal with these in a timely, kind and understanding way.

12. Nurture yourself – make sure that you are allowing time for you as you focus on time required for everything else.

13. Listen to your body. Your body will often tell you if you are not eating well or not exercising regularly; and if you select not to listen to it and fall ill, you will be impacting on your own life balance.

14. Superhero – do you have to be? Often you will try and be everything to everyone, when really you can just be you!

15. Journaling – use your journal take time to reflect, to prepare, and to empower yourself.

16. Outsourcing is a great way to reduce your own workload in both your personal and professional life. How can you benefit from someone else doing something for you?

17. Find a support circle – coach, mentor, like-minded friends. You do not have to do everything yourself, by finding your own supporting and motivating support circle you will be able to create your own balanced life!

18. Seek role models. It is suggested that in everything we aspire to be we find a role model. Who do you know or know of who lives a well balance personal and professional life? You will be surprised how many people do. Find one to understand how they have done it.

19. Plan a date! Often you are rushing around so much that you forget something of importance. It’s simple to make sure that as well as those appointments you have in your diary that you can plan a date with everything you want or need to do – every task and every action.

20. Enjoy every moment – large and small!

Living the balanced life of your dreams is a journey of self-discovery and achievement!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Barbara J. Cormack MNMC, AFC, AFM is your leading Spiritual Coach, Mentor and Trainer; published in five co-authoring books, and author of two of her own. Barbara is an advocate of achieving in every arena of life. Her clients hold her in high esteem as her style of working makes the knowledge of your future, clear, inviting, and achievable; while her style of coaching or mentoring makes the possibility of sustainable change compelling, exciting, and achievable. She combines her extensive background and experience with a keen insight into the demands of balancing the personal with the professional.
Marketing Plans That Motivate
- Setting up the Perfect Marketing Plan for YOU -
by Cheryl Oribabor (USA)

As a coach with your own practice, you may have been told what to do to grow your business. Mentors, senior level colleagues, business partners, peers, and others have shared with you how THEY achieved success. But many entrepreneurs and business owners like you remain uncomfortable when it comes to that dreaded word ... marketing ... or even worse ... a marketing plan!

Why? Because you likely have not been given the correct tools to truly market yourself.

The perfect marketing plan should pinpoint motivating factors that inspire you to achieve your specific goals in a way that offers you the freedom to be yourself, make genuine connections and establish authentic relationships.

So, while it may seem like a great idea to participate in networking events or meetings, without thoughtful consideration of your comfort level and potential contribution, it might not yield desirable results; in fact, it may actually deter you from marketing!

No one wants to move outside of their comfort zone for fear of looking foolish and no one wants to waste their time. A generic marketing plan with individual goals might read something like “…will attend a speed networking event, two lunch meetings each month and will join a professional organisation.” Often, lists of organisations are distributed for team members to select from.

What are the results of this approach?

- **Lack of Focus** – the pressure is on you to find events each month that will fit into your schedule, rather than focusing on making a true connection with someone who will value your skills.
- **Lack of Motivation** – You are tasked with finding someone with whom you share a common interest from a sea of individuals that have been gathered for the sole purpose of general networking.
- **No Ownership of the Commitment/Activity** – “What will I have to do if I join?” It’s not that having monthly goals is a bad thing and perusing a list of organisations can certainly be helpful – it’s just putting the cart before the horse.

**Individual Marketing Plans**
- Everyone has their place in the Sun!

The perfect marketing plan for YOU should provide a safe, comfortable place for you to regularly communicate your value to a specific, targeted audience.

**A Common Interest** – Identify a group of people with whom you share something in common in order
to foster a genuine interest in the group, as well as compatibility with its members. This should help facilitate authentic connections.

Mould your individual marketing plan around your specific abilities and interests. Your target group should offer something attractive to you. What type of people do you most enjoy being with? Start thinking about what you enjoy and what inspires you; pinpoint your favourite clients or customers to identify the essence of what makes them so favourable; then try to duplicate that nuance in the organisations, venues or activities that you select for your marketing plan.

It might be possible for you to attend only 4 or 5 networking events throughout one year IF you can truly bond with the members of each group. In addition to networking events, remember to communicate regularly with your new contacts individually. If you have a common interest with them, you’re more likely to do this. Consider contributing an article to a specific group’s newsletter or give a presentation. Work with a colleague or business partner to address the group. You will have ownership of your marketing plan because it is tailored perfectly for you – and then you will be fully committed to its successful implementation.

The group marketing plan should utilise the resources and talents of the entire group so that all may participate. One month maybe present an informative networking event, the next a broadcast e-mail featuring a hot topic, the next an article in an appropriate publication, the next an appropriate sponsorship, etc. One coach could be charged with the coordination of all events. With everything planned well in advance, everyone knows what is expected from them and is comfortable with their contribution. Opportunities will present themselves over time, as your business develops a reputation of its commitment for that niche.

Everyone has strengths (and areas for improvement). Your marketing plan should take these into consideration. Any professional can successfully market themselves when they are at ease, confident and nurturing the right relationships – which will yield the highest return on your investment.

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**Group Marketing Plans – Getting and Giving Support**

Coaches working together can develop a group marketing plan for a niche or service area using the same approach you would use to develop an individual marketing plan. Everyone should be comfortable with their contribution to the entire marketing plan and agree on the type of client(s) or customer(s) they want to attract. Tailor the plan to the target group and include events throughout the year that they attend, publications they read and any other venues by which you could provide worthwhile information.

**Define Key Strengths & Roles** – Acknowledge the strengths of each of the key team members and clearly showcase these in all of your communications to the target group. All aspects of the plan should highlight these abilities and engage the target audience by demonstrating the value of these skills. The plan should extend over a period of time (one year or so) and be moulded around the schedule of opportunities to reach your target group regularly. If one of your coaches is more technical, perhaps that individual can contribute the points of an article for an appropriate newsletter or publication. Perhaps that individual can develop a presentation for a conference. Another coach might enjoy research. That individual could be charged with providing current news or trends about pertinent topics that would interest the target group.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Cheryl Oribabor is a Senior Marketing Consultant & Life Coach. With Marketing Plan Coaching she serves business owners and entrepreneurs, offering customized marketing plans, business development coaching and social media training. Her inspiration is in providing insight to help you grow your business and do more of what you love. Cheryl can be reached at 856.441.0577 or cherylo@marketingplancoaching.com
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Consider the Layers – Develop Innovation Capability Successfully
by John Brooker (United Kingdom)

Imagine your senior leadership team wants an in-house programme on innovation and request your advice. How would you respond?

To develop a successful programme you must consider different factors that form an innovative organisation. To illustrate these factors, let use the layers of a metaphorical rainforest, which, like an innovative organisation is a rich, creative and complex environment:

**LAYER 1 – A CLEAR INNOVATION STRATEGY**

Without a strategy, your programme will have no direction. I interviewed a CEO recently and two pillars of her innovation strategy were to:

- Differentiate from competitors - innovate in areas other than operational efficiency
- Introduce a standard method and language for people to innovate.

**If your organisation has no innovation strategy, here are questions to ask the leaders:**

1. **Why does our organisation want to innovate?**
   To drive more revenue, save costs, differentiate us from the competition or improve staff retention? What else?

2. **What type of innovation does the leadership team seek?**

   - Is the goal to drive more ideas (front end innovation) or to implement ideas (back end innovation)?
   - Do we want to create propositions that enhance products and services, reduce costs and improve processes (incremental or operational innovation), or to find new markets, new business models, innovative products etc. (radical or strategic innovation)?

3. **What is the focus?**
   Is our focus to manage existing innovation initiatives or to be more innovative

4. **If we develop innovation capability, what signs of business progress do we want to see?**
   Be clear on your measures. I reviewed an “invitation to tender” document recently that described “innovation progress measures”. However, 80% were input measures, e.g. the number of courses run and innovation champions assigned. These are valid, but measure an innovation bureaucracy, not an innovative business. More powerful measures show business progress, e.g. processes improved and new products
5. **How will we know our progress is sustainable?**

It is relatively easy to implement a few new propositions, harder to sustain innovation. Clues that it is sustainable might be that the organisation uses a standard method throughout the organisation and it implements propositions.

6. **How will we adjust our reward and other governance systems to facilitate innovation?**

People rewarded to log trees focus on that, not other aspects of the rainforest ecosystem. If you reward people on operational performance, will they focus on innovation? You will need to consider your governance policies if your programme is to be effective.

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**LAYER 2 – A STRUCTURED MODEL TO INNOVATE**

A structured model is like a map of the forest that guides people to sense an opportunity, create a proposition to exploit it, shape a strategy to implement it and plan action. This “map” guides people to work on the same stage, at the same time and in the same mode of thinking (creative / logical modes). It helps people collaborate, enhances the thinking process and creates well thought through propositions. You can find out more about a structured model [here](#).

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**LAYER 3 – AN INNOVATIVE CLIMATE**

Is your organisational climate a desert or a rainforest? By creating the right climate in your organisation (a “macroclimate”), you enhance creativity and collaboration. When your people return from a development programme, will it be to a desert of the same procedures, processes and management thinking that stifles their enthusiasm to innovate?

There is much research on innovation climate, (Goran Ekvall’s is the most cited), and if your organisation is a desert, you need to think how you will plant and nurture a forest before you run your programme.

Your first step might be to design and demonstrate the right climate, a “microclimate”, for people to collaborate in creative meetings.

You can find out more about building climate [here](#).
LAYER 4 – USE OF A CREATIVE AND LOGICAL THINKING TOOLKIT

When innovating, people use two modes of reasoning, “Divergent” (creative) and “Convergent” (logical). At each stage of the structured model mentioned above, you use tools to facilitate these two modes to ensure you think widely. If your toolkit has a range of tools it will enhance thinking and maintain interest. You can find example tools here.

LAYER 5 – ACCEPTANCE OF INNOVATION STYLES

People have different innovation styles and this can cause issues when innovating. If people understand and accept the styles it can improve communication and collaboration. Consider using a style inventory as part of an innovation programme; Google, “innovation styles” to find out more.

LAYER 6 – REDUCED RISK AND COMPLEXITY

Typical solutions for development programmes are initiatives to train the whole organisation to be innovative, to change the culture or to steep all leaders in the processes of innovation management. These often addresses only part of the system and an organisation wide programme is a major risk in terms of cost versus benefit and will likely meet resistance from decision makers and people seeking the same resources.

The CEO I mentioned previously, having abandoned an “idea generation initiative, has taken this lower risk approach:

1. Form a multifunctional team to innovate.
2. Introduce the team to a structured innovation model and a tool kit.
3. Run a pilot workshop to exploit a real opportunity and create a real proposition.
4. Implement the proposition.
5. Learn lessons from the pilot to resolve strategy, climate, approach, governance and leadership issues.
6. Repeat steps 1 – 5 using the lessons learned and build impetus.

This has three benefits. It allows her to:
• Risk fewer resources
• Address the layers in small steps
• Demonstrate a tangible business benefit quickly and thus justify further funding.

IN SUMMARY

To develop a successful programme:
• Consider innovation as a system and ensure that your programme takes in to account key aspects of it
• Ensure management is very clear why they want to innovate and how they will measure it in business terms
• Run a pilot workshop to create a real proposition and let people learn from this; as I say, “Innovate to learn, don’t learn to innovate.”

Most of all, urge the people in your organisation to stop talking about innovation and innovate!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

John Brooker is a former Senior Vice President of Visa. Since 2001, he has facilitated organisations and teams to collaborate, innovate and transform. He is the author of “The Creative Gorilla; Innovate to Learn, Don’t Learn to Innovate.” For practical innovation tips, you can learn more at www.yesand.eu
The Power to Speak Up!
by Yasmin Vorajee (Ireland)

Have you ever been in a situation where someone asked for your opinion and you lost your voice? Or you were itching to say something in a meeting because you knew you had something really important to say but it just would not come out?

This is something that I struggled with for a long time and it was not until I went to university and got involved with student politics that I really found my voice and truth be told, it’s hard to shut me up these days!

To be a true and authentic leader, you have to find your voice and speak your truth – not what others think is important. So how can you do that? What I have found is it’s not something that you can just turn on and off and I believe it is something that you have to keep practising – whether it’s speaking up in a restaurant that your food is cold or in an important meeting when you know the information you have could really influence the discussion.

So here are my top 3 tips on how to find your voice in any situation and how to deliver the message effectively:

1. **Use your belly** – draw strength from your core and really breathe into it. When you take shallow breaths and try and talk at the same time, you can come across as rushed and breathy which does not indicate strength. So take a deep breath and really draw it in from your belly – your belly is your friend (doesn’t matter if it jiggles!)

2. When you are about to speak, **set the intention to be clear**. Start the sentence with a strong statement. Instead of saying “if I could just add...” replace it with “I believe...”. You want to sound decisive and with conviction, not apologising for daring to have an opinion.

3. Thirdly (and this is very important), **know your knees will be shaking but it’s ok!** If it helps, keep your hands on your knees to stabilise the shaking and you will be fine. It’s part of the process and when you are nervous, it means you are invested which is always good!

Speaking up is a muscle that has to be constantly exercised so you just have to start. After all, if you want to lead others in a meaningful and purposeful way, we need to hear you. Until we hear your beautiful authentic voice, you will not know the impact you could have on others and that’s where your leadership resides so just start!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Yasmin Vorajee is a Productivity & Accountability Executive Coach. She trains, coaches and empower business owners, entrepreneurs and professionals get more done in limited time. A professional and accredited trainer & coach, speaker and active blogger. She is passionate about helping people create the success they dream of, on their terms and with no apologies.
When running a business, you cannot rely solely on assumptions, winging it, or gut instinct to get you to where you want to be. You need to have quantifiable key business metrics in place to measure the actual reality against your goals. And you don’t need to be a genius to understand the significance of business metrics and what they stand for. A little application is all it takes for you to learn about the key business metrics of the successful business owner.

Usually, business owners have some business metrics in mind when running the business even though, are not clearly laid out as such. For instance, there would be hardly any entrepreneur who does not use revenue to measure the success of a business. Revenue is a key business metric, and so are the expenses, the cost to acquire clients, inventory, etc., as these are things every entrepreneur has in mind when analysing their business’ performance.

Controlling and managing the metrics which can be crucial for your business’ success is essential. For this, you need to be able to measure the metrics your business is following. Below are 3 benefits you gain by implementing key business metrics and measuring them consistently.

3 Benefits of Measuring Key Business Metrics

1. **Improved Decision-Making**
   The business metrics you follow provide you an infrastructure to make better decisions. You get to know exactly how effective each metric is proving for your business. Hence, you can decide which ones you want to continue pursuing and which ones to abandon. Know where to spend money or cut back.

2. **More Focused Approach**
   You can filter out the factors that don’t affect your business’ success but which you might have been paying too much attention to. With the business metrics, you know which factors are the most important and you can focus on them only.

3. **Broader Vision**
   You are in more control of your business and are in a prime position to spot any new trends emerging in the industry. You have a clear idea of your business’ capabilities at any given moment and decide the direction you want to take with it. Addressing threats and capitalizing on opportunities becomes easier when you have a broader vision for your business which key business metrics help you develop.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT KEY BUSINESS METRICS

Implementing key business metrics are not as difficult as it may sound. You can easily put them into practice in your business following the 7 steps laid out below.
Lay out clear goals for your business which you want to achieve long-term and work your way backward to the present year to be on the path to achieve your long-range goals. They can be related to anything, from expansion to a greater sales volume. Make sure the goals are defined clearly and you can easily visualize them actually occurring.

Assign a Metric for Each Goal

Once you have the list of goals in front of you, assign a key business metric to each goal. For instance, if your goal is to increase your company’s earnings by 20% over the next year, revenue becomes a metric by which you can measure whether or not you achieved the goal.

Measure Current Values

Before you can start working towards the goals, you need to use the metrics to judge where you stand at that moment. If your goal is to improve profitability, you may need to reduce the money you spend for acquiring a client. Thus, you need to use the cost per client acquisition as a metric to determine how much it costs for you to get one client. Only if you know the current value would you be able to change it in the future.

Create an Infrastructure

You need to have a mechanism in place which would enable you to easily and quickly measure the key business metrics. For instance, you can gauge the sales volume every month and see by how much it has grown since you implemented the metrics. You need to keep a tab on the metrics or else you would lose track of the progress or lack of progress your business is making.

Communicate the Metrics

Perhaps the most important of all steps is to communicate the metrics to your team. You cannot expect your employees to follow the metrics if you have not informed them clearly about them. When you make your business goals known to the people working for you, you also need to define how the metrics against their performance will be measured. You cannot hold your marketing manager responsible for following the metrics of increasing your promotional outreach to include other cities if you have not properly informed them on how they will be specifically measured. The same goes for all other departments.

Analyse and Alter

With the key business metrics in place, you are in a better position to judge whether your business strategies and practices are working or not. Make an honest assessment of how your business is working and then alter the strategies accordingly. Using key business metrics is pretty much useless if you don’t make any changes to your current business approach when you need to.

Celebrate Progress

Last, but not the least, make it a point to celebrate any improvements in the key business metrics. This does not mean you have to throw a party, but at least communicate to the employees that your business metrics have improved, even if the improvement is minimal.

These are the steps you can follow to implement the key business metrics which would help you take your business to the next level.
SELECTING THE KEY BUSINESS METRICS

There are a few common business metrics entrepreneurs put great emphasis on. They include client retention, profit/loss, productivity, inventory, expenses, etc. Without a doubt, some of the metrics apply to every business. Yet, there are some specific considerations entrepreneurs have to make for their business depending on the scale of their business and the industry they operate in. For example, employee absenteeism may be a major concern in the services industry but, that may not be the case with a large-scale manufacturing company. Hence, an entrepreneur in the services sector would use absenteeism as a metric.

When it comes to selecting the key business metrics to implement, there isn’t a standard pattern you can follow. There are some important business metrics which are important for every business, like effective management, solid finances and employee efficiency. However, there are some metrics which are exclusive to each business that have to be implemented as well. Take some time to determine the business metrics which are the most important for your business and implement them.

As mentioned above, it makes sense to lay out your goals before you decide on the key business metrics. Though you have complete freedom when selecting key business metrics, there are some best practices you can follow.

- Keep the list of metrics concise and clear. Having too many metrics makes it difficult to implement each one and then keep track of it.
- Decide what the best time interval for measuring each metric is. Some metrics have to be measured every week or month, while there would be some that you can measure only once a year.
- Over time, check if the metrics you have implemented are relevant to your business. The way a business works and its goals change over time. Make sure you keep up with the change and modify the key business metrics accordingly.

FINAL WORD

The importance of key business metrics cannot be ignored. As an entrepreneur, you would find great use for the key business metrics measured from time to time. They help you have a clear idea of where your business stands at a certain point of time. You can ensure your business is on the right track and achieving the goals you set out for it. In short, the key business metrics of successful business owners make you a better manager and leader.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Anne M. Bachrach is known as The Accountability Coach™. She has 23 years of experience training and coaching. Business owners and entrepreneurs who utilize Anne’s proven systems and processes work less, make more money, and have a more balanced and successful life. Anne is the author of the books, Excuses Don’t Count; Results Rule!, and Live Life with No Regrets; How the Choices We Make Impact Our Lives, and The Work Life Balance Emergency Kit.
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The geopolitical and business outlook is set to become even more complex. Are business coaches well enough equipped to add value to their clients?

I have been speaking to some of my senior business clients over the last few weeks and getting a feeling from them of the business landscape for the coming year.

The consensus is that there is even more uncertainty and complexity. This of course is happening on a geopolitical level with wars in the Middle East, tensions in the far East and Eastern Europe and what Pope Francis has called “A piecemeal World War III” as well as economic tensions in Europe.

The US economy and to a lesser extent the UK appear to be growing, with Europe uncertain and some down turn in the emerging markets.

Regulation has also spread from the financial services to other industries and is being taken far more seriously. Non executive directors and boards are being held into far more account at a regulatory level whilst greater shareholder involvement is holding boards to account and there is a rising awareness and push back on the amount of C level remuneration.

Most companies have repaired their balance sheets and many are actually cash rich. Growth is required; however there is much more discussion about the appetite for risk.

One thing is certain, when we look back in 12 months time the landscape will not be as it was predicted!

Taking this to another level, some executives are becoming aware that the changing and turbulent set of circumstances with which their businesses are having to deal need a change in the way the organisation is run. Too many processes, rules and control mechanisms and the ability to react or be creative is blunted, the culture becomes reactive and driven underground so that the informal network becomes the only way to get things done. Too few and things drop off the conveyor belt. Some businesses operate on this basis, however, considering the magnitude of the challenge, not enough.

Sound complicated? You bet it is. And this is whilst dealing with globalization, competitive issues, running the business and other internal organizational issues.
Recent research of CEOs has shown that only half considered themselves prepared for the complexity of the global business environment that is unfolding. (1)

The old saying that ‘If it isn’t broke, don’t fix it’ is no longer relevant today. Business is changing so rapidly that if you don’t understand the changes in the context, then you cannot manage it except by using previous recipes.

How do people cope? How do businesses survive? And more saliently for this publication, how is the business coaching industry helping leaders navigate this shifting terrain? Are coaches enabling a genuine deepening of executives thinking and broadening of their ‘toolkit’ – whilst staying in the coaching space as opposed to consulting or mentoring?

At one level, great coaching is well suited to this task. “Coaching at its best, informed by good theory and practices and case studies around international business in the true sense, is brilliant and uniquely placed to encourage people into new kinds of conversations that deepen and build their cognitive capacity and enable them to make sense out of circumstances that are extremely complex.” (2) Only complexity can absorb complexity. In other words, for a leader to be able to deal with complex situations they have to have an equal or more complex set of approaches to deal with the situation. So shouldn’t this apply to the executive’s coach as well? How can a less complex set of coaching questions match a complex situation?

What is stopping the uptake of a more flexible, guiding and directing style of leadership? Well, ‘the system’ isn’t too keen on it for a start. Investors, be they government, shareholders or private equity want to know what they are getting. At an Individual level, leaders – as indeed would be any human being – are adept at developing reasons for not getting out of their relative comfort zone (‘I may be banging my head against the wall but at least I know what the pain will be!’). Most revolve around the absence of an immediate ‘compelling event’ – the business equivalent of the health scare that makes us lead a healthier lifestyle – and include not having time, learning a new approach and language, losing control or power, setting, measuring and achieving budgets or targets – both at an individual and team levels, ‘It’s only theory’ and doubtless many, many more.

At a personal level, I saw this dichotomy play out in practice. I was lucky enough to see Prof Ralph Stacey give a talk on ‘Managing Order and Chaos in Organisations’ in which he described the need for a new flexible mindset amongst managers and leaders. I was then working on a joint venture alongside a Big 5 consultancy, who had drawn up a 10 year business plan with revenue figures over that period measured in decimal places! Perversely, I did a presentation to my leadership colleagues on Prof Stacey’s approach. You could smell the burning as their fuses overloaded!

I wanted to test some of my ideas, so spoke to someone with a great perspective straddling the academic and business worlds. Dr. Paul Thomas is known by the BBC as the Business Doctor and is an experienced and respected author, thought leader and trail blazer on matters relating to change and organizational development that allows people to thrive and flourish within 21st Century organisations. He thinks that the way most businesses are run is outdated. He said:

“[Our approach] has met understandable resistance from some managers despite its well-researched benefits on organisational performance. This level of criticality causes uncertainty and worry for most managers as they realise they are at times not adding value to the ‘customer’ but simply creating more rules & procedures which are counter-productive and therefore adds cost. A recent example is the NHS Health service (United Kingdom) which has seen unprecedented levels of funding, the majority of which has gone into the ‘management, systems, technology and not frontline outcomes’. Measuring performance indicators for example has created a vast army of counters, checkers and bureaucracy that increases cost but not necessarily performance. We also know that ‘measurements’ and targets sub-optimise human systems.”

“So the solution to every problem will be in the organisation already. Its called frontline staff and if
you engage them they are your consultants; ready, willing, and loyal to the cause. Management is a function, which most can do easily with training and practice. True sustainable services in the 21st Century only happen when frontline staff are able to trust the leader, suggest, reflect and be trusted back. When trusted, risk is seen as a positive not just negative. “

“This may seem ‘revolutionary’ but in order to see our companies, products and service provision survive the next 10 years we must think radically, ask the difficult and down-right insulting ‘why’s’ to survive. To question traditional command and control, to consider alternative approaches is difficult given so much vested interest and even if we do take risks and think differently there are no guarantees of success. However, we need leaders throughout organisations where there is not one but a thousand pairs of eyes, all the employees in the organisation each searching for the competition and customers, innovating and driving service levels upwards. This increases productivity (in one service by 300%), reduces sickness and absenteeism to zero, increases morale and energy and reduces disputes/issues.”

“Most of the simple things have been done in Business Schools and consultancy solutions and only the messy things are left. But it’s the messy things that matter, it’s the messy things which make the difference to sustainable organisations and innovation.”

“How many times have we seen grand strategies fail in implementation, before we are able to understand that organisations are messy, simply because people are messy. Organisations are full of humans which makes it - if allowed - an adaptive system which is not controllable in the traditional managerial mindset, indeed the more measures, procedures and rules that are created by managers the less effective the organisation becomes, the opposite to what is commonly believed.”

“So coaching can help leaders develop that complexity of thought to deal with the highly complex environment they are facing. For me however, a real value add would be for coaches to ensure that their ‘saw is sharpened’ by having a grasp of organizational theory and practice to enable them to challenge in a way that matches - or exceeds – the organizational complexities with their own grasp of complexity.

**SOURCE:**

1 & 2) Author’s interviews with Dr Geoffrey Abbott. [http://www.internationalbusinesscoaching.com](http://www.internationalbusinesscoaching.com)


**SUGGESTED READING:**


**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Malcolm Nicholson is the owner and Coaching Director for Aspecture, and has worked successfully with a wide range of senior business people for over 15 years, enabling them to improve business results through transformational changes. (see [www.aspecture.com](http://www.aspecture.com)). To find out how he can help your organization contact him at malcolmnicholson@aspecture.com or on +44 1932 267597.
One of the exercises I frequently conduct with audiences is to ask them to define what they mean by success. It’s something few have thought about. Almost invariably, the responses fall into two categories:

- **Success as achievement** – reaching your goals, exceeding expectations, winning, being outstanding in a chosen field, being wealthy
- **Success as personal fulfilment** – being content and happy, balancing work and life, becoming the person you aspire to be.

It’s evident that the first of these is largely externally driven and about recognition by others, while the second is more internally driven and related to personal values. When I go on to ask each group, “Is that enough?”, it soon becomes clear that a more comprehensive and satisfactory definition of success incorporates both aspects. Hence the definition:

**SUCCESS IS ACHIEVING WHAT YOU VALUE**

Many people are driven to achieve a goal, only to find when they get there that it is not what they wanted. Goals that are not aligned with personal values can be described as transactional or “thin”. It’s hard to look back on them with a strong sense of satisfaction or fulfilment.

It’s important for coaches and mentors to stimulate reflection on how their clients make meaning of the concept success. What factors do they take into account? Is there understanding of success one-sided, or multi-factored? Shallow or deep? Can they articulate how the goals they aspire to will meet both their internal and external measures of success?

Also significant is who can and might wish to share in their success – and in the path towards it. Who holds the same or similar values and will therefore want them to succeed? To what extent can their success be measured in the success of others (as for example, in the role of mentor or teacher)?

My own experience of this kind of conversation is that it is often an eye-opener for people, whose perception of their own future has been shaped by the expectations of others, even if they have internalised those expectations and made them their own. Taking a more nuanced view of success and particularly of their own potential to be successful, opens up a wide vista of different possibilities that enriches subsequent coaching or mentoring conversations and lays the foundation for a healthier, more fulfilling relationship with their personal goals and how they pursue them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

David’s new book Beyond Goals, with Susan David and David Megginson. Contact info@davidclutterbuckpartnership.com for details of the discount code.
2014 would appear to be the year that mindfulness has come out of the shadows and moved into the mainstream. We have seen mindfulness sessions at the Davos Economic Summit in Switzerland, widely respected corporate leaders such as Arianna Huffington talked eloquently about mindfulness in her book ‘Thrive’ and a growing number of highly respected world class academics have published numerous research papers and highly readable books on the subject. It’s also easy to plug into this mindfulness movement via online applications such as Headspace and Smiling Mind.

The science (or neuroscience) behind mindfulness is now coming into focus. We are beginning to understand more clearly how it can affect the brain’s thinking process and, perhaps more importantly, how it can positively change the way the brain thinks, how it affects our emotional responses, and our future outcomes in life.

As an executive coach, I have been deeply interested in this whole field on mindfulness for many years, but have definitely noticed that discussions on the subject with executives and HR professionals have moved from the “are you crazy” to the “how can it benefit us.” Mainstream businesses are now looking at the latest research and some leading edge risk takers are even rolling out mindfulness programs, with extraordinary success.

Much nonsense is still talked about mindfulness however, so if you are considering introducing mindfulness for yourself or your organization, but don’t know where to start, or what the possible business benefits could be, then my experience of the scenarios below may be helpful to consider.

1 WELLBEING

This is the most common reason that I find organizations and individuals are looking at mindfulness. It’s becoming clear that our western model of business is coming under more and more pressure. In the United Kingdom in 2013/14, the Health and Safety Executive have reported that 39% of all work related illness is due to stress, anxiety or depression – a total of 11.3 million working days.

The pace of change of technology, social and commercial innovation has created a business world where executives are always on call, always available...
and always having to deal with ever more complex and demanding problems. The world is getting more complex and our attention is always switched on, which is a state of hypervigilance. Hypervigilance is associated with the biological fight or flight response and largely driven by the stress hormone cortisol. We evolved the biological stress response to keep us safe in a dangerous primitive world where survival meant we humans would need to react quickly to run away or fight. Once the danger had passed our physiology would return to a normal resting state. Not so in the modern world where executive stress is constant and relentless. Prolonged heightened levels of cortisol is associated with all kinds of bad outcomes, including heart disease, diabetes, depression and hypertension.

By developing and regularly practicing a state of mindfulness, we become more able to observe our moment-to-moment thinking, much of which is unconscious and can often be the source of negative feelings such as anger, fear, frustration, self pity, indignation and envy. If we are able to consciously notice, and make sense of, our thoughts, feeling and actions, we can also choose to break out of unhelpful patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving to create more positive and helpful outcomes.

Often in my coaching sessions, I sit across from executives who are in a continuous and mindless state of suffering. Their minds are running repetitive thoughts of worry about the future and the past. These ‘mind loops’ are thankfully easy to spot when executives are taught how to mindfully breath and slow down overactive neuro-pathways. They can then consciously understand how the brain perceives the present moment based on past experiences. Wouldn’t it be wonderful instead if we could all mindfully choose to celebrate life by feeling calm and centred, having more kind, engaged relationships through seeing the best in one another, with a positive attitude of gratitude for our daily life. We know that life is a very precious thing and that one day it will come to an end. So in the meantime let’s enjoy every moment by realizing how.

Science tells us that a state of mindfulness engages the parasympathetic nervous system – the one associated with calm, objectivity and balance. Science also tells us that the daily practice of meditation results in positive changes to the brain’s neural circuitry to make it easier to become mindful thereby allowing practicing individuals to break out of old unhelpful thinking habits to create the conditions for them to make better choices and, by association, achieve better outcomes at work and in life generally. In my view the only valid reason for not engaging in the practice of mindfulness is if no one has yet told you about the great personal benefits.

One caveat that I would raise is to be careful that your organization does not use mindfulness as the only tool to deal with executive stress. Just because you have rolled out a mindfulness program does not absolve your business from responsibility for executive burn out.

Every few years, at least, most large organizations will run a leadership development program for their top talent. There are an endless number of variants, models, techniques and tools that can be included in such programs: emotional intelligence, strategic leadership, situational leadership, coaching conversations, conflict management, systems thinking etc, etc. Many of these models, tools and techniques are helpful and, when used effectively, can improve individual leadership performance. So why do most leadership initiatives fail to deliver sustained positive results in the longer term?

The problem is - “same old thinking, same old results”. Our subconscious thinking habits have been acquired throughout our lives. We experience the world through our five senses and every historically significant experience we have had contributes to the process of connecting arrays of neural cells in our brains, thus determining how we think, feel and behave in the present as a response to external stimuli. This is what I call past thinking. It is our personal reality, or personality.

I believe that leadership development programs can only bring real results if they enable the creation new habits of leadership thinking, feeling and behaving. Mindfulness is the key that accelerates development and opens the door to new levels of performance.
Mindful leaders have a keen sense of intuition, and have the ability to bring focused attention to old unhelpful patterns of biased thinking and feeling. Continuous mindful use of new leadership models, tools and techniques improve cognitive focus and quickly results in new thinking, feeling and behaving thereby resulting in new outcomes. In my experience, mindful leaders are more resilient, less judgmental and better able to cut through the unhelpful chatter of ever-present organizational politics.

It is empowering to understand that mindful leaders simply make better decisions. They know how to self-inquire, to make decisions from a place of calm, rather than fear. Perhaps a lesson for our political leaders as well.

Innovation and creativity require us to have the ability to break free from old Newtonian type cause and affect thinking. Future thinking requires that we have the capability to stand in the present and imaginatively sense the limitless possibilities that have not yet happened. We must bring the future to life in the present. This can only be achieved if we are truly mindful of our old conditioned patterns of thinking and fully open to future possibilities. Symbolically we must let go of the old and visualize new scenarios at a deep level so that we can experience the heightened emotions associated with achieving new outcomes. Not an easy concept to grasp, but one that underlies the emerging understanding of human creativity.

CONCLUSION
It is my very firm viewpoint, the time now is upon us to bring the latest science-based knowledge of the workings of the human brain out of the science laboratory and college classrooms and into the boardroom, executive offices and business meeting rooms. I believe we are at the very beginning of a new era in the way we work and do business in the modern world. We are moving from an industrial and technology-centric world into a more human-centric world. There is a growing recognition that the external economic and social stresses of globalization must be balanced by also taking care of our inner world of spirit, purpose and personal fulfilment.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:
Noel Brady is a Senior Partner & Executive Coach of Inside Out®. He works across several business sectors, most notably financial services, FMCG, high technology and professional services. As London and New York are major hubs for many organisations.

“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them; they cannot be changed without changing our thinking”

Albert Einstein penned this sentence around 80 years ago, but today it still really resonates and lives for me. Many people are trapped inside narrow constraints of black and white thinking. By nature, human beings want to bring order and certainly to an uncertain world. We often don’t feel comfortable or safe in an environment that is unknown or uncertain. We naturally tend to rationalize, identify, organize and bring certainty. This tendency is driven by our primitive need as human beings to feel safe and secure in our environment. The problem is that this can lead to black and white thinking that stifles openness, curiosity, creativity and innovation. Old thinking begets old outcomes. New thinking and exploration requires that we are open to taking risks that challenge our sense of security and personal safety. We must be prepared to be vulnerable. Brené Brown puts this point across beautifully in her book The Gifts of Imperfection:

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change”
A few years ago I was thinking: “What if I were to guide someone into setting goals, creating and managing competitive levels, manage tests and social connectivity, go through different levels of professional or personal life, creates or benefits from specific rewards, design, or just go through different quests, gaining points, rewards, incentives, badges, as they get continuous feedback and recognition?” I have found the answers to all these aspects by gamifying skill development with coaching.

My background as an NLP Architect (author, researcher, trainer and coach) and a Gamification Behavioural Designer offered me all the tools necessary to start applying Gamification mechanics and dynamics into coaching projects.

But what is Gamification? It represents the process of using game thinking and tools in common settings, non-related to games. The objective is to enhance players, trainers, participants of all sorts engage in a fun, genuine and rewarding experience.

When we think of employees, we might believe that money, salary, income is a real incentive for them. In fact, this is not true. A real organisational quest and fair rewards are a high extrinsic motivational factor. With the use of Gamification, companies can engage their employees at any level and place them in the centre of different games leading to effectiveness, innovation, efficiency, productivity and more.

Gamification offers the opportunities for self and professional development, life-work balance, collaboration, a perfect management, but it is neither a personal or professional coaching tool. It is an experimental coaching framework, where players, employees can gain mastery, recognition, engage and reach their objectives and the organisational objectives together. It is a funnel for the coaching techniques to take place.

Let’s look into it more closely and understand why Gamification became a revolutionary coaching framework. Once you are in the position to coach an organisational team, you need to consider its dynamics closely related to the organisational mechanics, as well to keep the mission, vision, and goals aligned.

**So how do you do this?**

Consider the game dynamics at a macro level (the company as a system) and also at a micro level (look into the team as a sub-system). What you will be analysing is: objectives, goals, desires, the dynamic flow and how is it working, stats, competition, self-expression, altruism, achievement, rewards. All these components will indicate towards meaningful choices, emotions, materials to process and work with. Once you need to coach that specific team, you will know...
how to teach them to master their emotions, to model excellence in their behaviour, you will be challenging their limiting beliefs, change their daily habits, insert game elements, rewards and enhance employees’ superpowers.

**How will you be doing all these?**

The answer is simple. Gamification comes with elements of mechanics. You need to design your coaching session and gamify them so that the employees understand how this works. Here is what you need to create in your coaching methodology and transfer this knowledge so that the teams you will be working with will be able to implement the same methods into work practice.

Design your environment, offer freedom, let people dream and manifest their dreams into concrete words or actions, create scenarios, insert conditioning or skill games. These will allow you to encompass: skills’ conditioning, core skill, practical, proficient and productive awareness, environmental awareness (workplace setting can become a more comfortable one for employees engaged into a daily gamified experience at work), communication, collaboration, performance under stress and fundamental organisational skills applicable in the game settings you design to deliver in small amounts of time during the coaching sessions. The employees as players will have a setting which will allow them freedom, fun, engagement, rewards. Create a Leaderboard and use it. Coach the employees (managers could be fitted for this kind of coaching) to create levels, feedback, quests, surprise within their teams. Make them understand the importance of information, community collaborations. Make them use a system of points, status of progression and more in order to point the best employee of the month. It’s all about enhancing different behaviours, offering and receiving feedback and progression.

While coaching managers, make sure you emphasise on the role of the Magic Circle. This is an engaging environment of the game, of the gamified organisational experience they will create for their teams. Magic Circle is just like anchoring the employees to come back for more. More rewards, more recognition, more quests, more engagement, as they will put in more effort, innovation and practice their best skills at work being highly motivated to do so. Coach the managers in order to create loops of engaging, fun and rewarding work activities to keep their teams satisfied, achieve more and contribute more.

You will not be coaching managers into operant conditioning experience. You will be coaching them into offering a fun and engaging gamified experience for the employees as players, reinforcing those to feel free, experience the gamified organisational environment, step into this experience and engage in their best and take their own decisions. Coaching with Gamification shows that power and control is no longer found in the managers within the companies, but within the design of the whole work experience. The employees will be empowered in different ways (points, badges, Leaderboards, wellness benefits, insurance and more) they will have freedom of expression and creativity, they will be able to make decisions and implement their conclusions. But all these will be done within a gamified framework with the mechanics and dynamics already offered by the design. This will ensure that each employee will benefit from being coached in his daily activities, rather than managed.

There is a lot to learn from coaching with Gamification and there are many organisational benefits into it. I am offering you just a simple perspective in this article. Consider it a level one info about organisational coaching with Gamification.
Have you ever wondered about the future? How will you survive and thrive in a world that is changing exponentially? How will you live the life of your dreams on a planet whose population is increasing, whose landmass is decreasing, whose natural resources are almost depleted, and whose food and water supplies are becoming less than adequate?

How will you still succeed? How will you raise children who can make a difference? How will you lead organisations and inspire people to be the best versions of themselves? These are not the problems for business, governments and scientists to come up with solutions for: we each have a role to play.

Based on extensive research, personal and business experience, The Mind Age™: Mastering your Infinite Mind for Success reveals Leann Naidoo’s personal story and provides:

- Neuroscience principles from leading scientists and thought leaders on how to leverage the power of the brain
- Simple but effective techniques to create and harness a powerful mind-set, and
- A practical but impactful guide on how to master your infinite mind for success

Leann Naidoo is a management consultant specialising in leading complex organisational change programmes and developing leadership excellence using a variety of neuroscience based learning, development and coaching interventions. Her 20-year long career working for large consulting firms on projects in the UK, the UAE and South Africa, has given her great insights into the future of business. Leann works with dynamic organisations and people who want to achieve sustainable, transformational change in accelerated time-frames.
**SECTION: Coaching Couch**

**Born 2 Succeed!**

Born to take Romania globally with Business coaching

by Cristina Burca, ICN Journalist, Romania

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**Born2Succeed** is not only a successful business consultancy in Romania, but also the mind-set of an emerging entrepreneurial community which brings Romania in the spotlight of the global start-up scene. With almost 300 start-ups and more than 500 founders in only the last two years (listed on RomanianStartups.com), Romania is already seen as a vibrant and ever-growing global start-up hub. More, Romania ranks 5th in the world at internet connection speed and 38th as to starting up a business. Clear signs that business coaching has a huge potential to develop.

Irina Alionte, one of the youngest entrepreneurs and business coaches in Romania, grew a worldwide consulting business – Born2Succeed – in less than a year, whose figures speak for themselves: 25 live events for entrepreneurs in 2014, international speakers, a fully-booked list of 1-to-1 coaching sessions and an innovative Bodyshape transformation centre. And that’s only the beginning. As the Romanian market has a lot more to show.

ICN spoke with Irina about coaching trends in Romania, how to create a successful business in record speed, avoid failure and enjoy a “freedom” lifestyle. Stay tuned:

**ICN: As a business and empowerment coach, operating both in Romania and at international level, how do you see the business coaching market in Romania? Can you make a comparison with the international scene?**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** I see the Romanian business coaching market continuing to expand and I have been pleasantly surprised to see more and more demand for coaching from entrepreneurs willing to grow their business, income and influence. I don’t see any major differences between ours and the international scene, except that some coaches in Romania are still afraid to charge what they are worth and are driven by the mentality that in our country, “things are different”. I recommend business coaches in Romania to simply up their game, sell their services confidently and ask for the prices they think they deserve.

**ICN: Do you see coaching as an effective tool for management? We could differentiate between corporate management and start-ups.**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** Yes we all need a coach to keep us accountable and provide us with a 30,000 feet view of any circumstance. Sometimes we entrepreneurs have too many ideas running through our head, so it’s always good to have a guide that can give you more focus, clarity and help you knock down any roadblocks.

**ICN: Let’s talk now about entrepreneurs and start-ups, which are developing at a fast speed at international level. How do you rate Romania at this point?**

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1Bloomberg.com
2World bank report « Doing business 2015 »
IRINA ALIONTE: I believe there’s never been a more exciting time to start a business – there are so many resources and tools available, coaches, mentoring organisations and people willing to help, grow and contribute. I applaud any initiatives that support entrepreneurship, but there are still a lot of room for development and improvement.

ICN: Do Romanians have a business mind-set?

IRINA ALIONTE: Some do and some don’t. I don’t like to generalise.

ICN: What strategies/ reforms should there be implemented in Romania to become an entrepreneurial hub compared to London or Berlin?

IRINA ALIONTE: Some of the things I see missing would be a funding scheme for start-ups such as the “Start Up Loans” Programme adopted in the UK, entrepreneurial education in schools, mentoring organisations that can support businesses and more education on what coaching is and how it could help a business.

ICN: How to plan and start a business? Which are the secrets of growing a business?

IRINA ALIONTE: Find what you are good at, find what you are passionate about, find out how it helps other people and then simply help the first person you can. Get confident to ask for money in exchange of the value you offer that person and then you have a business. Repeat the process until you have the amount of money you like. When you can’t serve all the people that want your services anymore, you have to expand by training more people to do what you do. The big secret is there is no real secret, it’s as simple as this.

ICN: Where can entrepreneurs look for resources to grow their expertise and business?

IRINA ALIONTE: Internet is full of free information available to everyone, but the best thing is to find a mentor and model them. Rather than try to figure it all by yourself and put together information from different resources and waste a lot of time in the process, simply find someone who’s already got the result you want and study how they did it. And when you pay for a mentor, you also have some skin in the game and the extra accountability that makes you apply the information provided.

ICN: How to balance personal with business life?

IRINA ALIONTE: Many people overwork themselves and forget to enjoy a nice lifestyle. Put time for yourself in your diary. Myself and my
partner schedule date nights and holidays very often. Plus always do the things you want to do, whether it’s taking up a new hobby or going to the gym – do what excites you. You have to put yourself first in order to be strong for others.

**ICN: How to cope with stress?**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** In business you have to remember it’s a marathon, not a sprint. So you have to be detached from the outcome and remember you’re in it for the long term. And yes sometimes things don’t always turn the way you want them to. Take a step back, be grateful for everything you’ve achieved, give yourself a big pat on the back and get in the game trusting that everything always works out perfectly. Over the years I have learnt to enjoy the process, not the destination – because in reality, there is no destination. That’s how you can keep a relaxed attitude and not stress out over unimportant things.

**ICN: Despite positive trends for developing a business, many start-ups fail. Why do you think this happens? Which problems in the process lead to fail?**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** Many start-ups fail because they fall in love with their product or service, but don’t get validation from the marketplace. At the core of this mistake is a lack of understanding of their ideal customers and what are their deepest desires, frustrations and obstacles. A thorough research of the ideal customer would prevent a lot of start-ups from failing.

**ICN: Could you name some effective entrepreneurial strategies, which would help managers and entrepreneurs to achieve their target goals?**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** Providing amazing customer service is the key for any business. It does not matter if you offer a product, a service, or an app. You are always selling to people, and therefore a business is just a collection of relationships. Success is business then comes down to the quality of those relationships. So always be giving, always look for what value you can give others. Be a good ‘people’ person and read “How to Win Friends & Influence People”. Sure, there are thousands of other ‘strategies’ out there. But if you don’t get this one right first, none of the other strategies will matter. Because you will have no clients or employees to share them with.

**ICN: Please give us some examples of success stories about people who have gone through business coaching with you.**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** We have amazing success stories from around the world, but let’s talk about some examples from here in Romania. One of our best clients was Cristina – she had just become a life coach and specialised in helping parents develop better relationships with her children. When she came to us, she had no clients, no knowledge of business or marketing and didn’t know where to start. But within 2 weeks we positioned her as the expert in her field, developed a strong package she could offer, and helped her generate over 30 prospects applying to work with her.

Another story is Bogdan, a martial arts instructor. Before meeting us he had a handful of clients, and had spent thousands of Euros on expensive websites and wasted hundreds of Euros on marketing with not a cent of return. Within a few weeks of working together, Bogdan rebranded his company, increased his fees, and tripled the size of his client base. Now Bogdan is also holding regular personal development seminars and is earning more money than he ever imagined.

There are many stories like this. The most exciting part for us is seeing the inner transformation that these entrepreneurs experience. At first, they believe it is the money or free time that will make them happy, but when they achieve that they also realised they were changing other people’s lives on a whole new level, and that gave them more fulfilment. That’s also what gives US fulfilment in doing what we do. So it is like a positive cycle that benefits everyone, and it’s why we love coaching so much.

**ICN: Let’s talk also a bit about your own personal story as a Business coach: how you’ve got here and what challenged you mostly during your career path?**

**IRINA ALIONTE:** I started coaching other business owners shortly after meeting my partner. He was already a business coach to entrepreneurs around the world and he challenged me that I could do the same thing. At first I was reluctant. I had some limiting beliefs about what a coach was or wasn’t. In other words, I thought I had more to ‘prove’ first. But my partner taught me that as long as you can help someone get the results they want faster, easier or cheaper than they could do on their own, you are ready to help.
Even though I was not earning millions, I quickly realised that I had a lot of life experience, business experience, and the knowledge from all my own mentors that I could be – and should be – passing on.

This is how I got started in business coaching, and myself and my partner then created Born2Succeed to take this idea further – merging personal development and business coaching together.

ICN: You are one of the few young Romanians having set up a business in the UK (the Cardio Club) and won the “Best Business Growth” award after only one year. Congratulations for this performance! How did your studies at the Warwick Business School help you to achieve this performance? What is different in the British business education compared to the Romanian one?

IRINA ALIONTE: Both countries teach similar things, so there is no remarkable difference in my opinion. What I soon realised was that no business ‘school’ actually prepares you for the real world. Your education really starts when you off the sidelines and jump into the game! Although my time studying was valuable and a great experience, you will learn one hundred times more about success and entrepreneurship by doing it and not just reading theories about it.

ICN: What plans do you have as a business coach for Romanians?

IRINA ALIONTE: At the moment our 1-1 client spots are all taken, and we have a waiting list. The testimonials don’t lie – our success stories are not matched by any other coaching company in Romania – at least none we’ve seen demonstrated anywhere.

We held over 25 live events for entrepreneurs in 2014, and this year we plan on holding more, bigger live events and also bringing in more international speakers to help develop the growth of this country.

Myself and my partner have also just opened another coaching business here in Bucharest – the Bodyshape Transformation Centre. This is the first combined fitness, nutrition and personal development coaching program that guarantees our clients results in 30 days, or they don’t pay. This project is taking up the biggest part of our time at the moment, but we will keep pushing the boundaries of what’s possible for Romanian business owners with our live events too.

ICN: Do you have a mentor or a person who has had a tremendous impact on you as a leader? Why and how did this person impact your life?

IRINA ALIONTE: I’ve had many mentors in the last few years – you can never stop learning from so many successful people. One of the mentors who have had a huge impact is Eric Wagner – a Forbes.com writer and multimillionaire entrepreneur from the USA. The reason he has had such a big impact on me is simply because he always sees the potential in me that is a few steps ahead of my own awareness. I think that is a great coach – someone who doesn’t see you as you are right now. Instead they see you for who you could become, and they already believe in you 100%. Eric is always challenging me to think bigger and bigger, and holds me accountable to those standards.

For more information on Born2Succeed and Bodyshape Transformation Centre, go to: http://www.born2succeed.ro/ and http://www.bodyshapetransformation.com/.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Cristina is a Communication Consultant and journalist with experience in European environments (the EU institutions, communication consultancy, journalism and training). For more information, visit her website: http://www.brandimage-europe.eu/en/ and LinkedIn profile: https://www.linkedin.com/pub/cristina-burca/2b/463/133.
Many of us are lucky enough to work with great coaches, in business, sport and life. Individuals who are keen to support and challenge us in many aspects of work and life. But, do we really make the most of these relationships? If we are to increase levels of performance via coaching then we have to make sure we are ready for coaching.

Let’s deconstruct a known saying - ‘when the coachee is ready, the coach will appear.’ That’s just it, so many of us are not ready for coaching despite having experienced individuals to hand. If this is the case, then it will take us longer to make an impact.

My latest research has showed that individuals only possess 40% of the skills required to be an effective coachee. So unless you can evaluate whether coaching is the right option for you, you might be wasting everyone’s time. Ask yourself two questions…

- Are you ready to be coached?
- Do you possess the skills (coachability) to be an effective coachee?

Ten years ago I was struggling to ascertain whether coaching was right for me, despite the fact that my organisation had paid for and arranged a world-class coach. High performance was certainly one of my key goals but I was struggling to take to the challenge of coaching – the probing, questions and observation in particular. After some visible resistance I slowly found my feet as a coachee and my performance increased.

This experience and many others like it led me to embark on a research project and eventually a book (It’s Not About The Coach) that I published in 2013.

I began to realise that coaching is a space between two or more people, coach and coachee. Typically coming together to discuss performance and how it might develop. However, to date just about all of our research and literature has focused on the coach. Why aren’t there any resources for the other half of the coaching relationship? Everyone else thinks it is about the coach; training, qualifications and accreditations etc. are readily available. Yet we often neglect the hero of the story - the coachee.
A new world where coachees are at the centre of the relationship. Inspiring them to…

- Make informed choices about coaching
- Discover readiness for coaching
- Develop the values required by coachees

Knowledge of the coaching process can only get you so far; choices, readiness and values will allow coachees to accelerate their coaching relationships and achieve a long lasting impact.

Here are the 10 top tips for getting the most from coaching…

1. AUTHENTICITY
   – are you making your values valuable?

Develop awareness of self (and others) so that you can begin to attune your needs (inner) to the environment (outer). Watch out for the conflict between compliance and defiance.

2. CHANGE
   – on a scale of 1-10 how present are you being right now?

Change is change, it is neither good or bad. It is just change. When you recognise a change, just do exactly that, recognise it and hold onto possibilities. Steer clear of negative descriptions.

3. EMOTIONS
   – are you reacting or responding?

Develop your emotions in the same way you develop your muscles. Thus coaching becomes a work out, with your personal trainer to hand. Bottling up these emotions serves no one.

4. CURIOSITY
   – are you serving the world?

When you experience curiosity you will need to be conscious of it, aware, knowing. Encourage consciousness and spot reflective behaviour. Don’t push curiosity though, it might push back.

5. CHALLENGE
   – are you taking the road less travelled?

In order to achieve superior performance there isn’t one single challenging question that will serve us. We need to come at it from all angles. Remember low support and low challenge = apathy.

6. QUESTIONS
   – do you ask open questions that create endless possibilities?

Coachees flourish when they work with questions. Enter into dialogue - searching for the question and then the answer. Be aware that society is a ‘tellaholic’ one, rewarding answers.

7. GOALS
   – are you setting performance and outcome goals?

As a coachee look to secure your performance and outcome goals towards the end of the coaching conversation, rather than at the start. If the goal is misjudged then you are misaligned.

8. SYSTEMS
   – what impact are you having on those around you?

As a coachees performance shifts so does their system, increasing in size and complexity. Make sure you are investing your energy in the right place so that you can connect with other people.

9. ENERGY
   – are you firing on all cylinders and tapping into all five sources?

Our energy sources create well-being and vitality in us all. Simply complete conscious activities that keep your soul, body, heart, mind and spirit strong. Don’t lapse these must be done daily.

10. MASTERY
    – are you now ready to master being a coachee?

Consider POSSIBILITIES, aware. Challenge PERCEPTION, adapt. Change PERFORMANCE, action. You have entered a new world, two worlds even - coach and coachee. Master both…
Of course the concept of coachability can be applied to us all. We all at some point find ourselves in a conversation with another person where our performance is at the centre of the discussion, aka coaching. Equally many of us are coaches ourselves, here our role is to manage the learning journey for the coachee and ensure that they are coachable. A word of caution here, if you aren’t coachable then you will most likely struggle to instil this value in others.

Once coachability is in place then you can attend to the coaching objectives. This is why I ensure that all my potential coaches are exposed to coachability as soon as I hear from them. The chemistry or contracting sessions are perfect for exploring this in more detail. If your coachee is ready for coaching then ROI shoots up, which is of value to all.

The first thing you can do to take a step in this direction is sign up for a free e-book introduction to It’s Not About The Coach – www.stormbeach.co.uk I have also just released a free online course on www.udemy.com and the book is available on Amazon.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Stuart Haden is a facilitator, coach, consultant, author and speaker specialising in Authentic Leadership and founder of Storm Beach based in Bath, UK. @ StormBeach www.stormbeach.co.uk.
The Alpha Group offer proven effective membership services which empower business owners to maximise profitability and dominate their sector in 2 years.

Helping BUSINESSES to breakthrough WORLDWIDE

The Alpha Group is ideal for Coaches, Mentors and Trainers that are passionate about helping members to thrive while growing a loyal and strong client base. Therefore you need to be up for the challenge of making a significant difference in the lives of others. On a monthly basis you will meet with a network of like-minded professionals that are keen to gain a high level of success in business.

Get ready to transform the performance of businesses and impact the productivity of your peers’ organisations through focused meetings, practical training and valuable business support.

At each meeting you will start by delivering a high impact 60 minute Fast Growth workshop. This will encourage and equip your members to really advance in their fields and fulfil their business ambitions. This will be followed by working as a group of peers where you will work on helping to grow each other’s businesses in a structured facilitated way by resolving critical business issues together. Every decision made or action taken is made accountable to create an authentic business scenario. This is a great way to share ideas and learn from the experiences of like-minded peers in an inspirational team building environment. Over a period of time these exercises will build up your members to develop themselves as a personal Board of Advisors to your members as well as friends.

We are currently accepting applications for Regional Directors who are serious about helping growing members businesses. Our aim is to help them dominate their business sector.

Become a Regional Director with Noble Manhattan
WWW.THE-ALPHA-GROUP.BIZ

Successful Alpha Group Regional Directors will:
- Be qualified, experienced and highly motivated professionals with in the Coaching, Mentoring or Training world
- Commit to, and be held accountable for helping to achieving transformational change for the members
- Adhere to the highest standards of professionalism
- Share your knowledge, experience, ideas and wisdom with your members
- Have the desire to earn a substantial on going income by growing successful Alpha Groups
- Have the ability to build a substantial Coaching client base

We are accepting applications for Regional Directors who are serious about helping growing members businesses.'

Because our aim is to help them dominate their business sector.

We have now successfully launched in the following Cities:

To find out if your city is still available please call or email Colin for a brief non-committal conversation. For more information and to find out how The Alpha Group could work for you, contact:

Colin Lindsay
Managing Director, The Alpha Group Worldwide
mobile: 07795976292 . email: colin.lindsay@the-alpha-group.biz
2015 Your Three Steps to make A POSITIVE CHANGE!

The IIC&M are the preferred International Accreditation Body for Coaches and Mentors

Here at the IIC&M we have decided to make 2015 count, by making our own changes as to how we interact with our members globally. Firstly we’ve improved the website navigation and content, to provide more resources to our members. We have expanded our team to ensure we stay on top of the changes and developments within our expanding market. We are looking at our communication, to ensure that we engage with coaches and mentors to understand their needs and ensure they are more successful by working with us. We hope to grow a positive future.

STEP ONE – Join the IIC&M

These are the benefits you can expect from joining the IIC&M.

• You will become part of an International Body of excellence in coaching and mentorship
• You will have the opportunity to meet and network with coaches and mentors globally
• You will be part of a respected and influential body
• You will benefit from advice, guidance and support gained from over 13 years of business experience
• You will have joined an organisation which is acknowledged world-wide as a leader in coaching and mentoring excellence
• You will benefit from/ an unrivalled range of inclusive membership benefits which will save you time and money
• You will have the opportunity to have your say about the issues that affect your business

STEP TWO – Accreditation

How do you stand out as a coach or mentor to demonstrate your professionalism and standard of ethics? Accreditation is your internationally recognised and approved standard/level of accomplishment that demonstrates your training, experience and ability/competence as a coach or mentor.

This is our promise to you:

• To support all our coaches, mentors, and students worldwide.
• To be a resource centre for everyone interested in the wonderful, powerful, life changing phenomenon known as coaching and mentoring.
• To provide a platform of support and guidance for all our members, with coaches, mentors, and teams worldwide to assist them.
As mentioned in our article the IIC&M launched their new CPD based ‘Professional’ level for Accredited Coaches & Mentors.

Wherever individuals are within their professional development, this is their opportunity to move their professional skills forward. CPD means self-managed and career-long professional development and a process by which everyone benefits.

The IIC&M have long recognised that CPD forms part of the accreditation process and therefore have introduced the Professional Level for Accredited Coaches.

We’re taking a positive step towards change this year – JOIN US!

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The preferred International Accreditation Body for Coaches, Mentors, Training Programmes, and Clients
Creating excellence in the coaching and mentoring professions

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www.IICandM.org
“Face your Strengths®” Methodology
by Avra Lyraki & Evan Fotis Georgoulakis (Greece)

Ever wished you could instantly “read” people’s intentions or even their personality? Ever wondered how your nonverbal signals are perceived by your peers, family, friends, and even your partner? Ever thought how you can influence people around you by applying your peak strengths in your personal communication style?

Those questions can be answered easily through the application of an innovative methodology established by Avra Lyraki (Ph.D) & Evan Fotis Georgoulakis (Physiognomist), which combines the fields of Morpho-Psychology with Communications Coaching in order to assess and reinforce one’s Personality Strengths, enhancing their personal communication and thus their influence.

The pillars of this methodology consist of the principles of Physiognomy and the principles of Coaching and Positive Psychology, according to which the powerful features of one’s personality – external and internal – motivate them to achieve the desired results through their communication. In his book “Managing Oneself”, Peter F. Drucker expounds how you can achieve true and lasting excellence by operating from a combination of your strengths and self-knowledge. To discover your strengths, you need to use feedback analysis. Every time you make a key decision or take a key action, write down what you expect will happen. Practiced consistently, the method will show you where your strengths lie and will also show what you are doing or failing to do that deprives you of the full benefits of your strengths.

1. What results are you skilled at generating?
2. What abilities do you need to enhance in order to get the results you want?
3. What unproductive habits are preventing you from creating the outcomes you desired?

In identifying opportunities for improvement, don’t focus on your weaknesses, because it will take you far more energy to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than to improve from first-rate performance to excellence. Instead, concentrate on – and build on – your strengths.

For each individual, a personal communication strategy is built using a toolset of Morpho-Psychology’s personality assessment, along with strengths psychometrics questionnaires that spots exactly the coachee’s strengths. This helps each person create their personal communication inventory that will help them know thyself and communicate effectively their identity and goals. The information conveyed through a person’s face, from both expressions and also the structure and proportions is unmistakably powerful and immediate.
Physiognomy is the method that evaluates and studies the proportions of the face, and the individual characteristics from which we can draw conclusions about the underlying tendencies and predispositions of the personality. It is an ancient yet evolutionary method that reflects information about what lies within us and is revealed on our face.

There is a direct correlation between morphological and psychological characteristics. Their form and functionality is directly connected. Form follows function. Humans as a species have evolved for self-preservation and reproduction reasons with the subconscious ability to instantaneously gather information about people around from a face to face encounter.

Our external features are visible, apparent. Whether we are able to decode what is displayed and available for all, used to depend solely upon our sensory acuity and perceptive observation.

Through a single glance, information about attitude, health, fertility, and character can be perceived. This can explain why our first impression is more often than not more accurate.

In modern societies, people have been conditioned to respond to and follow social rules, which as a result inhibit their natural sensory acuity.

Our facial features are visible to all. Whether we are able to decode them accurately depends on the combination of our sensory acuity, our perceptive faculties, combined with knowledge of the meanings. Through proper application of Physiognomy’s specific rules of proportions, association and meaning of each feature, we can now have insight into who we truly are. This knowledge helps us in distinguishing the differences between our true potential, from the stereotyped image that we and our society have built and conditioned for ourselves.

Further, through Communications Coaching we focus and highlight the coachee’s personality strengths. The latter derives from certain psychometric tools and personal sessions, where the coachee becomes aware of his strengths and how to apply them in any given situation or goal.

Working with the coachee’s signature strengths, developing them and furthermore building a tailor-made personal communication strategy is the key in influencing and above all conveying any message according to the set goal with clarity and confidence.

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**STAGE ONE – Face Analysis (External Evaluation)**

Assessment of the external morphological form, structure and facial features and its correlation to inner traits and predispositions.

- Face Shape and corresponding Temperament
  - Extrovert-Controlled –Introvert
  - Dynamic-Controlled –Passive
  - Intellectual-Emotional-Physical
- Predominant - Contradicting features
- Balances – Imbalances
- Inherited, Static vs. Dynamic, evolving traits
- Strengths vs. Weaknesses
- Individual Features
  - Long term behaviour
  - Immediate responses

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**STAGE TWO - Personality Strengths Analysis (Internal)**

- Assessment and analysis of the inner personality traits
- Mapping and prioritising the coachee’s goals
- Exploration of coachee’s strengths through established self-assessment tools
- Setting the right communication profile according to coachee’s personal style
- Combining personality traits such as strengths and virtues to the attainment of the coachee’s goals.
STAGE THREE – Effective Communication Profiling Strategy (Internal & External)

When the Face Analysis and the Strengths Assessment has been completed, we partner with the coachee in order to build his/her communications strategy in setting and achieving their set goal through the appropriate communication techniques focusing on the development of his/her strengths.

The novelty of this methodology which is based on the overall dynamic analysis of both the external features of a human face and each person’s internal characteristic enables and empowers them in:

- Setting the right communication strategy according to their personality by capitalising on their internal & external strengths.
- Increasing their awareness of their personal communication style.
- Helping them to incorporate their top internal and external unique features.
- Identifying their personal strategies for developing communication intelligence.
- Discovering how to deal effectively with conflict situations in cross-cultural encounters.
- Empowering their communication strategy towards the achievement of their goals.

BENEFITS OF PARTNERING WITH US

In an era of constant changes, instability and financial challenges, the need for effective communication and strong interpersonal relations is of utmost importance. Our success or failure in any field of life hugely depends on our ability to communicate effectively and persuade people around us:

Professionally with our bosses, clients, colleagues or personnel.
In relations with our significant other.
In our family with our spouse and children.

People with the insight of instant behavioural pattern recognition are able to:
- Inspire
- Persuade
- Gain trust
- Succeed in their goals

Incorporating our services in your everyday life, will help you expand your insight on:
- What our face reveals about your personality.
- How your emotional state is communicated through your facial expressions and posture before even saying a word.
- How to use Physiognomy to effectively decode people’s behaviour and actions.
- How to comprehend what motivates each person to act the way they do.
- How to use your strengths to convey your messages in a compatible way to your personality.
- Leave a positive impression using communication secrets conformed to our unique personality traits.
- How to build your personal image and brand Target Audience
- Executives expanding their toolset/success when working with individuals and teams with diverse communication backgrounds.
- Business leaders wanting to become more effective in identifying key personality features of their peers and build solid relationships with their teams.
- People who want to enhance their personal communication skills and impact either in the professional or social environment.

If you would like to know more about us, we welcome you at: www.faceyourstrengths.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

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