



A PERSONAL COACH FOR SENIOR MANAGERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS – WHY, AND WHAT FOR?

Dear Reader,

As a business owner or senior manager, you obviously know what coaching is. But don't you wonder why **senior execs like you** work with a coach, and on what type of issues? Most of my senior clients had thought that they had already "outgrown" coaching.

Browse these few pages to learn from a seasoned professional about what you stand to gain from a service that takes many years to learn, and a lifetime to perfect!

This is also of course recommended reading if you are toying with the idea of teaming up with a coach, but still have questions or concerns.

The following pages are an excerpt of my **ebook The Proposition of Coaching for Managers and Business Owners** which I originally started compiling to help potential clients get some hands-on knowledge and orientation in a field that is becoming a little crowded of late.

Here are some of the areas the full 28-page version covers in four parts:

The Coaching Proposition:

(1) Who works with management coaches, and why? (2) What goals, and whose goals (3) What to expect in a coaching programme, and (4) What an individual session might look like.

Finding the Right Coach:

(1) The importance of a personal fit (2) How and where to meet professional coaches (3) Who I am, and what do my clients say about our work together?

The Specifics:

For those who have already decided to work with a coach, including: (1) Cost, fee structure, and who pays (2) Results (3) Coaches and coaching associations.

In the **Annex**, I address issues such as the philosophical fundamentals of some coaching schools, and some myths that deserve to be debunked. I am happy to send you the full version with my compliments.

To obtain your copy, just send your business details to my email annette@an-edge-for-you.com - no strings attached!

I wish you a pleasant read, and ultimately, a fruitful and enriching experience with the coach of your choice.



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THE THREE TARGET GROUPS FOR EXECUTIVE COACHING

Coaching has gained momentum over the past 20 years, and will probably keep doing so: When people need to perform and be effective in complex and ever changing situations and under lots of pressure, sustainable ways of speeding up their learning curve, as well as being at the top of their game whenever they need to be have a high appeal. Coaching clients also report that nothing supports people in bridging the gap between *knowing what to do* and *knowing how to do it* quite as effectively as working with their coach. **This is very relevant for people who have to be careful to invest their energy into the right things, and stay in optimum condition.**

While every assignment is new and different, some typical perspectives and sample issues:

(1) Corporate senior managers, CEOs of mid-size companies

The famous thin air at the top: senior managers have great positions, impact and usually also compensation packages. But occasions where they can discuss their own matters openly,



unfiltered and on par with someone without endangering their position are few and far between. Always being on the alert, moving between power parties, interests and coalitions, i.e. acting smartly in the political arena in addition to excelling in their field, requires a lot of energy. It also makes the faculty to look at oneself and one's own function from other people's perspectives an absolute must. A good coach will prove an invaluable asset in helping to build this faculty.

I am a valuable partner for clients who want to look beyond their own nose and their positioning in the company. Often, I am the first person with whom they voice their deep-

est concerns and most fundamental goals (i.e. what they demand of themselves) - for capable people act out of an inner motivation and drive. The things that others admire and envy may still fall short of what they have to achieve in order to *feel* successful.

Many people I work with think in systems and know that they can only realize their potential impact by not just influencing their teams, but by proactively influencing complex contexts. This is where partners become scarce: people with whom they can discuss and design high-level strategies that help them make a leap forward are hard to find. That's where a good coach comes in.

A FUNDAMENTAL BARRIER TO WORKING WITH A COACH

In my experience, this is the number one barrier to coaching relationships - potential clients simply **cannot imagine that a conversation with somebody they have only just met can have such an impact.**

Many people don't have much experience with relationships that are at the same time **exploring, inspiring, challenging and supporting.** A paid consultant isn't necessarily where they expect to find that relationship of equals, where two highly skilled individuals are focusing on the goals and issues of one of them: the client. Let's look at how

many coaches come across, and what their background is, to understand why sometimes, the alarm bells start ringing when manager meets coach.

Two common types:

The helper: With their rhetoric around help, empathy and process, those coaches are just not cutting it with their target audience. Even if our managers would give anything (figuratively speaking...) for a truly stimulating, inspiring and resourceful dialogue, they just can't imagine having such a conversation with those coaches.

The know-all: This is a different breed, dressed more like managers but often coming from a position of "I am 20 years more experienced than you" or "I might know better than you", which are messages that don't sit well with managers and especially business owners. Can you blame them...?

If this has been your experience, don't be fooled: there are real professionals out there, who combine knowledge about organisational behaviour, complex systems, psychology, and leadership!

(2) Ambitious B-1+B-2 managers

This is where the big numbers used to be in coaching: While multinationals demand results within the shortest possible time, they are often willing to support their managers to take charge of a new role. Examples:

- (1) Delegating a trusted expert professional to a foreign subsidiary, especially if his new role will be a managing one.
- (2) Transitioning from line to project management: when having to lead differently wired individuals and experts, updating one's management repertoire – fast – is often the only effective solution.
- (3) Disputed promotions: coaching can either help that person to master their new role, or to win the assurance and support of the relevant superiors even before they are promoted.
- (4) Big-ticket jobs: when the manager's job is not just about excelling in their area of expertise, but also managing a complex cobweb of expectations. Here, the external perspective of a coach can make the crucial difference.

(3) Entrepreneurs/Comp owners

This group is not easily inclined towards turning to others for help. They have had to master many challenges themselves, and did so successfully. Also, they are quite budget-conscious and will carefully ponder a decision to work with any type of consultant.

However, there are some recurring motives where they, too, seek out coaches:

- (1) The entrepreneur has health issues or faces family challenges, and understands they need to let go more. They know that they have to do some ground work before they can start

delegating accountability and/or outsourcing. They have no time for trial-and-error.

- (2) The owner starts noticing a lack of strategic and innovative goals, and derives no satisfaction from fine-tuning processes. They want a sparring partner to design the company's future, and reenergize the top team with fresh strategies.

- (3) The entrepreneur is thinking about exit strategies. They understand that the company isn't of much value without them as long as they are at the heart of all processes. This creates the motivation to work on processes and formal structures that would allow them to leave the company after a sell-out. As they are painfully aware of having to personally drive this process, they may procrastinate on this vital topic. Until they team up with a coach.

- (4) The entrepreneur has brought his company into a partnership and realizes that they don't enjoy making decisions with their peers, and see their engagement and commitment dropping. Despite good intentions, they keep falling back into old, now inappropriate or ineffective patterns.

- (5) Succession: torn between their responsibility as entrepreneurs and parents, they are looking for the best solutions – from “bringing the children into management positions” to “hiring professionals, family only in supervisory bodies”.

- (6) Generational change: when two generations work together in the company, emancipating oneself from the role carried over from family life is a challenging task – but one that is necessary to tackle, for this can otherwise split the company into two camps.

WHO COACHING APPEALS TO

Generally, people will consider working with a coach in a special situation. This might involve a higher-level job, a dilemma, difficult decisions, crossroads, and the resulting negative feelings. Some people, however, are able to anticipate these demanding or stressful situations and start working with a coach before they even occur.

In other cases, people require shortcuts so that they are sure to tackle a new challenge successfully – e.g. when experts are posted abroad and propelled into CFO or even CEO positions.

The number one precondition in working with top executives is that they wish to convert the high level of stress they experience into eustress: the kind that fuels and motivates them, rather than the kind that causes stomach ulcers.

“Something I don't want to do without anymore is a person with whom I can discuss all aspects of my professional life, without having to be afraid that she might use her knowledge politically within the organisation, pass on information, and/or give me unsolicited, unqualified advice. I want inspiring questions that encourage me to find new options in difficult decisionmaking situations, and rethink alternatives. This is a tough combination to find in one's circle of friends or family. My sessions with Annette help me time and again to position myself within the company, find new energy to tackle issues, and stay focused on the real priorities.”

general manager, engineer, 50



FINDING THE RIGHT COACH

At some points in life, there is so much at stake or things get so confusing that only an in-depth dialogue can help regain some perspective. A dialogue that will give you new inspirations, and allows you to think freely about your issues and concerns. As a result, you can look far ahead again, and priorities and next steps will become obvious – if sometimes a few other ones than you might have expected. Obviously this type of conversation requires a very special partner: someone who lets you explore your own thoughts and who supports you, but at the same challenges your thinking when you start going round in circles. Someone who brings valuable insights to the table and does all the above is indeed a combination that is difficult to find in your circle of friends or family.

A coach's experience, combined with their change management expertise, is difficult to beat in order to take full advantage of the resources, solution ideas and motivation that you already bring to the table. This, in a nutshell, is the proposition of coaching.

Despite the fact that this sort of conversation requires expertise and skill of the coach, it is also something that you'd really only like to enter into with the "right sort of person". **But who is the right sort of coach for you?**

A coach is not just a process expert; first and foremost, (s)he is a human being. Coaches have bios and individual journeys of how they became a coach in the first place – for coaching typically is a second or even third career. I think this is even more important than the next point on the list: the *professional* background of your future coach. It may matter to you whether your coach has had a career in business, or comes from a teaching or adult education background.

For a first encounter, I recommend these pointers:

- > Would you be willing to trust this person? And if so, do you believe they could challenge and inspire you? And quite simply – can you "connect" with their style?
- > Does this person show awareness of the reality of the executive level? (or if more relevant: do they have entrepreneurial experience?)
- > Is their experience and reputation comparable to yours, and in line with the importance of the assignment?
- > Do they have a sense of humour?
- > Are they able to work both tight and loose, demanding but also supportive when the going gets rough?
- > Do they have enough groundedness not to get charmed by (your 😊) power?
- > Do they demonstrate insight during your very first conversation?

A FEW WORDS ON MY PROFESSIONAL BIO

Apart from being a full-time certified professional coach since 2000, I graduated in psychology, studied economics and economic history, and owned a management consultant company with 25+ staff. Over the last 14+ years, I have worked in many Western and Central European countries with managers from 15 nationalities.

My services range from coaching and consulting with top managers individually to working with management teams. I bring to the table high respect for my client's goals, a quick grasp of their personality and values, and sound knowledge about leadership, innovation, systems and change management, among other things. I am passionate about helping top executives **reclaim energy and motivation**, find **new meaning** in the challenges they are facing, and **more choices** in confusing, overwhelming or mission-critical situations - whether this relates to their management team, their positioning in an international context, or more personal matters. My ongoing further education allows me to find resourceful solutions that inspire my clients, fit their personalities, backgrounds and contexts, and obviously at the level I am working, help them produce highly convincing results in a minimum of time.

To request your complimentary copy of the full ebook, feel free to contact me at annette@an-edge-for-you.com or give me a call at +420 603 151 550 or +49 178 97 515 97. If I can't take your call I'll usually respond to you by the next day. **For further information** see my LinkedIn profile, or visit my website: www.an-edge-for-you.com.