

## **CASE STUDY** by Rosanne Cole

“Asked for a conservative estimate of the monetary payoff from the coaching they got, these managers described an average return of more than \$100,000 or about six times what the coaching had cost their companies.”  
Fortune Magazine, February 2001

Melanie (not her real name) was a Manager in a leading Accounting practice, responsible for a large Audit division covering the North of the UK, and was being considered for promotion to Partner level. During her appraisal discussion some issues were raised regarding her personal impact and ability to persuade senior colleagues to adopt her proposals and she opted for some one-to-one coaching. She met three different prospective coaches and selected me as someone she felt comfortable working with and who would offer the right balance of challenge and support. We met for a preliminary discussion about what she wanted to achieve, her preferred learning style and to scope out her objectives. We agreed that 7 x 2-hour sessions would be about right and for the first session I asked her to write out her SMART objectives so we could monitor progress.

Over the following six months we met monthly and I worked with her on improving her initial impact on new people (music and dance) with emphasis on behavioural change, and on her influencing skills. I introduced her to the concept of productive and unproductive styles of influence and to the balance between assertive and responsive behaviour.

Between sessions we agreed she would undertake some challenging new approaches and I provided her with some practical tips on ways for tackling her confidence issues. At the start of each session we reviewed her progress and discussed successes and/or setbacks. By the end of the six months she had obtained positive feedback about her improved confidence in meetings with new clients and had also won support for a proposal for changing an established working practice. After 6 sessions we agreed that she had achieved what she had set out to and ended the coaching sessions. Six months later she called me to let me know that she had been promoted to Partner.