

## **SHOULD EVERYONE HAVE A COACH?** by Kevin McKee

“Line Managers are the greatest untapped pool of coaching potential in any organisation..”

Last year’s CMI survey on coaching revealed that 80 per cent of Executives believe they would benefit from coaching. The vast majority of managers (93%) thought coaching should be available to all employees. When asked about specific benefits of coaching the highest rated were: enhancing team morale, generating individual responsibility and supporting people through restructuring and change.

Costs usually restrict the use of external coaches to senior management levels and other key individuals. It is surprising in some ways, therefore, that so few organisations use specialist **internal** coaches, though undoubtedly many have the ability. Despite today’s lean, mean multi-tasked HR environment we still feel that more could be done to equip HR/Development people with better coaching skills and encourage them to use these (although we acknowledge that confidentiality is an issue).

**Line Managers** are the greatest untapped pool of coaching potential in any organisation. David Goleman’s assessment of a range of Leadership styles concluded that it was the least used of six key styles despite its proven ability to enhance business results. As he says “Admittedly there is a paradox in coaching’s positive effect on business performance because coaching focuses primarily on personal development, not on immediate work-related tasks. Even so, coaching produces results”.

Unfortunately coaching can seem a time-consuming and unfocused process to managers who are not properly trained. The importance of training coaches is underlined by the areas people want to be coached in. Among their top perceived needs are: personal effectiveness, emotional intelligence and assertiveness. This looks like a daunting list to the untrained coach.

It seems as if far more people could and should have a coach. We can achieve this through smarter use of external coaches and enabling more bosses and specialists to provide coaching.

“Executive coaches are not for the meek. They’re for people who value unambiguous feedback. All coaches have one thing in common, it’s that they are ruthlessly results-oriented”.

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