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developing leaders, delivering results

6th Ridler Report Workshops

‘Best Practice in Coaching – the Sponsor’s Perspective’

June 2016 ‘GROUP COACHING’

Sponsored by KDVI

Rentokil Initial

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67

31,400

£1.8b

2m

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Initial Hygiene

Initial Workwear

Rentokil Initial – the context 2010

- Falling business numbers
- Leadership in crisis / transition
- Company of disparate parts – autonomous units
- Complex and unwieldy portfolio
- Significant lack of investment over 2 previous decades of acquisition growth
- Basic propositions which were highly lucrative and good businesses
  - low barriers to entry so some major threats to market share
- Entrepreneurial and energetic in spirit
- Passionate and dedicated in attitude
- Lack of management standards and disciplines
- New CEO: Strategy focussed on ‘building capability’ and ‘building strong relationships’

Living Leadership – A programme to embed disciplines and raise standards

- The importance of deepening our emotional intelligence to build strong teams and a coaching culture as a conduit in driving stronger results.
- Experiential programme with regular Group Coaching sessions.
- Compelling inputs to improve knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Changed the input over the years but it's the Group Coaching that we have strengthened and enhanced and remains the single most important factor in delivering transformation.
- Programmes have 16 participants – group coaching in two groups of 8.
- Growing our capability to facilitate internally.

Group Coaching – what do we do?

- Group Coaching is firmly at the heart of the learning and is a critical component amidst a customised agenda of other content.
- We run at least 4 coaching sessions in each programme.
- We create the groups to maximise diversity.
- Each Group is led by two facilitators (usually one female, one male; often one is external, the other internal).
- The first session is the all important Timeline exercise which bonds the Group and helps to identify their ‘One Big Thing’.
- Subsequent sessions are focussed on what they choose to bring – and 4 participants each get about an hour from the Group on their issue.
- All participants practise coaching skills whilst gaining insight into their issues concurrently.
- We have learned a great deal – and continue to do so…especially around the development of facilitators.

Challenges

- Practical Set up



- Individual Developmental Journey



- Culture considerations



Practical Considerations

- Diarising the time up front and **getting commitment** up front to attend all sessions.
- Finding / training internal skilled support to run the groups **with sustained commitment.**
- Setting up good **supervision** for the group coaches. They themselves are learning.
- External facilitators are expensive and in any case we **need to build internal capability.**
- Selling the methodology to **stakeholders**.
- Selling the methodology to the **participants**!
- **Holding the line** on the process and ensuring the time was kept sacrosanct.
- **Resisting the pressure** to add projects or applying specific learning from inputs.
- **Holding our nerve** on the strategy.
- Organisation changes meaning **line relationships** coexist in the group.



Individual Development Journey

- Being open in a macho business. Loved Johari Window as a foundational model …and the lifeline was very significant for most.
- Getting the difference between content and process. Regular check-ins on what's happening here?
- Coaching in practice was hard. Ask more than tell as a groundrule. Use of GROW speed coaching questions.
- Bringing Topics. Invited broad range from other areas of life / role played performance conversations. Need for a small toolkit.
- Business as usual gets in the way of practising / applying coaching. However the level of support received by individuals is significant and an excellent insight - most make quite a shift in their work relationships.
- Slowing down the pace of activity is very hard for some. Careful to pace-match but its still important to slow down.
- Making reflection time valid and relevant. Serious activity that we set up with journals and conclude with presentation to a senior 'panel' to report back on personal change.



Cultural Considerations

- How do we get more alignment across senior teams? Everyone is under pressure from BAU.
- Gritty business – culture is fairly JDI in places. For some the coaching style is 'flowery'. Essential to use internal senior managers as part of coaching team.
- Pragmatic culture and coaching culture are not easy bed fellows… How much do we need to drive a *coaching* culture? – do we rather need a *contingent* culture – less JDI…less abdication… more situational leadership in all 4 quadrants.
- Sometimes stumble over unacceptable behaviour – need to work on the system too.
- Existential angst! How relevant can it be in the work space?
- How much can the culture support vertical learning? Do we really know the outcome of such development before we start? Must be prepared for some voting with their feet.
- How might we move to self managed groups? Not sure this is realistic at the moment. Need to consider a structure to facilitate this.



Positives outweigh the challenges ten fold!



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