

5 Essential Reasons For Coaching In A Recession

"If managers manage by the principles of coaching, they get the job done to a higher standard and develop their people simultaneously" - John Whitmore, 'Coaching for Performance'.

What else can be achieved by coaching? And why is this beneficial in a recession?

1. You engage staff.

Recent research by HayGroup and WorldatWork revealed that the downturn is prompting organisations to increase their focus on engaging staff. This is backed up by Ipsos Mori research which states that although two-thirds of the country's leading firms admitted to reducing staff numbers and cutting or freezing salaries in the past year, attracting, motivating and retaining the best employees was the factor most cited by executives for boosting their future business success.

So how does coaching help? It encourages people to take responsibility and achieve more than they thought possible. It's a very supportive, yet challenging, style of leadership. It strengthens relationships. It helps build an emotional connection between people and their work so that they want to do their best and put in extra effort to do so. It builds loyalty and this can help you retain good staff during the downturn and beyond, when they might have more choice but decide to stay because of your leadership. People feel valued and appreciated, leading to good team morale and a more pleasant working environment.

2. You develop your people cost-effectively.

During any given day, managers are presented with lots of 'Coachable Moments'. There are opportunities to instigate a conversation or respond to someone using a constructive coaching style. You can easily incorporate a coaching approach into your everyday management of people. It doesn't have to be a formal 'add-on' to the day job. And the benefit is that by encouraging people to think through issues with your support (but not directly providing the solution), they apply themselves, problem-solve, take action, and perform more effectively in the short and long-term as a result.

3. You improve productivity and reduce costs.

"Achieving more with less" is a constant refrain that I hear from my public sector clients. It's absolutely essential to get the job done productively, efficiently and accurately. Striving to have an organisation full of competent, high-performing teams and individuals should be admired. Coaching encourages people to consider their motivation to perform their role, how best to do it, and to take ownership for doing it to a high standard each and every time.

Coaching is particularly effective when used during a period of change. It helps people become more responsive, flexible and adaptable to the changes they are facing.

4. You reduce procrastination.

It's very easy to put things off until 'mañana' but the difficulty then arises when people are faced with an overwhelming workload, sky-high stress levels, and seemingly impossible deadlines to meet. When you use a coaching style, you

encourage people to face up to their workload, help them prioritise, and work out a systematic approach to getting back on track and in control of their job. It's such a relief to be in that position.

And, finally, who coaches the coaches? For top management within an organisation, executive coaching comes into its own during a downturn and throughout periods of significant change.

5. More focused, successful leadership.

"The coaching environment allowed me to safely articulate, in an environment divorced of day-to-day working pressures, problems and issues that I was facing in driving a newly formed, young business team forward. The big success of these sessions was that it got me to explore ways and approaches to improve the effectiveness of my team and myself, and then own the mini action plans and timescales to achieve this. It was surprising how quickly I moved matters along after only a few sessions"- **Recent client testimonial.** To read others, see the Testimonials page on www.creatingacoachingculture.co.uk.

The benefits of regular executive coaching sessions include:

- Clearer focus and direction.
- You get things done, firstly, because you come up with the plan and are motivated to implement it and, secondly, because you know your coach will review progress and successes with you at the subsequent session.
- It's completely bespoke therefore you address what you need and gain maximum benefit from it, with no distractions.
- It's an opportunity to discuss issues of concern in a completely confidential manner with a qualified business coach you can trust and who wants you to succeed. Very often senior managers feel they can't confide in their own manager or peers so they're left with few options. A business coach who is encouraging, challenging and non-judgemental, with a good grasp of the business environment and current issues, can be a godsend.

Now is the time to invest in a coach for yourself to help you excel at what you do, especially in these trying times. And if you equip **all** your managers with coaching skills, you'll be able to achieve so much more for your business, your employees, and your customers, now and in the future.

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