

8 Reasons Why “CEO Coaching” Enhances ROI

by Jay Vierling

So why does a CEO need a coach? It’s all about getting results.

Today’s president or CEO faces more pressures than ever. Business leaders are dealing with rapidly changing markets, technologies and workforces, increased financial and legal scrutiny . . . and more. Top executives who feel that they can handle it all by themselves are more likely to burn out, make poor decisions or make *no* decisions – potentially resulting in significant loss of opportunities, human resources and financial resources.

An effective CEO Coach is a person who understands these challenges because they’ve been there themselves. And the one-on-one format provides the best environment for safe, yet frank interactions that result in positive outcomes.

So what kind of outcomes can a CEO expect from working with the right coach? Following are 8 reasons why working with a CEO Coach is one of the best investments you can make in effective leadership . . .

1. Motivation:

It’s lonely at the top and it can be an emotional drain to deal with tough issues all by yourself. Having a trusted third party to test ideas or work through difficult issues will instill confidence and provide a comfort-level to act within the organization. A new freedom comes from being able to brainstorm in a supportive environment with a fellow leader. And, like an athletic coach, a credible CEO Coach will stretch the top executive to higher levels of thinking, effectiveness *and passion*. Done properly, the CEO Coaching process is energizing!

2. Accountability:

The world of business is getting more complex, with plenty of opportunities for leaders to get off track. The recent lapses of Enron and



WorldCom executives have led forward-thinking organizations to see the value of CEO Coaching for ethical accountability. Even more common, is the potential for top executives to lose strategic focus in the day-to-day operations of their companies. A good CEO Coach will hold the leader accountable to guiding principles that have been established by the organization and the strategic process, pushing for the best from a CEO, without the obvious down side risks of getting this kind of direction from within the organization.

3. Consistency:

The process of defining and articulating a clear vision for the organization is a challenge for many CEOs. An effective CEO Coach will aid the CEO in shaping and crystallizing a consistent direction with consistent goals. Like a personal trainer, the CEO Coach helps the CEO “work the plan” to obtain the desired results, while providing honest feedback when the executive starts to stray.

It is the reinforcement of vision and direction within the leader that clarifies goals and expectations for the organization. In many situations, the coaching role can be expanded to the role of “facilitator” for the CEO’s executive team, enabling the strategic planning process. In this way, the CEO Coach may become more “hands on” to help propagate or formulate a consistent direction at the management level.

4. Confidentiality:

CEOs are generally reluctant to be completely open with employees, staff, board, and even family, for fear of negative consequences. This stifles leadership because the restraint of ideas and concerns can limit the kind of critical and courageous thinking that often produces the best solution. CEO Coaching offers the perfect venue for safely testing concepts without risk. This process also gives the leader an opportunity to vent, express fears and be vulnerable to a trusted third party, in a constructive atmosphere. All of this points to the essentialness of trust in the CEO Coaching relationship.

5. Objectivity:

Sometimes business leaders get too personally invested in an issue to view it objectively. Neither the CEO nor the rest of the management team is immune to becoming inwardly focused and entrenched by subjective agendas. A qualified CEO Coach can bring a broad range of business experiences to bear on a situation, and as an outsider, the coach isn't tied to departmental conflicts or relationships that can interfere with sound judgements. In this way, a third party can help the CEO see a matter in a more detached fashion and prevent costly mistakes.



6. Perspective:

We all have our own set of experiences that can limit how we view things. When facing an important decision, a CEO can benefit from the council of a fellow executive who has faced similar issues. Exposure to leadership scenarios from a different industry or market helps the business leader see a situation in multiple dimensions. In this way, a CEO Coach can pay big dividends by unlocking the door to new and better solutions.

7. Experience:

Top executives frequently seek knowledge and experience in the form of written memoirs or biographies of prominent leaders. A CEO Coach can be a "living" reference source offering direct personal experience in areas that are less familiar to the CEO. This is where a seasoned coach, or one with special expertise, is able to add the most value to the relationship.

8. Results:

What is it worth to you and your company to set a more profitable course for future business? How costly is a misguided decision that could potentially set your business back strategically and financially for years to come? For a cost that is probably less than an entry-level employee, CEO Coaching offers a huge ROI to organizations, in the form of effective leadership that obtains tangible and measurable results. And at the end of the day, what counts is getting results!



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