COACHING THE COACH

When it comes to team leadership, CEOs and executives helm the ship by encouraging their crew to work together and use the resources at hand. Although some guide their teams safely to their destination, others end up lost at sea.
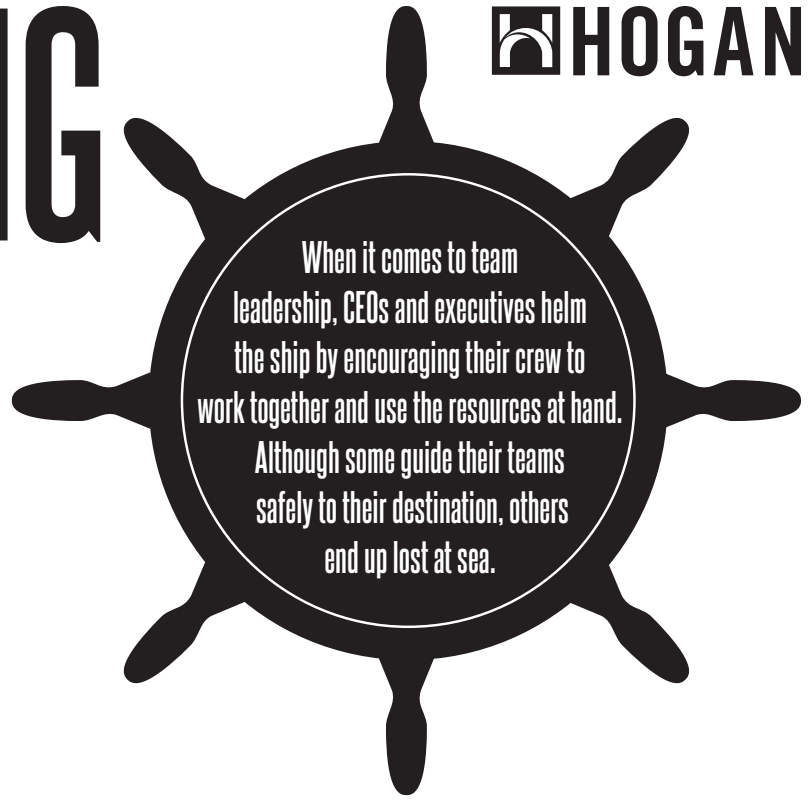
Organizational and executive coaches can help leaders keep their teams on track when they begin to flounder.

"High-quality personality assessments provide powerful information about participants' strengths, weaknesses and reputations," said Trish Kellett, director of the Hogan Coaching Network. "However, without an effective developmental framework, it's difficult to translate that information into measurable improvement."

Organizational coaches provide the feedback and suggestions necessary for leaders to create such a framework.

Hogan distributor Peter Berry Consultancy (PBC) compared the personality profiles of 366 Australian leadership coaches to those of 287 Australian CEOs to examine each group's personality preferences. PBC defines an organizational coach as one who "[facilitates] the psychological or emotional growth of the coachee in an organizational context." This type of growth is essential if a leader is to understand the psychological and emotional qualities of his employees enough to build a high-performing team.

HPI Coaches scored significantly higher than CEOs on Hogan Personality Inventory's (HPI) Interpersonal Sensitivity scale. The difference in scoring suggests "coaches focus on building their client relationships based on open, positive, and careful communication and to come across as warm, authentic, and considerate," said Fiona Klat-Smith, senior consultant with Peter Berry Consultancy.

CEOs have a tendency to be tough self-critics, so a leadership coach's thoughtful approach is particularly important to their development.

Not surprisingly, CEOs scored much higher on the HPI's Ambition scale "confirming their drive, determination, and confidence leading organizations through ambiguity towards successful outcomes," she explained.

Unlike coaches, CEOs are less likely to be tolerant of the shortcomings of others and may have a tendency to let their frustrations show in social interactions.

Their moderate score on the Learning Approach scale suggests CEOs tend to search for the underlying reasons for things. Organizational coaches are up to the challenge with a higher Learning Approach score.

"Through explaining human behavior, they can help CEOs better respond to those that they see falling short of expectations," said Klat-Smith.

HDS

PBC also compared the Hogan Development Survey (HDS) profiles of the two groups and found significant differences on the Colorful, Skeptical, and Reserved scales. Organizational coaches score higher overall on the Colorful scale which indicates that they have a tendency to self-promote. This may be helpful when building a client base.

"This may also be a necessary skill to help authenticate the coach at the beginning of his or her coaching engagements, particularly as CEOs are higher on Skeptical suggesting a more mistrusting, suspicious and defensive disposition," said Klat-Smith.

CEOs had a much higher Reserved score than coaches, which suggests that they tend to become more self-reliant, uncommunicative, and distant when under stress. The benefit of a coach in this instance is to inspire openness and trust to better evaluate leadership style.

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MVPI

Coaches and CEOs differ greatly in their Altruism, Affiliation, and Power scores on the Motives Values Preferences Inventory (MVPI). Although CEOs may be more interested in the ROI of coaching and development (Commerce), a higher score in Altruism suggests that coaches are motivated by improving client welfare and morale. Klat-Smith referred to a recent paper by Grant (2012) "where he argues on a number of levels that financial ROI is a poor measure of coaching success and instead our attention should be more on measuring well-being and workplace engagement where the focus is on the extent to which the individual is flourishing and is feeling engaged and operating in the sweet spot of the performance zone."

"Organizational coaches are also motivated by Affiliation," said Klat-Smith. "At one level, this consolidates their enjoyment of connecting with others regularly, but also points to a deeper desire to collaborate."

Collaborative coaching encourages CEOs to surface thoughts and insights that will help them reach their end goal.

CEOs are more motivated by Power than coaches. They are personally driven to get ahead and care deeply about being successful.

"A coach's role is to help them evaluate what they consider as meaningful success and how to reach these goals," said Klat-Smith.

5 Suggestions from the Hogan Coaching Network for Building an Effective Development Framework

1 **Provide education and training**. Formal programs, classes, or workshops; coaching; mentoring; webinars; or on-the-job training are all valuable resources to build and reinforce an employee's skills and improve performance.

2 **Leverage strengths**. If a leader lacks creative and innovative ability but excels in effective teambuilding, he or she can leverage his or her ability to create an environment that facilitates and nurtures the team's new and different ideas.

3 **Compensate with alternative behaviors**. Use positive behaviors to rebuild a reputation marked by counterproductive behaviors. As positive behaviors are demonstrated multiple times, the manager's reputation will begin to change, and often new behaviors become the person's natural behaviors.

4 **Support weakness with resources**. When someone has a clear weakness, such as micromanaging, sometimes the most effective development strategy is to compensate by supporting the employee with additional resources, such as a direct report who excels at dotting the I's and crossing the T's.

5 **Redesign the job or assignment**. More effective than allowing an individual's performance to flag, it is sometimes possible to alter an individual's job requirements to remove key roles or responsibilities and assign him or her elsewhere in the organization.

Grant, A.M. (2012). ROI is a poor measure of coaching success: towards a more holistic approach using a well-being and engagement framework. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory. Research and Practice, 1*, 1 -12

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