

Building a more productive workforce by leveraging coaching as a development process



The company

Capgemini Consulting is a global leader in working with clients to significantly transform their organisation, with deep industry experience in all major sectors.

With 3,600 consultants worldwide, Capgemini Consulting offers a range of capabilities designed to support their clients in making the right decisions for their organisations.

Capgemini Consulting aims to recruit the best people and keep them. That means making the most of their talents, and helping them to make the most of their careers with the company. They invest heavily in Learning and Development to keep their people at the top of their game, for the benefit of their clients, the company and the employees themselves.

The problem

A number of our consultants were encountering blocks to their personal development which conventional L&D interventions were not addressing.

L&D focused on capability improvement via a Global Competency Model and Global Curriculum. This reinforced a distinction between the 'Can Doers' and the 'Can't Doers'. We realised we were creating a quantitative performance culture which valued things like "numbers = good = promotion" and "busy = good = promotion" to the exclusion of everything else. Our 'high' performers were becoming increasingly less self aware.

For our senior people, we had an ad hoc approach to engaging external 'coaching' help. Upon investigation, these 'coaches' were really offering mentoring and in most cases did little to wean the client off a dependency on them.

The journey begins

In 2009 our aim was to become "No 1 for People" in the consulting industry. We found evidence that professional services organisations that have introduced structured coaching programmes have increased individual and organisational effectiveness. We decided to introduce a coaching culture using a four phase process: Business Case, Setup & Training, Pilot, Do+Review.

The research process

Before deciding on a supplier, we embarked on significant research using the Internet, investigated our University's existing Co-active supplier and discussed options with our 'Employee Transformation Practice' gurus.

- **Our research found that coaching is a pervasive learning and development tool used within 71% of organisations.**
 - 44% of organisations now offer coaching to all employees, while 39% offer it to directors and senior management. A third offer coaching to senior managers (33%) and line managers/supervisors (33%).
- **Our research found the following critical factors to the success of an internal coaching service:**
 - Being clear on the personal and business development objectives of coaching is essential; for example, embedding learning, 'landing' organisational or cultural change, improving performance or developing our emotional intelligence.
 - Issues in consistency of approach could occur as a result of a coaching culture that is encouraged but not rigorously prescribed or not well planned.
 - Encouraging more senior grades to be coached will demonstrate its value and help with gaining senior engagement and sponsorship.
 - Coaching is less effective as a remedial intervention.
 - In matching coachees to coaches, having coaches from the same business unit as the client blurred boundaries and issues with respect to confidentiality. Also, matching to a coach that has prior knowledge of their coachee can affect their coaching.
 - Training the coaches as a group binds the coaching team together from the outset.
 - Similarly, organising CPD for coaches as a group allows them to grow as a team, cultivate trust and develop stronger mutual accountability.
 - Encouraging group supervision within the coaching team itself helps each coach to see a range of perspectives.
 - A number of professional services firms have employees that spend a significant amount of their time coaching rather than working for external clients.

"The AoEC has never felt like a supplier of training. They've acted as a partner in delivering our ambition to develop a more effective consulting workforce through the use of business coaching".

*Chris Jackson Vice President
Capgemini Consulting*

"It has been a real pleasure working with Capgemini Consulting. We found a curiosity about coaching and have had some great conversations on applying coaching and coaching principles as a way to develop their people. Our experience of working closely together, means that our services were co-created, allowing Capgemini Consulting to get the best out of the AoEC. Alongside this we got a real sense of their desire to invest in their people. I can only imagine how powerfully this way of working and focus on development must impact positively on Capgemini Consulting's clients".

*Richard Clarke
AoEC MD Corporate*

What did we do?



Selection criteria

At this point our key selection criteria had distilled to four key questions:

1. Does the supplier understand Professional Services and specifically the Management Consulting world?
2. Is the supplier offering well formed and structured from a learning perspective
3. Is a route to international certification available (via the ICF or similar body)?
4. Is the offering good value for money?

Learning Model = Developmental: Most suppliers offered a specific coaching model that they were effectively trying to 'sell'. The AoEC's Practitioner Diploma is Executive Coaching focused on introducing a variety of coaching models, encouraging students to try them out before deciding which was best for their developing style of coaching. This approach was carried through into the assessment process which encouraged students to develop their own coaching model and is quality assured through the re-accreditation process 12 months into your tenure as a coach. This continuing focus on personal growth and quality has taken certification from a 'tick-box' exercise to a highly valuable business tool.

Partner rather than Supplier Relationship: Ease of engagement; a sense of journey together. As an organisation the AoEC is coaches (i.e., minimal managers & administrators) and we were able to talk to them.

Personal Connection with MD: Initially and on-going. A face to the organisation.

Value Back to the Business: A continuous service from training to creating an internal coaching team to provision of external coaches, all working within the same operating model and ethical framework.

The solution

Capgemini Consulting went through a rigorous selection process before deciding to work with the AoEC. Their decision depended on the AoEC's experience in understanding Professional Services and specifically Management Consulting, offering well formed and structured learning style and international accreditation.

The benefits of working with the AoEC

- Ease of engagement.
- A sense of a journey together.
- Their sense of expectation about our growth.
- The quality of the AoEC staff.
- As an organisation the AoEC is coaches (i.e. minimal managers and administrators) and we were able to talk to them.

The process

Before the training started the participants reported feelings of excitement, anticipation and a sense of something new.

During the training period there was a massive increase in self-awareness. The team, created with energy and commitment, began to build an operating model as we learned. The training requires each participant to have one or more clients so that learning is not just theoretical and this was used to pilot the coaching offer within Capgemini Consulting to test the appetite.

After the training programme had been completed we agreed the following action plan:

- Introduce coaching with a focus on talent management in the first year.
- Test the impact of coaching on clients.
- Understand the operating model (e.g., coach to client ratio, how to position coaching with the other consultant-to-consultant people development roles and sustainability given 'consultant demands' on a coach).
- Produce a coaching success evaluation framework.

To summarise the feelings of participants after the training we can only use one word: Wow!

What did we do?



Conclusion

“Who you are affects how you coach and this is alright.”

Capgemini Consulting now has an internal coaching team created with their focus on quality rather than quantity. They ensure there is a strong interlock with twice yearly performance reviews. A formal Coaching Panel for matching has been created and plans are in place to reinforce the distinction between mentoring and coaching.

Capgemini Consulting is now looking to:

- Drive growth.
- Build the brand.
- Target particular grades where there is attrition.
- Be more flexible in structure of intervention (doesn't always have to be six sessions each lasting 90 minutes)
- Offer 'water cooler coaching'.
- Allow continuous nomination (rather than at the twice yearly performance reviews).
- Offer drop-in coaching facility at twice yearly university event.
- Expand beyond the UK operation of Capgemini Consulting and into other businesses within the Capgemini Group.

Capgemini Consulting will continue to bring value back to business by having a continuous service from training, to creating an internal coaching team, to a provision of external coaches, all working within the same operating model and ethical framework.

The work detailed in this case study was carried out by Executive Team Coaches Alison Hogan and Elke Anderson as part of their AoEC Systemic Team Coaching Master Practitioner Diploma qualification:

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