



Coaching – Move You and Your Company

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By Jennifer East and Michael Lobraico

Resort owners are always looking for new strategies to grow sales, cut costs, improve customer service and find more time for themselves. What are the three biggest challenges you're facing right now in your business? Is there one significant change you would like to make in your life that has eluded you? Working with a coach helps business owners see more options than they imagined were possible, and build a plan to achieve their goals.

How Does it Work?

Coaches work one-on-one with business owners to identify problems and areas for improvement in their professional and personal lives. In family businesses, coaching plays a valuable role in helping family members talk about challenging issues like succession planning and inheritance. Resort owners also work with coaches to develop managers, build stronger teams and enhance the working environment.

In a 1987 Showers study on learning in the workplace, coaching ranked higher than all other forms of training. Compared with a 5-10% transfer rate of information to the workplace after presentations, demonstrations and practice, coaching offered a 90% success rate.

This study highlights coaching's unique advantage for individuals and teams: it's ongoing. Working with a coach on a regular basis enables clients to shift their perspective over time. Areas where you feel 'stuck' start to open up as your coach introduces new ways to look at a problem, which then leads you to innovative solutions. Using a strengths-based approach, your coach helps you and your staff identify what's working, and how to build on this foundation to achieve more.

Try it Out

Resort operators took the coaching concept for a test drive at the 2006 Fall Workshop/Christmas Celebration. When asked to think of two people with whom they have a difficult relationship, a relationship they'd like to improve, operators quickly jotted down several names.



After describing the challenges, and identifying the benefits of improving these relationships, participants then considered a relationship that works. How long have you known this person? What is positive about the relationship? How do you resolve difficulties when they arise? Jennifer East and Michael Lobraico coached participants to build upon what works in positive relationships to improve those that don't.

Tools You Can Use

Yes And

Try using this interesting ground rule at your next management meeting. Instead of the common "No we can't do that", or "but it wouldn't work that way", use only "yes, and" as a response to someone else's idea. This helps ideas grow, fosters collaboration and brings out the creativity in everyone in the room.

Be a Problem Causer

What if you set your staff up for failure, created a scenario you didn't think they could handle? Would everything fall apart? Or, would your staff innovate and develop entirely new ways of delivering great service? Help staff break old habits, spark creative processes and trust that your team will build a better business in the process.

Tasks vs Outcomes

Have you ever wondered why delegation doesn't work as well as you'd like? Think about what you're delegating. Are they tasks that you haven't connected to the desired outcome? Or have you described your ideal end result, and let your staff decide how best to get there?

Getting Started With a Coach

Coaches specialising in small business and family enterprise work with clients in-person and by phone on a weekly, biweekly or monthly basis. Most work on a retainer or project fee, and design a custom process for your specific needs. Ensure you have a strong personal connection with your coach, that he/she has professional coach training and experience in the entrepreneurial field. For more information on coaching, or to contact Jennifer or Michael:

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