

The Internal and External Model of Development

A recent piece of research on coaching managers explores when coaching is the best choice for management development and what the developmental areas it targets most effectively are.

The results are presented as a 3-part model:

- internal qualities - which are essential to on-going growth and development
- external competencies - which are key to creating change at work
- mediating skills - which act as a bridge between internal development and its external implementation.



Internal Qualities

- **Self-awareness** consists of four elements: the ability to understand one's past and learn from it; openness to one's own and other's feelings; the ability to reflect on situations before moving to action; and the ability to make appropriate choices.
- **Confidence:** enables people to bring more of themselves into the workplace, to feel stronger and more rounded, to be more able to link their beliefs and values to their work, and to make 'tough' decisions.



All the managers in the study reported an increase in their own self-awareness and self-confidence.

- **External Competencies Leadership and Management:** The managers reported changes made across three areas:
 - **Individual Presence and Purpose:** Developing a wider perspective, commanding greater respect, and a greater clarity and motivation.
 - **Team Leadership:** increased openness and honesty and a greater awareness of process and content leading to more effective meetings.
 - **Task Effectiveness:** Better objective setting, more effective leadership skills, increased business performance, and a greater ability to understand systems and analyse situations.
- **Assertiveness:** Managers were more able to understand and describe their needs, skilfully express their opinions, stand up for their beliefs, and to challenge and accept challenge.
- **Understanding Difference:** Many of the managers reported an increased ability to allow, accept and work with differing ideas and opinions.
- **Stress Management:** The coaching relationship provides a safe environment in which to explore fears and anxieties, to identify coping skills and strategies, and to test out new behaviours. Many managers reported feeling calmer and less angry by the end of the programme.
- **Work/Life Balance:** Managers in this study took more ownership of decisions affecting themselves and close relations, and became more pro-active in managing the various roles in their lives.

Communication Skills

Effective communication is the channel for interactions between inner and outer development. It provides both the language for describing internal and external experiences, and the means of translating human experiences into learning and development. All the managers in the research described significant improvements in their communication skills.

What I like about this model is that it provides a frame-work for presenting the management development benefits that coaching can offer in a simple and readily accessible way.

For a copy of the research contact Suzy Wales on suzywales@aol.com

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