



Team Coaching – What is it?

Team coaching in business is still much less understood than training or 1 on 1 coaching. To grow people organizations employ mainly a variety of training workshops and some individual coaching for top managers. Why don't they blend both development methods? **What is the key to developing teams?** Our experience shows that team coaching can be, in many cases, the **most effective technology** for solving team problems and improving results.

Why is this so? The answer lies in **focusing** on the **most important**, which is continuously finding out where we are, where we are heading, how to get there and making corrections in our chosen direction. I call this strategic management of the future. This does not happen during training workshops, which are focused on selected topics and teaching of skills selected beforehand. It does happen in individual coaching but only for the coachee, who usually does not share his/her goals, discoveries and results with other team members. The coachee's own strategy and methods of improvement remain a secret, and are often used to climb the career ladder and to compete with others... instead of collaborating with the team.

We know very well, that long term organizational **success depends** on **team performance**; their level of communication and collaboration, which translates into business results. Why then, in the most important field, which is strategy, do we concentrate on individual development? Why are we afraid to gather the whole team and **align** individual and team **directions** of growth? Why do we share our experiences and give team feedback so rarely? Clearly, there are cultural reasons and also; clearly it is much more difficult than organizing a "high energy" event or interesting skill training. Or maybe we know that it is needed, but do not know how, because we do not have such experience or the right technology.

Team coaching is a bold, assumption challenging **technology**, which fulfills the above needs in a stunningly effective way (if done by an experienced team-coach). Of course, it would be ideal, if the boss was the main team coach for his/her own team, however this is rare again. A **Professional** coach discovers with the team the unseen or "unspeakable" **team processes**, objectively supports them in setting and following objectives and reminds them about **crucial issues** and **steps**. Thanks to this the team can effectively overcome internal issues, keep learning continuously and improve results.

If we work together it is wise to learn together too, together overcome growth barriers and together manage the future. If we cannot learn together, then I doubt that we can work effectively together. Peter Drucker says that for organizations, the strategy is no longer the most important; it is "**learning together while continuously improving strategy**" that is. This is the core of team coaching. If the boss does not have the skills of a professional coach, or simply does not have time, he should ask for such support. In time he/she and the team may be able to let go of a coach, only asking for help to deal with a serious crisis or challenge.





AfT leadership & strategy approach to team coaching

1. We focus on the team **vision** and **strategy** in the context of the organization's vision/strategy as well as the values of the participants. These elements must be aligned together and support each other. The strategy must be continuously adapted to fit the changing human and business factors.
2. We increase **trust**, **openness** and **understanding** in the team using coaching methods. This is the absolute key without which very little could be changed, so we work on these areas specifically from the beginning.
3. Particular focus is applied to **coaching** and **leadership competencies** of team members, so they are able to support each other, through listening, openness, trust building, leadership and motivational skills.
4. We use **AfT Team Competency Pyramid** and **Leoncioni** model of 5 Team Dysfunctions.
5. We build an **implementation system** for **accountability**, feedback and **measurement** of individual and team performance.

Our consultants will gladly tell more about our project experiences and possibilities. You are also welcome to discuss with us this article. Please feel free to contact us in any case.

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