

Coaching, Mentoring, Consulting & Counselling!?!

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In essence...

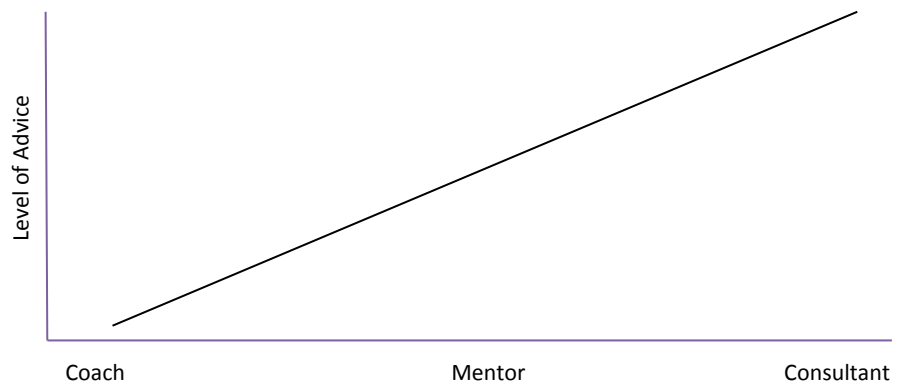
There are many forms of assistance out there, with all sorts of names/labels; we use several of them here at Pyramis Solutions. The way we differentiate between each form is related to the past vs future focus and the level of support or advice given by the expert.

From the top...

When a person or business starts to notice there is something not working well or it's not fulfilling its maximum potential, it is wise to consider how outside help can overcome these hurdles. However great care needs to be given to the type of help, and how it will be received by those it's supposed to be helping. By matching the needs to type of intervention, it greatly increases the chances that change will be productive, well received and an overall success.

Do explain further...

There are number of ways that external help can be sought, often on a scale of how involved the expert is with the solution, the three main forms described here is that of a Coach, Mentor and Consultant.



Coaching

Coaching is a non-directive intervention, the coach is there to facilitate a conversation that is goal orientated, future focused and provides the coachee with an objective, safe and non-judgemental environment to explore ideas, hurdles and problems and then seeks to support the client to build an action plan.

It treats the coachee as the expert in their own life; the coach is the expert in the process and is there to act like a mirror or sounding board. There are many benefits to using coaching, specifically some main ones is the coachee is encouraged to find answers, they get to flex their own muscles and get to work with their ideas, this can be invaluable for empowering the coachee to have ownership of their results and feel they are invested in the process.

Mentoring

Mentoring is traditionally a more informal relationship where a mentor offers their own wisdom and experiences, especially if there are particularly successful in a particular area, helping others explore and try out success strategies that worked for them to help the mentee achieve their goals.

Often the type of style varies greatly between industries, professions and individuals style, and can often include a mix of the 'pure' coaching style with helpful guidance and exercises that can help the mentee move forward.

This is a more typical approach used in our support contracts; there is a balance of coaching and mentoring to support individuals and teams through change or performance enhancement, building skills and knowledge through support.

Consulting

Consulting is one of the most directive forms of intervention, the consultant is considered the expert and is seeking to share their knowledge to solve very specific problems you may be facing. They can suggest changes, build systems, offer training and take control of projects, to ensure your requirements are being addressed.

This is a great form of quickly resolving issues, by tapping into the consultant's techniques, there is less trial and error, and consultants can recognise the usual troublesome areas and seek to iron these out before they escalate further.

Consultants are great for immediate change however it is key to note, that this is not necessarily the most diplomatic or empowering process for others and therefore resistance can be common along with solutions not being fully embraced which can lead to disruption or failures in service, it is for this reason Pyramis Solutions believes in 'Coaching' process and chooses to utilise this approach often to help individuals or teams grow.

Counselling

We've mentioned the services and labels we use, however there is a key point to make about what we don't do. All the above roles are focused on the future, it has a goal or objective to achieve and it's about taking action to take you closer to achieving these goals.

When sessions start to stay focused on the past, the issues or even... well...a bit of a moan, this is more of the exploration of how you got to your current point and how that makes you feel. These are very strong characteristics of Counselling and other talk therapies designed to build understanding and awareness of the current situation.

Although there is a tremendous amount of value locked up in really understanding your current situation, it's a process that should be handled sensitively with trained professionals. We of course touch on it briefly to understand what is not working for you, however it is only a small part of what we aim to achieve and it's the action taken forward that brings change/results, this is why we focus on the Coaching, Mentoring and Consulting interventions.

In conclusion...

Coaching, Mentoring and Consulting offer very different approaches to solving your problems however it is key to know how each approach will affect others and what would be the approach that would bring the greater success before engaging in any route, knowing this can save time, money and potentially a lot of ill-feeling when done right.

If you would like to know more or to discuss any of the above content, the author would love to hear from you, please contact them on vicki.lamch@pyramissolutions.co.uk.

Who do you know that would benefit from reading this article or speaking to us at Pyramis Solutions; please do share this information and our contact details.