

# HOW CAN YOU BE MORE STRATEGIC WITH YOUR COACHING?

We know that Executive Coaching is incredibly effective for supporting the developmental needs of individuals, but it can also deliver a wider organisational impact when linked to strategy and purpose.

We are now working with organisations to align coaching with a broader strategy or desired change and to think systemically about designing and delivering Executive Coaching programmes, either for the whole organisation or at least for a part of it, such as the people strategy or, within that, the talent strategy.

Whether your Executive Coaching is delivered through an external provider or an internal coaching pool, there may be an opportunity to gain even more from your coaching if you consider how coaching can support a broader objective.

## Where to start

These are some of the questions and considerations you might need to think about when designing an Executive Coaching intervention to support your strategy.



## Who in the organisation is driving the process, and where do they sit?

Typically, the HR function will be the one thinking about commissioning Executive Coaching and its relationship with the people strategy for the organisation. But, as with the OD function, there probably needs to be oversight and engagement from a more central place, possibly the CEO's office, to ensure alignment with the organisational strategy. Where there is an overarching change process taking place, particularly where this is targeting culture change, those leading this need to be in close collaboration with those responsible for Executive Coaching.

## Where will coaching make the difference?

Depending on the impact desired and how the coaching approach is leveraging change, where the coaching is being targeted in the organisation will be a key consideration. Is it a specific team, department or division which is seen as a critical lever or pilot for change? Could a particular layer of leadership be targeted so that a shift in approach is being modelled across that level of the organisation?

In The OCM's work with clients, we have seen a combination of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. This has involved targeted Executive Coaching for key leaders combined with team coaching and training for managers at all levels to support them in taking a coaching-style approach with their reports.



### What should the focus of the coaching be?

While there are topics that are likely to be relevant at all levels, such as confidence, dealing with transitions of various kinds, managing downwards and upwards, having difficult conversations and so on, others will be specific to the targeted level. From issues concerning the setting of vision, horizon-scanning, governance, and brand positioning at senior levels to those that relate more to execution, coordination, influence, and negotiation within teams lower down in the system, the issues and challenges supported by coaching will differ.

There may be patterns causing stuckness, friction or resistance to change. These patterns can inform the emphasis taken within Executive Coaching. Is there a culture of toxic “niceness” in the organisation which gets in the way of courageous conversations and constructive feedback? Is there a pattern of “circling” in meetings because participants are unable to frame or state their purpose in their communication? Is there a lack of clarity about what decision has been made, or indeed whether it has, because decision-making processes are not explicitly constructed, codified and recorded? These kinds of patterns can get in the way of delivering on organisational purpose and can be dealt with very effectively through Executive Coaching.

### What help do you need?

Becoming more strategic with your coaching doesn't need to be complicated. In fact, simplicity is often key to success. It may be helpful to work with our experts at The OCM to identify what needs to change in your people to have the greatest impact on your organisation's objectives. And how to successfully use coaching to create that change.

### What next?

Please get in touch with us at The OCM for help thinking through your next steps for coaching in your organisation. Wherever you are on your coaching journey, we are happy to offer our insights.

