

Executive Coaching

Feeling like a juggler...
(and dropping too many balls...)



The Scenario...

Alison was new to a senior leadership role. She was clearly highly intelligent, very pragmatic and keen to make a difference to the organisation she had joined. Although its position was by no means desperate, there were some transformational changes that needed to be made to the business for future success, many of which she knew wouldn't be popular and she recognised she would need to take a major role in bringing these changes to fruition. Alongside her responsible senior work position, she was also the mother to 2 small children and determined to do her very best for her young family.

The coaching experience...

We started Alison's coaching sessions as we always do with a formal contracting session which included agreeing the overall goals of our work, together with her Chief Executive and sponsor. On the face of it, these goals seemed relatively easy to determine. They were highly focused on the demands of the role; how to take the new business strategy forward, ways to build relationships with her team and how to ensure everyone was performing to their maximum potential.

Alison had started to have an impact on the business very quickly and lots of people were commenting on the difference she was making. A few sessions in however, it became increasingly clear that Alison drove herself hard in every aspect of her life. It only took some relatively minor (but quite debilitating) health issues added into the mix for her to start to struggle and question whether she really could achieve all she wanted to in her life.

The deep rapport that we had already built gave Alison the space and comfort to talk about what was really going on for her, because she was assured that as her coach, I had her best interests at heart and would in no way be judging her. My role was to believe in her resourcefulness and be there as her 'thinking partner' to help her work out what she wanted/needed for her own wellbeing and to continue fulfil her many roles in life.

Alison surprised herself by all that she shared with me in that session. She had become quite emotional and felt the need to apologise to me for doing so and for sharing so much of her home life. But that's exactly what needs to happen in coaching! Coaches need to create a safe space for clients to be themselves, to share *what's really going on for them* and for them and both support and challenge others to take steps to be their best selves. Things had started to get on top of Alison and she hadn't seen it until it was too late... wanting to carry on being 'superwoman' to everybody and not thinking about herself in any way.

Coaching reflections...

I always consider it a privilege when my clients feel able to show their true feelings and talk about difficult circumstances in coaching. I know this helps us to get to the real 'heart of the matter' and make true progress. I am cautious not to enter into discussions about topics clearly more suited to work with a qualified counsellor and help clients to access that support if it turns out to be more required.

Alison's set of coaching sessions turned out to make a real impact on her whole life, not just at work and her evaluation feedback told me about the difference she believed it had made. We all juggle a lot of differing priorities these days. Some people make it look easy, but experience has shown me that few really glide through with no issues. Coaching can be so valuable to provide you with the time and space to work out how best to achieve what you really want and need to, whilst still looking after your own wellbeing...

If you want to know more about how executive coaching works with Azure drop us a line at info@azure-consulting.co.uk , call 01924 385600 or check out our website