

What Can an Executive Coach Do for You?

by ANN GOLDEN EGLÉ, MCC

My dearest friend from college recently visited for a long overdue reunion. Thanks to the bounty of Central Oregon, we enjoyed a weekend of gorgeous hikes, long talks and epicurean delights.

A recently-retired senior partner in her firm, she relayed stories of international travel, intrigue and negotiations; dining with kings and presidents; celebrated successes; heartbreaking betrayals and the ever present 'lonely at the top' syndrome.

During the latter part of her career, Patricia's energy was drained and she was physically and emotionally depleted, something she hid from her colleagues and clients. Or did she?

In discussing my profession, she was curious how, in hindsight, an executive leadership coach could have benefited her.

I asked her to envision the wheel of a bicycle. In the center is the hub, which is 'you.' Spokes project out from the hub, which represent aspects of your life that demand your attention.

Patricia listed spokes ranging from professional (which were typically 90 percent) to family (children, aging parents and spouse each had their own spokes), friends, health, community, physical fitness, spirituality, hobbies, time for vacations, athletic pursuits.

Next, I asked her to envision the rim that holds all of these spokes in place, preventing them

from toppling onto one another. This rim is your 'executive coach' who helps you separate and gain perspective of each of the spokes in order to see them more clearly.

Separating out, strategizing and making a game plan to successfully handle each of your issues (spokes) takes clarity and patience, yet not always time. This is where an executive coach comes in.

A professionally-trained executive coach knows the right questions to ask to help you dig deeper and to steer you to options not previously seen on your own.

A savvy coach will tell you what others (who are afraid of the backlash) will not. For example: observations of when your anger or impatience gets in your way; alternate approaches which will serve you better; when you're thinking too small, not seeing the larger picture; potential consequences of your actions.

Confidentiality is paramount to a successful coaching relationship. Patricia had no confidential, trusted, non-judgmental soul with whom to strategize. This alone would



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professional responsibilities weighed relentlessly on her shoulders, she chose not to burden her husband, the one person she could trust.

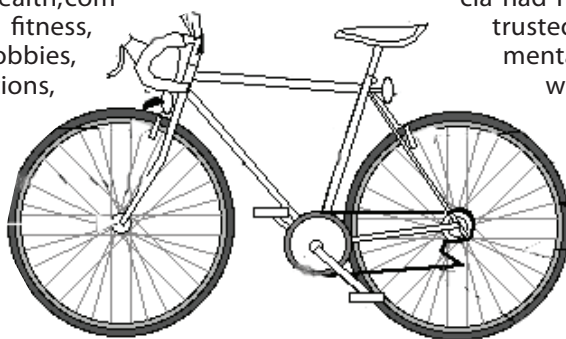
The pure freedom to express out loud your innermost thoughts and dreams helps you gain clarity. No idea is too bold, insignificant, or wacky to at least pursue discussions around with your trusted coach.

In a nutshell, an executive coach helps you maintain sanity and perspective; become more creative, bold, balanced, confident and outrageously successful.

In hindsight, Patricia understands how she could have saved herself years of feeling alone and stressed through hiring her own executive coach. You don't have to retire to gain this clarity.

We'll discuss 'keys to working with an executive coach' and how to select the best one for you in upcoming articles. I'd also love to answer your specific questions in future articles.

Ann Golden Eglé, MCC, President of Golden Visions & Associates (GV&A), Coaching for Executive & Leadership Success, est. 1998; can be reached at www.gvasuccess.com or 541-385-8887. Subscribe to Ann's weekly 'Success Thoughts' e-zine on her website.



have been a tremendous asset. Though her pro-