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COACHING CASE STUDY

Ex-McKinsey consultant transitioning into operational executive roles, FTSE 100 multinational group

Background

Our client was a high performing McKinsey consultant who had joined his new employer after a successful strategic consulting project for them. After a few years supporting the core corporate team on strategy and M&A activities, he was given a choice. He could remain at the corporate centre, or take on a challenging operational role running a significant technology innovation and procurement business with a large multinational team of both commercial/marketing, and scientific/engineering employees.

Gap Analysis

Our client's career thus far had been built almost exclusively on his mastery of correct data and correct analysis. At the corporate centre, this posed no major problems. However, he wanted to challenge himself to step outside his comfort zone. While his clinical approach would have carried him quite far with some of the scientists and engineers, it became clear that he needed to broaden his impact if he wanted to create confidence in his leadership across the entire team, including commercial and marketing professionals.

The gap was one of emotional intelligence, connection, and human energy.

Coaching Programme

The coaching programme addressed a central dilemma: how to both 'soften the edges' of this formidable analytical individual, at the same time as retaining -and in fact increasing- the sense of positive energy and dynamism he conveyed.

We focused strongly on listening skills and on how to apply a light touch to data. We worked on the value of storytelling as a way to represent data and analysis without the need for spreadsheets.

We explored the need to frame every interaction around two types of outcome: a relationship outcome as well as an immediate transactional outcome.

Finally, we worked on the physical/body language dimension of how to transmit a sense of warm, human energy to those around you.

Result

Our client succeeded so well in his line leadership role that he was rapidly appointed as a country CEO within the business, first to a small market and subsequently to one of the business's biggest markets. At every stage we continued to provide refresher coaching support, check-ins against new challenges with new stakeholders, and coaching preparation for important set piece communications.

The Newman Partnership offers confidential personal coaching for leaders and their teams, with UK and international clients across the worlds of business, politics and sport. Based in London, we also have representation in Tokyo and Beijing.

Martin Newman, who heads the partnership, is also Director of The Leadership Council (www.theleadershipcouncil.co.uk), a nonprofit UK based network of senior leaders which regularly researches and publishes on topical issues around leadership.

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