

Case Study: Executive Coaching

A *Big 4* professional services firm reaches out for assistance in streaming, selecting and developing new Partners.

We worked with a special committee to design a structured process that would enhance and maintain the strategic, operational, and leadership capability of new Partners selected into their roles.

The Firm: A top-ranked, LLP professional services firm with over 45,000 employees.

The Challenge: Despite a long history of success, this top firm required special expertise and sector knowledge to help improve the selection accuracy for potential Partners. They also sought executive coaching support to aid high potential or high need Partners in this significant transition, as required. While experienced and technically savvy with the ingredients to be successful leaders, potential and new Partners required support in developing executive presence, building awareness of interpersonal impacts and effectiveness, and working with risk and strategy in new and more consequential ways.

The Solution: Using a prescribed methodology that included leadership assessments and feedback to build awareness, each coachee developed a personal development plan, in collaboration with the coach and their boss. The coach provided valuable assistance using an existing library of discrete, specific developmental action steps which provided easy ways to change

behaviour. These action steps, while simple, when combined together produced noticeable changes. This “simple” strategy was used as a vehicle to change deeply embedded brain patterns, beliefs, and assumptions. Part of the process involved isolating maladaptive patterns and beliefs and systematically rebuilding them using easy, discrete steps. This programmatic, behavioural science approach succeeded where other “structured” programs and open-ended coaching conversations failed.

The Results: Each coachee undergoing the program was successful in being selected into, and transitioning to the Partner role with high ratings of performance. Quantitative evaluations of behaviour change (through repeated 360-degree evaluations) and qualitative feedback during structured evaluation interviews were used in this analysis. Behaviour changes were traced back to the specific developmental plan areas, providing more support for the process used to identify development areas, as well as for the easy, discrete actions identified for change.