



Outside Eyes for Inside Help

Most organizations understand the need for executives to get help in order to deal with the complexities of an ever changing market. Seismic changes in the economy, government and global competition have created the need for all executives to have “outside eyes” to help guide and direct through unknown terrain.

There are several ways that executives can get help and it’s important to understand the viability and appropriate use of each process.

1. Mentoring
2. Coaching
3. CEO/Executive Peer Groups

Mentoring: Executives and all team members can benefit from an organized, internal mentoring program. For example here at Ross Buehler Falk, we implemented the [Success Through People Program](#) through Firm Foundation, an association for CPA firms. We were recently featured in an American Institute of CPAs magazine about [our mentoring program](#).

Prior to implementing the program, we used a traditional 1-5 rating system for our employee evaluations and rated our people on typical technical skills, personal characteristics, firm process ability and overall knowledge.

With our new program, every employee is assigned a career advisor

that is either a partner or manager. At the beginning of the career development year, which is May 1st, each employee meets with their career advisor to develop key goals in the areas of client service, employee and client relationships, productivity and business growth, technical or industry expertise, work/life balance and career progression. The career advisor and employee then meet mid-year to review the employee’s progress towards their goals. The focus is now on driving specific results and outcomes.

Coaching: Executive coaching focuses on giving key team members the time and energy to work on their own development as leaders. With the guidance of an experienced coach, executives can develop leadership skills that will impact the entire organization.

Coaching sessions are one-on-one sessions with an objective third party who is not tied to the organization and can provide an outside perspective to issues and challenges and also provide support in a form that the organization cannot do. Executive coaching sessions provide the leader with real time solutions, developed in the context of their current situation, with an ongoing accountability to the coach.

CEO/Executive Peer Groups: With a professional facilitator at the helm, peer groups are very helpful for executives to process issues, learn how others have handled difficult

issues (CEOs say handling conflict is their biggest issue) and have a group of “outside eyes” to give them a broader perspective.

CEO Peer Groups give members a deep sense of community and mitigate the emotional needs that come from “being lonely at the top.” In a setting of equal peers, CEOs and executives can be open and honest without fear of creating disruption within their organizations. Top level executives often feel they have no one to explore ideas with, because their team may be hyper-sensitive to the CEOs thoughts and feelings and react negatively to brainstorming solutions. In a peer group, executives can examine ideas and explore options without the burden of staff reactions.

RBF sponsors “Beyond the Numbers,” a Lancaster, PA CEO peer group which you are invited to attend as a guest. Please email Jeff Bleacher at jbleacher@rbfco.com or call 717-393-2700.

