

The Monthly Leader

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GILD

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Leadership Skill of the Month - Coaching and Mentoring

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The High Impact Leadership Model™



Leadership Skill of the Month: Coaching and Mentoring

Definition: The skill of mastering a comfortable coaching style and using it strategically to improve performance

1. Uses a variety of methods (reason, inspiration, etc.) to help individuals attain higher levels of performance.
2. Helps others recognize their areas of weakness in a constructive, beneficial manner.
3. Identifies and confronts critical developmental issues or barriers with respect to peers, reports, etc.
4. Instills a sense of confidence in others – even those who are convinced that “they can’t do it”.
5. Helps others work their way through problems or crises.

In this Edition:

Feature Article:

Expanding the Value of Coaching:
From the Leader to the Team to the Company
- By Marshall Goldsmith

Leadership Toolkit:

Leadership Timeline Exercise

Application: Use this tool to help you formulate your leadership story

Personal Agenda for Change

Application: Use this tool to create a leadership path you will follow into the future

The Goal Setting Tool

Application: Use this tool to establish long range goals across all dimensions of your life

The Mini Survey Tool

Application: Use this tool to make sure that you follow up and track your behavior change

The Interview Tool

Application: Use this tool to focus your new coaching experience with direct reports



“... values are the core ingredient (of leadership potential) here (at GE). The people we are putting into leadership slots are those we deem to be terrific role models. That means embracing the values, being able to motivate and energize others, and having that infectious enthusiasm to tap people’s potential and generate the capacity of the organization to accomplish beyond what it otherwise would.”

- Jack Welch CEO, GE

Feed Forward Exercise: Video-Clip

from the Thought Leader Marshall Goldsmith on “Coaching for Leadership”



Application: Use this process to connect with your direct reports about what you learned from your 360° Report and what behavior you intend to change.

Expanding the Value of Coaching: From the Leader to the Team to the Company

By Marshall Goldsmith

(Published in: The Art and Practice of Leadership Coaching, edited by Howard Morgan, Phil Harkins and Marshall Goldsmith, Wiley, 2005)

Joe Smith is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Clarkson Products . Clarkson Products is a key division of Clarkson Enterprises and employs over 40,000 people. Clarkson Enterprises is a “Fortune 100” company that employs over 100,000 people and is a leader in its industry.

I had the opportunity to work with Joe as an executive coach for over a year. Although I am not sure how much Joe learned from me during this period, I learned a lot from him and from his team! I hope that the great work done by Joe and his team gives you a few ideas that you can use, either as a coach or as a person being coached.

This real life case study shows how an executive can expand a simple coaching assignment to benefit his team and the entire company. I hope the article also reinforces my observation that the most important factor in executive coaching is not the coach. It is the executive being coached and his or her co-workers.

Getting Started

My coaching process is somewhat unusual. My mission is to help successful leaders achieve positive change in behavior: for themselves, their people and their teams. I work with my clients and their managers to determine: 1) who are my client’s key stakeholders and 2) what are the key behaviors that my client wants to change. The company pays me only after my client has achieved a positive change in key behaviors as determined by key stakeholders.

The project began when I met with Bruce Jones, the CEO of Clarkson, and Mary Washington, the EVP of Human Resources. Bruce was clearly a “fan” of Joe’s. He let me know that Joe was a fantastic leader who had produced consistent results. He felt that Clarkson would benefit if Joe played a greater role in reaching out across the company and building relationships with his colleagues in other divisions. Mary agreed that Joe was a key resource for the company and that the entire company could benefit from his increased involvement. Clarkson, like many of my clients, is trying to increase synergy across divisions and build more teamwork across the company.

When I first met Joe, I was impressed with his enthusiasm and love for his job. He was clearly in a place where he wanted to be. Joe was very proud of what Clarkson Products produced and proud of the people who worked with him. I have worked with over 70 major CEOs. I have met a lot of committed leaders. Joe is one of the most committed leaders I have ever met.

Joe liked the design of our coaching process. He developed a list of key stakeholders and called Bruce to validate his list. He decided to work with me.

Collecting Information

I conducted one-on-one confidential interviews with each of Joe’s pre-selected stakeholders. Both colleagues and direct reports agreed that Joe was brilliant, dedicated, hard working, high in integrity, great at achieving results, well organized and an amazing leader of people.

Expanding the Value of Coaching: From the Leader to the Team to the Company, Continued

Joe's peers felt that the company could benefit if he did a better job of reaching out and forming partnerships with them. Some believed that Joe and his team were so focused on achieving results for the Products division that they hadn't placed enough emphasis on building synergy and teamwork across the entire Clarkson business.

Joe's direct reports agreed that Joe, his team and the company would benefit if the Products team did a better job of reaching out across the company. They also wanted Joe to focus on making sure that everyone felt included. Some mentioned that Joe was so focused on achieving his mission that he could (unintentionally) leave out people or ideas that were not on his "radar screen".

All of the interview data was collected by topic, so that no individual could be identified. After reviewing the summary report of the interviews with Joe, he agreed that he wanted to work on "reaching out across the company and building partnerships with colleagues" as a personal goal. He also expanded the goal to include his entire team. Joe also decided to work on "ensuring involvement and inclusion" with his direct reports. Joe checked in with Bruce and both agreed that these were worthwhile goals.

Involving Team Members

Our research on behavior change is clear. If leaders get feedback, follow-up and involve their co-workers in the change process, they get better. If they don't follow-up and involve their co-workers, they usually are not seen as improving.

As part of the coaching process, Joe had one-on-one discussions with each of his colleagues and direct reports about what he had learned in his initial feedback. He thanked them for their input, expressed gratitude for their involvement and positive comments, openly discussed what he wanted to change and asked them for their ideas on how he could do a great job.

After the initial discussions with his direct reports, Joe made a minor modification in one of his goals. He decided that his direct reports wanted him to do a great job of "inclusion and validation". The Products Division was going through very turbulent times. Several of Joe's team members wanted to make sure that he was "checking in" with them and validating that they were headed in the right direction during these changing times.

While I always recommend that my coaching clients follow-up with their key stakeholders to get ongoing ideas for improvement, Joe came up with a much better idea. He got his entire team involved! Not only did Joe pick key colleagues to connect with on a regular basis, so did everyone on this team. This expanded the benefit "reaching out" far beyond anything that Joe could do by himself. In fact Joe's team established a matrix with ongoing process checks to ensure that everyone was "sticking with the plan". All members of Joe's team talked about whom they were contacting and what they were learning on a regular basis. They shared information with each other to help improve cross-functional teamwork, synergy and cooperation.

In the area of ensuring inclusion and validation with direct reports, Joe developed an amazing discipline. He would consistently ask, "Are there any more ideas that we need to include?" and "Are there any more people that we need to include?" at the end of each major topic change or meeting. This gave everyone a chance to reflect and made sure that everyone had the opportunity to make a contribution.

Expanding the Value of Coaching: From the Leader to the Team to the Company, Continued

Often in the meetings of high-level executive teams (like Joe's), there is an "outer ring" of people who may attend meetings. These are people who may report to team members and may be providing information on key topics that are going to be discussed. Not only did Joe reach out to make sure that his team members were included, he also reached out to ensure that everyone in the room was invited to participate.

Over the course of the year, I had follow-up discussions with Joe's direct reports. Not only did Joe pick an area for personal improvement, each one of his direct reports did as well. This way the process of change not only benefited Joe; it benefited everyone.

A couple of his direct reports showed great maturity by telling Joe, "When we started on this process, I was critical of you for not being inclusive. In the last few months, you have been doing everything that you can do to include people. You have asked me for my input on a regular basis. I have to admit something. You weren't the problem in the first place. Sometimes I just wasn't assertive enough to say what I was thinking. It was easier for me to blame you than to take responsibility myself."

A Year Later

At the end of the coaching assignment, I had the opportunity to interview each of Joe's 15 direct reports and his 10 colleagues from across the company. They were asked to rate his increased effectiveness on each item on a "-5" to "+5" scale (with "0" indicating "no change"). Not surprisingly, his improvement scores were outstanding. 40% of all numerical responses were a "+5" and over 85% were a "+3" or above. No individual had a negative score on any item. I have seen hundreds of reports like this. These scores were exceptionally positive.

In "reaching out across the company and building partnerships" both his direct reports and colleagues were extremely satisfied with his progress. They commented on his ongoing dedication to being a great team player. They noticed how he had "gone out of his way" in meetings, phone calls and e-mails to be a good partner.

In "ensuring that his team does a great job of reaching out and building partnerships", his scores were equally positive. Both groups commented on the ongoing process that he put in place with his team. In fact, some of his direct reports commented that their colleagues across the company had also started becoming better team players. (It is much easier to be helpful and supportive to someone else, if they are trying to be helpful and supportive to you!)

In "ensuring validation and inclusion" his direct report scores were not just positive; they were amazing! His fifteen direct reports had over 100 positive comments and nothing negative to say. They almost all talked about the value of his asking for input on an ongoing basis and including everyone who was involved in the decision.

Like many companies, Clarkson's business was dramatically impacted by September 11 and it's aftermath. This was an extremely hard year for Joe, his team and his company. Many of his team members noted how easy it would have been for Joe to "lose it" and not reach out to others during this tough time. He had every "excuse" not to put in the time. They were amazed at his ability to involve, inspire and

Expanding the Value of Coaching: From the Leader to the Team to the Company, Continued

motivate people when times were so tough. Some of the written comments were more than positive, they were moving.

Learning Points for Coaching

The key variable in determining the success of coaching is not the coach; it is the person being coached and their co-workers.

Joe had greater challenges and problems than almost any of the people that I have coached. In spite of this, he achieved outstanding results in building relationships with his colleagues and being inclusive with his team. He didn't get better because I did anything special. In fact, I have put in much more time with people who have achieved much less. He reinforced an important lesson for me (as a coach) – only work with people who care!

As a person who is being coached, never put the responsibility for your change on the coach. It is your life. Like a personal trainer, the coach can help you get in shape. You are the one that has to do the work.

Not only was Joe a model of ongoing dedication and commitment, so was his team. Every team member had a positive, “can do” attitude toward improving teamwork across Clarkson. Joe's positive results were not just a reflection of his efforts; they were a reflection of his team's efforts.

True long-term change requires discipline over time and process management.

One of the great false assumptions in leadership development is, “if they understand, they will do”. If this were true, everyone who understood the importance of going on a healthy diet and exercising would be in shape. Every executive that I meet is smart. In terms of behavior, they all understand what they should do. Joe did it!

Joe established an ongoing process and discipline and “stuck with it”. He managed a process. He made sure the follow-up discussions were scheduled. He had the discipline to ask, “Are there any people or ideas that we need to include?” over and over again. Joe worked with Carrie, a great executive assistant, who helped keep him and his team on track.

By involving team members and key stakeholders, the value of the coaching process can be increased exponentially.

Tool: The Leadership Timeline Exercise

What It Is

An exercise that maps the defining moments that have most influenced a leader's development.

How It Works

- ◆ The goal here is to plot out the important milestones in your life that were the most memorable in making you the leader that you are. The best way to do this is to use the worksheet provided.
- ◆ First, in the section marked "Your Highs," write down sentences that describe decisions that you made, contributions that you made, recognitions, awards, etc. that you would classify as defining moments. Then, in the section "Your Lows," list defining moments that took the form of setbacks, disappointments, etc.
- ◆ For each (Your Highs and Your Lows), try to identify how you were feeling and thinking at the time—it will help you crystallize the importance of the defining moment.
- ◆ Finally, when you've had a chance to review your list and you are sure it is complete in both columns, plot your highs and lows chronologically on the timeline attached.

Helpful Hints

Helpful hints:

- ◆ This exercise raises a good deal of old emotions and thoughts. Make sure that you use the worksheet so that you don't leave anything out.
- ◆ This exercise will lead you to some conclusions about where you want to go and where you want to be. It's important to remember what you were thinking and feeling during those defining moments (both high and low).
- ◆ This exercise should take you approximately 1.5 – 2 hours to do well.
- ◆ Do this at a time that is your best time for reflection.

Tool: The Leadership Timeline Exercise, Continued

Worksheet

Your Highs	
Defining Moment	Your Thoughts/Feelings At That Time
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Your Lows	
Defining Moment	Your Thoughts/Feelings At That Time
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Tool: The Leadership Timeline Exercise, Continued

Name: _____

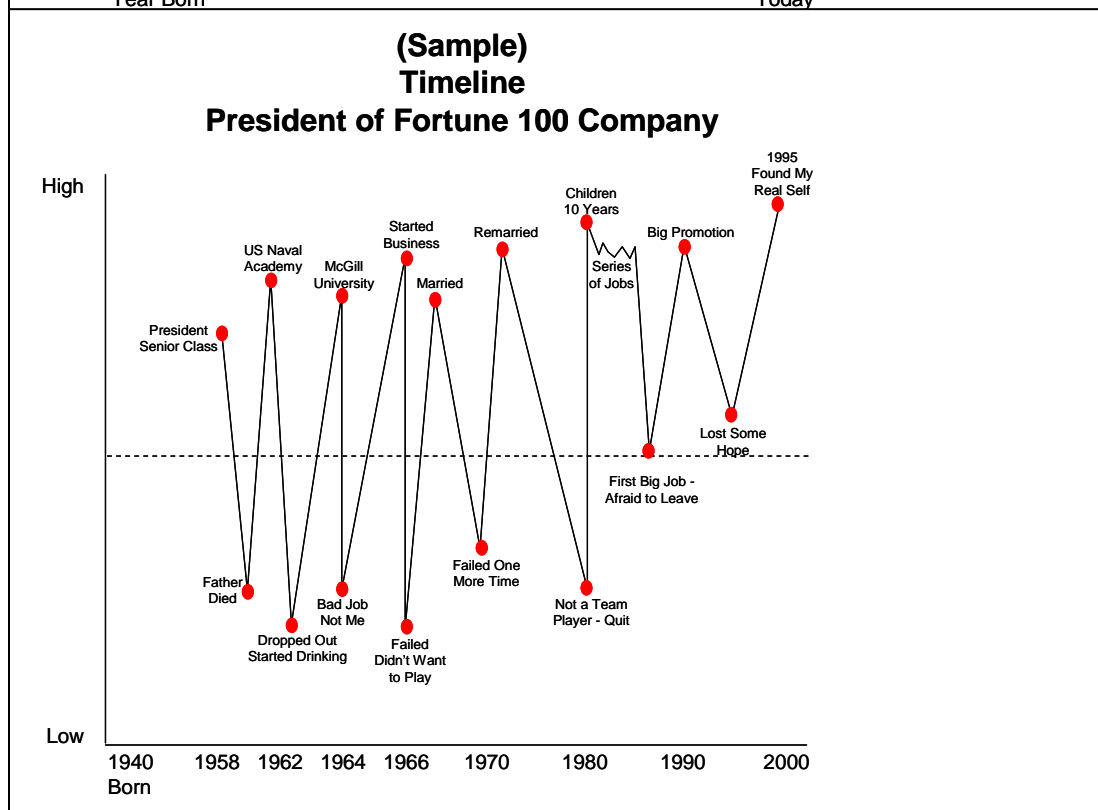
Title: _____

Timeline

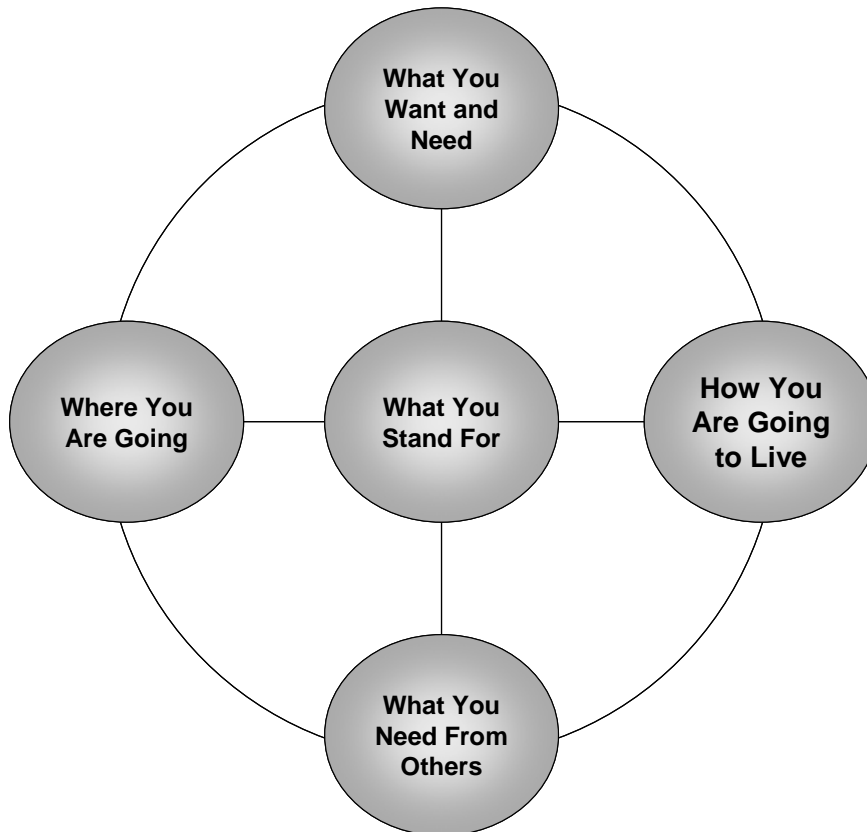
High

Low

Year Born Today



Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change



What It Is

An organized way for a leader to think of himself/herself as a product that he/she is building and bringing to the world.

How It Works

You might think of the subject of this exercise as a business that you are positioning in the marketplace. Only in this instance, 'the business' is you. From this starting assumption, let's forge a step-by-step action plan.

Step 1 ***What You Want and Need***

This is a two part exercise beginning with visualizing the end state.

To visualize the end state, write an epitaph for a newspaper (approximately three paragraphs). How would you like it to read about your life and your career? Think both about past years and, especially, the years to come.

Once you have written your epitaph, rank order your five most important goals and objectives in life.

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 2 What You Stand For

To determine what you stand for, develop a personal mission statement no longer than one sentence supported by three values that you live your life by.

These are the values that you would not deviate from under any circumstances – you would do nothing to contradict them.

Be sure to think hard and deep about this—and test it with those around you who know you best to be sure that you got it right.

Step 3 Where You Are Going

In determining where you are going, it is absolutely critical that you first define your "Future State" in yearly increments of no more than three years. This will be your three year plan which you will update every year.

Define Future State first by writing a headline that announces your accomplishments in detail. This will be a headline followed by sub headlines, no more than three.

Once complete, write down your Current State—in other words, where you are today.

Then determine who the stakeholders are and what the barriers are.

Finally, write down three possibilities for action that are necessary to bridge your Current State to your Future State. These critical actions comprise your migration path.

As an additional step, it is helpful here to write down what you are most afraid of and what you would do differently if you weren't afraid. This could become part of a journal that you can keep to track your progress.

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 4 How You Are Going To Live

Now that you've determined what you want and need, what you stand for, and where you are going, it is critical that you determine how you are going to live each day. In other words, what are the governing principles by which you are going to make decisions? What are your rules for living? List 3-6 that apply.

Like an organization that you are branding, you need to have guidelines to follow and a process to ensure that you are staying on track. In order to do this, it is a good thing to have your own personal "board of directors." Select three to four people who you believe are potentially capable of helping you preside over your career and your progress as a leader. These three to four people will become your board and will meet together with you not more than once every year or so. (It could be just to go fishing.) More importantly, each member will agree to make himself or herself available from time-to-time so that you can call and ask for guidance. Commit to giving each of them something back that they need.

Step 5 What You Need From Others

The previous steps are not possible unless you have other people in your corner. Identify here the critically important people who will help forge and support your development as a leader.

Borrow from Step 3, as they may also be some of the stakeholders that you identify in connecting Current State to Future State.

Once you have listed those; define specifically what you want and need from each.

Concluding Tips

Commit your Personal Agenda for Change process to paper. Keep it with your journal (if you are in fact keeping one). Check into it from time to time. Make a promise to update it at a minimum every three years. It is also helpful to give your Personal Agenda for Change to your board members once you have selected them.

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 1 What You Want and Need

A. How would you like your epitaph to read about your life and your career?

B. Using your epitaph as a guide, rank order your five most important goals and objectives in life.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 2 What You Stand For

Write your personal mission statement. This statement should be no longer than one sentence. Then bullet the supporting three values that you live your life by.

Personal Mission Statement:

Supporting Values:

1.

2.

3.

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 3 Where You Are Going

Future State: Where Are You Going? Craft a headline that captures your accomplishments over the next three years. Include 3 subheadlines that provide further detail.

Headline: _____

Subheadline: _____

Subheadline: _____

Subheadline: _____

Current State: Where You Are Today? Identify your current state in the form of key facts, considerations, positions, etc.

Migration Path: How Will You Bridge The Gap? Identify the key action steps and commitments required to transform your Current State into the desired Future State.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Key Stakeholders and Barriers:

Key Fears:

- What are you most afraid of?

- What would you do differently if you were not afraid?

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 4 How Are You Going to Live

A. What are the 3-6 operating principles by which you will make decisions and live your life?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

B. Who will be your “Board of Directors” to preside over your career and your progress as a leader?

1.

2.

3.

4.

Tool: The Personal Agenda for Change, Continued

Step 5 What You Need From Others

Who are the critically important people who will help forge and support your development as a leader—and what do you want/need from each?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Tool: The Goal Setting Tool

What It Is

A tool that helps coachees determine certain long-range goals (work-related or otherwise).

How It Works

Have the coachee:

- ◆ State his/her overarching goal using the format in the attached worksheet
- ◆ Create a sub goal for each domain on the goal-setting wheel
 - Each goal should have the following format:
[adverb] [gerund][adjective]{goal}
 - Examples:
 - “Creatively designing a relaxing centerpiece by the sea to draw friends and family into my life”
 - “Masterfully sharing my own story and wisdom with (at least) 100,000 people each year”

Helpful Hint

Sub goals should contribute to the overarching goal—and not be in conflict.

Goal Setting Wheel

Overarching Goal: _____



Tool: The Mini Survey Tool

What It Is

A tool that you can use to measure progress in several key defined development areas.

How It Works

- ◆ Distribute the attached survey to 5-10 managers, peers, and reports.
- ◆ List only 2-3 targeted development areas—this survey should merely provide a quick (but critical) read on the areas that matter the most.
- ◆ Distribute and collect surveys in a way that preserves confidentiality (for the best and most candid responses).
- ◆ After you receive responses, summarize data, present data to coachee, and discuss how you can drive further change/effectiveness.
- ◆ Remember to emphasize progress that has already been made in addition to progress that still needs to be made.

Tool: Interviews

This method leverages the feedback to enable the coach to see more into the “world” of the coachee. By selecting a few core competencies and designing questions around them, you (the coach) can target which leadership capabilities to focus on when speaking with the coachee and the coachee’s peers.

Some questions you can ask the coachee:

- ◆ What is your main concern right now? What “keeps you up at night?”
- ◆ When are you at your best as a leader, what do you think you do well? (strongest talents)
- ◆ What do you see in your leadership style, skills, knowledge and/or abilities which could negatively impact your effectiveness? (weaknesses)
- ◆ If you could change one thing about your leadership style, skills, knowledge and/or abilities, what would it be?
- ◆ What is most important to you: what do you care most about in this job (or with this team)?
- ◆ What contribution would you most like to make to this organization (or this team)? What legacy would you most like to leave?
- ◆ What would you most love to say about yourself as a leader? What would you love others to say about your leadership, your impact on them and on the organization?
- ◆ What would an ideal job for you be like? An ideal boss?
- ◆ If everything went very well, three years from now, how would you (or your team or your relationship with your boss) be different? If things did not go well, what would you be concerned about happening?
- ◆ If your subordinates (or boss or peers) were here listening to our conversation, how might they react? What might they say?
- ◆ If you had no constraints on you, what would you do?
- ◆ What worries you most about your current situation? What do you think worries your boss?
- ◆ If I had a chance to observe you in circumstances when you were at your very best, what might I notice? What might I notice in circumstances when you are not at your best?
- ◆ What do you want to add, given the nature of this exercise?

Some questions you can ask the coachee’s peers:

- ◆ What is your relationship to the coachee? (frequency/type of interaction)
- ◆ When the coachee is at his/her best, what do you think s/he does well? (strongest talents)
- ◆ What gaps do you see in his/her leadership style, skills, focus, knowledge and/or abilities which could negatively impact his/her effectiveness?
- ◆ What do you think s/he has done better, or differently, than his/her competition?
- ◆ If you were to make one suggestion to help the coachee, what would it be?
- ◆ Who do you consider to be sponsors/mentors for this coachee?
- ◆ Is there anything you wish to add, given the nature of this exercise?

Tool: Interviews, Continued

Interview Tips

Before the interviews:

- ◆ Prepare questions
- ◆ Choose and schedule those who will be interviewed
- ◆ Communicate purpose clearly

During interviews:

- ◆ Affirm and clarify the purpose
- ◆ Give assurance of confidentiality
- ◆ Create a comfortable and safe environment
- ◆ Respect the individual
- ◆ Don't ask leading questions or push your agenda
- ◆ Pay attention to body language (theirs and yours)
- ◆ Honor time