



Description of CDR's Coaching Services

Coaching helps individuals make significant strides in their lives, in areas in which they want to grow, change or overcome challenges. In the organizational context, it can involve developing specific capabilities of leaders or staff with high potential to take on increased responsibility, addressing challenging behaviors or facilitating transitions. At the beginning of a coaching relationship, the client identifies specific areas that he/she wants to focus on and this becomes the priority for future discussions. In some cases, an assessment (e.g., a 360 performance review) may be helpful to refine focus areas. Because all aspects of our lives are interconnected, even if the focus is on job performance, for example, discussions may also incorporate aspects of the client's personal life.

Coaches ask thought provoking questions to help clients determine their own paths forward. They are deep listeners who are able to raise patterns or insights that clients may not be able to see since they are so steeped in their individual experience. Coaches help clients set meaningful goals and next steps, and serve as an accountability mechanism. Coaches are not strategic advisors; their job is to help clients find answers within themselves. At the same time, there may be times in which the coach may have expertise that may be useful. For example, CDR Associates has significant conflict resolution experience and there may be times when CDR staff "take of the coach hat" and provide advice or training on how to proceed. This is appropriate as long as the transition to this different role is clear to client.

For a coaching relationship to work, the client must want to be coached and be committed to being open and honest, and to do work between sessions. The client and coach must also have good chemistry. In addition to clarifying the focus of the coaching relationship, the first meetings are an opportunity to build rapport and outline the specifics of how the relationship will work.

CDR recommends at least three months of conversations on approximately a bi-weekly basis, likely for an hour each. The purpose of coaching is to help clients clarify needed changes and take steps towards them. Change is hard and it's natural for people to backslide to the familiar if they don't feel that change is happening quickly enough. Also, many clients may lose their initial commitment after a few weeks and need the structure of a regular accountability mechanism. This amount of coaching time will help clients through the various phases of change in order to see long lasting results.

Laura Sneeringer, CDR Senior Program Manager, is in the midst of obtaining International Coach Federation certification through the Coaches Training Institute. CTI is a recognized leader in the coaching field with a 12-month comprehensive program. Laura is passionate about helping individuals and teams create thriving workplaces that fully utilize team members' passions and expertise, and in turn increase effectiveness and productivity. For more than ten years, she has been providing a wide range of collaborative services, including assessing challenging work environments to uncover core issues and implementing improvement strategies, facilitating discussions to help teams outline how to work better together or take their work to the next level, facilitating strategic planning and decision-making efforts, mediating high conflict situations often among large groups, and providing training in collaborative skills. She is trained as a conflict coach and uses these skills regularly within her projects.

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