

Coaching Lab and Planning Initiatives

A. Overview.

The Coaching Lab provides an opportunity for participants to learn various perspectives on conditions that impact them, and develop concrete plans that will eliminate barriers to optimum capacity. See also Tab 6 - Organization Change System, and Tab 8 - Facilitation Teams Manuals.

B. Participation.

A minimum requirement is an *QWLC* consultant/coach, and at least one participant (normally a supervisor). *QWLC* suggests a cascade approach to participation, which involves the client and his or her direct report managers during the first cycle. Then each direct report and his or her subordinates schedule a session. Options may include specific teams who have a strong desire to optimize their productivity. When possible, the *QWLC* consultant/coach is joined by other consulting team members assigned to the client on a regular basis. If there is an assigned realignment coordinator or organization development coordinator, that individual may also be invited at the discretion of the client. If a supervisor desires to have all his or her direct reports involved in a coaching lab, this may also be arranged although our experience is that attendance above 12 people diminishes the amount and quality of the dialog.

C. The Coaching Lab Scenario.

The participants and coach sit around a large computer screen and call up data from the client's databases to determine a current condition for the organization, and talk together to determine causes, strengths that can be further developed, and weaknesses that can be improved along with strategies for improvement. Participants get to see organizational data that includes their own "red line" data in comparison to groups of their own choosing. Products that are routinely displayed include the RGB, UHS, Trend Tower, and Bar Charts. Some participants may also qualify to use the "Network Feedback" features of the Coaching Lab. This will allow them to construct their own tailored data collection instrument, distribute it to those they want to get feedback from, and then view the results when it has been processed. Participants or the coach may call up any demographic slice to determine potential underlying causes of specific scores. Survey items can be "selected out" of the display so that more refined (and presumably more relevant) data can be viewed. Participants are provided with workbooks or other "forms" to assist them in getting the most out of this exercise. Often, people ask if they can complete the survey or inventories being viewed if they have not already done so. The answer is always - Yes! As participants inquire about shortcomings revealed by the data displays, all participants are encouraged to make suggestions that will result in improvements. See Attachment 1, 2, and 3 to this Tab for more information. Use the appropriate attachments as read-ahead materials for participants.

D. Selecting the Coaching Lab Option.

When traditional survey result feedback is insufficient to prompt changes that will ultimately improve worklife culture scores, then the Coaching Lab ought to be considered. Normally, organizations with scores at or below a Quality of Worklife Index of 6.4 are strong candidates.

E. Coaching Lab Facility.

Coaching Labs can be conducted in any facility that matches the privacy necessary, and the equipment needs of the Lab. Participants view diagnostic results during the session and engage in initial planning sessions that tend to be highly collaborative. Normal equipment involves the use of *CapacityWare*[™] and sufficient projection capability to make viewing easy for all participants.

F. Uniqueness.

The Coaching Lab affords a high degree of intimacy with the data being reviewed. Too often, survey data loses its impact when people cannot see their responses in the data, or the data being presented represents a group too large for them to readily identify with. The Lab allows participants to view their own data (with their consent) in relation to others in their group. The system allows the comparison of an individual with another individual as long as each of the individuals agrees to the display.

G. Optimizing the Coaching Lab.

Participants that come to the Coaching Lab with an intention to learn will always come away from this unique experience having felt the time was worth it. The more participants ask relevant questions, the more they will learn. The more participants inquire of their colleagues that seem to be doing well in the areas they seem to be weak, the more value added the session will have.

H. Initial Planning.

The Coach may also engage participants in an initial Planning Session that lasts from 1 hour to 4 hours depending upon the level of detail desired. Initial plans are linked directly to the data examined, and are normally adopted as part of the organizations' strategic goals. *CapacityWare*[™] Initiatives may be created that monitor progress throughout the planning implementation cycle (normally annually).