

CINCYBIZBLOG

Got A Coach? That's Not Bad

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Having an executive coach is not the "scarlet letter" it once was, according to a new survey by a Cincinnati-based coach-training group.

The hiring of a coach to address a specific problem or challenge dropped another three percentage points to represent 29 percent of the reasons why coaches are hired, according to the fifth annual [2010 Sherpa Executive Coaching Survey](#), released this week.

In the first survey, nearly 40 percent of all coaches hired were for remedial work. The 26-page report shows results from more than 1,000 coaches and other human resource professionals, up from 500 the first year in what is one of the most comprehensive studies of the growing executive coaching field.

Executive coaching is a regular meeting between a business leader and a trained facilitator designed to produce positive changes in business behavior in a limited time frame. Coaches are different from mentors, who usually share their experiences; are not consultants, who give advice; are not counselors or therapists who deal with personal issues; and are not trainers, who give specific knowledge.

"Executive coaching is seen, more and more, as part of succession planning," Sherpa Managing Partner Karl Corbett said in the survey's executive summary.

The use of coaching primarily for leadership development has picked up from 43 percent to 53 percent since the first survey. While only 61 percent restricted coaching to senior managers and executives two years ago, 73 percent of employer-paid coaching was directed strictly to senior managers and executives in 2009.

"Organizations realize how much leverage their top leaders have, and apparently keep investing in them, even as expenses elsewhere are being cut," said Corbett, whose wife, Brenda, and her business partner Judith Coleman, wrote the book, "The Sherpa Guide: Process-Driven Executive Coaching."

Watch for a new report from the Sherpa team Feb. 25 on earnings and fees for both life and executive coaches, ranked by metro areas throughout the U.S. and Canada.