



Sherpa Strength: The Newsletter of Executive Coaching

October 2010

Momentum and the process of executive coaching.

By Pam Basil, CSC, Penn State, 2007

The marathon runner. 26 miles. His motivation is a driving force that keeps his physical endurance strong. He has momentum while running the race. If a mishap should occur, a fall, momentum is lost. It can be difficult to get the stride, flow and endurance going again. But once back on the track, he can regain the driving force and complete the race.

Is momentum important in the Sherpa Coaching process? You bet it is! That's part of what makes Sherpa Coaching exceptional. This is a driven process. There is a time frame: twelve weeks' commitment. There are weekly face-to-face meetings. The process creates momentum.

What might cause a coach or a client to lose momentum? Three things.

Momentum can be lost if the process is not followed. This may lead to more of a 'counseling' session rather than coaching. I know. I am a counselor, and I know where this lapse can lead!

Another cause for lost momentum may be a lapse in keeping appointments. Time constraints are sometimes unavoidable: vacation, illness or family matters. But when a couple of weekly appointments are missed, the lack of momentum can begin. It may become easier for the client to 'reschedule'. The process begins to lag. The benefits of coaching drop off.

And what about that homework! That can certainly contribute to losing momentum. It is vital to convey, at the first meeting, the importance of completing homework assignments. When homework is completed, the process flows. If it is not completed, a client's progress is limited. They might even cancel an appointment rather than show up unprepared.

When I was coaching Mary, we got started with a bang! For the first five weeks, the sessions were enlightening. Mary completed homework assignments and was committed!

Then 'life got in the way' and a weekly meeting was cancelled. The following week, she left a message to 'reschedule'. It became difficult to reach Mary. The momentum was decreasing. What could I do as a coach?



I emailed Mary a copy of the midterm evaluation and asked her to complete it. Within 48 hours I received the evaluation. It sparked the process back to life. We scheduled a meeting within the week, and we were back on track!

It can be difficult for one to identify and examine weaknesses. During this process, it may be easier for the individual to avoid, rather than confront. As a coach, we need to recognize this and have tools to keep the momentum alive and finish the race!

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