

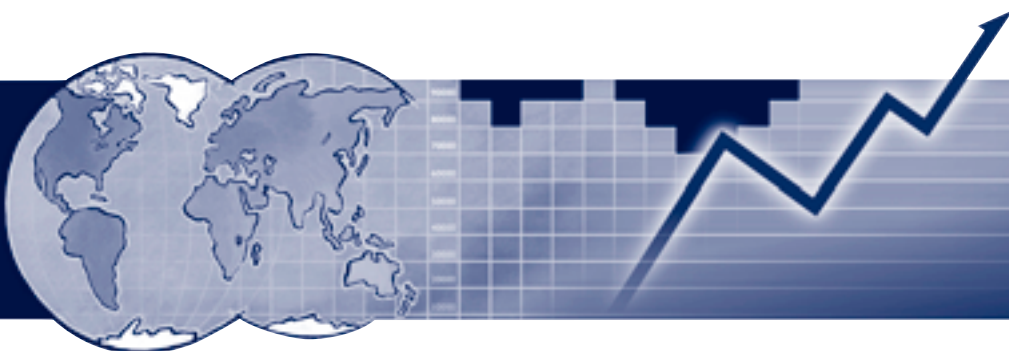
# RESEARCH REPORT

FROM LORE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

## THE CASE FOR EXECUTIVE COACHING

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Coaching is one of the principal tools businesses have for developing their people. Lore International Institute describes a coach as a person who helps others develop their knowledge and skills and improve their performance through individual assessment and guidance. The ultimate goal of coaching is to help people learn more about themselves and to change their behavior.

Coaching is an especially useful tool at the executive level because busy executives have few other assisted means of continued development. Executives need less formal training but may require more objective and sustained feedback with a thought partner—a sounding board—someone who generally cannot be found within the organization. Coaching can fulfill these specific individual needs; therefore, more and more companies are using executive coaching to develop leadership skills, retain key executives, and ensure that their executives deliver the leadership the company requires. This leadership capability is a significant investment and directly tied to success and profitability for most organizations. Therefore,

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*"Once original strategies change, you need coaches. Division heads don't have time to coach each manager. Plus it's not their expertise; changes are different than operations. Most of the executives are competent operators, but not competent at getting changes to take place. That takes special coaching agents."*

Pat Mene  
VP of quality and merchandising, Ritz-Carlton

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companies that engage in coaching are interested in seeing direct business results as an outcome. Coaching is not an inexpensive intervention in terms of either cost or time. As executive coaching becomes more prevalent, companies are increasingly concerned about the effectiveness of coaching and their return on investment from coaching engagements.

These are reasonable concerns. Hard data that can truly address these issues is beginning to accrue; however, most of the evidence to date is qualitative or anecdotal. Since executive coaching is an emerging field, as the profession continues to evolve, methods for measuring and understanding the benefits of executive coaching will also continue to be developed and refined. Although we expect a great deal more attention to be given to the process and outcomes of coaching, enough research has been completed to make a strong initial case for executive coaching. This research brief is intended to review the use of executive coaching, the reasons why companies have selected coaching as an intervention, and the documented benefits of coaching. Factors that influence the positive outcomes of coaching are also discussed. The most striking findings from our review are these:

- ▶ Executive coaching is increasingly prevalent in the business world.
- ▶ The reasons for choosing coaching go beyond correcting problems to challenging and developing executive-level skills that impact the entire organization.
- ▶ There is increasing interest in quantifying the results of coaching and developing more rigorous ways to measure the impact of coaching on important business metrics.

- ▶ The results from current studies demonstrate remarkably positive outcomes and benefits for coached individuals and their organizations, including impressive ROI.
- ▶ Factors such as “coachability” can influence the success of executive coaching engagements.

## The Prevalence of Coaching

Coaching is here to stay. Since its introduction in the 1980s, coaching in organizations has steadily expanded, moving it beyond a mere management fad to a viable professional development choice. In 2000, one human capital firm that provides executive coaching set out to understand the prevalence of and uses for coaching. After surveying more than 300 companies, they determined that almost 60 percent were using coaches (or other developmental counselors). Furthermore, an additional 20 percent intended to hire coaches within the next year (that is, 2001).<sup>1</sup>

According to those figures, fully 80 percent or more of these organizations should now be using coaching. If this sample indicates a general business trend, organizations that are not currently considering executive-level coaching are in the minority. In our current and highly competitive business environment, companies are looking for any and all possible avenues to gain a competitive advantage. From the prevalence data alone, coaching is frequently chosen to help executives—and their fellow employees—improve behaviors that in turn can improve the bottom line.

<sup>1</sup> Manchester, “Tight labor market causing more companies to develop employees through coaching and mentoring.” <http://www.manchesterus.com/press-release3-99.html>, 6 June 2002.

## Reasons for Hiring Executive Coaches

Executives and their companies are now choosing coaching for a wide variety of reasons. In order to make the many reasons clearer, we classify them in table 1 below. The reasons expressed for selecting coaching are directly connected to desired changes at three levels: the individual executive level (intrapersonal), the interpersonal level, and the strategic or organizational level. The premise is that changing executive behavior at any of these levels—intrapersonal, interpersonal, or organizational—can drive the changes, which will impact the business results of the organization. In addition, we observed that coaching is being

*“Absolutely one of the best learning experiences. It will play a decisive role in my future within the company and personally.”*

Coachee  
Lore International Institute

chosen as often to address developmental needs as it is to correct or resolve problem behaviors at each of these same levels. Since changes can be enabled through either development or problem solving, these foci become the second way to classify the reasons expressed for hiring executive coaches. Furthermore, we recognize that very often these reasons and foci intersect and overlap each other, thereby adding complexity to the rationale for coaching.

Table 1. Key Reasons Executive Coaches are Hired to Help Executives

	Intrapersonal Changes	Interpersonal Changes	Organizational Changes
Developmental Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance use of emotional intelligence</li> <li>• Increase skill level and knowledge required of complex and rapidly changing business</li> <li>• Achieve work-life balance to enhance success and well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop management and leadership skills among technical people</li> <li>• Ensure success of leaders in the early stages of their new leadership position</li> <li>• Develop capacity to model ideal feedback and relationship behaviors</li> <li>• Support the goals and leadership challenges of women and minorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate and ensure involvement in succession planning</li> <li>• Maximize development of all high-potential employees</li> <li>• Increase capacity to revise business strategies and involve more people in the change process instigated by globalization, technology, and corporate mergers</li> </ul>
Problem Resolution Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent executive derailment</li> <li>• Avoid misalignment—regarding culture, responsibilities, operating styles—for executives in new environments</li> <li>• Reduce high stress levels or other emotional factors that may be interfering with performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain talent and reduce turnover that is caused by a perceived lack of leadership</li> <li>• Reduce conflict that interferes with collaboration among executive team members</li> <li>• Close gap in leadership skills currently required and what leaders know how to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove obstacles, namely, executive resistance, that interfere with the implementation of key strategic initiatives and goals</li> <li>• Move beyond malaise and fears related to issues such as recessions or traumatic events</li> <li>• Eliminate obstacles that inhibit successful transitions for executives who are assuming new roles</li> </ul>

At least two surveys illustrate the breadth of reasons for using coaching and its recent emphasis on both development and problem resolution. In a recent online survey of the status of coaching in organizations, respondents indicated that the single

most important reason for coaching sessions was development and growth, not correcting performance problems.<sup>2</sup> In a second study, respondents identified a variety of reasons for hiring executive coaches.<sup>3</sup> Note in this list that reasons

<sup>2</sup> Matt Starcevich, “The status of coaching in organizations.” <http://www.coachingandmentoring.com/statusofcoachinginorganizatons.htm>, 4 June 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Diane E. Lewis, “Companies are hiring coaches to teach executives how to sharpen management skills and communicate effectively.” [www.bostonworks.com/globe/articles/112600\\_coach.html](http://www.bostonworks.com/globe/articles/112600_coach.html), 3 May 2002.

encompass both problem solving and developmental emphases. In parenthesis is the percentage of respondents citing that particular reason.

- ▶ To develop the leadership skills of high-potential individuals (86%).
- ▶ To improve the odds that newly promoted managers would be successful (64%).
- ▶ To develop management and leadership skills among their technical people (59%).
- ▶ To correct behavioral problems at the management level (70%).
- ▶ To help leaders resolve interpersonal conflicts among employees (59%).

## The Effectiveness of Executive Coaching

The benefits of executive coaching are the driving force behind an organization's decision to hire coaches. It is also the easiest way for most companies to understand outcomes. Those in the coaching industry have made many benefit claims regarding the value of coaching as an intervention. For some companies this is enough. But in order to evaluate these claims more accurately, companies need to analyze the actual results and effectiveness data more carefully. An obvious step in a more rigorous evaluation is a close inspection of and consideration for measurement. Companies should not only know the basis of benefit claims being made, but they must also identify their own goals and choose the appropriate measures that will best capture the value for them in the coaching process. Furthermore, we hope a discussion about

measurement will encourage more companies to consider their own measurement component for coaching engagements. In this section, we will describe the benefits found in the literature. But before doing this, we will also discuss how

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*“The fact that corporate executives are supporting the expansion of professional coaching through the ranks of management gives credence to the profession’s argument that coaching directly impacts the ‘bottom line’ as a unique and effective tool for performance enhancement.”*

Diana Churchill  
HR.com

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coaching organizations and their clients have measured coaching results. This discussion should help companies understand—and also appreciate—the benefits claimed.

### *Measurement*

Measurement is often overlooked. According to one survey, fewer than ten percent of organizations are measuring the effectiveness of coaching.<sup>4</sup> To help make sense of the qualitative and quantitative results that are available, we use four categories that reflect the kinds of measurement used to establish coaching effectiveness. As the coaching field has grown, each level of measurement has become more and more refined. This is true primarily because companies are requesting

<sup>4</sup> Matt Bolch, “Return on coaching.” <http://www.trainingmag.com>, 3 May 2002.

measures that tie more closely the individual level changes and resulting benefits to the organization; executive coaching firms like Lore have built such measures into their coaching engagements. The four categories are described below.

1. **Self-reported satisfaction.** This is the most common measure used to assess the benefits of coaching. Typical questions would be, “Do you like the coaching?” and “Was it effective?” This measure represents the basic level of feedback to coaches about process issues and their interpersonal skills. It measures the coachee’s initial reaction to the intervention and is the first step in evaluating the learning process. However, this kind of measurement evaluates perceptions about coaching, not behavioral changes. A good example of this type of measurement is Lore’s *Coaching Effectiveness Survey* (CES). Coaching recipients (coachees) complete this instrument in order to provide feedback about their coaches’ effectiveness and about their own preferences and satisfaction related to the coaching process.
2. **Self- and other-reported improvements.** Surveys are also conducted to learn more about behavioral, attitudinal, and skill improvements—both from the perspective of the coachees and others with whom they work. This level of measurement is valuable because it describes actual intrapersonal and interpersonal changes in the executive. The content of the survey can measure organizational climate, contracted benchmarks and milestones, and baseline assessments to measure pre- and post-engagement behaviors. One of the most common assessments includes

360° measurement that solicits feedback from several different stakeholders regarding behavioral, attitudinal, and skill improvements of the coachee. Very often, the 360° feedback is compared before and after the coaching engagement.

3. **Business impact studies.** Increasingly, companies are requiring coaching organizations to provide measurements of business impact. Examining business results is the next logical step in a progression of measuring the impact of coaching. With these studies, companies move from measuring satisfaction and improvements (individual and organizational) to more specific and well-defined— and often financial—impacts on the organization. This evaluation is designed to better understand how organizational goals are met, what business results are obtained, and the economic value of the results achieved due to the coaching engagement. Thus far, business impact studies have relied on self-reports. This category includes case studies, estimated impact attributable to coaching, and internal and external customer surveys.
4. **ROI studies.** One specific type of business impact study is a mathematical comparison of the cost of coaching versus the financial benefits, otherwise known as Return On Investment (ROI). The ROI of coaching is a comparison of benefits to cost expressed as a percentage. ROI studies answer if the financial benefits received from coaching justify the cost of it. The analysis involves the following formula:

$$\frac{(\text{Dollar Value of Improvement} - \text{Cost of Coaching}) \times 100}{\text{Cost of Coaching}} = \text{ROI}$$

Accurate ROI percentages are difficult to obtain because they require defining and measuring the improvements and specifying the dollar amounts associated with them. Furthermore, some improvements are difficult to quantify and are not meaningful if evaluated in that way. It's also very difficult to isolate coaching as the single contributing factor. Thus, some experts caution against relying too heavily on ROI studies because the calculations may not include all the important improvements, the numbers attributed to the changes might be estimated and inaccurate, and/or a single percentage may be insufficient to meaningfully assess the impact of coaching.<sup>5</sup> ROI measurement can help establish the value of coaching, and it is often the most accepted way to approach fiscal responsibility and accountability.

### Benefits

As noted above, many benefits of executive coaching are claimed, but fewer have been studied in a formal way. In this section, we report the quantified benefits that are supported by actual measures. The benefits mirror the four kinds of measurements used: satisfaction, improvement, business impact, and ROI.

### Executives Are Very Satisfied

Without satisfaction, the likelihood is low that the executive will use the coaching experience to make meaningful behavioral changes. The evidence suggests that the majority of executives who

participate in coaching are highly satisfied with the experience and find it valuable. For example:

- ▶ Dell Computer Corporation offered coaching to nearly 400 executives and their internal survey determined that satisfaction rates exceeded 90 percent.<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ The International Coaching Federation found that 70 percent of coachees described coaching as “very valuable” and an additional 28.5 percent described it as “valuable.”<sup>7</sup>

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*“Executives are able to spend little time in training venues, but consider the coaching to be ‘just in time’ learning. They distinguish this from training, which is ‘just in case.’”*

Lee Smith and Jeannine Sandstrom  
International Coaching Federation

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### Executives Report Personal and Organizational Improvements

Improvements that stem directly from coaching engagements include:

- ▶ *Enhanced executive learning.* One study described the increased results of combining coaching with training. They learned that training alone increased productivity by

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Tobin, “The fallacy of ROI calculations.” <http://www.tobincls.com/fallacy.htm>, 3 May 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Coachthee.com, “What do you know about executive coaching ROI?” <http://home.att.net/~coachthee/Archives/ROIexecutivecoaching.html>, 9 April 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Maximum Potential Coaching, “Survey reveals emerging profession of coaching having measurable impact on clients.” [http://www.maxcoaching.com/Survey\\_Reveals.htm](http://www.maxcoaching.com/Survey_Reveals.htm), 3 May 2002.

22 percent, but when training was paired with coaching, the productivity increased by 88 percent.<sup>8</sup>

- ▶ *Gains in corporate performance.* One study of 100 executives documented benefits in productivity, quality, organizational strength, customer service, executive retention, and profitability. They also reported positive reductions in customer complaints and costs.<sup>9</sup> Another article reported that executives who received coaching scored higher than executives who did not on business results obtained for their organizations.<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ *Enhanced relationships.* In the study of 100 executives, the benefits included improved working relationships with direct reports as well as immediate supervisors, peers, and clients external to the organization.<sup>11</sup> In a similar study, coached executives were better able to build relationships.<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ *Increased leadership effectiveness.* In the study of 100 executives, coachees claimed improvements in team performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced levels of conflict.<sup>13</sup> Dell Computer Corporation found that “senior staff members . . . tend to be promoted more often than those

who don’t participate in one-on-one coaching conversations.”<sup>14</sup> Coached executives score higher on their ability to apply integrative thinking than did non-coached executives.<sup>15</sup>

## Companies Find Substantial and Quantifiable Business Results

Self- and other-reports are generally qualitative measurements. Business impact studies, however, place actual dollar values, or quantitative measures, on the improvements gained from coaching. Results are stated in ways that show the impact to the bottom line. Below are some examples from business impact studies.

- ▶ One study asked coachees for a conservative estimate of the financial benefits gained from coaching. “Almost three in ten (28 percent) claimed they had learned enough to boost quantifiable job performance—whether in sales, productivity, or profits—by \$500,000 to \$1million.” The average response indicated a gain of \$100,000.<sup>16</sup>
- ▶ “A large employer in the hospitality industry saved between \$30 million and \$60 million by coaching its top 200 executives.”<sup>17</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cathi Turner, “Coaching can make a difference in career success.” <http://seattle.bizjournals.com/seattle/stories/2001/08/13/focus7.html>, 3 May 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Manchester, “Executive coaching yields return on investment of almost six times its costs, says study.” [www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html](http://www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html), 9 April 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Anne Fisher, “Ask Annie.” [http://www.fortune.com/indexw.jhtml?channel=artcol.jhtml&doc\\_id=203405](http://www.fortune.com/indexw.jhtml?channel=artcol.jhtml&doc_id=203405), 1 May 2002.

<sup>11</sup> Manchester, “Executive coaching yields return on investment of almost six times its costs, says study.” [www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html](http://www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html), 9 April 2002.

<sup>12</sup> Anne Fisher, “Ask Annie.” [http://www.fortune.com/indexw.jhtml?channel=artcol.jhtml&doc\\_id=203405](http://www.fortune.com/indexw.jhtml?channel=artcol.jhtml&doc_id=203405), 1 May 2002.

<sup>13</sup> Manchester, “Executive coaching yields return on investment of almost six times its costs, says study.” [www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html](http://www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html), 9 April 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Coachthee.com, “What do you know about executive coaching ROI?” <http://home.att.net/~coachthee/Archives/ROIexecutivecoaching.html>, 9 April 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Anne Fisher, “Ask Annie.” [http://www.fortune.com/indexw.jhtml?channel=artcol.jhtml&doc\\_id=203405](http://www.fortune.com/indexw.jhtml?channel=artcol.jhtml&doc_id=203405), 1 May 2002.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Coachthee.com, “What do you know about executive coaching ROI?” <http://home.att.net/~coachthee/Archives/ROIexecutivecoaching.html>, 9 April 2002.

- ▶ One coaching firm completed a coaching evaluation study using the “success case” methodology. They saved \$100,000 by retaining two key executives (a conservative estimate); realized gains of \$250,000 because strategic account teams worked more effectively; moved average sales performers to better plans and the company gained more than \$75,000 in increased sales; improved customer retention and satisfaction that resulted in savings of more than \$100,000.<sup>18</sup>
- ▶ Another case study documented an innovative leadership development effort within a Fortune 500 firm.<sup>19</sup> First they learned that 77 percent claimed that coaching had a significant or very significant impact on at least one of nine business measures. Most respondents (60 percent) identified the specific financial gains. These respondents claimed that overall productivity and employee satisfaction were the measures most significantly impacted by coaching.

## The Return on Investment is Impressive

Perhaps the hottest topic—the *sine qua non*—found in contemporary coaching publications is calculating the return on investment. So far, ROI is a summary statistic reported in studies that look at business impact, thus the ROI calculations to date are a product of the larger business impact studies cited above. We expect formal ROI studies

to be an area of growth for establishing the financial benefits of executive coaching.

- ▶ A study of successful coaching engagements announced a conservative ROI of 1000 percent.<sup>20</sup>
- ▶ Another study of 358 organizations claimed an ROI of nearly 600 percent.<sup>21</sup>
- ▶ A recent study calculated an ROI in excess of 500 percent.<sup>22</sup>

## What Makes a Difference to Coaching Outcomes?

All stakeholders involved in the coaching process want to know which factors will enhance the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes. We’ve identified just a few of the key factors that surfaced in the literature as well as in Lore’s executive coaching experience. This list of factors that make a difference to outcomes is preliminary and will mature as companies take a closer look at the determinants of coaching results.

### *Organizational Support*

Most coaching experts agree that organizations must provide resources to support executive coaching and recognize that it requires a long-term investment in order for it to succeed. Executives need follow-on coaching and reinforcement in order to sustain changes in behavior. In addition, professional development should be kept separate

<sup>18</sup> Coaching.com, “Impact Evaluation Report on the Coaching.com Intervention for [Client Company].” <http://www.coaching.com/Marketing/Common/images/ImpactReport.pdf>, 18 May 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Merrill Anderson, “Executive briefing: Case study on the return on investment of executive coaching.” <http://www.breakoutofthebox.com/ROI.htm>, 3 May 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Coachthee.com, “What do you know about executive coaching ROI?” <http://home.att.net/~coachthee/Archives/ROIexecutivecoaching.html>, 9 April 2002.

<sup>21</sup> Manchester Inc., “Executive coaching yields return on investment of almost six times its costs, says study.” [www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html](http://www.manchesterus.com/executivecoachingyieldsreturnoninvestment.html), 9 April 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Merrill Anderson, “Executive briefing: Case study on the return on investment of executive coaching.” <http://www.breakoutofthebox.com/ROI.htm>, 3 May 2002.

from performance because the high level of trust and openness required for development would be compromised if these two essential processes are mixed.

### *Coaching Style Preferences*

Coaching recipients enter an engagement with a variety of style preferences that can impact their participation in the coaching process and therefore the outcomes. Lore's executive coaching practice seeks to understand three dimensions of preference: *how* the coachee prefers to receive help, *when* they prefer to receive it, and *what* they prefer to focus on. To define each dimension, we have identified anchors on each side. For the first dimension—*how* the coachees prefer to receive help—we ask if they prefer *directive* or *nondirective* coaching. Directive coaching means that the recipient perceives the coach as either a teacher or advisor who gives direct advice. Nondirective coaching means they perceive the coach as a counselor or facilitator who helps them explore their issues and generate their own solutions. To understand *when* they prefer to get help, we ask if they perceive coaching as an ongoing activity and commitment (*programmatic*) or as a periodic and spontaneous one that occurs according to specific needs (*circumstantial*). To assess what they prefer to focus on, we ask if they view coaching as a vehicle to achieve overall growth and development (*holistic*) or if they would rather focus on particular skills, tasks, or issues (*specific*). Lore, using the *Coaching Effectiveness Survey*, collected responses from 1400 coachees and learned that:

- ▶ 61 percent of coachees say they would prefer to receive nondirective coaching; 39 percent prefer directive coaching.

- ▶ 78 percent of coachees say that they would rather have programmatic coaching. Only 22 percent prefer circumstantial coaching.
- ▶ 85 percent of coachees want holistic coaching. Only 15 percent say they prefer specific coaching.

Therefore, the most commonly preferred coaching style is nondirective, programmatic and holistic, which Lore calls the counselor style. The least-preferred style is directive, circumstantial, and specific—the manager style. These findings suggest that companies should be sure to reach alignment between coachee preferences and coaches' styles in order to maximize satisfaction and optimize changes.

### *Coachability*

Some executives are more open to coaching than others. Some are disposed to accept coaching while others are not. No matter how brilliant and effective a coach might be, no change will occur if the coachee does not take responsibility for it. Simply put, the question to ask is, "Is the coachee ready, willing, and able to be coached?" Coaching organizations use self-assessments of "coachability" to detect the coachee's receptiveness. This assessment is used to increase coachees' self-awareness regarding obstacles to their participation in the process. Clearly this is not enough information to understand coachability as a factor in the outcomes of coaching. Lore has developed a coachability model that will help coaches and organizations understand how coachable an executive is, what behaviors reflect the executive's degree of coachability, and what is required for effective change. Coachability assessments help organizations predict who will most benefit from

the coaching, how to respond to coachees with lower coachability ratings, and how to better match coaches and coachees to take full advantage of the relationship.

### *Internal Versus External Coaches*

Coaches can be individuals who are internal to the organization or external to it. An internal coach might be a boss, manager, or a team leader. An external coach is generally a consultant outside of the organization, a third party who can be objective and is not required to assume any additional roles within it other than “coach.” The kind of coach may be an important factor because feedback from those who receive internal coaching is less than ideal. For example, 60 percent of coachees, all who were coached by internal coaches, said they would like *better* coaching than they received. An additional 56 percent reported that the coaching they received was often not focused on the right things and did not help them learn exactly what they should do differently to be more effective.<sup>23</sup> Another organization surveyed more than four thousand corporations and learned that external coaches are most frequently used for executives.<sup>24</sup> Reasons cited for using external coaches included the perception that internal coaches are less valuable, less available (no time), or will blur work and coaching roles. In addition, external coaches were in a better position to maintain confidentiality, be available, and possess the ability to train the direct reports of the corporate executives. Therefore, the trend in executive coaching is to hire external coaches because they are less biased, more available, and focused on the right issues.

### *Competence of the Coach*

Coaching is a relationship and therefore the competence of the coach is another significant contributor to the success of the engagement. At a minimal level, coaches must be carefully screened, educated, and certified. The ICF estimates that as many as 10,000 people call themselves business coaches. Thus, organizations must carefully select qualified and competent executive coaches in order to achieve their goals. To illustrate how the competence of the coach can affect the outcome, consider another finding from Lore’s *Coaching Effectiveness Survey*. We found that 38 percent of coachees say that their coaches were ineffective at helping them set action plans in order to change specific behaviors.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the competence of the coach directly influenced their ability to implement lessons learned from the coaching engagement. Another example is hiring a coach without the skills to recognize when another intervention—such as counseling or psychotherapy—is more appropriate. Steven Berglas recommends screening all executives for psychological problems before entering the executive coaching process.<sup>26</sup> If coaches do not have sufficient skill to do this screening, they may do more harm than good—to the executive as well as his or her organization.

## Concluding Thoughts

Just because executives are at the top does not mean they have reached their highest potential. Management, interpersonal, and leadership skills are essential, but it is not uncommon for high-potential individuals to reach executive levels

<sup>23</sup> Barbara Singer, *Recovering Executives at Risk of Derailing*, (Durango, CO: Lore International Institute, 2001), 9.

<sup>24</sup> International Coaching Federation. “Analysis of the 1999 Survey on Coaching in Corporate America.” <http://www.coachfederation.org/pressroom/pr-corpsurvey.htm>, 16 May 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Terry Bacon, *Nondirective Coaching: Helping People Change*, (Durango, CO: Lore International Institute), 14.

<sup>26</sup> Steven Berglas, “The very real dangers of coaching,” *Harvard Business Review*, 80,6 (June, 2002), 92.

without the requisite skills in place. The implications of the available information about executive coaching are that coaching can provide enormous benefits in both problem resolution and personal development. Improved functioning of executives creates benefits for them and for their entire organization, including bottom-line business results.

This is a summary of our most important findings that help to make the case for executive coaching.

- ▶ Executive coaching is one of the most accessible and time-efficient ways to learn. This is especially important for busy executives who generally have less time for learning.
  - ▶ More organizations than not are hiring executive coaches.
  - ▶ Companies are using executive coaching to support a variety of their learning and organizational goals. Executive coaching, among other interventions, is used to revitalize management, develop capacities to meet the requirements of fragmented markets, to help manage downsizing, and to develop emotional intelligence. It is also a tool for developing potential, building teams, or inspiring company loyalty.
  - ▶ Coaching is viewed as a valuable avenue for professional development as often as it is a corrective measure. Companies are more proactive about avoiding problems than merely reacting to them.
  - ▶ Evaluations that once focused more narrowly on self-reports of satisfaction and improvements are beginning to include wider measures of the impact for the entire organization.
- ▶ Several different measures have been applied to the impact evaluation and the results are universally positive. Even the most stringent bottom-line indicator—ROI—shows exceptional returns.
  - ▶ Factors that influence the outcomes of coaching engagements are beginning to be identified. This is a new area of interest that deserves greater attention and holds enormous promise to gain greater specificity regarding the “who?” “what?” “when?” and “how?” of executive coaching.

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*"I absolutely believe that people, unless coached, never reach their maximum capabilities."*

Bob Nardelli  
CEO, Home Depot

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## Lore International Institute®

Lore is a firm specializing in professional development, corporate education, and consulting services related to maximizing business results through people. Though headquartered in Durango, Colorado, Lore provides programs and services worldwide. Our firm helps clients differentiate themselves and grow their businesses through the development of people and the processes and tools they use to do their work. Our three divisions work in concert to provide practical, research-based solutions through a variety of consulting and learning methodologies.

## Lore Research Institute

The purpose of the Research Institute is to conduct original research in areas related to professional development, leadership, and other areas that contribute to business performance. Staffed with professional researchers and research fellows, the Lore Research Institute publishes a series of research reports, white papers, books, and other materials designed to help Lore clients make more informed business and professional development decisions. The Institute also conducts client-funded research, creates surveys and assessments, prototype software, and productivity tools.

## Lore Consulting Group

The Lore Consulting Group offers organizational consulting and executive coaching. Organizational consulting services assist clients in achieving specific business results using a four-step process

that involves (1) specifying desired business results; (2) identifying issues that are creating barriers to achieving these results; (3) implementing an action plan to address these issues; and (4) establishing metrics to monitor progress in achieving business results. Executive coaching services focus on understanding the business context and leadership competencies required for success, diagnosing strengths and opportunities for improvement through systematic assessment, such as 360° feedback, and providing individualized coaching solutions for executives at all levels.

## Lore Professional Development Group

The Lore Professional Development Group designs and implements customized learning solutions globally to improve individual and organizational performance. Approximately 40% of the Professional Development Group's assignments are international. Lore uses the most appropriate methodology for each client and solution, including classroom training, experiential e-learning, synchronous collaborative tools, job aids, and online productivity tools. Solutions cover a full range of interpersonal, influence, coaching, leadership, and business development learning initiatives. Lore offers the most comprehensive business development curriculum available, with emphasis on competitive differentiation.

For information about Lore International Institute programs and services, call 800-866-5548 or e-mail [impact@lorenet.com](mailto:impact@lorenet.com).

## About the Authors

### Dr. Pamela Wise

Pam is an executive coach for Lore International Institute and senior researcher in our Research Institute. To Lore's engagements she brings over twenty-five years of experience in the business consulting, counseling psychology, and education fields. She has coached individuals and teams in strategic planning, operations, marketing, acquisition preparation, conflict management, career development, work-life balance, culture change, productivity improvement, and human resource planning and development. She has worked with corporate executives in start-ups and Fortune 1000 companies.

Her professional career includes leading the growth of her independent psychology and consulting practice for fifteen years, developing corporate strategies for a technology management company, and serving as executive vice president of a technology management consulting firm. She has consulted with a variety of industries, including information technology, financial, retail, health care, and education. She began her coaching and counseling career as an assistant professor of clinical counseling at The Ohio State University.

In her research role at the Lore Research Institute, she has established relationships with and collected interviews from senior executives at Southwest Airlines, EMC, and Men's Wearhouse. She combines her analytical research skills and her counseling background to enable leaders to understand the behaviors that differentiate their companies.

She attended SUNY at Buffalo for her B.A. in psychology, her M.Ed. in counseling, and her Ph.D. in counseling psychology. She is a licensed psychologist and certified Imago relationship therapist and workshop presenter.

Pam has international business experience in China.

### Dr. Laurie Voss

Laurie is a faculty member and Lead Researcher for the Lore Research Institute. She brings seven years of experience in higher education to Lore's research endeavors and consulting engagements.

Laurie was a visiting instructor for two years at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado where she taught writing, sociology, women's studies, and political science. Before joining Lore, Laurie worked with children detained at the world's largest detention center in Chicago, Illinois. She and her co-researchers from Northwestern University Medical School's Department of Psychiatry studied the mental health needs of children who are detained. Laurie used this research to write a dissertation about children who are prosecuted as adults in the criminal justice system. She is currently revising her dissertation into an article for publication.

Her Ph.D. in sociology was awarded from Northwestern University in 1999. Her B.A. was awarded in 1993 from the University of Denver.