

BENTON ON LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

2 Abstract

This paper will give you an insight into what CEO coaching is. Broadly speaking, coaching is personality training, where somebody observes how you behave in a specific field of your life. E.g. there are coaches in sports, drama school, rhetoric or leadership. A CEO coach tries to help CEOs so that they can develop to be more respected, more impressive and more convincing in their jobs.

You will recognise that you can partly coach yourself in the same way that CEO coaching takes place. I will work out where you can coach yourself and where you need external assistance.

Finally you should have enough information about CEO coaching to develop yourself so that you act and think like CEOs do.

This paper will be mainly divided into the following sections:

- Pre-analysis before you start developing.
- What you can do alone.
- Check for what you still need a coach for.

ABBREVIATIONS

3 Abbreviations

CEO Chief Executive of Operations

INTRODUCTION

4 Introduction

When you read this paper, or when you think about CEO coaching, then you are touching on a very sensitive subject. It is sensitive because the title “CEO coaching” tells us that the subject is related to CEOs, who are considered to be important, very successful and leading meaningful lives. It is an interesting subject, because not everybody can afford to pay a CEO coach. It is also a sensitive subject, because the question arises whether CEOs are successful due to coaching or if they would have been equally successful without coaching.

In any case you should know what coaching is before you continue reading this paper. Coaching is personality training on a non-technical level. The focus of coaching is not to teach you techniques on how to work more effectively, but to show you who you are and to watch you from a distance. You can regard a coach as a mirror or a very honest friend. She/he helps you to understand how other people see you and where you can improve on yourself, so that you are even more respected, understood and followed.

It is important to understand that from a certain moment in time your technical skills are not the most relevant thing, because some other people will know as much as you do. To be more successful than them, you need personality, which a coach tries to help you develop.

You are ready for coaching when you accept that you may need to alter your mindset, learn new approaches and even make major changes in your behaviour.

5 Investigate Before You Develop

If you read this paper because you want to develop as a CEO, who received CEO coaching, then you have to take a rest. Slow down and do the same things as coached CEOs had to do. Their first exercise was to think about their past.

Do you have any idea why this is necessary? Compare yourself with a ship on the ocean. If you know where you want to go, but you don't know where you are, then you don't know the way to reach the goal. If you want to develop, then you first have to check your position. You have to check where you might have strengths and where you might have weaknesses. Check the wind that determined the last days of your sailing trip. Apply this to your life: check over your past and decide what controlled you and in which direction you floated. Please realise that I consciously used the passive form – “what controlled you”. Check your childhood and your school days and identify any regular or irregular patterns of behaviour that you detect. This will help you recognise the patterns of behaviour and personal qualities that you need to develop. The more time you spend, the less time is wasted. I assume that this will be something that you will not finish in one step. If you think you have finished, let it lie, continue with reading this paper and if you want to add something to your history analysis, please add it later. It will be worthwhile.

5.1 Self-Review Part1: Write Your Life Story

Write down everything about your past life. Write down things like where you were born, grew up, the work your parents did, memorable moments in grade school, high school, and college, the successes and setbacks along the way, why you chose your career, how you got where you are and where you want to go.

5.1.1 *Your Own History*

This gathering of information is important and will help you to:

- Think in an organised manner.
- Refresh your memory of where you've been and all you've done.
- Feel good when you think back and reflect (or bad, if you haven't worked very hard).
- End up with more complete information for updating a resume and job interviewing.
- Discover patterns and tendencies.
- Reveal gaps.

You can think and write about the following topics:

- The early years
 - When and where were you were born?
 - What was your relationship with other children in the family?
 - What kind of work did your parents do?
 - What do you remember about your different schools?
 - What was your relationship with your parents like?
 - Were you popular? With what types of children?
 - Does anything stand out that was life shaping?
- The middle years
 - Were any of your teachers or coaches particularly memorable? Why? Who?
 - Did you work after school?
 - What did you think you wanted to be when you grew up?
 - How did you choose what college to go to?
 - What did you study? What were you going to be?
 - Did you pay for college yourself? How?
 - What kind of work did you do during college?
- Up to the present
 - What was your first job after college?
 - What was your first boss like?
 - How did you do?
 - When and why did you change jobs?
 - How were your relationships with bosses, peers, or subordinates?
 - When did you first manage people?
 - How did you learn how to do that?
 - What were the circumstances of getting (or losing) each succeeding job up to your current job?
 - Where/how did you meet your spouse or other significant people?
 - What kind of work does that person do?
 - What do you do for fun?
 - What creates passion for you?
 - Where are you going in your life, both personally and professionally?
 - Where should you be going?
- For now and later
 - If you didn't have to worry about money, what would you do at this point in your career?
 - Besides money, what is keeping you from doing it?
 - What causes people doing your work to leapfrog ahead of their peers?
 - What keeps people on the bench?
 - What's been your shining moment to date?
 - What advice have you been given?
 - Did you take it? Why or why not?
 - What skills do you want to work on?
 - What talents do you want to develop?
 - What's holding you back?

- What have you learnt from life so far? What was the most embarrassing moment?
- What brings you to the point in your career that you want coaching?
- What do you want to get out of coaching?

I am sure that the points that strike you most are those who are most worthwhile to think about. Some questions hurt when you read them, but take your time and really analyse them. It will be useful to you. I regard this analysis as worthwhile when you detect some of your weaknesses and strengths by thinking about painful moments. Analyse why some moments were painful. Did somebody behave like you wanted to behave but you were not able? Did somebody have many friends, but you did not? With the help of this analysis you can find out behaviours or attitudes that you would like to possess.

Please especially have a look at the last 3 questions, which are closely related to your development: what is holding you back, why do you think coaching is useful for you and what do you expect from coaching?

5.1.2 What Patterns Might You Have Inherited

Do the same check for your parents. Gather all the information you can get about your parents. Take time for this. This exercise can help you to check if some of your attitudes or behaviours are copied from your parents. Use this as information, not as ammunition to blame anybody. Keep in mind that you, not your parents or your childhood, are responsible for your current life.

You can think about the following topics:

- Your parents' work history
 - What were their first jobs?
 - What are their earliest recollections of bosses?
 - How did people describe them?
 - What did their bosses say about them?
 - What were their fears?
 - What were their goals?
- Your parents' successes
 - What are their best stories about a job change or promotion?
 - What were their greatest victories or shining moments?
 - What attracted them to the company, job, or career they chose?
 - What were the best advises they received?
 - What words still ring in their ears?
 - What were the best schemes they ever carried out?
 - What are their biggest regrets?
 - What do they wish they'd spent time on?

- What was difficult for them?
- What do they wish they'd done differently?
- What advice do they remember being given that they didn't take?

After this journey you should look for certain patterns in your information and for a match between your parents' general behaviour and yours. It is common for children to learn values and attitudes from their parents. Sometimes this happens indirectly or by chance. It is even worse when parents influence their children directly by ruling their behaviours. Some parents even choose the future jobs for their children, not always with the children's best interests in mind. This is not always for the benefit of the children.

As a result of this exercise you should be able to see patterns if they exist. Now you can consider if you accept the patterns or if you would like to change some of them.

For some people this investigation will answer the question "Why do I always react like I do?" Some people are prisoners of their automatic reactions. E.g. during a conversation some people hear something and they react very aggressively. Later these people ask themselves "Why did I react so aggressively? There was no reason to do so!" If we don't understand one of our reactions after we have had it, it might be related to patterns we learnt during our childhood. By using the results of the survey, we can understand why we react the way we do and avoid doing so in future situations.

A second important outcome of this survey can be that we detect patterns showing us why we are not well liked by others.

A third finding can be that we detect that our job contradicts our governing values. E.g. we detect that we always played alone during our childhood or that we preferred hobbies that we could do alone, whereas during our professional life we have to work in large teams. Then the questions automatically arise: "Is this the correct job for me? Can I be successful in a job, which is different to what I did for the last 20 years? Can I go on with my learnt behaviour or do I have to change?" One of the most important outcomes of this survey can be that we detect that our childhood patterns might block us in our professional life. If we detect that we have to change our attitudes,

then this survey was useful. If we found out what we have to change, then the survey was worthwhile.

“Now that I see why I’m like this, I can choose to do something about it“¹

5.2 Self-Review Part2: Thoughts About Yourself

The previous self-examination was related to tendencies and preferences. It was on a 'technical' level where we could gather facts.

In the next analysis we will focus on associations. Please replace the bold word of a sentence with a word belonging to the bold word and afterwards say why you chose the word you’ve chosen.

E.g.: “If I were a **fruit**, what would I be?“ -> replace *‘fruit’* by the fruit you would like to be.

The bold words are:

- Job, weather, tool, temperature, animal, smell, crime, toy, something to wear, country, spare time activity, sound, time of day, and department in the supermarket.

This exercise is not an attempt at deep psychological analysis. It is an interesting way to look at how you think about yourself. It is a tool to help you decide what gaps you might want to eliminate and what strengths you might want to reaffirm and enhance.

The big contrast between the first and the second analysis is that the former explains what you are and why you are like you are and the latter checks what you would like to be and where your innermost values and tendencies lie.

5.3 Self-Review Part 3: 360 Degree Point Of View

In this exercise you are asked to select different people to give their statements about you.

There exist three different kinds of selections and it is up to you which one you choose.

The first one is the most objective and the most difficult one. You can do this together with your manager and the human resource department. Human resource staff members are responsible for carrying out the survey and for the analysis of the outcome. They work through the result together with you to determine a development plan. In my opinion, this is the most formal way and does not always give you what you want. I.e., if you only want to know your weaknesses and strengths for yourself, then you don't need the human resource department to make the survey, but you can use one of the following two methods.

A second possibility is to select just 10 people (5 below and 5 above your position) and let them answer one question "Do you regard me as competent, memorable, impressive, credible, genuine, trusted, and liked?" The answer must be "YES", "NO", or "DON'T KNOW". This is the fastest method but it gives only a statistical answer. From my point of view it hardly serves as a tool when you like to know *what* you need to improve. I think it can be useful to you if you don't know *whether* you need personality training *or not*. If the answers are not as you expected them, then you might want to receive personality training.

A third way is to design a questionnaire with detailed questions, like:

- How well do I look for ways to meet or exceed customer needs?
- How well do I look for ways to meet or exceed management's needs?
- How well do I take a positive approach to business?
- How well do I work effectively with people in a wide variety of circumstances?
- How well do I analyse complex situations accurately and in a timely manner?
- How well do I minimise activities that do not add value to the organisation?
- How well do I value others' thinking or thoughts?
- How well do I understand how to get things done in the organisation?
- How well do I have in-depth industry knowledge?
- How well do I overcome obstacles?
- How well do I quickly act when I see an opportunity?
- How well do I demonstrate intellectual curiosity?
- How well do I make sure I can be counted on?
- How well do I remain in control when stressed or pressed?
- How well do I gain trust?

- How well do I admit responsibility for failures or mistakes?
- How well do I help others?
- How well do I follow through to get results?
- How well do I set a good example?
- How well do I see and understand the broad view of business?

You need to prepare a lot for this survey. On one hand it is the most time consuming method with respect to your efforts. On the other hand you can directly control which questions you want to ask and therefore you control what you get known about yourself.

Regardless of the approach you take to receive feedback from others, get as much input as possible, test what you hear, offer your perspective, but don't be defensive. Then specify areas you want to work on.

5.4 Isolate Triggers That Set You Off and Set Goals To Handle Them

Some situations derail us and these incidents are triggers. From all the introspection you've gone through, sort out your triggers. The specific trigger incidents become the basis for your development plan. You can say that each part of the development plan is a specific goal that must be achieved, to reach the final goal. So the next thing is to define separate goals.

5.4.1 Your Goals

Having goals, plans, and dreams is nice, but unless you do something about them every day they'll continue to be goals, plans and dreams, but not reality. From the self-investigation of the previous chapters you should have identified some areas in which you want to develop. Define some goals and actions for these areas. Write down these actions on a small piece of paper. Read this paper several times every day, just to remind you to follow these actions.

From my own experience, I suggest that you can do something each day toward your long-term goals. If you regularly remind yourself about the areas in which you want to improve, then you will always take advantage of situations where you can improve your abilities. This method can be

compared with mountain climbing. You can be successful, but if you are not always attentive, you might make a mistake that could cost you your life.

Remember your goals every day and work on them regularly. I don't mean just the long-term goals, but also the small actions to develop your personality.

5.4.2 Strategy To Go Forward

There are some simple rules that anybody, who wants to progress, should follow

- Quantify your contributions and let the right people know about them. If it's fact, you are not blowing your own trumpet but rather making it easier for the boss to understand your work.
- Try to share credit where you can. Enthusiastically and sincerely ask, "How did you do that?" You might learn something valuable.
- Raise your positive visibility by *real acts* that produce the results which management wants. Don't waste your time and your energy fighting for things that you can not influence. If you don't agree with a decision, then say it once and try to convince the opponent a second time. If you don't succeed with changing the situation do the best you can. Use your positive thinking to bring the positive results that this situation requires. Don't blame it on the *wrong decision* – this is your opinion. Make the best out of the situation and show everybody that you can collaborate even under circumstances where you don't agree (e.g. the work process or the company's policy).
- Get a reputation that supports the way you want to be perceived. Be careful that you don't lose this reputation by stupid handling. Consider the following scenario: you join a company and you are perceived as a very collaborative colleague. You are intellectual, so you learn your work quickly. Initially, many colleagues will ask you to support them. At first, you will do whatever you can. What happens when several superiors want to benefit from this situation? Several will come to you at the same time asking for support. You now have a very good reputation. When you can not stand the pressure and there are more and more requests, what will you do? Now very *sensitive handling* from your side is required. If you react incorrectly, e.g. you become too aggressive in your refusals, your good reputation is in danger.
- In relation to the last point: don't be afraid to say "No", even to superiors. If you take on too much and end up doing poor work, you'll both lose. It's a good idea, when you say "No" to someone, to give the person something in exchange that you can and will do. Always tell them why you say "No" and put emphasis on the fact that you considered all the information that you have. E.g. if you say, "No, I am working for project A", then say in addition "As far as I know, project A has the highest priority". This clearly communicates that you think about what you do and that you are able to analyse the situation in which you work.
- Ask questions and recognise how the relationships in you environment work.
- Acknowledge others (also upwards) in the way you would like to be acknowledged by them.

6 Active Steps

Now, after you have thought about your history, you are going to start your personal development.

6.1 Start, Continue, But Never Complete Your Self-Coaching

It is most important to realise that your development can never end. If you want to become a CEO, then you should never forget this rule. You may never consider yourself as perfect.

Rule 1. Remember that you're not alone in this.

Rule 2. Don't be extreme but be consistent.

Rule 3. Be self-disciplined.

Self-discipline creates habit. Any steadily repeated act becomes a habit and then it becomes easy. Usually you end up taking pleasure from it.

6.2 CEO Apprentice

In some cases, after gathering your history, you find some attitudes that you would like to develop. There is still the question of how to do this. A second question is "How might the result look?" For the latter there is a common strategy – try to find someone who acts as you would like to be, and emulate him/her.

First, make a conscious decision to apprentice yourself to company presidents and CEOs. Appreciate being around them. Talk to them as much as possible. Watch them and learn how they behave. Have a close look at how they talk, stand, walk and react. The point is to be around the best, and emulate the best of the best.

You have already emulated some people in your life; so don't worry about doing it when you want to develop in the direction of CEOs. Here are some examples:

- New company – from learning and following the company culture to using the company pen.
- New team – by wearing the team uniform and drinking at it's hangout.
- New community – by attending the town fair and shopping where the locals do.

Remark: I agree with this idea of Ms. Benton, but I wonder how you can do this? Normally you have to find a reason to talk to the boss of your boss otherwise you won't get an appointment. It must be for a neutral (that means not job related) reason – otherwise you ignore your immediate

boss and this is seldom appreciated. So in general I regard this as difficult. But when I think about my past, then I can say that I missed some chances. There were opportunities during lunchtime in the canteen or there were chances at celebrations, when I could have talked to our CEO, which I did not take.

6.3 Attitude Management

6.3.1 Think Positive

You *can* only achieve something, if you *want* to achieve something. That means that you need to want something otherwise you have no choice - but what is the want? It is simply the attitude of a person. Successful people have a positive attitude. They always think, “We want this and we can do it.” This is called positive attitude. This can be learnt and practised by everybody. If you don’t have this attitude then practise it every day of your life. If you wake up in the morning, tell yourself that you can achieve something today. In a difficult situation don’t check what you can not do, but what you can do. Always look for the possibilities and not the problems.

6.3.2 Talk Positive

Talk positively *to* yourself (self-talk), *about* yourself *and to* others. Don’t say things to yourself that you don’t want others say about you.

6.3.3 Create Patterns

Don’t be extreme, but be consistent. Remember the goals, which you have defined, throughout your day. Consistency is so important, because it creates patterns. Patterns are what people respond to – and what they remember.

If you create positive patterns, and if all your activities become attitudes, then you don’t have to spend your time and energy reminding yourself how to act. At this point of time you are so effective that you can concentrate on helping others become equally effective.

6.3.4 Do The Opposite

When you try something and it does not generate the reaction or response you want, then quickly change your tactics. Do something completely different. Go for the opposite of what you were doing. If that still doesn’t work, try something else radically different.

Doing the opposite may give you nice surprises, plus it makes you more creative, disciplined, innovative, and knowledgeable.

6.4 Perception Management

One's best intentions and one's behaviour aren't always in line. Unfortunately this discrepancy is not created consciously, but unconsciously.

This chapter is not about showmanship but about creating an authentic appearance that is memorable, impressive, credible, genuine, trusted and liked. It focuses on the attitude of the body: e.g. the standing posture, style of motion, and verbal delivery.

It is important that you realise the importance of this chapter. You can hide your 'bad' attitudes, but you can't so easily hide behavioural and physical actions. People you meet will evaluate you in about eight seconds and they will draw their conclusions based on what they see. To be impressive and convincing, your attitude must support your actions and vice versa.

Perception management also considers symbols and signs. If you behave in a specific way (positively or negatively), then other people will keep that in mind. Whenever they think about you, they will remember your special behaviour. If you momentarily stop before you sit down, for example, others will keep this in mind as a symbolic behaviour of yours.

Remaining in the mind of others is important.

Therefore your intention throughout the day must also focus on your physical appearance. Avoid any unpleasant behaviour. Consider whether you want to build up a ritual that specifically belongs to you.

6.4.1 Tenacity Breeds Discipline, Which Creates Patterns And Habits

The difference between skill and instinct is that skill determines what you can do if required and instinct appears automatically. You can regard instinct as the highest level of permanent training and permanent acting on your skills. If you always act consciously according to certain patterns and if you exercise a particular skill each day, then you have a chance that this skill will become an

instinct. The big difference between you and your competitors can be that they have the same skill as you, but you behave 'faster' than they do, because it's your instinct and not just your skill.

Key rules you must never forget:

1. Never give up on yourself.
2. Never let up on yourself.
3. Never let yourself down.

Please have a look at the following citation: "Nobody who ever gave his best regretted it," said legendary Chicago Bears coach George Halas. On the contrary, there is the huge risk that you will have regrets, if you feel that you didn't give everything.

6.4.2 *Quiet Speed: Slow Down To Get Things Done*

6.4.2.1 *Pace*

The pace of your activities is more important than you might believe. Don't be slow if you walk. Don't be slow when you search for a document. Take the correct pace when doing so. If you act too quickly then you look nervous or frantic. CEOs never look like that– or don't you agree with me? The reason for this is that they have learnt to act with the correct pace. They are *not too slow* and *never hectic*.

6.4.2.2 *Walk*

When you walk, pay attention to walking slowly. This looks more impressive than running around. Please don't confuse this with creeping. Of course, this would also be wrong. You should walk slowly but with dynamic. You can vary your pace by varying your step size. If you take larger steps, then you don't look as if you are running, but everybody will see that you dynamically move.

I regard this point (walking) as one where assistance is necessary. A professional coach or an honest friend can lead you to the same results. It is easier to learn to walk correctly if you have feedback from other people because they can see and observe you. In any case you should keep in mind that you should *neither hurry* through your company *nor creep*.

6.4.2.3 *Entering A Room*

Slow down when coming into a room. This lets the others know that you believe, "I am worthwhile so you will take time for me." Another important advantage is that the others can have a look at

you. If you wear the correct clothes and if you know how to walk, then show it. Be impressive when entering a room. You can also stop for a moment after you enter the room and have a look around the people in the room. Consolidate the situation before you go forward into the room.

6.4.2.4 *Speaking*

Slow down when speaking. If you are too shy to do so, then think, “I am worthwhile; you will listen to me” before you start talking.

With the correct pace of speech, others can follow more easily.

Remember that they don't have the script in front of them. They are hearing the speech for the first time. You read your speech several times during preparation. Remember that after you have read a sentence, the others will have to work on it. The audience must get the sentence into their heads, analyse it, and finally put it into relationship with the previous sentences.

Please don't confuse *pace* during a speech with a *boring* speech. Slowing down doesn't mean you are boring, but it means doing things purposefully and deliberately. The pace of your speech can be a tool for building tension. You are allowed to speak faster than usual, for one to two sentences, if you want to emphasise something. If you want your audience to be aware of what you are saying, speed up, talk louder and then make a long pause. After the pause, the used time for your last sentence should be comparable with the other sentences of your speech. After some sentences of fast speech, the audience will need a longer interval to understand what you told them. Keep this in mind.

When you slow down throughout the day, then you can think things through. When you can think things through, the results are more profound. Even the risk of failure reduces. When you slow down and think, you align attitude and action, and you appear calm and confident. When you appear calm, people think you know what you're doing. They think you must be right. They are much more likely to listen to you and follow you.

6.4.3 *Actions Fit Your Attitude And Create Your First Impression*

As I mentioned before, unfortunately the human being is impressed during the first eight seconds she/he recognises (sees, hears or feels) another person.

A recent Harvard study concluded that you should trust your first impression of others; it's probably right. Psychologists showed a group of students three to five second videotaped clips of professors teaching. The students were asked to rate the professors' effectiveness' based on these few seconds of observation. Their ratings turned out virtually identical to the ratings the teachers received from students who had taken classes with them for an entire semester.

What do we learn out of this? If you want to impress someone else, you have to be impressive in the first few seconds. To be honest, I believe that some adults know how to do this from their first day in business life. Maybe they learnt it during their childhood or they were born with this skill. My advice to you is, if you know such people have a close look at how they behave. You can learn from them. The second step is, try to do similarly; try to emulate them. If you become familiar with their behaviours, then try to develop your own. You have to practice them, otherwise you can not improve or develop. Good style requires some acting. Try doing some simple things with a little showmanship, like:

- Remaining standing in the reception room so that when you meet whoever's coming to get you, you are not smaller than him/her just because you are sitting.
- Complimenting a stranger in the elevator.
- Being the first to make small talk to your seatmate.
- Carrying yourself as if you are fit, even if you haven't worked out in a year.
- Dressing neatly, with attention to detail.
- Engaging strangers in conversation at a social gathering, so they can feel more relaxed.
- Acting like you are always having a good time.

Some final thoughts regarding 'calming down.' You pretty much become how you behave. If you calm down your actions, then you will become calmer. If you become calmer, then this has positive effects on your well-being and this in turn will be reflected in your more relaxed appearance.

6.4.4 Check Your Posture, Walk, And Smile

Have a look at yourself! Check how you behave; that means how you walk, stand and sit. Check also how others behave. Try to find a person you regard as impressive (movie, television, neighbour or whoever). There is nothing wrong with imitating this person. If you imitate this person, then it is helping you to exercise different behaviours. It is important for you to verify regularly how you stand, sit or walk. Do it a hundred times a day. The more often you do it at the beginning of your development, the more benefit you will gain from your observations. Again, if you succeed in making this self-observation an attitude, then you won't have to put effort into reminding yourself

to look at yourself and you will do it automatically. Remember that it is important to check your physical presence – the more often you do it, the better it will become.

Here are some facts that you should regularly refresh in your mind:

6.4.4.1 Stand Tall

If you stand tall, then you look more impressive than if you don't stand tall. You can achieve this very easily; if you just remind yourself that you are proud of yourself. You can be proud of yourself – there is nothing wrong with that. Everybody can be proud of who she/he is. If you give your best efforts throughout your whole life, then you have a right to be proud. Whatever you achieved, it is your best and therefore you can be proud of yourself. Even if there were situations in which you didn't give everything, then it was your decision to act this way. Stand by your decisions and be proud of yourself. If you manage to make this feeling one of your attitudes, then you will automatically stand taller.

6.4.4.2 Walk Tall

This is similar to the previous point. Always remember that you can be proud of yourself. Feel like a winner and walk like a winner. Demonstrate to everybody that you don't want to hide.

When you walk into a room, remember to walk tall. You will be more impressive to the other people in the room.

6.4.4.3 Put On A Happy Face

A smile gives warmth to your face. It is one of the most important factors to remember when trying to be impressive. You may never grin, but you should smile where it is appropriate and as often as possible.

Sometimes it is even useful to smile when you don't feel like it. E.g. if you receive a big reward and after 12 hours of flight, photo sessions and talk you are asked to give a statement to the public, you probably won't be happy. You are just stressed. Don't forget to smile nevertheless. The public expects it. In such a situation it is again important to keep a check on yourself. Make it an attitude to check how you appear to others. Put a warm smile on your face whenever it is expected and feel correspondingly cheerful.

Some benefits of smiling are:

- It gives strength.
- It begets reciprocal smiles.
- It helps you to live longer and more healthily.
- It generates trust.
- It makes you look as if you're having fun.

6.4.5 *Look Your Best In Your Basic Appearance*

You can write about this subject endlessly. I will try to focus on the main parts.

Dressing is important in our society. This is a pity, but it is a fact and we have to live with it. If you want to impress people, then the clothes you wear must fit the location, the audience and the event.

The basic rules for dressing yourself are:

- Your clothes shouldn't be more interesting than you are.
- Apparel should fit well and appear neat and clean.
- Choose clothes a level or two above you, or suitable to the level you want to influence.

Why is it so important? I believe that the other people want to feel appreciated! If you wear clothes that they consider as fitting, then they believe that you appreciate them.

A second point is that people believe the following: if you wear appropriate clothes, then you show that you can adapt to the situation and they will automatically believe what you tell them.

6.4.6 *Theatrically Speaking*

Remark: this chapter is just a very short summary of some aspects that I regard as the most important ones to remember every day. It can not replace a complete book about speaking and giving a speech. Speaking is a very complex subject, which can not be completely covered as a subchapter of training CEOs.

This chapter is about leaving important information with people. It is not about so-called Smalltalk. Even if some of the characteristics listed below might be similar for both events, the audience is quite different. The following points are most important and most appropriate when you want to give a message to another person. There is no difference between leaving a message on an

answering machine or giving a speech in front of a group or trying to convince just one person face-to-face.

When you talk to somebody, then you do it because you want to give him/her a message. If you want to give a message to somebody, you must make this message interesting to the other party and in addition make your presentation interesting.

Ms. Benton proposes the next rules for you to follow:

- If you have something to say, then say it.
- Stop when you've said it.
- Don't be so brief that you are obscure.
- Don't hoard information.
- Be tentative when speaking *about* people.

When I took a first look at this list, the first two points struck me. The reason for this is that I regard some people as impressive, but when I see them at parties, I always hear them talking and talking. Even when they have nothing to say, they are talking. Have a look at politicians. Some are impressive, but they are talking, even when they don't have anything to say. In several interviews I saw and heard CEOs, who were not simply answering a question with a "Yes" or "No", but they were always holding a 2-3 minute monologue, which normally gave little detail.

I have the impression that impressive people tend to hold monologues and I assume that these monologues are learnt. I am almost certain that these people talked differently before they came into the positions they occupy when they hold interviews. For that reason my experience contradicts the first two points. I leave it up to you, whether you follow Ms. Beton's or my point of view.

Some practical rules:

- Write down the key points you want to make.
- Stand up when you speak.
- Have a smile on your face (even useful for a telephone call, where the other party does not see you; your voice is nevertheless more polite when you smile).
- Breathe deeply and slowly while you are waiting for the moment to speak.
- Speak half as fast as you normally do; throw in a dramatic pause between key points.
- Minimise buzzwords, repetitive words, and fillers.
- Interrupt if necessary. Don't be overly polite if something must be corrected.

Remember that good communication frequently involves leaving things unsaid. ²

Some important points on giving a speech:

- If you plan to deliver a speech, first check the audience; check for whom you plan to speak.
- When writing the speech, regularly verify that your point and your talking style fit the audience.
- Make your speech as simple as possible.
- Make the sentences as short as possible.
- Make the speech as colourful as possible.
- Add humour.
- Make the speech as active as possible. Try to avoid passive wording, but try to use active wording.
- Use examples in your speech.
- Try to follow a sequence:
 - Say what you are going to talk about.
 - Tell it.
 - Summarise what you spoke about.
- Present any material as interestingly as possible. Make the matter alive.
- Let not a single filler word escape your lips.
- Practice your speech in private. From my point of view this is one of the most important things and one of the most difficult ones. If you plan to do so, what is necessary? You have to decide what you want to practice. Are you going to practice the whole speech or just a part? Do you want to do it alone or will someone in the family contribute? From my experience I can say that it depends on how many speeches you have already given. If you are a complete newcomer, then your first practice will always be difficult, even in front of your family. Therefore you will probably first practice alone. Afterwards you will ask the most generous person of your family to listen. What you may recognise is that the whole procedure will take time. Another point is that you should practice the whole speech word by word. Try to formulate all the words. Even if this takes much longer than you planned, where else would you test the wording you want to use? Even when you have written the whole speech word by word on paper, you have to practice how to present these words. Don't underestimate the value of practising in private. Do it. Try to change the volume, the pace, and the inflection.
- Maintain a relaxed smile before, during, and after the presentation. It makes you look confident.
- Ask the audience questions to check for understanding, responsiveness, and receptivity. If you aren't getting those things, now is the time to do something about it.
- Listen to your audience; don't just talk at them.
- Keep in mind that you are delivering the speech for them and not for yourself.

I think your voice is one of the most important things that you can use to be impressive. The problem is that you can not verify your voice by yourself. There are some things that you can check for yourself (e.g. the pace and the volume). But there are too many things for that you need a coach (e.g. delivering a speech, learning how to act in front of an audience or where to put your hands during a speech). I also think that you need a coach to tell you when your voice is most convincing and when your whole presentation is convincing. It is simply not enough to know that you must slow down the pace and vary the volume during a speech.

I think it is essential to have:

- Some chances to practice your speeches or to practice talking.
 - A coach who helps you to develop; somebody who gives you feedback.
- Without somebody who gives you feedback, you just have yourself, looking at yourself. I do not think that this is enough to ensure development.

6.5 Using Emotional Energy

Use emotional energy to make other people follow you. The main goal of a manager or CEO is to have the staff follow him/her and accept his/her targets as their own.

To achieve this, a CEO should act according to the following points:

- Maintain the self-esteem of people around you.
 - Start them out at 100 percent and let them take themselves down, if it happens that way. Don't value them at zero and force them to prove their worthiness to you.
 - Be clear, honest, open, and prompt to say what you will do and what you want others to do.
 - Accept any undesirable response or reaction for the time being.
 - Turn up the emotional energy effort.
- Be humorous.
 - It keeps you healthier.
 - It enables you to share a common bond and draw a group together.
 - It makes others around you feel good.
 - It reduces everyone's stress.
 - It gives balance.
- Be affable.
 - Emotional energy requires you to be pleasant and friendly, even when those around you aren't.

- It's popular to say count to 10 before acting when angered. Thinking about the consequences first sometimes prevents them.
- Be bold and present. You have to be physically present and your gestures should be impressive.

7 10 Rules For Effective Coaching

If you have already thought about this topic, then you are probably already a coach, officially or unofficially, to someone – a child, co-worker, relative, or friend. When you help others to improve, you will probably improve yourself.

- Be other-oriented. You have to shelve your ego.
- Slow down. It will make you look more self-assured. This increases confidence in the coached person and it will give you more time to think of good advice to offer.
- Constantly raise the bar for yourself. As you get more experienced, you'll be able to provide better advice.
- Don't be intimidated by the coachee. She or he is likely to be superior to you in some areas, but you are adequate and that is what you are offering.
- Hold your ground. Some coached people will try to dismiss what you offer. If you have something of value, do not let them diminish it.
- Do your job in giving excellent advice, but do not be bothered if the coachee doesn't apply it. Resenting the fact that she/he doesn't implement your thinking is naïve. You teach. The person must want to learn.
- Own up to your mistakes. If you gave advice that bombed, then you should be willing to help extricate the coachee from any situation you helped get him/her into.
- Stay objective. As much as you care for the coachee and his/her situation, you have to remain impartial. You will offer far better direction and be a much better coach if you can stay objective.

MY FINDINGS

8 What You Can't Do Without A Coach

I regard Benton's book as interesting. It gives a very nice insight of what CEO coaching is. It is interesting to see that there is no mystique behind this kind of coaching.

Nevertheless I think this book does not replace a coach. It helps you to prepare for coaching. You can make the pre analysis of yourself before you go to a coach. Maybe it helps you to find out some strengths and weaknesses before you go to a coach. Maybe this book helps you to find out in which areas you need coaching and in which areas you do not. In the worst case, this book just enhances the understanding of yourself that you already had. Maybe it confirms to you that you need a coach.

I think that you can not improve alone in subjects like "Perception Management". I expected that CEO coaching would just focus on this area and was surprised that CEO coaching also includes the pre analysis. I still believe that the main work is done in perception management. After reading the book you know that you should stand tall, walk tall or sit tall. But perception management is also about the coach watching you and showing you how to walk. I consider CEO coaching something like learning to be a film star. A star also learns how to smile and to walk; and I think it is similar to CEO coaching. CEO coaching also means learning how to smile. I can imagine that CEO coaching also involves discussions about the clothes you wear. It is not enough to wear expensive clothes but to wear clothes that make you not too tall and not too small. I am convinced that you can save a lot of time (maybe years) if you have a chance to work together with a coach to learn how you should behave and control your posture in front of other people. You can hardly do this alone.

FINAL STATEMENT

9 Final Statement

I regard the pre analysis (that means checking your childhood, your weaknesses and your strengths) as very interesting. I had already done this and I would advise anyone to do one.

It is a very tough survey to study your history and find out why you did not like or why you liked somebody. You gain a lot of experience when you analyse hurtful situations. I think you learn most from difficult and hurtful situations.

I take the following key words with me with respect to CEOs' attitudes:

- Be calm and behave at the correct pace.
- Be always active. Don't let the situation control you, but take over the control.
- Be impressive: stand tall, walk calmly and enter a room with style.
- Speak slowly.
- Be consistent.
- Work regularly on your improvement. Don't let it be a one-off action.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

10 Bibliography

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“Secrets of a CEO Coach” (1999)

NOTES

11 Notes

¹ "Secrets Of A CEO Coach", D. A. Benton, 1999, p.95

² "Secrets Of A CEO Coach", D. A. Benton, 1999, p.156