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## FEATURES

### MANAGING CORPORATE TRANSITION

There are many reasons a company decides it wishes to implement change, from changes in market conditions, to competitive actions, to a new management team, or perhaps a new partnership. All of these new starts also mean that many aspects of the "old way" of operating is set to cease. These changes, if not managed properly, can lead not to the intended and desired positive results, but ...

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### SMART NEGOTIATING

In many business deals the potential and promise of the transaction is dependent on the success with which the negotiators succeed in obtaining the necessary elements that serve to make the deal worthwhile. Good negotiating skills, therefore, are a business necessity. This article details the practices that constitute good negotiating, and the poor actions that should be avoided. By knowing how to better negotiate, you can better plan how to gain...

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The very idea of coaching is often misunderstood. Rather than it coming from a point of arrogance or greater knowledge than someone else, coaching is really all about pushing someone to excellence by making them be the best they can. The comparative capabilities of the coach are completely irrelevant. The coach only needs to know how to effectively and constructively extract the excellence from the other person.



### DULY QUOTED

*"All that there is to the making of a successful, happy and beautiful life is the knowledge and application of simple, root principles."*

- James Allen

### WISH WE SAID IT

*"First one must change. I first watch myself, check myself, and then expect changes from others."*

- Dalai Lama

## THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

### It's All About How

There has been a transition in recent years in the measurement of trust, integrity, values and reputation. Whereas the standard used to be "it is not what you say but what you do that matters", the new standard has expanded to "it is not what you do but how you do it that matters". This transition is significant because it declares that the end result is not the sole objective, and that the path selected to reach the end result will be part of the criterion upon which the end result will actually be qualified.

Part of the reason the transition has occurred is because we are living in a world of instant information and the way we do things can now be easily discovered and quickly disseminated. The quick distribution of news of any wrongdoing might be enough to keep most people in line. It also serves as an indicator of how important how we do the things we do really is to most people.

From a business perspective, you can use how you do things to separate your company from the competition. By using the best ingredients you can gain a reputation for quality. By providing excellent employment conditions you can be seen as a great company to work for. By having excellent service you can be known as a company that stands by its word and its word. By engaging in honorable practices your company will become synonymous with integrity. How you do things becomes what you are.

The new "do it right" culture could lead to a whole new way of looking at how we pursue our goals and how we define elements of our businesses like efficiency, quality, service and, of course, ethics. The rise of the "how" and its overthrowing of the "what" leads to a brand new set of considerations for businesses and the reputations they want to develop and maintain.

From Tudog's perspective this is a very good development. To us, how we do anything means everything and we are glad to see that people will take notice and judge us accordingly. The playing field will become even when everyone is judged by how they achieve their results because not all results are created equally. As Tudog sees it, the more dignified and honest the "how", the more durable and credible the "what".





## MANAGING CORPORATE TRANSITION

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By Craig R. Frank

There are many reasons a company decides it wishes to implement change, from changes in market conditions, to competitive actions, to a new management team, or perhaps a new partnership. All of these new starts also mean that many aspects of the “old way” of operating is set to cease. These changes, if not managed properly, can lead not to the intended and desired positive results, but rather to setbacks brought on by difficulties in implementation.

To avoid poorly executed transitions and the consequences they bring, Tudog presents herein an overview of the transition process, the challenges that are faced during each phase, and ways these difficulties can be addressed and overcome.

One of the most important things to keep in mind is that transitions mark for some people involved the end of the way they are used to doing business, and this is difficult because they may see it as an end to the comfort level they have acquired by doing things the old way. They do not see the transition as a beginning, but rather an end, and reassuring them and allowing them to view the transition as a new start is an essential component of the successful transition.

Any desire to force the transition through without thought or care to what people think and feel is a recipe for disaster. When you initiate a transition you are changing the way people interact with one another and with your enterprise. The process requires management or it will get out of hand and you will find that you are not only unable to start your new processes, but also incapable of operating according to the old ones.

Most transitions have 3 processes you need to manage. They are:

1. The Transition from the Old to the New
2. The Adjustment to the New
3. The Implementation of the New

Let's review each stage, it's challenges and remedies to the challenges:

## **The Transition from the Old to the New**

This initial phase is often characterized by a sense of loss by many involved. This can also lead to a resistance to change as the people involved seek to preserve what they have and oppose what they see as changes that have an ill effect on them. The loss they feel can depend on the people involved, their functions in the company, and the extent to which they identify personally with their work and the company. Some loss elements may include:

- Loss of Sense of Belonging - the transition can make people feel less connected to the company and their colleagues because they are uncertain about the future and do not feel that they are stakeholders in the changes being introduced.
- Loss of Responsibility – the transition can make people feel as though the responsibilities they have (and by extension perhaps the authority or power) is at risk because the changes being implemented may curtail their activities or change their job descriptions.
- Loss of Sense of Security – in many instances people feel a sense of security from the known, and conversely, a sense of insecurity and apprehension from the unknown. The changes brought to policies, schedules, processes, and systems of operations by a transition can lead many people to feel insecure.
- Loss of Hope – many people equate the way things are with the way their future will be and gain a comfort in being able to forecast their situation. A transition can take away that perceived certainty and with it a sense of hope for the future.
- Loss of Control – a transition could lead people to feel they have no control over the process they are engaging. The resulting discomfort leads to indecision as people are uncertain of the circumstances and feel they lack the basic information upon which to make a decision.

### *Remedies*

The solution to the problems presented by the transition from the old to the new includes:

- Communication – make certain you have channels to communicate with your employees and make sure they know not only what is being decided, but also why. The more you are able to include them in your thinking, the less insecure and alienated they will feel.
- Engagement – there are many decisions you can leave up to your employees that will allow them to gain a sense of ownership in the process and allow them to feel that some of the changes being made are of their own making, giving them a sense of empowerment and security. You can even let them know what needs to be changed and achieved and leave it up to them to figure out how.
- Vision – people cannot get on board with changes if they have no idea where it is leading them. You need to make sure you share your vision with your staff and make sure they understand how the new vision will affect them. Then, when you introduce change, connect it back to the new vision and let them know how this specific change advances the company toward the new vision.

## **The Adjustment to the New**

As the changes begin to become apparent you will find your employees often switch between being excited with the prospect of the new and apprehension about leaving behind the old. They may at times feel disoriented and uncertain of procedure, and at other times may resort to older processes as a way of regaining a sense of control.

Many transitions fail because they do not manage this phase of the process properly and instead try to force through the changes by being more committed to timetables than the long term stability of their transition.

### *Remedies*

- It is important to encourage cohesion during this phase so that your staff senses that they are together in the process and will bear the initial burdens together so that they can collectively succeed.
- Do not try to suppress dissent as it will look like you are trying to strong arm your way to the changes. Rather, make an effort to discuss the issues with those demonstrating resistance and, wherever possible, acknowledge their feelings.
- Continue to communicate regularly and explain why the changes being introduced are necessary. Also, by communicating you are providing the answers to many questions that might otherwise be answered incorrectly or fall victim to rumor. Any vacuum of information (and good will) may be filled by opinions that are less than productive.
- Monitor the changes carefully and keep asking the people affected by the changes how they are coping and adjusting. Not only will be showing concern, but you may learn where some of your changes need adjusting.

## **The Implementation of the New**

This is the final stage in the process after the initial feelings of confusion and loss have given way to a greater interest in the transition. This can manifest itself both with intense energy and commitment to the changes, and also more passionate sentiments by those against the changes. The reaction to the transition is, at this stage, a function of the personalities of the people involved. There are some people who were able to share the vision of the transition early on because they are comfortable with new ideas and new processes. There are also those people who are slower to adapt and need more information in order to find their comfort zone.

Both the quick and the slow to adapt bring something of value to the process. The energy and creativity of the early adapters will help your company execute the transition with innovation. The questions and challenges presented by the late adapters will make certain the company addresses all issues of importance as the transition is implemented.

### *Remedies*

- Continued communication remains the key as the different kinds of people in your organization will have different kinds of questions that require answers. Make sure you address the questions that are posed, as well as try to pre-empt some questions by providing information on a regular basis.

- Make sure you continue to share the vision and the ideas behind your actions and plans.
- Make sure you also speak not only of the changes being made but of the better future the changes will bring to the company.
- Make sure you are training your employees for all their new tasks and in all the new processes. Nothing diminishes loyalty more than employees feeling they are not being given the tools and knowledge they need to succeed. Add this to an environment of change, and the results could be harmful to your transition effort. By training your staff you are letting them know you want them to stay and you want them to succeed.
- Initiate a policy that will serve as an incentive for people to comply with new processes and procedures. This can include giving people new responsibilities, publicly acknowledging jobs well done, and granting of new training to those showing special interest.
- Maintain the community of your company. One of the biggest fears employees have is that the sense of community they feel at work will be eroded through the changes. If you can demonstrate through office events, company sponsored meals, and other community-like actions that the same positive environment will prevail, you can neutralize a good deal of the potential resistance.

Transitions are necessary for company growth and often they are undertaken to bring a company to the next stage of its development. Transitions only work, however, if they are implemented properly and are able to take and build upon the existing strengths of the company. The secret is in recognizing the dangers and acting to remedy them before they can have a troubling impact.

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Craig Frank is CEO of The Tudog Group.



## MARKETING PLANS REVISITED

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By David Gilad

The marketing plan is the often forgotten step-brother of the business plan. While we are taught in business schools around the world that a business plan is an essential document, marketing professionals everywhere enter into complex and expensive marketing campaigns without the benefit of a comprehensive marketing plan. The logic behind this escapes Tudog, as we believe that a marketing plan is also an essential document for every company.

Our dedication to the marketing plan is a function of our belief that marketing is one of the primary and critical functions of any company, and that the lack of a clear plan of action - formulated carefully and with the benefit of the proper business intelligence – could lead to mistakes that alienate customers, dilute competitive advantage, and ultimately, diminish company value.

The process of creating a marketing plan forces you to ask tough questions and discover the answers. The construction of a marketing plan goes beyond the development of a marketing strategy and the selection of tactics, serving also to define the methodologies and process that will be deployed for implementation.

So what are the elements of a good marketing plan and what considerations go into creating one? Below Tudog lays out the 14 element blueprint we most often use:

### **Element 1: Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary is a high level summary of the marketing plan, included to provide all stakeholders with an overview of the information used, the reasoning engaged, and the conclusions drawn in developing the strategies and tactics that the company will be implementing as it moves forward. The Executive Summary is your opportunity to gain supporters for the plan, even before they delve into it.

### **Element 2: The Challenge**

Every marketing effort has challenges it needs to overcome. The first step in overcoming the challenges is to identify them by listing them out. These may include well branded competitors, insufficient channels, lack of resources or other barriers to entry. In addition

to identifying the challenges, it is also wise in this section to include a brief description of the product to be marketed and associated goals such as sales figures and strategic objectives. This allows the plan to establish a correlation between the challenges, the product(s) to be marketed, and the overall goals.

### **Element 3: Company Analysis**

Understanding your company is a prerequisite for determining the best marketing path the company should undertake. You need to make certain you have an open, honest, and unbiased understanding of your company's goals, culture, strengths, weaknesses, implementation capacity, resources, ability (and willingness) to allocate resources, and ability to focus, stay focused and implement according to a plan.

### **Element 4: Customer Analysis**

Just as you need to know your own company, you also need to know your customer. How many of them are there and what are their value drivers? What will persuade them that your company and your product(s) are worthy of their loyalty? Who are your customers and how do they classify demographically? Where are they located and how are they concentrated? What is their decision making process and what information do they need in order to make a decision? These questions all need to be answered so that you have the appropriate knowledge of your customer base and can develop and sustain a marketing program that leads them to the conclusion that they should be doing business with your company.

### **Element 5: Competitor Analysis**

It is critically important to understand who else is marketing the same products to the same customers so you can understand what else is being said about the product category, how else it is being positioned, and what potential threats may lie ahead to your efforts to increase your presence and sales. In looking at competitors you should try to determine what position in the market they are seeking to carve out for themselves, what their strengths and weaknesses may be, and how much of a market presence they already command. You need to avoid their strengths, leverage their weaknesses, and select a position in the market that differentiates your company and its products from the competitors.

### **Element 6: Partners Analysis**

Every company needs partnerships to assist it in the complete implementation of its marketing plan. Whether it is through joint ventures, strategic partnerships, or distributors, you should be certain to understand their capacities, their position, and the level of commitment they can actually fulfill.

### **Element 7: PEST Analysis**

In every marketing effort there are factors that need to be understood, even if they cannot always be controlled. This allows us to plan around barriers and anticipate (and have contingencies for) unexpected events. In launching a new marketing effort a PEST - Political, Economic, Social & Technological – Analysis should be conducted, with the

relevant factors in each category researched, analyzed, understood, and incorporated into the planning.

### **Element 8: SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT analysis is a more widely used tool and is not always incorporated into a marketing planning process. Tudog likes to use the SWOT in this process because we think that understanding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats goes a long way in aiding in the planning of a comprehensive, integrated marketing program. The SWOT, however, should not be limited to your company, but also to competitors and the overall market, so you get a better sense of where you stand within the overall environment.

### **Element 9: Market Segmentation**

Not every market is completely homogenous and certainly you should not be expecting to sell your product to only one narrow market. Under these circumstances you need to understand how the market is segmented. You want to prepare a description of the market, how the sales are divided among the various segments, what need/want the different customer groups are seeking to satisfy when buying the product, whether there is any differences in how each group uses the product, what support requirements each sector may have (and whether you are set up to meet them, what channels are available to reach each group, and also whether there are price tolerance differences. By knowing these variations you will not only be able to structure a marketing plan with the broadest appeal, but also will be able to eliminate any groups you had under consideration that prove to be too outside your focused marketing plan.

### **Element 10: Product Strategy**

The strategy stage begins with a look at the product and the determination of goals and positioning on a number of related issues, including brand name, quality of the products, the scope of the product line, how the product will be packaged, and whether you will back up the product with a warranty or guarantee. These strategic questions allow you to focus in on how your product will be defined.

### **Element 11: Pricing Strategy**

Pricing is a central and critical component to marketing and any effort to extract consideration of pricing from the marketing process is an error. The pricing needs to be developed from the perspective of the price/quality ratio so the company can create a price point that reflects its positioning (exclusive, value, low price, etc.) and maintain that position over time. Additionally, you need to carefully consider where you place your list price, what kinds of discounts you are going to allow, and whether you will be placing the product on periodic special incentive programs.

### **Element 12: Placement Tactics**

It is important to keep in mind that a core function of marketing, in addition to raising awareness and creating interest, is delivering the product to market – that is making certain it is available to customers once you have raised their awareness and created sufficient interest that they actually seek to buy the product. This requires a review of

your channels, such as direct sales, sales through distributors or VARS, or sales through retail. You need to have a plan in place to identify, secure and maintain (motivate) your channels. You should also give some thought to the logistics of transportation, warehousing and order fulfillment as the company's ability to effectively execute on these matters will greatly influence your market presence.

### **Element 13: Promotion Tactics**

The last element is the promotional element, or the aspects that serve to raise awareness and create interest. These tactical considerations come last because they are deployed to meet the goals laid out in previous elements and are selected based on information gathered and analyzed in previous elements. The tactics you want to consider include all the obvious choices – advertising, public relations, direct mail, internet based programs – as well as any distinctive opportunities that may come from the industry you are in or the market you are targeting. This is also the time to consider a schedule of promotions and events you may use to promote the company, your brand and your product(s).

### **Element 14: Budget & Projections**

In developing your marketing plan you need to keep in mind that your activities will be guided by the budget you have and will be judged by the results you generate. You need to include in your plan the budget you need and how you plan to allocate the funds. You need to show your anticipated results and how it relates to the resources expended (your Return on Investment).

The marketing plan is an essential component to your business planning process. Without exception, every company should have a marketing plan. With this article...you now know how to prepare your own. With the excuse gone, all that's left is a really good business practice.

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David Gilad is President of The Tudog Group.



## STRATEGIC PERSUASION

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By Ilan Sarid

Persuasion is a critical element in the art of business. Successful business often depends on the ability to convince others of the value, worthiness or future benefits of engaging in a necessary action. This could mean getting employees to demonstrate their commitment and loyalty, getting customers to make a purchase, getting a partner to perform a function, or even getting a competitor to behave in a desirable manner.

From an ethical perspective, there is a difference between persuasion and manipulation. The act of persuasion is using a variety of methods and tactics to gain consent and voluntary participation. The act of manipulation includes lies, half-truths and trickery to gain consent. With manipulation, the participation cannot be voluntary because the individual or entity is being asked to make a decision based on information that is untrue, or at best, only partially true.

It is easy to get persuasion and manipulation confused, even though the distinctions are clear. Tudog only endorses the use of persuasion as a legitimate business tool. We do not, under any circumstances, support the idea that there are times when manipulation is acceptable.

There are a number of legitimate persuasion styles that provide opportunity to convince stakeholders under a number of different circumstances. The tactics Tudog believes are valid include:

- Shared Interest – allowing the mutual interests of the parties to serve as a foundation for common behavior and an aligning of action. This can be an excellent persuasion tool, provided you have the same objectives as another party and you are able to demonstrate that your plan of action will help them secure their objectives. The persuasion is in the communication of the commonality of interests and in the advisability of the course of action you are advocating.
- Shared Relationships – leveraging mutual relationships and contacts to serve as a basis for a common view of how specific situations and circumstances should be handled. This is a useful persuasion tool as long as you are able to show that the fact that you share relationships is consistent with the sharing of goals and worldview. People will act based on common relationships because they feel it

- has meaning beyond simple acquaintances. The communication needs to be focused on what the shared relationships say about your shared perceptions.
- Shared Values – the commonality of values, from an emotional and inspirational perspective, allows for the other side to gain a level of comfort with your position within a relatively short period of time. By making your persuasive appeal based on shared values you are communicating that you are very much like the other person (and they are very much like you) and that, by extension, your views should be valid to them as well. The communication needs to be in line with the fact that you both agree on what is right, wrong, good and bad.
  - Shared Views – sometimes persuasion is just a function of common sense and two people agreeing with one another on what is the best, most rational path to pursue. The persuasion sometimes becomes necessary in bringing the other party to see why and how your position is the most rational. But once you have secured their agreement, the next steps of the persuasive process (getting them to not only agree with your position, but your proposed set of actions) is that much easier. The communication is focused on the logic behind your statements and the continued (progressive) logic of your proposed actions.
  - Shared Threats – the use of mutual threats is a powerful persuasion tool because it brings people together to combat the common enemy regardless of areas of less compatibility the partnering parties may still have outstanding. Using shared threats is effective for short term partnering because ultimately the common threat will be minimized and the remaining differences between the parties will emerge. The communication needs to be focused on the commonality of the current challenges and the wisdom of putting differences aside to meet the more pressing common need.
  - A Position of Authority – sometimes you just need to pull rank and persuade someone based not on the rightness of your views, but on the authority you have to make the decision. When persuasion through the commonalities options fails, and if you are the person responsible and empowered to get the job done, you can always fall back on the authority you have to mandate compliance. Oddly, while not allowing for opt-in and voluntary agreement, authority is often a highly effective persuasion tool because people often are more comfortable following orders than they are sharing in the responsibility of a decision.

The result of your persuasion effort – that is the results of the actions taken because you successfully convinced people to engage in them – will be affected by the tactic you used and the manner in which you applied them. If you persuaded while respecting the beliefs of others and by giving people a reason to say yes, then you will find one set of results. If you coerced people into agreeing, you can expect a backlash, and an entirely different face to the results.

The use of any of these tactics should only come once you have set the ground to accommodate the cooperation your successful persuasion has generated. More importantly, you need to make certain that you have connected the people you have persuaded to your idea so that their cooperation is sustainable. Persuasion is all about winning people over without coercion by using emotionally intelligent positions that make sense for all involved. Not only is it good business, its good leadership.

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Ilan Sarid resides in Canada and serves on Tudog's Board of Advisors.



## SMART NEGOTIATING

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By David Feingersch

In many business deals the potential and promise of the transaction is dependent on the success with which the negotiators succeed in obtaining the necessary elements that serve to make the deal worthwhile. Good negotiating skills, therefore, are a business necessity. This article details the practices that constitute good negotiating, and the poor actions that should be avoided. By knowing how to better negotiate, you can better plan how to gain the terms and conditions you need to make your next deal a win-win for all involved.

### Good Negotiating Practices

Tudog has identified 7 things that are good to do when negotiating. They are:

#### **1. Establish a Good Comfort Level**

Tense negotiations make people less accommodating. Establish a good comfort level by listening to the other party, acknowledging good points made and making reasonable responses. Keep in mind the cooperative relationship that needs to be implemented once the negotiations are completed.

#### **2. Create Trust**

Credibility in negotiations is crucial. If you pull a "bait and switch" or backtrack on a commitment you already made the other side will lose faith in you and begin taking tougher stances. Always deliver on your promises. Never over-promise or under-deliver.

#### **3. Know What You Want**

Enter the negotiations with a clear and realistic expectation of what you want and need to make the deal worthwhile and practical for you. Be prepared to make quick decisions. To make quick decisions you need to know where your red lines are and where you can compromise.

#### **4. Understand the Other Side**

Just as you have expectations and limitations, so does the other side. Do your homework. Try to understand what the other party is seeking and try to estimate what they should be willing to provide in exchange. Also, understand their limitations. Asking for something outside the other party's range is a non-starter.

#### **5. Solicit the Other Side's Perspective**

In a negotiating situation use questions to find out what the other person's concerns and needs might be. You might try: "*What do you need from me on this*"? You could also ask, "*What are your concerns about what I am suggesting / asking*"? When you hear the other person express their needs or concerns, use listening responses to make sure you heard correctly.

#### **6. State Your Needs**

The other person needs to know what you need. It is important to state not only what you need but why you need it. Often a disagreement may exist regarding the method for solving an issue, but not about the overall goal.

#### **7. Time Your Moves**

There are good times to negotiate and bad times. Bad times include those situations where there is a high degree of anger on either side, a preoccupation with another issue, a high level of stress or when people around the table have grown tired. Try to avoid negotiating during these times. If they arise during negotiations a time-out/rest period is in order, or perhaps rescheduling to a better time.

#### Poor Negotiating Practices

Tudog has identified r things that are not advisable to do when negotiating. They are:

##### **1. Being Confrontational**

Negotiation need not be confrontational. In fact effective negotiation is characterized by the parties working together to find a solution, rather than each party trying to win the contest of wills. Keep in mind that the attitude that you take in negotiation (eg. hostile, cooperative) will set the tone for the interaction. If you are confrontational, you will have a fight on your hands.

##### **2. Being Competitive**

If you "win" there must be a loser, and that can create more difficulty down the road. The best perspective in negotiation is to try to find a solution where both parties "win". Try not to view negotiation as a contest that must be won.

### **3. Becoming Emotional**

It's normal to become emotional during a negotiation that is important. However, as we get more emotional, we are less able to channel our negotiating behavior in constructive ways. It is important to maintain control.

### **4. Focusing on Personalities**

Particularly with people we don't like much, we have a tendency to get off track by focusing on how difficult or obnoxious the person seems. Once this happens, effective negotiation is impossible. It is important to stick to the issues, and put aside our degree of like or dislike for the individual.

### **5. Playing the Blame Game**

In any conflict or negotiation, each party contributes, for better or worse. If you blame the other person for the challenges the negotiations are encountering, you will create an angry situation. If you take at least partial responsibility for the problem, you will create a spirit of cooperation.

### **6. Arguing**

Negotiating is about finding solutions...Arguing is about trying to prove the other person wrong. A contest of egos will get in the way of progress being made. Don't waste time arguing. If you disagree with something, state your opinion in a gentle but assertive way. Don't demean the other person or get into a power struggle.

Negotiating well is a valuable tool for gaining so many valuable business assets. It is also an acquired skill. The hints included in this article should serve as a good head start on the way to negotiating excellence.

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David Feingersch works with Tudog in Florida.



## THE FUNDAMENTALS OF COACHING

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By Leisy Melian

The very idea of coaching is often misunderstood. Rather than it coming from a point of arrogance or greater knowledge than someone else, coaching is really all about pushing someone to excellence by making them be the best they can. The comparative capabilities of the coach are completely irrelevant. The coach only needs to know how to effectively and constructively extract the excellence from the other person.

In most cases people live in relation to the expectations of those closest to them. We either live up to their expectations or we fall short of them. But in most cases we are compared to them. These expectations are usually realistic and reasonable and in par with objectives we can, if we try, reach. Where we stumble is when the expectations are too burdensome and we cannot possibly satisfy the other party – so we give up even trying. Or sometimes, the expectations are so low that they fail to properly motivate us, so we don't try because we fail to see the challenge.

Coaching is really about helping people set the right, properly balanced expectations so that they can effectively work toward meeting the goals they set for themselves, as well as those that have been set by others and that they accept.

Tudog's coaching practice utilizes 7 fundamentals of coaching that we believe best serve to bring out the excellence in our clients. These 7 fundamental are:

### 1. A Clear Definition of Excellence

Excellence is not a static measurement that remains the same across different goals and different people. In order to push someone to be excellent you need to have a good definition of what constitutes excellence to that person – and what constitutes excellence within the arena the person needs to operate within. By knowing what defines excellence, you are in a much better position to help the person gain measures of it.

### 2. A Clear Definition of Leadership

In many cases people seek out coaching because they already are in positions of leadership or seek out a position of leadership. The only way to assist them in improving their performances or enhancing their prospects is to have a clear definition of what leadership means within the confines of the social and business structures they operate within. By knowing this, you are able to develop the steps needed to meet the goals.

### 3. The Ability to Have Tough Conversations

The least effective kind of coach is the person who is more interested in avoiding conflict than making progress. If the coach plays up to the ego of the client then the chances for real meaningful change is limited. The coach's job is to bring forth the tough and uncomfortable conversations, regardless of how uncomfortable and awkward they may be. As long as these conversations are constructive and have a clear purpose, they are necessary. The Tudog tough conversations seek to determine where weaknesses are, create a path to improvement, and then hold the client to his/her commitment to improve. If the client slacks off a bit, you have to be there to call him/her on it, even if doing so will instigate an uncomfortable moment.

### 4. The Right Relationship

All too often coaches think that the best way to get the client to open up and discuss weaknesses and be receptive to suggestions is by becoming friendly and establishing a relationship that is among equals. This damages the coaching process because sometimes the client needs to hear things that a friend cannot or does not wish to say. The right relationship for a coach is one that is development focused. The purpose of the sessions together is to identify areas for development, create a plan for development, and then to monitor and track the development. That is the entire purpose of the relationship and any other view can diminish the efficacy of the coaching.

### 5. The Right Coach

Not everyone can be a coach and not every good coach can be good with every client. The match needs to work because there are many times when the relationship will be under stress and any weaknesses in the relationship can be cause for diminishing results. The good coach has to earn the respect of the client by being genuine in his/her comments and recommendations. The coach needs to have sufficient self-esteem to be able to present ideas and opinions with confidence, but not an exaggerated sense of sense that inhibits discussion or prohibits ever being told he/she is wrong. Also, the coach needs to be coaching for the right reasons – that is to help people succeed in reaching their objectives. Without this desire to serve the coach may lose credibility in the eyes of some clients who will question the motivations behind certain suggestions.

### 6. A Good Eye for Potential

A coach's job is to help people perform to their highest potential, even if coming to understand what that potential is requires a process of discovery. The potential can be directly related to the existing goals, or could be beyond them, requiring a re-evaluation of goals and the tough discussion on needing to work harder to meet one's potential. Conversely, sometimes you may come across a client that has set his/her sights too high, and the tough conversation is about reconsidering the ambitious nature of the goals.

### 7. Accountability

There is little point in developing an improvement plan for someone who will not follow the steps outlined. It is not enough to want to improve, you need to make sure the client

will actually implement the program. In order to do this you need to have the authority and power to hold your client accountable for his/her actions as they affect the program. You should let the client set up the accountability elements of the program before the action plan is launched. This way, as you proceed, if you need to hold him/her accountable, you will be doing so in ways he/she selected.

A coaching relationship is almost like a partnership in that both sides need to respect one another and understand how and why they need each other. The partners need to have not only a mutual appreciation for one another's skills, but also the comfort to confront one another when necessary, and the authority to hold each other accountable. By doing this, the coach is able to push the client to excellence, while allowing the client to help make him/her a better coach.

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