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Unleashing Executive & Organizational Potential

I appreciate your willingness to describe your experience in the executive and leadership training that I provided to you and your organization. The information will be included in a marketing booklet that I will be using to expand my global footprint. My sincere gratitude for your support.

Herb Stevenson

Please describe your experience in the space provided

Herb Stevenson became my executive coach in 2009. I had recently left a 28 year career as a senior partner of a leading London law firm to become General Counsel of an international financial institution in the United States. The transition proved difficult. My law firm experience was both intense and intellectually rigorous. The work environment in my new position was far more relaxed but also more politically charged than I was accustomed to. I was viewed as a demanding leader who insisted on very high performance from staff and was impatient with substandard work. My staff reviews were very mixed, with people either loving or hating me.

My employer decided I needed coaching to smooth out my rough edges. This was not uncommon for senior staff, particularly those coming from a private sector background. Nevertheless, I approached this with some trepidation as I feared the coaching would be formulaic.

This was not the case with Herb, however. From our first meeting, I knew this would be a rewarding experience. Herb is phenomenally well read and is one of the best critical listeners I have ever met. Herb emphasizes that being fully present without judgment is critical to effective coaching and leadership. He lives by that code. His approach is very analytical, with quite a bit of writing and diagnostic testing involved. We spent many days talking and taking tests before he started making recommendations.

In the end, his recommendations were both helpful and reassuring. He concluded that I had pretty strong leadership skills and that the dissonance I felt in my new position was less due to any fault in me than in differences between my core values and those of the institution. He counseled that it was pointless to alter my own value system or lower my standards. However, I should strive to be more patient and less quick to judgment in my interactions with others in the bank.

His core teaching to me was “Pause, Reflect and Choose” or “PRC”. When confronted with ideas or behavior with which I did not agree, I should not suppress my judgment but instead decide whether it was worth engaging on each matter. If an issue was important, I should weigh into it with force; but for the many issues that were not, it was best to hold fire and fight another day. This was great advice.

Herb is a phenomenally interesting man. He has a lot of business acumen from his years in the financial services industry and his wide management reading. But this is only part of the picture. He is a Native American, a horseman and a Marine, and he brings these additional perspectives to his coaching. Working with Herb is an intense experience, but also an incredibly rewarding one.

My formal coaching with Herb only lasted a year, but we have remained in close contact in the eight years since. I seek his advice from time to time on big life decisions and he always provides wise counsel. His after sales service is excellent!

I honestly believe that I could not have found a better coach.

What did you find most effective from this coaching and training that supported your leadership development?

The Pause, Reflect and Choose training had the biggest effect on me. It has helped my immensely in my professional life. I am significantly more patient and hopefully a bit more tolerant. At the same time, I have held true to my core values of excellence and integrity.

How has the coaching and training led to be a more effective leader

Herb stresses that being fully present without judgment is a critical leadership skill. You have to listen to others critically but without judgment before you can find common ground and build upon it. I think I knew this before I met Herb, but his coaching allowed me to take it to a higher level. This has benefitted me a great deal in my professional life.

May we cite your name and organization? If so please list it below.

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