



SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS, TEAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH COACHING

Using a crisis to build a stronger future

Addressing a serious threat inside the executive committee enables directors to align functioning to strategy, support operational managers and teams to achieve ambitious growth objectives in this company.

► Context

DEALING WITH INTERNAL OPPOSITION IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

This insurance company, the subsidiary of a major financial group, was created in 2000. Since that date it has experienced exponential growth in a market considered to be saturated, but which has proven to be experiencing profound transformation both in terms of operating modes, products and markets. The CEO and founder hand-picked and recruited his initial management committee. As a group of 4, they built a business which only 5 years after signing their first major contract has generated revenues that exceed €1.4 billion and profitability of 17%.

In 2002, an organizational consultant from BPI was called in to assist in setting up an operational infrastructure capable of supporting rapid growth to keep pace with the general manager's strategic ambitions.

With the structure in place, two years later, it became evident that lack of cohesion and alignment on the executive committee would, if not addressed, compromise the company's ability to secure its growth objectives. A fifth director had joined the initial group of four and was showing signs of resistance, reluctant to buy into the strategy and support the objectives that would carry the company forward. His refusal to align and unspoken conflict began to threaten the cohesion of the company. The Excom and general manager were at a loss over how to deal with the issue. The situation became a serious threat to the projected growth rate for an entity of 50 people, expected to double in size in the near future.

The operational consultant recommended bringing in a coach to strengthen alignment and assist the General Manager in confronting the problem with the director in question.

► Task

TEAM COACHING, INDIVIDUAL COACHING, TEAM BUILDING

To bring the sensitive issues to the forefront, the coaching began with a 360° evaluation of all Excom members, critical in increasing awareness as to how urgent the situation had become. Open communication between Excom members facilitated awareness that the company's exponential growth and its profitability were at risk. They decided to confront the issue, and assist the disenfranchised director in leaving the company in order to integrate a culture better-suited to his pace and manner of doing business. Instead of hiring in another director, the core team decided to break the activity into smaller teams that could be integrated comfortably into their operational units. This then resulted in profound changes in practices and organization to the benefit of all.

Coaching profoundly challenged processes, the organization and ways of thinking and working, both individually and collectively. Subsequent work in clarifying company values facilitated the creation of a recruitment process with a clear guidelines of the qualities expected from future new recruits.

Subsequent to team coaching for the Excom, and in order to facilitate the reorganization and innovation of new ways of working across the line, BPI provided individual coaching for all directors, including the **General Manager**.

The profound changes were experienced throughout the company, making the operational teams themselves eager to experience coaching and team building. BPI again responded by organizing team-building seminars with each team, followed by individual coaching for key operational managers.

► Perspectives

SOLID PRACTICES TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE AND AMBITIOUS FUTURE

The benefits of coaching have been numerous:

- stronger interpersonal relations,
- clear charter of values and behaviours required to support business,
- better communication and inter-team collaboration,
- clear roles and responsibilities as well as opportunities for growth and development,
- company-wide support and consolidation around a shared strategic vision.

The GM's personal appreciation

"Coaching has helped to clarify thinking, to organize and strengthen my intuitions, feelings and beliefs, to formalize it all, to feel more comfortable having my ideas and beliefs challenged.

The solitude of the CEO has never ever been a problem for me, but it has been extremely beneficial for the entire company to challenge ourselves on HR performance and policy, to become more ambitious and demanding with regard to interpersonal and team dynamics as well as to challenge and continually reconsider strategic orientation and vision in a context of total confidence."