

Selecting Professional Assistance

By John F Mehrmann

Congratulations, if you are among the many business executives or small business owners considering the advantages of continuous improvement with assistance from a professional resource. It means that you are already investing in your future. This will be a very positive and rewarding experience for you, and it begins with selecting the appropriate type of support that suits your individual requirements.

The following information will help to improve your searching and selection technique for the type of support suited for your specific needs.

Make a short list of immediate and long term results that you want to achieve. Examples of immediate requirements may be a necessity to increase revenue, resolve a conflict or negotiate a contract. Long term goals might be a desire to increase profitability, develop a strategic plan, increase market share, improve customer satisfaction, train your sales force or develop the leadership skills of your management team.

Training is an excellent way to spark the imagination. Seminars are a very effective form of training because they are designed to condense an abundance of material into a short time span. A seminar is typically a one or two day course focused on a single subject. Examples of Seminar Subjects are "Time Management", "Conflict Resolution", "Interview Skills" and "Dealing with Difficult Customers". Trainers may also be hired to provide a course or seminar specifically designed to meet the needs of your staff. Training seminars are a minimal investment of time and expense, and excellent preparation for the next step.

A **Consultant** is typically employed to achieve a specific business objective by providing skills or experience related to a project or process. The Project may be focused on implementation of, transition to, or attainment of a goal. Projects also frequently include analysis of competition, marketing analysis, risk assessment, strategic development or organizational alignment. Search for a consultant to help you develop and implement a business objective, project or plan.

A **Mentor** is an experienced business professional hired to help develop individual skills. This is common practice for Business Managers and Executives. Small Business Owners have great personal risk, especially in the first few years. It is a worthwhile investment to hire a mentor who can provide advice, discuss ideas, analyze or prepare plans, and provide a perspective on your business during the formative years. The mentor may guide you through a myriad of challenges and be a stabilizing force when emotions and enthusiasm alone are not enough to grow profit.

An **Executive Coach** is a powerful personal partnership of private thoughts and individual reflection. Unlike a consultant who coordinates a specific project, or a mentor for a particular skill, an executive coach focuses on identifying and developing the talents of the individual person. The Executive Coach can share experience and strategies obtained from interaction with other Executives, as well as personal experience. The result of successful coaching is the unleashing of personal skills to maximize strengths for the continuous benefit of the organization. This has an extensive and long lasting reward for the business. A consultant may significantly improve a targeted objective and METRIC. A consistent coaching program can improve the overall management and success of an organization.

Step 1) Review your needs.

Step 2) Refine your Search by type of professional support, topic and location

Working on a tight budget? There are several free resources on-line and books at the public library. This is an alternative for self-paced study with no out of pocket expense.

Professional athletes rely on Coaches and Trainers to perfect their skills. Mentors and Consultants are used extensively by executives and world leaders. It is a competitive marketplace and rapidly changing environment. To be "Best in Class" sometimes requires a 'hired gun' approach for immediate and sustained results. By carefully selecting the type of professional support that suits your organization and personal needs, you identify yourself as a person prepared to achieve a higher degree of excellence.

Do you have an article, idea or suggestion that you would like to share?

Submit your articles, ideas and suggestions to info@ExecutiveBlueprints.com

About the Author:

John Mehrmann is President of [Executive Blueprints Inc.](http://ExecutiveBlueprints.com), an organization devoted to improving business practices and developing human capital.

www.ExecutiveBlueprints.com provides resource materials for trainers, sample Case Studies, educational articles and references to local affiliates for consulting and executive coaching.

Leadership and Learning are indispensable to each other.

You may distribute this article freely, print it, sell it, or include it as part of a package as long as it is left completely intact, unchanged and delivered via the original PDF File.

Copyright © 2005-2006 Executive Blueprints Inc, www.ExecutiveBlueprints.com