

CLIENT STORIES [6]

Mobilising changes in leadership behaviour

Rosemary was engaged to coach a potential CEO successor. The executive had made his mark by being a strong strategic thinker, a tough decision maker, and always exceeding his financial targets. However he was viewed by many, including some directors, to be insensitive to others, not attuned to organisational issues and self-aggrandising. He was considered a long shot for the CEO role.

Rosemary interviewed the executive, his direct reports, colleagues, CEO and Chairman to gather a rich tapestry of data about his strengths and liabilities. The key messages from this research were shared with the executive who until this time, had had quite limited insight into how others perceived him. Rosemary worked with him to create a leadership development plan and committed to a long term coaching relationship to help him address the changes he needed to make.

She used a number of techniques to help him learn new ways of behaving, such as tracking his behaviour for a concentrated period to increase his awareness of how others responded to him; planning and rehearsing anticipated key interactions with the CEO, his colleagues and direct reports; and reviewing recent interactions to understand what worked and what didn't.

Over time, the executive adopted a broader and more flexible leadership style. He became more attuned to others' needs and more sensitive about his impact on people, without losing any of his business acumen or performance. Several years later, he was appointed to the CEO role and was regarded internally and by the market as successful in the role.

Individuals are capable of significantly changing their leadership behavior if they understand the potential benefits and want to achieve their ambitions.