



Peer Group Coaching: An Introduction

Using Peer Group Coaching as a Developmental Tool

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#PDCWinterMeeting



Introduction

- **Jennifer Rakstad, Career Development Advisor (US) at Mayer Brown LLP**
 - Certified Coach through the Hudson Institute of Coaching
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- International Coaching Federation Certification (ACC – Associate Certified Coach)
 - Leads coaching groups at Mayer Brown for senior associates, women associates and income partners



Program Objectives

- Participants will learn:
 - What peer group coaching is (and isn't)
 - Benefits of and best practices for peer group coaching
 - How peer group coaching can be used at your firms
 - How to use peer group coaching for your own professional development
 - How peer group coaching can help participants reach their goals



Program Objectives

- Participants will take away:
 - Practical experience in a peer group coaching context focused on your own developmental goals
 - Tools to use in peer group coaching
 - The opportunity to continue meeting with your peer group



Agenda

- 2:15 – 2:45: Introduction to Peer Group Coaching
- 2:45 – 2:50: Meditation Break
- 2:50 – 3:20: Practice Peer Group Coaching & Group Debrief
- 3:25 – 3:40: Continue Practice Peer Group Coaching & Discuss Next Steps for Peer Group
- 3:40 – 3:45: Large Group Debrief



Coaching - Definitions

- **ICF Definition of coaching:** “partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that **inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential**, which is particularly important in today’s uncertain and complex environment. . . It is the coach's responsibility is to:”
 - **Discover, clarify, and align** with what the client wants to achieve
 - Encourage client **self-discovery**
 - Elicit **client-generated solutions and strategies**
 - Hold the **client responsible and accountable**
 - This process helps clients **dramatically improve their outlook** on work and life, while **improving their leadership skills and unlocking their potential**.



Peer Group Coaching – What is it?

- Group Coaching definitions:
 - A small group process throughout which there is **the application of coaching principles for the purposes of personal or professional development, the achievement of goals, or greater self-awareness**, along thematic or non-thematic lines. (Jennifer Britton)
 - A **facilitated group process** that is led by a professional coach and formed with the intention of **maximizing the combined energy, experience and wisdom of individuals who choose to join in order to achieve organizational objectives or individual goals**. (Ginger Cockerham)
- Group vs. Peer Coaching



Peer Group Coaching – Benefits

- Potential for larger impact than individual coaching
- Reinforce learning from training programs
- Group accountability & metrics
- Sustained change
- Members learn coaching skills
- Practice speaking in groups/enhanced communication skills
- Learn from fellow group members
- Fringe benefits – networking, cross-selling, etc.
- Flexibility – by phone, Skype, video-conference



Peer Group Coaching – Challenges

- Engaging introverts
- Attendance & participation
- Group cohesion & trust
- Group leader/facilitator?
- May feel less accountability in group
- Multitasking & distractions



Peer Group Coaching – Best Practices

- Confidentiality
- Commit to attend meetings & do “homework”
- Ground Rules
 - Designate a **facilitator/leader** for each meeting
 - **No distractions** or multi-tasking (phones, etc.)
 - Be **respectful** of fellow group members
 - **Listen** to group members and **only respond to add value**, using **coaching questions**
 - Keep **feedback positive and encouraging** and only **provide advice if requested**
 - If on the phone, **announce yourself** before speaking and mute phone between speaking



Peer Group Coaching – Practical Applications

- Use for **targeted groups**
 - New partners
 - Senior associates
 - Women or diverse attorneys
 - PD Professionals
- Part of a **broader training program**
 - Group members set individual goals, which are tied to the overall program objectives
 - Reinforce skills and competencies
 - Participants track progress and hold each other accountable
 - Opportunity to go more in-depth into content
- Use as a **tool for professional development**



Peer Group Coaching – Practice

- Get into **groups of 4** at your tables
- **Part 1 (2:50 – 3:15 p.m.): Focus on 2 group members**
 - ***Brief introductions (All)***: Name/Firm/Position, one thing your group should know about how you are in a group
 - ***Pick 1 group member to start*** (rotate clockwise from there)
 - ***Group member to share one individual goal*** as a result of today's session/pre-work (include LIFO profile results)
 - **Explore each group member's goal**
 - Use Powerful Questions (Handout)
 - Engage in peer coaching around goals
 - End with concrete Action Steps and accountability measures



Peer Group Coaching – Practice

- Large Group Debrief (Part 1)
 - What worked well?
 - What was challenging?
 - Anything to do differently in Part 2?



Peer Group Coaching – Practice

- **Part 2 (3:20 - 3:40 p.m.): Focus on remaining 2 Group Members**
 - ***Group member to share one individual goal*** as a result of today's session/pre-work (include LIFO profile results)
 - **Explore each group member's goal**
 - Use Powerful Questions (Handout)
 - Engage in peer coaching around goals
 - End with concrete Action Steps and accountability measures
- **Decide on Next Steps for Peer Group**
 - Consider ***4 meetings over next 4 months***
 - Set first meeting before you leave today
 - Consider ***using Scorecard to track accountability***
 - Confirm “homework” for group/include in scorecard



Peer Group Coaching – Practice

- Large Group Debrief
 - What worked well?
 - What was challenging?
 - Key take-aways
- Outstanding questions?



Further Resources

- Books & Articles
 - Jennifer J. Britton, ***Effective Group Coaching: Tried and Tested Tools and Resources for Optimum Group Coaching Results***
 - Ginger Cockerham, ***Group Coaching: A Comprehensive Blueprint***
 - Jennifer Rakstad, ***Group Coaching: An Innovative Approach to Supporting Lawyers' Professional Development*** (Law Practice Today, May 2013)
- Handouts
 - Powerful Questions
 - Next Steps for Peer Coaching Group