

Coaches help bottom line

Read all about it!

Guides help companies develop strategies, implement plans

People, teams, divisions and companies share similar challenges when seeking double-digit revenue growth and that never-ending quest for success.

Executive coach Krissi Barr, founder of Barr Corporate Success, thinks that a lot of problems can be skirted for companies and executives if only people would focus on what they want, as opposed to focusing on avoiding what they don't want.

But figuring out what you want for yourself, your group or your company is always a tough task.

"The question people need to ask is this: a year from now, six months from now, three months from now, what needs to happen for you to feel good about your progress," Barr said.

That is The One Big Question that everybody needs to explore: whether a neighborhood hardware store owner, a brand manager or a rookie account executive dreading the task of telephone cold calls.

"It works in sales, too," Barr said. "That's the one question people should ask themselves this morning."

A Mount Lookout resident, she coaches chief executives and other senior-level executives and managers about effective leadership, strategy and attitude.

"The miss-hit, the miss-connection is that people don't know what they want," she said.

Barr Corporate Success has broad background in mentoring and coaching. Among its recent successes: advising a struggling local



John Eckberg

technology company on how to reconfigure performance assessments, bringing renewed momentum to the sales force of a \$300 million publicly traded company and helping increase sales and profit margins at a manufacturing technology firm.

Barr suggests that clients spend a lot of time developing strategies, aligning teams and then creating a disciplined action plan.

The action plan is usually the toughest piece of the puzzle, too.

Distractions such as e-mail, phone calls, impromptu meetings and scheduled meetings can be crippling.

"Every interruption means it takes at least 20 minutes to get back to deep, concentrated thought," she said. Barr recommends something of a cyber-cloister to stay on track. Some call it "Power Time" but she calls it "My Time."

"Turn off instant message," she said. "Turn off the Outlook so you don't see that envelope that e-mail has arrived. Turn off the phone."

"Make sure people know - unless somebody is dead or bleeding, don't interrupt me," she said.

Accountability must play a role in all achievement initiatives, but often people and companies neglect one aspect of accountability:

"This is very, very hard work," Barr said. "So it is important to celebrate little successes along the way."

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The Enquirer/Carrie Cochran

Krissi Barr (front), founder of Barr Corporate Success, works with two of her clients. Brian K. Jaynes is the CEO of Pontifex Works, and Carol Shea is an executive at Olivetree Research.

Experience is key

A local and national survey of 796 executive coaches by West Chester-based Sasha Corp. shows that experienced coaches are far more likely to attract corporate clients than coaches who have one or two years of experience.

When a coach has five or more years of experience, 60 percent of the time, their fees are paid for by companies while companies paying fees for coaches with one or two years of experience only hap-

pens about 18 percent of the time, according to the January survey...

Coaching can be a lucrative line of work for those who are certified and experienced executive mentors, the survey found.

About half of the respondents -- 46 percent -- make \$150 to \$290 an hour, while one in four executive coaches earn \$300 to \$500 an hour.

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