



ESTABLISHING A COACHING PANEL

PRAESTA

Why Coaching Panels?

- ▣ Coaching, as an executive development tool, started gaining traction in Australian corporations in the early 1980s.
- ▣ It was seen as a mechanism for individual growth. Coaches tended to be selected by the coachee and the focus was on the specific goals of that individual.
- ▣ In the last decade coaching has proliferated in organisations. This initial focus on supporting individual transformation has expanded into an organisation wide strategic talent development initiative. Today, coaching is part of the organisation's armory for human capital development and building competitive advantage.

On the benefits of coaching panels:

“The diversity of experience and skill [of coaches on the panel] coupled with the ability to obtain collective feedback and observations on the effectiveness of the leadership within the organisation were the most helpful aspect.”

Kellie Stirling

Group Head of Leadership and Executive Development, ANZ

Savvy organisational strategists recognise the power of coaching. In looking to harness this power the challenges typically encountered include:

Strategic Outcomes

How can the activities of (often) disparate coaches be coordinated to ensure their work is aligned to both corporate objectives and the needs of the individual?

Budget Control

For many organisations coaching has become a significant budgetary line item. How can the investment be maximised and ROI measured?

Quality Assurance

Coaching is an unregulated industry. At this stage, anyone can call themselves a coach. Organisations need to have the confidence that the coaches they engage are qualified, employ quality and ethical practices and adhere to industry standards.

Leveraged Learning

How can the benefits and learnings of the coaching transfer from the coachee to the organisation?

Coaching Panels have emerged as the chosen solution to these significant challenges. Early adopters of this process are experiencing immediate and significant rewards.

The Organisational Value Proposition

A coaching panel, when correctly established and managed, can help build sustainable capability and boost productivity and accountability within an organisation. Organisations that place strategic importance on people capability and performance will generate value from a properly employed coaching panel.

The checklist below provides a useful prompt for thinking about how a coaching panel can deliver value for an organisation.

	YES	NO
Is organisational change a strategic imperative mandate for your leaders?		
Do your coaches understand the big picture of what the organisation is attempting to achieve?		
Is the use of coaching supported by all stakeholders?		
Are all current coaching engagements logged for effective management?		
Is there a transparent system in place for selecting coaches?		
Do formalities exist for managing the coaching investment?		
Are there reporting mechanisms to ensure coaches are accountable?		
Do feedback loops exist to continuously improve the skills and knowledge of the coaches engaged in your organisation?		
Does the feedback received about coaches indicate a significant variance in the quality of coaching being employed?		

Establishing A Panel

Develop inventory of existing coaching activities, assess performance and value

1. AUDIT

Identify stakeholders, determine requirements

2. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Gain feedback from stakeholders, debrief and train coaches

3. DEVELOP BRIEF

Document requirements, resources, budget and KPIs

4. ASSESSMENT CENTRE

Conduct assessment centre for shortlisted coaches

5. INDUCTION

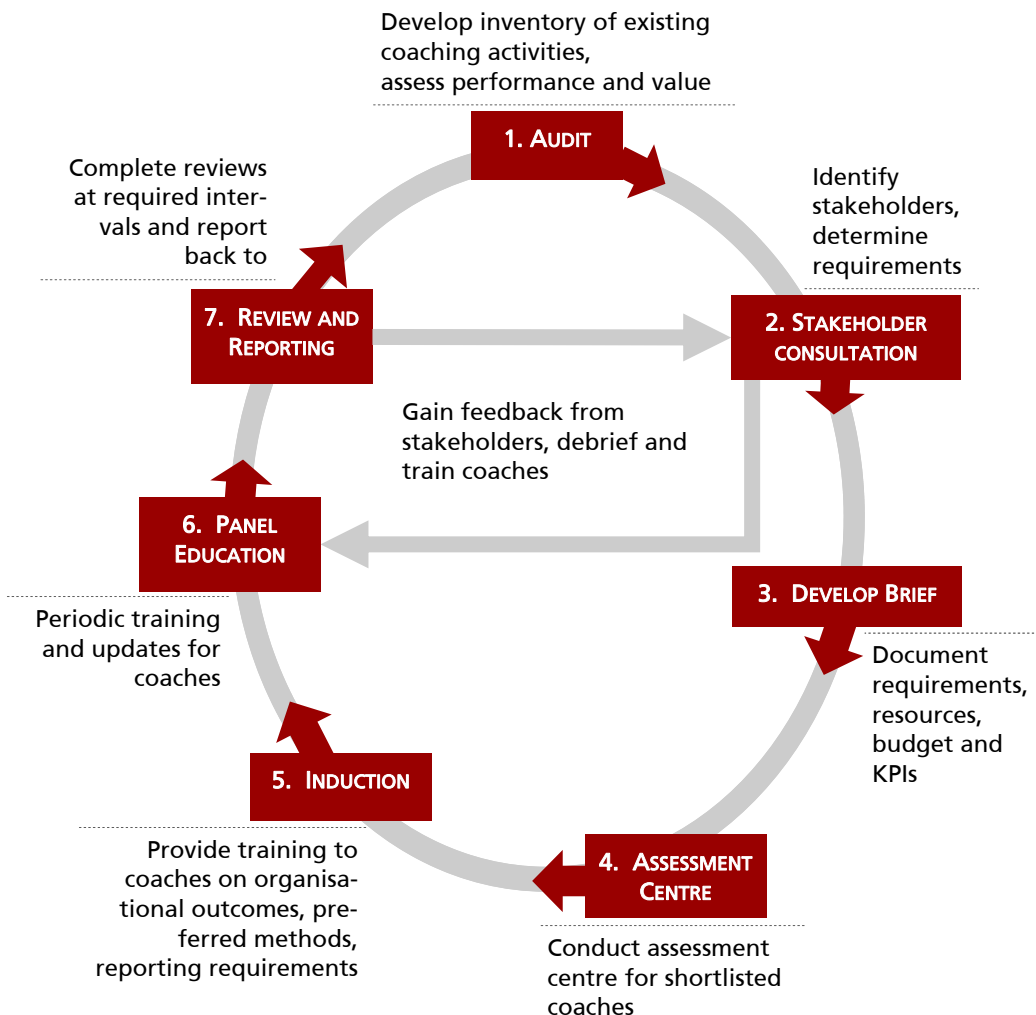
Provide training to coaches on organisational outcomes, preferred methods, reporting requirements

6. PANEL EDUCATION

Periodic training and updates for coaches

7. REVIEW AND REPORTING

Complete reviews at required intervals and report back to



The Assessment Centre Approach

The use of Assessment Centres to evaluate competency levels is an established practice commonly used to inform selection decisions or development plans. The process is equally applicable to the selection of coaches.

Targeted, Wholistic Assessment

- ▣ Coaches can be practically assessed from different perspectives; how they think, communicate, act and respond.

Efficiency

- ▣ It can be far more efficient than undergoing a series of individual engagements, leading to cost and time savings.
- ▣ It drives greater consistency in coach selection and is therefore likely to deliver greater consistency in coaching performance.

Engagement of Stakeholders

- ▣ The development of competencies and requirements provides for the engagement of stakeholders in the processes of recruitment and endorsement of coaches.

Commitment and Professionalism

- ▣ It sends a very direct and clear message to prospective coaches of your organisation's level of commitment to and focus on coaching.

Tips for an Effective Assessment Centre

- Build a competency profile through consultation with stakeholders and by benchmarking already successful coaches in your organisation.
- Develop a “pre-assessment” questionnaire to collect history, qualifications, track-record and competencies of prospective coaches. It will make the assessment centre run more efficiently and will test the commitment of the coaches. A telephone interview can also be useful.
- Include live coaching sessions with employees where possible to ensure the assessment is as true to real circumstances as possible.
- Be clear with the coaches as to the purpose of the session, i.e. to simulate a “real life” experience rather than demonstrate every technique or skill they possess.
- Peer observation and feedback (coaches observing coaches) can also be a useful tool for eliciting behaviours and capabilities.
- Ensure you debrief each coach after the exercise. Their response to feedback can be very telling!

What Makes a Good Coach?

Here are some aspects you might like to include in your assessment criteria for your coaches.

- ▣ Qualifications alone do not guarantee competence; ongoing professional development should be evident.
- ▣ Demonstrated evidence of ongoing learning and adoption of best practice.
- ▣ Regular peer supervision regarding coaching practice.
- ▣ Regular clinical supervision regarding coach self management and client safety.
- ▣ Relevant commercial career background to ensure a commercially savvy approach about the context in which your people operate.
- ▣ A passion for coaching. They should be able to demonstrate sound reasons for being a coach.
- ▣ Clear ethical boundaries aligned with those of the organisation.

“Be really clear about what you believe coaching means to your organisation. Be really clear about your philosophy toward coaching and how it will be used. Set clear boundaries between coaching and other types of leadership interventions.”

Wayne Mullen

Global Head Learning and Development, Standard Bank

Rules of Engagement

Once the panel is established you need to carefully plan the engagement process, i.e. how does someone from your company engage a coach from the panel?

Some questions to consider when designing your engagement process.

- ▣ What discretion will individuals be given to shortlist their preferred coaches?
- ▣ How will the shortlist be developed?
- ▣ What should be the format of the “chemistry” meeting between the potential coach and client?
- ▣ What should the individual do if they have concerns about a coach’s capabilities or approach?
- ▣ What are the requirements for reporting and evaluation?

“Coaching has the power to provide substantial strategic advantage when harnessed correctly. Based on our global experience, Praesta Australia is one of the few firms properly equipped to support you in fully leveraging coaching within your organisation.”

Padraig O’Sullivan
Managing Director, Praesta Australia

More Resources

Praesta Australia has created a series of podcasts (MP3) to assist with the design and management of your coaching panel. These can be downloaded free of charge from the Praesta Australia website.

Visit www.praesta.com.au/CoachingPanels to download resources.



Wayne Mullen, Standard Bank UK

Wayne Mullen is the Head of Learning and Development at Standard Bank, UK. He talks with Padraig O'Sullivan of Praesta Australia about the practicalities of running and managing an effective coaching panel within a large organisation.



Robin Linnecar Founder Praesta International

Robin has an international reputation for building successful coaching teams. He shares his experience with coaching panels and provide tips on getting the most out of your coaches.



Kellie Sterling, ANZ Bank

Kellie Sterling is the Head of Learning and Development at ANZ Bank. She speaks with Padraig O'Sullivan from Praesta Australia about the challenges of bringing uniformity to coaching across a large organisation.

About Praesta Australia

Whoever you are and wherever you are located in the South East Asian region, when you work with Praesta Australia you'll benefit from senior executive coaching at its very best.

As part of the worldwide Praesta International group, we are able to put into practice cutting edge techniques and programs that have been developed by some of the best specialists available. So we can deliver global programmes as well as work with the business next door.

Our business is to transform, extend and develop the leaders of your's. And as our coaches have held senior positions themselves, we know our way around a wide variety of business environments. Our client list includes major blue-chip public and private sector organisations in Australia, New Zealand and throughout South East Asia. The majority of the people we work with are either CEOs, senior executives, department heads and middle managers with responsibility over critical capital resources and key field personnel.

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