

KEEP IT SIMPLE, SILLY

A simple coaching solution for times of complexity

During the boom that reached nemesis in 2008, business was driven ever faster into complexity and variety. There was a drive towards more and more sophisticated products and services, in response to the demand for choice, novelty and the principle of More!

But fast growth and complexity mask inefficiencies. The bigger the organisation, by and large, the more diseconomy of scale applies. Complexity without clarity and systemic intelligence create costly problems, e.g.

- Poor understanding of the whole
- Lack of responsibility because the bigger consequences are not understood
- Increased costs that are not covered by gains from new products/services
- Extra layers of management
- Increased ratio of administration to production
- Lack of integration
- Poor internal communications

This recent history has left many organisations struggling with such functions of excessive complexity in the face of economic crisis. Now there is a need for products and services that simplify life as well as adding value.

As Harvard Business School professor Clayton M Christensen has noted with his co-authors in 'The Innovator's Prescription', simple solutions to complex problems lead to breakthroughs. And, always, the successful enablers of innovative disruption are used for the simplest problems first.

So what does this mean to the realm of coaching?

As a relatively young industry, coaching has grown fast, with a corresponding proliferation of trainings, providers and 'flavours' of coaching (executive, leadership, health & wellbeing, etc.). Following the general trend towards complexity, coaching has demonstrated a similar trajectory, not least in how large organisations have resourced coaching. Many HR heads of large organisations will admit to having a largely ad hoc selection of coaches working within the business, often without a clear strategy or coherent rationale in their selection, management or measurement of results.

Coaching has been around long enough to have proved its worth, with many organisations now seeking to create a 'coaching culture' and developing internal coaches to encourage and promote coaching based communication and management style.

Complexity in the arena of coaching can show up in various ways:

- Lack of coherence in recruiting and managing external coaches
- Added burden on HR administrators in managing diverse coaching provisions
- Lack of agreed measurement criteria for the quality or effectiveness of coaching
- No clear regulatory standards or universal accreditation criteria
- Polarisation of expensive external coaching at the executive end of the scale
- Managers increasingly being expected to act as coaches for the rest of the population, with varying personal aptitude in this area and often fairly superficial training / support

It seems that complexity exists both within the realm of coaching and within organisations that it serves.

Returning to the work of Christiansen and his colleagues, they identify that most disruptions have three enablers: a simplifying technology, a business model innovation, and a disruptive value network.

Coaching on Call uses a unique operating model that exemplifies these three factors.

1. Unique, purpose built secure technology
2. Innovative managed coaching solution - expert telephone coaching available on demand
3. New value networks – making coaching available to much larger populations at a reduced cost while guaranteeing quality

Reflecting the need for simplicity in a time of complexity, Coaching on Call offers a straightforward solution to the dilemma being faced in large organisations: 'how do we make high quality coaching available to more people at lesser cost?'

It's exciting to consider how this and other innovations in the field of coaching will contribute to the evolution of coaching over time.

What do you think?

Please feel free to email any thoughts you have [here](#).

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