



The EFMD Advisory Services Seminar Series

The current state of coaching

This fully booked EFMD Advisory Services Seminar took place on April 24, 2007 at the EFMD in Brussels.

In his welcome, Jim Herbolich, EFMD Director Network Services, underlined the importance of coaching for managers, leaders and organisations. He also reported on the short survey that EFMD conducted with the aim to provide a snapshot of what is happening today in business schools and companies. 79 schools and 39 companies participated and the survey results can be clustered in three areas:

- 75% of the participating schools have a coaching provision for programme participants, especially at master level and for executive education participants. The large majority of respondents report an increase in the demand for coaching.
- 2/3 of the participating schools do not provide coaching for their faculty nor staff members.
- 60% of the participating corporations report coaching to be very important in the overall learning and development portfolio. 80% of the participating corporations use external coaches.

“Getting to the Top - with the Coach as Climbing Companion” was the focus issue of Iain Martin, Managing Director at I.J. Martin & Co Ltd. in Switzerland. Iain Martin identified the changes in the landscape when people climb up the career path. These changes are related to power and authority, responsibility, internal politics and planning perspectives. The manager or leader has to acquire new skills to handle information processing and storage, decision making and discretion, stress and management styles.

From his experience as executive coach for global leaders, Iain Martin has identified the following main deficiencies:

- poor interpersonal skills
- bad communication skills
- lack of time/will to coach subordinates
- aggressive rather than assertive behaviour
- poor time management
- failure to manage perception

In the group discussions, participants further elaborated on the coach as a climbing companion especially in the areas of personal development issues, developing followers and implementation.

In a second presentation Iain Martin focused on research around coaching. It was confirmed that coaching is a young profession with hardly any standards yet. Credibility of coaches can and is sometimes questioned, in parallel HR professionals in various surveys report high value but low credibility. For the future, Ian Martin expects formalisation of training and certification on top of stricter classification of coaching.

“How to integrate the coaching element in executive education” was covered in the afternoon session by Ina Smith, Director of Coaching at Ashridge Consultancy Ltd. in the UK.