







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The First Commandment – Coach in the Context of the Organization

[\(http://www.humantalentnetwork.com/author/jhoover/\)](http://www.humantalentnetwork.com/author/jhoover/)by John Hoover (<http://www.humantalentnetwork.com/author/jhoover/>) on January 6, 2015

Countdown to the summit..

The ten-week countdown has begun to the Conference Board's 2015 Coaching Summit. The Summit will begin with a pre-conference event on March 9 with the keynotes and breakout sessions on March 10 & 11. On March 10, Dr. John Hoover from Partners in Human Resources International will join Dr. Harris Ginsberg of Pfizer, Dr. Eric Hieger of ADP, and Dr. David DeFilippo of BNY University in discussing The Next Big Conversation – The Leader and Organization as Co-Clients. This panel is designed to introduce and discuss the significance of keeping the voice and interests of the organization alive and involved in executive coaching engagements.

Coach in the Context of the Organization

It seems improbable that organizations would conduct expensive executive coaching engagements without an enterprise-wide coaching framework or a formalized reporting structure and protocol that aligns coaching work with the organization's established leadership principles, values, or competencies. It also seems implausible that organizations would not capture and analyze the structured interview 360 data and information from coaching reports (without compromising coaching client confidentiality) to identify organizational leadership trends and development opportunities.

Yet, organizations with formalized executive coaching structures and processes like those above, even if only to ensure consistent quality from one engagement to the next and/or from one geographic location to another, are the exception, not the rule. As the Conference Board points out, Organizations have much to gain by moving toward contextual alignment in coaching and acknowledging that the true client is the relationship between the leader being coached and the organization. According to Hoover, the reasons are clear:

- Executive coaching must produce a benefit for the sponsoring organization that is consistently equal to the benefit for the leader being coached.
- The leader being coached and organization must be considered co-clients to ensure the voices of both are heard and honored in coaching engagements.
- As multiple engagements take place across the global enterprise, the leadership patterns and trends that emerge must be captured, analyzed, and reported without compromising confidentiality to gain full organizational value.

For each of the ten weeks leading up to the Conference Board's 2015 Coaching Summit, *Human Talent Network* will feature one of the Ten Commandments of Contextual Coaching. The first commandment of Contextual Coaching—which is to say, coaching in the context of the organization's culture and strategic agenda—is:

Coach in the Context of the Organization

This means aligning what leaders do best with what the organization needs most. Enterprise-wide alignment between leaders and corporate strategy is critical to successful executive development and optimal execution on the organization's most pressing organizational needs.

Without compromising any of the confidentiality, craft, and reflective practice that help make executive coaching the most powerful (and expensive) individual leadership development intervention available, elevating the voice and presence of the organization in coaching engagements is essential to maximizing the value of the organization's coaching investment.

If the goal of executive coaching is to build the leaders who will build the business, the approach to developing leaders, whatever it is, must be informed by the context of the organization. The symbiotic relationship between individual leaders and the organizations that employ them must be defined and documented in the context of the collective. If organizations that sponsor executive coaching engagements hope to maximize the benefits of developing their leaders, the leadership development processes, protocols, and guiding principles must align with and thereby advance the strategic agenda of the organization.

Traditional ad hoc executive coaching engagements that are not contextually aligned with the strategic agenda of the organization are inherently myopic. The odds are poor that a broader organizational agenda will be well served by executive coaching, strategic team alignment, or any leadership development activity when executive coaches or group process facilitators' peripheral visions are too narrow to see the full organizational spectrum. Chances are slight that detached and isolated leadership development activities will add significant enterprise-wide value.

The Ten Commandments of Contextual Coaching each outline one dimension of coaching through an organizational lens. To establish the organizational context within which the aligned coaching will take place, talent strategy designers must:

1. Establish criteria for selecting; training, and supervising executive coaches
2. Establish enterprise frameworks within which coaching engagements take place
3. Establish reporting and data analysis processes and procedures to ensure coaching consistency, alignment with the sponsoring organization's strategic agenda, and data mining opportunities



All of this work, including nuanced sub-processes, must be based upon and aligned with the sponsoring organization's established leadership development principles, values, or competencies.

Next week, Contextual Coaching Commandment Number Two examines more deeply the alignment between what people do best and what organizations need most:


Coach with the Art of Alignment: People, performance, and profitability.

Countdown to the Conference Board Coaching Summit – March 9, 10, 11, 2015 to be held at the Westin New York at Times Square. For conference information and registration instructions, contact www.conference-board.org (<http://www.conference-board.org>) or media@partners-international.com (<mailto:media@partners-international.com>).


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 About the Author

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John Hoover, PhD, is a New York Times best-selling author and former executive at The Disney Company and McGraw-Hill. He coaches senior executives and their teams to venture outside of their boxes. By day he is a mild-mannered SVP at Partners International in New York City (partners-international.com), certified by the International Coach Federation, a coaching supervisor certified by the Coaching Supervision Academy, and a former Marriage & Family Therapy intern, licensed by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. It's all about relationships, if you haven't picked up on that theme. Dr. John's hat trick--executive, coach, and author--is the perfect storm for supervising executive coaches and working as a thinking partner to those developing leadership and talent strategies that align what individuals do best with what their organizations need most. (More relationship stuff.) With more than 12 books to his credit from Amacom, Barnes & Noble Press, Career Press, HarperCollins, John Wiley & Sons, McGraw-Hill, and St. Martin's Press (including the New York Times, Business Week, and Wall Street Journal best-selling "How to Work for an Idiot") Dr. Hoover co-created the Contextual Coaching™ framework at Partners International and teaches fun stuff about managing coaching functions in organizations at Fielding Graduate University.

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