

Coaching at Work annual conference – 5th July 2017, London

Coaching  
at Work

# Culture and Challenge

Coaching and mentoring to challenge,  
shift and embrace cultures

## Coaching at Work Annual Conference 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017 Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, London

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**Is the key to being authentic and genuine at work making your work colleagues Facebook friends?**

Neil Tomalin – Managing Partner – July 2017

# Where it all began...



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## ... but where does it end?

- Our modern emotional history;
- Is human behaviour changing?
- Confessionals led by the LGBTQ and mental health communities;
- What is the impact of this on our workplace behaviour?
- Are we all striving to become closer to our 'genuine and authentic' self?
- Who is up for greater sharing and who is not?

# Let's start the Conversation

- Take 5 mins. Talk to a neighbour about a 'bring yourself' to work day;
- What would you reveal about yourself?
- How might you change your behaviour?
- To what extent are you your true and authentic self at work?

# Basis of the research study

- Exploring themes around being 'genuine and authentic' in the workplace;
- Focused upon relationships:-
  - Employer to employee;
  - Employee to employer.
- Assessing the impact on individual performance;
- Scoping out where business coaches can get involved to improve performance.

# Feelings rather than a definition

This quote sums up that feeling:

***‘Because I am now a modified version of that really authentic 3 year old that existed. Work, school, being bullied and all that. That 3 year old was fierce and fearless and just so dynamic and I lost a lot of that light going through a lot of experiences and life and I’ve had to hold tight onto that individual, who would put on Mamma’s bathing suit and say, hey’.***

*Shea Coulee – Drag Queen*

# The power of 'human moments'

- Coming out as LGBTQ to a boss;
- American boss reacting to diversity;
- Mushroom soup excuse in a meeting;
- Very effective if it is used properly;
- Expectations are changing (Corbyn v May);
- Any ethical considerations?



# Initial Findings – Employers

- Size really does matter;
- If they believe it will make a difference to employee productivity they will listen;
- Cultural messages not getting through;
- Is a 'relationship' just too up close and personal?
- They seek challenging behaviour, but don't encourage it;
- How well does anyone know each other – particularly the senior leadership team?
- Need to experiment e.g. some employee review processes are now morphing into facilitated conversations.

# Initial Findings- Employees

- People perform better when they can be themselves;
- However, this can only happen when certain behaviours are recognised and rewarded;
- There is a desire for greater expression, but not enough outlets available in the workplace;
- Behaviour in meetings and meeting culture is the acid test;
- Relationship with individual manager is critical;
- Lack of interest in 'getting to know me' as an individual, particular poor with senior management;
- Age and size matter!

**There's also a significant amount of editing going on!**



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## 10 min exercise – authenticity in action

- 5 meeting stances identified from the research;
- Which shows authenticity in action and which does not?
- What role or roles do you identify with?
- How might this understanding improve client performance?

# Are you authentic in a meeting?

I always say what I am feeling. There is no filter. My actions are closely aligned to my personal values.



THE DOG

I like to chuck a rock sometimes to see what reaction I get. I like pushing the boat to see what happens. It gets a reaction and that gets me noticed. And, it might just be a great idea.



THE SHARK

My contribution is very measured. I always try and say the right thing. To take a mature and professional stance. I do a lot of editing!



THE OWL

# Are you authentic in a meeting?

I observe and listen. I will make a point if I am invited to, but generally prefer to sit on my hands and ask questions in my head only. I am most likely to be found making my point by the coffee machine afterwards..



THE MOUSE

I have had enough of meetings and am aware I disengage, but then, what's the point if you already know that a decision has been made?



THE CAT

# Implications for business coaches

- Essential background checks;
- The significance of meeting culture and performance as a microcosm;
- Opening up new lines of questioning – focused around the ‘relationship’ word;
- Real opportunities for improved workplace performance by taking more control;
- Should we be coaching clients towards their ‘genuine and authentic’ self, or away from it?

# Any questions?

