

## How to Evaluate Executive Coaching<sup>1</sup>

An evaluation might consist of a comparison between initially stated consultation objectives (validated by both coach and clients) and the actual results of the consultation. This requires that objectives be stated in observable, measurable, verifiable, behavioral terms. It also requires both coach and clients to make an explicit comparison at the conclusion of the consultation (and at agreed-upon points along the way).

**Example:** Members of a team say they agree about the philosophy and objectives of their organization. When the coach asks individual leaders what the organization's philosophy and objectives are, there is little actual agreement.

Coach and clients agree on a specific objective, such as, "Team members will agree on and complete a written organizational philosophy and list of two or more specific organizational objectives."

Note that evaluation of such an objective might consist of a simple response to the question, "Did this described event occur or not?"

### Four Categories of Evaluation:

1. **Reaction.** How clients feel, what they think about the consultation.
2. **Learning.** A gain in knowledge by clients (facts, concepts, processes/procedures) as a consequence of the consultation.
3. **Behavior.** Whether or not clients apply what they learned.
4. **Results.** Whether or not the application of learning resulted in any sustained difference in clients' behavior, work procedures, or organizational outcomes.

Often clients will trust data more if drawn from multiple sources and methods.

- Multiple sources include self-report, coach's observations, peer/spouse/manager's perceptions.
- Multiple methods include observation checklists, questionnaires, interviews, and/or available data (e.g., productivity reports, sales records, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> Based on an article by Arthur M. Freedman, 1983 NTL Institute *Consultation Skills Reading*