

Tim Link



Tim is a graduate of Corporate Coach U and a member of The International Coach Federation. Tim's coaching draws upon 17 years of experience as a successful entrepreneur and corporate sales executive, general manager and vice president. His most fulfilling work as an executive coach is enabling leaders and the people around them to become more collaborative, productive and fulfilled. Tim's services include one on one executive coaching, senior team development, coaching skills workshops, employee engagement measurement and culture audits. Through Link Resource Group affiliate partners, Tim has the unique capability of marshaling a cadre of resources to deliver coaching, training and organizational development programs of virtually any size.

316-634-2328
www.linkresourcegroup.net
tim@linkresourcegroup.net

Link Resource Group and emotional intelligence competency

There are three essential competencies of the effective coach. They must be interpersonally skilled at coaching and influencing others. This requires an extreme self-awareness, excellent listening and observing skills, empathy, and ability to deliver feedback in a tough yet non-judgmental way. Secondly, they must be highly trustworthy. This becomes particularly important when navigating complex confidentiality boundaries. Thirdly, good coaches must have a sufficient understanding of business practices and organizational politics to help their clients decipher, understand, and address organizational complexities.

DJ Mitsch, founder and President of The Pyramid Resource Group and Past President of The International Coach Federation, emphasizes Tim Link's abilities as an executive coach with particular strength in emotional intelligence training. "Tim is reflective, he's thoughtful, he shares ideas, he's open and he partners with people. Add to that his qualifications and training, and it makes him one of the best in the business."

Raedina Campbell, Human Resource Officer at client Preferred Health Systems comments, "We have experienced first-hand Tim Link's ability to develop and expand emotional intelligence with our leadership team. In working with our people, before and after assessments have shown marked improvement in EI and as a result, our team is more productive and our overall environment is more conducive to individual and company success."

Link Resource Group News

- Tim Link has been selected as one of 3 coaches across America to participate in a national coaching pool working with the Pyramid Resource Group in coaching executives and managers of a Fortune 500 company. The program began in February 2004, and the coaches will use a virtual interactive classroom and phone bridge. One class per week for six weeks will be conducted with ten managers simultaneously, and one-on-one coaching sessions will be conducted in-between the weekly sessions in order to review and build upon skills built during interactive classroom sessions.
- Link Resource Group has expanded to include affiliation with training consultant Donna Berry. Berry specializes in team building, emotional intelligence, leadership development, and communication and strategic planning. She teaches as adjunct at Newman University and Friends University and is the co-author of four training books.

Issue Highlights

Our first issue of "Coaching Link" focused on the importance of the quality of the relationship between manager and employee, how executive coaching helps managers develop positive relationships, what executive coaching is and isn't, the challenges of incorporating behavioral change, and how executive coaching enhances the performance of executives and improves organizational outcome.

A major component of executive and managerial success correlates to the concept of emotional intelligence. This issue will focus on how embracing and understanding emotional intelligence can benefit you and your organization with very real change.

Managing with emotional intelligence: The importance of empathy

The business community has embraced the concept of emotional intelligence and its importance ever since Daniel Goleman's best-selling book, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998). New studies in corporations that have adopted emotional intelligence training have shown that "EI" can be trained and is effective. When programs are implemented there are overall improvements in productivity and profits.

Furthermore, up to 90 percent of the difference between outstanding and average leaders is linked to emotional intelligence. "EI" is two times as important as IQ and technical expertise combined, and is four times as important in terms of overall success, according to studies by the Hay Group.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize your own feelings and those of others, and the ability to motivate yourself and others, as well as to manage your own emotions and those of others. Essentially, there are four competencies:

1. Understanding yourself, or self-awareness
2. Managing yourself, or self-management
3. Understanding others, or social awareness
4. Managing others, or social skills

One of the foundation skills that contributes to success is the skill of empathy. It starts with self-awareness, in that understanding your own emotions is essential to understanding the feelings of others. It is crucial to effective communication and to leading others.

Empathy can be defined as the ability to see things from the other person's point of view- to be able to "walk in someone else's moccasins." Goleman defines it as the ability to read other people. Other definitions include the concept of identifying with the other person or their situation. This implies more than a cognitive understanding, more than just remembering a similar situation that you may have gone through yourself. Empathy means that you can recall some of those same feelings based on your own memories. There is a sharing and identifying with emotional states.

Managing with empathy

When someone comes to you with negative feedback, what is the first thing you think to yourself?

1. Here we go again. Another annoying complainer. This is a waste of my time.
2. I'm going to sit here and pretend to listen to this and then give them the facts on their latest performance measures.
3. Why can't he/she pay attention to the really important issues, like getting this project completed on time?
4. Why is this an issue? I need to get more information.
5. What is this person really saying here? Or, rather, what is not being said and maybe needs to be addressed? What questions do I need to be asking?

The first response is one in which you are focusing on yourself and your needs. Responses #2 and #3 focus on the goals and needs of the organization. All of the first three responses are lacking in empathy. Response #4 focuses on the other person. And response #5 focuses on the other person and the organization. The last response shows the most empathy because it goes beyond what is being said.

At the outset empathy involves real curiosity and a desire to know or understand. There is a genuine interest in what the person is saying and feeling. You cannot have empathy without asking questions. Some typical ones are:

1. "Can you say more about that?"
2. "Really? That's interesting. Can you be more specific?"
3. "I wasn't aware of that. Tell me more."
4. "I'm curious about that...let's discuss this in more depth."
5. "Let me see if I understand you correctly ...here is what I hear you say..."

Managers and leaders who are high in empathy skills are able to pick up emotional cues. They can appreciate not only what a person is saying, but also why they are saying it. At the highest levels, they also understand where a person's feelings might come from.

Those that do not have empathy have a tendency to misread the other person. They do not ask questions to clarify. They do not pay attention to non-verbal cues. Those people who are analytical by nature will listen to the words, facts and figures and completely miss the real message of what is being said. If we remember that only 7% of the message is carried in the words and the rest is in the non-verbal cues, then listening to the content of what is being said may actually be misleading.

How then to learn effective empathy if you are one of those task-oriented managers who is primarily focused on achievement? The good news is that your achievement orientation and focusing abilities will help you in acquiring empathy skills. The bad news is that it may not be natural at first. Fortunately, empathy is a learned capability and like other competencies, it can be acquired. Like all the emotional competencies, it is better to practice with an experienced coach who can monitor and give effective feedback. Reading a book and taking a class can both help to gain a greater cognitive understanding of what is involved. However, empathy skills must be learned experientially, that is, practiced in the field in real-time.

Empathy and focus

What does this have to do with running a business, managing a company and dealing with bottom-line performance issues and how do empathy and focus work together for success? According to Goleman, empathy represents the foundation skill for all the social competencies important for work:

1. Understanding others: Sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns
2. Service orientation: Anticipating, recognizing and meeting customers' needs
3. Developing others: Sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities
4. Leveraging diversity: Cultivating opportunities through diverse people
5. Political awareness: Reading the political and social currents in an organization

Managers and leaders are usually high in those traits and characteristics that lead to successful goal completion, such as high achievement orientation and high focusing

abilities. That's why they get promoted to managing positions. Success depends a great deal on having focus, being able to persevere, and being able to concentrate. But focus alone can result in undesirable consequences if not counterbalanced by empathy. Focus alone will not result in the fulfillment of goals. Focus and empathy will.

Empathy skills are those that involve paying attention to other people-things like listening, attending to needs and wants of others, and building relationships. When empathy skills are high, one is more likely to inspire the troops. When a manager understands his/her people and communicates that to them, he/she is more liked and respected. And that is how practicing empathy results in better performance. When a manager is respected, the people they lead are more likely to go the extra mile. Empathy and focus need to be balanced, and when they are, managing skills are optimally effective.

The business case for emotional intelligence

The following examples of research build a case for how emotional intelligence contributes to the bottom line in any business organization. They offer a bottom-line rationale for attention to emotional competencies, in hiring, selecting, and retaining personnel, in developing performance measurements, and in managing customer relationships.

After supervisors in a manufacturing plant received training in emotional competencies such as how to listen better and help employees resolve problems on their own, lost-time accidents were reduced by 50 percent, formal grievances were reduced from an average of 15 per year to 3 per year, and the plant exceeded productivity goals by \$250,000 (Pesuric & Byham, 1996).

In another manufacturing plant where supervisors received similar training, production increased 17

percent. There was no such increase in production for a group of matched supervisors who were not trained (Porrás & Anderson, 1981).

An analysis of more than 300 top level executives from fifteen global companies showed that six emotional competencies distinguished star performers from average: influence, team leadership, organizational awareness, self-confidence, achievement drive, and leadership (Spencer, 1997)

Financial advisors at American Express whose managers completed the Emotional Competence training program were compared to an equal number whose managers had not. During the year following training, the advisors of trained managers grew their businesses by 18.1% compared to 16.2% of those whose managers were untrained.