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# Coaching Success Stories

## How Coaching Can Change Your Life

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Association of Coaching & Consulting Professionals on the Web  
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# Coaching Success Stories

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# Why Coaching Success Stories

## Introduction



By Milana Leshinsky,

Founder of ACCPOW

Association of Coaching & Consulting Professionals on the Web

<http://www.accpow.com>

It doesn't stop to surprise me how many people have never heard of personal coaching. Roughly 9 out of 10 people have yet to discover what a life coach is and how much quality of life can be improved with a coach by your side.

It's like the best-kept secret among the most successful people. Talent, desire and persistence are absolute essentials in anyone's success. But if you have someone who is your cheerleader, sounding board, friend, confidante, and mentor, all of a sudden reaching your goals becomes so much easier!

A coach can be that person in your life.

Personal coaching has always existed. In the last 20 years, however, the extraordinary results of working with a coach became obvious and coaching became a formal profession.

A professional coach can help you in over a hundred different areas of your life, including career transition, personal relationships, parenting skills, leading a healthier lifestyle, solving work conflicts, improving communications within an organization, recovering from an illness, overcoming addictions, and many other ones.

Why hire a coach? To become a top performer in both, life and work. This collection of success stories is proof that coaching works! I hope they inspire you as much as they inspired hundreds of thousands people all over the world.

*Milana Leshinsky*



## **Carol McClelland, Ph.D.**

Carol helps clients create meaningful careers that fit their true nature. As the author of *Changing Careers for Dummies*, *The Career Clarity Program™*, and *The Seasons of Change*, Carol provides clients with refreshing insights, unique tools and powerful resources to transform their confusion and frustration into clarity and positive action. A variety of clients - administrative assistants to executives, creative artists to scientists - have used the Career Clarity Program™ to transform their careers and lives.

To begin targeting your new career, visit <http://www.careerclarityprogram.com> to subscribe to Carol's Career Clarity Tips and receive a free career insight packet.

## **From Semiconductor Marketing to Innkeeping A Career Change Success Story**

### **Coaching Challenge:**

When Ed first came to see me, he was quite unhappy with his work as a Product Marketing Manager for a hi-tech company in Silicon Valley. In fact, he'd been unhappy for quite some time. Although Ed's career had progressed quite well over a 20 year period, his value system was becoming more and more at odds with the demands of the corporate world.

The politics required to continue an upward career path repulsed Ed, who wanted to devote his energy to cultivating a strong home life and social environment. Relentless travel, ruthless peer competition, and a never ending focus on product strategy were ripping Ed's strong interpersonal and management skills to shreds and making his strongest skills irrelevant to his superiors.

Ed had been trying to find a new career on his own for at least ten years. Although he hadn't hurt himself financially by staying in a job he didn't like, he did experience huge losses at a personal level due to his unrewarding job and work environment. His self-esteem had plummeted, his health had suffered, and his standing in his field had steadily declined.

### **Obstacles:**

As Ed and I worked through each step of my Career Clarity Program, we began to clarify what worked best for Ed in terms of his work environment, his work colleagues, and his lifestyle. We also explored his passions and interests and began brainstorming new career

options that fit his needs and his personal style. On the surface, all was going well. Ed had definite interests that tied to the values he couldn't express at work. As a result of the brainstorming phase of the Career Clarity Program, Ed determined that his number one choice for his next career was to own and operate a Bed and Breakfast.

As we defined his ideal work situation, however, I began to notice Ed knew more about what he *didn't* want and what he *didn't* think was possible than what he truly desired. For instance, Ed stated quite emphatically that he and his wife would never sell their home in the area, nor would they ever move. Their living location was non-negotiable, which made it impossible for him to pursue his ideal work.

I also became concerned when I saw Ed wasn't able to act on ideas and strategies we created to improve his current situation. In several instances we talked about the same idea several weeks in a row and Ed wasn't able to shift his behavior or his perspective to create any change. It became clear to me that his long-standing patterns of low self-esteem and depression needed to be addressed before we would be able to make any more progress toward creating a more fulfilling career for him.

From my interactions with Ed over several months, I knew that even if Ed was able, by some miracle, to muster the courage and gumption to find a new job or create his own business, it was highly likely nothing would really change for him because his perspective on life would be with him wherever he went.

Although Ed was a bit taken a back by my recommendation to work with a therapist to address the patterns that were holding him back, we parted ways. I have to admit that I doubted I would ever hear from Ed again.

## **Solution:**

A year later, I did! It turns out Ed had worked with someone on the issues we'd discussed. Unfortunately, however, he was still in the job that was chipping away at his health and his self-esteem. In fact it had gotten so bad he'd been forced to take a leave of absence for health reasons.

Ed still wanted (and needed) to find a new career. This time he was ready to go! Although he still wasn't ready to contemplate relocating to pursue innkeeping, by revisiting and updating the work we'd already done together, we were able to hone in on a business he could start right away. Becoming a landscape designer would give him the opportunity to leverage his passion for landscaping and horticulture and incorporate his love of creating environments of beauty - all without relocating.

After about a year in the landscape design business, Ed realized that although he enjoyed the work, the time intensive nature of each project limited the number of clients he could handle. Upon assessing the long term potential of the business, he didn't feel he could adequately meet his lifestyle and financial goals with this business. Furthermore, Ed and his wife really wanted a business they could run together.

Although he was disappointed, he was by no means crushed with his conclusion. He'd seen the writing on the wall for some time. I recommended that he and his wife, Dawn, begin rethinking their joint future by taking some time to review his Career Clarity binder and updating it to match their current needs. I urged them to combine the elements they wanted in their ideal business to get some ideas for their future direction. I was there to

help if they needed any guidance.

Not long afterwards, I received a call from Ed. He and Dawn decided they really wanted to own and operate an established B&B. Owning a B&B would give them plenty of opportunities to create beautiful environments both inside and out, entertain together, and cook. Having made this decision, they realized they could live anywhere they wanted to in the United States. Although they preferred to remain in their native region of Northern California, they began opening their minds to exploring other options. Another key aspect of their decision making process had to do with Dawn's career. Although Dawn was highly regarded by her employer, staff and peers and her career path was strong and definitely climbing, she too was ready for a major change.

Together they plunged into researching the industry and available properties. Within several months they'd sold their home (!) in Northern California and purchased a five room Inn in Julian California, in the mountains one hour northeast of San Diego. After Dawn resigned from her job, they relocated with their pets and many of their favorite rosebushes and bonsai trees.

The fact that they sold their home to create their new career was a stunning change of events and told me Ed had changed at his core. I'll always remember an email I received from Ed about a year after they relocated. In it Ed shared that *the worst day of incepting is far better than the best day of semiconductor marketing!*

Now, five years later, Ed and Dawn continue to own and operate the Butterfield Bed and Breakfast in Julian, California (<http://www.butterfieldbandb.com>). They recently purchased a neighboring house to add a private cabin to their B&B complex. Thankfully their home and business survived both the 2002 and 2003 fires in the Julian area.

Each time I hear from Ed and Dawn I experience great joy. Their journey is inspiring and demonstrates that anything is possible when you persevere and act to bring more of what you love into your work and life.

## Meg Montford



Meg coaches executives and professionals in managing their careers. Using a pragmatic inquiry approach, she partners with them to clarify career values, define goals and develop action plans for achieving results. She helps clients confront tough issues and reach resolution. Some call her their "secret weapon" in their job searches.

Holding a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Missouri, Meg received coach training from Career Coach Institute and Corporate Coach University. She is a Professional Certified Career Coach and Career Management Fellow. Since 1986, she has helped hundreds achieve career success as a coach, recruiter and career strategist. Visit her web site at <http://www.abilitiesenhanced.com>

## From Technical Writer to Personal Trainer A Career Change Success Story

### Coaching Challenge:

In today's world of work, many people find themselves working harder and longer with less personal satisfaction and little or no recognition for their contributions. How did we get to this place? If work is a 'necessary evil,' does it have to be emotionally painful? Does it have to be so totally life consuming that we lose our souls, the very essence of who we really are?

One such lost soul contacted me for career coaching. She was caught in a trap of working 60-70 hours per week and had been stuck in this rut for months. Karen was a technical writer employed by a large corporation, a corporation undergoing restructuring that involved downsizing and elimination of thousands of jobs. Karen didn't want to lose her job, too.

With a Bachelor of Arts in journalism, she had built her 20-year career in business communications. She had been happy for most of those years, but now it was different. Work was dominating her life. She was always tired and seldom had time for her husband who worried about her, missed her companionship, and pleaded with her to quit the insanity of giving her life away to her company. When Karen contacted me she wasn't clear about whether she wanted to 'fix' her current employment situation or find a new career path. What she did know, though, was that she couldn't continue in her current state of being.

### Solution:

Karen came to our first coaching session a bit unsure of what to expect and what would be expected from her. We spent our initial time together getting to know each other better, and laying the foundation for our coaching relationship - a relationship that had to be based on trust and open communication in order to best benefit Karen.

Karen stated that her immediate goal was to be able to cut back on all those long hours she worked, and to understand herself better. She agreed to do introspective work on clarifying her values, defining her motivators for working, and assessing her complete repertoire of skills. Perhaps with this kind of focused observation she would be able to start to figure out how to change her life into one filled with career satisfaction - one offering a healthy balance between enjoyable work and her personal life.

"I believe this introspection was one of the key factors that helped me realize aspects about myself that I hadn't thought about in many years, and certainly hadn't thought about in relation to my work," said Karen. "I also learned which communication style was most comfortable for me and the key role it plays in my career success."

"Meg and I met by telephone for 30-minute sessions once a week for about three months. She was always there when I called. Her focus was completely on our conversation during every single meeting and she was able to hear clearly what I had to say. Meg listened and I talked and she asked all the right questions. It was astounding how quickly we became acquainted and how thoroughly she understood my situation in such a short time. She was always there for me and that was a great comfort," said Karen.

Karen was very willing to do fieldwork between our coaching sessions knowing that with ongoing concentration she could more quickly achieve her goals. Once she understood her values and how they didn't align with her current company's culture, she then defined her motivators and decided she was no longer driven to continue the extended work hours, and finally she was ready to inventory her skills to see which ones she might be under-utilizing. This is when the 'dream job' exercise entered the scene and Karen got really stuck.

"Meg asked me to complete an assignment that required me to create my personal dream job - anything I wanted to do. The assignment required details about my daily schedule for one week including with whom I ate lunch, what meetings I attended, what awards I won - every detail. I just couldn't do it! There was no part of any job I could think of that I wanted to pursue, so I decided to write a weekly schedule around all the things I wanted to do outside of work. That consisted of doing my exercise classes, yoga, walking, and writing. I was actually very discouraged at this point. I just couldn't think of any job I wanted to do," lamented Karen.

Karen came to our next coaching session a bit dejected and frustrated with what she felt was her failure to complete the fieldwork. As we started to discuss her 'dream job,' I asked Karen key questions to help her look at her feelings and jump-start her creativity about what an ideal job would be like for her. I stated that I noticed a pattern in her written assignment and asked her what she saw.

"I don't see anything," Karen cried. "I couldn't write about any job I'd like to do so I wrote about the fun things I like to do." I asked Karen to look closer at what she wrote. What was she not seeing? All of a sudden I sensed the light bulb go on, all the way through the phone line. "I could be a personal trainer!" screamed Karen. "But that would be fun. You mean I could do the things I love and get paid for it?"

What a novel thought! "I had so equated pain with work that it was truly hard to accept the idea at first. I can still remember the 'aha' moment and how excited I was," said Karen since then. Being the coach, I asked her to test her idea by processing it through the business reality filter. Would it meet her income requirements? Would it satisfy her career goals? How could she make her dream job real?

"I did fieldwork that confirmed that being a personal trainer was a viable option for me," said Karen. "Not only could I help people with their fitness goals, but I could also utilize my writing talents by writing fitness articles for magazines and assist health clubs with their newsletters. I couldn't be happier, but this was really 'out of the box' for someone who had worked in Corporate America for 20 years. I had no official experience, only the years I'd devoted to exercising on my own. Meg helped me work through my initial doubts that something so wonderful could really be a profession that I could successfully pursue."

Karen and I completed our coaching about a year ago. Since then she has accepted a severance package from her employer as her department finally got caught in the layoff frenzy. "I felt so guilty about being happy while all my co-workers were hurting and not knowing what to do about getting new jobs. I had already begun my Personal Trainer studies," said Karen. "My severance package was a bonus as I'd already decided to give notice soon and start working toward my new career."

A few months ago Karen contacted me to celebrate passing her certification test. She is now a Personal Trainer happily employed in a fitness center. Only a couple years from the age of 50, she doesn't fit the profile of the typical beginner in her field. However, Karen sees her age as an asset in working with her preferred clientele - women over 50 who are trying to get into physical shape. She loves her work and advises everyone to find a way to work their passion.

"Life is too short to waste it in a job that causes stress and frustration. I now have time for my husband and we enjoy traveling on the weekends instead of going into the office to catch up on last week's workload. Furthermore, I come home happy during the week with a sense of inner peace in my heart," says Karen.

"My coaching experience was nothing short of life changing. I never expected this kind of result. My coach guided me to my new career path with kindness and thoughtfulness. She heard things that I never knew I said, but she would play them back for me. This allowed me to find my way to this new career on very solid ground. I knew the minute I discovered Personal Training it was really the place for me. I truly don't believe I could have ever found this place for myself without coaching," says Karen with a smile.

No more a lost soul, Karen has found the secret to a fulfilling career. As a Career Coach, so have I.

## Milana Leshinsky



Milana is an Internet business coach. She helps professional coaches and consultants create passive revenue sources, multiple streams of income for their businesses, and to attract more well-paying clients using a powerful web presence.

She has a Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems, an Associate's in Business Administration, and a Bachelor's degree in music education. Milana is also the founder of ACCPOW, the Association of Coaching & Consulting Professionals on the Web. Milana's web site is <http://www.richcoachpoorcoach.com>

## From an Overwhelmed Underpaid Business Woman to a Well-Paid Author and Consultant

### Coaching Challenge:

As a part of my business, I search the Web for business success stories. When I found Marcia, a popular column contributor, I was excited! I contacted her immediately, asking if she would be interested to share how being a columnist at a high-traffic web site helped her attract more clients. While she responded positively, I was surprised to learn that writing for such a successful web site did not bring her more clients or e-book sales.

Marcia mentioned that her marketing schedule was a disaster, and she really needed help organizing her marketing activities. I offered her my 12-week Rich Coach Poor Coach program and we started to work together.

### Solution:

The biggest obstacle to Marcia's ultimate success was too many things on her plate.

She just completed her book and her agent wanted her to begin a promotional book tour, which included radio interviews, store visits, writing press releases, and so on. She also had to continue working with clients and teaching at a local university, which were her biggest income sources.

On the other hand, she had to keep up with her online marketing. Her e-book sales were slow, especially for the amount of traffic her web site was receiving. Writing more articles and conducting live workshops would be great strategies, but there is only so many (or so few!) hours in a day.

Our goal for Marcia was to automate as many business and marketing tasks as possible, and delegate the rest to her assistant, so she could concentrate on the most income-producing activities.

First, I was surprised to see that the e-book was selling at all. The sales copy was very short and unattractive, and I suggested a re-write.

To write a great sales letter, I needed to be absolutely impressed with the product, so I asked Marcia for a copy of her e-book. After reading it and taking notes, I was very impressed with it - the existing sales letter didn't do it justice! I wrote a new, longer and much more benefit-oriented copy and sent it to Marcia.

Two weeks later, she was thrilled to share with me that her sales doubled! And that's from the same amount of traffic. All was good. And, after moving the newsletter sign-up form to the front page of her web site, Marcia's subscription rate doubled, as well.

Next, we needed to automate the way she followed up with customers. Publishing a newsletter was great, but we needed a way to turn more e-book customers into consulting clients. I asked Marcia to write 5 short lessons as an extension of her e-book, and enter them into an autoresponder. Now whenever someone bought her e-book, they would be automatically reminded of Marcia's other products and individual help she could offer. She no longer had to worry about manual follow-up.

Another thing that kept coming up in our coaching sessions is her target audience. Being a "new job" coach, Marcia's clients needed her only for a few weeks or a couple of months. In other words, the life of a client in her business was very short. She needed a way to capitalize on each client that comes her way.

I suggested focusing on a group of clients within her niche that were highly motivated and willing to pay for great results. This group was very specialized, and I asked if Marcia would be comfortable increasing her consulting fees for this group. As it frequently happens with professionals, she wasn't. She was worried about losing clients.

A published author, a professional job consultant with 15 years of experience, a coach with hundreds of success stories and client "thank-you's", Marcia was worried about raising her fees!

As a test, we decided that she would double her fees to see what happens.

"No one objected!", Marcia said to me with excitement a few weeks later. She went from \$75 to \$150 an hour, packaged two hours together as a minimum, and is now getting \$300 instead of \$75 out of every client. "I couldn't do it before, but when you told me I should, it's like I got permission from you to do this!"

After our 12 weeks were over, Marcia wanted an ongoing coaching and support to keep her on track with her marketing. While she writes tips and articles, her virtual assistant posts them online, so Marcia could focus on her primary activities that only she can do. Her assistant also publishes the newsletter, which went from monthly to bi-weekly and increased her product sales even more.

"Milana, I consider the money I have spent on coaching with you an investment in the future. One that is paying off today! My business has

doubled since we started working together. I appreciate your guidance and your patience with me. You are the best!"

My client is a success story, and that makes me feel like one, too.



## **Gladeana McMahon**

Gladeana is a leading Personal Development Coach who coaches politicians, celebrities and senior business people. She works at board level with individuals from a diverse portfolio of UK and international companies. Combining academic rigour with down-to-earth communication skills.

An internationally published author ('Confidence Works - learn to be your own Life Coach' and 'Coping with Life's Traumas') the Independent on Sunday listed her as one of the UK's Top Ten Coaches. A regular broadcaster her media work includes being co-presenter of Granada Television's 5 part series 'Sex and Soaps' as well as being VT Presenter for BBC1's 25 part series 'Life's too Short'.

Web site: <http://www.gladeanamcmahon.com>

## **Personal Transformation An Emotional Intelligence Success Story**

### **Coaching Challenge:**

Jim, a Director of an investment bank based in the United Kingdom, came to see me because he was upset about what he saw as a "ceiling" to his career aspirations.

Although he had reached a senior position he wanted more and had heard through the grapevine that he was seen as hostile and that this had been a key reason for him not progressing. Jim saw himself as a hard worker, who did a good job and was always willing to assist anyone who needed his help. He could not make sense of the comments he had received. It soon became clear that Jim did not realize the impact his forceful personality had on others. He was task-focused, believing that doing a good job in itself was enough to gain promotion and the respect of others. He had never realized that people skills were just as important as task skills.

Jim had a difficult emotional life when he was younger, following the death of both his parents in a road traffic accident when he was nine. His maternal grandmother was too old to look after him and he spent the next seven years being fostered by a range of short-term foster-parents. He soon learned that academic success brought rewards. As he never stayed in one place long enough to make life long friends he never learnt the lessons of sustaining relationships and the need for people skills.

## **Solution:**

Using a range of coaching skills taken from the psychological as well as executive arena we were able to help Jim explore the impression he made on other people and how he could influence other people's attitudes positively towards him.

Jim began to explore and understand what has become known as "Emotional Intelligence" and how these skills could help him. He started to use social skills such as using 'open questions' to make 'small talk' and thinking about what other people might want in relation to the "What's in it for me" and "What's in it for them" approach. Jim recognized what had been missing from his communication style. He was an able coachee who not only used our sessions well, but undertook his between session assignments with vigour. As he had to travel extensively he used this time to read a whole range of self-development material.

Within 6 months of starting his programme, he reported better relationships with work colleagues and, about three months later he was asked to take up a high profile position.

Jim came to realise that coaching could make a difference. He was such a convert that was instrumental in positioning coaching within his company. Coaching is now used as a way of developing what is seen as "Top Talent" as well as for more traditional performance related issues.

## **Sylva Leduc, M.Ed. , MPEC**



Sylva is a Leadership Development Coach who specializes in creating "humane workplaces." Sylva is one of the early pioneers in coaching, developing "Manager as Coach" and "Peer Coaching" programs -- and that was way back in 1991. For more than a decade she was an internal coach, until she grew weary of the "Road Warrior" lifestyle.

When Sylva makes a change she does so in a big way. In 2000, she escaped corporate life to launch her coaching business, and quickly became overwhelmed with all the administration involved in running a successful business. She solved her problem with a software program for coaches. Sylva became so enamored with the program that she bought the company, took it through a major overhaul and it re-emerged as Client Compass. Sylva's web sites are:

Leadership Development: <http://www.TurningPointNW.com>

Small Business Coaching: <http://www.MYOBcoaching.com>

Software System for Coaches: <http://www.ClientCompass.com>

## **"Don't fire Greg. Just give me six months..." An Executive Coaching Success Story**

### **Coaching Challenge:**

Greg was the IT Director. My company had been brought in to consult to an organization undergoing massive changes, and I was the "people person" to help make those changes take hold. During the time I'd spent at the client site I occasionally worked with Greg and his team, and I observed his different communication and behavioral styles.

In team meetings or one-on-one, he would talk non-stop, dominating conversations, not giving his staff a chance to say much of anything. Other times he was less than "cheerful" and I'd see people cringe when he started yelling at them, berating them and calling them names. In project meetings with peers, he made promises, too many promises, and later would try to wiggle his way out when commitments were not met, or he'd look for someone else to blame.

The result was a lot of in-fighting on his team, they didn't meet timelines, staff morale was at a low level, and gossip was the favorite activity. Other departments looked upon Greg's group as undependable and lazy, and when his name was mentioned, people would smirk and roll their eyes.

Senior management had grown frustrated long ago and they were ready to act in the only

way they knew how - they just wanted to fire him. But I also knew that change could take place using a coaching approach if I had enough time. Along with their support. I also knew that systems perpetuate behaviors. So I set out to coach both the person and the system.

"No, don't fire Greg. Just give me six months to coach him and I know we'll see changes."

## **Obstacles:**

I really had my work cut out for me because time was one of the biggest obstacles. I had six months to demonstrate that Greg could change his behaviors. Senior management didn't expect miracles but they did want to see measurable change.

For anyone who has ever worked in an organization you'll recognize another of the obstacles: it's what I call Corporate Imprinting™. How we act and impact other people in an organization makes a lasting impression. Even when change takes place it can be hard to recognize, let alone remember.

The third challenge was Greg's self perception. Sure, he could be fun to be around – at times. What he didn't see was that people did not trust him because his behavior was unpredictable. Nor did he recognize they did not trust his promises or his boundaries.

## **Action Steps:**

One of the first mandatory steps I took was to find out if Greg wanted to change and if he would work with me as his coach. I also wanted to make sure he knew the truth, that senior management was going to give him six months to turn around his department and they were going to hold him accountable. He had heard them and he did want to make changes.

Knowing there were only six months to coach Greg, I had to act quickly. I set an initial three hour meeting with him and we talked about what he wanted to do and who he wanted to become as a leader. We focused on what a leader - a true leader - does in an organization. How a leader treats others, how a leader talks to people, and how a leader talks about other people. We talked about trust, commitment, and follow-through. And we talked about personal responsibility. This became one of many coaching conversations we had over the next six months.

I also set out to get feedback from as many people as possible in Greg's group, people in other departments, to interview his peers, as well as his own manager, and other senior management in the company. Some people call this a 360 feedback process. I look upon it as being a systems approach to feedback. One of my core beliefs is that a feedback process should not tear down the person before rebuilding him/her, i.e. "it should do no harm."

To gather information I used a feedback tool, focus groups, and individual interviews. I combined the three-pronged approach because I wanted to give as many people as possible the opportunity to let them know that Greg wanted to make changes. I also wanted to find out what they saw as his strengths and areas for development. In short, I

wanted to get them to remember the "good stuff" as well as the bad. Plus, I wanted their commitment to help change occur.

Together, Greg and I worked on the amount of talking he did. He was such an enthusiastic extrovert that he didn't realize the messages he was sending: that only he had valuable information to contribute, or nothing was confidential to him. He didn't realize that people didn't trust him because he would talk about anything or anybody. He also didn't realize that when he was thinking out loud others mistook what he was saying as being a commitment.

Some specific actions we took included my coaching Greg to practice his presentations, with me as his audience. We'd narrow down the amount of information so that he could increase the quality with two way communication. He began paying attention to people and watched for the beginnings of the glazed-over look. He rambled less, asked more questions and began listening more often.

He built better boundaries and stopped talking about others, or betraying confidences. This one action began to increase the trust Greg's staff had in him as their leader.

My greater goal was to coach the system. I wanted to set in place new levels of personal accountability and to increase trust. As a result of team coaching, what we designed was a "no gossip zone." Don't get me wrong, I don't mean that I'm unrealistic and think all gossip can be eliminated. In my experience I find that corporate gossip serves a purpose to reduce tension. Yet if management sets the example or even promotes gossiping, then it's far too easy to become a blaming environment, to avoid confrontations and become paralyzed, and people get can hurt.

In effective management (and leadership), they are the role models in how to deal with tension, and how to help staff solve interpersonal problems. Managers can help employees learn how to talk to people, rather than talk about people.

## **The Result:**

At the six month mark I knew we'd made changes in how Greg was viewed in the organization, and I wanted to know how much of a change.

We conducted a second, more abbreviated, feedback process. His staff reported they felt Greg listened to them more and didn't monopolize all conversations. People trusted him more. Senior management saw that he was meeting deadlines more often, and they were hearing fewer complaints about Greg and his department.

Is this a success story? With ten years of implementing Corporate Imprinting™ I didn't expect miracles to occur in six short months. The results were good, not miraculous, but good. And I felt great knowing that Greg hadn't been fired. Senior management saw he was fulfilling commitments (or at least accepting more responsibility if they weren't met), his staff were treating each other with respect, and overall, morale had improved.

With my coaching assignment complete, I left Greg and his team. About nine or ten months later, I learned Greg's department was recognized for the changes they had made and they were regarded in the organization as an

example of team excellence. I'd venture to say that after I left they continued coaching each other, held each other accountable, and that's what led to their recognition.

## **Key Lessons:**

Organizations who work with consultants may need to be educated (coached) on what coaching is and how it differs from consulting. Change doesn't take place overnight in organizations, so it's vital not to convey that coaching is a magic wand solution.

Help people to remember what they like and appreciate about an individual. This helps change to take hold, and to overcome some of the memory of negative experiences.

To increase the likelihood for success, coach the system, rather than just coach the individual.

And finally help clients recognize how they can coach themselves and their teams for long term success.

## Vivian Burns



Vivian is a spiritual counselor, personal Fitness trainer, nutritional practitioner and a personal coach. She works with people on living life consciously.

"Through an integrative inquiry we begin to awaken the mind, body and spirit in living an authentic, meaningful life."

Vivian lives in NY state, is Leader of the Holistic coaching SIG and a co-leader of the virtual community of the ICF. She facilitates the Extreme Self Care Program, Girls Circle and Living a Perfect Life Program, and writes a Cornerstone news e-zine.

Her web site is:

<http://www.cornerstonecoachingandcounseling.com>

## Finding the Right Partner Self-Image Transformation Story

### Coaching Challenge:

Dana is a petite brunette, in her mid forties, has a teenage daughter and has been divorced from her husband for several years. She is attractive and was desperately wanting a stable relationship.

We had been working for several months around confidence and what she wanted in this relationship. In her own words she became who the men she dated wanted her to become. Some roles which made her uncomfortable. Her desire for a relationship however over-rode any feelings of discomfort. It was difficult for Dana to honor what her needs or values were. At first, it was difficult for her to even acknowledge she had any needs or desires.

Although she had been dating a variety of men during our working together, she found them undesirable. She continued to date them simply because they asked her out.

It became obvious to Dana that she needed to find and honour her feelings, wants and desires if she were to meet someone SHE wanted to be with.

### Solution:

The changing point came when I presented her with the challenge of changing her way of dressing. Her tendency was to dress in a manner that got her attention. And, yes, it was

attention that she got. Once she realized that her manner of dress was attracting the kind of man she was dating - and ultimately did not like, she took on the challenge.

We planned a change of wardrobe for the week. Each day was scheduled. Dana actually called the first couple of days, and needed reassurance. After the first couple of days wearing fashionable, more age appropriate attire, people began to compliment her - on her "new" look.

She found she was attracting men closer to the type of man she wanted to date. Clearly the inner development we had been working on had an impact as well. After about 30 days, Dana began dating someone she liked, and who respected her. This is about three years ago now and they are planning a June 2004 wedding!