

CASE STUDY

World-leading coaching consultancy



A subsidiary of General Physics (UK) Ltd
www.bathconsultancygroup.com

The organisation pioneered training in coaching supervision from Bath Consultancy Group for their faculty. Subsequently, they introduced a quarterly group coaching supervision with John Bristow of BCG.

Solution

The three-hour session typically follows a specific format:

- A short check-in that enables the group to re-connect. This allows time for questions to emerge and to co-create the focus of the day
- All participants are asked if they have anything on which they would like to get supervision. Through discussion, one person volunteers to be the supervisee, another volunteers to be the supervisor whilst the others observe the process as shadow supervisors. As the faculty has been trained in the Hawkins and Shohet Seven-Eyed model, they work primarily in this model
- Normally, the supervisor, facilitator, or an observer suggests a time-out after 15-20 minutes of supervision dialogue. During this 5-10 minute time-out, the observers have a conversation with the supervisor about what's happening in the coach-supervisor dialogue, what the supervisor is doing, the observers' perceptions, hypothesis and recommendations. Normally, the supervisee listens in on this discussion but does not directly engage. The purpose of this time out is to equip the supervisor with insights and new choices for the remaining part of the supervision session. Often this discussion will encourage the supervisor to be aware of what is happening for themselves in Mode 6. Questions will often get the supervisor to attend to impact on the 'here and now' in the relationship between the supervisor and coach. The facilitator and observers encourage the supervisor to be aware of their own internal processes, feelings, thoughts and fantasies that are evoked when listening to the client system.

The observers will also often identify parallel process that the supervisor and coach may be mirroring regarding the coach/coachee and the organisational system. The time-out can also be used to identify Mode 7 aspects of the wider system and the stakeholders of the situation being discussed



LEARNINGS



- When the supervisor is ready, the supervision dialogue continues. Occasionally, if another participant has a specific line of enquiry that the group wants to explore, the supervisor role may be swapped. At the end of the supervision session, feedback is given to the supervisor on what they did well and what they could do differently. Typically, the supervisor has the first go at self-assessment, then the supervisee and finally any observer who wants to give feedback. There may be a short discussion on any aspect that the supervision session flags

This process enables all the participants to learn from both the supervisor and coach perspective.

- Following a short break, the group divides into trios or a combination of trios and pairs/quads depending on numbers. The small group configuration is ever changing from one quarterly meeting to the next. This enables each participant to be supervised and observe every other member over time. The format is similar to the above process with one person as supervisor, one as supervisee and one/two as observers.

There are usually fewer time-outs. There may be time for more than one session in the small groups. In this case, the roles will rotate around so there is a new supervisor, supervisee and shadow supervisor(s)

Outcome

Since the supervision group has been running for an extended period of time, there are a number of benefits that the individuals, the team and organisation are experiencing:

- Since it is one of the few regular meetings of the faculty, it is an important opportunity to connect with colleagues. It is valued as an opportunity to learn together. It also has the side benefit of creating a window into the way that each faculty member works with clients

“I have really seen the group develop their supervision skills since the group situation facilitates learning from each other. I have seen the coaching and supervision capacity increase significantly. I used to make more inputs but now most of the interventions and observations come from the group. This is an indication of their increasing competence as supervisors.”

John Bristow, Facilitator