The Seven-Stage Model for Executive Transformation

The Transformational Executive Coaching Seven-Stage Model is **a unique approach to executive coaching that provides the best information and resources available to support executives in achieving the goals that enable them to impact organizational performance.** At the heart of the Seven-Stage Model is the 360 Feedback Interview, designed to provide experienced executives with the quality and specificity of feedback that cannot be obtained from traditional 360-degree survey instruments or from typical employee-manager-peer interactions. Customizing the feedback process to the executive's specific goals—goals tuned to the executive's needs and current organizational circumstances—provides an entirely different level of value to the executive and the organization.

The Seven-Stage Model is designed to drive systemic and sustainable changes to behaviors that transcend the relatively short time that the executive and coach work together, mitigating the dependence of the executive on the coach. In addition to providing the initial high-quality feedback, the model impacts the organization by teaching the executive techniques for seeking feedback, which in turn enriches the feedback environment and increases the work group's effectiveness.[1] When executives have firsthand experiential knowledge of the power of goal-specific feedback that is behaviorally anchored and offered with the best intentions, they want to continue this practice. A high percentage of the executives I work with continue to use some variation of the feedback process they learned during the coaching engagement. In the best cases, the executive's use of the techniques for getting valid and usable feedback cascades into the culture of the work group and beyond. **The aspirational goal behind the Seven-Stage Model is that the potency of having an enhanced feedback environment will permeate the entire organization.**

The care and attention given to helping the executive learn the techniques for getting high-quality feedback reflects my philosophy of coaching, one designed into the Seven-Stage Model. Coaching provides ongoing value by expanding the executive's leadership toolkit. The tools and techniques used to master a specific issue or achieve a specific goal are discussed and generalized so that the executive can apply them in other situations. Creating transferable knowledge enables the executive to apply processes and concepts in other contexts so that the benefits of coaching transcend the current engagement.

This chapter provides an overview of the model's seven stages. Chapter 4 provides detailed descriptions of the process steps in each stage. Chapter 5 and 6 unpack the coaching skills needed to successfully implement the model.

TRANSFORMATIONAL EXECUTIVE COACHING
SEVEN-STAGE MODEL

STAGE	DESCRIPTION AND DELIVERABLE
1. Establish Relationship	Meet the executive, review the coaching process, and determine the mutual benefit of entering into a coaching contract. Clarify what it means to work in a safe, bounded, goal-directed relationship.
2. Frame Change Intent	Guide the executive in creating an explicit statement of three or four goals that have the full support of the executive's sponsor.
3. Engage Feedback Support Team	Conduct the 360 Feedback Interviews. Review the goal-directed feedback report with the executive.
4. Commit to Action	Complete the Commit to Action Worksheet that includes: (1) the key areas for behavioral development, (2) specific actions to create change, (3) an action learning project, and (4) an action plan.
5. Measure Success	At approximately five months into a six-month coaching engagement, the executive asks the same feedback support team to re-evaluate the driving and restraining forces to his goals.
6. Sustain Progress	Meet with the executive and the executive's sponsor to provide a high-level overview of progress and to build ongoing support from the sponsor.
7. Provide Feedback to Coach	The executive evaluates the coach against goals that were important to the coach.

STAGE ONE: ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIP

Meet the executive, review the coaching process, and determine the mutual benefit of entering into a coaching contract. Clarify what it means to work in a safe, bounded, goal-directed relationship.

Description

The purpose of the first stage of the Seven-Stage Model is to meet the executive, review the process, and determine the mutual desirability of entering into a coaching contract. This is often the first time the executive has had a coach, which can translate into a lot of uncertainty about the process of coaching, how issues of confidentiality are handled, and generally what to expect. These issues need to be fully addressed in ways that provide a sense of safety and confidence in both the process and the coach. In cases where the executive has received prior coaching, this first stage is needed to demonstrate how this approach differs from the model the executive was exposed to in prior coaching. This is particularly helpful when the executive's prior coaching was not effective.

Deliverable

The tangible outcome for this stage of the coaching process is a signed contract, detailing the scope of work with key deliverables, the processes to be employed, the meeting and communication logistics, and how success will be measured.

The intangible outcome for this stage of the coaching process is the executive feeling comfortable with a coaching model built on attunement, authenticity, and collaboration and feeling safe to discuss

the real issues. Building safety requires a healthy conversation about how the coach handles confidentiality. The executive should know that only he will get copies of the feedback reports and that the coach will respond to questions about progress from the sponsor or human resources by discussing only process and inviting the executive to share content. Sharing detailed examples of how I handled "invitations" to violate confidentiality has been reassuring to clients.

As with all issues of trust, this process may take time. One executive took several sessions to be convinced that the conversations were confidential. He signaled this uncertainty with reminders such as, "I would not be having these conversations if it were not for the confidentiality." That was an opportunity for me to reinforce how I manage boundaries. I shared snippets from conversations I had with his vice president of human resources, including how normal it was for the person in that position to ask certain questions and how I routinely responded. **Trust increases when it has been tested.**

The confidentiality boundary management is particularly significant when coaching multiple clients within the same organization. In several organizations, I individually coached the members of the executive team. This model of coaching has been exceptionally effective, as it enables the coach to add the value of seeing the entire system, with insight into issues from the political, cultural, human resources, and structural perspectives. It also mandates having an earned reputation for not sharing information between clients.

My approach to coaching actually starts during the initial interview, where the executive and the coach explore whether they have the right chemistry and the desire to work together. While I use this initial meeting to explore the executive's purpose for seeking a coach, I also use it to demonstrate my approach to coaching through my behaviors.

Understanding the executive's motivations for entering into a coaching contract is critical to the selection process. When I first began my coaching work, I assumed that the client's motivation was always high. More than two decades later, I now start with an open perspective, aware that I do not know the client's level of motivation and thus need to gain that insight from the interview. In the small number of cases where I sense the motivation is not high, I talk about the difficulties clients can have with making and sustaining behavioral changes. This invites a conversation on how much change they are considering and how dedicated they are to the task of changing behaviors.

Low motivation can show itself as low commitment. A conversation on the commitment to change was necessary with a mid-level regional executive who insisted at our first meeting that he just wanted to "make a few adjustments, nothing serious." I pushed back on that to determine both how sure he was about that being the case and how invested he was in making the commitment to the coaching process. I suggested that before we move forward, we consider how much investment is required—his time, my time, his boss's time, and the time of those who will be providing him feedback. I asked if the return of investment would be acceptable if we were only making a few tweaks. This directness without defensiveness or aggression on my part opened up a dialogue that uncovered his cynicism about coaching. This dialogue gave me the opportunity to showcase how I work by expressing empathetic attunement as a former executive, genuine concern for his interests, and a clear commitment to working collaboratively on his goals. This candid conversation enabled the executive to make an informed choice about whether he was willing to engage in the coaching process at this time and whether I was the coach he wanted to work with.

While the executive I've mentioned above decided to embrace coaching and had outcomes that went far beyond "a few adjustments, nothing serious," other executives self-select out of the process. **I have too much respect for the hard work of coaching and the executives I work with to accept low expectations for outcomes due to low motivation or any other reason.** Some of these interviews result in the selection of another coach or a deferral on starting the engagement. The "hard work of coaching" is not just about the executive or the coach; because the Seven-Stage Model is a systemic approach, it involves many people. Using this method to achieve systemic and sustainable change requires a determined effort by the executive, the coach, and the executive's support team.

When I described this process to one junior executive, she expressed her concern that this was more time, energy, and personal investment than she wanted to take on. I respected that decision and acknowledged that right now might not be the best time for her to start a six-month coaching engagement. Executives are busy people with complex roles who are always juggling demands. There are definitely times that are not conducive to this work. I realize, and make it easy for the executive to understand, that **this model of coaching requires a significant commitment and also raises the bar for results.**

During a recent selection interview, the executive expressed relief upon learning that coaching was not about lowering the bar. While he knew he could be hard on his team, expected a lot, and sometimes moved at a faster pace, he also knew the solution was not to accept a lower standard of work. He twice repeated his increased comfort when he learned that my coaching model was about keeping standards high and delivering results. Our open conversations enabled him to go forward and to affirm his commitment to the process and work.

STAGE TWO: FRAME CHANGE INTENT

Guide the executive in creating an explicit statement of three or four goals that have the full support of the executive's sponsor.

Description

With the coaching contract and the foundations for a working relationship established, the first few meetings detail the preliminary goals and aspirations for the coaching engagement.

Deliverable

The deliverable for this phase of coaching is a written statement of three or four explicit goals that have the full support of both the executive and the executive's sponsor.

When working with seasoned executives, I find that through conversation we can adequately identify the areas worthy of our attention. Seasoned executives have lengthy experience with assessments and evaluations and with bosses who have been direct about their developmental needs. The coaching process adds the reflection necessary to synthesize and make sense of the data the executive already has available. This is significantly different from coaching models that rely on gathering new data, most often through a 360-degree survey instrument, before beginning to assemble a set of goals. The 360-degree survey process is good for leaders with less tenure and a low awareness of how others perceive their strengths and weaknesses, but it undervalues the knowledge already present at the executive level.

Developing well-articulated goals that motivate the executive flows from a process that finds the intersection of multiple frames or

perspectives. The Seven-Stage Model explores goals from three per-spectives: (1) current pressing business issues, (2) personal leadership challenges, and (3) the executive's career aspirations. **The objective is to help executives define goals that cross all three perspectives and are in alignment with their values.** Later chapters will address how this process works and will provide examples of what can happen if all three dimensions are not considered. The Venn diagram shown in Figure 2 captures this concept of goals that concurrently impact the three perspectives.

FIGURE 2: EXPLORE GOALS FROM THREE PERSPECTIVES

Career aspirations

Business issues

Leadership challenges
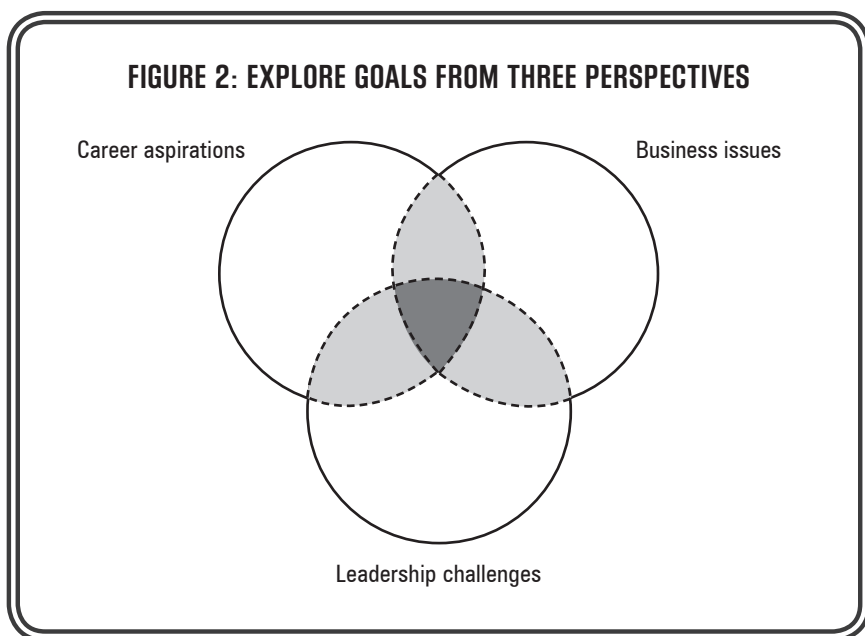
Once these few critical goals are well articulated, I meet with the executive and the sponsor to ensure that we have the right goals and to gain the sponsor's support for achieving those goals.

The sponsor most typically is the executive's boss and will some-times be an interested board member. Before making substantive

investments of time and involving a lot of other people, it is prudent to ensure managerial alignment. Two experiences illustrate the benefits of giving the sponsor the opportunity to influence the goals. In one case, the executive sponsor wanted to show his direct report that he was invested and committed, and opportunities to influence the goals gave him a way to demonstrate that. In another case, a reluctant executive sponsor got pulled into investing in the process. The more she got involved, the more committed she was to a successful outcome. Involving the sponsor also serves as a "reality check" for potential blind spots. I have seen no downside to getting the executive sponsor invested in the behavioral change process.

One of my clients was a bit hesitant to engage his boss, convinced that he would not add much value to the goal-setting process. When I asked why he held that view, he laughed and described how infrequently he received any feedback and how cursory it was. When I asked about performance reviews, he simply noted, "Those don't happen at this level." I have found that to be quite a common occurrence. **Executives do not get the specific, behaviorally anchored feedback they could use to guide change.**[2] When we held a three-way meeting of the executive, his boss, and me, the executive's boss got involved and had solid ideas. My client later shared that he had never expected his boss to be as engaged or animated as he was during the meeting. He was surprised at how helpful his boss was in refining and adding a long-term career-planning focus to his goals. The Seven-Stage Model undergirds the feedback process by creating the context and providing the structure so that members of the feedback support team know what is expected and how to respond.

STAGE THREE: ENGAGE FEEDBACK SUPPORT TEAM

Conduct the 360 Feedback Interviews. Review the goal-directed feedback report with the executive.

Description

In most coaching models this phase would be referred to as the data-collection phase, with a goal of getting a broad range of perspectives from many people on an array of leadership competencies. To this end, a 360-degree survey instrument is typically administered. I propose a different goal for this step and, in the tradition of Louis Sullivan and his understudy Frank Lloyd Wright's dictum "form follows function," a different process. The Seven-Stage Model drives systemic and sustainable changes to behavior, which happens with a cadre of knowledgeable and caring colleagues who are willing to forgo anonymity and share openly what the executive needs to hear in order to make meaningful changes. The 360 Feedback Interview process includes defining the interview protocol, carefully selecting the participants, conducting the interviews, summarizing the themes across the various interviews, and reviewing the report with the executive.

Once the proposed feedback support team has been identified, the executive contacts the team members to get their agreement to serve in this role, explains the interview process that will be used, and electronically introduces the executive coach. The coach conducts thirty-minute telephone interviews with between six and eight people (boss, peers, and direct reports), using a variation of the 360 Feedback Interview Protocol, included in this book as Appendix B.

The critical elements of the protocol are:

- **Specific questions on behaviors that either support or get in the way of achieving each goal**

- **Qualitative, behaviorally anchored responses**

- **A request made at both the beginning and end of the interview to share the notes taken during the phone conversation**

Participation on this support team carries a reciprocal obligation. The expansion of the feedback environment starts by having the executive share his goals, the things that are most important to him to work on, with people that he trusts, those who know him in the work context and who he believes have his best interests at heart.

The screening criteria for entrance onto the feedback support team are:

- **The executive's confidence that the participant has his best interests at heart**

- **The participant's contemporary knowledge of the executive's behaviors**

- **The participant's willingness to share insights on the executive's specific goals**

Deliverable

The deliverable for the 360 Feedback Interviews is a substantive report of highly organized feedback of both behaviors that support goal achievement (driving forces) and behaviors that undermine goal

achievement (restraining forces.) The synthesized report identifies themes, while the individual interview reports (one from each interview) provide support detail.

I had a client who received some major changes to his goals from his boss. Then his boss went further and suggested that four specific people be added to the pool of individuals being considered for inclusion on the feedback support team. My client and I had already reviewed the criteria and had a proposed list, and we knew that one of those four did not meet the criteria. This created a feedback opportunity. I was able to describe the criteria for inclusion and asked my client to share why he disqualified one individual. The boss listened intently, gave clear indications that he understood, and supported the executive's proposed list.

Executives do not talk about making themselves vulnerable, yet that is exactly what happens when they ask for the feedback that really matters on the goals that are most important to them. I still remember one executive who realized how vulnerable this process made him feel and, in classic form, leaned back in his chair, put his hands behind his head, and deeply exhaled before taking the step of becoming vulnerable. He needed assurance that his direct reports would not take advantage of his being open about his goals. After the feedback process, he was overwhelmed by how gracious the members of his executive team were, how they willingly reciprocated his trust and openly shared explicit information with examples of behaviors they had observed firsthand.

Building trust happens as we take risks. The executive is taking the risk of sharing the areas targeted for development. The authenticity of the goals should be abundantly clear to the members of the feedback support team and should set the stage for reciprocation at that same level of authenticity in their interview responses. One executive, head

of a large global operation, had been diligent in developing his goals. He approached them with the same sharpness of attention that he applied to his multi-thousand-person operation. The goals included a business outcome, a statement of what he wanted to build on, and a constraining force to be balanced. For example, in order to increase profits, he had to continue to build the organization in a specific area while recognizing his tendency to get too far ahead without informing his executive committee. His boss and others blew this executive away by praising him for taking the courage to so clearly articulate the issues. The executive was admitting exactly where he had to improve.

STAGE FOUR: COMMIT TO ACTION

Complete the Commit to Action Worksheet that includes: (1) the key areas for behavioral development, (2) specific actions to create change, (3) an action learning project, and (4) an action plan.

Description

The feedback process generates balanced feedback on both the things that help and the things that get in the way. We review the driving forces to see if these are sufficient, to see if there are additional things that the executive should be doing to achieve the goal. Things that get in the way of the executives accomplishing their goals are the restraining forces. Kurt Lewin, a seminal thinker in applying systems concepts to behavioral science, argued that we should pay most attention to the restraining forces, the things that are getting in the way.[3] We explore the restraining forces to identify which ones to address and eradicate.

One of the powerful benefits of using a systems approach is that it avoids the pitfall of framing things as either strengths or weaknesses.

In this model, **a behavior may be a potential driving force for one goal and a potential restraining force for another goal.** An example is the nearly universal executive tendency to be "impatient for results." For some goals that tendency definitely provides the needed drive to completion, while for other goals it overruns the benefit of more circumspect decision making. The historical management approach of focusing primarily on aspects labeled as weaknesses or career derailers has led to a backlash trend of techniques that focus primarily or solely on the positive.[4] This post-modern positive approach has been found wanting by some critics because it lacks a systemic perspective. In the TEC model, both sides of the force field matter as they relate to the specific goals the executive has targeted.

This stage requires a significant investment of time for the executive to metabolize the feedback and to isolate the few critical areas to work on. The potency of using a behaviorally anchored process[5] to gather the feedback on the executive's goals becomes apparent at this step, where the executive makes commitments to changes in behavior.

Deliverable

Once feedback has been analyzed and reviewed, the coaching engagement moves on to the action plan or Seven-Stage Roadmap (see Appendix A).

This stage includes four critical components:

- **Identification of key areas for behavioral development**

- **Commitment to take specific actions**

- **Selection of a real, on-the-job action learning project**

- **Development of a metricized action plan**

This detailed roadmap becomes a work in progress that guides the coaching conversations and serves to hold the executive accountable for her commitments.

Identification of Key Areas

I coached an executive who recognized that he was not viewed as being inclusive of all members of his executive team; consequently, he crafted a goal targeting his desire to create a culture marked with high levels of diversity and inclusion. The interview process to gather behavioral data powerfully captured a barrier to achieving this goal. One of the few female members of his executive committee noted how frequently meetings at that time of year began with conversations about hunting trips over the weekend. She went on to describe how this left her feeling alienated from the group and somewhat disgusted by the gory details. This well-articulated example of a specific behavior and impact did several things. First, my client understood how this senior vice president felt excluded. Second, and more important, it opened our conversation about the role that "coming together as a group" plays in setting a tone of inclusion and about techniques for testing for inclusion in a group. The commitment plan had actions that ensured inclusion. The executive made sharing outside activities an intentional part of the meeting as a way to build inclusion and attune all members of the executive committee. In this new context, hunting stories were still shared, albeit without the field-dressing descriptions.

Commitment to take Specific Actions

The second component, the commitment to take specific actions, is crucial to gaining sustained change. I use the disciplines developed in the **action-learning** research to ensure that the executive pinpoints practical, tangible opportunities to practice the new, desired behaviors.[6] At its heart, action learning is a process for working on real problems, taking action, and learning through reflective questioning and listening while solving the targeted challenge.

One executive targeted a variation on the goal of being more effective at leading teams. We narrowed our coaching efforts to one specific team he was leading that included executives from more than a dozen different countries and developed a toolkit of techniques he planned to use and actions he planned to take at the meetings. He recruited two trusted team members who were also participants in his feedback process to share with him how he executed his goals during the meetings. Our coaching conversations became a continual learning and refining process, building on what worked and adapting to changing situations. The eventual results stunned the client, the trusted participants, and the executive's sponsor. People went from dreading being on a team with this "tyrant" to recruiting him for team leadership positions. On one of the executive's international projects, the company credited his leadership skills with aligning stakeholders and inspiring a team in efforts that accelerated the timetable and resulted in a savings of many millions of dollars.

Selection of an Action Learning Project

The Center for Creative Leadership, one of the most respected leadership development organizations, builds its programs on an

assessment–challenge–support model, recognizing the importance of having the opportunity to practice new behaviors in a supportive environment with professional guidance/coaching and with fast feedback loops.[7] In my role as a consultant, I have formally evaluated the effectiveness of leadership development programs. I did this for a well-respected state-level organization, using the success-case research methodology developed by Brinkerhoff.[8] When I compared senior managers who had clear and measurable success against those with performance metrics at the other end of the bell curve, one of the explanatory variables was whether they had a work context for applying what they learned in their leadership development program.

When I reviewed my own successes as a coach, I found the same variable surfacing as making a difference. **Executives who selected a bounded, targeted area to practice the new behaviors have better results.** This makes intuitive sense: it forces the executive to move from concept to practice in a select area, it supports motivation with early wins, it provides immediate feedback on what is working, it provides fast adaption and modification support, and it bounds the time frame for making the changes. It also helps that the coaching work is now the "real work" of the business, not something "extra."

Development of a Metricized Action Plan

Measuring results is often treated as an afterthought in coaching. With my finance background and work in metrics for soft skill development, I take another perspective; of course, we should be able to capture and recognize changes in behavior. One executive, a transplant from the semiconductor industry, was reluctant to enter into a coaching engagement where there were no clear indicators of progress. He

was excited by being able to demonstrate results. To me, the proof of his commitment was in how carefully he sized and time-lined what he expected to accomplish. He saw the process of establishing metrics as invigorating and as a positive challenge. His goal focus and drive kicked in as a self-fulfilling prophecy. While measuring success is the fifth stage of the Seven-Stage Model, establishing that results will be measured and agreeing on the process for gathering that data is part of the Commit to Action stage.

STAGE FIVE: MEASURE SUCCESS

At approximately five months into a six-month coaching engagement, the executive asks the same feedback support team to re-evaluate the driving and restraining forces to his goals.

Description

This stage of the coaching engagement consists of teaching the executive how to gather ongoing data relevant to goal achievement. We can expect to see sustained behavioral changes in a six-month coaching engagement. At the same time, it is generally an insufficient period of time in which to see differences in the bottom line, revenues, or other multi-determined outcome metrics.

Deliverable

The Seven-Stage Model design wonderfully supports the ability to measure outcomes. The executive has identified crisp goals and has a wealth of data on the behaviors that support goal achievement and undermine goal achievement. At approximately five months into the

six-month coaching engagement, I invite the client to ask the same feedback support team to re-evaluate the driving and restraining forces that are operating on the goals. Such feedback provides a pre-coaching/post-coaching comparison.

I had a coaching engagement that was nine months rather than six because it required work with the team as a whole, and the executive had been working on significant changes that involved others. Once the executive started implementing the action plan, the executive management team gave him anecdotal feedback that they liked what they were seeing. I asked him to gather feedback using a more structured approach, the same one I used at the beginning of our engagement. He agreed but was nervous, not quite sure he could do what I had done. The truth is that at the beginning of the process, he could not have, because he did not have the trust and engagement of his team at that time. I knew he could at this point because of the enhanced relationships and because of the simplicity of the process. The tricky part is keeping people on task and using behaviorally anchored inputs. It's amazing how many times people get excited and want to cover everything. I use a prepared interview protocol to ensure that I manage both of these challenges (see Appendix B: 360 Feedback Interview Protocol). I reviewed the process with my client and suggested he observe while I interviewed one of his direct reports. I had ample opportunities to shape the inputs; for example, "While it is great you think John Doe is doing better, what would you point to as an example of something he did that led you to that conclusion?" My client watched quietly and then conducted the next interview with another direct report while I observed. After a short debrief and a few insights, he independently held conversations with the rest of his executive management team. The results provided a dramatically different story than the first set of

interviews. **The team was able to save $4 million in the next budget cycle through better collaboration, and the executive management team genuinely felt they had put the fun back into their work.**

After the client gathers the feedback, we compare the new post-coaching results to those gathered at the beginning of the process and discuss surprises and learnings. We review the pre-coaching and post-coaching results, with an eye to (1) supporting and reinforcing improvements in order to minimize backsliding, and (2) looking for areas that have stubbornly resisted movement and determining what else needs to be done. For most executives, the celebration for successes might last five minutes, followed by a tight focus on the next goals. The pushback from my side is to stay ever vigilant, to avoid the siren call of new goals before habitualizing the new behaviors and to ensure that when our coaching engagement ends, the gains will not dissipate.

STAGE SIX: SUSTAIN PROGRESS

Meet with the executive and the executive's sponsor to provide a high-level overview of progress and to build ongoing support from the sponsor.

Description

Reviewing the feedback gained before and after the work of coaching helps the executive metabolize the extent of the changes she has made. It also opens the door for a conversation on barriers to sustainability. Our conversations center on how the executive would know if she were backsliding. If this were a weight-loss program, it would be easy: you get on a scale at the same time every day. There is an equivalent for

making behavioral change, and our work is to articulate how we stay alert to any backsliding. This stage is about surfacing and addressing those realities.

Deliverable

One technique to ensure continuity and sustainability of success is a closure conversation with the executive and the sponsor. This meeting provides a high-level overview of progress made and builds in ongoing support from the sponsor. The executive has the opportunity to share facets of the pre-coaching and post-coaching feedback that has been gathered.

In a memorable coaching engagement, I decided I could skip this closure meeting, as the executive's sponsor was not particularly engaged in the process and the executive was very independent. This was a mistake. The sponsor felt dropped and expressed concern that the executive being coached had just done his duty of getting coached and had "checked the box." The sponsor viewed herself as a mentor and wanted to continue to be engaged, and she had leading-edge issues to convey. I learned all this about three weeks after I thought the engagement was finished. The silver lining is that I received the feedback that I needed to hear and was able to take action to gain closure through a three-way meeting. The Seven-Stage Model embeds a process that gets people involved in supporting the executive's development. Executive sponsors like that and generally want to continue to be involved, which helps ensure sustainability and continuity after the coach exits the process.

An executive who was surprised by the feedback he received and felt misunderstood demonstrated an exemplary method of sustaining progress. Because the feedback was so explicit and because people were

willing to own their perspective by sharing their names, he was able to start regular conversations, and structured bimonthly meetings with various people to help keep him on track. By the end of the coaching engagement, I felt he had already supplanted me with a trusted feedback support team and regularly scheduled conversations. Perfect!

STAGE SEVEN: PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO COACH

The executive evaluates the coach against goals that were important to the coach.

Description

At the end of the engagement, I always ask the executives to evaluate me, the coach, using an evidence-based methodology. This is in the spirit of "eating your own cooking." I structure the feedback into five domains. The first is on preconditions that enable success—motivation, chemistry, and opportunity to apply learnings. The second domain is the things I should be doing as a coach, the standards to which I hold myself accountable. The third domain is on outcomes, the things that our coaching engagement was expected to deliver. In the fourth domain, I ask for any "ah-ha moments," those points in the process when the executive really got something that would make a lasting difference. Finally, I explore return-on-investment metrics.

Deliverable

The feedback report on the coach is completed in both an online and a face-to-face format. The form used (see Appendix D: Evidence-Based Coaching Evaluation) is provided in advance to the executive. Some