



Building Competence and Confidence at RBC Business Banking

The Challenge

Andrew Staniforth, a manager for RBC for 8 years, wanted to become better at coaching his people to take ownership for what happened after they walked out of his office. Andrew found that all too frequently he did the analysis, provided solutions and mapped out plans for his people rather than getting them to create their own plans. More disturbing was that Andrew realized his people weren't really growing in their competencies. This was evidenced by the number of times people came back to Andrew seeking help around the same kind of challenge. In addition Andrew's 'coaching' was taking up a lot of time and leaving him without time and energy to do some of the bigger picture aspects of his role.

Part of the problem was that there was no discernable urgency to change. Andrew's team of 14 business bankers was experienced and getting solid results in a tough economic climate. But the pipeline was not being refilled, a new focus on new client acquisition was being largely ignored and a new sales support tool, that had been brought in at considerable expense by the bank, was being unused.

Back to the Classroom

Andrew signed up for the May 2011 program offered by Performance Coaching in "Advanced Coaching" under the RBC learning curriculum. Andrew gained much from this time to reflect and learn about his coaching style. He liked the model. He could see himself applying it quickly and with confidence. He learned some things about his own belief systems that were getting in the way of changing his behaviour. The clincher was the final coaching 'real play' during which Andrew found himself coaching an RBC colleague, from a completely different area of the bank, around a real challenge she was facing.

“ Because I knew absolutely nothing about her world, I was powerless to give advice and really had to rely upon applying everything we had learned over the previous day and a half.”

– Andrew Staniforth, Manager

And what Andrew saw at the end of the 'real play' was exactly what he had been looking for – true ownership – a coachee walking away from the conversation with a clear action plan, and the confidence and the commitment to carry it out.



Real World Application

Andrew resolved to change his approach in line with what he had learned. In the months that followed, the results exceeded even his most optimistic expectations. Because his coaching sessions were more targeted and efficient he found that he was able to triple the amount of coaching he did with his people, increasing from 2 – 3 sessions per week to 1 – 2 sessions per day. In addition, challenges dealt with in one conversation, rarely resurfaced again with the same individual. Also, people became more receptive.

“ I’d been telling them for months how the news sales tool would benefit them with little to no uptake – but they became very receptive when a key feature to the tool was offered to them at the right moment as something that would make their life easier in terms of dealing with a specific challenge.”

– Andrew Staniforth

Andrew had to prepare his people for a ‘Market Blitz’ where his entire team was challenged to be out of the office for two full days attending client acquisition meetings. He decided to use this project as a measuring stick for his newfound ability to coach. “We were heading into the summer months which are traditionally very slow in terms of bringing in new business. To create some energy we decided to identify key targets that we could hit over a 2 day period, thoroughly prepare for those client meetings and then hit the streets to knock on those doors.” The Market Blitz was a clear success. 120 meetings took place and \$25 million dollars of potential business was moved into the pipeline. By mid-summer his team had acquired 5 new clients with 6 – 7 more clients being identified as very likely to come onboard by year end.

The Final Word

When asked if he would recommend the workshop to others, Andrew chose to share a story. In the late summer Andrew’s most senior team member, with over 30 years in business banking, walked into Andrew’s office. He commented on the difference in Andrew’s approach to coaching in recent months and the impact it was having. In this person’s words, “I have never been more organized and never felt more set up for success.” Those are the kind of words that every leader wants to hear from his or her people.