

Customized Individual Development. A key to becoming an employer of choice - part II



[In the first part of our article](#) we talked about how you can generate a development program that is tailored to the strengths and areas for leadership growth with the help of a thorough assessment of an individual.

Let's now look at how we develop this plan further.

A consultant/coach capable to put information together, benchmark it correctly and draw pertinent conclusions and a customized plan is of very high importance.

The plan may include customized recommendations on:

- **Open executive development programs** at top business schools (programs matching the development needs of the leader). While most programs of such schools are good, customized ones are even better. The network created at such program is a major part of the program's value.
- Local leadership development programs, carefully chosen
- **Hiring a coach** - a person you trust both personally and professionally
- Identifying **a mentor** from within your organization or not only
- Working with a "personal board of advisors"
- A list of **selected audiobooks, books, articles and studies** to read during this period, **in the right order**, matching **your** development needs
- Exposing yourself to the **right networks, business clubs, masterminds**, etc. - exposure that could make a huge difference in benchmarking, self-awareness and self-regulation
- **Exposing yourself to other business models, innovation** and best practices exchange (@Facebook, Amazon, Alibaba, etc.) - There are companies who send their key people on short learning trips to such companies; for those who don't have this opportunities, the programs of **Singularity University** are somehow a similar option;
- Accessing assisted **Free online education** (i.e. MIT OCW, Ted Talks, Coursera, etc.)
- And last but not least, actually the most important I believe and a solid base for all the above - **a structured plan on following a healthy life**: organize yourself to have time for sports, reading, healthy/er food, meditation, family and friends....

“Treatment/Improvement” Phase - Coaching, Mentoring and applying some or all of the above recommendations.

Choosing the right coach and mentor **with the suitable methodology** to address the set objectives is critical. For a deeper self-awareness and complementary to a business coach and mentor, some may choose a very good psychologist in parallel.

Follow up

Studies show that people do not actually improve without follow up and as the coaching guru **Marshall Goldsmith** says - “Becoming a better leader is a process, not an event”

Once a coach, a mentor etc. are chosen, together with the line manager or just by yourself, **a follow up** process should be created on the plan and on assessing your evolution. Regular follow up and discipline are as important as the program itself as otherwise long lasting habits and behavior changes are unlikely to be created.

I haven't heard of any top sports player training randomly or only when feeling his/her condition decreased. Or asking the coach to play instead in moments of “other emergencies/priorities” or when was “too busy” with others' emergencies.

An efficient coaching program takes at least a year and thus requires commitment from many parties. Of course you could choose shorter versions yet lasting habits need a bit more time as we've experienced.

A process like this requires effort, determination, discipline and humbleness otherwise it doesn't work. And another thing: If you don't like the coach or you don't trust the coach enough ... it will not work either. And by the way: coaching works for good people that want to become great. Not for people that their companies want to “repair”.

No matter how big your potential is, without an action plan, without follow up and discipline it will rarely be unlocked.