

Locker Room Tactics

Personal and business coaching is fast becoming the next big thing in professional circles.

// BY TERESA TALERICO

Long ago, Marilena Beuses realized she had a knack for bringing out the best in the people around her.

Colleagues and employees at Citigroup, PepsiCo, and other companies frequently sought her encouragement when working on challenging projects. Ms. Beuses found she enjoyed pushing them to reach their potential and watching them succeed.

So last year, she became a full-time coach.

No, not the kind that makes the team do push-ups every morning or scribbles plays on a chalkboard—at least not literally. Ms. Beuses is a business and executive coach. She's part of a fast-growing and relatively young profession that has grabbed the attention of Corporate America. Large companies now routinely shell out hundreds, even thousands, of dollars a month to have their staffs whipped into shape by coaches.

A former human resources

executive and a native of Venezuela, Ms. Beuses is based in Florida. Her clients include NASA, Sara Lee, and Microsoft Latin America. Her primary goal is to help Hispanics succeed.

"I'm passionate about Hispanics making a great contribution to this country," she says. "My aim is to work with the Hispanic population in the United States and overseas. My aim is for the whole Hispanic market to be number 1."

Personal and business coaching, which emerged in the early 1990s, grew out of the consulting and mentoring fields. Coaches help companies or individuals fully use their talents, reach their goals, and obtain results—which can mean anything from coaching a private individual about improving personal relationships to coaching employees of a company on time-management skills.

Today there are an estimated

15,000 coaches in the United States, according to the International Coach Federation (ICF). They include a small but growing number of Hispanic coaches and those who specialize in Spanish-speaking or minority clients.

"I understand there's not a whole bunch of us—first from doing searches and second from reactions I'm getting from Hispanic business owners," says San Francisco coach Silvia Medina. "I think that's probably because of how new it is."

Based in Washington, D.C., ICF is the largest professional coaching association. It has more than 5,500 members and 179 chapters in 30 countries. ICF was formed in 1992 and offers a credentialing program for coaches as well as a referral service for those interested in hiring a coach.

ICF also maintains a list of accredited or approved coach training schools, of which there are many nationwide. Even Georgetown and George Washington universities offer coaching programs.

Lori Dinham, marketing manager for The Hudson Institute of Santa Barbara, which offers coaching courses, says the industry typically attracts people who are educated and have impressive résumés in various fields.

"We attract a baby-boomer crowd," she says. "Most of our students are in their 40s and 50s and have some life experience."

Unlike consultants, coaches don't give their clients expert

answers or tell them exactly what to do. Instead, they teach them how to reach their own solutions. Also, coaches are not therapists. They do not treat emotional or mental problems.

"In coaching work, the challenge is to do what we term 'leading from behind,'" says Pamela McLean, CEO of The Hudson Institute.

Because of their education and former work experience, many coaches specialize in specific fields.

"There are Web coaches, there are media coaches, we have public relations coaches," says Rosaline Myers, ICF spokeswoman. "We use the term 'former lives.' We have many coaches who are former doctors, attorneys, PR gurus."

Like the athletic version, personal and business coaches devote themselves to making their clients shine, but never do their work for them. Sports analogies are common in the industry.

Ms. Beuses, a former triathlete, often uses the movie *The Legend of Bagger Vance* in her work. She says the golf drama starring Will Smith and Matt Damon illustrates the importance of focus and self-confidence, two traits coaches seek to instill in their clients.

"There might be people keeping score out there, but you have to be satisfied enough that you are a winner," she says. "The end result in life and sports is that you have to look at yourself in the mirror and say,

TIPS FOR HIRING A COACH

- Decide on your objectives. What do you hope to accomplish with your coach?
- Ask the coach what kind of training he or she has. Is he certified or credentialed by the International Coach Federation?
- Request a biography or resume.
- Ask the coach for a few client recommendations.
- Know that it's standard for most coaches to offer a complimentary session.
- Interview three coaches before selecting one. Make sure you feel a good connection or rapport with the coach.

Source: International Coach Federation

"Hey, I did the best I could."

Los Angeles executive coach Gwendolyn Catchings-Castello says her idol is basketball coach Phil Jackson.

"If a person like Phil Jackson can go in with Michael Jordan, who had all the skill in the world, and make him a better player, there's a skill there," she says. "He didn't do the shots for him. He did it by working with him day in and day out and challenging him to do better things."

Ms. Catchings-Castello, who has a doctorate in business administration and has been a coach since 1999, uses her skills to help minorities. She has worked with Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE) and the public relations firm Valencia, Pérez & Echeveste.

"Coaching is based on an adult learning theory that says you're the best teacher of yourself," she says. "Coaching asks questions and allows the person to self-discover."

She advises her clients to clear the "clutter" in their lives. Indeed, many coaches help their clients eliminate distractions and focus on important goals.

Ms. Beuses says coaching helps remove those hurdles in business and life.



"Sometimes we have too many ideas and we don't put any of those ideas into real-life format," she says. "So the ideas pop in your head and you keep dreaming about them, and nothing happens. A coach really helps you stay with a good idea and move it forward."

One of her clients is Luis Romero, president of Humanitas International Foundation, a non-profit health and education organization based in Miami. He hired her in April to assist him as Humanitas expands and embarks on a joint venture.

Mr. Romero raves about his coach. "Every human being should have a coach sometime in their life," he says, adding that

tool like the coaching system."

Like Mr. Romero, many executives are feeling the crunch and turn to coaches for motivation and inspiration, says Ms. Myers of ICF.

"The business industry is so dynamic and the pace is so fast," she says. "It's very hard to keep up with the demands of growing your business, staying on top, staying on the fast track. There are times that it's absolutely overwhelming. That's when they can bring in a coach."

Kayleen Maya-Aviles, a board member with HOPE, hired Ms. Catchings-Castello to conduct a coaching workshop at the group's last conference.

"We see a lot of Latinas climbing up the corporate ladder, but they need that guidance to get

workshop corresponds with HOPE's mission," says Ms. Maya-Aviles. "It's providing the tools that Latinas need to succeed in their respective fields."

Coaches can give Hispanic professionals a competitive edge—especially since more and more corporations are using them, says Ms. Medina, the San Francisco coach.

"It's another resource, another tool we could use to enhance our success, to help us troubleshoot, to help us create even bigger visions for ourselves and our business," she says. "It's having that other person in your corner that's there only for you."

For Ms. Beuses, coaching is her way of contributing to the Hispanic community's success—by encour-

"I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT HISPANICS MAKING A GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS COUNTRY." —MARILENA BEUSES, PRESIDENT, 4 TOTAL SUCCESS

Ms. Beuses has helped him, for one thing, become a much more effective listener.

"The world is in such an upside-down situation," he says. "Whether you consider yourself a Superman and just go ahead and do it, or you analyze all the different viewpoints to determine how to build up an institution in a short period, it's a lot better to have an important

there," she says. "With a professional coaching model, it really taps into a lot of different areas to help you evaluate where you are and where you want to be."

The coaching workshop, she says, was a great success. Many of the 300 women who attended stayed long after it was over to keep working and talking.

"This professional coaching

aging and inspiring her clients around the world. Years later, she will know she played a role in their achievements.

"I get a lot of satisfaction out of what I do," she says. "I know this will not only personally take me places, but it will take people places. I'll look back and say, 'I was part of that success story.'" □

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