

In search of forgotten core values

A weekly series of profiles on Canadian executive coaches

BY AL EMID

The coach Adria Trowhill, president of Toronto-based Posi-TRAK Coaching and Consulting Inc. since 1994.

Professional designation(s) Certified Professional Coach from San Rafael, Calif.-based Coaches Training Institute; Master Certified Coach from Lexington, Ky.-based International Coach Federation; honorary Adler Certified Professional Coach from the Adler School of Professional Coaching Inc. in Toronto; Masters Degree and PhD.-level psychology courses at York University in Toronto.

The clients Primarily pharmaceutical firms and not-for-profit organizations.

Philosophy and approach Ambitious employees often lose some humanity on

their climb to the executive suite. "They lose their core values: They lose their passion to serve, they lose their intuitive insights about people," Ms. Trowhill says.

Such losses threaten crucial relationships between executives and employees at a time when they face the challenge to increase productivity with fewer resources. Her techniques can include 360° testing, including confidential interviews with colleagues. Insights gained in the interview help form the *metaview*, a vision of desired outcomes that include the resolution of problems cited. Solutions include debriefings after problem situations, analysis of a client's misgivings and practice sessions for upcoming situations.

Success story Relations between a director of a Toronto-based firm and her marketing team steadily worsened until her employer called in an external coach — Ms. Trowhill. "On the way up the ladder she lost her ability to be compassion-

ate, to really listen to people," Ms. Trowhill recalls.

The director focused on results at the expense of team members' needs and adopted a command-and-control approach. She was unable to engage them to focus on company objectives. They refused to follow her direction, missed productivity targets and eventually complained to other executives.

During 360° interviews, her team discussed her disrespect of their needs, unrealistic expectations, demands, deadlines and inability to take no for an answer. Ms. Trowhill has seen this in many executives. "She was acting a part. People act a role that the system demands of them."

The bottom line The team now meets and exceeds productivity targets, which is its return on its investment in Ms. Trowhill's fees, which start at \$350 an hour or \$3,000 a day.

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Adria Trowhill uses colleague interviews to gain insight into clients' trouble spots.