

## An Interview with Michelle Davies, an Executive Business Coach

**Séamus** - Hi Michelle, so, you work as an executive coach. Can you tell me a little about what the process involves?

**Michelle** - Certainly, well it all depends according to the company I am working with. Some companies may have the coaching process very closely aligned with the training process and others will have coaching just set up on a very individual basis

**Séamus** - Right

**Michelle** - So we vary it according to the needs and the policy of the company. To give you an example, ahm, a company we worked with, I worked with recently, what we did, there was an initial assessment process carried out by HR which involved a 360 feedback, an assessment day and some on-line questionnaires about leadership styles. Then we went through that, we looked at what, what the findings were

**Séamus** - Uhm, hum.

**Michelle** - of the, of what the assessment, of this evaluation of the individual coachee and then we designed a draft training plan, sorry, a draft coaching plan.

**Séamus** - Uhm, hum. So what exactly is a 360 feedback?

**Michelle** - A 360 feedback is basically an evaluation where you get input, the person gets input from everyone around them, so that would be their, their boss, the people that work on their team, colleagues. It's completely anonymous, obviously apart from the boss, and so you get an overview of how other people are seeing you and that will give you an idea of the gaps that maybe you need to develop, how people are perceiving you, and where you need to work, either to strengthen your, the points which you already have, the points that are already strong or to develop in further areas where you are not so strong

**Séamus** - OK so that gives the basis to the process and then how long does it ....

**Michelle** -That's right. It's a sort of kick off, you know, it can, it sort of a short cut to getting the process going and from that you can get a draft action plan which in some cases then we, we've had a three-way meeting with, with the coachee, with their boss and obviously with myself there, where we decide if there is anything else that we haven't included in the plan that we need to include and basically deciding the objectives of the coaching process. Though I am always, I want to make that I am there for the coachee and everything we do in, in the sessions is completely confidential and the coachee decides what they'd like to share with their boss at the end.

**Séamus** - OK, and how long does the process usually last?

**Michelle** - Well the process, it varies. I've had varies, I've had 360 plus one session, 360 plus three sessions, I've had sessions of, six sessions which don't actually have any initial 360 or evaluation behind them and I've had sessions, a process of up to fifteen sessions.

**Séamus** - Wow, and when do you know that the process is coming to an end, when do you know that the, that coaching has been successful and that the coachee is ready to move on?

**Michelle** - However we, however we set it up, whether it goes with 360 or not, however we set it up at the beginning we always agree goals and these goals are going to be measurable, measurable in all senses as you can see, whether, someone will feel more comfortable, for example making a presentation or you could have, in one company I'm with now for example, at the end of the process there is going to be another 360 evaluation so that will be compared with what we had beforehand so that's really very, very measurable. We are always very careful not to create any sort of dependence so if we see any sign of that happening well we are really going to work even harder to make sure that the coachee knows their resources and can carry on even actually asking themselves the same types of questions that we've asked them to do in the process to get them going.

*Michelle Davies is a certified Executive Coach based in Spain. She is a member of AECOP, the Asociación Española de Coaching y Consultoría de Procesos, International Coach Federation and ICF Spain.*

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