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Coaching Across Cultures

Philippe Rosinski

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If coaching is largely about shifting and expanding people's perspectives in a way that they can translate into daily actions, then working with individual belief systems and assumptions is vital. Beyond these individual creeds, coaching has to explore the embedded collective paradigms, which feel to humans like the water that fish blissfully and obliviously swim in. This is why we are discussing coaching in a cultural context in this issue, choosing a fresh European coaching voice as our guide.

-- Agnes Mura, Co-Editor

*"**Philippe Rosinski** is a bridge builder. As the principal of a coaching and consulting firm who has worked with many large international clients over the years, he is on a mission, he writes to connect coaching and interculturalism, while improving both professions. … Instead of looking at culture in an international sense, Rosinski addresses culture as a phenomenon involving people from different organizations and backgrounds. … Rosinski explains that by integrating the cultural dimension into his coaching style, he is able to unleash more human potential and achieve more meaningful objectives. … He helps coaches move beyond traditional coaching methods that operate within a single cultural norm, and challenges them to expand past previous limitations and tap into possible world views. … Along with the many ideas, tools and examples that he offers, Rosinski also presents a 'Cultural Orientations Framework' to help readers adopt a broader cultural perspective. Other issue he addresses throughout "Coaching Across Cultures" include: the sense of power and responsibility, definitions of identity and purpose; organizational arrangements; notions of territories and boundaries; communication patterns; and modes of thinking."*

-- From the book review of ***Coaching Across Cultures***
in ***"Soundview Executive Book Summaries", June 2003.***

Cultural differences can cause immense frustrations and represent a real mystery to many of us. When understood and used constructively however, these differences provide a remarkable source of richness for interactions, learning and growth.

Integrating the cultural dimension into coaching is not only necessary to increase coaching's validity and applicability in today's intercultural environment. It is also an opportunity to learn from alternative cultural perspectives about crucial areas such as communication, thinking, time, power, identity, purpose, organization, or territory. Bridging coaching and interculturalism leads to a more creative and global form of coaching. This article draws extensively on the author's recent book, *Coaching Across Cultures*.[1]

A Japanese interculturalist lamented recently: "My fellow citizens have come to accept US models of management at the expense of Japanese traditions." Having lost confidence in their own way, she explains how many Japanese are ready to turn to US concepts: *Universalism, individualism* and *directness* (typical US *cultural orientations*) may not feel right to the Japanese but they reckon that, given the success and dominance of the US, the American way must be the right way. Sadly, noticing the apparent acceptance of their models, Americans are reinforced in their belief that their approach has universal validity. Japanese reservations are not made explicit for cultural reasons and therefore go unnoticed.

Instead of ignoring or denigrating cultural differences, or simply minimizing their importance, participants in coaching relationships are invited to embrace cultural diversity as an opportunity and to leverage the differences. A Japanese colleague saw this as a very empowering message. It does not have to be either the Japanese or the American way; it can be both.

For example, let's take the relationship between people and their environment. The Japanese have a culturally dominant propensity for *harmony* with their environment; the US has largely the dominant preference to feel it can *control* its environment. In today's global world, my colleague realizes that these two worldviews need not be mutually exclusive. Japanese managers foster the harmonious relationships necessary to maintain team cohesion. At the same time, Japan also needs pro-active managers determined to take strong stands and forge the future. In other words, my colleague saw in the dialectical "both-and" model represented in *Coaching Across Cultures* the antidote to what C.K. Prahalad and Kenneth Lieberthal have termed

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an "imperialist mindset."[2]

Incidentally, this philosophy of valuing differences rather than imposing your norms, values and beliefs, not only applies to national cultures but to all forms of cultures: professional, corporate, socio-political, etc.

I consider coaching both as a profession and as an important function of leadership. I define coaching as the "art of facilitating the unleashing of people's potential to reach meaningful, important objectives."[3] The distinctions made in *Coaching Across Cultures* allow the unleashing of additional human potential by systematically tapping into the richness of cultural diversity, into the wisdom that lies in alternative cultural perspectives.

For example, if your culture considers *time as a scarce resource,* that belief might have lead you to learn to manage time quite efficiently …but also to be caught in a permanent juggling act, running from one task to the next. A coach, when stuck in this worldview that "time is money," could paradoxically exacerbate the problem by helping her clients to succeed at cramming even more into an already bursting schedule. By learning to view *time as abundant*, an outlook other cultures cherish, coachees are able to slow down and see more clearly what is truly essential. Similarly, believing that you are in *control* will typically lead you to pro-actively make your dreams happen (self-fulfilling prophecies). Yet taken to an extreme, this belief may incite people to succeed at all cost, including cheating or breaking down. On the other hand, when you respect nature and allow it to be in charge, you have to listen to your body and allow time for recuperation. Considering these alternative belief systems, as they are represented in different cultures, helps coachees to broaden their perspective. By taking care of themselves and of others they may achieve more sustainable success.

These ideas have already been discussed in detail in the book, along with tools and examples to show how to systematically put them into practice. However various applications have emerged over the last months, often inspired by readers' questions and clients' challenges. This is prompting new solutions in areas that can be grouped into four categories: individual, team, organizational and societal. In this article, I will elaborate on some of these applications.

Individual Coaching Applications

Executive coaching that integrates the cultural dimension and a global perspective (e.g., "intercultural executive coaching" or "global executive coaching") is described in the book. Further applications typically involve a combination of **consulting, training and coaching**.

Making the Most of Expatriate Assignments

In the spring of 2003, I was asked by Carol Braddick to comment on the value of expatriate assignments.[4] Expatriate assignments offer the opportunity for expatriates to extend their own vision of the world and to see more options and creative solutions to challenges. An executive who tends to stress conciseness, precision and detachment (i.e., neutral orientation) can discover the virtues of displaying emotions and warmth (i.e., affective orientation) when confronted daily with this alternative communication pattern. An executive who believed that the same rules and processes should apply worldwide (i.e., universalist orientation) learned to favor tailored solutions based on particular circumstances (i.e., particularist orientation). This attitude allowed him to support the subordinates who developed a new product. It became a regional success and then was adopted by the entire company, bringing an important stream of revenues.

The cross-cultural environment provides a unique chance to step outside one's comfort zone. Adapting to differences requires you to bravely step outside and experiment with changing some of your behaviors. When executives become more cross-culturally competent, the whole organization has a chance to develop as well and increase its performance in the global arena. However, the learning process is far from automatic. To make the most of expatriate assignments, a systematic and careful approach is required.

Selecting the Expatriate

Effectiveness in a cross-cultural environment depends on the expatriate's genuine interest in learning about other cultures and stretching her/his vision of the world. These intrinsic motivations should therefore be present. Otherwise, the expatriate may spend his time abroad with fellow expatriates and fail to seize opportunities to gain significant cross-cultural knowledge. Without curiosity, learning is likely to be minimal.

Training the Expatriate Before the Journey Abroad

Training, when available, unfortunately often happens at a superficial level. Knowing the basic customs on exchanges of business cards and punctually is certainly useful. However, an appreciation for the deeper layers of culture involved with various human activities (e.g., time management, communication, thinking, organizing, etc.) is probably what distinguishes an executive who survives in another culture from an executive who grows and succeeds in another culture. Training based on tools such as the Cultural Orientations Frameworks and Dealing With Cultural Differences[5] provide vital preparation.

Taking Care of the Practical Aspects
To make the most of the costly assignment, corporations should relieve the executive from worries that can only distract him/her from the assignment: helping to find comfortable housing, adequate schools for the children, find fulfilling activities for the expatriate spouse (e.g., a suitable job), etc. I have seen on several occasions how failures in any of these areas have resulted in missed opportunities (e.g., the spouse is unhappy and the family eventually leaves).

Coaching the Executive During the Journey
Working with an intercultural coach allows the executive to increase his/her awareness of cultural differences and to deal productively with challenging differences when they arise. Coaching enables effective learning.[6] While stressing that the book cannot replace an intercultural coach (particularly since cross-cultural dynamics, often unconscious, can easily be missed by the executive), I also encouraged executives to use the book to become their own coaches. Costly mistakes could be avoided and profitable opportunities could be seized if executives on expatriate assignments were given the chance to work with an intercultural coach.

Extracting the Lessons from the Experience
My experience is similar to that of Daniel Meiland who observes that companies often fall into the trap of stationing people abroad and then forgetting about them: "If anything, advancement is even more difficult for the expat when he returns to headquarters, having missed out on opportunities to network with top management …The companies that do handle these rotations well - Shell and General Electric come to mind - track their people carefully over the course of many years. GE has systems for examining people's work histories and designing their next step toward becoming global leaders." Pro-actively extracting the lessons from the expatriate experience means reaping more benefits from the expatriation investment. For top executives, this can be as simple as taking the time to really listen to what the expatriate may have to suggest following his experience abroad.

Global Leadership Development

In their special issue "Leadership in a Changed World", the Harvard Business Review editors observe that, "for all the talk about global organizations and executives, there's no definite answer to the question of what, exactly, we mean by "global."[7] There is some consensus however. First, the five top executives interviewed all agree that "the shift from a local to a global marketplace is irreversible and gaining momentum". Second, they all insist on what Fred Hassan (Chairman and CEO, Schering-Plough) calls a "global attitude": "an attitude which involves a real passion and curiosity about the world, a willingness to accept good ideas no matter where they come from, and collaboration around geographies."

Beyond cultural sensitivity, which is characterized by openness, understanding and respect, some of these top executives emphasize the value in cultural differences. Stephen Green (Group CEO, HSBC) declares: "If, for example, my French colleagues lost their French-ness or my Brazilian colleagues lost their Brazilian-ness, life would be a lot duller, and HSBC would be a lot less profitable. We prize our diversity. That's all part of the richness and fun of working together, and it's what makes us so creative and responsive to our clients' needs."

Unfortunately, as Daniel Meiland (Executive Chairman, Egon Zehnder International) explains: "Many companies haven't been all that successful at developing global executives … The intentions are good, but the fact is, practice hasn't caught up with intent."

This is where global leadership development comes in. Strangely, many companies still assume that global leadership competencies will somehow either come naturally or through superficial training. On the contrary, excellent international companies (including Unilever, Chubb Insurance and IBM, where I had the chance to serve over the past several years) have found that developing global leaders requires a rigorous and systematic approach.

They discovered that the unique combination of coaching and intercultural skills is essential for effective global leadership: being able to facilitate the unleashing of human potential and to leverage the richness that lies in cultural diversity.

The author's approach to developing global leaders typically involves a combination of consulting, training and coaching. Consulting occurs in the initial phase to determine what outcomes are most desirable and feasible, given the company's context and building on its current leadership development initiatives. In this phase, the consultant also examines the various levers of progress (e.g., tailored design of a global leadership development program that may combine training and coaching, performance appraisal and reward systems, company's culture, vision and strategy). Alignment and consistency breed effectiveness: ideally, the levers should reinforce each other rather than send confusing signals (e.g., "employees are our main asset" but the company does not seem to care about its employees).

A global leadership development program using this approach can be designed to develop the following leadership competencies (non-exhaustive list):

- Empowering leadership
  Intercultural coaching – being able to adopt a coaching style enhanced with a global and intercultural perspective.
  Intercultural excellence – having a capacity to work effectively across cultures through an appreciation of cultural differences augmented by an ability to leverage these differences.
  Integrity - being true to oneself and genuinely committed to serve others.

- Visionary leadership
  Dialectic/synthetic leadership – uniting and interconnecting ("and") rather than dividing and excluding ("or").
  Creative leadership - being curious and able to see reality from multiple perspectives, particularly for addressing leadership challenges.
  Farsighted leadership – framing organizational goals in the broader context of improving the world. (Editor's note: see, for example, *Strategic Planning Plus*[8] for this "mega" perspective.)

- Effective communication
  Communicating effectively, including across cultures. Being able to rely on various forms of communication: explicit and implicit, direct and indirect, affective and neutral, formal and informal.

To develop these competencies, several new global leadership tools described in Coaching Across Cultures are particularly useful (e.g., the Cultural Orientations Framework, the Global Coaching Process, the Global Scorecard). Several activities mentioned in the book can be included in training/coaching programs: inductive and deductive methods to decipher cultures and bridge cultural gaps, videotaped role-plays to raise awareness and effectiveness, and so on.

The emphasis can be on various levels: leading diverse individuals, cross-cultural teams and across organizations:

> At the *individual* level, participants discover new cultural choices for dealing with challenging situations.
>
> At the *team* level, they learn how leveraging diversity can lead, somewhat paradoxically, to increased team unity and performance.
>
> At the *organizational* level, participants find out how to integrate disparate cultures during mergers, acquisitions and alliances. They also sharpen their ability to define the new company's culture and to make it become real.
>
> Participants have an opportunity to progress on their own high-performance and high-fulfillment leadership journey while helping others progress on their own journeys.

In today's global, multicultural, dynamic and competitive world, organizations have to achieve greater results with scarcer resources. Furthermore, they need the creativity and farsightedness to seize the new ideas and aspirations that are also inherent in our turbulent and changing environment. Effective global leadership is necessary to address both the threats and the opportunities, thereby enabling sustainable business success. Therefore, global leadership development is becoming vital to attract, develop and retain the human talent necessary to achieve this success.

Finally, in my view, global leadership is inseparable from a global ambition: global leaders are concerned about improving the world at large. The good news is that leaders who genuinely care about people and society as a whole are more likely to inspire people, provide meaning and elicit best efforts. In the end all stakeholders are better served.

Team Coaching Applications

To develop high-performing teams, traditional team coaching and leadership will only go so far. By leaving culture out of the equation, they are indeed ill equipped to draw the best from geographically and culturally dispersed teams. Conversely team coaching and leading cross-cultural teams represent two natural applications of Coaching Across Cultures. Let me refer you to the book for more on this subject, excerpting from chapter 5, the section "Individualistic/Collectivistic"*:*

> As global coaches, we need to resist the tendency to judge differences. To Maslow, affiliation needs may be less advanced than the self-actualization needs that top his pyramid. His model reveals an individualistic bias. From a collectivistic perspective, this statement is not true.
>
> Traditional coaching has normally promoted self-actualization by reinforcing an individualistic orientation. Hopefully, this is not done at the expense of collectivism.Affiliation to multiple groups can be encouraged. Service of self *and* others can be simultaneously promoted.
>
> In the case of team coaching, I have developed an approach that pro-actively seeks to leverage both

poles in considering both the individual and the group dimension.[9] A somewhat paradoxical injunction I like to use with teams is to invite members at times to be selfish. The rationale is that individual commitment to the team is higher to the extent individual needs are met in the team context. When I started using this injunction in the mid-1990s it violated the common belief that good team members should banish personal agendas (despite the fact that only lip service to this rule existed because it was going against "human nature"). My goal was instead to legitimize individual desires and use them as engines for action. Consciously or unconsciously members need to have good personal reasons to engage in collective action and be fully committed to the team success.

Conversely, good coaches also avoid "groupthink"[10] and peer pressure. A skillful facilitator might be tempted to use peer pressure to manipulate. Manipulation is a negative form of influencing where you convince somebody of doing something he does not really want to do. Being committed to serve each individual and the team overall requires avoiding manipulative shortcuts. In an individualistic culture this takes time. If time is not available, then a different process to coaching can be used. It is important for the team leader and team members to consciously decide what they hope to achieve, and the level of participation that can be expected.[11] In a collectivistic culture, the notion of individual needs may be less pronounced and people may more readily come to consensus. In any event, the art of coaching consists here in exploring and integrating individual and collective needs to the right level.

Organizational Coaching Applications

Let's look at an example. The training and development department of an international corporation contacted me to help design a new management program around coaching competencies. The overall organizational context quickly became part of the conversation. Does the corporation want a coaching program because coaching is 'en vogue' and managers are now supposed to learn about coaching? Is that why the assumption is that top managers don't need to learn coaching, but middle managers "should?" Or is there a real sense of what coaching really means, of how coaching can positively affect the corporation and of what it takes to seriously embrace coaching?

The importance of carefully defining coaching is often overlooked. This step is crucial however, because your definition can either limit you up front or allow you to really gear up the corporation to a new level of performance. If coaching is merely about listening, questioning and encouraging, its capacity to transform the organization might not be apparent. This is why I have defined coaching as the art of facilitating the unleashing of people's potential to reach meaningful, important objectives.

Gearing up the Corporation

To gear up your corporation, it is of course crucial to devise a sound business strategy supported by adequate organizational structure and business processes. But leaders have known for a long time that the ability to mobilize human energies is critical to translate the strategy into action and results. This involves connecting with people's desires to foster genuine excitement and whole-hearted commitment. If coaching is about facilitating the deployment of human talent in the organization to achieve success, then it has got to be seen as something essential by top management.

To gear up the corporation and unleash maximum energy, striving for the alignment of levers of progress is key.[12]

Culture is one of the levers. Establishing a coaching culture (i.e., coaching is a typical leadership behavior, employees believe in and value coaching). This is more easily said than done. However, Coaching Across Cultures already includes examples and tools to help you (e.g., the Cultural Orientations Framework, bridging cultural gaps the current culture and the desired one, etc.).

Motivators is another lever. Are leaders rewarded when they demonstrate coaching behaviors with subordinates or do they get away with ignoring coaching as long as business results are somehow achieved? What is the penalty for not developing subordinates, for not helping them to make the most of their potential?

When levers are aligned, reinforcements operate fully and the organization can reach new levels of performance. When they are not, mixed signals are sent and sub-par performance is inevitable. That should not discourage you though from doing something to promote coaching. Intrinsic rewards exist as well: the personal satisfaction of helping people to make constructive use of their talents.

When the training and development department effectively helps leaders to acquire new coaching skills, even without top management full buy-in and without alignment, the positive impact becomes apparent and more leaders become interested in acquiring these skills as well. Ripple effects occur leading eventually to organizational transformation. Rather than simply expecting that the results will speak for themselves, you can speed up the process by engaging in pro-active

internal marketing to promote the successes.[13] Adding the cultural dimension into the equation makes the matter more complex but has the potential of gearing up the corporation even further. This leads us to the next section about diversity.

Diversity: Leveraging Differences beyond Visible Characteristics

Jeff Barbian wrote two interesting articles in the February 2003 issue of Training: "Racism Shrugged" and "Moving Toward Diversity". Barbian remarks that diversity training can be so much more than it is today [in the USA]. He points out that "after many years as a niche initiative, diversity training is gathering strength as an essential business practice… The key is dressing diversity as a business practice and communicating to employees that it's about harmony that extends to the outside world. And how a company represents itself to the outside world has a lot to do with whether or not people of color, age, or disabilities gravitate to a particular organization."

Moving from avoidance motives (e.g., anti-discrimination initiatives to avoid lawsuits) to positive business reasons (e.g., appreciating the benefits of diversity) is a significant step indeed. I propose to go one step further.

Diversity is not solely about external attributes such as race and gender (i.e., the two usual aspects of diversity from a traditional US perspective) and nationality (i.e., common kind from a non-US perspective). It is also, and perhaps more fundamentally, about mindsets, about cultural orientations related to human activities such as those identified in the Cultural Orientations Framework: *sense of power and responsibility, time management approaches, definitions of identity and purpose, organizational arrangements, notions of territory and boundaries, communication patterns, modes of thinking*.

Leveraging diversity means taking advantage of visible differences as well as alternative viewpoints. In fact, focusing on mindsets and cultural orientations has the advantage of avoiding the following stereotyping trap. I have seen many times executives expecting nothing but stereotypical manifestations when meeting foreigners: he is Japanese, thus automatically inclined to hierarchy and formalism; she is American, therefore I am going to get "US-like" explicit, direct, somewhat pushy communication. They fail to appreciate the uniqueness of their interlocutor and to build an authentic relationship with him/her. They overlook the multiplicity of cultures (we belong to several cultural groups at the same time: nation, profession, gender, etc.) and their dynamism (cultures change).

For Jenifer Rinehart, Chief Diversity Officer and Vice President of the Chubb Corporation, promoting diversity entails giving managers a chance to evaluate their own cultural orientations and learn to apply different perspectives. Leveraging diversity contributes to Chubb's effectiveness in the business world. Diversity programs should go beyond raising awareness about differences. This is where coaching comes in, taking such activities beyond what classical cross-cultural training could do, and yet including cultural dimensions.

Trained interculturalists are familiar with cultural differences (unlike many coaches today), but they face the following challenges:[14]

- How to durably extend people's worldview and foster lasting behavioral changes after the training;
- How to avoid generating opposite, undesired effects by virtue of teaching people about other cultures. Cultural stereotypes rather than mutual understanding could still build (the "Brits", the "Japanese", … as if all Brits, or all Japanese, could fit the same mould);
- How to relieve people from a sense of being overwhelmed and stressed when confronted, day after day, to the reality of cultural differences, or culture shock.

Cross-fertilization between the interculturalist and coaching disciplines offers new solutions to these challenges.[15]

Coaching enriches training or consulting interventions by engaging coachees on a high performance and high fulfilment journey. Coaching is a process carried out over time, it is not a one-time event. Coaching is results-oriented, focusing efforts on the attainment of target objectives. In one particular study, training, when augmented with coaching, yielded productivity increases almost four times the level achieved by training alone.[16] Coaching offers support throughout the journey until targets are reached, including to help deal with the stress[17] and the temptation to revert back to stereotyping.

In the case of Chubb Insurance, I already showed in "Coaching Across Cultures" how the company succeeded in synthesizing Western and Asian cultures,[18] notably leveraging the polarities of control and harmony, individualism and collectivism, directness and indirectness. This resulted in more complete and effective leadership, and increased business performance.

Mergers and Acquisitions: Capitalizing on the Cultural Differences

Leveraging corporate cultural differences will not occur spontaneously post-M&A. Strategic reasons usually prompt the move toward a merger or an acquisition, but lack of attention to the much-needed cultural integration processes has derailed many such endeavors. The combination of deductive and inductive thinking methods (e.g., applying the Cultural Orientations Framework and the Postcard Exercise pp. 61-73) can be used for assessment purposes as well as for bridging cultural gaps by reconciling differences. In any event, systematic and determined actions are called for.

Let's draw on an excerpt from *Coaching Across Cultures,* Chapter 2, the section "Leveraging Unilever and Bestfoods Cultures":

> Research has shown that "over one merger out of two fails. Two out of three do not produce the value creation promised during the operation. The question of people and company culture is by far the number one failure factor."[19]
>
> In 2000, Unilever acquired Bestfoods for just over US$25 billion. The operation was among the twenty largest mergers and acquisitions worldwide that year.[20]
>
> Rather than *de facto* imposing its culture, Unilever understood that to make the merger work, cultural differences between the two companies had to be well understood.
>
> A task force, with the help of the Hay Group, identified the following differences, realizing that there were many exceptions to those generalizations:

The integration team recognized that all the orientations had potential merits. They considered amalgamating the best of both cultures but soon realized that a context was necessary to make that evaluation. The overall vision and strategy provided that context. What was called for was *a new corporate culture* that would draw characteristics from Unilever and Bestfoods.

To that end, an enriched cultural repertoire has started to develop, leveraging Unilever and Bestfoods cultures. For example, Unilever executives are learning to make quicker decisions whenever extra analysis would only impede action. Bestfoods executives are developing a habit of constructively challenging decisions, to avoid engaging in a hasty, inadequate course of action.

I noticed the intellectual versus operational focus with several senior executives I coached from both companies. I urged them to learn from the other culture to enrich their original company culture. For example, I challenged one Unilever executive to describe his vision in more specific terms and to spell out his operational priorities. Meanwhile, I invited a Bestfoods executive to articulate a general philosophy and a compelling business case, building on his intuitive ideas and concrete initiatives in order to bring his colleagues on board with his novel approach.

Time will tell how successful the Bestfoods acquisition will prove to be. But it is clear that this eagerness to learn from the other merging company has already strengthened Unilever-Bestfoods. Talent from the acquired Bestfoods has been retained and developed, rather than alienated, as is too often the case.

Societal Coaching Applications

Let me conclude with my letter to the *Harvard Business Review* editor, which was published in the April 2003 of the journal.

"Thanks to Charles Handy for his excellent article "What's a Business For?"[21] During my executive coaching conversations with senior corporate executives, I've heard many of them express the desire for more than business success. As these leaders reflect on the legacy they will leave behind, they often discover that what's missing is a sense of genuine pride in doing something useful for humanity. Handy makes a strong and important case for defining a business's success in terms of its contribution to improving the world. He writes: 'We should, as charitable organizations do, measure success in terms of outcomes for others as well as for ourselves.'

But if we want to promote Handy's vision, we must also deal with some practical questions: How can we develop this new breed of leaders who will bring about the cultural changes necessary to turn this vision into reality? How can we enlarge the scope of the business scorecards currently aimed at achieving competitive advantage, without genuine consideration for environmental and social objectives, unless an obvious link with business success is established? Which scorecards will reflect the need to balance work with the rest of people's lives?

Executive coaching (at least as described in *Coaching Across Cultures*) facilitates the unleashing of human potential to reach sustainable results in the service of multiple stakeholders. Furthermore, coaching across cultures (a form of coaching that integrates multiple cultural perspectives into the practice of coaching) allows executives to gain valuable new insights from other cultures by taking a step back and systematically looking at their circumstances from fresh angles.

The Global Scorecard found in chapter 13 is precisely designed to set objectives that promote business success while encouraging people to take care of themselves, nurture relationships and serve society at large. Setting objectives that are truly important and meaningful fosters genuine commitment and liberates considerable energy. Coaching then facilitates human journeys in pursuit of sustainable success. Incidentally, the Global Scorecard is currently used by several executives at Unilever, a corporation that actively engages in leadership development –notably through executive coaching- and is one of the exemplary companies Handy mentions in his article.

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Principal of Rosinski and Company, a global consulting firm that helps leaders, teams and organizations unleash their human potential to achieve both high performance and high fulfillment. In addition to the pioneering book features in this article, Rosinski has written several articles on the power of multiple perspectives to compliment traditional coaching and leadership development approaches. Phillipe lives near Brussels.

Endnotes

1 Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003. www.CoachingAcrossCultures.com

2 C.K. Prahalad and Kenneth Lieberthal, "The End of Corporate Imperialism", *Harvard Business Review*, August 2003.

3 Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003, pg. 4.

4 My comments appear in the article "Valuing International Work Experience: the hidden benefit in expat packages" by Carol Braddick and Tom Tilghman, *FOCUSnews*, June 2003.

5 See Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003.

6 See Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003, Chapter 13.

7 Stephen Green, Fred Hassan, Jeffrey Immelt, Michael Marks, and Daniel Meiland, "Leadership in a Changed World", *Harvard Business Review*, August 2003.

8 Roger Kaufman, *Strategic Planning Plus*. 1991. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.

9 This is a powerful way to acknowledge and deal with both polarities. See, for example, Barry Johnson, *Polarity Management,* HRD Press, 1992 for a fuller description of the technique.

10 Groupthink is a "phenomenon in which the norm for consensus overrides the realistic appraisal of alternative courses of action." [Stephen Robbins. *Organizational Behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1989.] Individuals who hold a position that is different from the dominant majority are under pressure to suppress, withhold, or modify their true feelings and beliefs.

11 Confronted with a crisis situation, the team leader may have to make a quick and unilateral decision. This certainly is not coaching, but, then, we do not claim that coaching is a panacea.

12 See Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003, pp. 85-86: Visioning Model.

13 See Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003, pp. 123-125, 138-140: Constructive Politics and Building Alliances.

14 See Jean Mandelbaum and Daniel Haber, "Le management interculture: vrai ou faux probleme? Les Echos, January 16, 2001.

15 However, traditional coaching - because it is culturally biased without even knowing it- cannot adequately help interculturalists. For example, some coaches advise being straightforward and direct, without seriously considering the possible necessity and merits of indirect communication. *Coaching Across Cultures* avoids these pitfalls by integrating the cultural dimension into coaching, thereby making the coaching discipline accessible, relevant and applicable for interculturalists.

16 See Gerald Olivero et al. "Executive Coaching as a Transfer of Training Tool," *Public Personnel Management*, 26 No. 4 (Winter 1997). The study showed how management training alone resulted in a 22.4% productivity increase, while training plus coaching enabled a 88% increase.

17 Coaching offers a remedy to the stress issue by focusing energies on constructive uses of cultural differences. Negative stress comes from a sense of feeling powerless in an unusual culture. People perceive differences as insurmountable barriers, unbridgeable gaps. *Coaching Across Cultures* looks for synergies, uses cultural differences as a lever for progress. New possibilities arise. The sense of powerless causing harmful stress is substituted by increased personal power. Coaches help people discover new options and new solutions to achieve more of the success they desire, instead of feeling stuck and mired in frustration.

18 See Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Cultures*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2003, pp. 43-44.

19 Source: "Global research project study of 115 merger operations by AT Kearney in 1998-1999," in "Fusions: La Guerre des Culture," Enjeux Les Echos, January 2001.

20 See "Fusions: Les 20 Principlaes Opérations Annoucées en 2000," in "Bilan du Monde," Edition 2001, *Le Monde*.

21 Charles Handy, "What's a Business For?" *Harvard Business Review*, December 2002.

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