

Max Landsberg

Leadership Coaching



Max has been an executive coach, focusing on leadership coaching, for approximately 25 years – in parallel with his career as a senior adviser on strategy and latterly as a leadership consultant at Board level. His goal is to help people and organisations to grow productively.

Experience developing leaders

- Max has been coaching leaders since the early 1990s. At McKinsey & Company he was a strategy consultant and then Partner and Director of Professional Development for the UK, he developed and launched some of the earliest corporate initiatives in leadership coaching.
- Building on that experience he wrote *The Tao of Coaching* in 1996 to help leaders become better coaches. The book remains a classic in its field and its companion volumes *The Tao of Motivation* and *The Tools of Leadership* are still in print in large volumes and twenty languages. For several years thereafter he ran his own executive coaching practice.
- In 2003 he was head-hunted to help build and run search firm Heidrick & Struggles' Leadership Consulting practice in the UK. As a Partner there he worked primarily at Board level to profile and develop teams and individuals.
- In 2014 Max moved to Korn Ferry as a Senior Partner to focus on CEO Succession specifically and leadership consulting more generally. He rejoined McKinsey in 2016 as Director of the Senior Partners Office.

- Over the years he has coached a wide range of clients. These include former holders of the roles of COO of one of the largest UK retail financial institutions, Group HR Director of one of the top luxury goods companies worldwide, Partners at a Big 4 accountancy firm, a senior executive in the British Security Service, etc.
- His approach to coaching is informed by continuing interest in the theories relevant to personal growth (as well as by contributing to them), and by the wide range of senior executives with whom he works. Since 2003 he have worked with executives at companies indicated in the Appendix, to help build their leadership skills.

Other experience

Max graduated from Cambridge University in Natural Sciences and from Stanford University as an MBA. He is Level A and B qualified by the British Psychological Society, and is qualified to use profiling tools such as NEO and FIRO-B. He about to publish a book on personal mastery, and for six years was a non-executive director of Roehampton University.

Max enjoys outdoor challenges and on a sabbatical several years ago travelled to the Arctic and skied 100 km of Sweden's Kungsleden, crossed the USA from Canada to Mexico through 21 National Parks, trekked to Everest Base Camp and to the summits of those Munros (the 282 Scottish mountains over 3,000 feet high) that he had not yet climbed. In 2013 he completed 1,000 km of wild-camping across Scotland, Corsica and Switzerland, and 2014 saw the publication of his travels in Scotland, in *The Call of the Mountains*. He won the 2016 Prize for Best Guidebook, awarded by the Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild.

Approach to coaching

Max tailors his coaching programmes in discussion with the client (person being coached), and typically with input from the line manager, team, and HR responsible. While each programme is unique, his programmes have several consistent themes:

1. **Clear contractual context.** Client, line manager, team members, HR, and others are all clear on their roles vis- a-vis the coaching, and the boundaries of confidentiality.

2. **Explicit goals.** Early on we agree clear goals for the coaching and milestones. We revisit these periodically and may adjust them.

Goals typically relate to delivering greater and more effective personal impact at the level of team, enterprise, market, or society more broadly. At a more detailed level these goals may relate to building specific knowledge, skills or habits – such as in the areas of team leadership, delegation, communication, external relationship building etc. In parallel, clients may set goals of a broader nature such as greater confidence, more or less assertiveness, or greater charisma.

3. **Measured impact.** Measuring impact and progress motivates the client, allows course-correction, and assures value to the organisation that may be making the investment of time and money.

Different goals will have different types of measure; Max typically employs the Kirkpatrick model® to gauge the impact of his work. Level 1: *Reaction* - client reacts favourably to the coaching, Level 2: *Learning* - client acquires intended knowledge, skills, attitudes, confidence, and commitment Level 3: *Behaviour* - client applies what they learned during coaching, Level 4: *Results* - targeted outcomes occur as a result of the coaching.

4. **Grounding in fact.** To focus the coaching Max typically uses three types of information: 360° information available or obtained, psychometric information available or obtained, and potentially further perspectives of team, colleagues, customers, or other external parties gained through interview.

5. **Robust conceptual approach.** Max's approach to coaching is inspired by a range of sources that include:

- oThe professional coaches including Blanchard, Gallwey, Whitmore
- oSelected personal development thinkers including Carnegie, Covey, Robbins
- oExperts on leadership, teams, culture and learning such as Adair, Argyris, Belbin, Bennis,

Hofstede, Katzenbach, Kotter, Pfeffer, Ulrich

oThe great psychologists and lesser-known ones such as Adler, Balint, Bion, Ellis, Erickson, Jacques, Maslow, Reich, Rogers

6. **A broad range of activities.** Although much of coaching involves conversing, it is easier to behave your way into a new way of thinking rather than to think your way into a new way of behaving. Activities thus include planning, drafting, role playing, guided trialling of new techniques in real life, etc.

Much of the best coaching is non-directive, but there are times when the client can benefit from explicit guidance. In doing so Max draws on 20 years of strategy experience and 10 years of leadership consulting at the sharp end of executive search; he is also able to suggest other sources of expertise and mentorship as required.

Example

The intensity and duration of Max's programmes of coaching are customised to the client's needs. As a purely illustrative example, one of Max's programmes:

- Was aimed at helping a COO prepare for his transition to CEO
- Focused on the themes of Team Leadership, Delegation, and External Network Building
- Included psychological profiling, feedback discussions with team and Board to the client, and Involved ½ day or longer session every 3-4 weeks with the client over six months
- Achieved specific goals for transition set by the client and the Board

Other programmes have been of shorter and longer durations, involved lesser and greater intensities and involvements with the organisations, resulting in fees that were lower and higher.

Max aims to trigger benefits to the organisation that would be at least 10 times the fees charged