

COMPUTER SCIENCES CORPORATION (CSC)

Coaching for Leading Change Confidently

Change for the Better

CSC is a US-based global IT and services company with 79,000 employees worldwide. CSC Australia, with 3500 employees, has been serving Australia's business and technology needs since 1970. Recently, CSC Australia underwent a period of significant internal change - which coincided with a period of rapid growth in the IT sector. This period of change highlighted areas that CSC decided to specifically focus on as part of their strategy for continuous improvement.

Modern Leadership Requires a Well-Stocked Executive Tool-Kit

Gavin Larkings, Vice President of Global Infrastructure Services, CSC Australia comments, "At CSC we operate in a very busy industry with clients who are growing more sophisticated all the time. As an outsourcing company, we are also required to place employees into different companies, which will have varying cultures - so they need to be adaptable and able to handle the ambiguities that this presents. Also - as with all large organisations there are goals, objectives and of course politics, which need to be handled effectively. As a result, in order to operate seamlessly at a senior level, you need a pretty well stocked leadership tool-kit".

The question we asked ourselves was how could we build and improve our tool kit? The answer, I felt, was with executive coaching. I have always been very supportive of executive coaching, as a means of improving executive capability - having been through the process myself and derived great benefit from it. So, when a colleague mentioned how impressed he had been with Hewsons, I agreed to meet with them.

After an initial meeting, CSC hired Hewsons to coach seven key senior executives to:

- Deal with the ambiguities of a matrix global structure and the nature of their roles
- Influence and collaborate with others
- Develop client relationship and general management and leadership skills in executives with deep IT expertise
- Remain with CSC as top-tier leaders

"I believed that Hewsons executive coaching would help my team understand better what their strengths and weaknesses were and get some feedback myself on the impact of my own leadership," says Gavin.

Ambiguities and Awareness

After twelve months of executive coaching, Gavin was pleased to note that it had helped his direct reports feel more comfortable and more at ease with the ambiguities of organisational change and also more aware of their impact on others.

"The feedback from my executives has been very good - one person in particular was not convinced that it would be beneficial but in the end, he found the process very helpful. The opportunity to speak confidentially to someone unencumbered with company emotion, gave him a perspective and a confidence that he had not previously enjoyed."

Hewsons has also helped with their self-awareness, which has improved our working relationships immensely. We've noticed how many executives have become more out-going, showing a desire to really engage with customers and staff, brought about by an increased awareness of how their behaviour impacts others.



Composure and Confidence

In addition, Hewsons has worked with executives on their composure. “If you have a lot of people underneath you, how you conduct yourself in certain situations becomes critical. Things can go wrong and it’s a mark of your ability as a leader to be able to handle such situations calmly and effectively. How do you react? Do you withdraw or get angry? Or do you maintain your composure – which allows you to build confidence with your team, and demonstrate great leadership skills.”

Hewsons has been instrumental in helping my top tier executives retain their composure and that gives them the confidence and results focus to get more of what they want out of their jobs and their life.

Confidentiality and Collective Feedback

As part of the process, Hewsons provides Gavin with regular feedback on his executives’ progress, including valuable bottom-up feedback based on themes running across participants and the business.

One of the beautiful things about using Hewsons is that they are very confidential in their dealings with individuals, but they can evaluate collectively the impact that my team’s leadership is having on the organisation and give great feedback on issues that exist and that need to be dealt with.

