

## KBR

### Coaching for Effectively Leading and Working with Teams

#### The Business

KBR, Inc. is a global technology, engineering, procurement and construction company serving the hydrocarbons and government services industries. With operations in 40 countries, KBR has more than 25,000 people delivering services to customers in over 70 countries. With sales of over \$US6billion, KBR is one of the largest organisations of its type in the world.

#### The Coachee

Atila Bilgi, Sales Director Middle East, has been with KBR for 24 years and has 26 years of experience in the study, design and construction of infrastructure projects in over 10 countries around the world including South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Jordan, Cyprus, UAE, Qatar, Turkey and Pakistan. He was based in Dubai and the coaching was conducted on Skype. The following is his account of the experience.

*When I was invited by my manager to participate in the executive coaching program, I must say, I was highly skeptical. But after a conversation with Hewsons, I became excited about using the program to develop myself as an effective leader.*

#### The Challenge

Atila's development was focused around his effectiveness in leading and working with teams. His role requires bringing together a team of people (sometimes up to 60 people) who have a day job from different parts of the organisation based in various offices around the world in different time zones to work on proposals for large projects, sometimes in the \$billions. The durations the teams are together can vary from as short as a few weeks and sometimes longer than a year. KBR can invest millions of dollars on the larger bids, so their success is very important to KBR's success.

*I lead the teams and this means that it's my job to engage them even though they do not report to me. I am a highly capable and independent person with very high standards. This in itself is not a problem, except that I would depend on my skills and willingness to work ridiculous hours to get things done instead of empowering the team to get the work done. I would just expect people to do their jobs and meet my standards without empowering them and holding them accountable. My boss told me that I was too much of a 'lone wolf'. He was right!*

#### The Solution

*The first step in my transformation was looking into the mirror, Hewsons call it **'becoming aware and taking responsibility'**. I had to stop blaming others and see how I was contributing to the team not performing as effectively as was required. If someone didn't meet the required standards, I wouldn't tell them I wasn't happy with their work and hold them accountable, I would simply redo their work - after hours, weekends, whatever was necessary.*



## Communication Skills and Clarity of Message

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*In taking responsibility for how I was operating, I was able to create a new context for myself in my role. I was still responsible for producing and winning bids, but am now also a team leader empowering the people on the team to do the work to a standard that will win bids. I applied the principles and models of the coaching to my relationships with people. I started communicating my expectations clearly and giving people an opportunity to choose being on the team, I started holding them accountable for what they had agreed to do. I stopped doing the work for them and if the work was not up to scratch, I would provide the required feedback so that they would step up to the plate instead of doing it for them.*

## The Benefits

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*I am a far more effective leader out of having undertaken executive coaching with Hewsons. People on my teams are more engaged and more effective. I resolve incomplete issues quickly and effectively, deliver honest feedback and I have developed a leadership philosophy that I am inspired by. The proposals are now of higher quality, the teams I work with more satisfied and I have a better-balanced life.*

