

business coaching gives Troika new direction in print

Three years ago, after 13 years in business, Troika Systems faced a major retrenchment of its inspection equipment business. Managing director Phil Hall foresaw future growth, but knew he needed help focusing his business and finding profitable new direction. That's when he decided to revisit business coaching...

Unlike many Finding True North clients, Phil had already experienced business coaching – albeit years previously. This time, as he agonised over how to grow Troika, he asked Business Link for recommendations. Richard Hovey, Finding True North's lead coach, was among them.

head and shoulders above the others

'Richard stood out above the others I interviewed when selecting a coach,' says Phil, 'Even then, he applied professional coaching techniques. It was obvious that he's a passionate and genuine coach. He's not just someone who got into it as 'just another job'. His combination of an MBA and industrial experience was also very reassuring.'

high expectations

'Then we started the regular two-hour coaching sessions that continue today. Given the investment, my expectations were high. To my delight, Richard always delivered, although I usually had a frazzled mind after his thought-provoking mental workouts. His coaching technique was completely authentic. For 18 months, he didn't make one recommendation. Instead, he helped me drag ideas from corners of my mind, explore them and reach rational conclusions that I applied to my business. He's excellent at helping you draw issues to logical conclusions. An example was when I finally decided to employ the sales manager who's subsequently been a sound investment.'

Prompted to identify the most memorable moment, Hall recalls the end of Year 1: 'I realised what we'd accomplished, which proved it was exactly what Troika needed.'

quantifiable benefits

Three years on, what benefits has Phil seen? 'Firstly, I'm convinced that our 50% increase in 2010–11 turnover, and a greater increase in profitability, is directly related to the ideas and direction that came from Richard's coaching. So's the growth of our team, and as I'm sure they'd confirm, the changes in me have improved office life for everyone.'

Before his Friday-afternoon sessions began, Phil was a classic, driven, internationally-mobile, entrepreneur. By his own admission a poor delegator, he was often 'grumpy' and not always the rational leader his team needed. Many changes have been made, including effective delegation that sits comfortably with Troika's reinvigorated business focus. Colleagues enjoy their new responsibilities and fewer arguments punctuate office life as the company views the future with new optimism.

investing in Richard's coaching is worth every penny

'I'm still being coached,' concludes Phil. 'It's an integral part of the business and I've been getting my home life back as well as planning my exit strategy through Richard. Fortunately, we selected one of the top business coaches; I've already recommended Richard several times and am pleased to do so through this article. Investing in his expertise is worth every penny.'

Troika Systems Ltd develops and markets specialist quality-control tools for the printing industry. Based in Swindon, UK, its 12-strong team supports the pre-press needs of customers around the world.



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finding true north

tactical consultancy • personal coaching

about us

We work with leaders of businesses and charities to help them to develop themselves, their staff and their business. We do this through coaching, consultancy, facilitation and training.

what some of our clients have said

I was able to achieve one of my key objectives, with the full cooperation of my colleagues and within the limited amount of time that we had set aside. Thank you very much indeed.

Paul Bailey, Finance Director, Open Doors UK

Richard Hovey has proven to be an excellent coach with a calm, realistic and practical approach to coaching, finding a balance between the requirements of a small company and academic knowledge acquired from his own work experiences and studies for his MBA.

Phil Hall, Managing Director, Troika Systems Ltd

I would recommend Richard for any coaching needs you may have - you may even only need one session to help you achieve this.

Val Huxley, CEO, Business Against Poverty

director and lead coach, Richard Hovey



Before taking up coaching and consultancy work full-time, Richard gained wide experience in business and the third sector, so he understands the issues that you face. He worked in the defence industries as a design engineer and then as a project leader; in the computer industry as a marketing manager; and in the advertising industry as a finance director. After work as a parish priest in the Church of England, and as a regional manager for a UK charity, he set up Finding True North. His employment experience included large businesses, such as GEC Marconi and Intel, as well as small firms and charities, and current clients also come from a range of business sectors. His coaching skills have been honed through 'manager as coach' line management, pastoral work, and independent coaching.

Richard holds a BSc in Electrical Engineering from Imperial College, London, a MBA from Cranfield School of Management, and is an ordained priest in the Church of England. He is a Chartered Engineer and a member of the Chartered Management Institute and the Institute of Consulting.

His interests include sailing and scuba diving, he is a trustee of several UK charities, and he is passionate about individuals, teams, and organisations becoming all that they can be.

the benefits for your business:

- enhanced personal effectiveness and decisions
 - better communication skills and relationships
- leading to improved*
- innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction
 - staff retention, and bottom line results

especially in:

- growing leadership and delegation skills
- problem solving, planning, and reviewing
- change management and team building
- developing and motivating key staff
- giving extra support for extra responsibility

what next?

Contact us for more information and to discuss your needs further.

to do new things we need to see in fresh ways

Richard Hovey and Associates Limited

mail: Hartham Park, Corsham, SN13 0RP **phone:** 01249 712446 **e-mail:** info@findingtruenorth.co.uk **web:** www.findingtruenorth.co.uk

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