



COACHING OURSELVES

By Henry Mintzberg and Phil LeNir

CoachingOurselves: One Component of a Multifaceted Professional Development Program

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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Fordham IT has been using CoachingOurselves since 2011 supported by our partner Joe Sclafani. CoachingOurselves is an anchor component of their Laureates Program, which was designed to support their ability to provide and manage improved technology services to the university community.

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Participant

Challenge

We have been engaged in a multi-year organizational change process designed to transform our department into a platform for innovation and service that will permeate and support all aspects of university life: student development, scholarship, pedagogy, and administrative operations. Investment in professional development has been one of the strategic building blocks supporting this process.

Solution

We launched the Fordham IT Laureates Program. Its objective is to develop a subpopulation of capable and empowered leaders throughout our organization to foster collaborative, innovative, and timely responses to customer needs among their colleagues. Participants are selected based on a brief written description of what they believe their participation will contribute to their personal and professional growth, as well as to the strategic mission of the University.

The Program consists of a mix of facilitated group and individual activities of which CoachingOurselves is one component. Group discussions using CoachingOurselves 90-minute discussion guides provide each participant with an opportunity to learn and reflect on a variety of management issues in a way that promotes individual learning and insight into their own work and Fordham IT as an organization. Action Learning provides each participant with an opportunity to give and receive facilitated peer coaching specific to current work challenges. CIO Consultative Meetings provide a forum to review planned and on-going initiatives intended to enhance IT services or organizational



Participants learn and reflect on management issues through group discussions facilitated by CoachingOurselves modules. Discussions provide insight in their work and organization.



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effectiveness. Individual Assessments of behavioral styles and preferences provide each participant with information to facilitate the self-awareness needed to support and sustain personal and professional growth. The CIO may additionally assign special group projects and individual coaching is available on an "as requested" basis to follow up with any issues that arise from participation in the program.

Results

The results to date have exceeded our expectations. Participant response has been uniformly enthusiastic:

- *"The skills I've learned and the partnerships I've built are immeasurable."*
- *"The Laureate program allowed the cohort to discuss management topics in a cohesive and positive fashion. Personally participating in the program allowed me to identify professional and personal traits that I was not conscious of in the past."*
- *"The Laureate program really opened some new ways of thinking to me. It was a great learning experience ..."*

And, the Laureates are indeed positively impacting our operations through the transfer of their learning – directly to their colleagues and by their example – into their work units. We've since graduated multiple cohorts.

The graduated Laureates continue to meet on a regular basis, using additional CoachingOurselves 90-minute discussion guides to anchor their discussions and support their continued professional and personal development.

About CoachingOurselves

CoachingOurselves is the world leader in peer-group coaching. The company, founded in 2007 by Henry Mintzberg and Phil LeNir, is based on Mintzberg's reflective learning pedagogy. The CoachingOurselves leadership development method builds community, stimulates the exchange of perspectives, and encourages team cohesion. Managers learn from and coach each other using 90-minute self-directed, reflective discussion modules authored by some of the world's leading business thinkers. This creates self-developing organizations while building a culture of learning and collaboration. CoachingOurselves has a library of over 80 peer-group coaching modules and is used by over 20,000 managers in 8 languages around the world.

www.coachingourselves.com