

## Leadership Coaching

An effective development route for executives:

- **To acquire gravitas and develop presence** - enabling them to demonstrate the qualities that help get things done incisively and with compassion, but without aggression.
- **To find their purpose in life.** Aware of the need for strategic thinking and a clear vision, leaders of all kinds can nevertheless find themselves caught up in a whirlwind of daily problems.
- **To re-align themselves.** Recognising that they aren't quite achieving what they want to achieve - we look at what led to their success in the first place and what works now. Finding there are better ways of managing situations so they are clearer, energised and more effective.

## Graham Wilson

For the last 17 years, I've worked with the leaders of organisations, and their people, helping create a vision of what their world could be like, and then helping them to achieve it.

Believing in the enormous potential that people have I love to see them discover and tap into this in every aspect of their life.

Whilst both a futurist and strategist, my work has its roots in organisation development and is shaped by my training as a psychotherapist, sports coach, and minister.

You can read more about my background, leadership roles and my books on my website:

[www.grahamwilson.org](http://www.grahamwilson.org)

# TEN WAYS TO GET AHEAD

A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Guide to  
Career Success  
for Today's Executives

## Leadership Coaching

I meet clients at a variety of locations around the country, including London, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands. Appointments can be made to suit your timetable - many clients preferring to meet outside their core working hours.

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# Ten Ways to Get Ahead

*These notes are taken from a talk that I gave recently. They reflect the issues that my coaching clients (and their peers or bosses) see as holding them back. They also address the stumbling blocks that HR Directors frequently encounter when considering otherwise exceptional senior executives for promotion.*

## 1 Get into 'reflective practice'

People who succeed are constantly learning - they gain confidence from knowing that when something new happens, they will do their best, learn from it, and do even better next time. Practical, experiential learning doesn't just happen - it takes personal effort. Whether you choose to write a personal journal, use a professional coach, or even keep a blog, try to build 15 minutes a day into your schedule to reflect on the day's events and what you can learn from them.

## 2 Learn to "tune-in" to individuals

It's not unusual for people to describe their leaders as always having time for them. By this they mean that the leader is prepared to give undivided attention for sufficient time for the person to get their point across and that they will use active listening skills to help explore the point fully.

## 3 Be output oriented

It's very easy, especially early in their career, for young executives to throw themselves into special projects and become more excited by the day to day process than being driven by the desired end results. Then, later in their careers, their aspirations get frustrated. Those leaders who gain recognition though, have delivered true results.

## 4 Always consider the human implications of your decisions

Whether we are at the beginning of a new age in business as some people believe, or not, organizations and their executives are now expected to consider the wider human implications of their actions. There are always ways of achieving human solutions. Decisions that call for redundancy, closure, down-skilling, and exploitation are simply no longer smart choices for ambitious executives - in the long run, people who dirty their hands this way get dumped later.

## 5 Expect a net positive impact

It is a challenge, but the eyes of the world are now focused on organizations, especially commercial ones. We are expected to show a net positive impact in all our dealings. Simple examples include establishing local partnerships with social development charities, integrating habitat restoration plans even at the initial development stage, and providing rewards packages that reflect local conditions.

## 6 Never undersell to yourself; and don't over-promote to others

There are two sides to confidence. On the one hand, you'll not get ahead if you don't value yourself - both the contribution you can make and what it's worth. On the other, most people still like to see the arrogant upstart come a cropper. Both come from false impressions created when we are young. These need re-balancing to get ahead. They are hard to observe in ourselves, and it takes some nerve to get relevant feedback from others, let alone work on these fundamental attitudes, but the rewards can be huge.

## 7 Take responsibility for your relationships - with bosses, staff, and peers

Some people seem to forget that relationships are the lifeblood of all working environments. Just because you can't see any point building a mutual relationship today, doesn't mean that it won't be worthwhile tomorrow. Social structures are changing these days, people expect respect. Sadly, those people who find this hard to accept are usually very unaware of the (often negative) impact they have on others and it can come as quite a shock when they discover how few supporters they have.

## 8 Manage your relationships with family and friends

We used to read quite a lot about work-life balance which is fine, in that it describes a desirable outcome, but it doesn't say how we are meant to get there! People with a poor W-L balance often find that their relationships outside work are not that solid. There's a danger of getting into a chicken and egg debate, but the real issue is how to re-invest in these relationships.

## 9 Actively pursue hobbies/interests that are nothing to do with work

We all know that "all work and no play" doesn't work, but it's amazing how many people have no interests outside work that they can enjoy wholeheartedly. It's not a question of becoming obsessive, but people who get ahead are the ones who tackle almost everything with interest, verve, and energy - including their lives outside work. It's easy to go home and 'veg' out, but if you want to get ahead you need to get a life.

## 10 Give more than you receive and do so pro-actively

There's a school of networking that says that you need to give one hundred favours for every one you expect in return. That's a far cry from the 1:1 ratio of 'you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours' that some people seem to expect. But more importantly, you've got to be pro-active in your giving, not just holding back until someone asks you - if you hold back it'll take years before you've built up your bank account of favours. Being proactive means spotting opportunities to help, offering to help, going out of your way to help, and, in true Good Samaritan fashion, being on your way before people can thank you too much.

**For details of my leadership coaching, public speaking and other activities, please check out my website:**

[www.grahamwilson.org](http://www.grahamwilson.org)

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