

Executive Coaching: Environments at Work Establishes Greater Cohesion Among Executive Team

[Environments at Work](#) (EAW) provides organizations with a guiding hand in designing and creating new office spaces. Outfitting an office space can be an incredibly complex process. From managing expectations of general contractors, subcontractors and architects, to managing and implementing the technology requirements, EAW takes the pressure off their clients while ensuring the end result always reflects their clients' workplace culture.

The need for a company like EAW has increased significantly over the past few years. A variety of reasons can lead an organization to seek out a new workspace, such as when the lease is expiring or the organization has outgrown their space. As the volume of work increased, however, EAW started to feel some growing pains, primarily in the way the business was run.

The Challenge

"We were growing to a size where we needed to have more organizational processes put in place, and it meant a lot of change was needed," said Ken Patrick, founding partner at EAW. "The typical EAW employee is hard-working, focused on solving customer issues and an all-around great person. Being outwardly focused, they lacked some of the necessary management processes, thus growing pains were a lot more challenging to manage than they probably should have been."

Conflict avoidance became a common occurrence. This generated passive-aggressive behavior felt throughout the company, limiting productivity and threatening to disturb the workplace culture at EAW, a company that was dedicated to making things simple.

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"Quite frankly, this behavior went on too long," said Ken.

The Solution

Ken knew the best option was to bring in a neutral third party, someone who could offer guidance on how to better manage growing pains. He figured the best place to start was with the executive team, so he hired Jay Forte of The Forte Factor to implement the Executive Coaching program with six of his managers.

"The first time I met Jay, I was very impressed with him and how he presented [the ins and outs] of human interaction. He took a very complex issue that plagues organizations and created a pretty well-proven process as to how to deal with it," said Ken.

To start, the Executive Coaching program requires two full-day sessions to take the participants through the entire process. Then, each participant connects with Jay separately at a cadence they deem appropriate, whether a weekly coaching call, bi-weekly or monthly.

Over the course of a year, the program took each of the EAW managers through a process to increase awareness of their world (both at home and in the workplace) and awareness of themselves (self-awareness). By identifying individual strengths and liabilities, and understanding when it's appropriate to use those strengths to engage and inspire others, participants in the Executive Coaching program learn how to be self-managed to work better with others, and to understand and acknowledge others' strengths and liabilities, as well.

The Results

The Executive Coaching program ran for one year and results were felt almost immediately.

“The coaching Jay provided allowed each of us to grow and develop as individuals, and enabled us to interact and work better with each other to benefit the organization as a whole,” said Ken. “Ultimately, we got much better at making decisions together.”

“Jay’s coaching helped all of us become more confident in who we are and equipped us with new vocabulary to better communicate with each other. In fact, I leverage many of Jay’s tools in my one-on-one weekly meetings with my direct reports, making these meetings more efficient and impactful,” said Ken.

The Executive Coaching program ran for one year, but many of Ken’s team asked to continue individual coaching with Jay when the program was completed.

“I encourage my team to leverage Jay whenever they need him. Whether it’s a personal situation or a work situation, we all book time with him to help get to a solution we’re blocked from seeing. It’s been amazing to see the difference in people,” said Ken. “I refer to him as our ‘corporate psychologist.’”



“...THE TEAM WORKED BETTER TOGETHER, DEVELOPED MORE EFFICIENT MEANS OF COMMUNICATING WITH EACH OTHER AND, PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, NOW RESOLVE CONFLICT IN A MUCH FASTER AND EFFECTIVE WAY.”