



## The Big Blue Box Ltd

### A Pledge

With access to independent external support rapid change is possible. The Coachee's critical performance issues had not been resolved within the performance management system – indeed the process had exacerbated performance problems through the team and its management.

### The Background

The initial brief was to examine the issues that had affected E, the coachee's recent performance appraisals and to remedy E's performance issues. E is a member of a small expert team contributing to strategic projects within a global organisation. He is loyal, intelligent, honest, trusting and ambitious.

### The Process

In our first session E was clearly very angry about his situation, his confidence was very low and he was feeling isolated from his colleagues. The relationship with his manager had clearly broken down. Challenged to think of anything about himself that was good or great, he was unable to even offer a single example. We agreed that E should take some time to 'get his anger out' so it was decided that he would write the coach a letter before the next session that fully expressed his feelings.

He began:

*'At this moment in time I feel very angry and undervalued at work. There are a number of factors that contribute to this and I will try and document them the best I can.'*

The remainder of letter was vitriolic! It was several sides of closely typed, unpolished phrases presented in an unfiltered form. E concluded the letter as follows:

*'Apologies for rambling on. I can't really put into words some of the emotions that go with these contexts. There are other small things that probably contribute to this, but what I have documented seems to be the crux of my anger. I'm sure we can go into detail about this at our next meeting, but I will say one thing, writing this out has made me feel different. I can't put a finger on it, but something feels different. The anger is still there, but I just feel strange reading what I have put.'*

The 'letter writing' had been very cathartic, as E reported at the start of our second session, but he still struggled with finding any good in himself. The causes of the anger, as expressed in the letter appeared to be very recent and centred on E's job. Having got the anger out, we now explored E's 'story so far' including his childhood, parents, relationships, education and career.

### The Big Blue Box Ltd

Contact: 1 The Laurels, Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey. KT13 9LF

Tel: voice/fax: 01932 843933 [www.thebigbluebox.co.uk](http://www.thebigbluebox.co.uk)

Registered Office: Suite 1, Concept House, 23 Billet Lane, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1XP

Registered in England No: 4401635

## A Pledge

His anger was rooted in his parents' divorce and the substantial effect this had on him, disrupting his education at a critical time and requiring him to seek immediate employment to support the family. It was clear that E's career had not been his choice but that he had a strong sense of duty – his strengths were becoming clear to him, as were the real causes of his negative feelings and emotions. E had 'homework' to do before the next session.

At the close of our third session E was able to see things in a new light, to be objective, creative and to begin to find alternative approaches, particularly how to manage his situation at work and to achieve a balance.

E commented:

*'I feel more directional with a focus on the future; it's not all about work! I'll have to make changes outside work so that changes within work can happen. It's going to be hard but there are lots of positives. I can do it... I need to; this job supports everything outside too!'*

In our final session E reporting on the numerous actions he was taking, demonstrating the changes he was making in all areas of his life. We agreed that E would again write to the coach, this is what he wrote:

### The Outcome

*'My pledge is to continue in the way I have been growing and changing.  
I will continue to look sharp, and to be 'on the ball'.  
I will challenge and ask questions and discuss and argue where I think it needs to be done.  
I will not sit back and 'go with the flow'.  
I am a game player and I am now back in the game.'*

*'I will be attentive and engaged. ...  
I will not feel stressed or negative.  
I know my stuff and I am prepared to discuss it.  
I will be open and constructive in all that I say.  
I will take onboard feedback and utilise it to my advantage.*

*But most important of all, I'm going to be confident.  
I am the best at what I do ...  
I'm going to be confident in my actions and the way I think.  
**Confident, Positive and Engaged.***

*That is my pledge on my journey forward.'*