



The Big Blue Box Ltd

Failing At The Interview

To maximise their potential, organisations will usually require their people to succeed at a promotion interview. Achieving success at this stage is important for the candidate and the organisation.

Background

In this case the coachee, M had recently missed a promotion after failing at the interview stage but the organisation agreed to support her in seeking help with her interview skills.

M felt that she had made a real mess of her promotion interview, failed to sell herself adequately and was very angry about her performance, feeling she had again let herself down, as this was not the first time this had happened. There were clearly some significant issues holding M back from achieving her potential.

The Process

In the coaching conversation, having first discussed the interview itself, we then began to explore M's career and life outside work. Whilst reviewing recent psychometrics revealed some areas for development this did not seem to address the real problem.

A coaching conversation explored the background. M's life story included numerous factors that, upon reflection offered clues to her behaviour in the promotion interview.

Issues in her childhood included; her relationship with her 'emotionally reserved' father, a strict parenting style offering little support for building self esteem, her comparative achievements were 'only average' when measured against those of her 'very bright' father and the death of a sibling was 'not talked about'. Later in life issues of divorce, single parenting, several home moves and the inherited values of 'Duty' and 'Safety' that put the needs of others before her own had all affected M's self esteem.

In her career M had always been offered opportunities but had never decided what was actually right for her. M was concerned that as her own family was growing up, that the children will leave home and that she may then be faced with decisions about her own career and future.

In this first coaching conversation M realised that the interview 'failure' was not actually what it seemed. Her anger with herself began to change to a realisation that she hadn't known what she really wanted to do. M immediately began to feel better about herself – it was only her sense of 'duty' that encouraged her to apply for the job.

The Outcome

In her action plan M decided to focus on finding time for herself, to examine the real thoughts and feelings that were influencing her, examining what her real values are, to discuss thoughts openly with trusted friends and begin to explore her real ambitions and purpose in life. This conversation started M on a journey of improving self esteem and confidence in her career and in life, with obvious benefits to her employing organisation and her family.

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