



The Big Blue Box Ltd

'The Most Honest Conversation I've Ever Had!'

Anger can be dangerous and in this case the coachee was isolating himself. Provided with a safe place to release and examine his anger, coaching helped this talented individual to identify areas where he could learn, take responsibility, change his behaviours and turn his career around.

The Background

D has shown real leadership and drive in his career until recently having been recruited as a high performer. However just a few months into his current new role he feels he:

'is not a strong performer now.'

He is seeking a way out of a situation he describes as:

'a cul de sac – one way in, one way out...feeling let down...the informal contract was broken!'

His anger is affecting his performance and attitude, others are aware of his anger and it is clearly on display in the first few minutes of our first meeting. He is considering leaving the company. Indeed in the briefing, his manager had indicated that one of the outcomes of the coaching could be to enable D to *'leave well'*.

The Process

We explored his career and life story.

His talent was spotted at an early stage when he was recruited into a client, being offered accelerated promotion. He jumped again when another organisation approached him.

Having been recruited into his current role with his expectations high he found that he was then passed over for a promotion. D is clearly angry yet rationally he understands the decision.

With such strong feelings we looked for the root of his anger and examined its impact on him, his reputation, career and family.

D's particular childhood and family background featured early in our conversation as D described his conflicting feelings of both being 'rejected' and also being 'chosen'.

Having been successful in all he has done to date, this point in his career is perhaps his first real disappointment and plays to his feelings of being chosen and then rejected. Furthermore his career has been a series of decisions made by others from which D has benefitted.

D then divulged, close to tears, one of the most painful and disappointing events that went to the root of his trust in others.

'this is the first time that I've told anybody this...'

This then led to further disclosures of his own behaviours.

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In his feedback D stated:

'That was the most honest conversation I've ever had!

*These were things that I have never told anyone else.
...I've identified my anger!.'*

As the conversations progressed, D's mood was clearly *'brighter and more positive'*. D was now able to be truly honest – with himself.

We examined some of his most cherished assumptions.

*'I've always said that I am ambitious... I'm not as ambitious as I thought I was...
I may not get to the top... I don't want to be at the top of the tree... I'm
uncomfortable.'*

It became clear to D that he had no plan of his own; his constant progress seemed to be a substitute for a plan. His energy had no direction and was becoming destructive as his apparent career momentum declined.

Building upon his honesty and the insights that have been gained from D's reflection, our conversation focused upon particular alternative behaviours that D may want to develop, to support his new career plan. The ideas began to flow. D identified numerous skills to develop.

*'I'll need to be more patient, more subtle and political, I have to be responsible
for my own direction, and not reliant on other people, I need to network ... to
negotiate... to have a flexible style... I need to focus on other people... I need to
rebalance my life.'*

We began to build a 'plan' for his career.

The Outcomes

D had lost his anger and had taken responsibility for his career, he found some new ideas to work on, and changed his approach.

Within a few weeks D successfully applied for and won a significant promotion, into another business area.

His sponsoring manager offered this feedback.

'I actually want to thank you for your fantastic work with D.

*I am so happy for the way things have worked out for him and having your
support was of great help to him.*

*D and I had a really good chat this week and I will continue to support him in
his new role.'*