

A Model for Facilitating Change: Partnering, Reflection, and Reframing

VERSION 2

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Vistage Chair Alan Weinstein's new book, *Executive Coaching and the Process of Change: a Practitioner's Guide*, offers insight into coaching that he has utilized throughout his Vistage career. This article highlights many of the principles and processes in Weinstein's book that can help Chairs facilitate change with their members.

A large part of a Vistage Chair's role is to coach members. This is true both in one-to-ones and group executive sessions. In one-to-ones in particular, the Chair asks probing questions, elicits reflections, reframes, challenges, and supports members who want to engage in change.

One model that facilitates this positive change does so by contrasting the desired outcomes with the current state of affairs. If the coachee truly desires change, this gap will create tension, which in turn drives the coachee toward resolution through actions that reduce tension. This tension and its reduction through action are the basis of change.

"The tension existing between the desired and actual states is the focus of coaching... Reducing this tension between desired and actual behavior becomes the work of the coach and coachee."

Every one of us has a balance sheet of assets and liabilities. How much more effective could we be if we could leverage our assets while managing our liabilities? The process begins by identifying assets and liabilities and working them into the dialogue between Chair and member. "A coachee who has a realistic view of his or her balance sheet of assets and liabilities has an excellent opportunity to leverage assets while managing liabilities."

Here are three methods for facilitating change within a one-to-one or executive session:

- **Partnering.** Weinstein offers a personal example to illustrate partnering. One of his assets is creative insights. This asset has helped him to create programs, courses and businesses. One of his liabilities is implementing these insights in a timely way. Rather than fighting with himself to engage in behaviors he finds tedious, unrewarding, or where he may be deficient, he partners with colleagues that have strong follow through. Through this partnership, he has been able to be far more successful in implementing many of his creative ideas. In turn, his partners were able to benefit from his asset. Partnering is a powerful way to help members to create desired change.
- **Reflection.** By recounting experiences and identifying alternative ways of managing these experiences, a member can evaluate the efficacy of alternative behaviors, at least conceptually. Between one-to-ones, the member will have the opportunity to practice alternative behaviors and hopefully get a better outcome.
- **Reframing.** "Reframing is the process of changing the lens through which a situation is viewed," or seeing a problem through a different perspective. Most Chairs have a strong business and leadership background that will help to enable members to frame challenges and opportunities in ways that are more amenable to problem solving and successful outcomes. Reframing has the potential to move a challenge from a liability to an asset.

Facilitating an issue or an opportunity in an executive session lends itself to the same methods used in coaching. Guided discussion and other tools that Vistage Chairs use in processing issues can benefit from understanding a member's balance sheet, leveraging strengths, managing liabilities, partnering, reflection and reframing. These methods can make a real difference in helping members help other members to improve their chances of success.

The coaching model showcased in *Executive Coaching and the Process of Change: a Practitioner's Guide* (soon to be available on Kindle) can add to Chair training by providing tools that help new and experienced Chairs enhance the change process. It offers many cases that illustrate the value of coaching methods. Most of the cases are based on one-to-one sessions with Vistage members.

Alan G. Weinstein Biography:

Alan Weinstein is a coach to CEOs, a college professor, a consultant and an entrepreneur. He received his Ph.D in Industrial Psychology from Wayne State University. He has held professorships at Carnegie-Mellon University, Oakland University and Canisius College. In 1992, Alan started the first TEC/Vistage group in Western New York. He now chairs two CEO groups, and a KEY group.

Alan's consulting company, Alan G. Weinstein & Associates, specializes in organizational development, corporate training, team building, group facilitation, team building, and strategic planning. He has served on several Boards of Directors including Perry's Ice Cream, LaserTron, Stride Tool, EGW Associates, and North American Health Plans. He was twice a finalist in the Entrepreneur of the Year Award for his work in supporting entrepreneurship. The Price Babson Fellowship recognized Alan by presenting him the prestigious Edwin A. Appel Award for his work in Entrepreneurial Education. At Canisius College, Alan was selected the 2003 and 2007 Donald Calvert Outstanding Professor by his MBA students.

For several years, Alan co-wrote a news column in Business First titled Owner and Coach with Jim Cipriani Jr. Alan's book, Executive Coaching and the Process of Change: A Practitioner's Guide was published in 2013.