

Case study – one to one coaching

The Forton Group is working with a number of clients from the NHS *Breaking Through Programme** who are finding that leadership coaching is having a positive effect on their career progression.

“Coaching is like managing blood pressure. You need it to cope with the ongoing challenges of work”

Having successfully held an assistant director's role, RM wanted to step up to the next level and knew that confidence in his own ability was a key factor. A two-day *Breaking Through* Master Class confirmed he was equal to the challenge.

In preparation for his major career move, (he is now a Director of Performance Management), he enrolled on a number of courses to prepare and equip him. This support included a series of leadership coaching sessions with the Forton Group's CEO Helen Caton Hughes.

RM: “After the assessment course came a tipping point. I knew I had the ability to move up but my confidence and anxiety issues were still barriers. I was setting myself goals which were time rather than opportunity based and when I missed them, my anxiety was compounded. Bespoke one-to-one coaching was what I needed.

“Helen asked me where I was and where I wanted to be career-wise and helped me see how I could get there, enabling me to find solutions to any problems standing in my way. She gave me the support I needed, reflecting back what I was saying, helping me listen to myself. She has also enabled me to find a better work-life balance.

“Coaching has shown me that I should be focusing on my strengths rather than trying to do what I'm less good at, bringing in people from my team to fill the skills gaps. I have also learned to recognise opportunities when they arise and to make myself available.”

“*Breaking Through* was great to get me through the hoop. But now I've got there and

am on my own I still need help and coaching is the answer for me.”

Helen Caton Hughes: “RM's open style is a huge plus. It helped him to support his former boss, allowing his boss in turn to relax, making for an easier working relationship. Maintaining the 'real you' and having a 'leader-like humility' are important attributes and coaching brought these qualities out in RM.

“RM is a democratic and inclusive leader who leads from his own values. He is a great example of someone with talent from a BME group who has been successful because he found the confidence to put himself forward, while remaining true to himself. Those who interviewed him for his new senior role recognised and respected the benefits his leadership style would bring to it, as well as the value of diversity.”

The Process

Following the two-day assessment, RM was offered four coaching sessions funded through the *Breaking Through* Programme. He was invited to select from the list of accredited coaches. Opting to meet quarterly face-to-face, he chose Helen Caton Hughes because, “She is very experienced and I like her relaxed style. She understands how the NHS operates but also works with senior people in other sectors, a helpful perspective.”

He sees coaching as part of his strategic career development, “rather than fire-fighting” and intends to continue when the initial programme is finished.

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*The national *Breaking Through Top Talent Programme* is designed specifically to enable participants to perform effectively at Director level within the NHS. The *Breaking Through Programme* predominantly aims at members of NHS staff from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.