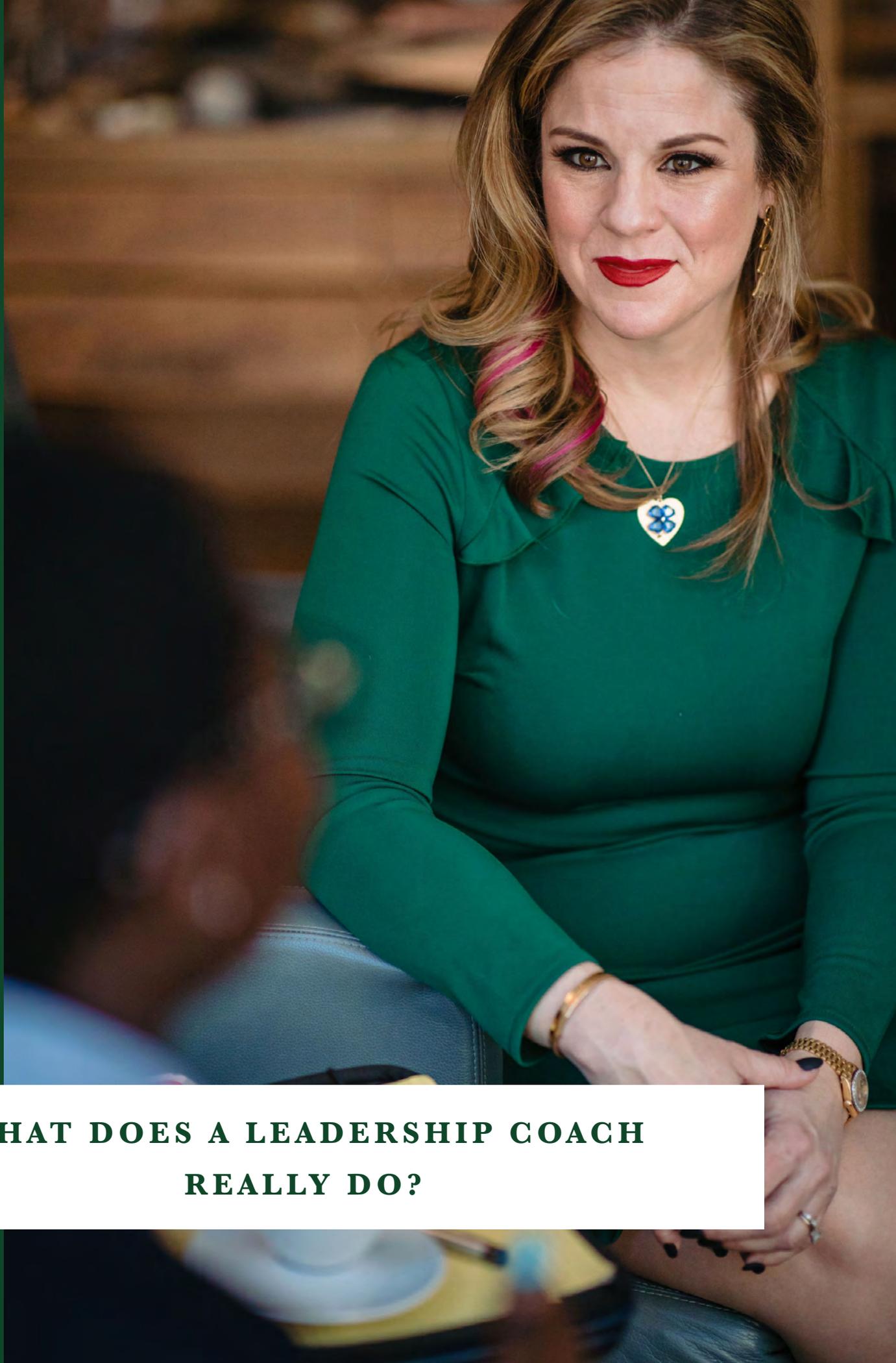


BY KELLY MEERBOTT, LEADERSHIP COACH + SPEAKER



WHAT DOES A LEADERSHIP COACH REALLY DO?



WHY COACHING?

When your board of directors suggests you bring in a leadership coach to improve on some facet of the organization, How do you react?

For most CEOs it goes something like this... “Coach? Why do I need a coach? What’s wrong with me?”

I’m here to tell you two things:

There’s nothing wrong with you.

We all need feedback —that’s how we progress.

Coaches, especially leadership coaches, are brought in to help launch you to the next level: to develop your high potential into high performance, and turn your performers into superior leaders. They are here to hold you accountable to the best version of yourself.



MINDSET SHIFT

Coaching has often been portrayed as a punitive or corrective tool to be used when circumstances have turned negative. However, in progressive companies coaching is a positive, proven method for helping executives explore their current goals and ambitions so they can achieve new and higher objectives.

When partnered with open and willing participants, the power of executive coaching is to:

- Accentuate your skills and abilities
- Boost performance with a more positive outlook and mindset
- Identify and deal with issues, concerns,

and challenges before they become unmanageable

The coaching and mentoring process is about shifting mindsets to see the possibilities, creating a plan, and taking consistent action to realize success once objectives are identified. The best practice approach is to observe and analyze the organization from a holistic point of view. Together, we look for positive, feasible, practical, and attainable improvements.

In progressive companies, coaching is a proven method for taking executives to the next level of leadership.

One of my favorite examples is when I was working with a COO in a medical organization. She had 49 direct staff, medical personnel who supported doctors during procedures. Although her department was responsible for 80% of the company's \$20M annual revenue, it had become a revolving door with attrition at 59%. Morale was terrible. The culture of the department had evolved into a morass of negativity.

During our first coaching session, she sat across from me with her arms crossed in a closed off stance. I asked her, "What would you like to achieve during our work together?"



COO: I'd like to get to the bottom of why so many people are quitting. I'm doing everything I can. I don't understand it. I reach out to them often, yet I get the sense that they're afraid of me.

KELLY: Well you do appear to be quite angry.

COO: Really? I try not to be. (begins to cry) I'm going through a very tough divorce. My spouse is a violent alcoholic.

KELLY: Did you know, the more we try to hide our emotions, the more they show?

COO: (Calming down) I can see that.

(At this point, I sit in silence allowing the COO's emotions to flow and giving emotional space. When they are ready, I ask a question.)

KELLY: When was the last time you had one-on-one conversations with your staff?

COO: It has been so busy that it's been about 18 months.

KELLY: And aren't your employees bonuses and salary increases based on quarterly evaluations?

COO: Yes.

KELLY: So what could you do to achieve the outcome you want?

COO: Start scheduling evaluations?

KKELLY: That's one option. Are you open to some coaching around this?

COO: Yes.

KELLY: How do you think it would affect your team if you had one-on-one conversations with them without an agenda—allow them to come in, you ask one question, and then listen?

COO: No agenda?

KELLY: No agenda.

COO: I could try it. What's the one question?

KELLY: How are you?

COO: I think my staff would be surprised and shocked.

KELLY: Good. That's what I was hoping for.



Together, we implemented a round of meetings. It took two weeks to complete, and morale demonstrably improved. Then, the COO and I co-created a plan of action to complete all the employee evaluations in 90 days—and completed them in just six weeks. By the end of the second quarter, attrition dropped to 17%, and by the end of the year the team brought in \$5M more in annual revenue than budgeted.

The Point? Although some techniques may be similar, coaches are not therapists, psychiatrists, or consultants. Executive coaches are creative partners that hold you to be the best versions of yourself.

The Result? An evolution; a mindset shift: from good to great!