

Leadership Coaching

An effective development route for executives:

- **To acquire gravitas and develop presence** - enabling them to demonstrate the qualities that help get things done incisively and with compassion, but without aggression.
- **To find their purpose in life.** Aware of the need for strategic thinking and a clear vision, leaders of all kinds can nevertheless find themselves caught up in a whirlwind of daily problems.
- **To re-align themselves.** Recognising that they aren't quite achieving what they want to achieve - we look at what led to their success in the first place and what works now. Finding there are better ways of managing situations so they are clearer, energised and more effective.

Graham Wilson

For the last 17 years, I've worked with the leaders of organisations, and their people, helping create a vision of what their world could be like, and then helping them to achieve it.

Believing in the enormous potential that people have I love to see them discover and tap into this in every aspect of their life.

Whilst both a futurist and strategist, my work has its roots in organisation development and is shaped by my training as a psychotherapist, sports coach, and interfaith minister.

You can read more about my background, leadership roles and my books on my website:

www.grahamwilson.org

ACQUIRING GRAVITAS

LONGER-TERM PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

A 21st Century Guide
for Today's Executives

Leadership Coaching

I meet clients at a variety of locations around the country, including London, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands. Under exceptional circumstances I have travelled further afield. Appointments can be made to suit your timetable - many clients prefer to meet outside their core working hours.

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Acquiring gravitas

My clients come to me for a variety of reasons but one of the common observations that they, their boss or their 'company' have made is that they need to acquire more gravitas. Start thinking of gravitas as 'executive presence' and you'll see why it is important. Sadly, many people reach the end of their lives without feeling a real sense of being fulfilled. Fulfillment comes from having an awareness of ourselves, what we do and how we relate to the world - it isn't about having answers or possessions. Taken to its extreme fulfillment is called 'enlightenment'. Acquiring gravitas is an essential building block on this fundamental human journey.

1 Who are you trying to impress?

We are all 'programmed' during our childhoods with the drivers that make us do what we do, to the degree, and how, we do it. Usually a small number of key role models in our early life set up a pattern that we follow for the next phase of our lives. Sadly, these people's lives were their own, and the answers they had then, do not apply to us. At some stage, we may question them. Perhaps a new person (often a spouse) comes into our life who overtly challenges us on these drivers. Sometimes it is the death of one of these role models (esp. a parent) that makes us reexamine what we are doing. Divorce can make us look again. Certainly, reexamination is a characteristic of 'mid-life crises'. Clinging on to these drivers even though we know deep down that they were not ours leads to a rigidity of thinking that isolates and limits us. Why wait until a crisis to examine them?

2 Recognize and get rid of guilt, anger, and envy

Whether these role models and the drivers they set up seem good, bad or indifferent, we create an unconscious image of how we should be in the world. Our failure to live up to our own standards (which may be theirs) is the cause of most of our sense of guilt, envy, frustration, and

anger. If we feel we have 'proven' ourselves to them, we are likely to become arrogant or smug. Few people are that good at recognising their own emotional state, let alone addressing it, however, beginning with these 'meta-' emotions is an important first step.

3 Be aware of, and tackle, your addictions

Anything done to excess has the effect of dulling our minds; whether it is simple behavioural habits, activities that we engage in without examining why and what we get out of them, patterns that we never change, or substances that we use. The impact is that we are living a part of our life without mindfulness. It is hard to have presence or gravitas when our minds are working like robots. One of the secrets to acquiring 'gravitas' is to experience the world with enthusiasm and curiosity.

4 Examine your relationship with wealth and success

Our needs change throughout our life. We all have material, intellectual, emotional and spiritual* needs in different proportions which are slowly changing throughout our lives. Most people though pursue one, to the exclusion of others, without considering why. They have often been taught at an early age that 'success' is achieved by satisfying this particular need. They seek money, possessions, degrees, lovers, or 'experiences' but are never satisfied. Work and society panders to these needs - those with *gravitas* are happy to say "I have enough."

* While this word might not be commonly used, it can be seen as a sense of deep connection between living things.

5 Decide what you really want to do before you die

Bearing in mind the importance of balancing our needs, if you knew you had three months to live (90 days), what would you do with that time to get the most from it? Suppose that you had less, what would you put at the top of the list? Most people do not get this much warning... Start doing some of them now.

6 Stop trying to control so much of your world

Most anxiety stems from our struggle to control our world - whether it is the day-to-day, specifics in the workplace, or at home, our finances, our children, our

parents, our colleagues or our friends. As we find that the ways we have used to control these in the past are showing cracks we begin to experience anxiety. We usually react by trying to withdraw or to bolster those 'coping strategies', but the easiest way is to step back and seek to influence without so much attachment to the outcome. Of course, this is easier said than done.

7 Start keeping a reflective journal

Much of what we know about civilisation comes from personal diaries, but few people who wrote them did so for others - they were a place to explore their own reactions to life; thoughts, emotional responses and fantasies. Through the journal, these people learnt to distinguish between fact and interpretation, and began to ask themselves "why?" Keeping a journal is the best way to accelerate your own development.

8 Learn to meditate

Meditation is a proven approach to reduce personal stress, improve creativity, and deepen our understanding of ourselves. Its pedigree dates back millennia and it has been used by millions.

9 Nourish your relationships

Most people are naturally reserved in making friends. Others make many acquaintances but few friends. To have friends we have to learn to trust, to share appropriately, and to relate at an emotional level without trying to control. Without friends it is hard to see how we are perceived.

10 Work with joy

Probably the hardest thing to cultivate, but being enthusiastic about our work, having an open minded curiosity, letting go of frustrations, anxieties and attachment to too rigidly defined outcomes makes work a real joy!

For details of my leadership coaching, public speaking and other activities, please check out my website:

www.grahamwilson.org

or telephone me on 07785 222380.

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