

Assessment Advisor™

A complimentary newsletter by CDR Assessment Group, Inc.

WELCOME to your Assessment Advisor!
We hope you enjoy the read. We encourage your input and feedback. Please email comments to cdrinfo@cdrassessmentgroup.com

By Nancy E. Parsons

Mixing Magic & Coaching Leadership Derailment Intervention

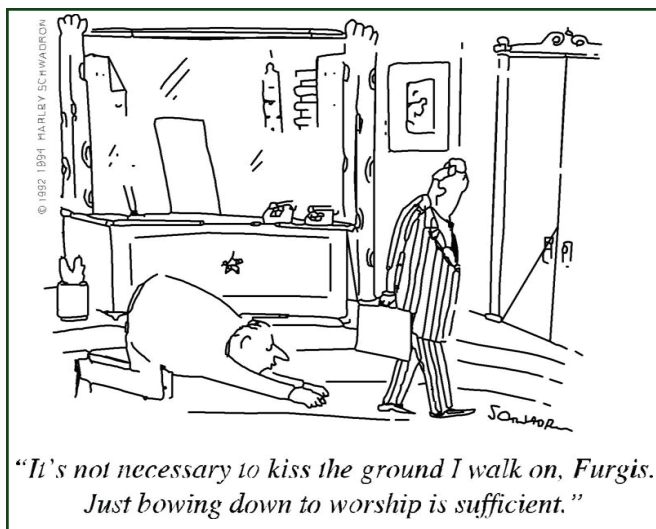
Intervention coaching is tough duty. When a leader is creating havoc, when bad behaviors have gone past the threshold of tolerance, or when a team is falling apart with no plausible solutions in sight, we get the call. We come in to perform our *magic*. Since these cases can be a can of worms, we are fortunate they are a small percentage of our overall coaching practice. The upside is that while these are often rocky and emotionally draining for all involved, if done well, interventions can be remarkably rewarding.

Magic may sound over-the-top. But, the term is not too much of a stretch given that the solutions we reveal tend to amaze our clients. Even more striking is that the derailing leaders themselves are the ones who frequently seem the most pleased and relieved. Because we are able to reveal correct and logical options that are ***otherwise elusive to clients***, it does seem to them that we are performing magic.

THE STORY: Nasty Ned

Ned, who was the director of a highly visible department, had been verbally abusive to staff and other key constituents for more than seven years. Change and unexpected events caused Ned to explode emotionally and the staff received the brunt of his anger. One staff member said "I have lost count on the number of constituents and staff members Ned has brought to tears."

Continued inside...



Can you identify the two CDR Leadership Risk Factors depicted in this cartoon?

Egotist, Pleaser

Kicking Business Leaders into Shape



Soccer is one of the oldest team games on earth. There are many similarities between leading a successful soccer team and a successful business team. Brave leaders laced up

their boots and donned their shin guards in preparation for this dynamic, educational and in-your-face 90 minute seminar titled **Leadership Football: How to Minimize Fouls, Cards and Penalties**, presented by Nancy Parsons of CDR Assessment Group. The seminar was held at the 2007 International Performance Improvement Conference on Wednesday May 2, 2007 at the Marriott Hotel in San Francisco, California. Watch

this space for details of future training events and seminars from CDR Assessment Group.

Email cdrinfo@cdrassessmentgroup.com to request a copy of the conference paper.

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Mixing Magic & Coaching continued...

“Compassion may be one of his weaker characteristics,” said one direct report. “I have witnessed Ned become angry at one of our staff because she wanted time off to attend the funeral of her mother.”

Making matters worse, racial tension entered this leader’s troubles. “Ned constantly complains about racism at our organization, yet he spews racism on his staff without hesitation.”

We perform our magic by revealing correct and logical options that are otherwise elusive to clients.

This feedback is just a small sample of the patterns of problematic behaviors and tension that had been permitted to suck the life and passion to perform out of the department. Ned’s inappropriate behaviors were not aberrations experienced by those required to work with him. They had become the norm.

The Magic

There are a couple of key ingredients required to perform intervention coaching magic. Our formula includes:

- Making sure the client is prepared to actually address the situation; agrees that change is necessary and the status quo won’t do
- candid, truthful, straight-shooting communications, including in-your-face coaching when necessary
- assessment tools that pinpoint **both** the root causes (CDR 3-D Suite) and impact (360° Leader Scan) of leader behaviors
- commitment by the client organization to provide the agreed-upon follow-up

support, action, and resources (as determined via intervention work) to correct and improve the situation.

How Does This Create “Magic”?

1) A Reality Check

Communication shuts down as a result of tolerating inappropriate leader behaviors for long periods of time. Naming the behaviors and outing the ogre become impossible for the organization. People learn to live with dysfunction and within an environment of disrespect. Senior leadership tolerates or ignores the elephant in the room. Confronting the issue with clarity and objectivity is something the coach must do at the onset.

Initially, the coach discusses with key management the ground rules, parameters/expectations of coaching, and spectrum of potential outcomes of the coaching intervention. Questions like: what is the best possible result? What is the worst result? What are you willing to tolerate? Why are you wanting change now? What flexibility do you have? How important is your investment in this individual? How much more can you invest? What’s the preferred time line?

Next, we let clients know that these types of scenarios are frequently “poor job fit” situations. Sadly these intolerable work environments go on for far too long with needless employee abuses along the way. Change *must* happen and if the company is committed to “fixing” the problem, that’s when we begin our magic.

CDR 2007 Training Schedule

COACHES’ FEEDBACK CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP

July 25 & 26
Chicago

September 26 & 27
Denver/Boulder

November 8 & 9
Albuquerque, NM

ADVANCED COACHES TRAINING WORKSHOP

New York, NY
December 6 & 7

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2) Truth Above All Else

In general, most coaches are truthful, but many curtail honesty with kindness or socially desirable techniques that dance around the most critical issues. When **we** refer to truth, we mean: frankness in coaching, candid and open dialog, accurate data designed to reveal problem causation, timely feedback, and unvarnished honesty.

The whole point of the intervention is to get the monster out of the closet, accurately identify it and carefully slay it. Sharing the truth, clearly void of sugar coating or camouflaging, is essential to the magic of intervention coaching.

3) Power Source for the Magic

The 360 feedback process is the important **second part** of the coaching intervention process. This data confirms the impact that the derailing or disruptive leader is having on his troops and organization. This feedback instrument, if done well and combines both statistical and narrative feedback (*such as the 360 Leader Scan*), should clarify the reasons for the intervention.

Too many coaches use a 360 tool and stop there. This falls short and allows too much wiggle room. **With 360s alone, the real problems remain elusive.** Although 360s describe important *symptoms*, they tell us nothing about the root cause of problematic behaviors. This “root cause” data is crucial and is the crux of our magic.

Our intervention magic, **part one**, comes from the CDR 3-Dimensional Assessment Suite®, which accurately reveals a leader’s: *Character* (acumen, EQ, and leader fitness); *Risk Factors* and vulnerabilities that can lead to derailment; and *Drivers & Reward* needs and aversions.

Bottom line, the CDR 3-D Suite gives an accurate reading on “job fitness”. Most often, this is the problem — poor job suitability. However, because of the failure to hold leaders accountable (by not looking past financial results), fear of addressing poor performance especially when involving minorities; or, wrongly thinking that effective leader behaviors can be taught to any smart and motivated person; organizations allow situations like Ned’s to fester for many months or even years.

THE NEW BEGINNING:

The truth is that deep down Ned wasn’t so nasty after all. He was actually a decent, creative guy who was completely miserable. He was promoted to the director role because of his academic credentials and his technical know-how. The organization failed to fix the deteriorating situation over the years, for the most part, because Ned was a minority.

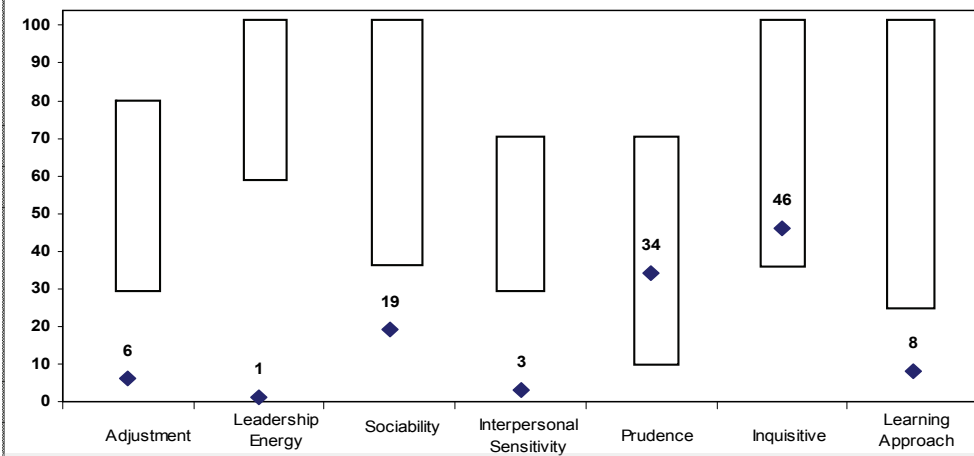
Ned was in a horrifically bad job for him. He didn’t have an ounce of leadership capability, yet he was the director of a prestigious and highly visible department. One of the scales on the CDR Character Assessment (part of the Suite and graph shown on next page), is Leadership Energy. For selection and succession planning purposes, in order to be considered for any management position, a mid-range to high score on “Leadership Energy” is needed. Ned scored a mere 1% on Leadership Energy. He was completely out of his element. He was trying to work against his own grain and had been failing miserably. Behaviors associated with his risk factors were out of control because he was stressed, depressed and agitated most of the time.

During the coaching process, Ned was remarkable. He was tired of the fights and frustration. He was ready for help and was responsive and engaged. In the end, Ned (being the creative guy he was) designed the job he would like to do that he felt would add value to the organization, and could tap into his strengths. Also, it included the type of work and environment he really enjoyed. We helped him shape it up and propose it to senior leadership. Fortunately, management thought it was a feasible and positive idea too, so they did some re-alignments, budget shifting and made it happen (while maintaining his salary.) Perhaps one of the most important outcomes was that Ned owned the changes and ideas. Everyone was happy (or — at least happier and relieved)!

Other Story Endings: *Not all cases end with the derailing leader staying in the organization. Post intervention, some leaders resign and a few have retired or gone to “contract” worker status. To date, no “involuntary terminations” have occurred after our intervention process, because the derailing leader takes charge of the situation.*

If you’d like to hear more about Ned’s profile or discuss the CDR Character Assessment scores graph on the next page, give as a call at 888-406-0100.

Nasty Ned's CDR Character Scores Compared to Leader Profile Ranges:



In the above graph, the boxes represent the acceptable scoring ranges* for a leadership position. The blue diamond show Ned's actual scores — as is clear, they do not fit these "leader" candidate profile requirements. While Ned was an intelligent, creative individual with a doctorate degree, **he was not well-suited to be assigned to a leadership role in any organization.** The magic is being able to see this type of information and then to deal with it directly, honestly, and with compassion. **Despite Ned's best efforts, he was destined to fail in this role.** The solution was for Ned to take a different job that was a match for his profile or to leave the organization if there was no suitable job available. Fortunately, the former was found for Ned.

*acceptable ranges determined by job performance validity research conducted by CDR Assessment Group, Inc.

ABOUT CDR ASSESSMENT GROUP

We help clients reverse the trend of force-fitting leaders into one-size-fits all development approaches. If you are ready to cut to the chase and get real results, then you are ready for CDR Assessment Group! The CDR 3-Dimensional Assessment Suite[®] accurately describes a leader's: character, risks factors for derailment, and personal drivers. The CDR Leadership Risk Assessment is the only assessment that consists of eleven risk factors, linking them to eight universal leadership derailers. **GET REAL — GET RESULTS.**

In Memory

We are glad for the few months that our colleague Jane Hanson was with us and we will miss her creativity and comradeship. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family in the United Kingdom as well as with her son and many friends in Tulsa.

CDR Staff

THE LAST WORD

If you have a success story of how you used CDR Assessment tools to solve leadership and/or organizational problems, whether you are a corporate leader or a coach, please send your stories for the *Assessment Advisor* to: cdrinfo@cdrassessmentgroup.com

MANY THANKS!



NANCY E PARSONS
President

Nancy is the cofounder of CDR and a true pioneer dedicated to shattering traditional methods for developing leaders. With more than 25 years in HR/OD she is a master coach who has provided developmental feedback to thousands of leaders. She is co-author of the breakthrough 3-D Suite.



KIMERLY BRINKMYER Ph.D.
Vice President

Kimerly is the co-founder of CDR and is an exceptional authority in organizational leadership. As vice president of operations and research, she has provided expertise across nearly all industry sectors. She is co-author of the 3-D Suite and leads product research and development for CDR.