



# SOPHIA ASSOCIATES

*Awakening Leadership Within*

## Sample Case Study: Leadership Coaching for CEO

**Situation:** This CEO has been in this position for approximately seven years. She anticipates that her bi-coastal company will be undergoing some changes due to market influences. She knows she has a reputation for being direct, sometimes even intimidating. She is results-oriented and she understands that she must provide visionary leadership through the upcoming shifts. She has had no real feedback and is looking for a perspective that includes the experience of working with C-level clients at other organizations. She is also a rare woman in a male-dominated industry that influences how she is perceived and how she believes she must behave.

### **Challenges**

- Client needs to have a way to assess her leadership style without compromising her leadership position.
- Client is reticent to share her concerns and ideas on strategies because of her position.
- Client recognizes that she must provide a model for her own executive team.
- Client has determined that some of her executives do not meet the standards of performance required to take the company to the next level.
- Client needs to work through her executives, delegating both authority and responsibility.
- Client recognizes her need to balance her family life with small children and her powerful career without compromising her health and wellbeing.
- As an introvert, client is challenged to increase her industry visibility.

**Solution:** Sophia Associates, Inc. provides a certified, experienced executive coach and advisor to work one to one with this CEO to increase her effectiveness over the course of twelve months. The client and her coach meet twice a month for two hours each session for the first six months and include shadowing opportunities. After six months, they schedule two in person or telephone appointments per month and often touch base in between via telephone. When more difficult issues or decisions arise they schedule to meet for longer sessions. Additionally, the coach uses The Leadership Circle Profile™ 360 assessment, whose results increase the clients awareness of her leadership strengths and drawbacks and provide focus for coaching.

### **Results and Outcomes**

- Adopted new ways of thinking about problems and developing solutions
- Developed techniques for showing greater empathy without diminishing powerful presence required to run this company



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- Learned to communicate powerfully without defensiveness, still maintaining her direct approach and incorporating inquiry
- Developed patience and listening skills that resulted in better relationships with her team, her employees and her board
- Became more emotionally intelligent, getting buy in on her ideas and influencing key decisions relating to corporate strategy, projects and staffing at the executive level
- Invited innovative thinking by creating open environments for information and idea sharing
- Able to set clear expectations and create an atmosphere of accountability
- By empowering others she was able to practice self-care through exercise and to better integrate family and work responsibilities
- Actively used her coach as a sounding board to discretely evaluate potential opportunities or confidentially “talk out” strategy
- Became involved in industry activities and associations that highlight her expertise
- Developed a practice for reflection that allowed her to maintain a high degree of self-awareness and supported successful decision making
- Created “real-time” self-observation practices and exercises to immediately experience new results while replacing ineffective behaviors
- Entered into a longer term retainer based engagement with Sophia Associates, Inc. that allows for quarterly meetings and access to real-time coaching as needed
- As a result of her development, she has engaged Sophia Associates coaches for many of her executives on both coasts

“Within the seven areas of performance management that drove the greatest business results, the number one area we would like to highlight is coaching. Interestingly, this is a new area of focus for management and leadership, and is taking on a life of its own. Organizations are finding that internal and external executive, management and leadership coaching can drive tremendously high business results.”

~ Bersin & Associates 2007 research

At the CEO and C-level, balancing competing commitments, building collaborative relationships cross-culturally, maintaining integrity and modeling guiding principles must work hand in hand with bottom line results. An executive coach provides unbiased support and challenge to leaders that help them be more effective, build their personal resiliency and keep them inspired through the many stages of organizational growth and evolution. Most importantly, as our client you have a collaborative partner and compassionate advisor whose focus is on developing the human side of leadership.

**Call us now for a complimentary, confidential consultation**

Sophia Associates, Inc. associates contribute their experience as leaders and working with leaders in private industry, non-profit and thriving organizations.

Tel: 443-433-0586

EM: [info@sophia-associates.com](mailto:info@sophia-associates.com)

1834 George Avenue • Annapolis, MD 21401

Tel: 443-433-0586 • Fax: 443-433-0587

Email: [alicia@sophia-associates.com](mailto:alicia@sophia-associates.com)

[www.sophia-associates.com](http://www.sophia-associates.com)