

Hummingbird Coaching White Paper Advises Employers on Evaluating Health Coaching Programs

Growing market increases coaching choices, confusion

CINCINNATI – Sept. 30, 2009 – Burgeoning interest in coaching may be a great boon for the wellness industry, yet may leave many employers with little clue how to evaluate the rapidly increasing coaching options now available.

In a new white paper, “Choosing a Coaching Vendor,” <http://www.hummingbirdcoaching.com/default.aspx?tabid=7316>, Hummingbird Coaching Services details the basic elements that employers should consider as they assess the quality of coaching programs.

Health, parenting and lifestyle coaching are increasingly popular options within employee benefit programs. Educational approaches for <http://www.hummingbirdcoaching.com/default.aspx?tabid=7203> [behavior change] have fallen short in helping employees sustain lasting behavior change. Yet the demand is attracting some vendors to tweak existing programs and re-label them as “coaching.” And due to the lack of standards in this relatively new field, even those who do develop new coaching programs fall short of a valid evidence-based program.

“Employees often need some level of personal support to convert their best intentions into their best actions,” said Dr. Neal Mayerson, Hummingbird chairman and a pioneer in the field of <http://www.hummingbirdcoaching.com/default.aspx?tabid=7205> [Positive Psychology]. “Coaching provides that support, and is especially effective when coaches are continually trained in behavior change.”

Content experts can fall into the trap of advice-giving, Mayerson explained, whereas studies show that clients stay engaged in a coaching program that is defined by a collaborative relationship. Coaching is about helping clients establish new behaviors, so employers should expect vendors to be able to explain specific elements of behavioral science within their programs. These include:

- Targeting behavior
- Functional behavior assessments
- Goal setting
- Positive Psychology – using client strengths and positive affect
- Active listening

Convenience in delivery also has been shown to increase client engagement. Employers should look for vendors with programs that leverage the newest methods of communication to increase convenience for clients.

For more information, download “Choosing a Coaching Vendor” at <http://www.hummingbirdcoaching.com/default.aspx?tabid=7316>

Hummingbird Coaching Services has provided one-on-one health coaching since 1997. Their <http://www.hummingbirdcoaching.com/default.aspx?tabid=7215> [proprietary coaching model] and online delivery platform is used by major employers, health plans and pharmaceutical companies to drive behavior change among employees and patients; www.hummingbirdcoaching.com.

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Contact:

Gail DeLano
Fisher Vista/HRmarketer
gdelano(at)fishervista.com
831-685-9700

Sean Slovenski
Hummingbird Coaching Services
Sean.Slovenski(at)hummingbirdcoaching.com
877-240-4588