

Ian Segail Interview with Paul Macklin, Amazing People

(Music introduction)

IAN SEGAIL: Welcome to another salestutor.com.au podcast, which supports business owners and sales leaders with ideas and tactical insights to accelerate their sales revenue.

IAN SEGAIL: Hi, I'm Ian Segail, author of *Bulletproof Your Sales Team* and I'm especially excited about introducing you to today's podcast guest, Mr. Paul Macklin. Paul Macklin is the principal and founder of *Amazing People*, which is a highly sought after organization development and learning practice that provides companies the likes of Qantas, Johnson & Johnson, Master Foods Sanitarium, West Pack (sp) and others with quality training and organizational development services including leadership coaching, teams, communication, performance management, and innovation.

Paul himself is an executive coach and has successfully coached and mentored some of this country's leading senior executives, providing them with mentoring and coaching and supporting them in their own change efforts to bring about greater people productivity and engagement through their organizations.

The discussion today will centre around the impact and some of the tools and techniques of effective coaching. There's also a short exchange on leadership and what it takes to become a leader. All in all this is a one hour interview, which is loaded with powerful ideas and insights that you can apply to your business and the management of your people.

Paul is both a brilliant and creative genius when it comes to business leadership and people management. And I'm proud to say he's both a mentor and a really good friend of mine and has been for over a decade. Without any more adieu, let me take you into my office where Paul and I were sitting down for a fireside chat about coaching and leadership.

Welcome Paul.

PAUL MACKLIN: Thank you, Ian. It's a privilege to be here.

IAN SEGAIL: So Paul, maybe just for the benefit of those listening, can you maybe just give us a snapshot of your background and how you got into this business in the first place?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well there's a long story and a short story. I guess for the purposes of the tape, the short story might suffice. About fifteen years ago my wife and I

were working in an advertising agency. I was creative director and she was a production manager.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And I read Steven Covey's well known 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and came to the realization that I was at the top of the ladder but the ladder was leaning against the wrong tree. And at the same time...

IAN SEGAIL: That's a big one.

PAUL MACKLIN: It was. Well, I guess it was one of four or five major life changes that I'd been through. At the time the agency was doing some work on organizational development videos to support another consultant that had a practice out there that supported the implementation of computer based systems.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: And he had come to the realization that without bringing people on the journey when you create change and systems that the system changes really fail or you have very difficult implementation. And as I was writing, helping him write the scripts for the videos, I realized that this was an area that I was very much interested in.

So we left the agency and a short time after that formed what was then Amazing Hat (sp) Company doing some innovative work using some of DeBono's (sp) technologies.

IAN SEGAIL: Where you and I first met.

PAUL MACKLIN: And that's when we connected when you were working with Rebel.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And then from that we, some years later, developed the business into Amazing People. The early part of the work that we did was very much around team building with a lot of short, half day, one day team building events with very much experienced based learning component. So high ropes, people jumping off ropes, (inaudible) team initiatives. And we learned very quickly in that process that we can accelerate a team to high performance if you can manage the environment, and you can take a largely disparate group of people and form them into a reasonably well-performing team very quickly.

So that seemed as though it was going very well and certainly our clients enjoyed the experience they were having with us.

IAN SEGAIL: And at the time there was a big buzz around teams and team building.

PAUL MACKLIN: There was lots of that going on, and by and large the groups of people we were working on were middle management, front line level. But when you went back, or I should come back a little to – motivation has always been to make sure that what we do produces a result.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we're never in it for training's sake and although our training was often very engaging and very entertaining, we were also concerned that it was going to provide an outcome. And I think that's partly because we came from a business background as opposed to coming from an outdoor education background or an education background. And we realized it had to create a bottom line result.

So we would go back and informally assess the impact that we had on those teams by visiting them in the workplace and talking to people. And often what we found was that instead of improved performance and an improved dynamic, sometimes it went backwards.

IAN SEGAIL: Wow, how so?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well, in doing our own informal research on that, one of the conclusions we came to was that when people came on the outdoor experience based learning process, they had the experience of being on a good team. And that was energizing and motivating and they appreciated that.

IAN SEGAIL: Then they go back home.

PAUL MACKLIN: Then they go back to the workplace and business as usual and to the day to day challenges and to (inaudible) gotten bigger while they were out and the behaviors didn't change. And so they became despondent because they said, "Look, we know what good teamwork is. How come we can't do it back here?"

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha.

PAUL MACKLIN: So about the same time the Master Foods or (inaudible) Organization approached us to help us get involved in the supporting their coaching program, the delivery of their coaching program, and we were introduced to coaching technologies and coaching tools and coaching practices, and we also realized that if we

were going to create an impact with the team, the person that had the most impact on the team most often in an organization was the individual team leader.

So then we began doing work on leadership and coaching and coaching individual leaders. We started to look at – what are the causes of behavior in a workplace? What are the causes of higher performance? What are the causes of good interpersonal effectiveness? And developed what I call my Magnetic Field Theory for organizational change.

So I want you to imagine that you have a piece of paper with a magnet underneath it and you sprinkle iron filings on it. This is an experiment we've all done as kids and we've done at school at some stage. And it will form that very typical field that we know of radiating from the north and radiating from the South Pole and making like an apple core effect.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: If you take that piece of paper and you take the magnet away and you run a comb through it, you can change of form of the way those iron filings line up, but when you take it back to the magnet again, if you shake it, it will reform back to the original piece.

So if you look at organizations you then say, “Well, what are the things that cause behavior in organizations?” And by and large it's not training and development. It's not teaching people to be more effective communicators or to be more effective team players. It's a lot to do with the way organizations are structured. So typically, if you look at an executive team, you'll find that the KPIs and the incentives for the team at a senior level actually cause conflict in the team. I mean, for one thing, the senior executive teams you often find that all of the players or many of the players are competing to be the next CEO.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So really you have a system there or a magnetic field which makes cooperation difficult.

IAN SEGAIL: Yes.

PAUL MACKLIN: If you look at the players that have the capability to rise to each EM (sp) level, to an executive level, quite often they're very independent and good, strong leaders. So they're very good at playing independently.

IAN SEGAIL: And often very competitive.

PAUL MACKLIN: And competitive in order to be – and they're used to giving directions and not necessarily used to asking other people's opinion.

IAN SEGAIL: Wow, okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: So there you have part of the magnetic field that causes it to be difficult. And John Katzenberg (sp) and the Wisdom of Teams has written some wonderful stuff around this and you know, reading Katzenberg's (sp) Wisdom of Teams 10 or 12 years ago probably was one of the ah ha's for me where I realized you're often going in there to create teamwork where the structure and system doesn't support it. So really it's a waste of energy and effort.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: But likewise, if you look at the KPIs of the executives of that level, take the KPIs of the guy that's running the supply chain. Invariably, it will be about reducing stock turns, reducing their inventory and trying to make the supply chain as efficient as possible. If you look at the KPIs of the guys in sales, it will be about delivering in time to the client.

Now those two aren't necessarily at odds with one another, maybe then you add to that the KPIs of the guy in marketing, which is to maximize the share of the business. And you start to see that these things can be in conflict. Because the sales guy says, "Look, if you guys bring the price down, I can sell buckets of this stuff."

IAN SEGAIL: Of course.

PAUL MACKLIN: And the marketing guy says, "Well yes, but if you sold strategically, we'd be making more margin, we'd be taking the business where we want to go." So we end up, because structurally the KPIs are at odds with one another, we haven't had a collection conversation around how that's going to work with these guys being competitive.

So you can play that right down through the organization. So we started to look at organizational structure and organizational design. And we started looking at the capabilities of leaders that underpin that and how the leader impacts the team. And of course, when you think about it, leadership has an enormous impact on how people behave.

IAN SEGAIL: Yeah, for sure.

PAUL MACKLIN: The odd Sicilian saying is, "The fish rots from the head down."

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: But if I'm standing in front of a group I usually say, "The tail follows the head, because it's a little bit less offensive."

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: (Laughing)

IAN SEGAIL: Is it Sicilian? I thought it was Greek. But anyway...

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah, someone said the other day it was Chinese. Nations don't (inaudible) what are appropriate.

IAN SEGAIL: Right. Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: So obviously then that took us out of the realm of doing – well, not necessarily took us out of the realm of doing the team building – we began to adjunct their team building activities with more work around leadership, around coaching leaders, and particularly around how leaders create the structure and the systems in the organization that enable the organization to act.

So now if somebody comes to me and says, "Paul, I've got a team or I've got an organization and I need to create some change there. We've got these issues. We've got these problems." My first response is, "Well, I see this as an X length period of work." Often with a team it will be very much less than 12 months.

IAN SEGAIL: Because you're changing the structure of the organization not just – this is not just a quick come in and tweak a couple of buttons and fix the team.

PAUL MACKLIN: There's no quick fix. And I think the metaphor, and this is the metaphor I use when I'm with people is, "Okay, imagine I'm a sports coach. And you've got a team, they're average. They're sort of in the middle of the middle grade and you've got some aspirations to take them to the top of the middle grade and maybe progress them into the senior league. Because that's where you know the organization needs to go."

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: "And we've coddled these guys together over a period of time and some of them are pretty reasonable players. We've got some young guys in there that have got some capability. And we've got some people that have been around there just enjoying playing the game. So we want to lift the capability of that group." And you come to me and if I responded to you and said, "Okay, we're going to go out and run a

marathon next week and that will fix it.” You’d think I was crazy. You know? You’d be wanting me to come back and say, “Oh yeah, we’re going to have a development regime here. We’re going to look at the capability of the team. Who’s in, who’s out, you know, who’s on the borderline. What do we need to do to develop the young players? What’s the talent management strategy? Which games do we need to play? Which games do we need to win? What’s critical for us? What are our game strategies? How are we going to play them?”

Now, of course, an approach like that is to use Covey’s (sp) term, it’s a quarter and two approach. It’s looking at long term, it’s looking at planning.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we form a relationship then most often with a senior person and we’d coach them because the other parties, if they don’t own it, if the leader, he or she doesn’t own that process...

IAN SEGAIL: So they delegate it out to HR to fix yeah.

PAUL MACKLIN: And any time they delegate it to HR, you can guarantee it’s an ineffective process.

IAN SEGAIL: Right, right. So if we take and look at – we were talking earlier about the state of the economy and everyone’s kind of in a state of panic – so the cheese has moved effectively. Organizations are structured around a certain where the cheese was.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yes.

IAN SEGAIL: And the other cheese is moved somewhere else to coin another phrase. Are you suggesting that, in effect, you have to change the structure of the organization now to meet the current challenges?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well I think you’re always changing the structure of your organization to meet challenges. I’m doing some wonderful work at the moment with a man by the Name of Dr. Norm Chun (sp). One of Norm’s wonderful piece of enlightenment is the strategy is really all about organizational design. Essentially you’re trying to create the right group of people, the right shape of people in the right series of processes in order to take advantage of whatever is in the market place at the time.

IAN SEGAIL: So it is constantly moving?

PAUL MACKLIN: It’s – tell me when it’s ever been stationary.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: The degree and the pace with which it moves now I think is much more significant than it was in our parents' time.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And the degree of competition is much more significant and there's global competition in every industry, in our industry when we first began playing in this space 15 years ago, there were very few international players playing in Australia. And now we have four or five competitors that can play in our space and not only that, they're very much niched. So they have a very specialist capability. So if you wanted one size fits all and very economic, there's a supplier out there that can provide that to you.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: If you want a very boutique but focused around values development, there's a player out there who's very good at that that plays from somewhere off shore that can give you that.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So if you're not clear about what game you're playing and how you play that, and if your organization isn't structured behind that, then you're in trouble.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: And, of course, if you look at what's happened with the share market, a big piece of organizational context has changed.

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: Now the knee jerk reaction in this sort of situation is to cut back on heads. You know, the empirical research is that that's a dangerous thing to do in this situation and actually the companies that invest in people are the ones that will emerge at the other end, it's the speed at which you come out of the corner that determines how fast you cover the track.

Now that's not easy.

IAN SEGAIL: No it's not, because you've got your share of the screaming, they still want something.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah. And they look at the share price and then one of the things that a really ruthless CEO can do is go in there and cut heads and suddenly he looks like he's doing the right thing and the share price goes up. Well, you know, short term thinking has short term consequences.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: It's a very hard sell. The landscape for the HR and OD guys, the organizational development guys, has changed dramatically in the last 12 months. 12 months ago it was they had a really good, strong platform to say to their CEOs, "We really need to be investing in our people because we can lose them." People in Australia are going west to the modern companies and off to Dubai where the big money is. Well, now all of a sudden we're facing...

IAN SEGAIL: They're coming back.

PAUL MACKLIN: They're coming back and people are looking for long term tenure and they're wanting security. And we're facing an economy that might have an unemployment issue.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we have to change the way we approach them in terms of selling what we think is a valuable, what we can prove is a value to the business.

IAN SEGAIL: So if I'm a head of sales and marketing and while I've got my team, yes I'm still part of an executive team and I recognize from what you said that the executive team is somewhat dysfunctional in terms of its approach.

PAUL MACKLIN: Potentially.

IAN SEGAIL: Yeah. Potentially. And I'm sitting here thinking, "Gee, from what you're saying, yes we probably don't have our stuff together in that sense." What is – do I work downwards? Do I work upwards? Where do I play?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well if I was a good coach here I'd say, "What do you think?"
(Laughing)

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: But that's probably not the point of the interview.

IAN SEGAIL: Correct.

PAUL MACKLIN: Well, in actual fact, you need to work in all directions.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah, any successful organization or any successful individual is very good at managing the value exchange that they create with their stakeholders. We all exist because we create value for other people. So we create value for the executives that we work for, we create value for the executives who we work with and we create value not only for our own teams, but also for other teams in the organization.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So how I manage those value exchanges or how I create the best possible win, win in all of those situations will determine very much how I succeed.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: Now some players will play to the big stakeholder. You know, there are many organizations that are run by very tough and ruthless people that just play to the share market. And they do that very well and it's a mode of operation that's highly successful. And there's also other organizations where the CEO is very much focused on people and process and future and they work well.

I think in the early days...

IAN SEGAIL: So it's not an either/or?

PAUL MACKLIN: No. And it's definitely not one size fits all. You know, in the early days when we first started doing this work, I started going out and interviewing people and saying, "What makes you a successful leader?" And the thing that I was most surprised with was the divergence of answers that I got. You know, one person would do it one way and one person would do it another way. Roger Hamilton's work, he makes the comparison between Bill Gates and Warren Buffet. So Bill Gates had an organization of 60 thousand people and made his fortune and became number one in the world for a period of time. And Warren Buffet has an organization of 7 and that's not 7 thousand, that's 7 people. Now they must be leading in totally different ways. Yet they're both very successful.

So again, I guess if you think about the marketplace as a little bit like the environment – there's many niches in the environment and there's rooms for people to play in different

ways. What's critical I think for the individual player is to understand as Marcus (inaudible) said, "Where's your strength and how do you play to your strength?"

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: "What are you good at?"

IAN SEGAIL: And organizationally as well.

IAN SEGAIL: Yeah, what's the capability set we have as an organization. If we want to go and play in a completely different game, that will mean we need to create a completely different capability. How big is that step we need to make? What's the cost of doing that? Are we better off to understand what our current capability is and form a niche market within that capability and specialize it? So there are strategic decisions.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay. So in terms of leadership then, which is why we're on the subject of leadership, because you guys do a lot of training in terms of you take them out into the bush and...

PAUL MACKLIN: The Leadership Challenge?

IAN SEGAIL: The Leadership Challenge and really work to develop leaders. Can anybody just become a leader if you go on a leadership challenge course?

PAUL MACKLIN: One of the conversations I think that we have early in the piece is to try to get people to create a distinction between leader and leadership. Because leadership is a behavior. So we can give a person the title of leader and we often do.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: They can be the leader or marketing or they could be the leader of the leadership team or whatever that is. And that's a positional title, that doesn't necessarily mean that they're exercising leadership or their people are following them. So position or not, doesn't necessarily indicate leadership. But if we look at leadership at a series of behaviors or if we look at leadership as the result of a series of behaviors, then I believe that everybody has the capacity to exercise leadership to some degree.

IAN SEGAIL: Because you can learn the behavior.

PAUL MACKLIN: You can learn the behavior, you can learn the orientation, you can learn what it is that leaders do and what leaders create.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay. So over time you implement those behaviors, you can emerge the leader inside you.

PAUL MACKLIN: Well if we go to the Leadership Challenge, which is four and a half days, it's an experience based learning program, it's out in the bush, you know, it involves a whole range of initiatives and it also involves a whole range of domestic activities, each of which is lead by somebody in the group.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So 15 to 18 people will go, lucky 13th person off the bus gets a brief that says, "You're in charge for the next three hours. We need to get the food. Here's two thousand dollars. There's the bus, there's the driver. We don't have a menu. There's the trailer, there's the tents."

IAN SEGAIL: Go for it.

PAUL MACKLIN: "There's the campsite. Set it up. We need a vision established. We need a safety policy. We need everybody fed. There's a market with a kitchen." And people respond to that challenge in a whole range of various ways, as you can imagine.

IAN SEGAIL: No doubt.

PAUL MACKLIN: And then over the period of the four days we have a whole range of challenges where we have stakeholders that demand that they deliver and – but a key part of that process is feedback. So after two or three hours of being on the hot seat and being the leader in that artificial environment and creating the framework, I guess in some ways it's a bit of a survivor place. We then sit around, and I think unlike Survivor and unlike the sort of television dramatized versions of it, we create a very, very comfortable learning environment where people can open up and get good quality feedback about how they did, what they did.

IAN SEGAIL: Oh okay. So there's a good referral system for them to see, "Oops, my behavior doesn't match what I think it should be or what I think I am doing."

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah or, "What is my behavior doing? What is the impact of my behavior?" Now in the early days of the program we very much believed that it was a skill based program that we were teaching people leadership skills. Now having done it for six or seven years, we've discovered that the real power of the program doesn't lie in teaching skills, but it lies in unearthing who you are. So good leaders, in general, have an understanding of how they operate, how their behavior impacts others – and they use

their strengths in order to create the changes they want in the environment. And they're true to themselves.

I mean, as I said earlier in the tape, there are leaders that lead with a very autocratic and self centered style and who are very effective. Most often they know that that works for them.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And they're not out there trying to be...

IAN SEGAIL: And therefore they hire people who would submit to that.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah and they create organizations that work well around that.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And that structure may not necessarily be humane, but it does it often very, very effective.

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: But they know that it works that way. Quite often as they come down through the layers of the business, people are not necessarily as aware of who they are and how they operate and how their behaviors impact others. So a critical component obviously in the program is then coaching to support that process. So after you've gone and you've done your two hours and you've lead and various things have happened. You may have been successful or things may have failed. Things could have gone wrong, people could have gotten angry and upset. It doesn't really matter.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: It's all grist for the mill.

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: At the end of that when we sit around the circle – and we use a structured model around leadership to help people gather feedback and to what extent did you build a vision? How did you mobilize people's resources? How did you make best use of people's capability? How did you network with partners? That feedback then becomes information that helps the person say, "Well here's what I'm good at and here's how my behaviors impact others."

And then you can start to ask the question, “Well how are you using that back in the workplace?”

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha.

PAUL MACKLIN: And that’s where lots of good one to one coaching helps the person identify, “Well, I’ve got these strengths. Currently I’m using some of them but I could use them much more. Currently my strengths makes me well suited for my job or not well suited for my job. And I’ve got these areas that I’m not so strong at and then I need to make some decisions.” Because the historic wisdom was we would give you a 360 degree feedback piece and then we would spend years and years and years trying to develop.

IAN SEGAIL: To improve.

PAUL MACKLIN: To identify weakness. And we know now that empirical evidence shows us that it doesn’t actually make very much difference.

IAN SEGAIL: Correct.

PAUL MACKLIN: We would be far better to invest that time in developing strengths. So in the coaching we help them develop mitigation strategies around weaknesses. So that could be – you know, the first assessment is – is it open for change? Is there enough capability there that you could develop some proficiency? If so, let’s invest in a bit of training. If it’s so much not you that you’re never going to get there, you’re chronically not organized, which is in my case.

IAN SEGAIL: Bring in some support.

PAUL MACKLIN: Then let’s get you a good EA or partner you up with someone who’s like that.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Or if you’re chronically not good at being creative and you know you need to do that in your CEO role, then let’s partner you up with somebody – so let’s form some networks and some lines, or let’s (inaudible) the processes of your business. So at the end of the meeting let’s make sure that we’ve got a process that says, “Have we covered all of the bases here?”

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: “Have we crossed all the I’s and dotted all the T’s?” In the case of the person who’s not necessarily so organized.

IAN SEGAIL: Right, gotcha. So which then leads on to coaching. You mentioned earlier you started out running coaching workshops?

PAUL MACKLIN: Correct, yeah.

IAN SEGAIL: How did coaching actually impact what you were doing at a team level? What did you see as the big impact – once the guys came to the workshop, they learned how to coach and then went back into the workplace and applied coaching – what did you notice started to happen?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well, for me I think if a leader adopts the approach that they want to be a people-centric person, they recognize that they want to grow in that area. Some don’t, but for those that do, the real value of coaching is the degree of responsibility that it places on the coachee for their development. So if we look at the process of bringing somebody to high performance, a metaphor that’s sometimes been used has been trying to make a violin. I’m a luthier – is it a luthier that makes violins? I’m a violin maker and it’s in the old days before you went to Bunnings (sp) to buy your lumber. Anyway, we don’t want disparaging comments about Bunnings (sp) lumber.

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: You would go to the forest to find the tree to make the top of the violin. And you would look for a certain quality of timber. You would want something that was straight and fine grained. You know, free of knots. And you would cut the tree and then you would season the lumber for a period of time. And then you’d have the right piece of wood. So that, in this sort of organizational metaphor context, is recruitment.

The first question I ask a team leader when I’m working with them on a team is, super work is worker’s question marks and outs (inaudible), “Who have you got on the team?”

IAN SEGAIL: Do we have the right people on the team?

PAUL MACKLIN: Do we have the right people on the bus, right. So recruitment and selection gets you the right people and if you had asked me, “What is the most significant factor in developing a high performance team?” I’ve got to always say, it’s selection.

And there’s a friend of mine Fred Hall says, “You can teach a pig to climb a tree but you’re better off to use a monkey.”

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing) It's really true.

PAUL MACKLIN: (Laughing)

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: So then you bring the piece of timber back to the workshop and you carve it. And you carve it into the right shape and you make sure it's the right form and fit for the job to be a violin top. Well that's like training. That's investing and making sure that the person has the right knowledge and skills and abilities to do the – or the right competencies to do their job.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So the next part in the process is actually taking the piece of timber back to the workshop and carving it into the right form. And the carving process is essentially like training in the workplace. You work with the capability that's there but you're trying to build that capability into the right shape and fit to fit the (inaudible).

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: Once we've done that and we've built the violin together, the last part is actually to try to bring the best out of them. And you bring the best out of the violin by tuning it and polishing it and scraping it and...

IAN SEGAIL: And that's the coaching.

PAUL MACKLIN: And that's really the coaching aspect if you think about it in terms of working with people. So for coaching to be effective, you need to assume that the basic capability is there. Because if we've selected the right person, we've got them in the right role. If we don't have the right person in the right role with the right set of skills all the coaching in the world is only going to create frustration.

So quite often a coaching conversation with a person will turn into a conversation around, "Well are you doing the right job?" And that's not a bad conversation because after all the person is going to be far happier, you know, being a monkey climbing a tree or being a pig doing what pigs do.

IAN SEGAIL: And it's interesting because working in sales often, and certainly in the last say 5 or 10 years, you haven't had to be really good. Sales hasn't – it wasn't necessarily come naturally, but because the market place was just so buoyant you could fit in. And now, people are really having their metal tested. I think you'll find a lot of people say, "Well gee, actually this is not really for me."

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah. You may get the opposite now, you might get people in sales teams because the employment market is getting tougher that will do everything they can to stay there.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So coaching, as you well know, and you've coached sales people in your own organization, a good coach will very quickly highlight whether or not the person has the ability or not.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And that really should be one of the first challenges that you're working with when you're coaching.

IAN SEGAIL: Yeah.

PAUL MACKLIN: We use a couple of core models when we're coaching. Initially the models that we worked around the behaviors of the coach, which is very much an old school model if you think about it. You know, get the behaviors of the coach right and the process will take care of itself.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Part way into that process I realized it wasn't very outcome focused. So I did some research and said, "What's the actual outcome you're trying to create when you coach somebody?" And really what you want is business results and business alignment. You know, you want the person that you're working with to be aligned to the values of the business and to the processes of the business and to the purpose of the business. And then at the same time, you want them producing the results that the business requires of them.

So the outcome of coaching might be that the person decides it's the wrong time and place. You know, ultimately the purpose of coaching is to try and create alignment and business results. So we want the person aligned to the performance goals and to the values and the behaviors of the business and to the purpose of the business. And we want them to be performing at the level that's required for them where they are.

So if you take that as the ultimate outcome, that's what you should be coaching for. That's what you should be measuring, that's what you should be altering and that's what you should be trying to alter your coach too. So assuming you've got the right person in the role, that you're coaching doesn't identify that they shouldn't be there – you come

one step back and you say, “Well, what are the enablers of that level of awareness in performance?” And I looked for initially at high performing sports people to say, “Okay, if we’ve got a high performing, high potential, high performing people in a sports environment, what is it that enables them to be successful at their level?”

And we came up with what we call their Five Cs. That is the focus for the coach when they’re coaching the coachee.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So the Five Cs are clarity, control, competence, commitment and confidence.

IAN SEGAIL: Clarity, control...

PAUL MACKLIN: Competence.

IAN SEGAIL: ...competence....

PAUL MACKLIN: Confidence and commitment. So I’m happy to work through some of those.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: Some of those – so if we think about clarity. To be effective in my role I need to understand who I am, I need to understand what the role is, I need to understand what the goals of the role are, I need to understand how I’m performing against those currently, I need to understand where the pressure points are so I can make a difference. So if you like, that’s like an intellectual understanding of the situation that I’m in. So you could call it self awareness or situational awareness or a combination of those things.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: So part of the role of the coach is to help develop situational awareness. So when you come in for coaching, for example, you go very quickly in coaching a sales environment, you go very quickly to the critical issues which are around sales measures.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So how are we currently performing against targets? What are the targets? You know, what’s for certain? What’s at risk and what do we know we can get?

And what's the probability of that? And then the coaching call's the same thing, you start to work on why we're doing this coaching call and what should we be focused on.

So if you like, it's the intellectual component that builds self awareness and self understanding.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: The next bit is around control. For me to effectively operate as a coachee, I need to take self responsibility.

IAN SEGAIL: Which is hard to get people to do.

PAUL MACKLIN: Absolutely.

IAN SEGAIL: I was sitting in a coaching session yesterday and the coach that I'm coaching asked a question and the person said, "Well gee, I don't know."

PAUL MACKLIN: So where's the ownership there?

IAN SEGAIL: Correct.

PAUL MACKLIN: Well often managers are responsible for creating that situation.

IAN SEGAIL: Of course.

PAUL MACKLIN: If that person has grown up in an environment where their parents always told them what to do and they come into an organization where managers tell and short term delegation managers, they're gopher managers, they will never have had the opportunity to develop self responsibility. I mean, with self responsibility comes risk and the opportunity of failure, but also the opportunity of success.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So part of the coaching is to try to develop self responsibility in the coachee. And obviously part of the way you do that when you're coaching is the use of effective questions, because questions land the problem in the coachee's...

IAN SEGAIL: As opposed to it's my problem or it's our problem, it's actually yours.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah and in fact, even the coach model that starts with current situations – some of the models start with goal. Well I've never ever seen somebody walk up to me and say, "Well Paul, I want to achieve this."

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Normally they come and say, “Paul I’ve got this problem.” Which is actually a description of current state. For me, goal comes second.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So there’s a whole range of things that a person needs to be able to get their handle on if they want to be in control. So that could be around control around finances or it could be a control around decision, which is like an authority piece. It could be self control. So if you look at Lighten Hewitt (sp) as a tennis player you know he’s one of those wonderful tennis players that always plays that fine edge of being out of control and in control.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And when he’s in control he’s an amazing tennis player. When he loses control, you know, he loses the game.

IAN SEGAIL: His game goes to pot. Yeah.

PAUL MACKLIN: And you compare him to somebody like Ed Burg (sp) or the current world number two, steady consistent, focused, in control all the time. So that’s control and as a coach you can do a lot to transfer that, especially as a manager coach. Because as a manager coach we hold...

IAN SEGAIL: You still have the authority.

PAUL MACKLIN: We have the authority. And one of the biggest challenges manager coaches face is having the confidence to hand over the authority to somebody else to make the decisions and make the call. So you can do some delegation, training and that.

Which brings to the next piece, you know, often we’ll hand over the authority when we know the person is competent. So when we’re talking about competence, we’re really talking about – does the person have the right skill set for the role?

IAN SEGAIL: Which brings up then, if I’m your manager coach, often I suddenly stop coaching and move into teaching, because I suddenly see a gap.

PAUL MACKLIN: We operate across a continuum. So on one of the continuum we talk about telling. So there’s directive management. “Ian, I want you to go and do this.” That assumes the manager is in total control and the other is a servant essentially. Then if

you come a little bit more towards empowering the recipient or the coachee, you talk about persuasion. So that persuasion, I'm trying to give you reasons to do the task so that you own it and you have to take it on.

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha.

PAUL MACKLIN: So that's a selling process.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: All selling is about persuasion. Trying to create enough value in the mind of the recipient that they say, "This is worth me doing."

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Then there's a commitment, investment in it. If you come across the next one is then teaching, so once you begin to own it, I can begin to teach you around, "Well, these are the things you need to focus on. Here's the critical touch points. This is what you need to be aware of." And the ultimate end there is actually empowerment or delegation where you can begin to coach.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So now the person owns it and they've got some capability around doing it, so they've got some level of self direction and they can then be coached by another violin being fine-tuned.

Now as a coach you need to work across all four of those, especially as a coach manager, depending on the circumstance and the person you're working with. And you might model all four of those in 15 minutes working with four different people, or even with one different person. So that requires a degree of sensitivity.

IAN SEGAIL: Right. So you have an understanding of where you're at with that person and where that person's at with the – with trying to achieve their goal or solve their problem or whatever it is.

PAUL MACKLIN: Correct. One of the assumptions that we sometimes make is that if it's a competence issue – so if it's a skill issue that we should be teaching the person – and that's a narrow view around how people learn. Because we can actually use coaching to help somebody learn something.

IAN SEGAIL: Can you share an example?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well, let's take it in your case. Let's just say we did a joint sales call together.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And we were really trying to develop the person's awareness around when was the critical point to close the sale. So we could take them to a seminar and we could talk about critical closing points, and we could show them videos, and we could show them where the closing points were and we could get them to do a ten point questions that says, "When the person's pupils dilate" whatever, right? I don't know sales as well as you do, I'm sure you do.

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: Likewise, we could do the joint sales call together and see what happened. It's not a life critical sales call, we can afford to let the person run the call and see what occurs. At the end of that call we can do a coaching conversation. And we could start even with the first of the Five Cs around clarity. "So Bob, tell me what happened during the call."

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: "Now, what did you notice? When did you notice that the customer was starting to warm up to the proposition? When did you see them closing down? How did you see that? What did you notice?"

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: "What did you notice about their body language about the way they said it? When did you actually make a decision that you were going to close the call? How did that work for you? If you were going to do it again would you use that tone? Would you use that close? What was the close you used? What other options do you have?"

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So you see as you're doing that, asking all of those questions, you're getting the person to reflect on their experience and reflecting on their own experience is one of the most powerful ways we can – because we're dealing with reality. We're not dealing with theory out of the textbook.

Now...

IAN SEGAIL: Which is a really good case for sales managers, getting out into the field with their people. Gee, what a concept.

PAUL MACKLIN: (Laughing) Yeah, which is – but I've done a little bit of work with coaching, working with remote teams, and it's a huge challenge for a sales manager, especially if their geographic territory is Australia or Southeast Asia if they're an executive.

IAN SEGAIL: Right, absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: And of course, you're not going to be able to be there with the sales call with every call, but you can with a telephone call. And we actually use a technique a little bit like this when we're doing a coaching training. So we actually get the coach to be blindfold while the coachee is learning to hit a golf ball. And we'll have participants say, "But how can I possibly coach them if I can't see what they're doing?" And of course, the answer is, "Well, how do you see what they're doing?"

IAN SEGAIL: Yes. You ask them questions.

PAUL MACKLIN: You have to ask them questions. And...

IAN SEGAIL: "Did you hit the ball? I can't see!" (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: (Laughing) A little anecdote. We were walking across to the field where we do the coaching practice, part of this three day coaching program and I had a guy with me who must have been in his late forties, early fifties who was obviously a very good golfer. And he was going out with a young woman, early twenties, who knew nothing about golf and I don't think she had a particularly powerful position in the organization. So you can kind of see that there's this whole power play, disparity between the two.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And we're walking across the road and privately out of her hearing he just leaned across to me and he said, "What the hell is this girl going to show me about coaching, mate? I've been playing for thirty years." And I said, "Well, let's just wait and see."

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we got out to the field and she said, "Look, I'd like to do it with a blindfold on. That would help me." And so he stepped up to the tee and he put the ball

down and she said, “Well what would you like to do?” And he said, “Oh, I just want to whack a few darling.” There was a little bit of patronizing going on.

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: So he hit the ball and sure enough, zoom, it sliced off to the right. And she said, “Well I couldn’t see anything that was going on there. Can you tell me what happened?” He said, “Oh, it sliced off to the right.” And she said, “Well...I don’t know anything about golf, what causes that?” And he said, “Oh well, you know, my grip was probably a bit like that and my stance needs to be a bit more like this.” And she said, “Well okay, why don’t you do that?” And you know, he adjusted his grip and adjusted the stance and bang, the next one went off and she said, “I don’t know what’s going on. What happened there?” “Well, I was a bit more off to the right.” And she said again, “Well I don’t know anything.” He said, “Oh, actually my – one of the coaches at the golf course has been getting me to focus on x,y, z, I can’t remember where to hold my hand exactly.”

And she said, “Oh well, why don’t you get centered around that?” And the next thing he hit this ball and it just went straight down the middle and he just said, if you’ll excuse the language, “Bugger me.”

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: (Laughing) And he looked at me and I said, “Well there you go.” And it shows to me the pair of coaching – often when I’m coaching I’ll play the innocent ear.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: You know, “Ian, I don’t know anything about sales. Tell me about sales.” And actually I might know a lot about sales. But in that innocent ear I give you the opportunity to show your capability. It gives you the opportunity to shine and I learn what you know.

IAN SEGAIL: Very clever.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we’re talking about the Five Cs. So we covered clarity and we’ve covered control, and we’ve had some conversation there about competence. And the critical issue being that you don’t necessarily have to train for competence, you can recruit for it. You can train for it, but you can also coach for it.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we develop our own capability. So the next one is around commitment. And commitment is all about what you value. So the model we use here is a three part piece. Commitment is a function of expectation, concern and control.

IAN SEGAIL: Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: So if I said to you, “Ian, would you like to climb Mt. Everest?”

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Would you?

IAN SEGAIL: At the moment, absolutely not. But it doesn’t fit within my game plan for myself.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah, so really you’re saying if I said to you, “Oh I really want you to go, Ian. I want to motivate you to go.” You’re probably going to go, “Well, I’m sorry Paul, I’m not interested.” And there’s a reason for that. Now we could put ten people in a room and I often do and I ask that question. You know, in ten people I might get one hand wants to climb Mt. Everest, one wants to go to base camp, somebody will want to go snow camping and for some people a bump in the walk with a dog in the park is as far as they want to go towards mountains.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And when you analyze that it’s a function of expectations, concern and control. So for the person that wants to climb Mt. Everest, what do they expect? So there could be some ego reward in being one of the few people – there has been many that have done it now – but one of the few that have done it.

IAN SEGAIL: The adventure.

PAUL MACKLIN: It could be the adventure, the personal challenge, standing on top of the world, there would be something for them which is an attractor. They balance that out against the statistics – one in four that suffer some major sort of trauma as a result of doing that. That’s a very high risk piece, but for them, the expectation of reward is greater than the expectation of risk.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Now quite often I’ll get people that won’t want to go and climb Mt. Everest. But if I say to you, “Look, Ian, if I could give you two years off work with guaranteed income. And we’re going to put you in an absolute, crack fitness team and

they're going to raise your fitness to huge levels and we're going to put a safety system in place where we could get a helicopter to you – not that helicopters can fly that high – but a helicopter to you at any time and they could pull you off the mountain. Would that change your desire to go?" Now, it may not do it for you because I don't know – we haven't analyzed to understand what your motivators are, but quite often in the group I'll now get three hands that will go up.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So what changed? I changed the degree of control and I changed the degree of risk involved. So when you look at it in a coaching situation, we want an inexperienced person to go out and start doing cold calling, which is sometimes one of the most scary things for inexperienced sales people.

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: We've got to look at what that equation is. What are they expecting to go into? What's the expectation of reward from having done it? What is the risk that they face? What is the expectation of a negative consequence and how much control do they have in that situation? And, of course, as coaches we can help work on those things.

And that means being close to our people and understanding what motivates them.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So another for example – one of the guys who works in our network is what I call a life-styler. His primary career motivation is his lifestyle. He likes building houses, he likes climbing mountains and he likes having a lot of free time to spend with his family. And to feed that he comes and works with us.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Now in the early part of working with him, I coached him furiously to try and get him to be more involved in the business and to take a bigger view and to come on the entrepreneurial journey with us, yadda yadda yadda. He never bought into it.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And then I came across a nice piece of work that talked about career anchors and I read that and researched and, "Scotty, your career anchor is

lifestyle.” And when I understood that I was much better able to manage him. Because I didn’t try to create commitment situations with him that his values weren’t in line with.

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha.

PAUL MACKLIN: So if you think about that from a sales executive’s point of view, you’ve got to know your people, what motivates them.

IAN SEGAIL: Right, gotcha, okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: So that brings us to the last piece, which is confidence. And of course, you can actually say confidence is a consequence of all of the other four put together. When a person is clear, when they have control, when they have the confidence and when they’re committed to something, it’s largely that their confidence, that their feelings for success will be high.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So one way we can impact confidence is make sure the other four are there. And, of course, there’s the other more intrinsic nature of how people are – so their natural risk profile or their natural confidence profile and again, that needs personal work when you’re coaching someone to try and build their persona sense of self esteem and their sense of self worth.

IAN SEGAIL: So, in essence, you could actually almost start the process by gauging their level of confidence?

PAUL MACKLIN: Mm hmm.

IAN SEGAIL: And from there you can then say, if I said to you, “On a scale of 1 to 5 how confident are you to go out cold calling?” And you would say a 2.

PAUL MACKLIN: Anything less than a 3 is a conversation.

IAN SEGAIL: Correct. And so then I would need to work on your clarity.

PAUL MACKLIN: So tell me Ian, how clear are you on what a cold call means? And you might find, in fact, an early example of this was a friend of mine who went to New Zealand to become a painter.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And had a very successful first exhibition and, look it wasn't my responsibility but I did a little bit of coaching and helped him get there. And he did a wonderful job of it. And it came round to having done the first exhibition and he wanted to do the second exhibition, or I assumed he did. And so I was on the phone every couple of weeks coaching him and trying to understand where he was at. And after the three unsuccessful phone calls – and by “unsuccessful” I mean, he wasn't doing the behaviors that would indicate that he was committed to the outcome.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Because behavior is the evidence of commitment.

IAN SEGAIL: Absolutely.

PAUL MACKLIN: You want to know if somebody is committed or not...

IAN SEGAIL: Look what they do.

PAUL MACKLIN: ...watch their behavior. Yeah? It's a prime...

IAN SEGAIL: Indicator.

PAUL MACKLIN: ...indicator, thank you. So on the third phone call I said to him, “Look, I'm just not getting this. And I've got this 5 C process, I'd just like to run through it and make sure that we understand why the behavior isn't changing.”

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So we did clarity. He understood exactly what he needed to do to do the exhibition. We did control, he had all of the tools and resources under his command. He could – he was the master of his time and the master of his environment. Confidence, we had no doubt about it. He had already established that in the first exhibition. We got to commitment and he said, “Paul, there is something I need to tell you.”

IAN SEGAIL: Oh.

PAUL MACKLIN: And then he told me about some personal objectives he had in his life that were bigger at that point in time than doing the exhibition. And I said, “Well why didn't you tell me this?” And he said, “Well you were so passionate as a coach about me doing this second exhibition.”

IAN SEGAIL: “I didn't want to hurt your feelings.”

PAUL MACKLIN: “I didn’t want to hurt your feelings.” (Laughing)

IAN SEGAIL: (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: So we’ve got to be careful obviously as coaches to the degree to which we impose our own values.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Especially in a non-work environment or a lifestyle environment.

IAN SEGAIL: But in a work environment it’s even more likely because you have an agenda.

PAUL MACKLIN: You do. And of course, one of the best things I believe that you can do with your coach is to declare that. So I will always say to coaches up front, one of the first things to establish with your coachee is what are their expectations of the coaching relationship? And what are their concerns? And what are your expectations and what are your concerns?

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Of course, these again, we’re going back to the prime components that sit under commitment.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Because that’s going to assess whether or not you’re committed. And the person might come in and say, “Well my boss told me to be here.”

IAN SEGAIL: “And that’s the sum total of my commitment.”

PAUL MACKLIN: And that immediately tells me something. So I’m not going to go on – I’m not going to make an automatic assumption that you’re committed to the process. I’m then going to start to fish around to find, “What is there about this that could be of value to you?” And if we can’t find anything, I’ve got a responsibility to be honest with your manager about that.

IAN SEGAIL: That’s right. Yeah. Interesting. Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: And, of course, in coaching you often have confidentiality issues. When you’re coming as an external coach into an organization – and I think those things

need to be clear up front. So if I come as an external coach now into an organization, I establish a contract between the person who's employing me, and that's generally the manager...

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: ...the person who's being coached, sometimes also an HR person that may have been initiating the process with myself. And we'll get clear about what the outcomes are that we're trying to achieve for the organization and the individual. And we'll get clear on about what the integrity issues are about sharing information.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Because, of course, if the person feels as though anything that they say is going to go to HR or back to the manager, there's going to be a whole different degree of confidence that they can have in disclosing with me.

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha. So when you coach and you alluded to this earlier, you guys have a process that you've developed. Can you just run us through that real quick?

PAUL MACKLIN: Well the actual sequence – questions are the key when you coach. Questions and listening.

IAN SEGAIL: And that's a skill, isn't it? I mean, questioning and listening, that just takes time and work.

PAUL MACKLIN: And it's amazing how in-built closed questions are for most of us. Obviously people who have done some good sales training have learned to ask open and high gain and open ended questions, and good closure questions as opposed to goo closed questions.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: But listening I think is almost a more acute need and the challenging thing around listening is that it's something almost all of us take for granted because we've been doing it for so long.

IAN SEGAIL: And we've never been taught it.

PAUL MACKLIN: And we don't think of it as a learnable skill.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And when you ask in a training environment, you say, “Okay, what are the things we could do to improve our listening?” And people talk about body language and matching and pacing and turning the computer off and focusing on the person. But I’d rather like to use the metaphor of a radio, of tuning a radio in. Because I believe that the intuitive nature of your listening can be as powerful as the intellectual nature of your listening.

So when I’m coaching with someone, I’m actually trying to be very quiet inside. I’m not necessarily trying to think of the next question. I’m definitely not trying to lead them down a path. In fact, I’ve become acutely aware internally when I’m trying to lead them down a path and I do a self check if I am. And all I’m trying to do is create enough stillness that I can become a radio receiver.

And then I try to tune in to the subtle, intuitive messages that are coming through to me from this person.

IAN SEGAIL: So this is reading between the lines?

PAUL MACKLIN: It is. It’s reading between the lines. Now, of course, you’ve got to be a bit careful with that because you can get it wrong. So when I get a bit of an intuitive sense – so this morning I was working with someone and I got a bit of an intuitive sense that performance anxiety was the issue that they were facing. Because I had heard – I guess, if I think back logically, either I had heard them talk about performance on half a dozen occasions.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: I’ve seen that in various situations where they were having to perform, that it had failed. And they talked about a number of things that sort of created that. So I said, “Look,” and I often use the word, I said, “Look, I’m not sure about this, but my intuitive sense here is that performance anxiety might have something to do with this.” So I do a sense check with them.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And I immediately got a green light, “Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I have issues in that area.”

IAN SEGAIL: Which then allows you to go ahead and explore that.

PAUL MACKLIN: So then I was able to dive in – that gave me permission to say, “This is a topic of conversation.” And intuitively you’re also looking for red light, green light, in terms of the conversation. Like sometimes as a coach you might need to push a

person. It isn't always plain sailing. If you go into an area that they're nervous about, where their confidence isn't there, or where their commitment isn't there, or they don't want to expose what their level of commitment is – you've got to tread carefully and you've got to keep getting the green light to go forward with that.

IAN SEGAIL: Right. Okay.

PAUL MACKLIN: I use a process in terms of creating clarity, both for myself and for the coachee, that I call draw down windows. So if I ask you a question, "So Ian, just tell me something about sales management coaching that really interests you. Tell me two or three things."

IAN SEGAIL: That really interest me?

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah.

IAN SEGAIL: Is the ability of the sales manager to really improve productivity of their people by using coaching.

PAUL MACKLIN: Okay, that's one.

IAN SEGAIL: The other key for me or the other thing that really interests me is how poorly most managers are trained in their role as a manager.

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah, so we've got the possibility for productivity and we've got poor training.

IAN SEGAIL: And the other thing I think that really blows me away is how limited managers are in terms of their ability to plan. So most have a number but they have no plan that says, "How do we get that number? What's the what, where, how and when?"

PAUL MACKLIN: So now in your answer to my original question you've actually given me three avenues of exploration.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And we've done that quite formally. I've said, "Tell me three things."

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So I'm being quite deliberate with it. Now, sometimes my questions won't be as deliberate as, "Tell me three things." But I'll listen to the answer

and I'll find one, two, three avenues for exploration. That, to me, is like a window that's been painted in the picture that the person's given me.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And I'll go back and I'll say, "So tell me, what it is about maximizing sales performance that you like?" And I can drill down that window and you'll give me another three windows and I can drill down through those. So it's like creating a hierarchy of intelligence, if you like.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And I if I get to the point where we've sort of mined one of those ideas to a degree that I think we've both got clarity about what that is, I might go back up and go, "Okay, so tell me what it is about poor training? So let's unpack that." So it's like you're making sort of a mind map. And sometimes we'll even do that, we'll draw it as we go.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And that's creating clarity for me and the person. It's a wonderful technique, but you've got to use your traffic lights as you're doing it. You go down a rabbit hole and suddenly you find the person is starting to get a little bit shifty and uncomfortable and they're giving you short answers.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Well, you've – you can challenge that. You know, "It seems like we're uncomfortable talking about this. Do you want to go further? Is there something you want to talk about?" And if you get a real red light there...

IAN SEGAIL: Oops.

PAUL MACKLIN: Back out, yeah. Or if you get kind of an orange, "Well, there's an issue here but I'm just not sure how to broach it."

IAN SEGAIL: Peel it.

PAUL MACKLIN: Well, let's have a look. Let's create a bit more trust and comfort here and how could you open it up. Sometimes that opens you in a goldmine of possibility for conversation. So that's where I say intuition as a coach I think is a very important thing. So that good listening underpins process. Then you ask me the question of what coaching process do we use?

You know, John Whitmore has become very successful and famous using the (inaudible) model. I think he has certainly taken off around the world if you like. I think it's a sort of VHS of coaching.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: We believe ours is the beta cam. We think it's actually the better version and we developed it off the back of looking at Whitmore's work and saying, "Well how can we improve on that?" As I said before, mostly we're not confronted with a goal, we're confronted with current situations. So let's start with C. Let's understand what the current situation is. Where are you? What's the situation? What's going on? What are you noticing? Why do you have this as an issue or why is this an opportunity for you?

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And then we'd move from an understanding of that into objectives or outcomes. So let's now go to future state. Okay, what is it you're trying to achieve here? In your ideal future state – and the question that I use so often in that state, especially in an organizational sense is, 12, 24, 36 months time, if the team was operating or the organization was operating to the level of effectiveness that you want, what would be different?

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: What does it look like? How do we measure that? So it's a visioning process.

IAN SEGAIL: Right. So what does success look like?

PAUL MACKLIN: What does success look like? And some people are very anchored in current state, especially if they're sort of really wetted to their problem, you might need to do some creative work and some loosening up work to get them to go there.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And then having created the tension between current state and future state, the obvious thing to say is, "What are the alternative pathways that we've got for getting there?"

IAN SEGAIL: To get there.

PAUL MACKLIN: So now we've got the A, that (inaudible) you can almost predict what's coming.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And the part where the alternative pathways is not to let the person settle on first answer.

IAN SEGAIL: Which is so tempting isn't it?

PAUL MACKLIN: Oh, you know, either as a manager we've got, "You want to be there and I know we're here."

IAN SEGAIL: Well in selling as well, in selling as well. If a customer says, "This is my problem." We just dive in and try and solve it.

PAUL MACKLIN: So this morning in a coaching conversation I was having with a chap, I asked him four times, "And what's another alternative? And how else could you do that?" And in the end he had four very good, solid actions that we believe are going to have an impact on the performance that he's trying to create.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So having explored a range of options, you may not use them all. Or a range of alternatives – the last bit is to get closure. And we use the three CHs for that. So the first CH is of the options, which do you choose? And you can marry the option against risk. You can marry the option against return. You can marry the option against which one is going to get you there quickest.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So there's some dialogue around, "Well Ian, you've outlined 7 of 8 things we could do here. Obviously your time is limited and some are going to give you more value than others. Which one would you choose?" So I'm using a closure question if you like to get to that.

Then having done the CH, the next thing we'd want is an action plan. So we call that a checklist, another word for action plan.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So that's about who and when and how and who's responsible for it, so it's just create an action plan.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And the last part is to challenge, and of course, we're going to challenge against the Five Cs.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: So having them come up with the action plan...

IAN SEGAIL: So now let's check your confidence.

PAUL MACKLIN: How clear are you? How confident are you? Do you have control over the things you suggested here? And if we get something less than a three, or if I get lots of threes as we go through, we might circle back and say, "Well what have we missed here? Is there something in that current situation? Is the objective too stretching? Have we missed some alternatives we haven't covered? What is it?"

IAN SEGAIL: Very good. Very good. Very good. Now, I'm conscious of time and you've been really, really – this has been a wonderful interchange. Just real quickly, as an executive coach, what questions do you get asked most often?

PAUL MACKLIN: I think the reality is that executive coaching doesn't work for everybody.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: As I said before, I think there's a whole range of leadership styles in organizations and outside of organizations that work. Coaching works for some people.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: It doesn't necessarily work for everybody.

IAN SEGAIL: Which I think is a good point. So if – and if I've come down to the sales management level and I'm going to implement coaching with my team, what you're saying is it might not work with everybody?

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah or a perfect coaching style might not work with everybody. A mentoring style might be better or a mentor might be better.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: You know, if you've got somebody who is very strong in terms of their interpersonal skills and their leadership style, but they really need to develop some capability around commercial acumen, for example.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: Coaching's probably not going to get you there because you would be far better off to hook them up with somebody who had skills in that area to act as a mentor.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: To put them – link them into professional networks. Can point them in the direction of the best commercial training around. So mentoring might be the right answer for that kind of person.

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha.

PAUL MACKLIN: It could be that if you got a very, very headstrong, bullish manager who leads in a very autocratic style, that hooking him up, or her up, with a mate like that who can go head to head with them and do the really tough sort of piece is the right kind of person to put them with.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: They would see a coach that comes in and says, "Well tell me what's your problem?" And say, "What am I paying you to ask me questions for?"

IAN SEGAIL: Yeah.

PAUL MACKLIN: So I think you need to – we need to be cognizant of making sure that the right people connected.

IAN SEGAIL: So it's the (inaudible) different strokes for different folks?

PAUL MACKLIN: Yeah. Now, of course, that doesn't make it easy to come back to your point of, "I'm a sales manager. I'm managing a diverse team of 7 or 8 people." I need to develop some behavioral literacy, so the ability to match and pace my style to the group that I've got there. And for some that might mean more rough and tumble and take them out for a game of golf. And for some it might mean sit quietly at a restaurant and work through the sales figures with them.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: I've got to understand that one size need won't fit all.

IAN SEGAIL: Gotcha. Wonderful. Paul, I think we'll leave it on that note because I know you're rushing out there to get to another appointment.

PAUL MACKLIN: Thank you very much.

IAN SEGAIL: Can I just really from the bottom of my heart thank you for investing your time here. I know it's going to be extremely valuable for all those listening.

PAUL MACKLIN: Thank you, Ian. Well it's been great, it's been a pleasure from my perspective and I love going back through the material, because for me, it's about clarity.

IAN SEGAIL: You can't wait to go coach this afternoon now. (Laughing)

PAUL MACKLIN: (Laughing) Well, to be honest with you, I think one of the great mistakes we make around learning is that we think we can get it in one hit. So we send people on a three day coaching course and we think they're going to go away as coaches.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: I know from my own experience that we used to run the coaching course for Mars probably three, four or five times a year. And I always would come out of the end of that three days having trained and coached other people and I got better as a coach.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: And it probably took me four programs before some of the things like just consistently asking open questions became innate for me. And I think we need to understand that as coaches. When we're sales coaches and coaching our team, we send people off to a training program and we expect them to come back knowing how to do it. The reality is that they've had one exposure to it.

IAN SEGAIL: Right.

PAUL MACKLIN: They're going to need repeated exposures to whatever that technology is. Whether it's asking questions or learning how to do a good close, or learning how to do a good strategic analysis of what the client needs. And that's where, as a sales manager, a coaching can be so valuable, because we can be the reinforcement that keeps delivering that. And, of course, we need to model those behaviors ourselves.

IAN SEGAIL: Of course.

PAUL MACKLIN: And certain point in time, three, four, five, six months down the track, suddenly the sales coach he turns around and says, “You’ve been asking me open questions all the time haven’t you?” That’s when you know that the clarity is starting to come in and the awareness is there.

IAN SEGAIL: Very good. Very good. Paul, thank you very much.

PAUL MACKLIN: Thank you, Ian.

(Music Closing)

IAN SEGAIL: For more information on Paul and the services of Amazing People, you can go to amazingpeople.com.au or you can call them at Australia + 61 2 4367 5977. For further information how Salestutor can help you grow your sales revenues, you can contact us at salestutor.com.au or Australia + 61 2 9460 7022 and ask to speak to Claudia.