

# 'Executive Wingman'\*

Scatterlinks

A hybrid Mentoring / Coaching program

## Information on Scatterlinks' 'Executive Wingman'\* program

### THE NEED

Someone once quipped of leaders: *"It's lonely at the top - but you eat better."* - Indeed!

Senior executives and business leaders are typically well rewarded for the responsibilities they bear. However, even though they may be 'outstanding' in many ways, they are in their own ways, just as human, vulnerable and imperfect as many other people around them.

Nonetheless, the societal and organisational expectations of these leaders can limit their ability to share or debate aspects of themselves or of their business problems with those above or below them in their own organisations.

As a result, leaders are often left to 'their own counsel' on an array of important issues – be they business or personal.

It is not surprising that most of the world's successful business leaders have regular engagement with high-level trusted mentors, advisors and coaches.

### THE SOLUTION

Scatterlinks recognizes this challenge – and offers a solution through our 'Executive Wingman'\* program.

The 'Executive Wingman'\* program is a blend of advisory/consulting, mentoring, and coaching services offered in a structured (but customized) program on a one-on-one basis for senior executives – who we like to refer to as our 'players' (as opposed to 'clients' or 'coachees').

**The Primary Objective** - is to enhance or deliver better achievement, fulfilment and satisfaction from which both the executive and the organisation will benefit.

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#### \* Why 'Wingman'?

##### *Military Definition:*

**Wingman:** - a pilot who supports the 'lead' pilot in potentially dangerous flying environments. Wingman was originally a term referring to the plane flying beside and slightly behind the lead plane in an aircraft formation.

##### *Scatterlinks Definition:*

**Executive Wingman:** - a trusted advisor and coach who provides independent support to business executives and leaders through a mix of coaching, mentoring, consulting and advice – with a non-directive coaching approach being the preferred style.

The terms 'coach', 'mentor', 'counsellor' and 'advisor' are often intended to engender very specific – and differentiated – types of roles that a person might offer in support of a client. However, their respective meanings are often confused within the minds of those who don't spend their careers working in this sphere of executive support – and are also often confused in the minds of the clients themselves.

In order to try and avoid the 'loaded meanings' of these commonly understood descriptors, Scatterlinks introduces a new word that attempts, however imperfectly, to create a new understanding of this role of a trusted advisor who is there to facilitate the success and fulfilment of his executive client.

Whilst much of the wingman's success for his client is achieved in a non-directive coaching-manner, the wingman approach also includes, as needs be, the appropriate use of directed consulting, advisory and mentorship processes to create a blended support and development service for the executive that best suits his / her needs within their personal and business contexts.

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**The primary style** of the wingman program is non-directive coaching and mentoring. i.e.: the executive is led through a process by which their performance, learning and development is enhanced through their own observations, learnings and insights. The wingman's role is to facilitate this process by the use of a non-directive approach (e.g.: he listens, explores (often using distinctions and metaphors), summarises, reflects-back and asks the right sorts of questions from which the executive makes the appropriate conclusions and adjustments.)

**The secondary style**, as needs be (and depending on the context and the problem being solved) is a more directive approach akin to mentoring, teaching or advising. This would be where the 'wingman' brings his personal business leadership to bear to augment the non-directive coaching style of the program.

## THE PROCESS

An initial assessment is made between Scatterlinks and the player (and, usually separately, their line-manager in the sponsoring organisation) in order to get a measure of the scope to be covered and extent of how much of the engagement will range between mentoring, advising and coaching.

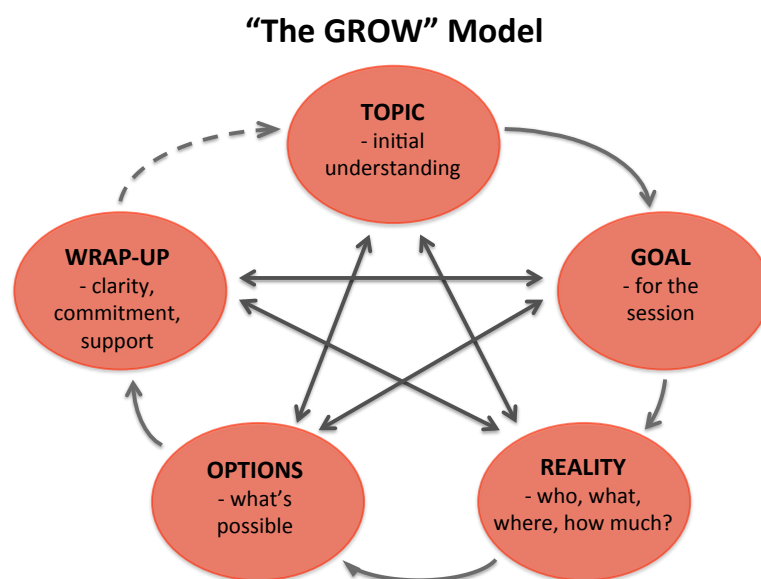
A proposal will then be made setting out the suggested outcomes, duration, basis and frequency of meeting and costs.

Once the proposal is accepted, the initial meeting(s) with the player are essentially further 'conversations for relationship' – enabling the wingman to get meaningful context and understanding of the player's role in the firm, their background, their 'way of being' and 'structure of interpretation' in the world, their business and leadership challenges etc.

From this will emerge a list of things that the wingman may assist the player in addressing. One or two of these may be long-term coaching topics and a good number of them may be shorter-term operational or 'contextual' issues.

For insights into how we would address the longer-term coaching issues please refer to the document "Scatterlinks Leadership Development & Coaching Program Info" available off the Scatterlinks website.

For the shorter-term / immediate coaching and mentoring issues we apply, among other things, a process we refer to as "The GROW" model – which is summarised in the following illustration:



## THE SCOPE

The scope of the assignment really depends on the particular player's needs and priorities.

However, we typically cover a selection of the following:

### **Mentorship and counselling**

This essentially entails the sharing and passing on of useful business leadership and management advice, honed from the breadth and depth of personal experience accrued at a high level over many years.

Whilst some of it may be 'directed advice', much of the player's learnings or insights will come from their reflection on the suggested insights or ideas of the wingman and how these might bear relevance to the case in hand.

### **Coaching**

Most likely, a lot of the engagement may revolve around effective executive coaching.

For more detail and deeper insights into how we would approach coaching work issues please refer to the document "Scatterlinks Leadership Development & Coaching Program Info" available off the Scatterlinks website.

### **Specialised operational assistance (consulting)**

Where the Scatterlinks executive has direct relevant specialist expertise (e.g.: investment management, executive team leadership, director-effectiveness, organisational design, strategy assessment and implementation), then there may be a call to undertake specific consulting-oriented work.

Some of this can be effected during the regular periodic engagements between the wingman and the player – but where this requires more time and effort than these engagements would allow, then such work will be defined and quoted for as an additional service.

## HOW LONG DO I NEED MY WINGMAN FOR?

As long as you find the relationship valuable.

The recommended initial engagement period is for one year. A review will be done every six months - assessing achievement against objectives, recalibrating priorities to meet emerging challenges etc. and, provided the service continues to be of value and deliver results, then it may be extended as needs be.

## WHAT TIME COMMITMENTS DOES THIS INVOLVE?

In the first instance the wingman will meet with the player, ideally, every two weeks for around an hour and a half. Sometimes the initial sessions might be done over half a day to get the program into gear as soon as possible. Frequency and duration can vary according to need (and diaries!) but the basic program revolves around fortnightly engagement.

Where the player is undertaking some longer-term coaching work with his / her wingman then, besides the fortnightly sessions, the player is likely to agree on a coaching program (of self-observations / practices etc.) that may involve 30 minutes or so a day - or every other day (not all at one time though). This will need the player to carefully prioritise their commitments so as to allow these longer-term coaching aspects of the program the chance to deliver the benefits that are hoped for.

## WHAT MAKES IT WORTH WHILE TO INVEST BOTH TIME AND MONEY IN A WINGMAN?

The player and the wingman (and even the sponsoring line-manager) will agree on what the desired outcomes of this program should be.

If achieved, these will invariably exceed the value of the time, effort and cost. It will produce better satisfaction and effectiveness for the executive and better results for the organisation.

Indeed, the cost of the service has a performance fee element in it – by which a substantial portion of the total fee is only payable to the extent the player and the sponsor determine that they have met or exceeded the reasonably agreed outcomes and expectations of the program.

### **ON 'WINGMAN' ASSIGNMENTS, WHO DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE CLIENT?**

Having a wingman work with an executive in a business context means that there are typically two clients – the organisation (typically represented by the line-manager authorising the payment for the program costs) and the player themselves.

Nonetheless, the primary focus is on the player – and as such, nothing about the coaching relationship is revealed to the player's organisation that has not been understood and agreed to by the player.

However, the line-manager is clearly entitled to take an interest in, and get feedback on, progress etc. so that he /she can be mindful of improvements - because they have a responsibility to ensure that the intervention benefits the organisation as well as the player.

In any event, this 'dual client' relationship is always handled with respect and transparency.

### **WHAT DOES IT COST?**

We consider that our Executive Wingman and Executive Leadership Development & Coaching programs are some of the most important investments an organisation or individual can make in their 'human capital'. Our fees recognise that and also relate to the degree of seniority of the executive in the enterprise and the length of the agreed program.

In order to align our interests with yours, a portion of the total fee payable will only be payable in proportion to the extent by which the player and the sponsor believe that their expectations were met or not by the program.

Once you've decided that you're ready to undertake this journey we'll be happy to discuss these details further.