



KLR Consulting

Inspiring Success in Your Leaders and Teams

CEO Executive Coaching | Success Story

Tracy Farhad is the CEO and President of Visit Tri-Valley, the official destination marketing organization in San Francisco's East Bay region, working with the cities of Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin and Danville. They aim to develop a vibrant visitor economy while enhancing the quality of life for residents of the area.

Workplace Challenges

Tracy brought years of expertise to Visit Tri-Valley as the new CEO. She was full of energy, great ideas, and implemented successful initiatives. Even so, an effective, successful executive can have areas that need improvement, especially when they affect the entire team and the atmosphere in the workplace.

"I knew there was a problem," says Tracy. "But I was definitely avoiding the issue, and that, of course, made everything worse!" Tracy let the problem fester, until one day she exploded. "I shouted. There is just no way around it. I yelled, a lot, and freaked everyone out."

Executive Coaching

How do you help a CEO help themselves? The best way is through executive coaching.

The incident was reported to Visit Tri-Valley's board of directors, and they realized that Tracy needed some support and training. They reached out to KLR Consulting, hiring Kristi Royse as an executive coach for Tracy.

This could have come across as a reprimand on the surface, because they did it without Tracy's input, but she completely trusted the board and knew they had her best interests at heart, "So I was willing to meet Kristi and find out what she had to offer."

"No one wants to deal with conflict, but the sooner you, as the leader, address the issue, the better. The longer it goes the more it grows, even if only in people's minds, and the more it poisons the atmosphere at work." After four months working with Kristi, Tracy understands what she can do differently next time to address conflicts before they become true problems.

Tracy Farhad, CEO/President

Industry: Tourism/Hospitality/DMO

Challenges:

- Communication
- Need to understand each other's work styles
- Working relationships
- HR issue
- Maintaining/building strong team culture

KLR Solutions:

- Executive Coaching
- DiSC coaching
- Facilitate DiSC workshops for team

Benefits of KLR Programs:

- Improved workplace dynamic
- Better understanding of each other's work style
- Increased & more effective communication
- Improved retention
- Enhanced team culture
- Ongoing use of DiSC styles and principles

Tracy emphasizes the importance of not being afraid of interpersonal situations, or to face that fear and jump into them anyway. She points out how, although people resist conflict, everyone really wants the human interactions in their workplace to go smoothly, and getting issues resolved when they come up is so much better than letting them fester and grow.

She notes that, even though Kristi was not her own choice as a coach, Kristi quickly gained Tracy's trust. "It took a couple of sessions, but she was able to make me see that she was on my side and in my corner, and that she truly cared about me and about my success as an executive. I continue to be impressed by Kristi's genuine concern, and for the success of my team as well."

"Kristi certainly pointed out where there were opportunities for me to improve, but in such an amazing, positive, supportive way. It made it so much easier to tackle the hard stuff!"

~ Tracy Farhad,
President & CEO, Visit Tri-Valley

DiSC for the Team Means Better Communication

Tracy also notes how important it was that they did the DiSC work as a team, and that it combined with her individual executive coaching to bring about the best result.

She says, "The DiSC workshop cleared the air, and that is in large part because Kristi is an excellent facilitator, and also because she is so good at helping people to feel safe and comfortable in the environment, so they are willing to participate"

"I understand now so much better where each person on my team is coming from!" She also says that her teammates have a better

understanding of her work style. She feels that they all gained mutual respect for each other, and learned how each of their ways of working has its value. "We also learned how to approach each other, based on those work styles, so that we can be respectful and get our point across without offending or missing the mark entirely."

Tracy says, "I have realized that we don't have to go at a breakneck pace all the time, and that I need to explain things more thoroughly. I have a post-it on my computer from Kristi that says, 'what else' and 'because'. Those are the two phrases that have improved things the most!" She says that asking "what else" gets past the surface and to the meat of any situation. "'Because' reminds me that people are not mind readers, and that I need to actively share what I'm thinking or why we are doing something!"



A Renewed, Engaged, Happy Workplace

Tracy says that Kristi was very available to her during the coaching process, outside of the scheduled coaching sessions. "I felt heard and acknowledged by Kristi, and also encouraged and inspired. She certainly pointed out where there were opportunities for me to improve, but in such an amazing, positive, supportive way. It made it so much easier to tackle the hard stuff!"

In the next few team meetings, Tracy made a point of continuing the learning that began with the DiSC workshop. "And everything changed. Body language changed, the tension was gone, and everyone seemed to be more comfortable asking for more detail, more information. Plus, and this is huge, the laughter and visible engagement returned!"

"Don't be afraid of opening up and telling it like it is, because Kristi is there to help you. If you need to acknowledge that you screwed up, do it, because she has a lot of insight and ability to help you feel okay. She creates a safe space, and coaching is very much "your" time. It is so worth it to do this work, and get Kristi's caring point of view!"

To learn more about KLR Consulting and how we can help you, visit our website at www.klrconsulting.com