

Pacesetters Grow as Leaders with Career Development and Executive Coaching

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What's important to you? And what do you want in your career? Karen Watai posed those two questions to the Pacesetters on September 22nd as she opened up a career development workshop hosted at The Guardian Insurance Company. Karen, President of KWA Leadership Consulting, is a skilled leadership development professional and facilitator who used her expertise to have the Pacesetters dig deep and find some critical answers for themselves.

Karen, who has both a law degree and MBA from the University of Chicago, started her career in financial services at Goldman Sachs and worked in the industry for close to 20 years. With both a business background and leadership development one, she understands the challenges and rewards of advancing ones career in a highly competitive environment.

Karen took the Pacesetters through a series of exercises and discussions starting with clarifying values and setting and working toward short and long term goals. Following that the Pacesetters focused on confidence, brand, reputation, relationships, and visibility. In this intensive three hour workshop the Pacesetters were able to explore what is important to them and also benefit from Karen's insights gleaned from both research and her own experience.

Immediately following the career development workshop Helen Dayen led a workshop, very complementary to the former one, introducing the Pacesetters to the concept of executive coaching, the role both the coach and coach play, and anticipated outcomes from the coaching process.

Helen is the principal of The Dayen Group, an executive coaching and leadership training firm, and she also leads the coaching component of the Pacesetter Program. Helen has both a BS and MBA from NYU's Stern School of Business and, has spent a majority of her career in financial services. After over a decade as a Wall Street sales professional Helen



JamiLynn Cimino and Bonnie Park at the Pacesetters Career Development Workshop

successfully leveraged her business background to embark upon a career in coaching, leadership training, and motivational speaking. Her enthusiasm is contagious.

Coaching is a significant component of the Pacesetter Program. As Helen explained, coaching is beneficial because “it works.” Based on an International Coaching Federation (ICF) study professional coaching can increase productivity as measured through improved work performance management, business management time management and team effectiveness. The study also showed coaching can improve self-confidence, relationships, communication skills, and life/work balance.



Helen Dayen, executive coach and principal of The Dayen Group, shares with the Pacesetters how to maximize a coaching experience

To have a positive coaching experience, Helen cited the need to:

- Build trust with the coach and fellow group coachees
- Come prepared to coaching sessions with specific situations
- Do your homework
- Stay connected throughout
- Be organized

Four coaches will be working with the Pacesetters. In addition to Helen, Kathryn Mayer, Sara Bigwood, and Antonia Bowring, all experienced executive coaches, will be meeting with the Pacesetters in small groups for group coaching sessions. These will take place from October through April with the groups meeting with their coaches approximately once a month for 1- 1 1/2 hours. The Pacesetters will be creating individual development plans and working with their coach and fellow coachees to support them as they implement on-the-job.

Thanks to both Karen and Helen, the Pacesetters have the tools and resources necessary to continue investing in their careers and developing as leaders.

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