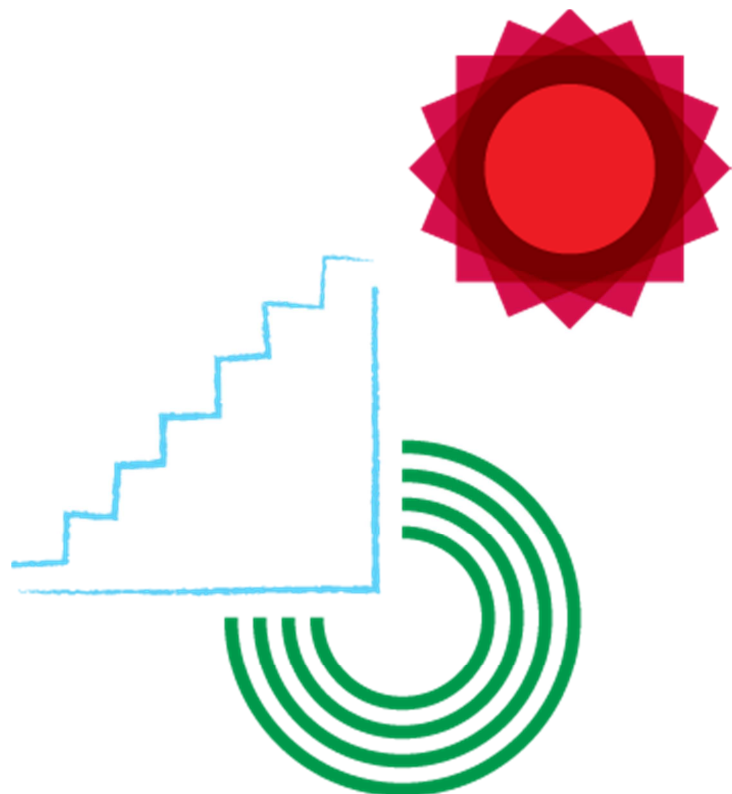




Success is coaching people to be better than you

A real life example from Luke Brason, Head of Creative,
Grass Roots UK Limited



SUCCESS IS COACHING PEOPLE TO BE BETTER THAN YOU

As a new line manager (this is going back ten years) I made the mistake of trying to get people to work how I worked. I found it frustrating if things were ‘wrong’ (not how I would do them) and I frequently worked late into the evening doing jobs I should have delegated.



Whilst my team members were polite, looking back they clearly found this period of working for me frustrating too. With hindsight it's obvious they were being overly-directed and stifled from developing their own solutions.

Through teaching Kung Fu in the evenings I began to realise that if people had the right tools (techniques) available they would interpret and refine them to 'fit' (based on physical size what worked for one might not work for another). I could see that some of my pupils ideas and uses of Kung Fu 'technique's' were at times better than mine. At first this worried me – how could I teach if I wasn't the most dexterous / acrobatic / energetic / fastest etc? Then it dawned on me, if I could help someone develop their full potential then, as a teacher, I would be succeeding.

Whilst this might ultimately mean that my 'pupil' became a higher grade than me, I would continue to develop my own skills through training with them. In turn they would raise standards across the class. I would be sure that my teaching was of merit – everyone's skills would grow and we'd all benefit!

Based on this I began to adapt my management style. I've become more supportive and avoided being dictatorial (there is perhaps still a need in the workplace for being dictatorial should there be a crisis – I personally haven't needed to adopt this style for many years). I

facilitate 'Growing You' Appraisals and regular 1:1's with my team. I coach as best I can and I try to highlight the breadth of personal development available. I encourage my team to be responsible for their growth, to highlight and discuss with me the things they want to progress. All the time I know that if my reports develop in ways better, faster, etc than me, then that is perfect – it will guarantee that individuals continue to grow and that we strengthen as a team.