

CASE STUDY

BE EXCEPTIONAL. THE HENLEY WAY.



Graham Roberts

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Graham, how did you come to be at Henley on the Coaching programme?

‘About eighteen months ago, I had an opportunity to move into coaching full time, and given that I’m still relatively early in my professional life compared to other coaches, I wanted to get a qualification that would give me credibility. I had regarded Henley’s as one of the top courses in the world, but looked at one or two others as well. Then I came along to the Henley Coaching Open Day, and was completely hooked! Henley’s approach is very reflective, which really appealed to me; knowing that, and meeting the people, gave me the confidence to invest in the Henley programme.’

So what were your expectations, and how has the reality been different?

‘To be honest, apart from Henley’s reputation, I didn’t have any strong expectations. I felt that I’d made the right decision, and had trust in the programme to deliver, and this was reinforced by my experience. Henley is a fantastic learning environment – one of my colleagues described it as ‘walking into Narnia!’ – and there is a kind of perfection, almost a feng shui quality about the place.

‘The faculty staff make it into a very safe learning environment; there are no wrong ways to do things, only your way, and they are all incredibly supportive. I soon began to realise just how brilliant the learning environment is at Henley in providing one that allows delegates to develop.’

Were there any surprises then?

‘Yes, the diversity of the people was surprising – in a very good way – as was the skilful way in which they were brought together. And the faculty never passed judgement on anyone. I was also surprised at how tiring it was in the beginning, but again, in a positive way. So much of the experience is delivered in situ, and the learning tools allow you to evaluate your response throughout the programme.’

What has been the impact of the programme?

‘I’ve certainly gained a great deal of self-confidence, and I think that understanding why the things I do work, has made me – and my coaching – more effective. I realised a while ago that I was coaching a business leader with much more experience than me, and I felt I was really able to help him.

‘I was particularly struck by a session we did on the differences between coaching and mentoring. And Denis (Sartain) – our tutor – said something which made a lasting impression; he said that ‘coaching is just a label. We are actually agents of behavioural change.’

What advice would you give to someone considering enrolling on one of the Henley Coaching programmes?

‘If you believe you can help people to change what they want to change, Henley will help you to recognise why you have those skills and help you to do it your way. It’s a menu of opportunity, and you have the choice.’