



Working in the *White Spaces*
Janet Matts, Johnson & Johnson

With the responsibility for executive assessment and coaching for Johnson & Johnson, I serve as a liaison, advisor and confidant to the leader being coached; the leader's boss and HR support, as well as to the coach. It is very much a behind the scenes *connecting activity*, and adds great value to the successful launch of an assignment ensuring the sustainability of the work and increasingly creating a *coaching culture*.

The link can be directly with the leader requesting coaching, or in conversation with their HR connection. I can advise them or help their HR partner decide on whether coaching is right for them, how to make the most of coaching, and which coaches they should consider working with in an assignment. I am connected with many of our coaches. I can advise coaches on how to navigate successfully at J&J.

As an executive coach myself in the Johnson & Johnson organization prior to taking on this role, and a 20 year J & J veteran, I am able to relate to what they do and what it takes to be part of such a complex environment.

I interface with HR in the organization where the leader is being coached, learning more about the bigger picture, connecting the coach with HR, and advising on the leader's progress. I use my experience, knowledge and intuition to provide an HR VP or Leadership Director with the right coaches to be considered for their leader, and help them to build their own pool of coaches.

In order to be successful in this role, one has to have great credibility and trust throughout the organization. This person needs both a deep understanding of the company's business and culture, be credentialed as a coach, and have walked in the shoes of executive coaching. Establishing confidentiality parameters and boundaries with each constituency is required, and seeing the process through different lenses; e.g., as a leader, coach, or HR professional with strict confidentiality.