



EXECUTIVE 01

JOHN

Bull in a china shop

SITUATION: When he came to see Jody Michael Associates, John was a rising star at a Fortune 500 company. However, after making the first appointment, he questioned why he needed to hire us. According to John, everything in his life was great, unless, that is, you asked the people that had to work around him. The breaking point occurred when, for the third year in a row, John was denied a promotion to partner due to poor 360° reviews.

RESOLUTION: While John stated he did not want to work with Jody Michael Associates, the possibility of not making partner a fourth time was an event he loathed even more.

Needless to say, JMA cannot coach a client that does not want to be coached or to change. John did not think his behavior needed modification. However, he did realize that he had hit the ceiling at his current firm. They had made that clear. It was the one bit of leverage that JMA had to work with.

We explained to him that he had a choice: (1) He could find a firm that promoted those with his personality traits, or (2) He needed to learn how to work, lead, and communicate as his peers and coworkers requested. He could improve his chances of making partner either way. John decided to try the latter approach.

Early in the assessment process, we realized that John was not a good listener. Among other things, he was self-absorbed, a bully, arrogant, anxious, had a temper, and was highly confrontational.

His reviews noted that while he was considered a sub-par leader and had anger-management issues, he was a top producer and deemed a “high potential with a need for refinement.”

JMA engineered exercises and assignments that attacked John’s belief system. He had grown up the youngest of five boys. Thus, he learned early that life was not fair, that he had to fight for what he wanted, and that bullying led to the spoils rather than to punishment. He had brought this approach into the business world, where the rules were different.

In session, Ms. Michael worked with John so that he got practice in the situations that usually brought on his unruly behavior. He learned management techniques, how to read people, how to work a room, and how to employ the skill-set of empathy. All the while, JMA was careful to make sure there were no competing commitments that were lurking to sabotage the entire process.

OUTCOME: John realized that it was a ‘win-win’ to bring his focus outside of himself and onto the people around him. Over time, John successfully achieved a change in how he addressed situations. Most importantly, he realized the goal that brought him to JMA in the first place. The next year, his 360° reviews improved markedly and his firm promoted him to partner. One of his co-workers went so far as to say that she had witnessed a “remarkable transformation.”