

Coach DQ Case Study: Elizabeth

Elizabeth was working as a senior business analyst when a friend told her about Coach DQ.

“I felt that my work was being undervalued, and that I was being undervalued,” Elizabeth says. “I was a senior level manager doing director-level work, and I didn’t know how to go about getting recognized, or how to ask for the authority and compensation I deserved.”

Having been with her current company since 1997, Elizabeth was unsure about how to navigate the world of online job searches, social media, and personal branding. When her friend mentioned DQ’s services, Elizabeth saw the value a coach could bring to her current situation.

“Dawn helped to focus me,” she says. “I learned about internet job search strategies, how to brand myself, and tailor my CV for different keywords. I also whittled down the list of jobs I really want. I’m equally comfortable in business and technology; I’m equally right-brained and left-brained, with a foot in both worlds. Dawn gave me really good strategies for how to manage that balance, and utilize my skills as a creative problem solver.”

While Elizabeth was starting her work with Dawn, her division underwent a reorganization, and a number of promotions and shifts in position were occurring. “I was mad! Here were these people who hadn’t been doing anything—they weren’t delivering. And yet they were getting promoted. Dawn said I had to start advocating for myself, and gave me strategies for doing just that. ‘They’re not going to promote you just because you’re doing your job well,’ she told me. And she was right! I had to let my bosses know in a professional manner that I was unhappy.”

Using Dawn’s strategies, Elizabeth approached her bosses. “I said to my boss, ‘It’s very unfortunate that there are no career opportunities for the top performers in this organization. It’s not good for the organization.’ I already had a job description for the work I wanted to do. My boss made a couple of changes, then showed it to his boss.”

Within a week, Elizabeth had negotiated a promotion which included an 8% raise.

“Through it all, Dawn kept me right on task,” Elizabeth says. “She gives me forms, cheat sheets, and strategies to guide my process. The questionnaires I received prior to our first session really helped me crystallize what areas I wanted to focus on during our time together.”

While she is happy with her new position, Elizabeth is still actively searching for another job. Now, she’s working with Dawn to address gaps in her resume, and “other things that would ding me in the job market.” In addition to developing tools to manage potential employers’ questions or objections to weak points in her resume, Dawn has been helping Elizabeth find new tools to cope with her fairly significant visual impairment.

“I’ve done very well with it thus far,” Elizabeth says. “In terms of the day-to-day, I have no problems: all I need is a 17-inch monitor. However, I didn’t know how to bring it up comfortably in a business or networking setting, where I’m meeting people for the first time. I also do a lot of presentations. Dawn has helped me find ways to address the issue in social settings, and ways in which I can bring it into the conversation without awkwardness.”

When asked what has been the most helpful part of working with Dawn, Elizabeth says with a laugh, “Strategizing. I’m smart enough to recognize what I need to do to move forward, but I don’t always know how to go about it!”