



## Coaching for Development, Brussels

A university leader uses a lesson in coaching to open the door to change.

**Oya Basaran**  
Director, English Language Programs  
Istanbul Bilgi University

Despite an abundance of developmental opportunities available to faculty in the English Language Programs at Istanbul Bilgi University, Director Oya Basaran found that the traditional ways of teaching weren't budging much at all. "Trying out new things requires taking risks, and a lot of the times people prefer to stay in their comfort zone and avoid risks," said Basaran. "It became obvious that we couldn't change anybody's belief system or teaching/learning behavior if the need to change didn't come from within and unless it was initiated and implemented with the active involvement of the teachers themselves."

Basaran saw coaching as a means to promote long-lasting change and improve the learning that was happening inside and outside the classroom both for students and teachers. As a result, she introduced a course to train teachers in the skills needed to work one-to-one with peers in their professional development. "We had been doing peer observations and peer coaching, but not really systematically," she said. "And if it's not systematic, people don't do it. That's why I wanted to initiate it more systematically as a safe way to explore personal potential for growth. Investing in people's personal development is essential for professional development, and it requires coaching."

With the coaching course for teachers underway, Basaran also decided to seek out further training for herself — specifically to learn about different styles of coaching and to diagnose her own areas for improvement. At the CCL® Web site, she found what she was looking for in the Coaching for Development program offered in Brussels, and she successfully applied for a scholarship to assist with the program fee.

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Coaching for Development is a dynamic program — lasting just three days yet combining such features as classroom instruction, small group interaction, peer coaching and feedback, and videotaped practice sessions. The taped sessions were extremely eye-opening for Basaran. "When I looked at myself, I realized that whenever people came to me with problems, I had a tendency to jump in and offer solutions. Since then, I've been working hard to be more observant and reflective of myself in a coaching relationship and improve my skills."

Basaran continues to enhance the coaching experience she created for her department, working with instructors to develop communication and active-listening skills. The knowledge she picked up at CCL about understanding different personality types and learning styles will be incorporated into the coaching sessions.

Coaching for Development provided a welcome respite from Basaran's hectic workday world, allowing time to reflect on her beliefs about leadership, coaching, and personal and professional development. "I came away much more confident and focused about my own improvement in my leadership role," she said. "During a very challenging time in my career, the program motivated me to stay true to my personal vision and keep learning."

For more information:

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