

## ***Business Sparring***

A positive confrontation for more clarity in business thinking and decision making.



>> Business Sparring



# Perhaps you are familiar with one or more statements...

My position in the organisation is high – people don't tell me what they really think

Our decision meetings are flooded with topics - we need more time to discuss the important things

I want to improve my standing in the company and prove my competences

I am afraid that I am not prepared enough for my board presentation

I don't know which questions to expect in the decision meeting

I don't have a discussion partner who I can really trust

We need to get better in asking the right questions on time

There is no one to talk to without a stake in my topic

I don't feel comfortable presenting in front of important persons

We need a space for our talents to grow & shape and to expand their network

We have limited perspectives & too much internal focus

I am unclear whether my idea is good enough to work further on it

These are indications that Business Sparring can create value for you or your organisation!

# Three examples how Business Sparring delivers value to you



The board presentation



The decision meeting



The constructive peer format

## What is the problem?

- Very important topic & a lot at stake
- Feeling insecure & possibly afraid of the situation
- No one to go to to prepare

- Decision meetings lack time or focus
- Rhetoric abilities can beat content
- Risk of severely wrong decision making

- Silo thinking of organisational functions
- Lack of understanding & perspectives
- Growth of competences limited

## How does Business Sparring help you?

- Clarity about the quality of your presentation & a safe training
- Access to experience, more perspectives and questions
- Increased confidence and security

- Additional quality filter
- In depth challenge & discussion of decision cases based on competence
- Higher competences in the organisation over time

- Positive challenge & improved understanding across functions
- Additional external perspectives
- Building strong cross-functional relationships over time

# What is the foundation of Business Sparring?

## Business Sparring has its roots in sparring from (martial) sports

- It is a training in a protected setting with concrete rules determined in advance
- The athlete trains to improve certain skills & to develop herself further
- The goal is to emerge strengthened, focussed & prepared for the next competition



## These principles are transferred to a business context

- It is a sporty and positive confrontation without injuries
- It takes place in a protected & confidential setting
- It is intense & sometimes hard training, always with the business goal in mind



# What is the difference to Coaching & Consulting?

All of these three services have their place in the Mind Your Business portfolio, because each is unique & valuable.

## **Background:**

In the market, the term is often used as a fancy name for consulting or coaching.

Mind Your Business sees Business Sparring as a separate & very specific product.

Business Sparring deserves a place of its own!

## Coaching

- The focus lies on the person & the enhancement of personal competences
- Empathy & time for reflection are important
- The coach is seen as a personal companion

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## Business Sparring

- The focus lies on the content & the training of the business subject
- The challenge & the positive confrontation are essential
- The Sparring Partner is perceived as a guide for intense training, giving constructive feedback & questioning your ideas

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## Consulting

- The focus lies on the process
- The understanding & structural development are important
- The consultant is seen as a holistic business partner who develops & implements content together with you

# Business Sparring is a versatile & value adding solution

## Key components:

- Positive confrontation
- Trustworthy environment
- Tough questions
- Constructive dialogue
- Additional perspectives

- Build key competencies
- Deliver well prepared
- Improve business results

## Options for:

Individuals



*Structured:*  
Preparing you  
well



*Freestyle:*  
Shaping your  
idea

Teams &  
Organisations



*In-house:*  
Establishing a  
new quality



*Challenger:*  
Adding a critical  
voice



*Peer format:*  
Enhancing  
competences

All formats can be adapted further to your needs (multi-person sparring, etc) and integrated into other offerings from Mind Your Business such as Business Coaching or Consulting

# The classic format

Usually 1:1 but fully adaptable to your needs

## What you might face:

- You need to deliver something important (e.g. a board presentation, a concept or change program)
- You feel stuck in your preparation and fear to fail
- You are uncertain which questions to expect and how to deal with challenges
- You fear to damage your reputation in the organisation
- You lack a trustworthy person who supports you without an own agenda

## You benefit from this format because...

- you prepare in detail, get challenged and develop solutions in a confidential training setting
- you develop additional perspectives and understand strength, weaknesses and context better
- you get access to the ample experience of your business sparring partner in decision meetings



## How does it work?



*"Markus was of great support to me as **business sparring partner**... His excellent financial & business expertise helped a lot in weighing the various options against each other & in **achieving top management approval**..."*

# The freestyle format

## Shaping your brand new idea

### What you might face:

- A new idea has caught your mind & you are uncertain whether to give it a try
- You have no neutral space where you can comfortably share your ideas
- You are too busy & lack the time for preparation especially when you are uncertain whether to follow your idea

### You benefit from this format because...

- it gives you an external voice w/o political interests or own agendas
- your business sparring partner connects quickly & has ample experience with these „freestyle“ dialogues
- you can get relevant & valuable input in a short time
- it is ideal when you enjoy a free, open & creative discussion
- it gives you additional perspectives to shape your idea at this early stage

### How does it work?

1.

We meet without prior exchange of information & you share openly what is on your mind

2.

We talk & you will immediately see how your idea resonates with somebody else & which questions it triggers

3.

You develop your idea further immediately & leave the session with a better grip on it as well as concrete ideas how to proceed



„Our dialogues brought me **inspiring and refreshing lines of thinking** and at the same time **concrete ideas how to implement.**“

# The in-house meeting format

## Setting up a value adding format in your organisation



### What you might face:

- Overloaded agendas of decision meetings
- Insufficient time to dive into details which triggers inefficient side discussions, delay of decisions or shots from the hip
- Rhetoric abilities sometimes beat content in proposals
- Risk of wrong judgement of proposals, loss of precious time or wrong decision taking
- No time or competence in-house to solve this dilemma

### You benefit from this format because...

- it scrutinizes, challenges and filters proposals, consequently increasing their quality over time
- the decision meeting is not flooded with content anymore which enables more conscious decision making
- the focus moves to the really important elements of your organisation
- your organisation will develop higher competences in preparing proposals for decisions
- it gives the board higher confidence in business cases



### The goal

- Systematically improve the quality of decisions
- Benefit from a regular in-house Business Sparring format in your organisation

### My role

- Support in setting up the Business Sparring session fitting to your specific context
- Optional: participate in / or lead the meeting

*“His focus on team and people development was fundamental to build trustful working relationships quickly.”*

# The challenger format

## Increasing the value of your existing meetings



### What you might face:

- Your review or decision meetings lack effectiveness
- You lose precious time and do not reach the targeted results
- Your teams lack competences to ask the right questions
- People might not dare to ask uncomfortable questions, nobody wants to be the „bad guy“
- Limited perspectives and / or too much internal focus instead of holistic end-to-end thinking

### You benefit from this format because...

- it increases the effectiveness of your existing meetings
- it is implemented quickly and builds on your decision criteria
- the external voice without any stake in your topics or own agenda asks sharp, critical but still constructive questions
- it adds perspectives via a holistic approach, touching connection points & consequences
- your organisation learns to improve the quality in the decision process, hence enhances competences



### The goal

- Get more value out of your existing review, sparring or decision meetings.
- Get those competences that your organisation currently lacks

### My role

- Take the role of the external critical voice
- Enhance your meeting(s) with vast experience in similar sessions

*„He is a **highly valued sparring partner** who can extend my perspective and resolve potential blockades with just a few questions.“*

# The peer format

## Enhancing competences in a constructive peer exchange



### What you might face:

- You see value in a cross-functional in-house format to enhance perspectives and competences
- There is no adequate format available due to lack of time or a suitable facilitator
- Business Sparring competences are missing which are needed to make these sessions successful

### You benefit from this format because...

- it grows additional perspectives quickly
- the separation from ongoing business leads to depth, new angles and the chance to test ideas
- the additional external perspective helps to develop key skills for tomorrow's business world
- it is fun for participants & a way to get positively challenged
- the peer group members build strong cross-functional relationships over time, hence strengthen networks



### The goal

- Enhance the competences of talented people
- Sharpen their skills in a sporty, constructive and confidential confrontation with peers

### My role

- Facilitate peer sparring sessions
- Enhance perspectives by challenging, guiding and providing feedback

*"...Moreover, it was a great pleasure to work with Markus due to his **highly cooperative and team focused working style.**"*

# Choose what fits your goals and tasks

## Options for:

Individuals



*Structured:*  
Preparing you  
well



*Free style:*  
Shaping your  
idea

Teams &  
Organisations



*In-house:*  
Establishing a  
new quality



*Challenger:*  
Adding a critical  
voice



*Peer format:*  
Enhancing  
competences

- Five special formats with tangible benefits
- Pricing:
  - Following your needs as individual or organization > let's discuss your solution
  - In addition: packages of individual options available for organisations (e.g. 30 hours in total for a team)
- Combine Business Sparring with other solutions from Mind you business (e.g. Business Consulting or Coaching)

There are business decisions happening on a daily basis.  
Increase their quality with Business Sparring – start tomorrow!

# Let's discuss your individual solution!

## Who is your partner?



>> Business Sparring

### Experienced & hands-on Business Sparring partner:

- 20 years+ experience in delivering results in multi-national groups
- 15 years+ experience in leadership teams & decision meetings
- Extensive know-what & know-how as Business Sparring partner – working together with individuals as well as establishing and leading respective meetings

### Key principles of Mind Your Business applied also in Business Sparring:

- Think clearly – decide consciously – implement effectively
- Individual, specific and flexible customer solutions instead of copy/paste
- Success means delivering practical customer solutions that last, not theoretic concepts or presentations.

### Practical & solution focused approach:

*"Markus was of great support to me as business sparring partner.....His excellent financial and business expertise helped a lot in weighing the various options against each other and in achieving top management approval. Moreover it was a great pleasure to work with Markus due to his highly cooperative and team focused working style." (Veronika Ettinger, Head of Marketing)*



**Markus Eckhart**

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# What are benefits of Business Sparring?

Did you ever experience a situation where you had to present something important & had invested a lot of time in preparing it. Then, in the spotlight, somebody asks a fundamental question - but you are not prepared for it. The presentation is over - where is the hole in the floor to escape...?  
...just one of many use cases for Business Sparring

## Business Sparring supports you to avoid these situations

- You are able to strengthen your case & increase your chances to deliver successfully
- You improve your appearance in the business world
- You receive additional perspectives & ideas
- You step into the professional spotlight more confidently, strengthened & better prepared
- You reduce the chances of errors in decision making

## Your Business Sparring partner:

- Provides you constructive feedback, critical questions & content expertise
- Questions & analyses your ideas, concepts & arguments thoroughly which sharpens your work
- Provides new perspectives & broadens your horizon
- Sparks your creativity
- Guides you through the process & encourages you, giving you more confidence & peace of mind

you need a holistic partner who understands your business context quickly & has experienced these moments in the spotlight from different angles and roles