

COACHING PACK 1

This is a pack of coaching handouts that I have written, adapting both original source material and my own experience. The pack gives people a basic introduction to coaching.

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2009

COACHING OVERVIEW

LEARNING CONVERSATIONS

1. BACKGROUND

A 'coaching approach' has become a useful management skill and leadership style. It promotes personal development, increases the power of the individual to make choices and encourages them to be accountable for their own actions. This approach presupposes that on most occasions the coachee has the answer locked up inside them. Therefore, coaching is about helping people to see things for themselves in order to enable them to design their own actions to take themselves forwards.

2. WHAT IS COACHING?

Coaching	= usually 2 people in a confidential conversation (can be coach + team) = work = structured sessions with learning points and actions = working with people to help them move from Point A to Point B
Coachee's role	= talk openly + explore alternatives + venture beyond comfort zone = practice new learning between sessions = be prepared to laugh and learn
Coach's role	= build the relationship + meet coachee's needs + manage the process = share appropriate how-to's during sessions = keep the process pragmatic + contextualised + useful = bring structure + encouragement + insight to the development process = provide new angles + distinctions + frameworks so the coachee can develop new actions = be prepared to laugh and learn
The Goal	= moving people towards self-propulsion = awareness + options + spontaneity (Eric Berne) = Autonomy

Coaching aims to produce

- 1) Continuing excellent performance
- 2) Self-managed learning and development
- 3) Self-monitoring and adjustment

3. THE COACHING PROCESS

Define the need	= the client maps where they are and where they would like to get to = the sponsor may provide some structure and outcomes if appropriate
Agree contracts	= mutual + respectful + lawful + achievable + recompense = include practicalities + process + personal elements = For each pair: coach - coachee / coach - sponsor / coachee - sponsor
Have regular sessions	= preparation + conversation + options + actions + session summary
Practice	= have a go at agreed actions = no such thing as 'failure' there is only practice
Review	= has the coachee made progress? = what could be done differently?

4. COACHING IS ABOUT LEARNING

The coaching process is about learning and the coach will often need to use one of more of the following to help the coachee to move:

Role play situations	Provide objective feedback	Rehearse conversations
Unpick 'failures'	Explain models	Share top tips
Share examples	2-minute brainstorming in silence with Post-It notes	Share practical how-to's on requested areas

Some useful quotations about learning:

"A mind stretched by a new idea never returns to its original dimensions." Oliver Wendell Holmes.

"An idea is a new combination of old elements". Gordon Dryden.

"Vertical thinking is digging the same hole deeper. Lateral thinking is trying again elsewhere". Edward de Bono.

"The only dumb question is a question you don't ask". Paul MacCready.

5. COACHING GUIDELINES

1. Coaching is about working *with* people. If there is no mutually agreed contract then it can become a 'done-to' process and people will only resent it.
2. A coach needs to be able to set issues in a global context. Ask: **What's the bigger picture?**
3. Move between the global picture and the small detail, to maintain perspective.
4. Never present yourself as an expert. It will set up a situation of dependency.
5. The only reality that matters is the reality of the coachee.
6. Take some time to engage people because they are 'always and already' in their situation. A good coach joins in and finds out where they are. Achieve this by asking open questions:

How are you? What's uppermost in you mind? What do you want us to talk about?

7. Ask WHAT instead of WHY. *What* questions elicit *why* information and bypass emotional filters. Being asked *why* can 'rubber-band' us back to a negative parent-child situation. Ask:

What was your thinking behind that? What was your desired outcome?

8. Ask WHEN to nail down actions. Be firm with a coachee who does not see action as an outcome of the coaching process. Ask:

When will you have three occasions you can try this out?

9. Alertness to 'crisis points' is key. High performers grasp the moment and act.

Take away message: Build the relationship first and then ask what and when.

COACHING CONCERNS

MYTHS & LEGENDS

1. COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Coaching is a specific and skilful part of a leader's tool kit. However, there are some common misconceptions which need to be addressed in order for people to buy-in to the process.

These include:

1. **“Coaching is just the same as mentoring”**. Although there is a natural grey area between them, coaching is about working with someone to enable them to make upward progress, whereas mentoring is more about being a friend and companion. A mentor may listen passively, whereas a coach may ask questions, challenge, or provide new angles.
2. **“Coaching is just talking really”**. Coaching is work. It involves structured learning conversations, where both parties make a valid contribution. Coaching sessions have a start and an end and include learning points and agreed actions.
3. **“Coaching can help everyone”**. Not always – coaching is best used for people going through a period of transition. If you need help to get from Point A to Point B then coaching is a good option. However, if you wish to remain as you are, then coaching is of no use to you.
4. **“You can't coach someone if you don't understand the technical elements of their work”**. This is one of the most pernicious myths. Coaching in general is not based on specific technical knowledge. Instead it is a structured and reflective process which helps the coachee to increase their options and design new actions.
5. **“All coaches are the same”**. No. Coaching involves building personal rapport. As with all things in life, a coach you can't get on with is no use to you. Life coaches help people with personal situations, business coaches help people in more business oriented situations and sports coaches help people to hone specific sporting skills. These can all involve different approaches, for example, sports coaching may involve more 'telling' or 'directing'.
6. **“A coach is for life”**. Coaching should not involve a dependant relationship. Also, coaching is not therapy. A good coach works quickly to ensure the coachee becomes self-sufficient. All coaching relationships should start with an end-point in sight.
7. **“Quick coaching cannot be good coaching”**. Coaching can last for a single session, if that helps the client to make the progress they need. There is no law which says that things have to take ages to be of any use, but our own prejudices encourage us to undervalue those things which take less time. This is a key point for people who may need coaching, but are put off by the fear that it will have to take months to make any progress.

2. PRACTICAL TIPS

When you are trying to coach someone, ask them what their concerns are. Use the above list to help them understand the reality that coaching is a useful, practical and safe process. Encourage people to ask questions – this is a good way to engage interest and to ensure they have a chance to put their 'hidden issues' on the table.

Take away message: Be prepared to deal with concerns and prejudices.

QUESTION TYPES

OBTAINING INFORMATION

QUESTION TYPES

We all use questions all of the time to gather information, check our thinking and gain agreement. It is worthwhile to consider the various forms these questions can take as the answer (and its usefulness) is directly influenced by the type of question we ask and the way we ask it. When thinking about questions always remember Kipling's 'Six Serving Men':

"How and who and what and why and where and when."

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Open	Seeks information and clarifies. In a coaching context the more open questions you ask, the better the session will be as this type of question invites people to think for themselves.	What do you think about that? Why is that important to you? How could you do this differently? What other options are there? When will you have this completed?
Closed	Forces people to choose between alternatives. Can be useful to end conversations and check that you have reached agreement.	Are you going to do this? Would you like to meet in the morning or the afternoon? Would you prefer tea or coffee? Have you thought about this?
Leading	Steers someone towards a particular answer or topic. Can be helpful when dealing with people who are struggling to focus more general thoughts.	Tell me about the time when you liked using your imagination? I think that you are good at solving problems. Wouldn't you agree?
Redefining	Puts the problem from a different perspective in order to overcome a poor answer or a lack of understanding. Is a useful question when someone is struggling to answer a previous question.	When I asked about your time management what I wanted to know was when do you update your diary? So you can't remember what happened. What do you think the other driver saw after you crossed the line?
Blocking	Cuts across or ignores the question being asked and steers the conversation in a different direction.	Lets not worry about my time management, what I want to know is why I was given this task in the first place? Thank you for asking about the accident. The actual question is can you help me sue the tyre manufacturer?

Take away message: Use different types of question to focus the conversation.

COACHING MODEL

LEARNING CONVERSATIONS

COACHING PROCESS SUMMARY

	STAGE	COMMENTS	COACHING SKILL
PREPARATION	SET UP SESSION	Think about neutral space and privacy.	
	PREPARATION SHEET & LEARNING STYLES	Coachee to complete ahead of the session. Coach to review their own Learning Styles and those of their Coachee.	Learning Styles
COACHING SESSION	CONTRACT	Include: Confidentiality, permissions, timing, note taking, expectations.	Contracting Permissions
	CURRENT SITUATION	Review preparation sheet and ask what the Coachee expects to have at the end of the session. Review previous actions and what has been practised.	
	1) <u>GOALS</u>	Identify the key <u>issues</u> . Identify what the Coachee <u>needs</u> to have at the end of the session.	Open questions Feedback Disclosure Reality Checking
	2) <u>REALITY</u>	During the coaching discussion note down what new ideas or angles or thinking emerge.	Johari Window Thomas-Kilmann Ego States Learning Styles
	3) <u>OPTIONS</u>	Generate options. List the options and consider their viability.	Dialogue Brainstorming Post-it's in silence Open questions
	4) <u>WILLINGNESS</u>	Sort and prioritise <u>ACTIONS</u> . Practice and rehearse them where appropriate. Check <u>commitment</u> .	SMART objective setting Disclosure (to confirm commitment) Role-playing Reflection Provide How-to's
	SUMMARY SHEET	Complete and agree. Check to see if there are any lingering needs.	
	QUOTE	Ask the coachee for a 'quote' to capture their feelings about the session.	Disclosure
	SET UP NEXT SESSION	Review location and timing.	
	THANK	Thank Coachee for their time and their contribution.	

Ref: Coaching for Performance, Whitmore, 2003 / Richard Maun, 2004

COACHING CONTRACT

BASIC ELEMENTS FOR DISCUSSION

Length of time for each session / location

Completion of Preparation sheet

Process = discussion/reflection/rehearsal/reality check

Responsibility of Coach = to manage the process and maintain confidentiality

Responsibility of Coachee = to remain responsible for all their ensuing actions and decisions

Note taking / summary sheet

Goal = "At the end of the session you aim to have..."

Feedback - safe and straight and only when appropriate

Special needs or considerations?

Respect Others Views

Confidential limits - within this room

Confidential scope - be responsible for self disclosure

No goods / bads - about appropriateness

It's Ok to practice It's Ok to change

It's Ok to admit ignorance It's Ok to share

It's Ok to question It's Ok to make your own choices

COACHING SESSION

USEFUL MODELS

1. COACHING SESSION STRUCTURE

Coaching sessions involve structured conversations. The coach is responsible for managing these. When coaching, ask relevant questions from each of the four stages.

STAGE	The 'Grow' Model	The 'Coach' Model	The 'ILpOA' Model
1) Relationship & Contract	Goals What would you like to have by the end of this coaching session? (a) So your goal at work would be what..?	Competency How can I help you? Would you prefer guidance or reassurance? What have you tried? Can you summarise the problem in one single sentence?	Issues What are you putting up with? (b) How much time would you like for the session? What progress have you made since we last met?
	Reality How much of this situation is within your control? (c) What else bothers you? And what else?	So what you're saying is... Share useful How-to's	Learning Points What have you learned? Could there be a different way you could react to this?
3) Option Generating	Options What options do you have for changing things? (d) What would be the benefits? What would you lose?	Outcomes What is your timescale? What will success look like? SMART goals are crucial	Options What else could you try? If we <i>had</i> to do it differently, what could we do? What advice would you give to someone else in the same situation? (e)
	Will What are you willing to try? What will you do? When will you do this? How will you measure success? What will stop you from doing this? (f)	Actions Which action will bring you the most results? What is your reason for wanting to tackle it this way? CHecking What is the most difficult question you will face? Rehearse them or challenge their thinking	Actions What would you like to do? When will you practice? Test assumptions Can I have a quote please? (for feedback) What would we do differently next time?
4) Actions & Next Steps			

2. SESSION QUESTION NOTES

There are some key coaching questions which are very helpful:

- (a) **What would you like to have by the end of this session?**
Start with a clear view of the coachee's needs and their 'destination'.
- (b) **What are you putting up with?**
A good way to understand a coachee's needs is to ask them to name their frustrations. This is an easier question to answer than "what do you want?"
- (c) **How much of this situation is within your control?**
Coaching involves the coachee taking responsibility for their situation. The coach may need to remind the coachee that they are always able to influence their own situation.
- (d) **What options do you have for changing things?**
The coach will need to encourage the coachee to think for themselves.
- (e) **What advice would you give to someone else in the same situation?**
People often find it easy to provide others with advice. This question enables a coach to reflect a coachee's advice back to themselves!
- (f) **What will stop you from doing this?**
This question is a useful check on reality and commitment. If someone has an issue with an agreed action then the coach can spend time rehearsing or practicing with the coachee.

3. TYPES OF MOOD

There are six types of negative mood, which may be encountered during the coaching process. The table below shows how to spot them and what to do.

Behaviour	Language	Solution
1. A sceptic says	"I doubt"	and needs to see evidence
2. A cynic says	"It's all rubbish"	and needs complete honesty
3. A resigned person says	"Nothing new is possible for me"	and needs reassurance
4. A frustrated person says	"I must do it, but I cannot"	and needs reflection
5. A resentful person says	"Something unfair has been done to me"	and needs consultation
6. A guilty person says	"I have done something and can never make up for it"	and needs absolution and a reality check

4. DOMAINS OF COMPETENCE

When coaching begins it can be helpful to think about which 'domain' the coachee needs support with. People need to be competent in all three domains starting with the 'I domain'. Ask: **which area am I coaching in?**

Finally move into **Task** = The It domain
 Then master **Others** = The We domain
 Start with **Self** = The I domain



facts and events / technical boffins
relationships with others / mutually productive
self management / reliability

Take away message: *Structured questioning models make for thorough coaching.*

Ref: Coaching: Evoking Excellence, Flaherty, 1999 / Coaching for Performance, Whitmore, 1999 / The Coaching Pocketbook, Fleming & Taylor, 2002 / ILPOA Richard Maun 2004