

# ABOUT COACHING & GETTING THE BEST FROM IT

Coaching is the preferred choice of successful leaders who want to achieve greater success, personal and business performance goals, and personal fulfillment. It is individual, targeted and focuses on future possibilities, not the past. It is about stretch and challenge; achieving with ease. It provides objective support on your journey to clarify and reach your goals.

## WHAT IS COACHING?

Coaching does not give you the answers or offer advice. Coaching facilitates your thinking and helps you to draw on your own resources and skills to find the answers for yourself. It is an emergent not a prescriptive process.

## COACHING

- Is goal oriented, focused on developing fresh thinking and understanding, achieving growth and specific outcomes: behavioural, performance, awareness, emotional, developmental, transformational.
- Increases self-awareness and awareness of others. Increased awareness generates a broader range of choices which in turn generates different results and development.
- Uncovers options and opens the lid on thinking. A coach facilitates your thinking and questions and challenges your beliefs and attitudes.

## WHAT TO EXPECT?

A coach can be many things: a torch shining a light in unvisited places, a sounding board, and navigational support. Coaching is non-judgmental; a coach offers open and constructive feedback that moves you forward.

You can expect complete confidentiality, freedom to explore your dreams, thoughts, feelings, and concerns, in a safe a trusting space – a space that is not generally possible within day to day business life. Coaching relationships are not formulaic; each has to be designed to establish an effective alliance

In a first meeting, we check that we can work together - building a sense of trust, rapport, and confidence that your objectives and learning style can be supported. Some clients look for a sense of comfort, however coaching is often about stretch, so what's important is that you have a sense of safety.

Initial meetings are normally face to face, and often include a tripartite session with an executive sponsor. During the first sessions outcomes and goals will be established, a programme will be mapped out, and a coaching “contract” agreed. Assessment and feedback may be undertaken (e.g. psychometrics, 360° interviews). Subsequent sessions are normally 1.5-2 hours, either face to face or by telephone. Email and other support is a normal part of our coaching programmes. Typical programmes vary from 3-9 months, and include mid-point and final review and evaluation.

Executive coaching is about:

- Widening repertoires of behavior
- Developing EI and learning to control emotional responses
- Getting closure around unfinished issues
- Cultivating leadership presence
- Understanding ones purpose and achieving fulfillment.

Bluckert 2006

“The greatest gift we can offer each other is the framework in which to think for ourselves”

Nancy Kline, More Time to Think

“In our view, coaching is not about solving problems, although problems will be solved. It is not primarily about improving performance, attaining goals, or achieving results, although all of that will certainly happen in an effective coaching relationship. We believe that coaching is chiefly about discovery, awareness, and choice. It is a way of effectively empowering people to find their own answers, encouraging and supporting them on the path as they continue to make important choices.”

Laura Whitworth et al

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Sessions are tailored to your needs and your agenda. My attention will be on you: listening, intuiting, evoking, make requests, bottom lining, offering challenge and stretch. This approach is well grounded in theory and practice. I can't tell you, but I can help you find out. I can share wisdom and what's worked for others, as long as you take accountability for decisions and actions. Sessions end with a brief review.

## HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM COACHING

- ✓ Above all, bring commitment to the process, and take accountability for your goals and learning – I will support and guide you, but you are responsible for applying and embedding the learning.
- ✓ Come to each session with a direction in mind and specifics that you want to address.
- ✓ Address your whole self - consider how you want to feel and not just what you want to think and do.
- ✓ Be open to new ways for seeing and thinking – coaching is about “who” as well as “what”.
- ✓ Take responsibility for the coaching alliance – train me, tell me if you feel my style needs adjusting to your needs.
- ✓ Bring your whole self openly – disclose and unpack your thoughts and feelings; be open to seeing things differently and trying new approaches; be willing to evolve as well as develop yourself.
- ✓ Be direct with me about what you want; consider and tell me.
- ✓ Prepare– allow some time beforehand – make sure you know what you want to cover. If you're stuck, say so; ask yourself “If I could cover just one thing, what would it be?” Make sure you're in the best internal state for you.
- ✓ Cut out the chat and the irrelevant – will it really move you forward? Is this really how you want to spend your time with me as your coach?
- ✓ Get the background out of the way beforehand. Use your time with me to move forward. Send me anything you can about context and background beforehand.
- ✓ Review - take time after each meeting and between sessions. Perhaps note down discoveries, insights or themes that were explored; write down actions and plan follow-ups.
- ✓ Reflect - what new awareness and learning do you have? What action have you taken, will you take? Keep a journal of significant thoughts, learning, and matters to address next time.
- ✓ The value of coaching does not just happen in the conversation. Allow for realisation to build in between times; integrate and use what was discussed.
- ✓ Share what you are doing with others (personal and professional). When we openly share what we are doing we both validate our commitment to ourselves and craft a more effective leadership and development experience.

I HAVE TEMPLATES I CAN SHARE FOR THINKING ABOUT GOALS AND OUTCOMES, FOR PREPARATION, AND FOR REFLECTION IF YOU THINK THESE WOULD HELP.

“Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them.”

Sir John Whitmore

“Coaching is a form of conversation with unspoken ground rules regarding certain qualities that must be present: respect, openness, compassion, empathy, and a rigorous commitment to speaking the truth. There are certain assumptions underlying the conversation as well. We, assume strength and capability, not weakness, helplessness, or dependence. We assume a deep desire to give the best and achieve potential. A coaching conversation has certain beliefs built into it: that every situation has possibilities and that people really do have the power of choice in their lives.”

Laura Whitworth et al

“To be nobody but yourself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting.”

e e cummings