



## **What is Coaching?**

The essence of coaching is a partnership—you facilitate self-discovery, create awareness, and promote self-discipline to hold the person you're coaching accountable.

While coaching is often viewed as a one-on-one situation, *when you use coaching techniques on a team or group setting, you are acting as facilitator.*

Coaching is not mentoring, where you share your experiences to generate ideas and problem solving.

Coaching is not therapy, where you try to discover root causes and learn the why of things.

Coaching is not leading and directing (where you manipulate) through questions to get the person to the conclusion you've reached, and feel is best.

Coaching is not athletic coaching which is more directed and motivational focused

## **What does it look like and sound like?**

Coaches ask questions, listen with an intent to learn and with curiosity. They use clarifying statements to reflect what they are hearing and offer reality checks and challenging questions that make provoke deeper thought by the individual. All of this is done in a framework that, guided by the coach, sets an agreed expectation at the start of the conversation and ends with a recap of agreed upon actions, ways that the individual will hold themselves accountable and a specific time when the coach and individual will touch base again to follow up.

Coaching can be done in person, on the phone, through email or instant messaging. However people communicate, coaching can be done.

### **STEP ONE: Set the foundation. Establish a Coaching Agreement**

The person being coached articulates what they would like to get out of the session. They often may not know what they want, it is up to the coach to ask questions that cause them to think about and articulate their goal. It is also up to the coach to make sure the goal is specific and realistic.

Examples:

“What would you like to get out of today’s coaching session?”

“I’m hearing that you would like to have at least one tool or strategy that you could implement to help you resolve\_\_\_\_\_.”

### **STEP TWO: Establish trust and maintain your coaching presence.**

Listening, reflecting what you’ve heard, so the person being coached knows you are listening with an intent to learn. Asking questions for clarification and curiosity but not nosiness.

Coaches do not bring in additional information they may know about the situation and argue with the person being coached, nor do they bring up experiences of their own (that’s mentoring). Coaching is all about the person being coached.

Coaches do not make judgements on the solution nor do they lead the coachee to that conclusion through manipulated questioning.

Coaches do not look at their watch, their laptop or cellphone while coaching.

Coaches are very aware that what they are thinking is revealed in their faces and body language and take care to stay present, interested and compassionate.

Example:

“I’m hearing that you feel overwhelmed by the project and the deadline. You’re frustrated that your co-workers don’t seem to be carrying their fair share of the load. You feel that your workload isn’t balanced and that you’re being taken advantage of.”

### **STEP THREE: Communicate Effectively**

**Use your active listening skills.** Watch body language and note how some questions provoke different speed of responses. How is the individual responding to their coaching journey? Is there a moment of connection or realization happening?

**Ask powerful questions,** not passive ones. Avoid yes/no questions.

**Direct communication.** Keep questions tactical and results oriented.

Examples:

“You’re telling me that you trust your employees, but your micromanagement says you don’t.”

“You say that you’re intent on building a high trust culture yet you don’t admit when you make mistakes.”

“You consistently overcommit”

“Who taught them it was your job and not theirs?”

### **STEP FOUR: Facilitating Learning and Results**

**Create awareness** in the person being coached; **design actions** that can be taken; **assist with planning and goal setting.**

Include in the planning, check ins to manage progress and accountability checks.

Examples:

“What one thing, specifically could you do that could change the situation?”

“How specifically do you think what would improve the situation?”

“What is a reasonable amount of time for that to happen?”

“When would you like to check in with me to see how you’re doing?”