Coaching For Results - Outcomes Are Everything
by Terri Levine (USA)

Coaching In Three Dimensions - Meeting the Challenges of a Complex World
by Malcolm Nicholson (UK)

Take Control of Your Discovery Call and Convert More Prospects to Paying Clients
by Glen Oliveiro (Singapore)

Why Some Coaches Almost Always Get Their Clients the Desired Results
by Peter Thomson (UK)
EDITOR’S NOTE

Welcome to another exciting edition of the International Coaching News (iCN) online magazine!

Our 23rd edition, is themed Coaching Tools, Tips & Techniques, inspired by coaches to guide coachees to create insight in oneself, define one’s goals, generate new solutions and/or overcome inner and outer obstacles.

This edition is filled with interesting power tools toward greater well-being. It focuses solely on coaching tools, tips & techniques used by seasoned coaches, to aid you in your coaching profession.

In this 23rd edition, look out for the article ‘Why Some Coaches Almost Always Get Their Clients the Desired Results’ by Peter Thomson from United Kingdom. In this article, Peter discusses his Six – seemingly simple questions that can be used for any situation in life - from goal setting (and achieving) to sales, writing powerful, persuasive and passionate copy – to getting fitter or climbing Mount Everest. Another noteworthy article ‘Take Control of Your Discovery Call and Convert More Prospects to Paying Clients’ by Glen Oliveiro from Singapore. This article will guide you through every step of your discovery call so you can help fulfil your client's objectives. For our Book Review Section we have ‘Coaching In Three Dimensions - Meeting the Challenges of a Complex World’ review done by iCN Journalist from UK Malcolm Nicholson. The book written by Paul Laurence & Allen Moore, pushed the boundaries of accepted wisdom around what coaching is, encouraging creativity and new approaches. Another article to look out for ‘The Wheel of Life’ by Ashley Gordon & Brian Tregunna. Ashley and Brian explain about the importance of having a broad range of coaching skills and the tool they often use to help new clients prioritise their needs. Each of our columnists, too numerous to mention, has taken some really interesting perspectives, and I would encourage a thorough read-through of this edition.

Just like all our other editions, this edition is not just an interesting read, but it provides you with helpful personal development ideas and professional development techniques to grow your business and improves lifestyle. I hope you enjoy this issue and do let us know if there are any topics you’d like to see covered in the future.

Lovelia
WIN THIS SELF-COACHING CARDS
Be in with a chance of winning this lovely prize

All you need to do is contact us here: https://coach-accreditation.services/contact/
and say you’d like to be entered into the lucky draw, which will be drawn on 25 DECEMBER 2018.
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**SECTION: Romanian**

Consultanța în afaceri, incotro? by Sorin Caian
Nothing can compare to your passion to help your coaching clients overcome their obstacles and reach their goals. And nothing beats the sense of fulfilment you experience when they do.

When a prospective client book that initial discovery call with you, you are unfamiliar with their struggles and unsure whether they are ready to commit to taking action to achieve their objectives.

It is therefore instrumental for you to take control of the discovery call and to steer the conversation so that you get the answers you need and close successfully.

This article will guide you through every step of your discovery call so you can fulfil the following objectives:

- Decide if this prospect is a good fit for you as a client and if you can help them;
- Present your coaching programme or your offer in a way that your potential client understands its value and how you can help them change their lives for the better;
- Convert your prospect to paying client.

Each step below includes suggested templates and examples, and for the best outcomes you should tailor them to your specific practice and communication style.

**1. Opening the Discovery Call**

**Introductions**

Hello (Name), I’m happy you found me through the _____ Facebook group and reached out.

... I’m glad you found my website and scheduled this call with me so we can get to know each other a bit more.

... I’m so glad (Name) referred me to you, so we get to know each other a little more over this call.

**Setting the agenda**

If it’s ok with you, I’d like to walk you through our conversation today. First, I’d like to tell you a little about myself, and then learn more about you and why you decided to reach out to me.

If your prospect is already familiar with your programme and you, you can say:

"First, is there anything you’d like to ask about my work or me?"?

And then, I’d like to get to know YOU. So, I’ll ask you a lot of questions. In the end, if I think I can help you, and you agree, I’ll introduce you to the way I carry out my coaching sessions and the outcomes you can expect if we work together.
Introduce yourself

In case your prospect is not familiar (enough) with you, use this template to prepare your intro in advance.

Template:
I help (your target audience / ideal client) overcome their challenges with (the problems you help your client solve) and become (the main benefits your clients will have if working with you).

Example: I help women who feel lonely and rejected to save their relationship, and create intimate, peaceful, passionate romance with their partners so they feel happy and loved again.

Example questions to dig deep:

- What is your no. 1 challenge (in relation to your field of coaching) right now?
- What are the consequences of the problem you’re facing?
- How does that make you feel?
- What motivates you to overcome this obstacle?
- Have you already tried to tackle this problem?
- Have you taken part in a workshop or worked with another coach before?
- How did it go?
- What will you gain if you solve this?
- Why do you think (this training/workshop/coaching programme) didn’t work out the way you hoped?
- Do you find it difficult to repeat a certain activity or a process to get results?

Phrases to navigate the conversation back to the main topic

When you finish asking questions, recap everything you learned from your prospect. This is key. By accurately summing up the issue/challenge and the effect or impact on this person seeking help, you will demonstrate that you have been completely present and fully understood him/her.

If you decide to help them, ask for their permission to present your solution.

It’s not enough to simply say ‘I understand’. You need to be very specific (yet concise) about what you have heard and understood and repeat it back articulately. Only then will you have clearly demonstrated to your prospect that you have truly understood and in turn, you would have created the desire for him/her to want to work with you.

Always have your coaching approach and/or your programme ready. Do not fumble at this point with trying to search through your website or notes or trying to remember details of your offer and/or fees. It demonstrates a lack of organisation, preparedness, or worse, a lack of confidence in your offer.

Speak confidently of your offer and what you can do to help your prospect accomplish his/her goal.

If you work with me, we will get together____times a week, for______ minutes. We will set clear goals and action steps for you to take each week. We will discuss strategies and I’ll provide you with all the tools you need to achieve your goals. You will have my email support during______, I will help you (list a few specific issues you can help your prospect with).

How does this sound to you?
Do you have any questions?
3  Closing The Call

The investment

Your job is to listen to these objections and be ready to respond with appropriate success stories.

Prepare examples of the people you helped in the past. Explain their background, main challenges, how you helped them, and most importantly, where they are now, AFTER working with you. If your prospect is ready to take action, your success stories will help them imagine having you as their coach and living their life with purpose, clarity and direction.

After they say yes, ask them when they would like to start and agree on the next steps.

4  Final Words

Duration of the Discovery Call

The final step of your proposal is to tell your prospect how much money they need to invest. Be confident and comfortable with the amount you ask from your prospect. Your attitude and tone of voice will be a clear signal about your expertise and that your coaching programme will give them the results that correspond to the value you are asking them to invest in working with you.

Only then will you be able to state your fees with authority and confidence, necessary for your prospect to entrust themselves to enter into a coaching relationship with you.

Handling objections

The most common objections in a discovery call are the cost of the coaching programme, the time it takes to see the results and the prospect’s fear of failure.

The art of giving value (without giving away too much)

The secret of a successful discovery call is for you to understand your prospect’s pain point, listen actively, acknowledge and then help them gain clarity on how you would approach it. Inspire them with possibilities and success stories and demonstrate your authority in the subject. It may sound counterintuitive, but the more value you give, the more they will want to work with you.

Make it easy for your prospects to connect with you

To make it easy for your prospects to reach out and connect with you, it’s important that you make it as frictionless as possible for them to schedule time to speak with you.

Having several back and forth emails or text messages to schedule a discovery call can be a real turn off. Busy people don’t have time for email ping-pong and it doesn’t look professional on your part either.

As a business owner, it’s also important for you to be productive and not take up half an afternoon to schedule a discovery call with your prospect. You have more important things to do with your time like doing proper planning and research about your prospect ahead of your discovery call.

There are several tools that you can use for automated scheduling which makes it easy, convenient and productive for both you and your prospects. Using a scheduling tool will save you heaps of time and demonstrates professionalism.

Think like a coach AND a business owner

You’re not a coach if you don’t have clients to begin with. Getting clients means having conversations with people who don’t know (yet) that they need a coach. It’s your responsibility as a ‘business owner’ to create a pipeline, schedule discovery calls and convert prospects to paying clients for you as the ‘coach’.

You are, after all, a coach and a business owner.

Each and every conversation you have takes you closer toward mastering the art of the discovery call and, ultimately, to your success as a business owner and a coach.
Many coaches tell me that coaching is about selling people into a coaching service where the client does all the work to accomplish their goals. I used to believe that was true. In fact, I was taught that nearly twenty years ago when I entered the industry. I started my coaching business with this belief. I was offering coaching and expecting my client family members to achieve the results they hired me for and yet many of them were failing. I quickly became frustrated because I care and my client family members matter to me and I want them to get the outcomes they hire me for. I realised that expecting my client family members to get outcomes and results and to achieve their goals only happened when both of us committed to the coaching relationship and did the work required to achieve the results desired. I realised that the best coaching tool I had was to create results for my client family members by shifting the way I delivered coaching to them.

Imagine that you wanted my help growing your own coaching business. You read my website and you understand with my background, experience and expertise I know how to build a seven figure coaching business. You then invest in my coaching services. I show up and tell you things like, “You have the answer”, “If you knew the answer what would it be?”. You might become frustrated and might find yourself wondering why I was keeping the answers from you. You had hired an “expert” and the expert was not sharing their knowledge with you. That actually feels very selfish to me and not something I would want to invest in if I were serious about getting results.

I am transparently telling you that for the first few years of my coaching, I did just that. I held all my expertise back and tried everything to desperately have my client family members find their own answers. After hearing their frustration, I realised I needed to package my expertise into a high-ticket coaching program that blended coaching with me sharing my knowledge with my client family members. Once I did this I was able to attract very serious client family members who were willing to do the work to achieve their goals and who would accept my coaching as well as my shared expertise. Instead of client family members investing $1,000 per hour to work with me, pretty soon I was working with small groups investing $5,000 to $15,000 to learn what I knew and to get my coaching to implement my marketing systems and to have me customise the information they were learning during our small group coaching for their business. My client family members were now getting a blend of high-level coaching along with my knowledge.

Most coaches don’t package their knowledge with their coaching. They miss this key point. When you package your knowledge into a high-ticket coaching program you can take on serious coaching clients on who are dedicated to achieving a goal and who recognise your coaching ability and who want your expertise.

How do you do this? You look at what you are qualified to help your client family members with. If you are an expert at parent coaching and helping parents to have more peaceful, loving children then you package that into a program that contains time for small group coaching as well as modules that will move your client family members step-by-step to their goal with curriculum you provide for them.

Coaching, in my experience of two decades in this industry with over 5,000 client family members, is a blend of curriculum with your coaching. This blended coaching approach is the most powerful tool any coach can use to truly give their client family members guaranteed results.

Coaching that gets results is founded on a program of well thought out actions clients need to take to move them step-by-step to the outcomes they seek. This type of coaching blends your ability to create curriculum that moves your client family members to outcomes while coaching them along the way. I believe great coaches who make a real difference and help their client family members achieve real outcomes perfectly blend curriculum with client coaching.

I encourage you to identify the valuable result, you know you can create for those who hire you. Decide what curriculum you will need to teach the skills needed for your client family members. Decide how much coaching they will need, and if it will be done by group or individually. I suggest that you turn your expertise into a high ticket coaching program and I do recommend you price your program at $1500 to $5,000 (US).

What might be included in your program? You will have your training content as curriculum which can be a blend of audio, video, webinars, membership site, etc. and then group coaching calls (or individual) along with question and answer sessions if desired. Be certain you have organised information in the form of curriculum that will assure your client family members transformation. Your goal is to truly help people get the outcomes they want.
Most of my client family members take their expertise and create a high-ticket signature program delivered over 6 to 8 weeks for $1500 to $5,000. All of them provide small live group coaching once or twice a week and some have live group question and answer calls and most have a closed private Facebook Group for more interaction. Their curriculum is delivered electronically and is well organised and the group coaching gives clients immediate feedback and customises and personalises the content. My client family members tell me they prefer a high-ticket because their clients are much more committed to results and they also prefer group to individual coaching because clients tend to have a lot of synchronicity and like to learn from others. I often find I am coaching one client family member and another on the group call messages me that they are so glad they heard me coaching this person because they had a breakthrough during the session and never thought of asking the question they had a breakthrough during the session and never thought of asking the question the other client family member asked for coaching on. Individual coaching misses this element.

I believe coaching alone does not create the best results and that many people bounce from one coach to another and one coaching program to another because they don’t achieve the results they are paying for. When your client family members don’t get the results they will leave and they will not refer business to you. You did not spend time and money to bring them in as a client and not help them, right? I know you do want to help them and to make a difference with your coaching. Then you owe it to them to help them experience major breakthroughs and to get results. When you do, they will fall in love with you. I hear from my client family members all the time about their progress and because I offer high-ticket because their clients are much more committed to results and they also prefer group to individual coaching because clients tend to have a lot of synchronicity and like to learn from others. I often find I am coaching one client family member and another on the group call messages me that they are so glad they heard me coaching this person because they had a breakthrough during the session and never thought of asking the question they had a breakthrough during the session and never thought of asking the question the other client family member asked for coaching on. Individual coaching misses this element.

What will you change in your coaching business based upon this article?

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Coaching in Three Dimensions

Meeting the Challenges of a Complex World

by Malcolm Nicholson (UK)

I have to put my cards on the table straight away and say I am mightily impressed by the thinking in Lawrence & Moore’s book. For me, so much resonated. They have created thinking that leapsfrog the development offered by most coaching organisations and allows coaching to step up to the value that is required by organisations, reflecting the complexity and unrelenting change with which most organisations are struggling. How can coaches add value to people who are having to constantly learn, adapt and be creative as well as do their day job if coaches themselves are following a well worn path?

They push the boundaries of accepted wisdom around what coaching is, encouraging creativity and new approaches. How many coaching authorities will look at a group coaching scenario and ask ‘What model of coaching will work best for this group? Dialogic coaches are more likely to encourage the group to explicitly question and review their own model for coaching than they are to hold the group to account to the version of coaching presented. Heresy?’

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They build from an examination of the traditional approach to coaching – (Goal orientated style) through to dialogic approach and then a systemic approach.

The authors challenge – but don’t dismiss - a lot of the perceived wisdom of ‘purist’ – or as they call it ‘traditional’ coaching. (‘We talk. Coachee decides to change’). This approach is two people sitting in a room, hermetically sealed by a membrane of confidentiality. The focus is forward and goal orientated. The coach works leader by leader they are contracted with and focus on that individual. However, for most organisations, this is simply the calling card now. It may get you through the door, but it won’t keep you there.

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Some business books can be a chapter masquerading as a book (get one idea and pad it out). The ideas and concepts discussed are developed throughout the book and the authors shine different lights from different perspectives throughout.
Business situations offer complexity that would have been unthought of even 5 years ago. (See previous ICN article 'The Changing Demands of Leadership in the 21st century. Is Coaching Keeping up?) They then go on to examine the Dialogic Approach; ('We engage in dialogue. Change emerges from the dialogue.') Change occurs through this dialogue which can involve key stakeholders and working groups. It understands that leadership is relational, that they flexibly contract the boundaries of confidentiality, create space for reflection and change through the level of dialogue, which may include others outside that room. And yes, it’s OK to talk about a person’s background and yes, it is necessary to go back in order to go forward, to ensure you’re not papering over the cracks of a subsiding structure.

The Systemic approach looks at the individual like a dialogic coach, but as part of a group, a team, an organisation and maybe even a broader canvas. Leadership impacts the whole system so the coach listens for patterns of dialogue and story to create space for individual and organisational change.

Lawrence & Moore then move on to look at systemic approaches in Coaching Practice. At an individual level – in other words, the coachees view is inevitably narrow, so how does the systemic coach broaden and enrich that perspective? The authors encourage creativity, or as John Dewey called it, “Having some serious fun”.

They then expand this approach to coaching teams and groups, then coaching the organisation.

The book rounds off with a fresh perspective on Coach Development. As alluded to earlier, many training programmes focus on ‘competence’, a necessary set of foundations on which to build (In a musician’s term, learning the scales). They identify that many organisations don’t offer much to the experienced coach to help them coach in complexity or traverse to larger groups.

'Capability' builds on competence, requiring self-awareness and reflection to enable active learning to develop. Without this, no insightful development will occur. It will be using the tools in a mechanistic fashion. In other words, I have learned the scales, but can’t do anything else with them.

Finally, 'perspective' reflects the work of Robert Kegan on adult development and thinking. Lawrence & Moore talk about ‘Vertical development’ instead of the more common approach of ‘horizontal development’ in order to be a curious coach, seeking understanding and helping the organisation and coachee with meaning-making. Familiarity with models and theories means the systemic coach can bring them into play, as a jazz musician is able to think and create simultaneously. “Music in the moment”.

At a broader perspective and on a more pragmatic level, coaching as a business is going through consolidation and being flooded by people freshly qualified. The approaches offered by Lawrence & Moore enables the experienced coach to differentiate their approach and develop and enrich the experience they have built up to add greater value to their clients.

So to summarise, I’ll leave the last word with the authors themselves:

... we challenge the idea that coaching is all about goal setting and action plans. We challenge the idea that coaching is best described as one person coaching another. We challenge the idea that becoming a better coach is all about acquiring new skills. We offer this three dimensional perspective... to those of us who believe we need to think differently about coaching if coaching is to remain relevant. The world is changing, so must we... we suggest we must all:

- Start becoming more adaptive and systemic and stop obsessing about becoming ‘professional’
- Above all perhaps, we need to get (even more) curious „

Do you remember audio cassettes?

If you’re like any other successful coach from that era your glove box (and possibly the boot/trunk of your car) was littered with brightly coloured audios on almost every conceivable success subject.

I was a junkie – still am. Just can’t help devouring ideas, methods and systems to help my clients be more successful – and in turn (and rightfully) increase my success too.

You have worked hard to learn what you know. You apply your proven ideas to help your clients. Imagine using a tool (even later today) with a client and seeing a whole new look of respect from them as they light up with possibilities.

Congratulations – you’ve joined the other successful coaches who use this clever little system. Simple too.

Here’s how…

I learned this from one of those old cassettes. The presenter, whose name I sadly can’t recall, was from New York and a Member of The Million Dollar Round Table.

He shared an idea that stopped me in my mental tracks. I played the cassette again as soon as I arrived back home and I wrote down the process. Since then...

I use in on myself. Help my private clients get the outcomes they did not even expect. Taught it to 1000s of others through my audios, seminars/webinars and mentoring groups. It works, oh, it works. Thank you my lost-name friend. I call it:

**The Six Seemingly Simple Questions**

Now, shall we do this, listing the 6 questions straight away and then explaining them? Or, would it be better if I shared them in an example? Um...

You are a professional coach – so I know you can see through simplicity and realise a profoundly deeper meaning to it. So, here’s the questions.

**Oh, by the way…**

These are also the 6 questions you can use to ethically sell your services. So versatile!

1. Where are you now?
2. How did you get here?
3. Where are you going?
4. Why do you want to go there? (probably the most powerful one)
5. What are the obstacles?
6. What are you (we) going to do?

Your use of these questions in initial discussions with a client positions you as the person who is going to help this client get the outcome they want.

Go from where they are To where they want to be For the reasons they have stated Past the obstacles they’ve already identified (even though you know there are a LOT more!) And enjoying the ride...

Ok, now we know the questions, let’s dig a little deeper to their actual use and insights:

**Where are you now?**

You and I are not surprised to discover that most clients have absolutely no idea whatsoever where they are now. Ask most business people for their number of customers, their average order value, their average order frequency and their retention rate and they will stutter, stumble, turn red and make something up – that on closer examination – is complete rubbish.

**And yet…**

If we don’t know the starting point how on earth can we map the journey?

**How did you get here?**

If only to establish preferred language patterns – this question is so useful. But also gives us an insight into the coping/success strategies our client has used in the past.

**Where are you going?**

You and I are well aware of the stats that are trotted out in our field (true or not, they’re probably a good indication). 3% with written goals, 10% with non-written goals. 87% with no goals.

As an early sales manager told me...

*‘If You Don’t Know Where You’re Going – All Roads Lead There’*

Just having the client be aware of the destination of their business/personal goals will do them one the greatest services we can do.

**Why do you want to go there?**

The driver, the emotion, the juice in the tank.

The WHY?

I like to know (for myself and my clients) both the away-motivation and the towards-motivation that’s driving their intended actions.

Another common expression, but equally likely true: ‘With a big enough ‘why’, the what and how appears’. Works for me. Works for my clients.

**What are the obstacles?**

If a client can answer this question with any clarity – we know they’ve given the goal some thought. The challenge is – you’re the expert (not them) so you will know far more obstacles than they’ve ever considered and that’s why they need your help.

**What are you going to do? (I prefer what are WE going to do?)**

The action plan:
‘A Goal Without a Plan is Just a Wish’

Now you discover if the client was at all serious in their intention to achieve the goal. They will have, at least, started to work out what needs to be done. And this will include what measurements need to be made and what records need to be kept. I realise that the stuff of your life so I won’t go into any detail about those.

So, here we have it...

Six – seemingly simple questions that can be used for any situation in life - from goal setting (and achieving) to sales, writing powerful, persuasive and passionate copy – to getting fitter or climbing Mount Everest.

Do let me have your comments – and any feedback on your use of this idea.

I wish you every success on your continuing journey to change this world of ours for the better...

ABOUT PETER THOMSON

“The UK’s Most Prolific Information Product Creator”
Peter Thomson is now regarded as the UK’s leading strategist on business and personal growth. Starting in business in 1972 he built 3 successful companies – selling the last to a public company, after only 5 years trading, for £4.2M enabling him to retire at age 42.

Since that time Peter has concentrated on sharing his proven methods for via online video programmes, books, seminars and mentoring programmes. With over 100 audio and 100 video programmes written and recently awarded the ‘Life Time Achievement Award’ by The Institute of Sales Management

Peter specialises in helping Coaches, Consultants & Business Owners to write, create & market their own informational products.

We often find that when we first meet with new clients that they talk about a chaotic, pressurised and stressful lifestyle, usually with so many challenging issues that they don’t know where to start. It’s not unusual for clients to disclose somewhere between six and ten major challenges, such as anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, panic attacks, broken personal relationships, redundancy, unemployment, work-based conflict, career crossroads, financial problems, alcohol, gambling and self-harming; the list of potential issues are seemingly endless.

Although we are experienced life coaches who have helped many people who are stuck in what they, incorrectly, consider to be hopeless situations, it still takes a lot of self-control on our part to stay calm and focused on the client and their needs. We have to work hard to concentrate on what they are saying, make some essential notes as an aide-memoire and ensure we are asking the right coaching questions to gain all the necessary information. At the same time, we are always very aware of the need to build rapport and trust with someone who has probably never had coaching support before. They are, therefore, often uncertain about the process and potential benefits, but nevertheless have had the presence of mind to recognise that they need help and have actually done something about it by asking to speak with us.

At such times it is very helpful to our clients for us to be able to offer a broad range of personal development services, including Personal Performance Coaching, Executive Coaching, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Time Line Therapy™, NLP Coaching, Hypnotherapy, Personal Development Training and Mentoring. Everyone is an individual, of course, so it’s particularly beneficial to design bespoke support that is tailor-made to meet their specific personal needs, usually using several of the skills and services listed above.

One of the first challenges, however, is knowing where to start and how to identify the client’s own priorities. In our popular new book, ‘A Life Now Worth Living’, we have shared the details of the ‘Tools to Improve Your Life’ that we have both used to help people enhance their lives. People can use the tools on a self-help basis, so that they can ‘Let Go’, ‘Take Action’ and ‘Move On’. Nevertheless, we also encourage people to seek help and, when they ask us to work with them on a personal basis, we find that one of the most useful coaching tools to help them unlock their problems and to start taking control of their lives is the ‘Wheel of Life’.

The Wheel of Life

by Ashley Gordon & Brian Tregunna (UK)

Ashley Gordon and Brian Tregunna explain about the importance of having a broad range of coaching skills and the tool they often use to help new clients prioritise their needs.
The ‘Wheel of Life’ is, therefore, a great coaching tool, not only for the coaches but also for the clients as an initial and ongoing self-help tool.

‘A Life Now Worth Living’ is available from local bookstores and online, in print and e-book versions. Alternatively, contact Ash or Brian as detailed on the authors’ corner:

Ash is a well-qualified trainer of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), Time Line Therapy™, Hypnotherapy & NLP Coaching with considerable experience of empowering other people to improve their lives through his own company ‘Personal Breakthrough Solutions’.

Further information on Ash and the services he provides can be found on his website or Facebook page.

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Brian is a highly acclaimed Coach, Trainer and Leader. He has his own Coaching and Personal Development company, working with organisations, groups and individuals to achieve high performance through bespoke coaching, training, mentoring and personal development.

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In our experience, it’s not uncommon for new clients who are in a state of high anxiety to almost take perverse pride in a seemingly unsolvable range of issues they are struggling with. Saying things like, ‘I don’t expect you’ve ever had to deal with anyone with so many problems as I have?’; ‘… and, there’s yet one more thing I have not told you about! You won’t believe this but…’ and ‘I have tried everything, you name it - medication, counselling, massage, but no-one can help me. This is just the way I am.’

Faced with situations like that, once we’ve decided that we can help the person and don’t need to refer them to their doctor, we focus on reassuring the client and helping them to take control of their circumstances. It’s when we ask clients to confirm their priorities that they often run into difficulties. They tend to shrug their shoulders and say that they don’t know or ask us to choose for them. That’s when ‘The Wheel of Life’ comes in very useful.

The ‘Wheel of Life’ provides a clear visual representation of the way a person’s life currently looks, compared with the way they would ideally like it to be. It is called the ‘Wheel of Life’ because each area of their life can be mapped on a circle, like the spoke of a wheel.

See below an example of a Wheel of Life with a sample selection of subjects that people often decide to focus on. Clearly the choice of subjects is specific to each individual.

The wheel is numbered from 0 to 10, with 0 in the middle and 10 at the rim. The client starts with a blank template and is asked to score each section in accordance with their own self-assessment. In the example below, for instance, the client has scored their ‘Personal Growth’ at 10, indicating that they are highly satisfied with that, but ‘Recreation’ only scores 4, indicating that they are very dissatisfied with that.

Joining up the scores creates a quick visual representation of where the client is at that moment and often enables them to quickly identify their area of greatest concern. This is particularly popular with clients who have strong visual sensory perception, but it is also helpful for people who are more responsive to auditory or kinaesthetic prompts.

The shape inside the wheel is often very small and tight at the start, reflecting the client’s low scoring self-assessment of the many complex issues they are dealing with. However, as we work with a client over a period of time and note their progress, we encourage them to produce further updated versions of their ‘Wheel of Life’.

The benefits of this are threefold. Firstly, the client can instantly see the changing score and shape of their self-assessment; as they see the shape within the wheel grow bigger, so they gain self-confidence and belief. Secondly, it helps them to re-prioritise and focus on another challenge that is yet to be addressed. Thirdly, they are often surprised to see that their scores for some subjects that we have not yet worked on together have nevertheless increased due to the interlinked nature of their lives; improving communication skills, for instance, often results in improved personal relationships without specifically focusing on that issue.

In our experience, it’s not uncommon for new clients who are in a state of high anxiety to almost take perverse pride in a seemingly unsolvable range of issues they are struggling with. Saying things like, ‘I don’t expect you’ve ever had to deal with anyone with so many problems as I have?’; ‘… and, there’s yet one more thing I have not told you about! You won’t believe this but…’ and ‘I have tried everything, you name it - medication, counselling, massage, but no-one can help me. This is just the way I am.’

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Using the Wheel of Life as a Lever for Balance
by Sarah Haté (France)

In my experience as a performance coach, a successful tool is one that can be adapted to a wide range of situations. The clients that I have already had the privilege to coach belong to various socioeconomic backgrounds, have had diverse reasons for wanting to be coached and come to me at different stages in their life, yet all of them have needed to gain more visibility and prioritise at some point during our sessions. One of the tools that I regularly bring into my coaching activity is the Wheel of Life.

What is the Wheel of Life?
The name of this tool comes from the fact that life is represented as a wheel, and the important areas in a coachee’s life are the spokes of the wheel. Literature mentions between 8 and 10 areas, or spokes. It’s a very common coaching tool, and despite the fact that its origin is unknown, it can be likened to the symbol of the wheel of life that originated in the Middle Ages. This wheel represented 4 phases of life: happiness, loss, suffering, and hope.

The Wheel of Life is a physical tool, i.e. it either needs to be printed out and given to the client, or drawn on a piece of paper by the client. One of the reasons why I find it so effective is that it enables the coachee to see what is going on in her life, rather than simply talking about it. Mapping out her important areas very often leads to an “aha” moment, as things become a lot clearer.

How can you use the Wheel of Life?
The principle is extremely easy. Take an existing template, like the one below, or ask the coachee to create her own. The latter is an empowering exercise in itself, as it enables the coachee to identify the dimensions in life that are important to her in the present moment. Each spoke should be graduated from 0 to 10, 0 being in the centre and representing the lowest score, i.e. this area is not satisfactory, and 10 being on the circle edge and representing the highest score, i.e. this area is extremely satisfactory.

Once all the scores have been plotted on the spokes of the wheel, ask the coachee to join them up and enquire into her impression of the wheel when simply looking at it. This may enable the coachee to identify areas in her life which require more attention, and therefore leads to goal setting. This could also lead a coachee to see the areas in life where she pays too much attention and gives too much time and energy, to the detriment of other areas which she feels are more important to her personal wellbeing.

The next step is to ask the coachee which area(s) she would like to work on, and to ask what it would take to move from the current score to a score of 10. This is a great way of testing her motivation, uncovering limiting beliefs and identifying action plans. As you have established the scores for all the important areas of her life, it is a great reference with which to work during future sessions, as you can go back to the ones she has decided to work on, and check on the progress being made.

On some occasions, after a few coaching sessions, my clients have actually said that they no longer need to achieve a score of 10 because they have made their necessary life changes with a score of 8, for example. It is important to remember that we ALWAYS work with our coachees and respect their decisions. Obtaining a score of 10 in all areas of the wheel of life is not the aim; the aim is to help them get a bigger picture, take a step back and get out of their mind and into their life.


When can you use the Wheel of Life?
The Wheel of Life is a tool that can be used in very many different situations. It can help a person who has a lot of things going on in her life, to prioritise goals and gain visibility. It can also be of use to a person with no clear goal, or who wishes to improve her work-life balance. It is an excellent starting point when a coachee arrives at a position of overwhelm.

I have often adapted it to more specific situations, such as a client who was aware of her limiting beliefs, but needed help getting over them to set up a new business, or another one who repeatedly mentioned the fact that she was looking for recognition from others.

The way I used this tool in the first example was to ask her to determine why she wanted to set up a new business (we had already worked on her values, and she used them for the wheel). Each of the 8 reasons was a spoke of her wheel, and enabled us to then work on one of her limiting beliefs, which led her to identify what she needed to do, in order to take her idea to the next level, i.e. do extra training, start networking and establish her prices.

The way I used this tool in the second example was to ask her to determine why she wanted to set up a new business, or another one who repeatedly mentioned the fact that she was looking for recognition from others.

The way I used this tool in the first example was to ask her to determine why she wanted to set up a new business (we had already worked on her values, and she used them for the wheel). Each of the 8 reasons was a spoke of her wheel, and enabled us to then work on one of her limiting beliefs, which led her to identify what she needed to do, in order to take her idea to the next level, i.e. do extra training, start networking and establish her prices.
In the second example, I asked my client to use each spoke to identify what recognition meant to her. It was interesting for her to realise that she also needed to recognise herself, to appreciate everything she had already accomplished, and to verbalise what she would like from others in both a professional and personal context.

To conclude, I can say that this approach assumes that the coachee will be happy and fulfilled if she can find the right balance of attention for each of the areas that she has identified as being important in life. It should nevertheless be noted that people change and life circumstances change, and that this tool is therefore designed to evolve over time. Happy coaching!
Turning on your P.R.O.F.I.T.S Tap
The 7 secrets to Generating Revenue in Your Business
by Steve Jones (UK)

Having spent numerous years coaching, training and mentoring businesses of all shapes and sizes several things have become very clear to me. A business is limited by the thinking of its owner or leadership team and that with the right tools and techniques businesses can push well beyond their expectations. However, I don’t need to tell that to a bunch of coaches do I? You already know this.

In my book ‘Turning on your P.R.O.F.I.T.S Tap’ the 7 secrets to Generating Revenue in Your Business, I cover the process I undertake to achieve the shifts necessary to create such changes in mind-set by setting out a way of thinking about business strategically. I then back it up with practical tools businesses and/or coaches can use to create the success and profits desired.

In this article it my intention to give you the structure I use to get business owners and/or leadership teams to think differently. You can of course apply this to your business as well as that of your clients.

If I ask any business owner and/or leadership team to name all the things they need to do to generate revenue in their businesses the list can be exhaustive and endless. Believe it or not there are over 180 things a business owner needs to do to successfully generate revenue and profit. Is it any wonder business owners can feel trapped in their businesses?

The next question to them is if they have any staff? If the answer is yes, do they have a job description? If they say yes, I turn to the list they produced (180 things) and say ‘There’s your job description – did you really sign up for that or to do what you loved?

You see, most business owners, including me, started our business because we love what we do and then we have to do all this other stuff. It can be quite overwhelming.

To get you out of that trap and thinking strategically you need a way of thinking about your business a mind-set.

The tools I use with businesses give them that mind-set. You see I can take all 180 things and distil them into 7 main headings I call ‘Contexts’ so they can make sense of their business fast and make the right strategic decisions. I’m going to share those steps with you now.

But first, ask yourself this: are you a coach providing coaching services or are you a business owner who has a coaching business? There is a big difference in mind-set straight away.

Now for the seven mind-sets:

1. Purpose and Vision: ‘Companies with unusually clear vision outperform their competitors by a factor of ten’ according to Harvard Business School. Does your business have a clear purpose? Do you know why you exist and can you communicate that purpose with passion. If you can, great. Next what does your 3-year vision looks like and can you present it in a visual format. I use concentric circles, a bit like an archery target, with year one in the middle, year 2 the next circle out and year 3 the outer circle, and I get clients to populate it from the outside in. It creates clarity as they connect revenue to activity, staff numbers, customers etc.

2. Are you Relevant? Strange question I know, but ask yourself or your clients all the same. We have seen the demise of Woolworths, BHS in the UK and we live in a disruptive market. If you drive for a living, you’ll be redundant within years. Are you robust enough to deal with change as a business? You are getting this knowledge free courtesy of this article. How long before all knowledge is free and accessible, putting the education industry at risk?

3. Can you ‘Outclass the Crowd’ you are a coach like me. If I go networking I can guarantee there will be other coaches in the room. How do you differentiate yourself? You have to be clear on:

   • What you do?
   • Who you do it to?
   • What you charge?
   • The Service you provide?

The supermarket chains all know this. They sell essentially the same stuff, but people buy from them for different reasons. People will buy you or your client for different reasons. Understanding why you or your client is different is paramount. What is your or their X factor?

4. Finding Clients. Even if you ‘Out Class the Crowd’ you could still be the best kept secret. When I work with clients I help them find their ‘supermarkets’. You see Kellogg’s Cornflakes don’t sell to you and me. They build a relationship with a supermarket and they display and sell their goods. Who are your and/or your clients’ supermarkets? Mine are accountants, lawyers, and recruitment agencies etc. All I do is build a relationship with them and they refer me all over town. Now there is a way of building these relationships, which is simple, but too detailed for this article. Do you and your clients have relationships like this? I’ve taught this to a number of coaches one of whom receives £100K worth of referrals from one accountant each year.


5

Inspired Sales Meetings: If you have done all the early stages well you will need a sales process to follow for your meetings. Do you and/or your client has a documented sales process? If not, make sure you design one. I have a six-step process that focuses on the clients’ agenda not mine. Most sales processes are focused on sales, mine is focused on relationship as I want the client for life so I can be transformational not transactional to them.

6

Time Management: Critical to any success in business is the ability to manage your personal time and business capacity. The more successful you become, the less time potentially you will have. Tools to manage your time and make you effective and efficient are therefore imperative. A month has 31 days at best and if you strip out the weekends, 22 days at best. How you use your time therefore is critical, considering that you have to run your business and serve your clients. Mu capacity is 12 client days a month. What is yours or your clients?

7

Serve Your Clients: No matter what business you are in, you will be measured on standards set by the companies like Apple and Amazon. You must, therefore, give exceptional service. You must give exceptional service for other reasons too. You want your client to refer you and you want your client to come back and buy more.

In conclusion, does your business or your clients business look like this? By doing a simple scoring you can work out where you need to put your focus:

- Tick – yes it does
- Neutral – sometimes
- Cross – Never

As an example of how this works:

It’s a bit like turning on a tap at the top of the diagram. If there is a blockage you won’t generate as much as you deserve. If you don’t have a clear vision, the ability to outclass the crowd or build supermarkets then you’ll have loads of time on your hands. Conversely, you may have time and capacity issues if you’ve done the above well.

This simple tool will help you work with clients around their strategy for generating profit. There are a number of tools and in-depth explanations in the book I mentioned, but even without the book you could run this model over your business and that of your clients and create tons of coaching opportunities.

I hope you have enjoyed this article and it brings you every success.

ABOUT STEVE JONES

Steve Jones is a well-known business coach, public speaker, trainer and consultant. Steve is an expert at creating ideas and strategies that build businesses, drive revenue and improve business position & performance. He has a passion for making companies and their products the best in their product category.

Steve’s unique understanding of leadership and management, team building and motivation in business, coupled with his understanding, drive and enthusiasm, clearly set him aside as an expert.

Improve Your Results with Appreciative Coaching

by Andy Smith (UK)

A while ago I was interviewing a fellow coach for some research I was doing in creating an online course. Later that day I was pleasantly surprised to see that she had posted on her Facebook page: ‘What an amazingly enlightening conversation I had this morning! Forever grateful, truly!’ Her life-affirming revelation had sprung from one question that I had asked her: ‘Tell me about one of the best experiences of your professional life.’ What was so powerful about this question?

Psychologists characterise motivation as either ‘approach’ (reward) or ‘avoid’ (threat). It’s easier to trigger the ‘threat’ response than the ‘reward’ response, especially if a coaching client is already feeling anxious or down. Many commonly-used coaching questions, such as ‘what stops you?’, ‘why haven’t you achieved that goal already?’ and ‘what prevents you from being at your best?’ focus on the negatives of a situation and can easily set off ‘avoid’ rather than ‘approach’ motivation.

I’m not suggesting that coaching should be all about the positives, merely that you may get better results for your clients if you first ask them questions that remind them about their strengths, qualities, achievements and what motivates them. This gets them to a place where they can view problems in perspective, and find it much easier to come up with creative ways of solving them.

The best model I have found for achieving this Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a method of change that works not by focusing on problems and trying to find their causes, but rather by looking for what’s already working and doing more of that. Developed by Dr David Cooperrider at Case Western Reserve University in the mid-eighties, AI grew out of the field of organisational change, but can also be applied to one-to-one coaching.

To get started with using AI, you just need to act as if these assumptions, widely shared among coaches, are true:

- In every group or individual’s performance, some things are working
- We get more of what we focus on – so let’s focus on what’s working to get more of that
- The language we use, and the questions we ask, create our reality.
The most common model for applying AI is the 4D model, standing for Discovery (of what’s already working), Dream (envisioning the ideal future), Design (creating options for how to get there), and Destiny or Deliver (planning and implementing the changes you want to make).

When it also shows the preliminary step of Defining the ‘affirmative topic’ (setting the frame for the inquiry), it becomes the 5D model.

In this article I want to focus on the most distinctive features of AI, which are also the most immediately usable for coaches - the affirmative topic and the appreciative interview.

Most coaching starts with a problem that the coachee wants to solve, or a performance gap they want to improve. If we use that as the frame for our inquiry, we will learn a lot about the coachee was doing differently then, and what conditions were in place that made it possible.

If only partially. In Appreciative Inquiry we are not interested in assessing average performance; rather, we are looking for the times of exceptionally good performance, what topics were in place that made it possible.

Having set the frame for our coaching with the topic definition, we can now turn to finding what’s working in relation to the topic, and where solutions are already happening, even if only partially. In Appreciative Inquiry we can now turn to finding what’s working in relation to the topic, and where solutions are already happening, even if only partially. In Appreciative Inquiry we are not interested in assessing average performance; rather, we are looking for the times of exceptionally good performance, what the coachee was doing differently then, and what conditions were in place that made it possible.

The affirmative topic focuses on what we want instead of the problem. I have found that ‘How do I <what I want instead of the problem>?’ is a good structure for formulating the affirmative topic, as it does not assume a particular route to a solution. For example, if someone wants to improve their time management, ‘How do I manage my time better?’ is a more productive avenue of inquiry than ‘Why am I so bad at time management?’

The chances are, if the coachee is feeling helpless because they are faced with a seemingly overwhelming problem, they will forget about the skills and resources they have that would help them solve the problem. The easiest way to help them regain access to a more resourceful emotional state is to ask them to tell you about a time or times when they showed the qualities needed to overcome a similar situation.

Defining the ‘affirmative topic’ is the first step in this process. Having set the frame for our coaching with the topic definition, we can now turn to finding what’s working in relation to the topic, and where solutions are already happening, even if only partially. In Appreciative Inquiry we are not interested in assessing average performance; rather, we are looking for the times of exceptionally good performance, what the coachee was doing differently then, and what conditions were in place that made it possible.

A typical appreciative interview might use these questions:

1. Tell me about one of your best experiences relative to <topic> - a time when you were at your best, when you felt fully alive, and in the right place?
2. What’s really important about this experience? What do you value most about it?
3. What made this experience possible? What conditions were in place that enabled it to happen?
4. If you had one wish for yourself in relation to <topic>, what would it be?

What you are looking for here is a story, not a detached overview. You will know when you are doing a good interview when you see the coachee start to relive the experience, feeling the same emotions they felt then (you will know when you’re doing a really good interview when you yourself start to feel some of those same emotions).

Telling the story puts the coachee into a more positive emotional state – a state that will help them think more quickly, see the big picture more easily, and become more resilient (Barbara Fredrickson, 2003). The Value of Positive Emotions. American Scientist, 91, 330-335). The coachee will feel more capable of dealing with whatever problems they face.

Each follow-up question has an important role. Question 2 starts bringing out their values, helping to ensure than whatever ideas they come up with in subsequent stages of the process will be in line with their motivations.

Question 3 recalls information about the conditions in place and what they were doing at the time that resulted in success. If they can put those conditions in place and act that way more often now, that will allow good performance to happen more often.

Finally, the ‘one wish’ question forms a bridge to the future, and primes the coachee for constructing their ideal vision of the future in the Dream stage.

The emphasis on finding what’s good in current and past experience before you look at the desired future is what really distinctive about AI, making it easier for the coachee to construct their future vision than starting with an intimidating ‘blank page’. It also makes the vision easier to believe in, because the coachee will have reference experiences of aspects of it already happening, even if only partially.

The further we go round, the remaining stages of the cycle, the closer AI gets to conventional coaching. The Dream stage is about what it would be like in the ideal world, if everything you wish for in relation to the topic happened. At this stage we are not concerned with how to get there, with how ‘realistic’ the dream is, or with quantifying a goal. We are setting a direction. Even if you only get 50% of the way there, that’s a 50% improvement on where you are now.
On the Design stage the coachee comes up with ideas for bringing some or all of the Dream into reality. They are not committing to any of them, nor are we concerned about the quality or viability of the ideas at this stage. We just want lots of ideas. A ‘bad’ idea may spark off a process of association that leads to good or even life-changing ideas.

Finally, in the Delivery stage (like many AI practitioners, I prefer this term as more business-friendly than ‘Destiny’), you help the coachee select from the options they have generated. Depending on how formal your coaching session is, the output could be one small step they decide to take or a full-blown action plan. Delivery also includes implementing the selected actions and noticing the results.

You can then go round the 4D cycle again in your next session, to Discover what worked, modify your Dream on that basis, Designing fixes for anything that didn’t work, and so on.

In this model each stage psychologically primes the coachee to do better in the next stage. Discovering what’s already working makes it easier to envision the Dream; as soon as the client starts to see their Dream, the part of their brain that solves problems and comes up with new ways of doing things starts to think of ways to get there; and having a wealth of options generated in the Design stage makes it easy to select the best actions in the Delivery stage.

I encourage you to incorporate an Appreciative attitude into your coaching and your life. As one of my AI students said, the method on its own is just another tool. It’s the mindset that makes it life-changing.

Find out more about AI at coachingleaders.co.uk. The main online resource for AI is the Appreciative Inquiry Commons at appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu.

ABOUT ANDY SMITH

Andy Smith is an Appreciative Inquiry facilitator, Emotional Intelligence consultant, and NLP trainer based in the UK. He has been assisting individuals and groups with accelerated change for 25 years. He is the author of Leadership EQ: How To Lead With Emotional Intelligence, Achieve Your Goals: Strategies To Transform Your Life, and The Trainer’s Pack of NLP Exercises. Andy is accredited to administer the Emotional and Social Competence Inventory (ESCI™) 360º assessment and is an ANLP trainer member, but spreading the word about practical Appreciative Inquiry is now his main focus.

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Twitter: twitter.com/practicaleg

Realise Your Potential with One of These 4 Coaching Methods

by Anne M. Bachrach (USA)

I absolutely believe that people, unless coached, never reach their maximum capabilities.

- Bob Nardelli,
  President and CEO of Home Depot

Life coaching is one of those magnificent opportunities you have to receive valuable guidance to help you achieve whatever it is you want out of life. Whether you want more money, to be more fit, have better relationships, or to improve your business; life coaching can help you to examine what in your life is not working and preventing you from achieving what you truly desire and dream about.

While true success means different things to different people, at our core, the frustration comes when we can’t seem to get what we really want. We are unhappy with our jobs, our relationships, being out of shape, financial situations, and feel stuck in a life we can’t control. Accountability Coaching can change all of that. Just like the quote from Home Depot President and CEO, Bob Nardelli, says - people do not reach their full potential unless they are coached. This holds true for anyone. Take professional athletes as an example - every single professional athlete has achieved success with the guidance of a coach or coaches. They might have had the talent, but it needed to be improved and refined to get them to the professional level. This is also true for actors, entrepreneurs, doctors, and even multi-millionaire entrepreneurs - they all received coaching in one form or another.

Accountability Coaching is a specialised field and is designed to improve both your personal and professional life, and it can help you:

• Realise your dreams, desires and spiritual purpose.
• Create a detailed action to bridge the gap between where you are and where you want to be.
• Identify and focus on your main priorities.
• Refine your strengths.
• Reduce and eliminate destructive and sabotaging behaviours.
• Create a more balanced life.
• Get Results!
There are many methods for coaching. Here are four methods to consider:

1. **Self-coaching**

You may be tempted to initially try self-coaching. Although I would not recommend this method, it is an option. You would want to create systems for daily, weekly, monthly and annual goal tracking. You would need to identify your highest payoff activities that will put you in the best position to achieve your goals, and then do those things first and foremost. Reading books about coaching might also be a good place to help you get started.

Personal and Professional Assessments are great tools to help you. They might even be able to guide you into a method that is best for you. You can take a complimentary online ‘Am I Coachable’ assessment and Implementation Index. These brief complimentary assessments will provide personal and professional insight to guide you for what you might do next.

Kathy Kolbe, an action and conative styles researcher, has developed a standardised assessment designed to measure an individuals’ dominant conative traits. She established four distinct patterns of action based on the Kolbe Conative Index. The Kolbe Index classifies people into four categories, and predicts how they will instinctively act in unknown situations. You can review their assessments at www.Kolbe.com.

A great resource for identifying your strengths is a book entitled, Now, Discover Your Strengths. It comes complete with an exercise that provides you with Strength Finder results. When you have a full understanding of what your strengths are, you are in a better position to be even more successful.

2. **Peer Accountability Coaching (3 people)**

You agree to meet weekly by phone or in person with your peer-coaching team (if you don’t have access to a 3-way conference calling feature, feel free to use a service like http://www.freeconferencepro.com (many services like this available to you to choose from).

Here is how it works with three people on your peer accountability team:

- Person A holds person B accountable
- Person B holds person C accountable
- Person C holds person A accountable

So, in this scenario, nobody is being held accountable by the person holding them accountable. Each participant agrees to devote themselves to the individual they are holding accountable for the period of agreed to. Each participant agrees to provide unselfish service to the individual they are held accountable by investing, time, thought, and (no nonsense) encouragement until which time you decide to change or dissolve the group.

3. **Group Coaching**

You will want to make sure to create an agenda and structure for the calls so you can measure progress against your goals every time you talk. Creating tracking methods are very important to creating success with this method and any coaching method you choose.

Creating tracking methods are very important to creating success with this method and any coaching method you choose. You can surround yourself with other ambitious people - just like you - who is striving to achieve success. These coaching groups might allow the members to brainstorm about how best to solve everyday challenges in your personal and professional life. Group coaching should have an agenda and individual assignments due for each session to report to the others. There also should be some form of accountability within the group to make it effective. Group coaching can be done over the phone or in person.

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In a group coaching environment, you can learn great tips for success, but you need to learn how to implement them and that usually takes the guidance of one-on-one coaching to know how to do that. However, if you have already received some level of coaching, group sessions can be great ‘mastermind’ sessions. Group coaching can be done over the phone or in person.

4. **One-on-One and Personalised Coaching**

These coaching services are typically conducted on a regular basis (weekly, biweekly or monthly) by phone or in person. The client and coach will schedule appointments to define your main focus and desires, develop strategies to achieve them along with a detailed plan of action, and create a way to measure progress. Most of us don’t even know we’re not going about it the right way until we have a coach who brings an objective sense and can identify the things we are doing or not doing that are preventing us from achieving what we want.

Professional coaching provides you an objective outside voice that helps you identify what it is you want and a plan of action to get it - plain and simple. One-on-one coaching sessions have so much to offer and you will learn so much about yourself that when you come to the end of your sessions you will feel like a very different person - a new and improved version of you. You will have finally identified what has been causing you so much frustration and will develop productive habits that increase your success instead of sabotaging it. One-on-one coaching is ideal for anyone who is not where they want to be in life, and any one area of their life. The intense focus and the personalised guidance can literally make the difference between staying stuck where you are and living the life you want to live.
What if I told you that Accountability Coaching is designed to help you achieve everything you want? Really - achieve anything you want. Life is what you make of it - not what is dealt to you and you can literally have anything you want if you know how to get it. Achieving success merely comes down to identifying the destructive habits and incorporating positive, success habits. Accountability Coaching does exactly that - guides you along the path of success until you learn to make the right decisions on your own.

Ask yourself these questions and write down your responses:

- Are you truly happy with every aspect of your life?
- Do you live your life feeling as if you are fulfilling a valuable purpose or destiny?
- Are there things you want to achieve or do that you just haven’t been able to?
- Now write down your responses to these questions:
  - If you could change 3 things in your life right now - what would they be?
  - Do you worry that you won’t be able to achieve the goals you have set?
  - You do want to change your life, but find that you face challenges in doing so?

Coaches may help you along the way, but ultimately your success is up to you. Your best strategy is to seek the best coaches to accelerate your progress to your next level of success.

### ABOUT ANNE M. BACHRACH

Anne M. Bachrach is known as The Accountability Coach™. She has 23 years of experience training and coaching. Business owners and entrepreneurs who utilise Anne’s proven systems and processes work less, make more money, and have a more balanced and successful life. Anne is the author of the books, Excuses Don’t Count; Results Rule!, and Live Life with No Regrets; How the Choices We Make Impact Our Lives, No Excuses!, and The Work Life Balance Emergency Kit.

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**Executive coaches are not for the meek. They’re for people who value unambiguous feedback. If coaches have one thing in common, it’s that they are ruthlessly results-oriented.**

- Fast Company Magazine

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### Why Assessments Are Critical Tools for Coaching

by Ken Keis (Canada)

Everything in life centres on measurement—money, travel, time, age, weight, volume, temperature, stock indexes—the list is endless. This is true even in underdeveloped countries that use the rising of the sun and the moon and the changing of the seasons as measurements.

However, our experience at CRG (after 40 years) has been that most people do not have a personal measurement strategy to help improve their lives or to help them establish their career path. A proper measurement or assessment strategy or assessment, can offer amazing freedom, clarity, direction and release to individuals and organisations.

If you went to your doctor, and he or she just guessed your temperature or blood pressure without taking a proper measurement with the right equipment, you would think they were a quack—certainly not someone whom you would trust with your life.

Coaching and Professional Development Are No Different

As a coach with over 10,000 hours and nearly 30 years of coaching and mentorship experience, I am familiar with numerous coaching methodologies, such as stakeholder feedback, conversational intelligence, mind kinetics, the narratives, the use of story and so forth, but one of the foundations that expedite our firm’s (and our Associates) coaching process—and that brings credibility, consistency and professionalism—is the use of assessments. In our opinion:

It’s doubtful (maybe even unprofessional) that a coaching practitioner or coaching process can be fully successful without an assessment strategy and the use of assessments in their coaching methodology.

Why are assessments critical? They are essential to understand, benchmark, clarify and measure. They augment and bring additional value not possible via only narrative, interview or conversational coaching processes. I’m talking about using a holistic assessment system (plural and multidimensional), not just one assessment.

One of the most important aspects of assessments can be owned by the individual or individuals engaged in the coaching process. Change, or wise decisions, must be based on awareness and a full understanding of the situation. Many clients don’t know what they don’t know so conversational questions will not effectively benchmark current awareness, skills levels or conditions. Without some type of assessment strategy, how can we, as professionals, ask the right questions and offer the correct responses to our clients? The fact is we can’t.
We realise there will be exceptions, but in our coaching practice, nearly everyone completes two to four assessments, depending on the coaching engagement and outcomes we have agreed to provide.

Imagine you are working with a group of managers from one organisation and you deploy our Stress Indicator and Health Planner; this tool not only allows you to individually benchmark 120 items, but it also enables you to conduct a team review, after which team members can even work together to implement improvements with partner-based or peer accountability/support.

**Do I Need a Professional to Help with the Assessment Process?**

The answer is Yes and No. First, a professional almost always adds value to an assessment process. Whether an expert is required for a specific assessment depends on the type of resource being used. Some assessments require expert interpretation in which the coaching professional must debrief the results to the individual who has taken the assessment. In our opinion, the best application for this type of test is for the screening side of the hiring or HR, not coaching or professional development.

Our experience has shown that the best assessments in coaching applications are those in which the participant can understand the content, then self-interpret the results. Yes, as a coaching professional, your interaction with participants and their results is highly beneficial, but the fact remains that the more the individual understands the model and the content of the assessment, the better equipped he or she will be to make independent and intentional decisions.

To teach people how to fish, as the saying goes, we need to equip them to take ownership of their professional development. Self-interpretation assessments, like the ones that CRG has published for over 39 years, helps achieve that objective.

**How Can I Effectively Use Assessments in Personal, Career, Leadership/Executive and/or Organisational Applications?**

- Before conducting assessments, establish the primary items you want to measure.
- Make sure you select assessments that apply well to your situation.
- With a team, ensure all members should go through the assessment process.
- Confirm your assessment strategy and consistently implement it.
- Never abuse the privilege and confidentiality of the process. Share all results with the individual.
- Remember, it’s not the results that are important; it’s what people do with them.
- Choose assessments that are proven in the marketplace and that are well regarded by their users. Just because an assessment is well known or has high market awareness does not mean it is high quality and will meet your needs.
- If you have no experience in the assessment world, contact a qualified professional who can recommend several options and choices. The use of assessments is a must for any progressive individual or organisation.

It’s difficult to determine where you want to go if you don’t know your starting point. Use assessments to evaluate where you and your clients are now and to plan where to go next. Start now. Take your personal life and coaching business to the next level with the right assessments for your situation.
Managing Expectations and Goals Setting
by Sylvia Pavlova (Bulgaria)

Roots are the underground branches that spread out beneath plants and trees as anchors. They provide water and nutrients from the soil to feed the plant. But because roots are usually out of sight, many people don’t realise how long and vast they can be. An alfalfa plant only 0.60-0.90 meters high may have roots reaching out as far as 9 meters. If you lay all the roots of a corn plant end to end, the resulting strand could be up to 152 meters long. Cavers in South Africa found a tree with the deepest-reaching root, so far: a wild fig tree with a root that extended nearly 122 meters into the ground!

In addition, roots can be incredibly strong. It’s common knowledge that, given enough time, roots can crack foundations, snap water lines, and lift sidewalks. Once they find even the tiniest crack, a rootlet can break through compacted soil, stone, or concrete and even push aside large boulders. For example, when tree roots become wedged in granite, it is the hard granite that splits while the comparatively fragile-looking root stubbornly continues to grow.

This is the fact of the matter. There is no healthy and fruitful plant without deep roots. So is any relationship.

Only relationships with a good match of mutual expectations could bear good fruit. Moreover, as our root metaphor goes on, roots are 'incredibly strong'. On a similar vein, people involved in a certain relationship as long as they have clear-cut mutual expectations may well overcome unexpected setbacks encountered down the way. Equally, the reverse is also true, should it happen that they have no clearly defined expectations, their relations are conditioned to go no further as the plants of no deep roots – they stand no chances but to wither away.
Coaching relationships are not an exception from the general rule. In fact, the opposite is true. In the coaching relationships it is even more mandatory to clarify expectations and set clear goals from the very beginning. However, the line should not be drawn at this point. This process should be there to keep on throughout the complete coaching.

Clarifying Expectations & Goal Setting

The plant as above described having its stem 90 cm long happens to have its roots a hundred times longer - thus coming as deep as 9 m. The same holds true concerning coaching relationships. If the growth is to advance upwards – which is readily exposed to the eye, there should have indispensably been much work going through suggesting numerous factors that happen to be concealed to the eye.

An indispensable premise prior to figuring out the expectations should be the completion of Establishing and Managing the Relationship process. Much on the same note: If one is to have the plant growing, they should have planted it first in a favourable environment. Speaking of coaching, this is actually accomplished when mutual agreements have been reached between the coach and the coachee following the process of Establishing and Managing the Relationship. As a result, both parties have become familiar with one another (at least up to a point); they have agreed the model for their meetings to take place, the time, the place, and the length of the meetings; whom will the information reporting on the coaching be delivered.

Forthwith the need is entailed for figuring out the expectations, and setting particular goals which are to make this relation of reason to both parties. The time dedicated to sorting out the issues at this stage and the efforts placed to this aim are sure to pay off repeatedly further down the way.

Clarifying Expectations & Goal Setting goes far beyond the mere highlighting of deficiencies and setting goals to fill this gap. Rather, it is meant to support the coachee in mastering external or intrinsic obstacles that hold him/her back, confuses him/her and prevents him/her from being and living his/her full potential.

Are there further techniques for Clarifying Expectations & Goal Setting?

There are numerous techniques which yield themselves to this purpose, to name a few below:
- Clarifying the meaning of success
- The cascade of change
- Importance/Urgency Matrix
- The change balloon, etc.

Myself, I apply of necessity the Importance/Urgency Matrix. This is primarily because this tool yields readily to the understanding of the coachee. Plus, it allows for an easy comparison of results with subsequent revisions.

The Importance/Urgency Matrix

The coachee is to enter his/her priorities in a matrix composed of four quadrants. Fig. 1 comes as an example. The four quadrants are defined by the combinations of the results produced in between the two axes of the matrix. One axis report on the Importance factor scaling it from low to high, whereas the other axis reports on the Urgency factor, again scaling it from low to high.

Once the coachee hands in the filled-in matrix, he/she is advised to have a personal interview so as to give out the reasons behind his/her prioritising goals and expectations this way. Typically, for the next 3 months I work with the coachee given the goals rated as both ‘important and urgent’. I take special time to get the ‘urgent’ goals defined with greater precision, and agree to what point the coachee is willing to have me involved to this end. Experience told me that goals rated as ‘important’ only, shift further down the way either into the ‘important and urgent’, or get dismissed. As such, I do not bring them much into focus.

When and how often one is advisable to have the Clarifying Expectations & Goal Setting applied?

Despite of the fact that the first two processes at the start of every coaching relationship seem to go streamline whereas others are iterative, the process of Clarifying Expectations & Goal Setting has to be applied on a recurrent basis. How often it is supposed to be recurrent depends on how long the coaching relationship stays.

Coaching relationships facilitated by me as the coach, for the most part has lasted for one calendar year. My studies and experience suggest that the Clarifying Expectations & Goal Setting is best applied every 3 months. Should I fail to initiate the revision, a couple of months later it turns out that the coachee wants to cancel the relation in the belief it has become exhausted. The iteration of Expectations & Goal Setting gets us actually where a similar effect is produced by cutting and pruning plants. After this pruning procedure, the plant is sure to yield much more fruit.
With that being said, the 3-month period comes just as a rule of thumb. Should some unexpected events of significant implication occur, the revision of goals and expectations is advisable to be made forthwith the occurrence of such events. Yet, no delay of such revision shall be advisable to persist as late as the moment such events happen to occur. It is often the case that the external conditions which have been the logic behind prioritising some goals ahead of others undergo significant change for 3 consecutive months, so it is no use waiting for some unexpected factors to kick in and make this process come round anew.

In addition, this process is of much benefit for:

- Getting feedback from the coachee,
- Getting information on new circumstances which have stayed beyond the focus of attention thus far,
- A review of what has been accomplished to the moment of the latest revision of goals.

Putting this into practice on a regular basis is sure to stand you in good stead for building credible relations with your coachee, the outcome of which promises to be an abundance of prime-quality fruit for both parties.

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**Building Up Your Framework for Coaching**

by Risto M Koskinen (Finland)

A plethora of training programs for coaching offer you a quick-fix, one-size-fits-all approach, “qualifying” you in 1-2 days and entitling you a specialised [pick your choice] coach, often with a nice acronym to be added after your name. This is not to say these programs are not worth participating in, but to raise a question of when and for whom they are a real value-add – do you have the backbone to understand and incorporate a new approach or technique into your practice?

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**Coaching as a Profession**

Coaching has been an undefined field of work, claiming the status of a profession, but missing some crucial characteristics of a profession. Grant and Cavanagh (2004, 14) have argued that coaching has been more of a service industry than a genuine coaching profession, amongst the other things because of the lack of a holistic theoretical framework based on a sound and sufficient empirical foundation and a shared body of general knowledge. An interesting perspective towards this issue opens in Hamlin, Ellinger and Beattie’s (2009) conceptualisations and definitions of coaching, OD, and HRD: their findings suggest that all three fields are very similar in terms of their practices, intended purposes, and processes. This further poses a challenge to define a genuine coaching profession with its own identity and unique body of empirically tested knowledge which can be distinctly defined and delineated. Also, we as coaches come with various backgrounds, different levels of education, diverse mental frames, differing aspirations and personal interests, which opens up a multitude of approaches, frameworks, methods and tools.

My intention here is to point out two aspects. First, I believe that coaching as a service, craft, art, vocation or profession – whatever it is for us – is not simply “a technology followed by a formula” (Schein, 2003, 80), and we need a deeper understanding of our practice than just applying a more or less rigid template of practice. Surely, one can superficially learn a formula like GROW in a day or two, but to deeply understand the formula, its pros and cons, its scope of use, and its limitations, is completely another issue.

Second, I find it beneficial to draw a “road map” to describe the theoretical backbone of my practice. For a start, it helps me to see the whole picture, to ponder if the interrelated elements entwine a coherent, usable, and well-founded body of knowledge to be used as the bedrock of my practice. Next, it acts as a reference point when I look for further training to upgrade my specific expertise. And furthermore, from my clients’ viewpoint, it enhances the transparency of the premises of my coaching approach. Very seldom explicitly, but probably quite often implicitly, it also acts as a proof of academic competence in coaching.
Starting to Build the Backbone

My background is over 30 years in teaching, training, consultation and coaching, and my interest in career transition coaching developed first by mentoring my students in a polytechnic university in the early 1990’s, and later in implementing career guidance for some 15 years. Coaching, and especially career coaching, which later on refined to career transition coaching, became my mainstream around 2010. Interestingly, my process of starting to build up the coaching framework was very much parallel to what I had made with my clients for some 20 years!

The theoretical framework itself was not the first schema to start with, but an attempt to figure out a general direction or a marketable service product, in order “to start something new”. Personally, I felt quite fed-up with my by-then clientele, and craved for a new phase in my life. So, I started to ask myself, what do I know and what am I competent in? What could be a good add-on to my present know-how? What would I like to do for the next 10-15 years? Pretty simple questions, and as a visually oriented person, I started to draw a picture:

Picture 1. Starting With a Rough Draft

My previous experience had been widely in social work, education (teaching), and training. That was the basis to build upon, each block delivering own kind of professional expertise, which I deciphered in detail (like “being able to perform in front of a large group of people”). The central theme unfolding in this review was “guidance”, a concept that covered issues of teaching to consultation to training to supervision, even to teaching aikido (my “social contribution”). Of course, at this phase you already have a preliminary understanding about what you are going to do. My idea was coaching. I had done my share of supervision and training, and I wanted to turn towards the business audience. Supervision is seen as a service for health care, social work, and education, having an emphasis on dealing with – especially emotional – work load. Coaching is seen more goal-oriented, and thus more suitable for the business context.

To get access to this new realm I felt I needed some formal education, and enrolled in an accredited MBA program, and got my degree a few years later, in 2013. In the pediment (picture 1) coaching is in the middle, supported by my experience in training and supervision – the latter was also amplified by a university-based supervision training program in 2009-2010. Also a one-year coaching specific training in 2010 made me a Certified Progress Coach®. Thus, I was ready to provide coaching services, and having a pretty solid background for these services, too, except one missing piece: distinction or competitive edge. Up to this point the coaching I was ready to offer was just a commodity, with no distinctive theoretical framework, with no domain of specified expertise, and with no niche.

Towards the Distinction

The next phase was to figure out the common denominator emerging most often and most widely in my professional experience, and that appeared to be some kind of professional, vocational or personal disruption. This was further on delimited to career transitions, which was actually the issue I had worked with for the last 20+ years, though never explicitly defined it as such.

The whole process was really a back-and-forth issue, with some stumbling, but not too many false starts though. In my MBA thesis, I had been building my personal coaching methodology*, a variant of appreciative coaching approach, and this was the starting point for the larger framework building. In picture 2 is described not only the framework, but in the left column also the structure this framework is based on:

*Appreciative Coaching® refers to this methodology which in Finnish is Arvostava coaching® and is a registered trademark for Navigen Ltd.
Defining myself as a career transition coach gives me a specific and still quite wide client niche, which is necessary in a small market (in Finland the whole population is 5.5 million; urban London in comparison is about double, 10.6 million). Career transitions occur when someone is promoted, changes organisation, starts a business, is outplaced, graduates, and so forth. Of course, these things happen to all of us, so further narrowing is needed. Not only due to my age, but also because of my continuing interest in models of (especially late) adult development and personal narratives I find myself being at best with clients in more mature career phases, searching for transformative career choices at their professional culmination points.

Coaching as Profession Revisited

My purpose here has been to open up the process of developing my theoretical framework for coaching. This framework (and the way to build it) is by no means the only one right, but hopefully it gives you some inspiration to build up your own signature framework. Building it does not remove the premises of coaching as a profession (like entry requirements, formal academic education, regulation and sanction systems), but I feel it’s a shift towards a more grounded practice of coaching, thus gaining us some credibility, but most of all, deepening our understanding about the coaching service we provide, giving us a well-reasoned backbone.

References:


In addition, my coaching style includes key skills drawn from my 20y experience as a sociologist, and behavioural analyst:

- Active listening
- Observation (mostly nonverbal)
- Calibration with the client
- Feedforward (powerful technique on which I wrote in my 2nd book, "Be First in Your Life!")
- Techniques for working on resistance to change
- Timewaver tool for detection of negative beliefs and emotional blockages.

I have a 5-step process that I use to help my clients develop their own roadmap to successfully achieve their goals.

Step 1: Self Discovery
Step 2: Overcoming Challenges
Step 3: Planning to Succeed
Step 4: Taking Action
Step 5: Your Drive and Energy

This allows me to get a clear picture of where they are, where they want to go and what they need to work on in order to attain the goals they have set for themselves.
People are AMAZING and capable of great things when given the support and accountability a coach can provide. Whilst I generally have a supportive and a listening coaching style, I do challenge clients to step up and stretch themselves to achieve things they previously did not think possible — and always with great results. I always remind my clients how facing fear and stepping out of our comfort zone helps us to grow.

More about the activity of the interviewed Coaches, below:

Mihaela Stroe PhD, Behavioural Analyst, Coach, Trainer, Author and Speaker: [www.mihaelastroe.ro](http://www.mihaelastroe.ro)

Kileha Holder, Lifestyle Change Coach for Entrepreneurs: [www.kilehaholder.com](http://www.kilehaholder.com)

Jo Ritchie, Personal and Business Coach, Corporate Trainer: [http://www.joritchie.com](http://www.joritchie.com)

**ABOUT CRISTINA BURCA**

Cristina has contributed to the iCN magazine since 2014, by interviewing coaches around the world to shed a light on this fascinating personal and professional development field. Cristina worked as journalist in Romania (2006-2008) and then moved to Brussels to work in EU affairs. After an international journey in PR, education and tourism, taking her from Germany to Malaysia and back to Europe, she is now managing the brand of a renowned business and life coach in Romania.

**Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone as a Coach**

by Sue Stockdale (UK)

There is a famous saying by Henry Ford that ‘If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you always got’. It is worth paying attention to this idea as you gain more experience as a coach, because we can become too reliant on using the same tools and techniques with our clients. You know what works, right?

However, I have a different philosophy that underpins my coaching practice, which encourages me to regularly step out of my comfort zone and try something new. It is about being a great role model for my clients. Who am I to encourage them to change? – if I don’t use a similar approach myself.

It was with this idea in mind that coaching in the outdoors was added to my coaching repertoire. During the chemistry session with a new client I noticed that they were finding it difficult to sit still. They seemed uncomfortable in a meeting room, even though in their day job they worked in a small office and were familiar with a typical corporate office environment. I decided to take a risk and suggest to them that we could meet elsewhere for our coaching sessions. How about outdoors?

I was both surprised and pleased at their reaction, because they readily agreed to this idea. And I also reflected that it had taken courage for me to ask the question. From then on, all our coaching sessions took the guise of a 1-hour coaching walk along the canal towpath.

It was a great success. The clients’ issue was focused around helping him to connect to his purpose and identity, and the impact of the open space made a real difference to the quality of his thinking. He could see things from a more objective perspective and it somehow connected him to the world in a way that would have been quite different in a more sterile office environment. And since then I have used this approach with other clients for particular sessions that I believe a different perspective.
Here are some of the things I learned that can help you consider if coaching outdoors would be of value to some of your clients.

**A New Perspective**

Every client I have taken on a coaching walk has enjoyed it to a great degree because it gave them a new perspective on the issue they were facing. It did not matter if it was freezing cold, sunny, calm or windy, as long as the client knew to be prepared with clothing for any weather they could cope. Sometimes all that a client needs to do is to look at their situation from a different viewpoint.

**Practicalities – for Coaching in the Outdoors**

- Notice if your client is fidgety when sitting in a room. This might indicate they enjoy moving and it can help them think so you could suggest the next session is a walk.
- Have your route worked out in advance and know how long it is likely to take. You might even want to identify a coffee shop en-route or at the end of the walk so that you can enjoy a hot drink and write up your notes.
- Take a recording device (e.g. iPhone) as you can record key points or thoughts for your client as you walk.
- Be prepared for the weather, not for glamour. You need to be focused on the coaching, so make sure you wear comfortable and appropriate attire.

**Rapport Is Vital**

You need to have built a strong level of rapport with your clients, before suggesting to them that the next coaching session will take place on a walk outdoors. They need to trust you and believe that this is likely to be beneficial as they may have a perception that “work type issues” should best be discussed within the confines of four walls. That means you could be challenging their views of what coaching is all about and how it should be conducted, so make sure you have good rapport first.

**You Can Be Brave In The Outdoors**

I found that out when walking with a client, I was able to ask them some questions and challenge their thinking in a way that I would not necessarily have done in an office environment. Somehow the wide-open space also gave me permission as the coach to be braver as well. Walks can take place in city parks, canal towpaths, or the lowland hills.

**Side by Side**

When you walk along together, you are side by side and exploring the issue from a common perspective. That is hugely powerful and perhaps it’s part of the reason why you can be brave. It symbolically means you are exploring together and no-one has the answer. Also, normally the client and the coach are generally both looking ahead at the path, and not at one another, so there is less direct visual contact. I think this allows people to be freer – similar to telephone coaching where the lack of eye contact can be beneficial at times.

**Heightened Senses**

In the outdoors, I found that my senses were heightened. Whether it’s to noise, wind, smells, or feelings I noticed that this really enabled me to use my intuitive sense more effectively. I also used visual cues to link the conversation to things we observed. A large tree with three branches represented three options, or a frozen lake was used as a metaphor to explore what might lie beneath a situation.

**ABOUT SUE STOCKDALE**

Sue Stockdale is an AC-accredited Master Executive Coach and coaching supervisor. Her clients include leaders in corporate, sport and not-for-profit organisations internationally. She was the first UK woman to ski to the Magnetic North Pole and has represented Scotland in athletics. In 2014, Sue received a global coaching leadership award at the World Coaching Congress in Mumbai. As an author, Sue has written and co-authored eight books, including Cope with Change at Work, (Teach Yourself Books 2012); The Personality Workbook (Teach Yourself Books 2013); and Risk: All that Matters (Hodder & Stoughton 2015).

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Incorporating Photographic Practices as a Coaching Tool

by Iulia Sorescu (Romanian)

Coaching is a dance of powerful questions and answers which ultimately lead to goal achievement and positive change. Ideally, but as powerful as a question can be, there are times when there’s no “ahs” and no clear-cut action plans. So, what can be done to overcome blockages within a coaching relationship? How can a coach help the client get to the necessary insight when questions don’t work their magic?

The good news is that coaching leaves a lot of room for creativity. We can bring in different tools and techniques and we can adapt our coaching strategy according to the situation. Guided meditation, vision boards, tools from gestalt therapy (such as the empty chair) can sparkle the session. Every coach has its own style and preferences.

My preferred tool is to bring photographic practices into coaching. Not only because I am passionate about the power of images myself, but because photography is at hand. Everybody has access to a wide range of pictures. And almost everybody is taking photos. Today, photography is just one smartphone click away. It is creative and empowering. But it is subtle and nonintrusive at the same time.

This article is aimed as a personal account of photographic practices in coaching. As there is not much literature on coaching and photography, my arguments are purely experiential and should be treated as such.

One image for an insight

As coaches, we are trained to believe that everything is possible, that dreams are achievable, that with the appropriate mindset we can attain everything that we can. But the truth is that not everybody perceives things in the same way. We cannot force this philosophy, nor is it ethical. The magical questions that we normally use to help a client get an insight may hit a wall. Especially when the client is used to see limits everywhere.

Of course, when a powerful question is not working, it is not powerful at all. When we are facing deadlocks, we need to be open, flexible and adaptable to find the appropriate helpful instruments. Thus, I started to look for new ways of assisting my clients, based on my experience that at times answers are not that evident. So, I asked myself:

- How can I access intuition more rapidly? For someone who is not used to use intuition, it is counterintuitive to tell them to use their intuition to tap into their answers.
Photographic practices as a tool

My answer to all my dilemmas: photography. And when I say photography I am borrowing the definition of therapeutic photography from Judy Weiser:

"Therapeutic Photography techniques are photographic practices (photo-taking, viewing, posing, planning, discussing, imagining etc.) done by people themselves (or their helpers) in situations where the skills of a trained therapist or counselor are not needed — for example, where photo-interactive activities are used to increase people’s own self-knowledge, awareness, and well-being, improve their relationships with family and others, activate positive social change, reduce social exclusion, assist rehabilitation, strengthen communities, deepen intercultural relations, lessen conflict, bring attention to issues of social injustice, sharpen visual literacy skills, enhance education, expand qualitative research and prevention methodologies, and produce other kinds of photo-based personal/emotional healing and learning."

Using photography for personal healing reasons, having photography as a current hobby and being trained as a photographer (for curiosity reasons, I do not work as a photographer), led me into this direction. I started my research and I came across one of the pioneers of phototherapy - Judy Weiser. It is on her website (phototherapy-centre.com) that I found out that there is PhotoTherapy and therapeutic photography and that the latter does not require the assistance of a trained therapist.

So, if this can be done by oneself, without the guidance of a counsellor, why could not it be a tool for enhancing the coaching relationship? When paying attention to the distinction between the two and the boundaries of coaching, we can safely use photography and images to uncover our clients’ answers.

In her book, “PhotoTherapy Techniques”, Judy Weiser is presenting her way of introducing the work with photography with her clients. She is very thorough about being ethical and transparent. I thus, apply some of her suggestions to my coaching sessions, in addition to the Coaching Ethical Code.

Firstly, I am transparent about my intention to use photography in the coaching process. In fact, I have this stated in my personal description, so anyone coming to coaching with me should expect images and photography to be included in the process. However, I feel that I need to ask them permission. Additionally, I explain how the therapeutic photography techniques work.

Whenever the context is created, and I have my clients’ permission, I start including the photos in the process, having in mind the benefit of the client. I am not using this tool for the sake of it, but as an additional tool to facilitate progress and change.
A personal experience

Photographic practices can jump in at any coaching stage. It is a good way of gathering information about the client and getting a grasp of their value system and underlying beliefs. It is appropriate to use when working with self-confidence and self-esteem issues. Depending on the client's openness and the coach’s creativity, there are multiple ways of integrating photography in coaching.

My preferred time for it is within bridging the gap activity, as photography is a great tool for visualisation, for seeing the big picture and exploring possibilities. Briefly, the client is asked to choose a photo representing their current situation, one for the ideal situation and a couple of photos that connects the two.

This visual metaphor can lead to concrete solutions and action plan. It makes it easier to overcome critical thinking and find all the possibilities. It is enabling the client to see the bigger picture. And it is empowering and gives them a sense of control over their current situation.

In the process I am using my own collection of photographs and when the client is open to try, they can come with their own photos or can take the photos themselves, within the coaching session or between the sessions. My only disclaimers are that no photographic training is required, any camera will work and there is no interpretation of the photographs. As generally in coaching, the client has all the answers, the coach is just facilitating the change process.

Final thoughts

My experience with photographic practice in coaching is highly positive. It is appealing, and its flexibility allows the use in multiple contexts, from 1 to 1 coaching, to workshops and working with teams.

Not to mention again all the benefits of using images within coaching, photography helped me help my clients to access their intuition, go beneath limiting beliefs and get into an imaginative, creative space where one can evolve and feel sufficiently at ease to have an equal exchange with peers.

ABOUT IULIA SORESCU

Iulia Sorescu is a certified coach and trainer. She brings coaching and photography together to help people find their values, live their way and create positive change for them and their communities.

She believes that in this time of disruption, it’s our responsibility to build the world we’d love to live in. And we cannot do so unless we create the best version of ourselves, and then ask how we can make things better around us. Uprise Action is her answer to “how can I make things better around here?”.

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From Admiration to Incarnation

by Cedric Lefebvre (Belgium)

There is an innocence in admiration: it occurs in one who has not yet realised that they might one day be admired.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

When it’s not about pride

Often attributed to the hubris of the ancient Greeks or to the sin of pride as Christianity calls it, the self-promotion of our own assets is discouraged in many Western and Eastern societies, while humility is highly praised. Rightly or wrongly, the result is that from earliest childhood, ignorance - or even non-recognition or denial - of one’s own qualities is reinforced, with the corollary of a lack of self-confidence and a difficulty blossoming. We are so used to looking up that we forget to look at ourselves - selfies aside – and as a result, we miss out on realising just how beautiful and perfectly imperfect we are.

So, in a world where competitiveness is a reality and is constantly increasing, identifying one’s strengths, talents or positive differentiators stimulates self-confidence. It also helps to find or regain a rightful place in the social setting, a space where one can evolve and feel sufficiently at ease to have an equal exchange with peers.

First of all, ask your coachee to identify two or three people they particularly admire. Here, by “people” we mean any real or imaginary individual, known personally or through any kind of media, admired for their acts, their impact, their attitude or their values. This could be a grandmother who is a war survivor, a godfather who achieved a brilliant career, a teacher who...
travelled the world, a politician who fearlessly faced his own party, a revolutionary artist from the Middle-Ages, or even a cartoon hero or a character from a sci-fi novel who protected their planet. This first step might be difficult for some people who will need to think back to when they were adolescents or children, at an age when their dreams were still vivid.

Actually, it does not matter too much who those idols are, so long as coachees have sincere thoughts such as “If only I could be or act like X”. What’s more, it doesn’t matter whether the reasons for this admiration match with reality or not. It matters even less if you share the same opinion or not. What counts here is that coachees are able to verbalise the reasons or rather the components of their deep admiration and pinpoint the underlying values, strengths and talents. What makes these heroes so admired? What inspires the coachee? What is behind these acts or behaviours that make them so admirable.

In fact, starting from the principle that we can only appreciate what we have already experienced and in contrast to the externalising conversations used in psychotherapy to help patients dissociate themselves from their problems, this is an internalising technique, aimed at allowing the client to divide them into two categories: those they possess, even if only in part, and those they believe they don’t possess. Here, you can use a black/white, a yes/no, a percentage or any other scale technique to create two groups as long as it helps build a foundation onto which the work of self-confidence can develop. In the most extreme cases - those where the client feels he has none of these qualities - ask them to make a ranking. In this way, they will bring in a gradation in their own judgment. Of course, as a coach, reframe and challenge this judgment to jump on anything that is potentially positive.

The next step is to find both what to capitalise on and what to develop, as the key is to remember that what we admire in others is often already in us without our being aware of it. Then a double dynamic develops.

By working on the characteristics already possessed, ask your clients to illustrate them using as many concrete examples as possible, recent and less recent. Ask them to list actions, to highlight experiences where they successfully expressed these values. Let your clients realise and feel that they are not starting from scratch, that they already have a base to draw from, a base for growth. This will be the stage where the foundations of improved self-esteem are built or strengthened.

Once the ‘components’ of admiration have been identified (e.g. courage, creativity, resilience, kindness, etc.) asks your client to divide them into two categories: those they possess, even if only in part, and those they believe they don’t possess. Here, you can use a black/white, a yes/no, a percentage or any other scale technique to create two groups as long as it helps build a foundation onto which the work of self-confidence can develop. In the most extreme cases - those where the client feels he has none of these qualities - ask them to make a ranking. In this way, they will bring in a gradation in their own judgment. Of course, as a coach, reframe and challenge this judgment to jump on anything that is potentially positive.

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Then, in the range of attributes they consider not to possess, let them choose those that are most desirable to attain or develop... while keeping in mind that an envied characteristic may hide a latent need. To admire someone for his or her sporting victories can express a deep respect for strength of character or express the need for recognition... and therefore love. Listening to what is said and what is not said then makes it possible to detect the wisest doors to open. The aim is to open the field of possibilities.

**From ownership to action**

Finally, comes the stage of generating ideas as to the different ways in which these dreamt characteristics could be experienced, or how these strengths could be developed. How can your client act to express these characteristics, how could they behave more like their role model? However, seemingly insignificant or ambitious acts, attitudes or rituals, it does not matter. Let your client start small, very small. Let your client progress step by step. What could they put in place? What could they stop doing? What can they do differently? What can they do instead? How can they slowly incarnate their role model?

The action plan to develop is then very simple: choosing the first of these actions to implement in daily life, then a second, a third and so on according to a program that induces a positive spiral and moves from admiration to incarnation. Follow-up coaching sessions will help keep the momentum.

**About Cedric Lefebvre (PCC)**

Executive, Business and Career Coach, President of ICF Belgium. Cedric holds a master’s degree in psychology and developed his expertise through 25 years of experience as a senior executive, team leader and independent consultant within leading international organisations.

He guides executives and entrepreneurs to a clearer comprehension of their drivers and beliefs. This empowers them to fulfil themselves and their objectives in the areas of career design, performance optimisation, time and stress management, work-life harmonisation or purpose identification and integration into their professional identity.

In parallel, he is President of International Coach Federation (ICF) Belgium building, promoting and preserving the integrity of the coaching profession. Cedric is based in Brussels and coaches internationally.
Coaching Resilience and Authenticity with Pario Profiling
by Mark Oliver (Australia)

Many psychometric instruments help to identify a person’s strengths and development areas, and those who can or cannot do a role. But more important are highlighting overused strengths and de-railers (extreme development areas) to gauge how people perform at work.

This helps to identify accurately those who:
1. Can’t do
2. Can do okay, or
3. Can do very well a particular role.

This not only helps with selection, but also gives critical direction to any coaching. This becomes a very important issue when selecting or coaching cross culturally.

Differentiating between the last two categories can make a big difference financially. A study in the Journal of Applied Psychology found that the difference in performance between an average and a very high performer in the role was equivalent to up to 127% of their salary per year to the organisation’s bottom line.

PARIO PROFILING

Pario Profiling is a process which highlights key aspects of motivation and behaviour that lead to excellent performance at work. The questionnaire takes around 20 minutes to complete. The process is administered via an online Control Panel and the resulting Development Report is emailed to the coach. The tool has proved useful when exploring issues affecting performance and resilience, particularly when coaching people in management / leadership roles.

The profile highlights work preferences that relate to the person’s approach to problems, people and tasks. This gives practical guidance to performance excellence by mapping onto the 3H model of Head, Heart and Hands.

This picture of a person’s mindset can guide the coaching process to quicker and higher level improvements.

The profile is distinctive in having a clear operational focus. Areas that are explored include Developing Opportunities (the ability to turn ideas into reality), the individual’s level of Organisational Awareness, and also the impact of Personal Values on professional objectivity. With reference to values, the profile does not directly identify the values, but explores the expectation that others should share the same values. Studies indicate that this type of mindset may be linked to perfectionism and can also result in a reactive style of working and a tendency to try and avoid problems.

Gaining insight into values can help managers/leaders become more proactive in various ways, e.g. by influencing others, setting clear direction, and building resilience. A study of 460 professionals in the UK indicates that the high emphasis on personal values is associated with reduced confidence in decision outcomes, lower scores on setting direction, and a tendency to be less questioning, with lower scores on the Innovative Response dimension.

The completed profile is designed to be diagnostic and support coaching and development. It helps clarify preferences and aspects of work behaviour that can affect performance. These issues might, for example, relate to delegation, consultation with others, or speed of response. Coaching interventions can help professionals gain insight and develop new ways of responding, so they become more effective at assessing issues and handling complexity.


AUTENTICITY AND PROFILING
Reviewing the profile also supports discussion relating to the four elements (shown below) that contribute to the authenticity. With this in mind, we have found that the profile can be used to strengthen coaching designed to build capability in the four key areas:

Self-Awareness
Understanding your unique talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values and beliefs; being open to experience, and becoming more receptive to feedback that creates this insight.

Balanced Processing of Information
Making allowance for your personal preferences and being able to consider multiple sides of an issue and differing perspectives; this contributes to improved analysis.

Relational Authenticity
Striving to achieve openness and truthfulness in your close relationships, using selective self-disclosure to build trust and appear genuine in your interaction with others.

Authentic Behaviour/Action
Responding to situations in a way that is appropriate in the context of the role, respecting your core values and acting in a (proactive) way that is consistent with these values

SUMMARY
In summary, Pario Profiling is easily administered and offers insights that are particularly useful in executive coaching and interventions designed to create significant performance improvements at work. The review process helps facilitate difficult conversations and clarify blind-spots that are affecting performance. It has relevance in the context of both one-to-one coaching and team development. Reviewing work preferences and mindset issues also help clarify role requirements. The feedback process can include discussion concerning the expectations of team members and work colleagues, and the steps linked to improved communication.

References:

What your Coaching Website Needs to Attract Clients
by Vibeke Foss (Spain)

Did you know that your website can be a great asset to attract clients to your business? If you are just starting out as a coach, planning your website can be a daunting and confusing process.

Questions I often get are: What should I write? How should I write? How do I structure it?

Even those who have already been in business for a while can find themselves struggling with engagement and conversion, so no matter what stage you are at, you can always get more clients from your website applying the following tips:

LAYOUT
- make it visually pleasing and easy to read

Distribute the information into digestible sections
The trend, especially for the homepage, is to have horizontal sections, where people scroll down - each section containing a digestible amount of information. Avoid larger chunks of text. This makes it easy for the visitor to absorb the content.

Use images generously
A large full-width image on top of the pages with a word or short sentence gives a nice visual feeling. Images distributed throughout the content is also recommended. It’s pleasing to the eye and a great way of breaking up longer texts.

Use headings generously
Using headings and subheadings work especially well for pages like your About Page and Work With Me page, where inevitably there will be more text to manage; it naturally splits it up into sections. Using a different font and color for headings is a great way to also make it look stylish.

Use your formatting tools
Even the most basic of formatting tools can transform a heavy block of text to an easy-to-read section:

Although we have so much to say, and we feel that we should have it all visible at first glance, we have to cool our jets. People easily get overwhelmed online, and they don’t want to consume a lot of dense information. This means that your design needs to be nice and clean, with lots of space and less text in bigger font, so here’s what you need to take into account:
• Bullet points - a simple way to highlight any part of a text that can be listed
• Bold - for emphasising important words and sentences
• Italics - to emphasise tone

All of the above works wonders to not lose the attention of your readers while they navigate your website, and it considers both those who prefer to skim through the text, and those who read every line. You can see examples of the above on my own, and most of my clients’, websites.

CONTENT
- What makes it attractive to your ideal client?

Emotions
In the coaching sector in particular, making your visitor feel understood is very powerful. Throughout your content you want to continuously refer to their situation: remind them that you know what they struggle with right now, what they feel, how they rather want to feel - and that you are the one to help them get there!

You want their response to your content to be: This person completely understands my situation, this person knows exactly what I feel, and I’ve come to the right place for help.

Personality & Authenticity
Selling coaching services means working with your clients over a longer period of time, and where they share quite personal information with you, so they need to feel good about you. Showing your personality, without hiding behind a business image, really makes a difference.

Maybe you worry about not being seen as professional, and therefore feel like writing as if you were a team, when in fact it’s only you. Or referring to yourself in third person, like the queen! It may initially sound more impressive, but it also creates a barrier.

The “be authentic” trend is all about showing who you really are, and thereby attract the kind of clients you naturally work well with. (It really works! I’ve been practicing this since I started my business). So let your personality shine through in your content.

Values & relatable stories
What truly connects with visitors is to see that they have something in common with you, so write using your own words. The ones you would actually use in an in-person conversation. Reading your content out loud really helps with this one. Does it sound like you at all? If the answer is yes, you’re on the right track.

Also, have pictures of yourself. One of each page, and some of them less formal, is totally ok. People love getting a sensation of who you are through images.

Testimonials
When your visitors see the words of other people on how they have greatly benefited from your services, this is one more step towards them trusting you and feeling safe with you as a person they can work with. Spread snippets of testimonials throughout your copy!

Contact Form(s)
Most of us have this in place. The minimum is to have the usual form on your contact page, or a form/online calendar where people can sign up for a consultation with you.

You want to keep in mind throughout the content of your website, that your goal for the visitor is for him or her to be guided towards the action of contacting you, so that you can get the opportunity to connect with them personally and increase your chances of converting them into clients.

Sign-up forms
Even when your website visitors love what they see, many will not be ready to contact you at first visit. Maybe they are a bit scared to take that step, it may not be the right time for them, or they feel they need to know you for a bit longer.

This is where the newsletter sign-up box comes into the picture. If they leave their email address, then you know they have visited, and also that they have some interest. These people are great candidates for becoming clients in the future, as long as you keep in touch with them via email to build up the relationship. Offering a little free gift (freebie/lead magnet) in exchange for their email address is the trick to make more people sign up on your site!

Call to Actions (CTAs)
My favourite is Call to Action. They can be presented as highly visible buttons in a color that stands out, or as regular hyperlinks that lead to other pages on your website. The purpose of the call to actions is to guide visitors through your site. Think of what would make most sense for them to look at next, combined with what you want them to do next, and add call to actions accordingly.

I see it as kind of a nip and tuck game. Let your call to actions point them to the really useful and interesting information you know they want, but you also want to remember your overall goal: That they leave some kind of trace that they have visited, which is contacting you or signing up to your mailing list.

INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS
- Call to actions and forms

The ideal layout and content is a good start, but not as impactful as when combined with elements that make visitors engage on your site! Engaging means clicking links and buttons, and filling in forms.

Idea is you have the following in place on your website:
- A contact form
- A sign up form to join your newsletter/get your freebie
- Call to actions

Call to actions point them to the really useful and interesting information you know they want, but you also want to remember your overall goal: That they leave some kind of trace that they have visited, which is contacting you or signing up to your mailing list.
A typical and ideal flow through your website would be for visitors to go to the About page after visiting the Homepage (the About Page is usually the second most visited page on websites - people want to know who you are), so it’s perfect to give them a snippet of information about you on the Homepage, but with a link or button to easily guide them to your About page where they can read more details. From there, link to your Work With Me page, and from the Work With Me page link to your Contact page. And remember to include the snippets of testimonials in-between.

Lastly, also make sure every one of your pages have your contact button highly visible. Most expect to find this on the right hand side in the main navigation bar on top of your website. It’s fabulous if you even have your contact information in your footer.

Having all this in place, your website is well prepared to convert your website visitors into client. Good luck with the implementations!

ABOUT VIBEKE FOSS

Vibeke Foss is the founder of Gorgeous Geek - Web Design & Online Business Consulting. She builds professional websites for coaches and female entrepreneurs, and has a talent for explaining technical stuff in a language you understand, even if you are clueless. She also gives guidance on content strategies to help you attract clients to your website.

In her online community Biz Ladies, she supports female entrepreneurs with free techy tips and business inspiration - feel free to join!

Social media links
Website: https://www.gorgeous-geek.com/
Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/bizladies/
Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/GorgeousGeekWebDesign/
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/vibekefoss/
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Embodied Coaching: Leverage the Power of Whole-Person Transformation
by Maud Raber (France)

Have you ever completed a coaching programme feeling that some deeper dimension of the client’s resources remained untapped and wished you could go deeper?

Have you ever worked with “heady” clients who felt stuck, but for whom verbal coaching interactions did little?

Developing a whole-person, embodied approach in your coaching can prove tremendously impactful. It has significantly increased the transformational power of my interventions. I share here some key learnings from my professional practice.

Embodiment: what are we talking about, and what difference does it make in coaching?

“Embodiment” is the way we are, how we feel, relate and do, in our whole body-mind. Our physiology is far from being just a vehicle for transporting our brain. It is the physical bedrock of our perceptions, cognitions, emotions, relationships and behaviour.

In that sense, embodiment goes beyond just “inhabitation” - beyond regarding the body as a thing I live in (implying a separate identity that is aware of the body as ‘it’). It is being aware AS a body; the body as ‘I’ : it is the subjective experience of the body as an aspect of self.

Becoming conscious of our usually unconscious personal shaping, developing a range of options, and having the freedom of choice as a result, is what ‘embodiment’ means to us. How we move is an expression of how we are, and the potential of how we can be.

Embodiment matters to all human beings because this embodied sense is present in the whole of our experience. And it matters specifically to us coaches as it offers a deep, efficient and sustainable approach to working with others when other methods (e.g. more cognitive or verbal-only) often fall short. In an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world, it is decisive that we develop for ourselves, and can help our clients develop, flexibility and adaptability, especially under intensity and challenge.

Accessing multi-dimensional awareness and agency

Embodied intelligence is multi-dimensional. We can think of embodiment skills as involving awareness and choice, for ourselves and others (choice becomes influence), thus forming a 4-quadrant matrix of embodiment capabilities:

- How am I?
- How are they?
- Managing myself
- Influencing others

These 4 quadrants provide a map of practical embodied skills that can be developed (building up from 1 to 4).

1 core capability: reflexive resilience

The core “algorithm” (P. Linden) or meta-process of embodiment is: Awareness - Acceptance and Choice (M. Walsh).

In an embodiment, we train ourselves to notice more often and earlier on when we are sliding in a pattern that’s not useful (not appropriate to context and objective), then practice acknowledging it as best as possible. From then on, we clarify our intention, and deliberately move and/or shape ourselves in the body towards this chosen way of being, acting, relating.
Shaker – an efficient state changer: Invite the client to shake their whole body for at least 3 seconds, standing, with deep, long outbreaths. This will support them shifting their embodied state.

Centering for embodied self-regulation: Centering is a category of embodied self-regulation techniques, building on posture, breath, relaxation, orientation of awareness and social connection. There are many centering techniques. Here is one from Paul Linden:

Soft core (relaxation): let your tongue hang loose, your shoulders drop, relax your belly and lower abdominal muscles

Stability (posture): adjusts your posture, uplifting while relaxing your spine, tilting your tailbone backwards if seated, and unlocking your knees if standing

Expansiveness (attention): Open your awareness to left and right, back and front, above and below, and expand it in all directions as a radiating light bulb

Smiling heart (social connection): think of someone who makes you smile.

A 2-seconds version of this is: Uplift – Relax – Expand (W. Palmer).

Embodied coaching excellence: how to get there?

1. Develop your own embodiment through dedicated practice, and stay on this ever-deepening path. Most of your coaching efficiency will spring out of who and how you are.

2. Work on your own trauma history and build professional trauma-awareness. The body is a powerful vessel, and coaching through the body borders therapy and trauma work more often than not.

3. Follow a high-quality professional embodied coaching curriculum. A few excellent ones exist internationally; all integrate a mid-term personal embodied transformation journey.

Because the body is also home to meaning as a felt sense, we tap into embodied inquiry to elicit and test insights, by taking on archetypal postures, as through the Embodied Yoga Principles approach (M. Walsh).

In the spirit of Focusing (E. Gendlin’s psychotherapeutic inner awareness process) or Hakomi body psychotherapy, we leverage deep body listening to follow a felt sense and its unfolding meaning throughout the body. In order to map and fuel opportunities to build an embodied range (more variety in our embodied patterns), we explore the Four Elements (Earth, Water, Fire and Air – G. Whitelaw and M. Walsh) and their resonance with our own embodied type. As an embodiment coach, our distinctive contribution lies also in supporting our clients to craft tailor-made practices that stretch them to the learning edge of their embodied potential.

Embodied coaching also builds on more elaborate techniques. On the basis of a principle-based approach such as the one developed by M. Walsh and F. Briers, you can reach infinite creativity in this respect.

To gain insight into new situations and practice new ways of doing things, we create simulators, i.e. safe, calibrated, experimental body-mind protocols by which we test the impact of different variables and support the client finds out a more adapted way of operating in the face of a specific challenge. With distinction coaching, we help clients get out of stunkness and gain greater choice by distinguishing and separating out embodied patterns that they have initially unconsciously confused e.g. visibility and arrogance.

3 of my simplest, go-to embodied coaching techniques:

I regularly use these in my coaching, and you can implement them immediately, with robust results.

- Walking embodied check-in (awareness) and intention setting (M. Walsh):
  
  This is a practice of the “awareness and choice” master algorithm of embodiment (see above). Invite your client to walk naturally in the room, scanning their body slowly from feet to head, following their breath, and discovering: “How am I right here and now?” (physical sensations, emotions and thoughts – comfortable and uncomfortable). Ask them to share their most concrete observations (what, where in the body, as a training in embodied awareness. Pause (see i.f. shaker below).

  Ask your client to resume their walk, this time asking themselves “How do I want to be?” (physical sensations, emotions and thoughts – comfortable and uncomfortable). Ask them to share their most concrete observations (what, where in the body and how), as a training in embodied awareness. Pause (see i.f. shaker below).

More advanced techniques

- Personality
  - manages people, concepts and things
  - perceptions
  - is centered self
  - Core
  - Safety
  - Approval
  - Control
  - References
  - on security
  - Notice
  - (self-awareness)
  - Notice
  - (self-regulation, e.g. through centering)

- Expansiveness (attention)
  - Open your awareness to left and right, back and front, above and below, and expand it in all directions as a radiating light bulb

- Stability (posture)
  - Adjusts your posture, uplifting while relaxing your spine, tilting your tailbone backwards if seated, and unlocking your knees if standing

- Soft core (relaxation)
  - Let your tongue hang loose, your shoulders drop, relax your belly and lower abdominal muscles

- Expansiveness (attention)
  - Open your awareness to left and right, back and front, above and below, and expand it in all directions as a radiating light bulb

- Smiling heart (social connection)
  - Think of someone who makes you smile.

Resources to go further:

- All books by: S. Heller, P. Linden, W. Palmer, R. Strozzi-Heckler, or G. Whitelaw

- Free e-Book “Working With the Body in Training and Coaching” and more resources on embodied coaching excellence: https://embodiedfacilitator.com/ebook/

- The Embodiment Podcast (free, also on iTunes)

- YouTube: Integration Training Channel

Embodied coaching excellence: how to get there?

If you feel called to bring the body more into your coaching, here are reliable steps that will lead you there.

1. Develop your own embodiment through dedicated practice, and stay on this ever-deepening path. Most of your coaching efficiency will spring out of who and how you are.

2. Work on your own trauma history and build professional trauma-awareness. The body is a powerful vessel, and coaching through the body borders therapy and trauma work more often than not.

3. Follow a high-quality professional embodied coaching curriculum. A few excellent ones exist internationally; all integrate a mid-term personal embodied transformation journey.

However you are already integrating the body in your coaching, consider prolonging and deepening this fruitful development. And don’t hesitate to reach out for any question! maud@embodied-potential.com

ABOUT MAUD RABER

Maud is a leading international embodiment developmental coach, facilitator and trainer. She works with C-Suite and executives in corporate organisations to support the development of authentic leadership, resilience and interpersonal excellence for the future of work. A trainer and mentor of embodiment coaches, she is a faculty member of the Embodied Facilitator Course (UK- Russia) and of the Formapart certifying Facilitator Training Curriculum (France). Accredited Leadership Embodiment Coach and Instructor, and seasoned practitioner of Being in Movement, Embodied Yoga Principles, systemic representations, Focusing and Mindfulness. Co-founder and lead trainer of the Moscow-based « Дозрель » blended learning executive embodiment programme.

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“What would really like from this coaching session is a plan on how to talk to my boss about a pay raise”, is what you hear from your coaching client. Now, there might be several things going through your head: “How do I help her plan this meeting?”, “What’s important to her about it?”, “What will be different if she has this plan?” How do you then decide what to invite your client to explore?

As a coach trainer, mentor coach and member of the ICF assessor team for professional certified coaches and master certified coaches I have had the opportunity to observe these kinds of coaching situations in many variations. Candidates, mentees and participants in my coach training programs have described two difficulties:

If you run with the first goal that a client mentions (in this case asking about measures of success for the plan to get a pay raise) you run the risk of getting lost in the exploration and never ending up actually discussing what the client came for (in this case, discussing the plan for the pay raise).

The ICF core competencies ‘Creating the coaching agreement’ and ‘Coaching presence’ ask the coach to partner with the client not only in what they want to talk about but also in how the coaching process is run. Coaches face this conundrum: they would like to be able to serve the client by providing clear process and by helping the clients to focus, yet they don’t want to narrow the focus so much that it hinders exploration and deeper learning. In the middle of this quagmire, some get lost and the coach and the client turn in conversational circles of broadening and narrowing and broadening and narrowing the focus of the discussion without moving anywhere.

Here are five steps to give focus to the discussion and talk about what is truly important: the double diamond of coaching, an idea borrowed from design thinking.

**The double diamond of coaching:**

Using the metaphor of a double diamond can be useful to loosely structure a coaching conversation for the benefit of clarity and partnership between coach and client. The widening and narrowing of the diagram represent the widening and narrowing of the focus of the coaching conversation and the numbers as turning points represent possibilities for the coach and the client to partner around the change of direction.

**Steps to a Structured and Flexible Coaching Conversation**

by Kirsten Dierolf (Germany)

1. **Initial request, problem or issue**
   - In the beginning of the coaching session, the focus of the discussion will often be quite narrow. The client brings a request, a problem or an issue that they would like help with the coaching session, e.g. “planning a conversation with my boss”. The coach can then ask for permission to explore the issue or the request a little further before agreeing on a coaching topic or goal. This can be done by questions like:
     - Would you like to explore the situation a little bit further before we agree on a coaching goal -- or would you like to jump into this issue right away? (It might be entirely possible that the client only wants to make a plan)
     - Can I ask you a few questions about what you are looking to achieve before we enter into the topic that you mentioned (e.g. planning a conversation with my boss).

   If the client agrees to some further exploration, the topic broadens. The coach might ask questions like:
     - Suppose you reached your coaching goal (e.g. a successful conversation with the boss), what difference would that make?
     - How would you notice that difference?
     - Would you now like to summarise what it is exactly that you are looking for from this coaching session?
     - Given all that we have talked about, what are your best hopes from this session?

2. **Getting to a clear and meaningful coaching agreement**
   - Again, at the turning point of the diamond, you can partner with the client about the change of direction:
     - Do you think we have explored the issue and what you want enough so that we can start narrowing down what you want from this coaching session?

   If the client reaches this point, the coach might ask questions like:
     - Who else would notice that difference?
     - What’s important to you about your coaching goal?
     - What do you have to get right about your coaching goal?
Coach and client can then proceed to narrow down on a more meaningful level what it is that the client wants from the session. In our example, the client might have discovered that they are usually very nervous asking for anything from her boss and that they would like to approach the situation with confidence and a feeling of bringing value to the organisation. For the coaching agreement, the coach can then ask questions around measures of success:

- Suppose you were successful in doing everything that we just talked about, what would be different?
- What will you have by the end of our session the points in the right direction?
- What would others notice? What else?
- What tells you that you’re already at X and not at 0?
- What else?
- How would you know that you have moved one step further on that scale?
- What would others notice?
- What else?

At this stage, any coaching process that fits you and the client that is suitable to bring them closer to their coaching goal is fine.

When the client and the coach seem clear enough about the coaching agreement, the coach can partner again:

- Are you now clear enough about what you want to accomplish in the session?
- How would you like to proceed from here?
- So, what should we start with?
- When you usually think about issues such as... what process do you use?
- How do you usually go about...?

And then, the coaching magic happens: coach and client explore what it takes for the client to move closer to their coaching goal. This can be done in various ways depending on what fits the client and the coach. A simple solution focused process would be:

- Suppose a miracle happened overnight and your issue was solved (e.g. you were this confident person who knows that she is bringing value to the organisation), just like that. What would be the first tiny sign the next morning that would tell you that the miracle happened?
- What would you notice?
- What would other people notice about you as you go about your day?
- On a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 is the morning after the miracle, where are you now?
- What tells you that you’re already at X and not at 0?
- What else?
- How would you know that you have moved one step further on that scale?
- What would others notice?
- What else?

Once the client has agreed that it is now a good time to start wrapping up the session, the focus of the discussion can narrow again.

- What has emerged so far?
- Would you like to summarise what you are taking from the session?
- Would it be a good idea for you to summarise your plan and next action steps?
- Is there anything that can support you in taking this further?

The last opportunity to partner with your client is at the end of the coaching session:

- Would you like to take a step back and think for a moment what you have learned about yourself during today’s session?
- Would it be interesting for you to take a moment to reflect on your learning process during today’s session?
- Are you good to close now?

The benefit of the double diamond of coaching is that it gives coaches a loose orientation on what kind of discussion they are engaging in with their clients. It leads to joyful and meaningful conversations with good results and a happy coach and a happy client.
The E-Coaching Revolution: Depth Impact The Art & Science of Writing
by Macarena Vergara (Spain)

This is not another article on how robots will take over our coaching profession, or about how to package ‘coaching’ programmes online to create passive income. It is not about devaluing coaching by turning it into a rapid, unconscious exchange of sound bites. This is about a revolutionary methodology I recently trained in, and that is now an integral part of how I coach. It involves technology, a love of the written word, intense commitment and deep presence even when not ‘live’ with my coachee. And it has proved immensely effective in creating rapport and awareness as well as fostering immediate behaviour change.

There is a world out there that needs coaching – and along came E-coaching. A scientifically robust coaching methodology, developed alongside its IT support systems which have been thoroughly checked for ethics and online security. Coach and coachee are not present online at the same time - we exchange messages on a secure and user-friendly online platform. We go on a coaching journey like we would face-to-face, on the phone or on video. We develop trust and intimacy, we explore together the coachee’s current reality, and we get to the ‘question behind the question’, uncovering what needs to be named. We set objectives for frame behaviour change, the coachee practices new habits, we jointly tweak them and make them sustainable. All of this without ever needing to have a live conversation!

You might think this is too good to be true – or that this cannot possibly be coaching. I call it ‘quiet power coaching’ – it goes deep and far in a short period of time. It is coaching because the ABC model (described in the book) was developed from the ubiquitous GROW model, covering the typical phases of a coaching journey and even better, allowing for space and time for deep exploration before setting concrete goals, allowing for intense and close follow-up of the coachees’ ‘baby steps’ venturing outside their comfort zones, and allowing for embedding visible behaviour change day by day.

Asynchronicity and dedication
Coaches love this. And they love achieving this whilst being able to communicate when it best suits them. The asynchronicity that the specialised digital written platform provides, gives coach and coachee more time, focus and care to dedicate to our communication. We co-create – at different times and at our individual convenience – a shared presence, manifested in our carefully curated messages. We co-create a bonsai with our words…

The power of the written word
Because what I have not told you yet is that the written word is used here scientifically and also, I would add, artistically. Writing brings immense possibilities per se for processing and healing and personal power. When used scientifically, as it is in E-coaching, coaches write strategically, building our relationship and alignment with the coachee in every single message, thus tending to the needs of their brains for clearer thinking and deeper inner connection and openness. Through ‘close reading’ and analysis of speech acts, through the use of language strategies (and acknowledgment) and through crafting our messages checking for quantity, quality, relevance and unequivocal clarity, we make use of tools from the psychology of written expression, to deepen and give power to the coaching – I can listen at global level, I can access my intuition. As a coach I can cultivate my deep presence when sitting down to respond to my coachee. I am listening to what is ‘alive’ in that moment, and distilling what really matters to advance the coaching conversation.

You can see now what I mean by co-creating a bonsai: you approach consciously, you trim carefully, you support growth deliberately and mindfully. It’s a delicate and beautiful opportunity to deal with language (as many of us adore the written word), communication and facilitation of another person’s development consciously. Similarly, coachees discover themselves in their writing as they self-represent their worldview and ways of being with their words, and they see themselves more sharply in their coach’s written reflection. This is empowering, the writing anchors the process quickly and deeply, and there is written record of the whole journey, to draw on later. The writing is an opportunity for creativity, for discovery of different aspects of the coachee through this means of expression, an opportunity to make use of broader capacities of the brain, and a chance to get to know the power and the beauty of their own voice. Like an art. But with a robust scientific basis.

Social anonymity and the dismantling of ‘egos’
The absence of body language and other visual information, with the inherent social biases, assumptions and obligations that arise when the coach and coachee are visible to each other, are not present here. This ‘social anonymity’ can be liberating for the coachee, feeling freer and less judged by the coach, and therefore more able to express themselves, inviting early disclosure. From the neuroscience perspective, this makes sense: the limbic system is not triggered through the physical presence of others. As a coach too, there is no place here for my ‘ego’: I am not on display, my deepest presence is in my writing and my capacity to connect to the coachee through linguistic analysis, my intuition and the words I curate. I don’t play a social role that can impact the coachee beyond what we deal with in the coaching – its essence. I strongly feel this encourages autonomy and power in the coachee and true focus on what matters in the coaching journey.

Deep reflection, intensity and frequency of contact
This ‘silence’ that reigns over our communications invites deep cognitive reflection and emotional exploration of meaning. It is space and time to think. Self-awareness grows and insights emerge as they do in live conversations. The strong involvement of coach and coachee in the process, and the intensity and high frequency of contact make the coaching highly effective in transforming behaviour quite quickly, whilst remaining a flexible process. I cherish this opportunity to show proper reverence to individual insights and successes, making an iterative written record of what emerges, not allowing those celebrations to be lost as they do with the spoken word.

There is constant and considered attention given to what the coachee is trying to achieve. There is continuous feedback and still the coachee leads the way. All of this deepens the connection and the trust between us, and I can safely say that I have found the coaching approach that best suits my personality. I have seen the benefits of working deeply and intensely through writing in a short period of time, to unearth patterns of thought, emotion and behaviour that no longer serve and create new ones that do. The brain – and the heart – need this condensed attention for there to be lasting change.

This is not another article on how robots will take over our coaching profession, or about how to package ‘coaching’ programmes online to create passive income. It is not about devaluing coaching by turning it into a rapid, unconscious exchange of sound bites. This is about a revolutionary methodology I recently trained in, and that is now an integral part of how I coach. It involves technology, a love of the written word, intense commitment and deep presence even when not ‘live’ with my coachee. And it has proved immensely effective in creating rapport and awareness as well as fostering immediate behaviour change.

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Challenges: letting go of words

There are challenges on the path of becoming a good E-coach, of course – I have encountered a few! Having to consider my written responses scientifically before sending them, and above all learning to be concise in my writing – saying what I want to say, in fewer words. It may be cultural or just a habit of expression, as I have a tendency to reflect back ‘poetically’ (read: elaborately!) to my clients, embellishing the reflection with inferences linked to awe and wonder about where they are at and where they are heading. It is my style of empowering others and always has been, and it definitely works for my face-to-face and phone coachees. With the E-coaching methodology I have had to work hard on my ‘fear of letting go of words’. I’ve been encouraged to embrace the power that exists in conciseness of expression, a power that I can then transfer to the coachee.

My growing edge here is definitely in ‘refining the art of keeping it about the coachee’, as my trainers would constantly repeat, distilling and expressing only what is needed to stimulate and bring them alive: the precise reflection, the perfect next powerful question, the right inspiration. I now say less, with more impact. This is also liberating for me as a coach. It is a new way of being in the world: through distilled writing, despite the intensity and frequency of this means of communication, the coachee’s self-responsibility and autonomy grows: paradoxically there is less hand-holding, they find their voice, and what is emerging from them crystallises powerfully.

E-coaching is the future

E-coaching in this form has a bright future. I have seen it in the corporate environment, where short-term results-oriented interventions are routinely sought for large numbers of employees. E-coaching is already boosting the impact of multilingual international leadership training programmes I am involved in – and these programmes are implementing robust monitoring and evaluation measures.

Moreover, E-coaching can make impactful, effective coaching accessible to everyone. And that is a vision I am willing to work towards.

About Macarena Vergara

Macarena is an ICF-accredited coach and trainer with a global coaching practice from her house in the countryside in southern Spain. Originally an economist, gender equality and public health specialist working in the international development field, Macarena soon discovered the impact of working with individuals through coaching. She then trained in E-coaching, Brain-Based Coaching and Zen Coaching, and now uses her understanding of the psychology of the written word, brain science, mindfulness, somatic focussing and conscious leadership to create awareness and empower her clients to find their voice and live in integrity and strength. You can read more about her on www.macarenavergara.com

Professional standards:

1. Accountability
2. Protecting client rights
3. Accurate record keeping
4. Effective communication
5. Being honest and trustworthy
6. Delivering exceptional client care
7. Practising safely within the scope of practice
8. Establishing and maintaining public trust and confidence

https://coach-accreditation-services
Coaching Tools – What, How and When to Use Them
by Iana Avramova (Bulgaria)

As far as we are familiar, Coaching, exists since the Ancient Greece. This becomes evident in the Socratic Dialogue thanks to Plato and Xenophon, who have recorded it. They show us that Socrates was the first known Coach. The questioning style that he has developed aimed to explore self-awareness. Self-awareness, which led the questioned persons to discover the truth about themselves, their wishes, desires and purpose.

And precisely finding the truth about oneself is the core of Coaching. Without it, the whole process will not bring us close to the desired transformation or result.

After Socrates, Coaching was evolving through the centuries, but a real popularity and understanding it gained only during the last 10 years. Its growth in popularity is proportional to the speed of technological development. The advancement in technology challenges individuals and businesses to keep up with the speed of change and turbulent environment. At the same time, Traditional Education is getting outdated and cannot keep up with that speed. This means that people in general are equipped with limited approaches to deal with the new reality. These resulted in the growing popularity of Coaching as a strategic choice for empowerment, change management and transformation.

The quickening pace of life and technology requires Coaches to also rapidly develop their skills. The good Coach-Client relationship depends upon the ability of the Coach to creatively deal with a variety of situations. And the Coaching tools are a vital part of the process.

What exactly are Coaching tools? Basically, Coaching tools or exercises are ANYTHING that the Coach can use in their practice. Anything, aiming at raising the Clients’ awareness and moving them forward towards the desired outcome. The purpose of the Coaching tools is to help the Clients explore the challenge they face – either as homework in their own time, in a session with the Coach or in a webinar. Further, a Coaching tool or exercise facilitates the Clients in creating essential time; safe space for reflection; it strengthens their learnings; and it helps them move forward faster. It all happens because the Coaching tools have the power to enhance the Clients’ understanding of themselves, to help them make changes, take decisions and action in their lives. It all can also be achieved through traditional Coaching. Still, the greatest advantages of the Coaching tools are their vast variety and ability to speed up significantly the process of achieving results.

Good knowledge of a Coaching tool, allows the Coach to alter it and use it in different situations and with different purposes. The bigger the palette of Coaching tools and exercises the Coach uses, the greater the power possessed by the Coach to help Clients, when they get stuck.

What does a Coaching tool look like? It can be as simple as closing a Coaching session with a powerful question, which the Client can think of, meditate or write about in a journal. A Coaching tool can also be a sequence of Coaching sessions with instructions over email. Coaching tools are any business tools and exercises adapted for Coaching purposes such as: SWOT analysis, SMART goal setting, the ‘Urgent/Important’ matrix, ‘Spheres of Influence’, Action plans and many more. Of course, there are also tools and exercises devoted to Coaching such as: the ‘Wheel of Life’, ‘Value Elicitation’ exercise, ‘Building self-esteem’ exercise, ‘Listening models’, ‘Limiting beliefs’ exercise and hundreds more that are available in books or online.

When familiar with the specifics of each exercise, the Coach can adapt its use to many divergent occasions. A great example of the variety of purposes to be used for is the ‘Wheel of Life’. It is probably the best-known Coaching exercise - and it’s amazingly flexible. Apart of its original purpose of helping people see how balanced their life is, it can be adapted for many other purposes. For example, it can be used to assess and understand a Client’s area of stress or frustration – becoming a ‘Wheel of Frustration’. It can help in getting a deeper understanding of the Client’s priorities – becoming a ‘Wheel of prioritising’. In addition, it can facilitate in the assessment of a person’s skills and knowledge gap – becoming a ‘Wheel of Knowledge/Skills’. A ‘Wheel of Life’ exercise can be even adopted for measuring a team’s progress. Imagine that on a weekly meeting each part of the divided ‘Wheel of Life’ represents a specific team-member. Each team-member can give a score that represents the weekly progress made. In this manner – a bottleneck can be identified early in the work process and the person in need can be helped on time. Last, but not least, a consequent use of a couple of ‘Wheel of Life’ can be useful in the process of decision making. For example, imagine a Coach needs to facilitate a Client in deciding on a new job. What the Coach can do first on a blank ‘Wheel of Life’ is to elicit and rate the most important values of the Client. The values that the Client considers a must have in a job. Then a separate ‘Wheel of Life’ can be used for the Client to rate the current job on the elicited values. A third ‘Wheel of Life’ will serve to measure the new job on the same elicited values. This particular use of the ‘Wheel of Life’ has the advantage of visually and metrically simplifying a complicated on first midstance choice. These are just a few uses of the ‘Wheel of Life’ – it can be adapted to many situations. The same goes for almost any possible Coaching tool or exercise.

The larger the toolkit of a Coach, the better equipped the Coach is for a whole variety of situations. Surely, no one can be prepared for all possible situations or remember all available tools. The power is to know that Coaching tools and exercises do exist, to understand their purposes and to be familiar with the places they can be found when needed. The Coaching profession does not require the Coach to come up with answers or with directions, but it is great to able to say to the Client ‘I think I know a process that may be helpful.’
How to choose your Coaching tools? There is no receipt for choosing the right tools – it is a matter of trial and learning. The best way to go on about is for each Coach to choose a toolkit that resonates with the Coaching style and niche of the Coach. While doing that, there are two important things to bear in mind:

1. The Coaching tool needs to be simple – if it is too complicated, the Client may lose motivation or interpret it incorrectly. When it is simple and can be completed within a reasonable period of time, it will also boost the Clients confidence and make them feel good.

2. The tool has to be enjoyable – when Coaching is fully embraced by the Client, it can become a hard work that requires concentration and processing. When the tool provided by the Coach is enjoyable it can make the whole process lighter and nicer.

In conclusion, through the Coaching tools and exercises the Clients are given a safe space to explore and develop their own insights about themselves. Their core purpose is to enhance the experience of the Client to get faster the results they want, while enjoying the process. In order to be an excellent Coach, who is prepared and equipped for a variety of situations, each Coach can develop a Coaching toolkit. The toolkit is dependent on the Coach’s personal preferences, the niche the Coach serves and the goals that will be pursued. The more tools the Coach is familiar with, the better they can help a Client get unstuck. Whatever Coaching tools and exercises a Coach may use in the practice, they are NOT a substitute for Coaching and the Coach-Client relationship.

ABOUT IANA AVRAMOVA

Founder and Author at Transformika Coaching Cards - Coaching Made Easy. Iana created from scratch a set of 32 Coaching cards + 60 coaching mantras (positive affirmations). Each card has a number of questions and represents a mini coaching session. There are different challenges in professional and personal aspect (i.e. problem solving, relationship issues, time management, career choice, health issues and many more).

RAPID IMPACT COACHING

by Catherine Stothart (UK)

At the heart of good coaching is the ability to ask the right questions at the right time and listen attentively to the answers. You can’t coach effectively without this ability. But sometimes an additional tool or technique can help the client crystallise an insight which might otherwise be lost in the coaching conversation.

One tool I particularly like is Rapid Impact Coaching. It helps the client get to the heart of the matter quickly and work out how they can deal with it, and they usually leave the coaching session with actionable plans and feeling positive.

The diagram below illustrates the process. It’s important to do the steps in the order listed.

- It has a clear structure – some clients like to know where you are going in a conversation.
- It is signposted – the client knows what is expected at each stage and if they jump ahead to later steps, you can park their comments and take them back.
- The desired outcome (Step 2) is placed on the right-hand side, so there is a sense of movement from left to right, which in NLP terms links to the future.
- You can do this standing at a flip chart which is visual and builds physical engagement – it’s a more active experience for the client.
• Writing their thoughts and feelings down makes it real for them.
• Exploring the barriers in themselves and others leads to deeper insights which the coach can explore or build on in subsequent sessions (eg by working with their values and beliefs).
• It helps the client understand at a deeper level what is driving their behaviour – most clients don’t think about what in themselves is stopping them doing something.
• It increases appreciation of the perspectives of others – clients often forget to think about what is important to other people in a situation.
• It is a practical tool which leads to realistic and achievable actions.
• They can keep the flip chart, or a photo of it, as a reminder for the future.
• Once they have experienced it, they can use it themselves as a problem-solving approach.

Below is a work-based fictional example to illustrate how it works. I use “they” and “them” to avoid gender stereotypes.

I ask the client to stand with me at a flipchart and I start by writing up the headings.

Ask the client to describe the issue and write down what they say. In this fictional example the client says that they are reluctant to speak up with their own opinions when in meetings with more senior people. They want to speak up, but don’t know how to do it effectively.

This stage is where you help the client explore what is stopping them doing what they say they want in Step 2. What are the barriers between them that stops them doing what they say they want? In this case, the barriers could be fear of looking stupid, fear of getting it wrong, fear of conflict, fear of the consequences of speaking up if others don’t agree, fear that it might impact their career prospects.

Next, ask the client what are the barriers to being prepared to listen. This could include conflict, fear of the consequences of speaking up, looking stupid, fear of getting it wrong, fear of their career prospects.

Finally, ask them what are the barriers in the wider system that stop them from speaking up. In this case barriers could include where and when the meetings are held and how the agenda is structured.

At this stage, help the client brainstorm possible solutions for dealing with the barriers. Write down everything they say and don’t evaluate – help them to be creative.

Tips

• Do the steps in the order listed
• Resist jumping to action too soon (though if something useful is mentioned, make a note of it)
• Ask good questions to explore at each stage
• Steer clients away from explaining the behaviour - why they or others do something doesn’t help deal with it (in any case, they don’t know for sure)
• Focus on what they and others do and say, not why

Max Landsberg (2015) The Tao of Coaching

ABOUT CATHERINE STOTHART

Catherine is a Leadership Coach and Team Facilitator. Clients include Airbus, Audi, the EEF, KCOM, and United Utilities. She previously held posts in Ford Motor Company, Mercury Communications and ICL.

Catherine is the author of How to Get On with Anyone: Gain the Confidence and Charisma to Communicate with any Personality Type, published by Pearson. The book is the result of 25 years’ experience of working with individuals and teams in business and education – it’s a practical guide to building better relationships, at work or at home. Catherine’s qualifications include BA(Oxon), MSc, CFCCI, and qualifications in coaching and psychometrics.

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I have used this tool many times and clients always get something positive out of it. It helps them understand at a deep level what is driving their behaviour and helps them appreciate the perspectives of others. And it gives them some practical actions to implement to achieve the change they want.
‘Are You in the Mood?’
Coaching Tool: Mood Cards to Identify the Baseline Emotions
by Anindita Das (China)

Many a times clients have come to me with a shadow of their present reality hanging over the coaching session. In almost transference situation, the mood has then hindered me from focussing on the session or caused distractions or unnecessarily hampered progress in talking about clients’ future growth. This has not only caused frustration in me, but also hindered in serving valuably to the client by not being present enough, though the fault was neither mine nor the clients.

Client moods have tremendous effect on the outcome of the coaching session. Some clients might come to a session after a horrid day at work or are in the process of tough negotiation or often a looming presentation ahead of them that hampers them from fully and completely offering themselves to the coaching session. I took a leaf from therapists and counsellors books and offered to use mood cards to Investigate client’s mood in the initial minutes of the coaching dialogue. This sets the baseline of our coaching session.

A very simple Plutchik wheel of emotions or more elaborate coaching cards are simple yet effective tools to encourage clients to talk about their present feelings and put the daily grind out of the way before continuing with the set agenda of the coaching hour. Many times, mood cards have helped me and the clients see an issue or a challenge from a different angle and reaching the a-ha moment even before we started with actual coaching.

Additionally, mood shifts created through the use of mood cards has resulted is the clients become more positive and rated the session quality to be high. Emotion cards have also helped me and the client loosen up and get into deeper discussions as well as creating rapport and a general feeling of well-being and trust.

A basic emotions wheel can be downloaded from the internet or cards can be bought from various resources on amazon. Although I prefer the old-fashioned emotions wheel with primary, secondary and tertiary emotions noted on them, some coaches also use emotions apps to generate a communication. These are especially noteworthy with adolescents or young clients.

As we all know emotion are expressed differently in different culture, cards can be customised according to the culture one lives in. It also makes a difference to the clients they can interpret the feelings in their own language. Some coaches based in India, for example, use ‘Nava Rasa’ or the nine moods to open channels of communication with clients.

About Anindita Das
Anindita Das is a global executive coach and co-founder of Global Expat Coachworx. Born and raised in New Delhi, India and studied and worked in the UK, Germany, USA and Singapore, she has recently moved to China and dedicates herself to coaching global workforce, especially women executives, based in Beijing. Currently, she spends her time coaching, speaking at events, intercultural training, volunteering and learning Mandarin.

Anindita is a coaching scholar from University of Cambridge and group and team coaching alumni from Oxford University. She holds a specialisation in Global Coaching (MCC Philippe Rosinski, Belgium) and Emotional Intelligence (MDIS, Singapore) and is certified Cinema therapist (Zur Institute, CA). She is undergoing specialisation in somatic psychology.

Her work experience includes intercultural training (University of Jena, Germany) and flight attendant for Lufthansa based in Germany as well as Key Account manager based in India.
How to Increase Your Small Business Profits in 2018
by Varun Datta (UK)

It is true that ‘profit’ is the only thing how we can keep score in business. Merely penning down profit into your business’s financial section doesn’t mean it will happen instantly. As a small business entrepreneur, you should be careful, because increasing your overall profit for the year often requires enhanced sales. If you are not careful, the cost of these improved sales will lead to the decline in profit. So, here is how you can increase your small business profits in 2018-

Streamline Management Costs
As a business owner, you should make sure how much are you owed in the accounts receivables? How many customer leads do you get and how efficient are your employees?

You should frequently answer these questions and to do so, you may need to automate your business. You should build in BOAT (Back Office Administrative Time) in order to manage both your business and accounts. Moreover creating a system for employees so that they can have access to the data and keep the information fully synchronised and updated. In this way, automation will help your business to run efficiently and smoothly.

Look for Efficiency Gains
Efficiency gains hold the key to increase the profit potential, especially in a small business. For efficiency gains keep a check on the monthly fee deduction from your business account. Are you using website application or a club membership? To enhance profitability consider leasing equipment and reduce banking fee.

Those profitable small business owners usually do routine plumbing and perform hard laborious tasks. This is because hiring an expert to do these jobs is expensive. Moreover, you should find ways to get a good value with low investment.

Offer warranties & maintenance contracts
In order to add a good dose of injection of new capital into your enterprise, warranties and maintenance contracts can play a significant role. Any customer purchasing your product would want to know if it will work. Therefore you can offer maintenance contracts and warranties to reduce their worries.

This will prove to be a good thing to enhance the bond between you and the customer including additional revenue for your enterprise. To avoid being in a situation such as a money hole when providing replacements and services to the customers, you should thoroughly work out the numbers to be sure you are charging enough for the contract.

Use information marketing to attract new leads
Nowadays, before making a purchase or talking to a salesperson, the customers want to educate themselves. Providing the customers with the information will make your business profitable. Not only will that it allows you to win the customers attention and eventually their orders. You can also do it by providing checklists for free; information packed downloadable special reports, and the white papers. In addition to that, you can also promote the giveaway on your website and through social media.

ABOUT VARUN DATTA
Varun Datta is a renowned entrepreneur who is also the Founder & Chairman of 4New Ltd. He has a wide range of experience across different continents like Asia, Europe and North America.
Agreements, Terms and Conditions and Why They Matter to You and Your Business

by Janine A. Schindler (USA)

Doing business is about agreeing what you are going to do for your customer in agreement for their payment. An agreement is any understanding or arrangement reached between two or more parties. A contract is a specific type of agreement that, by its terms and elements, is legally binding and enforceable in a court of law. So why do we need contracts and agreements? Back in the "olden days," there were few written business contracts. Many businesses and personal deals were done with a handshake. And if there was a problem, the two parties could take the issue to court, who would hear it even if the contract was not put into writing.

Today, although a verbal contract is still legal, most contracts are in writing. Contracts are very detailed these days, and every effort is made to make all possibilities clear. In addition to being clear, a contract must meet certain criteria to make sure it can be enforceable. A contract that is enforceable can be taken to court for a decision on a disputed item. If a contract does not have the essential ingredients, it is not enforceable.

Most contracts never see a courtroom and they could easily be verbal unless there is a specific reason for the contract to be in writing. But when something goes wrong, a written contract protects both parties. If one party to a valid (enforceable) contract believes the other party has broken the contract (the legal term is "breached") the party being harmed can bring a lawsuit against the party who it believes has breached the contract.

The major challenges I have seen within the Independent Ethical Review Board during the 10+ years I continue to serve stem from contracting or lack of clear contracting. Our International Coach Federation Core Competency #2 states:

#2 Establishing the Coaching Agreement — Ability to understand what is required in the specific coaching interaction and to come to an agreement with the prospective and new client about the coaching process and relationship.

1. Understands and effectively discusses with the client the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship (e.g., logistics, fees, scheduling, inclusion of others if appropriate).

2. Reaches agreement about what is appropriate in the relationship and what is not, what is and is not being offered, and about the client’s and coach’s responsibilities.

3. Determines whether there is an effective match between his/her coaching method and the needs of the prospective client.

Terms and conditions set out the rules by which you will both play. For example, what rights you have if things don’t turn out like you agreed. They protect you if things go wrong and reassure the customer they are dealing with a business that will treat them fairly. Your conditions must be fair otherwise you can’t rely on them.

So what makes a term fair or unfair? A fair term strikes the right balance between the rights and obligations of the business and those of the customer respecting both of their relevant interests. An unfair term tilts that balance too much in favour of the business to the disadvantage of the customer. You may enforce your terms and conditions by asking them to sign, but you can only enforce them if they are fairly even if your customer has signed off on them. Fair terms will help you prevent disputes, save you time, protect your business if things go wrong and are good for your reputation. If you are unsure if a term is unfair you can seek legal advice.

Here are 10 tips to help you continue to be successful in your coaching business and avoid one of the biggest pitfalls:

1. Get it in writing

Although oral agreements are legal and binding in many situations, they’re often difficult to enforce in court (and in some situations, they aren’t enforceable at all). In the business world, most agreements should be in writing even if the law does not require it. A written agreement is less risky than an oral agreement, because you have a document that clearly spells out each party’s rights and obligations in case of confusion or disagreement.

Contrary to what most lawyers think, you don’t need a lot of "legalese" and "party of the first part" legalese to make a contract enforceable. Instead, create short, clear sentences with simple, numbered paragraph headings that alert the reader to what’s in the paragraph.

2. Keep it simple

Don’t waste time negotiating a business agreement with a junior person who has to okay everything with the boss. If you sense that this is happening, politely but firmly request to be put in touch with the person in charge. Make sure the person you negotiate with has the authority to bind the business and has a vested interest in making sure the business performs its obligations under the agreement. If you’re not sure who that is, ask. In a smaller business, it might be one of the owners; in a larger organisation, it might be a chief executive officer or chief operating officer.

3. Deal with the right person

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4  Identify each party correctly
You’d be surprised how often businessespeople get this wrong and how important it is. You need to include the correct legal names of the parties to the contract so it’s clear who is responsible for performing the obligations under the agreement (and whom you have legal rights against if things go wrong). For instance, if a business is organised as an LLC or a corporation, identify it by its correct legal name—including the Inc. or LLC suffix—not by the names of the people who are signing the agreement for the business.

5  Spell out all of the details
The body of the agreement should spell out the rights and obligations of each party in detail. Don’t leave anything out; if you discuss something verbally and shake on it, but it’s not in the contract, it will be next to impossible to enforce. In the world of contract law, judges (with a few exceptions) may only interpret a contract from its “four corners,” not from what the parties said to each other. If you forget to include something, you can always create a short written amendment. Or, if you have not signed the agreement, you can handwrite the change in the contract. If parties initial the change, it becomes part of the contract.

6  Specify payment obligations
Specify who pays whom, when the payments must be made, and the conditions for making payments. As you might guess, money is often a contentious issue, so this part should be very detailed. If you’re going to pay in instalments or only when work is completed to your satisfaction, say so and list dates, times, and requirements. Consider including the method of payment as well. While some people might be okay with a business check or business charge card, others might want a cashier’s check or even cash.

7  Agree on circumstances that terminate the contract
It makes sense to set out the circumstances under which the parties can terminate the contract. For instance, if one party misses too many important deadlines, the other party should have the right to terminate the contract without being on the hook legally for breaching (violating) the agreement.

8  Agree on a way to resolve disputes
Write into your agreement what you and the other party will do if something goes wrong. You can decide that you will handle your dispute through arbitration or mediation instead of going to court, which takes up a lot of time and money.

9  Pick a state law to govern the contract
If you and the other party are located in different states, you should choose only one of your state’s laws to apply to the contract to avoid sticky legal wrangling later. In addition, you may want to specify where you will mediate, arbitrate, or bring legal actions under the contract. This will simplify your life if a dispute does crop up.

10  Keep it confidential
Often, when one business hires another to perform a service, the other business will become privy to sensitive business information. Your agreement should contain mutual promises that each party will keep strictly confidential any business information it learns of while performing the contract.

As we learn the coaching tools, an important one to remember is that the client always has the answer within, and she/he is as wise as a coach. However, this person is now in a black tunnel and we happen to be outside of that tunnel and provide the light for this person to get out. We do not go inside the tunnel to stay—temporarily get in just enough to shine that light that will eventually help the client to surface.

Having said that, would you ever allow to the tunnel someone that you don’t trust? The answer is no, of course. This is why, creating rapport is so important. Here some of my recommendations:

1  When you have the first meeting with a potential client, it really does help to talk a bit about yourself. My target audience are people who want to be more assertive by means of saying the right yes’s and no’s to the right people and situations. Therefore, I always tell the story of how difficult for me was to say NO to my family, for instance, and how that was causing me issues, with my own values and self-care. This creates rapport and helps the person opening up, thing that eventually will lead the person to trust you and empathise.

2  When you are having conversations and sessions with an existing client, with the time, this person will consider you as a companion and be glad to know you are there (again, in a healthy way, not like a ‘pillar’ that never falls or a wisdom god). Therefore, I would recommend, never to act like a ‘bank’ – if the person needs extra time for a session, which has been really intense and needs extra effort, or if you are in touch via chat or emails for an urgent worry, attend to it— with boundaries of course (night calls are never a good idea), and accept that some extra work is needed. Because we are dealing with people.
The technique of mirroring the client works great, and not only to make them feel more comfortable, but also to feel yourself at ease. By mirroring the tone of voice and the posture, even the eye-blinking if possible, establishes a relationship of empathy and complicity that is absolutely necessary for the person, and for the coach as well, to ask the best questions that unlock the client’s potential or limiting beliefs on a certain issue. I usually mirror the posture and change it as many times as the client does. It is a small thing to do and you have to make sure you do not lose your focus as the client does. It is a small thing to do and mirror the posture and change it as many times as the client does. It is a small thing to do and you have to make sure you do not lose your focus as the client does.

Role play exercises. Your client needs to do a lot of work by himself/herself, in order to process what is discussed between you and in order to see progress. There are situations which are hard to reproduce, such as the relationship with a manager, for example. I give you a practical example. A client of mine struggled to tell a potential employer of that particular person and embrace the idea that maybe the manager was not willing to compromise, and that he might not get the job for this.

Then our dialogue went on like this:

» Coach: Knowing that you might not get the job, for not wanting to do a certain task that do not belong to your values or studies, how do you feel?
» Client: A bit lost, I really need a job, but I guess I can still keep looking

» Coach: OK, sounds like you need time to think about it. The next question from my side could be this: From 1 to 10, how much are you willing to compromise on your tasks, in order to get this job?
» Client: 2… I really feel I would be unhappy. So unfair! I like this company.

» Coach: Think about your boundaries and priorities. That might help. I suggest you roleplay again in front of the mirror and ask yourself these questions before your next meeting with the manager.
» Client: Yes, I will try that.

Rapport is the primary condition from where you can expect your client’s progress and the willingness to go through exercises that can be a challenge and uncomfortable to the client.

ABOUT ALESSANDRA PATTI

Alessandra is originally from Italy, resides in Zurich, Switzerland, where she founded her Coaching company, FindYourWay. She is an accredited practitioner coach (Noble Manhattan Ltd), but also an author (she co-authors a great book on coaching exercises called “Activate your Life- 50 Transformational Exercises from Coaches around the world”, available on Amazon). She also has a master’s degree in Languages & Translation and 2 more diplomas in Marketing and Psychology.

Home Sweet Home

by Gregory Caremans (Belgium)

So this is it. We’re back home. The summer slowly draws to an end and it’s been great. The holidays were a breath of fresh air. We all had a whole bunch of new experiences. From sailing and kayaking, over medieval castles and prehistoric caves, to delicious food and wine tasting. Summer rocks!

And now, it’s back to school for the kids, back to our ‘normal’ lives, filled with routine and everything we know. From the morning radio show, over the usual traffic jams, to the fake smile of the cashier at the local supermarket, and our mother calling to complain about how we don’t call enough (or is that just me?). Business as usual.

So now what? Should we live a life of quiet desperation, punctuated only by the occasional holiday where we get to do some fun and exciting things? And between those lingers between nostalgia and anticipation for our next escapade? Or on the contrary, should we glorify the silent heroism of everyday life where we face reality with calm and steady determination?

Well, from a brain’s perspective, the answer is: neither. Or both. Depends on how you look at it.

Have you ever heard about the Attachment Theory? Actually, it’s not just a theory, but a whole body of studies and experiments which all points in the same direction. It comes down to this: in order for a child to become a healthy, balanced individual, it needs the safety of a caring and protective environment (read: parents) from which it can venture out and explore new things (have experiences and adventures), only to come back to its safe haven.

In other words, both are needed for a healthy brain, for a healthy life. A safe haven from which we can venture out into the new, and to where we can go back for safety and comfort.

So I welcome this September as I would welcome old friends who comes to visit me. He will remind me of old times. We will pick up our conversation where we last left it. We will talk. We will laugh. We will create new memories and cherish old ones.

It is good to be home.
Consultanța în afaceri, încotro?
by Sorin Caian (România)

Consultanța în afaceri, ca profesie recunoscută și etichetată ca atare, este relativ nouă în România, iar piața de consultanță a cunoscut o evoluție cu multe suișuri, dar și coborâșuri abrupte. Evoluția acesteia nu diferă prea mult de situația întâlnită în alte țări comparabile ca dezvoltare economică, nu numai din estul Europei dar și din alte zone cum ar fi Asia Centrală sau America de Sud.

La începutul anilor 90 consultanța a apărut timid în zona suportului pentru privatizare, procesul de privatizare în masă fiind un motor de creștere important, ulterior dezvoltându-se în special cu implicarea consultanților veniți din afară (“experti internaționali”), dar și cu sprijinul unor organizații ce aveau drept scop constituirea și consolidarea pieței locale și implicit educarea acesteia în vederea folosirii consultanței.

Apropierea și apoi apartenența la Uniunea Europeană a constituit un stimulent foarte puternic al creșterii și diversificării pieței, dar ulterior, după aderare, a avut și o serie de efecte adverse.

În primul rând crearea unui grup important de consultanți ce se ocupau numai de scrierea de proiecte (“specialiștii în fonduri UE”), și care de multe ori separau esența economică și socială ce ar trebui să guverneze procesul decizional, de conformarea strictă la cerințele ghidului și mai ales a grilei de evaluare.

Unul dintre elementele de bază ale profesiei îl reprezintă dezvoltarea profesională continuă (CPD – Continuous Professional Development), fără de care nu se poate desfășura activitatea cu atingerea performanței dorite. Consultanța în management nu este o profesie reglementată, nu suntem “un rău necesar” impus prin prevederi regulatorii, ci, pentru a fi folosită trebuie să dovedim valoare adăugată pentru cei ce ne solicită serviciile. Schimbările majore din economie, progresul tehnologic fără precedență, disparația barierelor în comunicare, determină modificarea atitudine și de abordare din partea consultantului, acesta fiind obligat să fie
mereu în linie cu progresul, să fie capabil să se adapteze și să asimileze inovația, să o ducă mai departe în procesele economice și sociale și să extragă sinergiile și aplicabilitatea folosind la maximum oportunitățile. De aceea, dezvoltarea profesională continuă este o condiție “sine qua non” a profesiei și, alături de experiență, constituie ingredientele cele mai importante ale profesiei.

Este evident că epoca consultantului local, cu specializare îngustă, s-a terminat, fiind nevoie de a acoperi cel puțin regional și cu o bună înțelegere a contextului global. Reinventarea roții este mai păguboasă decât oricând, iar lipsa viziunii și a înțelegerii globale pot fi handicapuri insurmontabile cu impact imediat asupra destinului profesiei.

Probabil cea mai importantă încercare a momentului este avansul tehnologic și adaptarea la acesta, dar ceea ce într-adevăr este piața de încercare nu e magnitudinea schimbării și a progresului cât viteza cu care acestea se produc. Personal sunt încrezător că profesia de consultant în management, deși foarte tânără, dar probabil cea care trebuie să se reinventeze cel mai des pentru a-și dovedi utilitatea și calitățile, va reuși să își păstreze poziția de facilitator al progresului economic și social, folosindu-și în mod inovativ principalele atribute ce o caracterizează: profesionalismul și etica!

DESPRE AUTOR SORIN CAIAN

Sorin Caian, CMC (Certified Management Consultant), fost președinte AMCOR și actualmente președinte al ICMCI (The International Council of Management Consulting Institutes), lucrează la BDO Business Advisory de mai bine de 25 de ani și are o experiență vastă în coordonarea proiectelor naționale și internaționale cu Banca Mondială, cu Banca Europeană pentru Reconstrucție și Dezvoltare etc. A lucrat în tări precum Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan și Republica Moldova.