THE ART OF COACHING

What is Coaching?

An extraordinary and unique relationship designed to create a significant impact and sustainable results in all areas of a person’s life.

Coaching is a powerful process uniquely designed to create lasting change. Coaching is also a profession, and one that offers highly qualified experts the opportunity to experience career fulfillment as well as financial security. Because of the extraordinary benefits of the coaching relationship to both client and coach, it’s no wonder that the demand has never been greater for great coaches.

Many people outside the corporate environment are not familiar with coaching. Most people only think of coaching in sports. The attitude and activities of the Olympic coach are much in alignment with an executive, corporate, or life coach. The tools and skills, however, are different. The best and simplest definition of coaching is: “Successful coaching is a mutual conversation that follows a predictable process and leads to superior performance, commitment to sustained improvement and positive relationships.”1

Basic coaching skills include:

● Observing
● Listening
● Questioning
● Moving through the gap
● Informing
● Challenging, and
● Endorsing/encouraging

What is the difference between coaching and consulting?

Coaching offers a distinct advantage over business consulting. Business consultants typically use their specific knowledge and prescribe a course of action to achieve an objective. They TELL the client what needs to be done and they may even do the work that is required.

While consulting is about the consultant delivering the right answers, coaching is about asking the right questions while empowering clients to create their own customized and personal solutions and become the drivers of their own success. Through improved communication, focus and accountability, coaching dramatically increases clients’ capacity to accomplish better results on their own.
Coaching does not deliver a single solution - it permanently increases the client’s own ability to repeatedly develop solutions.

What is the difference between coaching and counseling?

Coaching is not counseling. Counseling aims to heal mental and psychological issues and often examines PAST events. It usually centers on diagnosing a ‘problem’ that needs to be addressed. Coaching involves no such diagnosis and in fact, coaches only see opportunities, not problems. Coaches shift the focus from “why” to “how.” Coaching is very results oriented, maintaining a focus on the current situation and actively developing plans for the FUTURE. Counseling focuses on helping people to live functional lives. Coaching focuses on helping functional people live extraordinary lives.

Many models exist that define the coaching process.

1. Establish Focus: Where are you now, and where do you want to be? What is missing? What needs to be achieved? Where do you want to go?

2. Discover Possibilities: What is possible? What can be done with what is known or currently “real”?

3. Plan the Action: This is the time for strategizing the way to get from where you are to where you want to be.


5. Recap: Go over the plan again, then, as Nike says, “just do it!”

This is the nutshell version of coaching. Obviously, this is overly simplified. Coaching is composed of many skills and techniques all focused on allowing the individual (or groups) to achieve their very best.

How do you know if being a coach is right for you?

- People usually come to you for advice and you have a positive impact on them.
- You value personal growth and seek a career that will utilize your strengths
- You see great potential in people and are frustrated when they don’t exercise that potential
- You emphasize strong relationships and a balanced life with many interests, including vitality in health and career.
- You’re not afraid of hard work to create more personal and financial freedom.
- You know you have a gift - and you want to share it to help yourself and others live a more powerful and fulfilling life
Different Coaching Approaches

If you are a coach or looking to become one, this may give you new ideas on how you may be able to help your clients and prompt you to open to further coach development. I know when I started out I was introduced to ‘one way’ of coaching and it is only as I have developed myself over the years I have found that other approaches more effective.

So, what is a ‘coaching approach’?

In effect it refers to the way a coach delivers their service and is a reflection of the principles, models and tools a coach uses. Some examples include Solutions Focused, Values-based, Non-directive, Directive, Goal Focused and NLP Focused, Intuitive Coaching and Divine Living approaches.

These are just some examples of the many different approaches and you will find that there are overlaps. If you coach already you may find yourself, as I do, using a combination of approaches depending on the situation and some, for example solutions focused, non-directive and values based approaches complement each other very well.

• Solutions Focused Coaching Is A Powerful Approach

One really powerful approach to coaching is solutions-focused coaching. At its core, is the focus on helping the coachee find solutions rather than problems, building on strengths rather than weaknesses and finding positive ways to move forward rather than examining barriers. By directing energy in a positive way focusing on strengths and working towards a solution, a coachee will feel motivated and energized rather than de-motivated and demoralized, a feeling you have probably experienced when problems and difficulties are discussed and analyzed.

Let’s take a look at various types of coaching.

• Values Based Coaching

Values based coaching is an approach which recognizes that understanding one’s values lie at the heart of any personal or organizational change programmed.

Core Values

Simply put, a value is what is important to you and what you will consistently choose to prioritize in your life.
Examples of values include:

- Achievement
- Loyalty
- Respect
- Nurture
- Care of the environment
- Belonging
- Security
- Being oneself

What is the relevance of understanding values in coaching?

Understanding values lies at the heart of motivation. If you know what is really important to you, behave and make decisions that are congruent with those values, you are more likely to feel consistently happier, fulfilled, and more motivated.

If you set goals and make plans, which are not congruent with your values, then you are unlikely to be fulfilled or motivated to achieve them. (Have you ever wondered why those New Year’s resolutions never seem to stick?)

A well-trained, values-based coach can assist a client in clarifying and identifying their values, (while many people think they know what their values are, often times a values-elicitation session with a trained coach will uncover some surprises…) help them understand their motivation, uncover resistances to change, and take concerted action that is congruent with that which is most important to them.

Non-Directive Coaching

Non-directive is coaching in the truest sense of the word, whereby the coach simply asks questions, allowing the client the opportunity to find their own solutions.

A non-directive coach does not usually offer advice and rarely provides suggestions. However, through thought-provoking and skilful questioning, they can help the client see any given situation from a different perspective, gain clarity, uncover options, challenge inconsistencies, and hold them accountable to their actions.

The great benefit of non-directive coaching is that the client takes full ownership of their own solutions rather than ‘doing what they have been told to do.’ Through this approach, the client will feel empowered to make the
necessary changes, consistently, in their life, and all the while bolster their confidence.

**Directive Coaching**

Directive coaching, on the other hand, offers direction, solutions, tools, and techniques for moving forward. While the client may like the assistance and specific solutions provided, there is the potential danger that the suggestions offered may not be appropriate for their given situation. Consequently they may not feel fully committed to the solution provided.

**Other types of coaching**

What are the various types of coaching? What type of coaching would you like to choose to practice or specialize?

There are many different types or purposes of coaching, which can help individuals make progress in a variety of areas in life, ranging from business or executive coaching, to wellness and spirituality coaching.

Although, through coaching you will be able to help people make progress in many areas of their lives, there may be times when you will want to choose a more focused type of coaching, one which will help address a specific, life area. And you may come to find that you have a keen interest or is experience in that specific area or niche.

This section has been written to help you to learn the terms that are commonly used in the coaching industry, as well as provide assistance in helping you to decide what particular type or area of coaching you may want to specialize.

As you read through these pages, you may see some “type” overlap and in some cases you will find that different terms are used to describe the same type of coaching.

**Business Coaching**

Business Coaching aims to help an individual, or a team of individuals, make progress within a business environment. The primary focus is on achieving results for the benefit of the business as a whole.

This is probably one of the more confusing terms in the coaching world as the umbrella term ‘business coaching’ can encompass a wide range of more specific areas of coaching: executive, team, performance and leadership. The
term ‘business coaching’ is often used synonymously, as well, with business consulting or advisory.

While a non-directive business coach will lead the client to realize their own solutions, many business coaches choose a more directive approach offering the client a range of business tools, solutions, models and strategies to help their particular issues or concerns. Some would argue that in these cases they could be regarded as a business mentor or even consultant.

Some business coaches will focus on helping the individual develop personally, in order to better to achieve the business objectives they are seeking. This approach tends to help the client look at the role they play within the business performance, take responsibility by making personal changes that will improve and increase their performance.

However there are many business coaches who focus just on goals, strategies, and actions, concentrating less on the individuals. This approach can achieve specific, short-term results but may not allow for long-term development or commitment of those involved.

Some organizations regard coaching as an integral part of their operation’s success and may include a ‘coaching culture’ within the organization itself training managers and designated employees to coach other employees to increase team perform. Other organizations choose to hire coaches from the outside, for ongoing or temporary coaching services.

**Business coaching may be beneficial for the following situations:**

1. An organization needs to improve its overall business performance and it is recognized that the development of key employees and teams through coaching is an effective way of achieving this

2. A business owner, director or team leader needing assistance with
   a. Gaining clarity of the business purpose, vision, mission, values and goals
   b. Identifying issues affecting the performance of the organization
   c. Brainstorming solutions or strategies to continued growth
   d. Challenging current working practices and identifying new ways of working

3. Individual or personal issues which are affecting work performance
Executive Coaching

Executive Coaching, also known as Leadership or Performance Coaching, focuses on developing senior managers, directors, and key players within a business setting. The purpose is to enhance current level of performance, teach or improve new skills and abilities, accclimate individuals to new situations or job related responsibilities, and address a poor or declining work performance.

Many organizations invest considerable money sending their senior executives to leadership training courses but come to find that the information learned is too generic, with little implementation of information learned once back in the workplace.

One to one Executive Coaching offers the opportunity for an individual to develop personal awareness of their strengths, areas of weakness, skills, or specific issues in need of development, and implement the necessary changes effectively, with the support, guidance, and accountability of a professional. This provides a powerful platform for effective change and continued improvement of performance and skills within the working environment.

This type of coaching may also address personal, as well as, business concerns which may impinge upon or effect job or work performance. Therefore, it often carried out by an external coach, rather than one employed by the organization and can be relatively more expensive. It is usually reserved for developing senior managers within an organization from whom a perceived return on investment will be seen.

Executive coaching may be beneficial for those who...

- are a business owner or director needing an independent, objective, or impartial sounding board to help make important decisions
- are a manager wanting to up-level current skills and achievements
- are experiencing difficulties with effectively managing team members or employees
- are faced with personal issues or concerns which are affecting job performance
- are a ‘high flyer’ seeking personal and profession growth to the fullest potential
- need to address personal roles and performance within a company undergoing organizational change.
• Team Coaching
  Team coaching usually occurs within a company environment, aiming to improve the performance of an overall team or group of individuals. The coaching usually consists of working within the dynamic of the whole team at once but may also include one to one of individual members.

  This can be an effective vehicle for clarifying team goals, establishing common ground between team members, recognizing individuals’ values, needs and strengths, and developing a cohesive manner of working together.

  Often the terms Team Coaching and Team Facilitation are used interchangeable. There are many differing views on whether they are one and the same. For clarification purposes, we will use the following criteria to describe or define team coaching:

  1. Develop a team or group dynamic by identifying respective strengths and weaknesses, values, communication for an effective and cohesive work experience.
  2. Assisting the team by establishing and setting specific goals, implementing strategies and steps for working toward and obtaining those goals.

  In team coaching, the coach’s role is to facilitate clear and effective communication by asking questions. The emphasis is placed upon the members of the team to identify their own answers and solutions. The process ensures that all team member input is heard, contributing equally to the task at hand.

  Team Facilitation usually refers to guiding a team towards to a set or specific agenda. The facilitator will often hold the knowledge or information that the group needs to know and is typically used in a one-time session. Team coaching, on the other hand, occurs over a period of time and requires more than one session.

  For example, a team facilitation session might be held on “creativity” in order to assist the development of a team’s knowledge of creative techniques and how they might apply them. In this scenario the facilitator would be sharing some of his/her knowledge by introducing specific methods in but would conduct the session in such a style that encourages interaction, practice, and thinking within the group.

  In organizations where coaching is an established practice, managers may see coaching as integral to developing their own teams on a regular basis. Larger organizations may employ their own internal coaches, trained to fulfill this function.
External coaches can play an important part in coaching teams, providing independent and impartial facilitation, where an internal manager or coach may be too close to the issues and therefore may not be able to effectively assist the team’s progress.

Examples of when team coaching may be beneficial

- To achieve performance improvement is an already effective team
- A team needing to change current working practices and responsibilities in line with organization changes
- A dysfunctional team in which individual members need to work more effectively together
- A team where communication between members needs to be improved

**Performance Coaching**

The term performance coaching, as the name implies, is used within an organization where the key focus is the improvement of performance. Organizations employing this style of coaching will expect to see a measurable improvement in competencies, skills and overall effectiveness of employees.

Although it has its roots in sports coaching, there are plenty of scenarios within the work place, in which individuals and teams are required to improve their performance.

Performance Coaching can also be applied to business leaders needing to improve their own performance in order to improve overall business performance (see also leadership coaching), high achieving employees who are earmarked for fast-track promotion, or poor performers who need to raise their levels of confidence and competence. It can be carried out both in a one to one capacity or in a team setting. See also Executive Coaching and Team Coaching.

The focus on such coaching is about developing the individual’s competencies and confidence in order to achieve either personal goals or that of the organization in which they are working.

Typically the label “performance coach” is given to external coaches brought in to work with individuals or teams and generally work with senior management and directors where there is a likelihood of a greater return on the coaching investment. However those organizations with a coaching culture will place performance improvement at the heart of their coaching, utilizing internal coaches to achieve the same goals.

Coaching for performance can benefit...
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- key players within an organization who’s improved performance would significantly improve the performance of the overall business
- high flyers who have the desire to develop to their fullest potential
- under-performing teams or teams with the potential to perform more effectively
- those with an already high level of competence where further coaching will give them a competitive edge e.g. sportsperson
- a new team of people working together for the first time

Sales Coaching

Sales coaching is focused on the improvement of a very specific skill set, selling skills that will enable individuals and teams to sell more effectively.

Some coaches offering coaching for salespeople may work to uncover personal barriers to selling, address confidence issues, develop strengths, and what is needed to sell more effectively. Many sales coaches take a more directive approach, offering tools, advice and techniques to improve specific selling skills, adopting more of a training role, while imparting their own skills and knowledge.

Either way, coaching to improve the ability to sell should be tailored to the specific needs of the client in order to focus on what is most needed improve. This type of coaching is dependent on a current skill level and is tailored to the type of selling that will be conducted. One to one coaching may complement formal sales training, allowing the client to successfully embody the skills and techniques that have learned.

In an organization where there is a strong coaching culture often the sales manager will provide continuous, on-the job coaching to their team members.

Sales Coaching is typically beneficial for those who...

- have received formal sales training or already have a level of competence and the coaching is used to improve selling skills further
- as a manager needing to increase their level of performance from their own sale team, in order to sell more effectively
• **Life Coaching**
The aim of life coaching is to help the client identify and achieve personal goals in any area of life.

A holistic approach is taken, recognizing that one area of life impacts others and addressing personal areas, such as relationships or spirituality, can in turn lead to improvements in health or career achievements as well.

While each Life Coach has their own, individual style, they all typically help assess a client’s current level of satisfaction in the different areas of life, explore what is wanted to be achieved, current strengths, and formulate a strategic plan for development. For example, a life coaching session might identify the values that underpin a client’s personal motivation and challenge any existing beliefs that might be holding them back from achieving their goals or moving forward.

Coaching may be beneficial for those who...

- want to make changes in their lives but are struggling to make them on their own, or they feel there are mental blocks or beliefs that are holding them back
- have some major goals they want to achieve and need support and accountability
- need clarity and confidence to help them make major decisions
- need to clarity about what they would like to achieve and what would motivate them to achieve them
- want to reduce the stress in their lives or gain a better work-life balance

• **Relationship Coaching**
The aim of relationship coaching is to help people, as individuals, to improve their current relationships, particularly focusing on those with spouses or partners.

Personal relationships, of course, are a very influential part of our lives and unhappiness in this area can have a huge impact on other areas of our lives as well, such as work and health. For those struggling in an unhappy marriage or to form a satisfactory long-term relationship, coaching can help individuals to better understand themselves and their relationships, and find positive solutions to help them move forward.

Coaching focused on relationships tends to fall into two categories

- helping those who want to improve relationships with current partners such as spouses and long term partners
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● helping those who are single and are seeking to form a successful relationship

Closely related is sex coaching which aims specifically at improving sexual relations with your partner.

Relationship coaching may be beneficial for those who...

● Are experiencing difficulties in their marriage or long term relationship
● Want to revitalize the relationship with their current partner
● Want to have a more enjoyable and fulfilling sex life
● Have experienced infidelity either by themselves or their partner
● Have difficulties forming close relationships with others
● Are fed up of being single
● Want to gain insight into their relationships with others
● Want to gain clarity about their own sexual orientation

Parent Coaching

The aim of parent coaching is to help develop parenting skills and confidence. Few people would disagree that being a parent, at times can be hugely challenging. These challenges are often magnified:

● if a person is new to parenthood
● when they are deprived of sleep
● if their child is ill or has a learning difficulty or physical disability
● if their child isn’t eating or sleeping
● when children enter a new phase in their lives such as the ‘terrible two’s’ or teens
● if relationships between them and their partner breakdown
● if they are a single parent
● when there is interference from friends or other family members
● during other times of stress

Parent coaching can help address these and other issues, by assisting the client with the confidence and fulfillment necessary to raise healthy and happy children. Just being able to share their concerns and talk through ways to move forward can be a huge weight lifted off of their shoulders.

Coaching for parents may be beneficial for those who...

● Are facing specific issues or challenges as a parent and don’t know how to address them
● want to build their confidence
● want a sounding board to share personal challenges and issues
● feel stressed in the role as a parent
● feel isolated and lonely or feel a loss of identify as an individual person

• Personal Coaching
The aim of personal coaching is to help an individual, identify and achieve personal goals.

The focus is therefore on meeting the client’s personal needs as opposed to any agenda imposed by an organization. However some organizations may invest in personal coaching for their employees recognizing that if an individual is contented, having addressed their personal goals, then they will perform more effectively in the work place.

This style of coaching can take many forms and sometimes is also known as life coaching where a person may look to improve any aspect of their life. It can also include more specific areas such as relationship, spirituality or career coaching, where they may feel they have a particular need or desire to develop.

Personal or life coaching may be beneficial for those who...

● want to make changes or decisions in their lives, or have some major goals they want to achieve
● need to gain clarity about what motivates them and what they would like to achieve
● want to reduce the stress in their lives or gain a better work-life balance
● want to develop their skills, confidence to their full potential

• Success Coaching
The aim of success coaching is to help an individual, achieve whatever they want to achieve, in whatever area of their lives. It is therefore really another term that may be used to describe any other type of coaching whether in life, business, personal, or performance coaching.

Success means different things to different people - for one person it could be establishing a profitable business, becoming a renowned public speaker or to excel at a particular sport. For someone else it could mean having a satisfying relationship with a partner or being able to lead a life of helping others or spending time with family.

Ultimately, personal success can be defined as living a life congruent with their personal values (i.e. living your life in a way that is important to them) and a good coach should be able to help them clarify what their personal values are.
Those seeking for this type of coaching may already have a clear idea of what they want to achieve and need the help of a coach to help them get there, perhaps to help them build their confidence, address any limiting beliefs they may have that are inhibiting their progress, or to help them clarify a plan of action and support them along the way.

Success coaching may therefore be beneficial for those who...

- know that they want to achieve ‘personal success’ in any particular area of life and want some support in getting there
- want to clarify what ‘success’ means to them
- are feeling dissatisfied with having ‘lost their way’ and want to redefine what is important
- want to develop skills, confidence to reach their full potential

- **Spiritual Coaching**
 Spiritual Coaching is an approach to coaching that seeks to connect an individual to a deeper level that is beyond the mind, beyond those aspects of life that are controlled by materialistic and mechanistic goals.

A spiritual life coach would encourage a person to set goals around their deepest values in all areas of their lives that take account of their mind, body, spirit connection.

A Spiritual life coach will help develop faith that a person’s goals will be realized when it is right for them in your life, as life is a journey and the emphasis is on enjoying the journey as they create opportunities to grow and to achieve their goals.

For spiritual coaching, a spiritual life coach is needed. Firstly because a spiritual life coach is one who is deeply connected to their own spirituality and as such can quickly attune herself or himself to the clients deeper journey, dismantling thoughts and connecting with emotions that are a more reliable doorway to your inner being. And secondly a spiritual coach is able to go with the flow and their intuition when coaching.

Whatever aspect of life a person is dealing with, whether they are a parent facing challenges with their teenage children or a business trying to maximize their profits, anyone and any issue can be approached spiritually.

Spiritual life coaching may be particularly beneficial when you have a tendency to worry or feel anxious, are in a period following the break up of a relationship, have lost a loved one, have health issues or you are seeking inner peace and happiness.