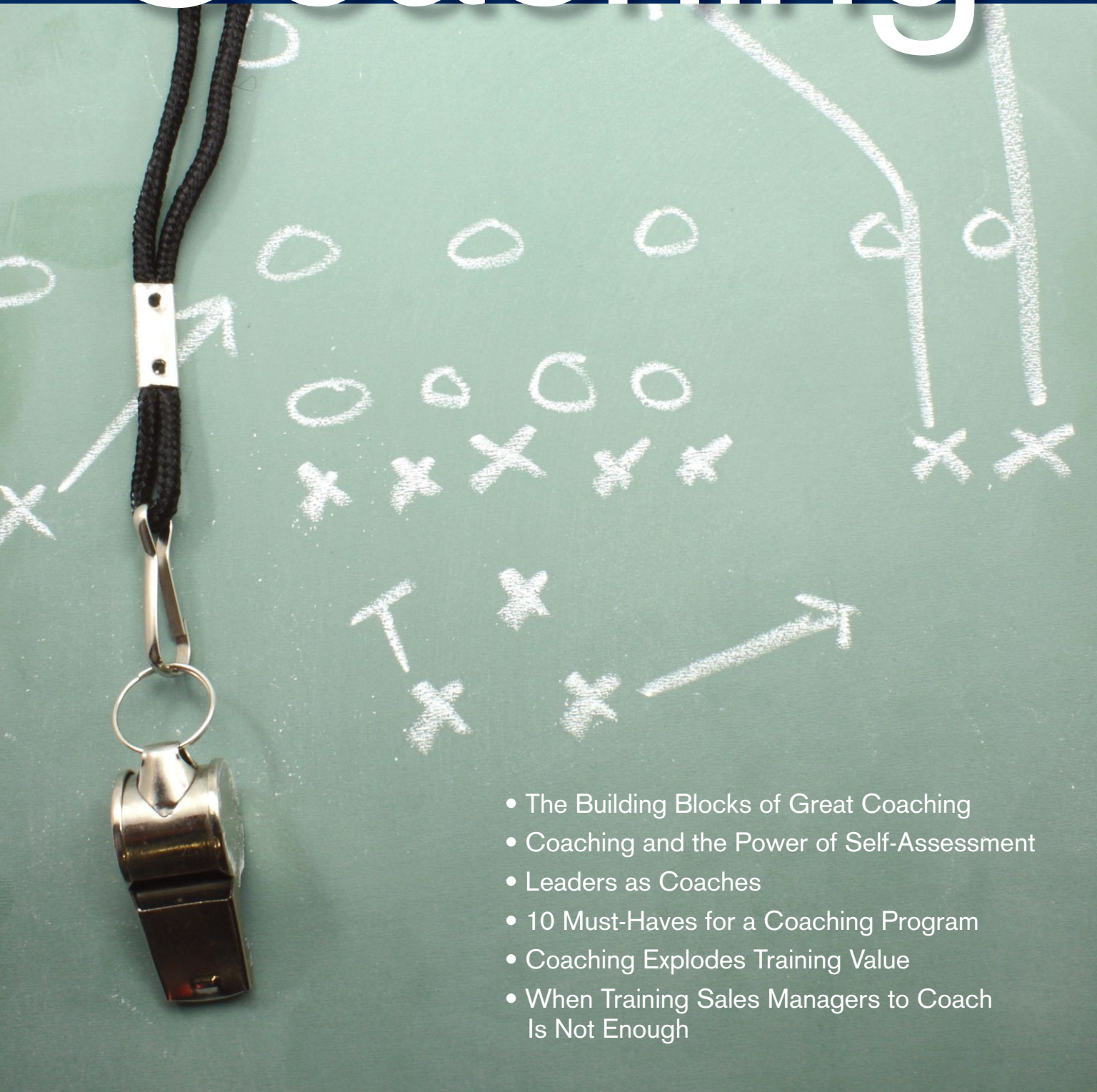


**training**

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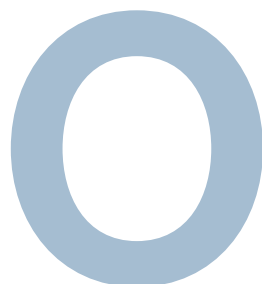
- The Building Blocks of Great Coaching
- Coaching and the Power of Self-Assessment
- Leaders as Coaches
- 10 Must-Haves for a Coaching Program
- Coaching Explodes Training Value
- When Training Sales Managers to Coach Is Not Enough



# THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF GREAT COACHING

A high-impact coaching program contributes to an organizational culture of personal and professional development and continuous learning.

**By Damian Goldvarg, Ph.D., MCC, International Coach Federation (ICF),**  
Master Certified Coach and 2014 ICF Global Board Chair



rganizations of all sizes and across all sectors face a common challenge: the task of crafting a strategy to leverage talent and nurture present and emerging leaders in service of a brighter future

for the organization and its stakeholders. Indeed, according to findings from The Conference Board's *CEO Challenge 2014* survey, human capital—how best to develop, engage, manage, and retain talent—is the leading challenge facing today's global leaders. A growing number of organizations are responding to this challenge by incorporating professional coaching into their existing training and development plans. Defined by the International Coach Federation (ICF) as “partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential,” coaching is used to help individuals dramatically improve their outlook on work and life, while also honing their leadership skills and unlocking their potential.

By definition, coaching is distinct from training. Whereas training programs are designed around a set group of objectives determined by the trainer or instructor, the coaching process is client driven and, more often than not, nonlinear. However, these are the differences that make professional coaching such a valuable addition to existing training and leadership development programs. As a highly individualized, adaptable, just-in-time intervention, coaching can be tailored to the needs of each recipient to maximize the benefits of training by

reinforcing new learning and providing personalized opportunities for application. Indeed, an Executive Coaching study by Gerald Olivero, K. Denise Bane, and Richard E. Kopelman showed that a program combining training and coaching increased participants' productivity by 88 percent, versus the 22.4 percent increase shown by managers enrolled in a training-only program.

If you're considering adding a coaching component to your organization's existing portfolio of training and development offerings, heed these four tips to set the coaching program up for success:

**1. Be selective.** The most successful organizational coaching programs set high standards from the outset when it comes to practices and personnel. Depending on their programmatic goals and the resources at their disposal, organizations may choose to utilize a pool of external coaches, a cadre of internal coaches, or a combination of external and internal practitioners. Regardless of which approach your organization decides to take, being selective is key to ensuring coaching's success.

Leaders of award-winning internal coaching programs, such as the one developed by Defense Acquisition University (DAU) for the United States' defense acquisition workforce, stress the importance of a rigorous coach selection and training process. Of DAU's 600-plus faculty members, only eight to 10 individuals per year are nominated for coach training. This select group then participates in an intensive program that includes classroom training, hands-on coaching

practice, and collaboration with an experienced mentor coach. Once qualified, DAU's coaches must fulfill continuing education requirements and maintain a roster of at least one active client per year.

Organizations using external coaches are advised to be equally stringent in their requirements. Many coaching decision-makers have found that coaches who hold an ICF Credential are well-positioned to help individuals, teams, and organizations meet their goals. To earn an ICF Credential, applicants must demonstrate coaching that shows an understanding and mastery of the ICF definition of coaching and the 11 ICF Core Competencies appropriate to their desired credential level; they also must log a set number of hours in professional coaching practice. ICF industry research has shown that organizations that work with an ICF-credentialed coach are more likely to recommend coaching to others than clients that do not.

**2. Make coaching work for you.** The best coaching programs are designed to align with an organization's key values, goals, and priorities. Identify coaching objectives that have a clear link to strategic objectives, such as improved customer service, heightened productivity, and greater innovation. Furthermore, seize the opportunity to apply coaching as an enhancement to existing training and development programming in order to maximize the return on all of your organization's human capital investments.

**3. Create a ripple effect.** According to the *2013 ICF Organizational Coaching Study*, coaching takes hold in many organizations thanks to a trickle-down effect, with senior leaders trying coaching for themselves, experiencing its benefits, and becoming advocates for a wider-scale rollout of coaching across the organization. Get the buy-in of top-tier leaders early in your coaching program's life, and it's more likely your program will stick.

Once you have gotten the buy-in of senior leaders and turned them from coaching recipients to coaching champions, make full use of their enthusiasm to spread coaching throughout the organization. Even if time or budget limitations prevent you from making one-on-one or team coaching available to every individual in the organization, it is still possible to build the

foundation for a coaching culture via initiatives such as coaching skills training for managers and leadership development courses oriented around coaching competencies.

**4. Make time for evaluation.** Tracking the impact of coaching within your organization is a must. In addition to enabling you to justify the investment of time, dollars, and energy in the program, frequent assessment and evaluation will empower you to course-correct as necessary to ensure the program continues meeting all strategic objectives.

Many successful coaching programs have adapted models for measuring the impact of training, such as Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation, to assess the ROE and ROI of coaching. Other organizations depend on coaching-specific techniques for calculating ROI, such as the step-by-step approach put forth by Patricia Pulliam Phillips, Jack J. Phillips, and Lisa Ann Edwards in their 2012 volume, "Measuring the Success of Coaching."

Don't discount other, supplementary methods for evaluating the impact of coaching on your organization. Canada's JOEY Restaurant Group, which launched its award-winning coaching program in 2008, uses external surveys completed by employees as part of the Best Workplaces in Canada program to track engagement and satisfaction. JOEY's chief operating officer, Al Jessa, says he believes the organization's annual appearance on the Best Workplaces list from 2010 to the present is proof of coaching's impact. Many organizations track climbing demand for coaching as an additional indicator of a program's success.

Finally, be sure to collect testimonials from coaching recipients satisfied by the experience. In addition to providing powerful anecdotal evidence of coaching's effectiveness, these firsthand stories can be repurposed into materials for promoting the program within your organization.

It's possible to build a high-impact coaching program that enhances existing training and development offerings and contributes to an organizational culture of personal and professional development and continuous learning. All it takes is a strong foundation. ■





# COACHING AND THE POWER OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

Asking questions to guide the coaching conversation is more effective than telling. When employees come up with their own developmental plan, they're more likely to buy into and implement it. **By Terence R. Traut**, President, Entelechy, Inc.

Coaching seems to have come of age in businesses today. Seen as a simple, effective way to build talent (critical as organizations emerge from a crippling economy) and engage employees (key to retaining top talent), coaching is the “new big thing” in management and leadership development circles. The problem is that for many, coaching isn't working.

## COACHING DEFINED

For some, the problem is the definition of coaching—coaching may be seen as a “kinder, gentler” way of telling someone to shape up or else. Certainly as manager, you need to address unacceptable performance and help raise it to at least acceptable, but that's a corrective action (or performance improvement or problem-solving) conversation, not coaching...at least not how we define it. Coaching is used to take acceptable—even good—performance to great. It's tapping into the talent that many of your better performers wish to release—and who want your help in doing so.

As managers, we tend to focus our attention on performance problems. But that leaves those who don't need immediate attention—our bread-and-butter performers—starving for growth and developmental opportunities. Coaching is for those employees, who have both the willingness and the potential to grow and develop.

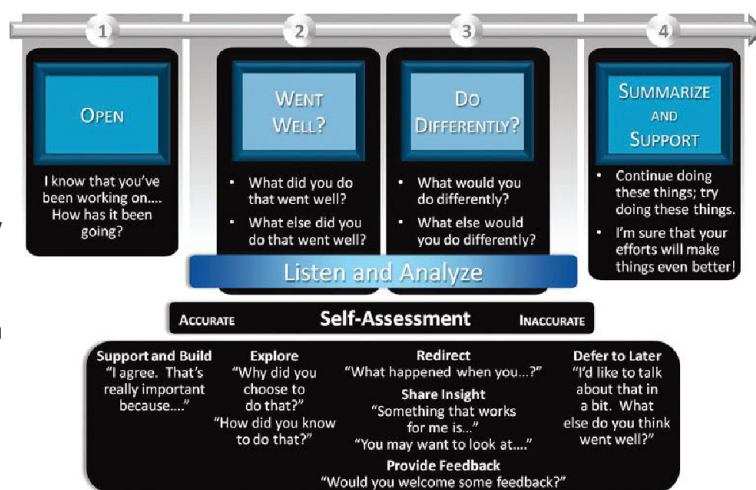
Developing this untapped and eager talent pool will be the best thing you've ever done as a manager and leader—if you do it right.

## A SIMPLE COACHING MODEL

Ask any manager if coaching is important, and 99 times out of 100, you'll get a resounding, “Absolutely!” Ask any manager why they don't coach more (or at all), and the answer is usually, “I don't have time!”

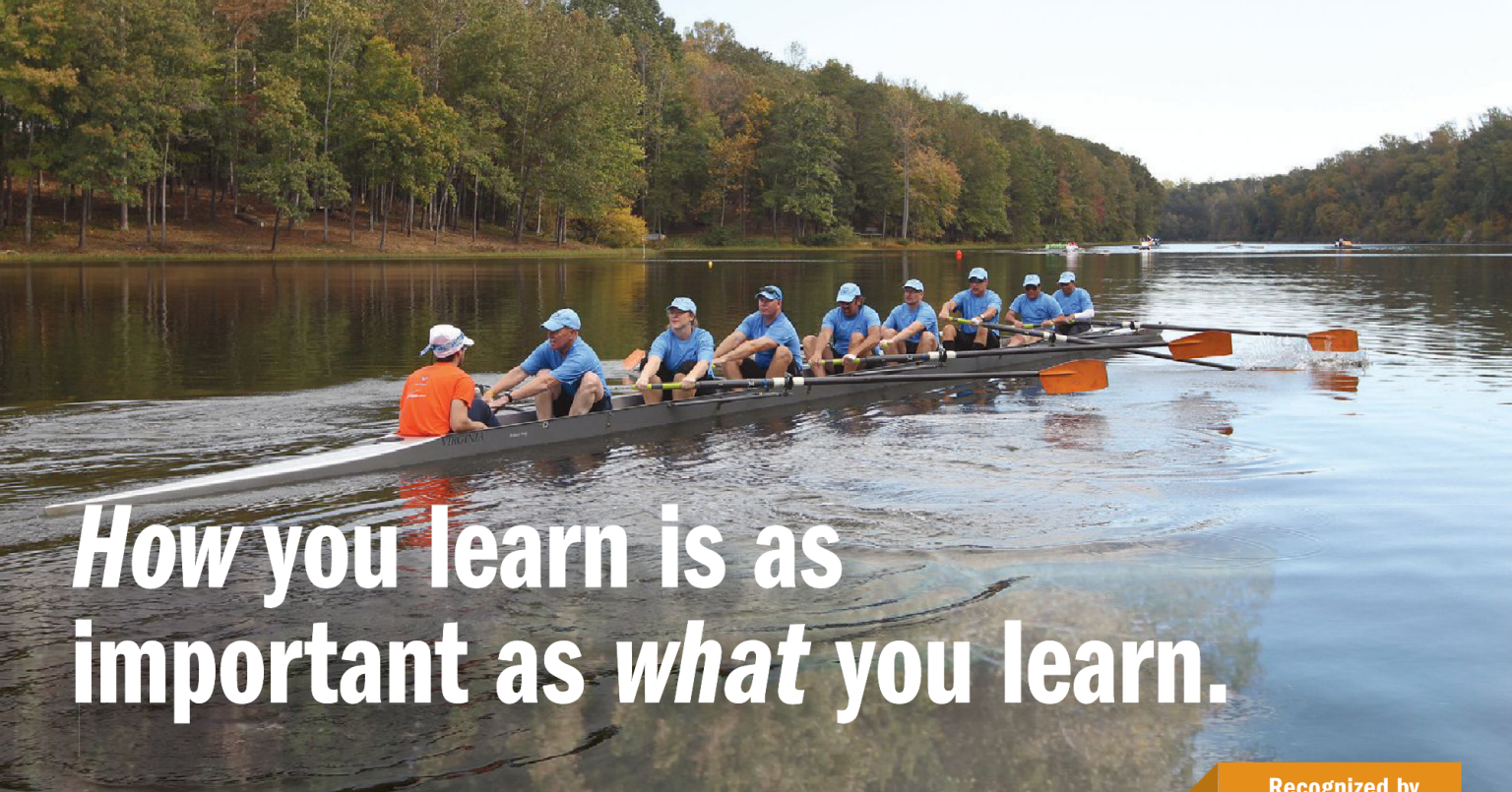
Coaching must be simple and efficient or managers won't do it. That's why in Entelechy's coaching model, the manager/coach guides the conversation by asking three core questions:

1. “I know you've been working on your [job-related skill] since we last got together two weeks ago; how has that been going?”
2. “Regarding [the job-related skill], what went well?”
3. “Is there anything you might have done differently to have been even more effective?”



## COACHING ISN'T TELLING

There are many reasons that asking questions to guide the conversation is more effective than telling. Most employees know what they did well and what they could do differently; telling them what they already



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know doesn't really help them improve. When we as adults come up with our own developmental plan, we're more likely to buy into and implement the plan.

Questions help develop one of the most powerful muscles we as adults have—self-assessment. Only by asking questions will the manager/coach know if the employee knows what he or she did well and what he or she might do to make things even better.

For example, let's say employee Mary is striving to improve her meeting management skills, and her manager/coach sat in on a meeting Mary conducted yesterday. The coaching conversation might go like this:

**Coach (opening performance probe):** Mary, I know you've been working on your meeting management skills since we met two weeks ago, and you've had a chance to plan and conduct several meetings, including the one I sat in on yesterday. How's it been going?

**Mary:** Overall, I think it's been going pretty well!

**Coach (first "what went well" question):** Great! What's been going well?

**Mary:** Well, I've found that providing an agenda ahead of time helps attendees focus their attention.

**Coach (supporting and building an accurate self-assessment):** You're right, and having an agenda helps people determine if they need to be at the meeting.

**Coach (second "what went well" question):** What else have you done that has helped your meetings?

**Mary:** I've become a little more focused in facilitating discussions. In the past, I tended to let things ramble too much and we would get off track.

**Coach (supporting and building an accurate self-assessment):** I bet that also helps with making sure you end the meetings on time.

**Coach (first "do differently" question):** Thinking over the last couple of meetings, what might you have done differently to make the meetings even more effective?

**Mary:** I think I need to do a better job of assigning action items; seems like there was confusion about who was supposed to do what after last week's meeting.

**Coach (supporting and building an accurate self-assessment):** Yes, I agree. I think your assigning action items in yesterday's meeting worked well; we'll see in next week's meeting if the tasks were completed.

**Coach (second "do differently" question):** In addition to assigning tasks, what else might you have done differently to make the meetings even more effective?

**Mary:** Hmmm... Well, we did start a bit late yesterday after waiting for two team members. I know the others

were getting a little frustrated. I think I should just start the meeting, regardless of who's running late.

**Coach (supporting and building an accurate self-assessment):** I agree. I've found that if you let meetings start to slide, soon others stop showing up on time.

**Coach (summarizing and supporting):** Mary, you're doing a great job of building your meeting management skills! Keep providing the agenda ahead of time and continue your tighter control over conversations. Over the next couple of weeks, focus on assigning action items and starting on time. If you'd like to touch base before our next coaching session, I'm here. I love the progress you're making!

## METHOD TO THE MADNESS

Note that we ask the questions in a specific order. By asking "what went well" questions first, we create a positive coaching environment. And by asking for what went well, we ensure that we identify the behaviors/skills we want repeated. By asking "what would you do differently" questions last, we leave the coachee with the developmental priorities fresh in his or her mind. Note also that by asking each question twice, we force the coachee to dig deeper in his or her self-assessment.

By asking questions, we're able to determine what our employees need from us. If Mary didn't know how to facilitate discussions, we could share some insights or even send her to training. If she didn't pick up on the fact that team members were getting frustrated by the late meeting start, we could have offered her tips to help her gauge the mood of the team. The only way to discover what the coachee knows or doesn't know is by asking questions and listening.

## OF COURSE, THERE'S MORE TO IT

The great thing about the coaching questions is that they are easy to use outside of formal coaching sessions. For example, when you're debriefing a recently completed project with the team, you may ask, "So, how do we feel the project went? What went well? What might we have done to make the project even more successful?"

Most importantly, by developing the self-assessment muscle through the use of the coaching questions, you'll find your employees asking the questions of themselves without your prodding. And isn't that what we're all looking for—engaged employees improving their performance and contributing in increasingly meaningful ways to the success of the team and the organization? ■



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# LEADERS AS COACHES: EXPERIENCE IS NOT THE BEST TEACHER

Your most experienced leaders may be your worst coaches. They may need additional training on delivering messages in small, timely chunks; active listening; and showing appreciation.

**By Jim Concelman**, Vice President, Leadership Development, Development Dimensions International (DDI)

**T**he airplane was bucking and kicking like a mad bull as we began our final approach. The captain came on the intercom and using his calm, confident, *The Right Stuff* voice, assured us of a safe landing. “Folks,” he said, “your copilot and I have 27 years and thousands of hours of experience between us. And we have families waiting for us, too.”

With that, the flight crew wrestled the plane to a relatively smooth landing (and applause from the passengers). The pilots’ experience was reassuring, but equally important in this situation was the ongoing training, practice in flight simulators, and recertifications these pilots underwent to ensure their skills supported their experience.

For many professions—doctors, accountants, first responders, etc.—ongoing training is required to ensure top performance. One profession that does not require ongoing training is leadership, where the vaunted 70-20-10 formula for development promotes experience as the pathway to proficiency (after some initial training). However, research shows that for one of the most important leadership skills—coaching—experience is a poor teacher.

In a recent study, *Driving Workplace Performance Through High-Quality Conversations*, Development Dimensions International’s (DDI) analysis of thousands of assessments confirmed that experienced leaders lack critical coaching skills.

This research, which looked specifically at data from assessments of executives—typically the most experienced leaders in an organization—revealed significant coaching skill deficiencies:

- Ninety percent of executives are not effective in checking their understanding of a situation before moving on to addressing an issue.
- More than half are not effective at encouraging involvement from others.
- Eighty-nine percent are not effective in demonstrating interpersonal diplomacy.
- Also, 89 percent are not effective in conveying performance expectations and facilitating clear agreement.
- Ninety-five percent are not effective in openly disclosing and sharing their thoughts and feelings with others.

So how do these experienced executives compare with newer front-line leaders? About the same. A similar analysis of more than 1,000 front-line leader assessments found there is little difference in levels of coaching skills.

Clearly, experience alone does not develop or improve coaching skills. Perhaps this should not be a surprise. The fundamental skills and concepts of coaching remain constant, even as leaders gain experience and change roles; however, the environment has changed. Even a leader with a strong foundation of coaching skills must adapt and further hone his or her approach as the workforce and workplace evolve.





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*Kelli Loveless, Training & Learning  
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So what does it take to be an effective coach in today's turbulent environment?

**1. GOOD COACHES USE TIME.** Coaching now takes place via informal methods. Communication is immediate and 24/7. We interact with each other in short bursts, with direct reports who are in other cities or countries. The days of leading sit-down conversations across the conference table for a 30-minute coaching discussion are gone. That's a luxury no one seems to have time for anymore.

Today's most effective leaders know how to coach "on the fly." They lead formal discussions with non-traditional or asynchronous means. These leaders coach by phone, by e-mail, and even by social media when appropriate.

The coaching messages may be delivered now in smaller bites, but they still have purpose and importance. The leader connects the discussions and guides the employee through the coaching process over a series of conversations. This is not easy to do. Most leaders do not develop this skill on their own.

What approach do ineffective leaders use? The approach we hear most often is "spray and pray." That is, these leaders do a quick "tell," disgorging all of their accumulated experience and hope it's enough to prevent the person from failing or getting in trouble. We also see a lack of proactive coaching (i.e., coaching before a person takes on a difficult task or assignment) and an increase in reactive coaching (providing advice after the fact).

**2. GOOD COACHES ASK INSIGHTFUL QUESTIONS.** A key part of coaching involves asking high-gain, insightful questions. While effective coaches will balance "seeking and telling," great coaches make the most of the seeking opportunity. They remember to ask clarifying questions—those that will help employees discover insight into themselves, the situation, and the other people involved.

These strategic questions lead to better solutions. They also foster higher levels of commitment to taking action in a coaching situation, whether it's proactive coaching or reactive coaching. It works both ways.

Some leaders discover this method through trial and error. They find that, over time, when they ask these types of questions, the results are much better. However, savvy organizations do not leave this to

chance as many smart businesspeople will not learn this through experience. In fact, our assessment data show that most leaders skip or do very poorly at clarifying. Active listening is a hallmark of the best leaders, but most need help to develop this critical skill.

### **3. GOOD COACHES SHOW APPRECIATION.**

Effective leaders find ways to genuinely and regularly show appreciation for their employees.

At DDI, we long have advocated the use of the "STAR" approach to provide relevant behavioral feedback. Using this model, a leader describes the Situation/Task (ST) the individual or group handled, such as a problem, opportunity, special challenge, or routine task. The leader also notes the Action (A) the person or group took, including what they said or did, as well as validating the positive Result (R).

The STAR acronym also can be used as a shorthand reference to an especially effective model for showing appreciation:

- **The Situation over Time (ST):** The leader has noticed the individual having an impact.
- **The relevant Attribute (A):** What is it about the individual the leader knows he or she can count on?
- **The Result (R)** or impact of the person's attributes.

STAR appreciation goes beyond behavior and recognizes who the person is, as much as what he or she does. But it can require a careful touch, which is why we view it as an advanced coaching skill—one leaders can develop only after mastering basic interaction skills.

## **THE DEVELOPMENT GAP**

Your most experienced leaders may be your worst coaches. The importance and impact of coaching rises as leaders move up the leadership pipeline. So does the complexity and difficulty of workplace challenges. Yet many managers and executives rely on skills learned in their first years as a new leader.

Just as we want experienced and well-trained pilots and doctors to handle our most challenging situations, we need capable leaders at all levels to navigate through today's volatile and uncertain business environment. These leaders need more than just experience to be successful. ■



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# 10 MUST-HAVE INGREDIENTS FOR A COACHING PROGRAM

Research shows that organizations with excellent cultural support for coaching have a 75 percent higher rating for talent management results than those with no or weak support for coaching.

By **Aja Duncan**, Principal, Limitless Leadership Training & Coaching, and **Steve O'Brian**, VP, Client Services, Chronus Corporation

**M**any organizations are discovering that the secret sauce to successful talent development is creating an effective coaching program—one that not only engages key talent but also drives strong organizational outcomes. A study from Bersin by Deloitte recently found that organizations with “excellent cultural support for coaching had a 75 percent higher rating for talent management results than those with no or weak support for coaching. Further, they had 13 percent stronger business results and 39 percent stronger employee results. The more cultural support for coaching, the stronger the results” (“High-Impact Performance Management: Maximizing Performance Coaching,” Stacia Garr, <http://www.bersin.com/Practice/Detail.aspx?id=15021>).

As coaching becomes a vital strategy for engaging and retaining employees over the next decade, companies are looking to create more effective, more efficient programs. Starting a program can seem overwhelming, so studying best practices for program design can help. Here are 10 best practices to keep in mind as you develop your own organization's recipe for successful coaching programs:

**1. Define clear goals and objectives.** Without a clear goal, it is impossible to know where you are heading or whether or not you ever arrive. Having specific program goals (overarching priorities) and defined objectives (specific targets) is like having a precise destination and good directions.

The best goals are ones that are created in

partnership with key program stakeholders. Whose buy-in do you need for the program to be successful? Involve representatives from these key groups in the early stages of program planning. These representatives, in turn, will become your program champions because they have a stake in the program's success.

**2. Target coaching populations at mid-level to increase impact.** Coaching often is used in organizations like a precious salt, sprinkled in small amounts only at the top. However, to have the biggest organizational impact, coaching should be used more liberally, specifically targeting mid-level managers. These are the supervisors who have the greatest impact on employee engagement and productivity and who, with development, will continue to advance in the organization to ensure its future success.

When a leading national university faced increasing economic challenges and the need to make significant operational changes, it invested its limited resources in leadership development and coaching for mid-level managers. In its evaluation of program results, the university found that those managers who participated in the program had higher employee engagement scores, higher productivity, and improved departmental outcomes. In addition, more than 30 percent of the coached managers advanced to more senior positions in the organization.

**3. Craft compelling communication to promote your program.** For coaching programs to be effective, they must be high-profile development activities that engage your best talent. Even in instances when the development is a top-down activity, it is important that the target audience understand the coaching

program and why they should be a part of it. Crafting compelling communication for dissemination in a variety of vehicles—staff meetings, success stories shared via e-mail, etc.—will ensure that talent is enthusiastic and committed to coaching.

#### **4. Involve talent in the coach selection process.**

Effective coaching hinges on a strong relationship born of respect and trust between coach and employee. To create the most fertile ground for this kind of relationship, it is recommended that employees have some level of participation in the coach selection process. If possible, provide employees with a small, select pool of potential coaches, and let them make the final decision. To create lasting learning, a positive coaching relationship with great chemistry is key.

Online tools, such as coaching software, can provide a valuable means of effective matching, allowing employees to search through available coaches by region, areas of expertise, and other relevant criteria. Coaching software also enables program managers to track coach availability and make coach recommendations based on potential compatibility.

#### **5. Establish clear expectations of a particular engagement.**

Coaching is about clarity, learning, and action. To set the stage for effective coaching engagements, it is important that the coach and employee refine the development focus. While leadership may identify a broader skill area such as “influence,” it is up to the employee and coach to identify which elements of influence would be the most effective focal areas. Such refinement is essential for development planning and establishing clear success measures.

#### **6. Effectively manage, track, and measure progress.**

Wide-scale coaching programs require regular administrative oversight to ensure they are effectively managed. It is important to know if connections have been established, coaching engagements are taking place, and progress is being made. This critical step will help you make program adjustments and broadcast program success later.

Embedded reporting functionality in coaching program management software can track coaching assignments and provide engagement metrics, and online survey tools can ensure managers have real-time feedback from employees and coaches on results.

#### **7. Continuously refine your program in response to feedback.**

Don't wait until the coaching engagements

have ended before finding out how things are going. By getting regular feedback from program stakeholders, participants, and their coaches, you can identify any problems, misunderstandings, or subtle misalignments.

#### **8. Communicate throughout the course of the program.**

Be sure to communicate regularly with employees in coaching engagements, with coaches, with program stakeholders, and to the organization overall regarding your important investment in talent development. While such regular communication can seem daunting, if you manage your program online, you can easily provide valuable progress metrics and streamline communication to keep the program visible and on track.

**9. Evaluate impact.** By now, you know how many people have been coached, what percentage of the target population they represent, how many times they have been coached, and their evaluation of the coaching engagement. You even know how much the program cost. But what about program impact? What effect did coaching have on departmental outcomes and organizational objectives?

To truly understand impact, gather input from additional sources outside of the program participants. What do their direct reports say? What do their managers say? The use of online survey tools can help you easily gather and analyze this information. Additionally, evaluate other departmental metrics—such as increased sales, reduced cost, increased productivity, etc.—to evaluate the impact of the coaching program.

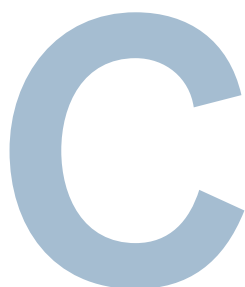
**10. Share your successes.** Sharing success stories is one of the most effective ways of motivating and inspiring others—whether you are seeking to expand coaching program reach, ensure leadership commitment, or even strengthen the reputation of the HR or Learning and Development function. Effective success stories show benefit, provide a memorable fact/truth, deliver metrics, include an emotional hook, and create a sense of urgency. Coaching program participants are the best source of these stories and also can serve as one of the best means of getting these stories out into the organization. Profile participants' experience in a video on the company blog, have them participate in noontime panel discussions, or post their stories on the walls of the cafeteria. Be creative and get these stories heard. ■



# COACHING EXPLODES TRAINING VALUE

Quality training paired with managers ready to coach and reinforce the training is a powerful combination that can build the bottom line and increase employee retention.

**By Tim Hagen**, Author, "Coaching: Corporate America's #1 Weapon," and Creator, Progress Coaching Training System



Coaching quickly is becoming a widely accepted strategy to develop employees, and those organizations that adopt coaching as a development platform will gain an advantage in the marketplace. So why aren't

more managers coaching their employees? Here are a few reasons:

- Fear—they don't know how
- No time
- Not my job
- We have a training department
- We hire good people
- Ego—asking questions has an element of exposing themselves

Logistically, employees leave training workshops or online modules to go back to their jobs where they have a small window to apply what they learned. Too many studies reveal that training is lost within 30 days if it's not reinforced or applied. Managers either support the training and learning process or they don't. Managers rarely intentionally devalue training; rather without coaching, they may indirectly not support training without even realizing it. At the end of the day, only one person is doing the employee's end-of-the-year review. It's not the outside consultant or Training department. It's the manager. How can the manager truly evaluate an employee if he or she is not engaged and/or coaching that employee? What is the employee's impression? Organizations risk losing valuable employees if managers are not engaged or coaching.

## HOW COACHING CAN HELP

We constantly talk about the importance of coaching and ways to do it better, but why should organizations incorporate coaching into their culture? Here are five top reasons coaching can help increase the bottom line of any organization and ultimately provide training an incredible opportunity to be viewed more valuably:

- Engagement
- Performance
- Recruitment
- Retaining Employees
- Culture of Participation

## REASON #1: ENGAGEMENT

According to Gallup, of the approximately 100 million people in America who hold full-time jobs:

- 29 percent are engaged
- 21 percent are actively disengaged
- 50 percent are not engaged

The following is a typical scenario that happens every day: An employee enters his or her boss' office to ask a question. During the interaction, the boss peeks at his or her phone or PC to see what e-mail came in. What is the employee feeling at that moment? Typically, he or she emotionally shuts down or immediately assumes the boss does not care. These moments can cause far greater damage than managers even realize due to the pace they keep.

## REASON #2: PERFORMANCE

The typical manager says the following...

- "We need to work together."
- "We need to get our sales up."



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- “We have to have positive attitudes.”
- “We cannot let angry customers bother us.”
- “Blah...blah...blah”

Performance does not “arbitrarily” go up. One of the most typical scenarios I see in corporate America is the leaders’ “rhetorical management” practices. You know, when the sales leader gets in front of the team and shares, “C’mon everyone we need to get our sales up.” Doesn’t the team already know that? What if two salespeople cannot negotiate or what if two people cannot handle price objections, etc.? These are typical challenges that require consistent training and coaching together.

### REASON #3: RECRUITMENT

Recruiting employees is costly. There are both direct and indirect costs associated with recruitment. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the median cost to recruit and retain an employee is between \$2,000 and \$3,700 each. One study estimates it can cost anywhere from 15 to 25 percent of a person’s annual salary. This provides Training leaders and their staff incredible opportunities to develop metrics outside of the typical “Did they enjoy the class?” evaluation sheet.

In addition, employees who are engaged and coached are far more likely to help their leaders recruit new employees, thus, lowering typical recruitment costs. In addition, it’s now easier than ever for candidates to find out what a boss is like to work for due to social networks. This can either draw or repel talent.

### REASON #4: RETAINING EMPLOYEES

According to the latest Gallup poll, the No. 1 reason employees quit their jobs is a bad boss or immediate supervisor. “People leave managers, not companies... in the end, turnover is mostly a manager issue,” Gallup wrote in its survey findings. The effect of poor management is widely felt. Gallup also determined that poorly managed work groups are, on average, 50 percent less productive and 44 percent less profitable than well-managed groups.

Often, we talk about trust—there are so many ways managers can build, as well as destroy, trust. For example, a coaching manager who schedules weekly sessions that are engaging with no distractions and filled with positive reinforcement will result in a loyal employee. On the other hand, a manager who only

engages with employees during weekly staff meetings in which he or she does all the talking is less likely to retain employees.

### REASON #5: CULTURE OF PARTICIPATION

Organizations that encourage participation have employees who care about more than just their individual success. They genuinely want to see others succeed. Coaching cultures have employees who enjoy role-playing (yes, I said it) and working with others even though it may not directly benefit them. Coaching cultures have employees who stay late, volunteer to work with other employees, and participate in learning activities that drive greater performance. They never rest on their laurels.

### HOW DO ORGANIZATIONS START?

- First, implement a coaching training program. The program should teach multiple ways to coach.
- Have the Training staff become trained and ultimately become coaching practitioners. This allows them to coach their managers’ employees while educating the managers so they can participate, as well.
- Establish a support system such as best practices where scheduled sessions help managers practice their coaching skills.
- Hold discussion group sessions where managers share their successes.
- Develop a communication strategy in which successes and practices associated with coaching are shared. It’s vital to illustrate even small successes as resistance always will remain in pockets inside organizations.

### DOES COACHING WORK?

Yes, it does! Quality training paired with managers ready to coach and reinforce the training is a powerful combination. Just ask Dave Stevens, director of Coaching at Inpro Corporation. “Coaching has allowed us to create pathways to success for our employees. As a result, we have seen business growth in the double digits, high employee retention, and a culture that develops employees to be the very best they can be, as employees and as people,” he relates. “In addition, our coaching regimen allows us to use coaching as a major tool for succession planning as we typically promote and hire from within for future leadership positions.” ■

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# WHEN TRAINING SALES MANAGERS TO COACH IS NOT ENOUGH

Sales managers need to have a sales management rhythm to provide a framework for how sales rep coaching will be operationalized within their hectic daily schedules upon their return from training.

**By Michelle Vazzana**, Partner, Vantage Point Performance, and Coauthor, "Cracking the Sales Management Code"

**T**he value of training sales managers to coach salespeople is gaining recognition. In fact, research from CEB found that salespeople who receive effective coaching from sales managers outperform those who don't receive coaching by 19 percent ("The Dirty Secret of Effective Sales Coaching," *Harvard Business Review* Blog Network, January 31, 2011, <http://blogs.hbr.org/2011/01/the-dirty-secret-of-effective>). As you might expect, sales manager training programs in coaching are increasing in popularity as companies attempt to achieve similar double-digit performance improvements. The only problem? Many companies are finding that, despite their investment in training sales managers on how to coach sales reps, this coaching isn't happening to the degree expected. In many cases, sales rep coaching isn't happening at all despite sales managers receiving hours of training on how to coach.

But is the training to blame? For many organizations, an underlying issue often hinders sales managers' coaching efforts—it has little to do with the training itself, but has everything to do with the environment in which sales managers operate.

## INHOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR COACHING

Sales managers operate in a demanding, hectic environment that is not always conducive to effective sales rep coaching. Not only do sales managers have

to respond to the demands of the executive-level sales leadership team above them, but they also have to serve the needs of the sales force they are managing. This often results in an ad-hoc schedule that leaves little to no time for sales managers to provide in-depth sales rep coaching.

Just as you can train someone on how to use all of the equipment in an exercise room, if a person's daily schedule is not built to allow for exercise, all of the knowledge of how to use the equipment will never be put to use. In the same way, sales managers receive training on coaching, but their busy schedules often get in the way of putting the coaching into practice. In reality, sales managers don't need more training on coaching—instead, they need a way to structure their environment so they can put their training into action.

## SALES MANAGEMENT RHYTHM

That means sales managers need to have a sales management rhythm to provide a framework for how sales rep coaching will be operationalized within their daily schedules upon their return from training. A sales management rhythm can be defined as the formal and informal interactions sales managers engage in to achieve sales goals.

A sales management rhythm is built around the high-impact activities sellers must execute well. These high-impact seller activities form the foundation of what sales managers need to focus on during the course of a day, week, month, quarter, and year. A sales management rhythm helps sales

managers operationalize coaching into their daily schedule by answering key questions such as:

- How often should coaching take place? Should it be weekly, biweekly, monthly, or quarterly?
- Where should coaching take place? In the office, in the field, or via a Web meeting?
- What is the right duration of coaching interactions and what is the best agenda to ensure comprehensive coaching?
- What preparation is required by the manager and the seller? What are the outputs and where are they captured?

A sales management rhythm must be based on a holistic view of sales managers' priorities, objectives, and daily responsibilities. With such a view, sales leaders, trainers, and sales managers can work together to develop a framework and management rhythm that allots sufficient coaching attention to the types of coaching that will have the biggest impact

on seller productivity. An effective sales management rhythm reduces unnecessary tasks, leaving room for coaching that is relevant, executable within the manager's real world, and linked to desired outcomes.

Understanding how sales rep coaching will be operationalized in a sales manager's daily environment must be determined prior to training so sales managers immediately can implement the skills learned during training. By adding structure and time frames to key activities and interactions, sales managers—with the support of executive leadership—can reprioritize to focus their efforts to make sales rep coaching a priority. When managers develop a relevant, workable rhythm, knowledge gained during training on coaching is put into action, sales productivity increases, salespeople are more satisfied with their managers, and managers feel more in control of their teams. ■



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