

THE DIFFERENT FACES OF COACHING

Tools for non-directive coaching



BY CAROL BROOKS, SR/WA

Anyone can become an effective coach. Whether you are a team lead, parent, grandparent, uncle, aunt or friend, you are equipped with life lessons that have groomed you to influence and add value to someone else's life. You have the ability to unlock a person's potential to maximize their performance by supporting and encouraging them to stretch upward to their highest potential.

A lot of people think they are already coaching when what they are really doing is a lot of teaching, advising and telling (or worse—micromanaging). They use the phrase “coaching” to describe just about any conversation they have with an employee. Learning the definition of coaching might help to forge your personalized development of becoming an effective coach.

What is Coaching?

Coaching is the skill and art of helping someone improve their performance and reaching their full potential. Let's give this definition more thought. Do you realize the immense honor you have to coach someone to reach their full potential? You have the opportunity to support them by helping them smash through roadblocks, break down negativity and fulfill their destiny. As you invest in others through

coaching, you leave the best of who you are with that person. That part of you will manifest in that person and blossom in ways unimagined.

As you coach, keep in mind two types of approaches. Coaching skills are often described as either directive or non-directive. Directive skills include teaching, advising, giving feedback and offering suggestions. Non-directive coaching is more about asking questions and listening instead of offering ideas. The real magic in coaching is when the coach takes a non-directive approach by asking challenging questions and listening as the individual works on solving his/her own problems.

When people come up with their own solutions, they are more committed and the fixes are more likely to be implemented. Additionally, this problem-solving experience helps individuals develop the self-confidence to solve similar problems on their own.

Coaching GAP Analysis

Great coaches—who put themselves in the other person's shoes—can help minimize the “noise” and distractions that are getting in the way of someone's ability to figure out what's going on and what to do about it. Great coaches know how and when to ask the right question at the right time, when to give feedback, when to advise, what to focus on and how to gain commitment. If you've never coached before or are a novice and would like to learn more about effective coaching skills, there's one thing you can start with.

Grab a sheet of paper. Draw two bold lines: one near the top of the page, then the other near the bottom of the paper. The space in between is commonly referred to as the “gap.” This space or gap can be filled with a list of steps it will take to accomplish a goal. This

approach is known as the Coaching GAP Analysis. It is built upon a non-directive framework and helps a person to fully participate in their preferred coaching direction. It serves as an easy-to-follow coaching tool as well. The table to the right delineates the framework of the Coaching GAP Analysis.

The following is a detailed explanation in each step of the Coaching GAP Analysis:

1. Set a Realistic Goal

Coaching starts with establishing a goal. It could be a performance goal, a development goal, a problem to solve, a decision to make or a goal for the coaching session. Goals should be specific, understandable, attainable, relevant and measurable. Don't set a date to achieve your goal until the other components of the GAP Analysis have been identified and understood. Are you ready to get started?

2. Current State

During this preliminary stage, it is good to identify any potential roadblocks to attaining the goal. Setting a realistic goal means identifying objective roadblocks. What is currently happening that might prevent you from reaching your goal?

3. Desired State

What should be happening now so you can embark upon the journey to accomplish your goal? What might be your first step?

4. Identify the GAP

What is the difference between *what is* and *what should be* happening? Don't over-analyze the gap at this point. The purpose of this step is to set your focus in the right direction.

5. GAP Analysis

Develop a step-by-step plan to close the gap and reach your goal. Once the plan is complete, then identify a realistic and specific date in which to reach your goal.

WHERE I WANT TO BE (My Goal) (Identify Specific Date)
7. Key Learnings. Assess and recognize what you did well while reaching your goal.
6. Affirmation Statement. Create a commitment mantra that will encourage and carry you through to your goal.
5. Gap Analysis. A step-by-step plan to close the gap and reach the goal (<i>identify specific date</i>).
4. Identify the Gap. The difference between what is and what should be happening.
3. Desired State. What should be happening?
2. Current State. What is currently happening?
1. Set a Realistic Goal. Write it on the top line of the GAP Analysis chart.
I AM HERE TODAY (Today's Date)

6. Affirmation Statement

Execution is one thing, commitment is everything. Develop a commitment mantra that will boost your attitude and keep you moving forward by analyzing the following questions:

- a. **On a scale of one to 10, what is the likelihood of your plan succeeding?**
- b. **What would it take to make it a 10?**
- c. **What obstacles are getting in the way of success?**
- d. **What roadblocks do you expect or require planning?**
- e. **What resources can help you?**

Here is a recommendation for an affirmation statement: *I've got this! Patience will get me to the finish line.*

7. Key Learnings

Aspiring to reach goals is a journey and should be critically analyzed. Assessing key learnings can help navigate a journey to a new goal. Ask questions about the most challenging part of this journey. What would you have done differently? What's next?

In Summary

Think about bringing a different face to coaching, and enjoy its challenges and impactful results. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. Discover the art of asking the right question at the right time. Witness a transformation sparked by intrapersonal growth and fulfillment of the other person.

Coaches have the honor of giving themselves away. What returns to them is a better version of themselves. Understand that someone else needs what you have. Be generous. Learn to give yourself away. ✪



Carol Brooks, SR/WA, is owner of Cornerstone Management Skills and a well-known author and lecturer. With 20 years experience in right of way, she is an IRWA CLIMB Certified Lead Instructor and the recipient of the prestigious Lum Award by the R/W International Education Foundation. ©2019 Carol Brooks. Visit www.CornerstoneManagementSkills.com