

Win, Win Coaching

The stakes for coaching can be high but there's everything to gain: Roy Scott, coach and director of Profile Consulting, says that when you really engage your clients in the process, everybody wins.



The word is that coaching within the business community is big business! Organisations from SMEs to multi-national corporates are embracing this self-development and performance improving process with commitment and high hopes - and the results seem to be pretty good. In fact there appear to be more and more articles written about how to coach, what model to use, how to 'label' it, what feedback tool to employ, as time goes by.

How, though, does the potential coachee think, feel, look or react to the prospect of being coached?

After all, like leading a horse to water, you can't coach someone who doesn't want to be coached. So I am writing this piece to identify some of the key outcomes for not only the coachee, but also their employer. What's in it for them?



"Like leading a horse to water, you can't coach someone who doesn't want to be coached."

Roy Scott, coach and director of Profile Consulting

What they shouldn't get includes someone else's agenda, judgementalism or ego.

What they should get is a real good listening to, exquisite attention and a confidential interaction on the subject of their choice.

I use a little five letter acronym to explain to clients what this may mean.

RACER:

Raise Awareness of issues brought to the table by the coachee. Create focus on what could be done to manage the issue. Establish Responsibility in the mind of the client that it is they who will make the difference and own the solution.

In most of my coaching assignments, I hear the same story being told and see similar situations that need addressing – here are the most common:

1. Someone wants to stop, reduce, start or increase certain behaviours in order to improve their performance.
2. There is a relationship problem.
3. There are difficult situations that the coachee feels they cannot handle.
4. It is part of their personal development plan – this can be because of a new role; company, responsibilities, measurements. Improving their performance is a particular challenge.
5. Personal confidence.
6. Communication issues.
7. Delegation.

It is possible that other issues are identified, but as an 80/20 rule, these tend to be the ones I see. What does this mean? Establishing some good examples of the benefits that a coachee can expect in these situations can help gain their commitment to being coached as well as enabling the initial conversations to include the subject of measurable outcomes.

"When someone wants to do something *enough*, they will, somehow, find the required resources and commitment to see it through."

Problem solving

When beset by any of these issues, the coachee tends to focus on the problem and often thinks at too high a level to be able to break it down into manageable chunks. This then multiplies the problem in their eyes leading to a downward spiral that includes reduced performance and self-confidence and an ever disappearing solution.

Helping the coachee to imagine the desired outcome will help them think as if they have solved their problem, they will be much more willing to put some measurements on the improvements – their own measurements. Coachees will then be more likely to embrace these new ‘targets’ (for want of a better term) and achieve them.

Here is where the coach and/or L&D professional can add value by digging deeper and deeper into what solving the problem really means until the outcome can be not only truly identified, but measured.

I have mentioned seven issues that I come up against with my clients. The biggest one? Probably the last - delegation.

Many people I work with think that being successful at their more senior job means being able to do the jobs of their direct reports better than they can. Apart from the frustration this can cause in the minds of the delegate, who gets better at the job? The more senior person, not the one who should be doing it. The results: the more senior person spends too much time working in the business rather than on it, the more junior person loses motivation – and often skills, the business does not grow as quickly or effectively as it could, the senior person does not grow in the role and often both parties leave.

What's in it for them?

Being successful in a more senior role should include developing one's team so that their performance improves and that means taking a more hands-off approach and resisting the temptation to 'do it yourself' because it's faster and has a more guaranteed outcome.

All this said, coaching rightly continues to grow in popularity and use and L&D professionals and their coaching resources, both internal and external, continue to develop people at all levels within organisations. Getting to understand what the coachee thinks is 'it for them' is, and will always be, the main factor that defines the coachees' level of commitment and ultimately the degree of success and performance improvement that can be expected.

Helping to set the scene with the prospective coachee is crucial in terms of expectations, support available and measurable outcomes.

We are all tempted by so many things and would like to do many of them. However, having sufficient resources is the main challenge, and by resources I mean, mental, emotional, physical, financial, people, technology, time and so on. However, when someone wants to do something *enough*, they will, somehow, find the required resources and commitment to see it through. That's what's in it for them, and if the coachee, the team and the employer benefit, it's a win, win, win.

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