**Lecture 1-2. The old psychology of leadership Great men and the cult of personality**

Having argued that there is a pressing need for a new psychology of leadership, a key question that needs to be asked before proceeding is how the superiority of such an analysis might be substantiated. What does a new psychology have to explain in order to be demonstrably superior to the old? On the basis of the foregoing observations, there are at least five criteria that our analysis needs to satisfy.

First, for reasons we have discussed at length, a new psychology needs to be non-individualistic. That is, our understanding of leadership needs to move beyond contemplation of isolated heroes and consider instead leaders’ relationships with those who translate their ideas into action. This does not mean that we will lose sight of the individual, but it suggests that in order to understand how individual leaders and followers contribute to the leadership process we need to understand and explain how their psychologies are shaped and transformed by their engagement in shared group activity (Turner & Oakes, 1986). This point harks back to Herbert Spencer’s famous dictum that

“before [the great man] can re-make his society, his society must remake him” (1896, p. 35). A key issue here is that we need to see leadership and society as mutually constitutive—each made by, and each transformed by, the other (Reicher et al., 2005).

Second, our analysis needs to be context-sensitive. As Stogdill (1948) first urged, rather than seeing leaders as “men for all seasons,” we need to understand how the capacity of any leader (male or female) to exert influence over others is determined by the context in which their collective relationship is defined. Why did Churchill succeed in the war but lose in the peace (Baxter, 1983)? As we will see in the next chapter, our answers need to do more than merely suggest that different types of people are best suited to leading in particular situations, and consider instead how the influence process at the heart of leadership is itself structured by social context. This analysis also needs to explain why and how leaders are required to display sensitivity to that context in order to achieve the outcomes in which they and other group members are interested.

Third, we need to develop a psychology of leadership that is perspective sensitive. One near-universal feature of prevailing approaches is that they assume that if one has identified the right person for a particular leadership position (e.g., on the basis of his or her personality), then this suitability will be recognized by all. In reality, though, as we noted in the case of Barack Obama, a person’s capacity to influence others always depends on who those others are. However well-suited a leader may be to lead a particular group, this suitability is never acknowledged uniformly and rarely acknowledged universally. Thus while Obama’s election was met with rapture by most Democrats, it was greeted with revulsion by many Republicans. As a further illustration of this point, consider what happened in December 2007 when the West Virginia University football coach, Richard Rodriguez, left Morgantown for the greener pastures of Michigan. Previously, Rodriguez had been a beloved son of the WVU fans, lauded for his footballing wisdom, his loyalty, and his sterling stewardship of the team. Unsurprisingly, though, once his departure was announced, fans were far less adulatory. Reaction was typified by a photo in USA Today of a WVU supporter holding up a banner that proclaimed in large text:

Rodriguez. 3 things you don’t have and can’t buy!

1. Integrity 2. Respect 3. Class3

Although immediately understandable, the simple point that this unexceptional anecdote communicates is one that the received approaches to leadership have considerable difficulty explaining: namely that followers’ perceptions of a leader’s attributes and their responses to his or her leadership are both contingent on their relationship with the leader. If that relationship changes, so too will the leader’s capacity to lead.

Fourth, there is a need for a psychology of leadership that, in the process of dissecting the workings of relevant processes, does not belittle or diminish them, but rather both acknowledges and explains their genuinely inspirational and transformative character. As we noted when discussing Weber’s writings on charisma, one reason why this term has proved to have such enduring value is that it speaks to the idea that at the heart of effective leadership there is a set of very special human experiences. These have an emotional and intellectual force that allows people to feel that they are not only witnessing history but making it. This was what William Wordsworth felt at the start of the French Revolution when he reflected “Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive/ But to be young was very heaven!” (1850, p. 299); it was what Barack Obama’s supporters felt in Grant Park, Chicago on the evening of November 4, 2008 (see McClelland, 2008). Nevertheless, the key problem with traditional approaches to leadership is that while recognizing the importance of this subjective experience, they signally fail to account for it. Indeed, by attempting to capture its essence in prescriptive formulae that marry conventional psychologies of person and place, they kill the very thing they seek to comprehend.

A fifth and final requirement of a new psychology of leadership is that its analysis proves to have stronger empirical validity than those it attempts to supplant. As we have seen, despite its continued appeal, it is the inability of standard personality approaches to explain much of the variation in the efficacy of different leaders that constitutes their ultimate weakness—leading even their most enthusiastic supporters to be “disappointed” by their explanatory power (e.g., Cattell & Stice, 1954, p. 493). In the chapters that follow, a large part of our focus is therefore on building up an empirical case for the unfolding theoretical analysis we present. Given the complex nature of the phenomena we are addressing—on the one hand leadership can be a creative, even poetic, process, while on the other hand we suggest that there are general psychological processes at play in producing effective leadership—this will involve marshalling a variety of types of evidence. Sometimes we will use historical and everyday examples; sometimes we will analyze leadership language; sometimes we will use data gleaned from experimental studies. None of these evidential sources has priority over the others. All are essential. Each buttresses and complements the other in explaining the multi-faceted nature of leadership. Indeed, it is the convergence of different types of evidence that gives us confidence in our analysis and that will be the measure of success for the new psychology of leadership.

**Recommended literature:**

1. The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence, and power (2011) S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher, and Michael Platow Ch 1

**Lecture 3. The current psychology of leadership Issues of context and contingency, transaction and transformation**

In many ways we have come full circle. In response to the excesses of the great man theory, its empirical deficiencies, and the shadow of the great dictators, post-war theory has placed a range of conceptual shackles on the ability of leaders to lead. According to different models, leaders are determined by the situation or at least have to be suited to the characteristics of the situation. Alternatively, leaders have to fit with the expectations of their followers, to satisfy their needs, or else possess resources that allow them to control their behavior. More and more the aura of heroism has dimmed as leadership has come to be treated as more and more mundane—as something that virtually anybody could do given the right circumstances or resources. In itself this may not be a bad thing, but it is worth asking whether things have got to the point where one should ask “But what is the point of leaders anyway?” If context determines behavior and leadership is tied to context, then what is the added explanatory (or indeed social) value of including a leader? If human behavior is determined by the exchange of resources, then what does leadership add? Is it time, as Emmanuel Gobillot (2009) contends, to announce “the death of leadership”—if not as an activity, then at least as a topic of any academic relevance?

Given the nihilism that lies behind this suggestion (and some of the research that prompts it), it is perhaps unsurprising to see that the leadership field has recently seen something of a backlash in the form of renewed conviction in the importance of the charismatic, transformational leader. But does this take us back to the future or forward to the past? The answer is probably a bit of both. On the one hand, contemporary transformational theorists move beyond the traditional individualism of leadership research and recognize the importance of collective processes and shared perspectives. Yet, on the other hand, transformational research is still very much about identifying individuals with “the right (transformational) stuff.” As Jay Conger puts it: “the heroic leader ha[s] returned—reminiscent of ‘great man’ theories—[but] with a humanistic twist given the transformational leader’s strong orientation towards the development of others” (1999, p. 149).

So, at the end of the long and winding road that we have traveled in this chapter, are we simply back where we started? No. The models we have explored here are clearly more sophisticated than those in the previous chapter and they have been subjected to far more rigorous testing. Indeed, in many ways, the lack of consistent evidence for the various theories we have considered is a sign of the maturity rather than the weakness of the field.

What is more, they have established the necessity for any adequate theory of leadership to include at least four key elements:

1 It must explain why different contexts demand different forms of leadership.

2 It must analyze leadership in terms of a dynamic interaction between leaders and followers.

3 It must address the role of power in the leadership process, not simply as an input but also as an outcome.

4 It must include a transformational element and explain how and when any such transformation occurs.

Context, followers, power, transformation: four elements for a model of leadership. As we put it in the introduction to this chapter, these are ingredients that must be included in any viable model of leadership. But as we also argued, and have now seen, we are still some way from having a model that explains how these elements fit together. As Mats Alvesson (1996) observes, quantitative leadership research is in a “sad state.” Thus: Rather than calling for five thousand studies—according to the logic of “more of (almost) the same”—the time has come for a radical re-thinking. (Alvesson, 1996, p. 458)

This conceptual impasse has practical implications. In the world of leadership training (particularly at the elite end of the market) it means that practitioners tend to “talk the talk” of transformational leadership, but then fall back on psychometric tools that attempt to assess the leadership potential of particular individuals in order to pay their bills. Many readers of this book will be familiar with instruments like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (the MBTI; Myers & Myers, 1995), the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (used as part of 360-degree feedback), or some variant of the Least-Preferred Co-worker scale (after Fiedler, 1964) that assesses whether (among other things) they are task- or relationship-oriented. These tools are routinely branded (and rebranded) as new and revolutionary, but at their intellectual core they are old and tired. It is not surprising, then, that evidence showing that participation in leadership programs translates into improved leadership is elusive (e.g., see Varvell, Adams, Pridie, & Ulloa, 2004). It is not surprising either that any benefits that do accrue from these activities often seem to be incidental to the models on which they are based.

There is, however, one further element of leadership that has appeared intermittently throughout this chapter, which has briefly flickered into view and then flickered out. That element is the group. It was most clearly present in our discussion of transformational models. It also arose in our discussion of transactional models—notably when we observed that leadership is not necessarily an interaction between leaders and followers as individuals but rather between leaders and followers as group members. What leaders need to do, we argued, is to get people to think in terms of the collective interest. By the same token, what they need to do is to be seen to act in the collective interest.

Indeed, when one considers this point further, it becomes self-evident that to invoke followers is to invoke group membership. For leaders are not just leaders in the abstract. They are always leaders of some specific group or collective—of a country, of a political party, of a religious flock, of a sporting team, or whatever. Their followers don’t just come from anywhere. Potentially, at least, they too are members of the same group. To be sure, any given individual may fail to perceive this collective orientation, and respond on a different basis (e.g., the promise of personal reward). But if they did, they would not be participating in a process of leadership, simply one of exchange. And, if this were all there was to leadership, neither this book, nor the multitude of others that have been written on this subject, would have been necessary. The problems of leadership would have been solved. But, alas, they have not. As we see it, the core reason for this is that the essential causal role played by the social group remains conspicuously absent from most (if not all) previous treatments of this topic.

Leaders and followers, then, are bound together precisely by being part of the same group. This relationship is cemented not through their individuality but by their being part of (and being mutually perceived as part of) a common “we.” What this suggests is that the problems of individualism in leadership research, the problems of counter posing the agency of the leader to the agency of followers, the problems of balancing situational constraints and transformational potential, may be addressed by transforming the group itself from a marginal to a central presence in our analyses. That means devoting some time to understanding the psychology of the social group and how it provides the basis for a model of leadership that is contextualized and dynamic at the same time. That is the challenge for our next chapter.

**Recommended literature:**

1. The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence, and power (2011) S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher, and Michael Platow Ch 2

**Lecture 4. Foundations for the new psychology of leadership. Social identity and self-categorization**

In this chapter, we have outlined the social identity approach to group processes and used it to derive one framing condition and four rules for effective leadership. The framing principle is simply that the exercise of leadership, in the sense of influence over a collectivity, depends on the existence of shared identity among those who constitute that collectivity. This point was brought forcibly home in some work that two of us conducted a number of years ago that revisited the paradigm of the Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE) that we discussed in Chapter 2.

As in the SPE, the study involved randomly dividing ordinary people into Prisoners and Guards within a simulated prison environment. Unlike the SPE, what we found was that, as the study progressed, the Prisoners identified more and more with their group while the Guards identified less and less. The reasons for this difference need not detain us here. What concerns us for the present are the consequences of this asymmetry.

What we found was that as the Prisoners developed a sense of shared social identity they became more effective in coordinating their actions as a group— notably in challenging the authority of the Guards. At the same time, they also became more willing and more able to choose a leader to represent them. Indeed, this emergent leadership was apparent not only to the Prisoners themselves but also to the Guards and—to independent observers.

In total contrast, as shared identity among the Guards declined, so they became less and less able to work together. Among other things, this meant that they couldn’t establish a basic system of work shifts because they were afraid that other Guards would do things they disapproved of in their rest periods. This meant that everyone worked all the time, not to help each other but to hinder each other. And the harder that everyone worked, the more exhausted they became and the less they achieved as a group. Their efforts cancelled each other out. Leadership in such a context was quite impossible. No one trusted anyone else, no one would accept anyone else to represent them. Again, this was apparent to both Prisoners and Guards as well as to onlookers. Moreover, the net result of these opposing dynamics was that the Prisoners’ resistance triumphed and the Guards’ regime was overthrown. The study was thus a perfect illustration of our contention that leadership and social identity go hand in hand and that no leader can represent us when there is no “us” to represent.

We have argued, however, that where people do have a shared sense of social identity (a sense of “us”), there are four key rules to effective leadership. Because these provide the structure for the chapters that follow, these are worth reiterating.

Rule 1: Leaders need to be in-group prototypes. The more representative an individual is seen to be of a given social identity—the more he or she is clearly “one of us”—the more influential he or she will be within the group and the more willing other group members will be to follow his or her direction. This is a point that we will expand on in the next chapter.

Rule 2: Leaders need to be in-group champions. In order to take followers with them, leaders must be seen to be working for the group—to be “doing it for us”—rather than to be “in it” for themselves or for another group (“them”). In other words, leaders must advance the collective interest as group members see it. This, together with the allied issue of how leaders promote justice and fairness, will be the focus of Chapter 5.

Rule 3: Leaders need to be entrepreneurs of identity. Leaders don’t just wait around until they and their policies come to be recognized as prototypical of the group. Rather, they work hard to construct identity in order to ensure that they and their policies are influential. The various elements of this identity entrepreneurship are explored in Chapter 6.

Rule 4: Leaders need to be embedders of identity. It isn’t enough for a leader simply to construct a plausible version of identity. As well as this, the sense of who we are and how we believe the world should be organized that is associated with a particular sense of social identity needs to be translated into social reality. The importance of this embedding process and the various levels on which it can be achieved is explored in Chapter 7.

In our final chapter, Chapter 8, we bring our analysis to a close by drawing these various points together and reflecting on three key challenges for a new psychology of leadership. Here we argue that in order for the social identity analysis to move forward, we need (1) to recognize and overcome existing prejudices in thinking about the topic; (2) to clarify how social identity principles can be translated into practice; and (3) to tackle the question of how different models for defining identity serve to sustain different forms of political structure. In this way, we conclude by showing how our approach provides new and important insights into the perennial questions that arise at the “sharp end” of leadership as it is taught and practiced around the world.

**Recommended literature:**

1. The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence, and power (2011) S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher, and Michael Platow Ch 3

**Lecture 5. Doing it for us. Leaders as in-group champions**

In this chapter, we asked what leaders need to do in order to be effective. We organized our discussion around what is widely recognized as one of the key activities in which leaders engage: dealing with different people and making decisions about how to treat them. We started by investigating the basic proposition that leaders have to be fair—and we discovered that there are indeed many occasions and many ways in which fairness will entrench not only the position of the leader in the group but also the position of the leader in society. However, as the chapter unfolded, we showed that things are not

always so simple. Yes, sometimes leaders will thrive through fairness, but equally they will sometimes thrive through unfairness, especially unfairness in allocations between groups. One way of resolving this apparent paradox is to say that leaders need to be fair within their in-group but to favor that in-group over other out-groups. But we then discovered that even this resolution is too simple because, depending on group norms and values, there will be times when favoring the in-group will be applauded and times when the leader who shows such partiality will be condemned.

The one constant that shone through all these twists and turns was thus not a matter of behavior but of process. What leaders need to do is to promote the group interest in the terms specified by the group’s own norms and values. This last clause is critical. It means that, if the leader is to provide the group with the things that matter to it, he or she has to have specific cultural knowledge of the group in question. We have said it before and we will say it again, but it is sufficiently important to bear saying here as well: for would-be leaders, nothing can substitute for understanding the social identity of the group they seek to lead. There are no fixed menus for leadership success, it is always à-la-carte.

Extending this point, what we have seen as this chapter has progressed is that leaders who take care to promote the group interest (more colloquially, those who are in-group champions, those who “do it for us”) reap many benefits. They receive endorsements from followers, they are likely to be seen as charismatic, they influence the opinions of their followers, and they are able to enlist the efforts of their followers in bringing their visions of the future to fruition.

This last point is critical. Vision, after all, is often seen as the thing that marks out great leaders. To quote the Australian religious commentator, Bill Newman:

Vision is the key to understanding leadership, and real leaders have never lost the childlike ability to dream dreams . . . Vision is the blazing campfire around which people will gather. It provides light, energy, warmth and unity. (cited in Dando-Collins, 1998, p. 162)

But, on its own, vision is of little use. Many people have a clear and powerful sense of the future, but this alone does not make them leaders. After all, having visions can also be a sign of lunacy. People only become leaders, then, when their vision is accepted by others. As James Kouzes and Barry Posner put it in their best-selling book The Leadership Challenge: A person with no constituents is not a leader, and people will not follow until they accept a vision as their own. Leaders cannot command commitment only inspire it. Leaders have to enlist others in a common vision. (2007, p. 17; emphasis in original)

So what determines whether a vision is solitary or whether it becomes shared? When do we dismiss self-styled seers as delusional and when do we hail them as prophets who are leading us to the Promised Land? It is hard to overestimate the importance of this question. As the historian Andrew Roberts observes, it is one that “lies at the heart of history and civilization” (2003, p. xix). The answer certainly is not to be found in the nature of the vision itself or in its strength. Confirming this point,

David Nadler and Michael Tushman conducted an extensive review of research that tracked leaders’ performance prospectively over extended periods. Their conclusion was stark: “unfortunately, in real time it is unclear who will be known as visionaries and who will be known as failures” (1990, p. 80).

Perhaps so. But followers are not completely helpless in distinguishing between visionaries and failures. They can look at the track record of leaders. They can inspect the visions themselves. More particularly, they can ask what these things say about the relationship between the visionary’s perspective and their own collective perspective. Moreover, it is this relationship that ultimately determines whether or not a vision becomes shared. And it is in pointing to the importance of this relationship that the contribution of this chapter lies.

For it is where followers can see that a leader is attuned to their sense of what counts in the world, where they have evidence that he or she is committed to advancing “our cause,” where the leader can be seen to act for the group rather than for themselves, that they will embrace the leader’s vision as their own. To extend Newman’s analogy of the campfire a little further, where a leader’s vision is seen to promote group goals, then others will help fan the flames. But when this vision is seen to serve other interests, then the aspirant leader will be shunned as a dangerous pyromaniac and others will douse the fire.

The important point, then, is that leaders can do something to ensure that their vision becomes shared. Leaders’ actions can make a difference in binding them to followers and vice-versa. Leadership is not a matter of chance, it is not a matter of fate, it is not something one is born to. It is something in which leaders themselves can be active agents by knowing how to configure their own behaviors in relation to group identities. Indeed, in a very important sense, we have so far under-represented the extent of this agency. This is because, throughout this chapter (and also in the last), we have looked at how leaders can present themselves and shape their action so as to reflect the terms of group identity. But we have treated the groups and their identities as if they themselves were givens. That is, we have looked at how leaders are able, and need, to fit the group mould. What we have not considered is that they might achieve a fit by shaping the mould itself.

To be more concrete, one of the points that has become clear as this chapter has progressed is that leaders very often need to behave differently in intragroup and intergroup contexts. Often (though not always) they thrive by displaying intragroup fairness and intergroup partiality. In making this argument we may appear to presuppose that leaders act in a world where the groups themselves are set in stone, where it is absolutely clear who is “us” and who is “them.” But this is self-evidently not the case. Often these things are most unclear. Should radical and moderate feminists see themselves

as opposed, or are they all feminists confronting a patriarchal world? Who should we see as fellow nationals—all those living in and committed to the country, or only those who were born in the country and who have parents with similar credentials? These and many other similar debates constantly rage around us (see Billig, 1996).

Our point is not simply that leaders can play a part in shaping these debates—and hence shaping the very groups they seek to represent—but also that the ways leaders treat people as similar or as different play a critical part in drawing category boundaries. If we are fair in our treatment of people, the implication is that we are all “in it together.” If we are unfair, the implication is that we are in different camps. This is an insight that this book’s third author confirmed in research with colleagues that presented participants with a situation in which two people had done some work, and a third person then paid them either fairly or unfairly (Platow, Grace, Wilson, Burton, & Wilson, 2008). After observing this behavior, the participants were asked to infer potential group memberships between these three key players. When the distributions were fair, participants inferred a single group membership between all three people. However, when distributions were unfair, participants inferred that the person making the distribution and the favored recipient shared a common group membership and that the unfavored recipient was an outsider.

In a second study, participants read about a researcher who was planning to hire two research assistants, paying them either equally or unequally. For some participants, both research assistants were described as fellow Australians (an intragroup condition). For other participants, one research assistant was described as a fellow Australian and the other was described as a French national (an intergroup condition). In the intragroup conditions, it was when treatment was fair that people felt most Australian. In the intergroup conditions, it was when treatment was unfair (and in-group favoring) that people felt most Australian.

In sum, a leader’s fairness and unfairness not only reflects the existence of communities, it also creates them. The scope of leadership action—and the bases of leadership success—thus extend to shaping the very categories that leaders seek to represent and whose interests they seek to advance. As we

will see in the next two chapters, this constitutes a radical extension to our understanding of how leaders engage followers. For it takes us beyond the idea that identity defines what leaders need to do, to the idea that what leaders need to do is define identity.

**Recommended literature:**

1. The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence, and power (2011) S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher, and Michael Platow Ch 5

**Lecture 6. Crafting a sense of us. Leaders as entrepreneurs of identity**

In this chapter, we have shown how effective leaders need to be masters of identity, not merely slaves to it. We addressed the various elements of their craft—in defining themselves as prototypical so as to speak for the group, in defining category boundaries so as to create a unified audience for their proposals, in defining category content so as to characterize these proposals as an expression of shared values, beliefs, and priorities. We can summarize all this by saying that, if all leaders need to be entrepreneurs of identity, then all politics are identity politics. We don’t mean this in the traditional sense, whereby the assertion of a particular identity—gender, “race,” sexuality, or whatever—is seen as an end. Rather we refer to the creation of identities as a means to achieve any end at all. For it is through the construction of identities that we create social forces with the size, the organization, and the sense of direction to have an effect on society.

Our argument has been that, although the ways in which any given identity is constructed will be specific, the relationship between the various facets of identity construction and the consequences for collective action will be general. Hence we have been deliberately eclectic in our examples, flitting across place from continent to continent, across time from the immediate present to the distant past, and across social systems from liberal democracies to dictatorships.

It is therefore apposite to finish with an example that brings together present-day Africa and the Greece of antiquity. In his book *An African Athens*, Philippe-Joseph Salazar examines the way in which speakers like Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela lay the ground for post-Apartheid South African democracy by constructing an inclusive idea of the nation. More specifically, Salazar notes how Tutu’s funeral orations for those who died in the struggle against Apartheid were a way of invoking and celebrating the idea of a fairer “nation-to-be” (Salazar, 2002, p. 10). Going back 27 centuries to the heyday of ancient Greece, the French historian Nicole Loraux (2006) also shows how funeral orations were used to create a notion of Athenian identity that tied the living to the dead and enjoined the living to honor the dead by acting for the Athenian polis. This spirit was encapsulated by Aristotle when he observed that “Those acts that one does not perform with self in mind are beautiful . . . those that one performs for one’s country, in contempt of one’s own interest, are absolutely good” (Loraux, 2006, p. 151). In her reflections on the importance of such oratory, Loraux concludes that it was this shared sense of community and these shared civic norms that gave rise to “the unanimous enthusiasm that drove the small troop of Athenians to confront much larger numbers” (p. 150). In short, in both Ancient Greece and latter-day South Africa, it was by connecting identities

of the present to identities of the past that leaders were able to mobilize others to contribute to identities of the future.

Throughout time, then, leaders have created and shaped identities and those identities have created and shaped institutions, organizations, and whole societies. They do this in recognition of the fact that, however small they may be, a group of people with a shared identity will always have more power than a group without it. Indeed, one of the key reasons why great leadership is so revered is that it gives proof to this simple fact: that history is made not by groups with the most resources or by those with the most numbers, but by those groups whose energies have been galvanized by leaders into the most coherent social force. As we have seen, identity is the source of this coherence and hence, for leaders, it is the most important of all resources.

**Recommended literature:**

1. The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence, and power (2011) S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher, and Michael Platow Ch 6

**Lecture 7. Making us matter. Leaders as embedders of identity**

What we have sought to show in this chapter is that there are a number of material dimensions to successful leadership and that harnessing these requires considerable skill. The list of necessary skills that we can abstract from our analysis includes linguistic prowess, rhetorical sophistication, poetic expression, choreography, spatial design, architectural vision, organizational acumen, and social insight. But for all this diversity, there are two constants that, implicitly or explicitly, run throughout the chapter. The first is that leaders do not simply need to be artists, impresarios, and engineers. They need to be artists, impresarios, and engineers of identity—specifically, of a social identity that is shared with followers. Social identity, then, remains a key unifying construct. That is, the vision of leaders is a vision of who we are, what we value, and what sort of society would constitute our Eden. The shows provided by leaders are ritualized enactments of that Eden in which the forms of social being that “we” value are created within the rituals and ceremonies of the group itself. Finally, the structures and social realities created by the leader must be objectifications of the group identity (Drury & Reicher, 2005). That is, to be effective, leaders do not need to bring about some generalized

notion of what is “good.” Rather they must realize specific goods related to the values of the groups that they seek to represent.

What is equally important is the relationship between the various material dimensions of leadership activity. We have already suggested that vision needs to be matched by practice—both the social practices internal to the group and the social practices implemented by the group. Artistry will come to nothing without creating matching shows and realities. But equally, the implementation of particular practices will come to nothing if they are not rooted in a compelling vision of who we are and what is important to us. Above, we referred to Gelvin’s rich analysis of different forms of collective action in post-imperial Syria. Both were splendid and elaborate displays, both communicated very clear ideas of Syrian identity and Syrian society. But as Gelvin relates, the elite governmental version conceded little to shared symbols, shared historical knowledge, and shared understandings of what “Syrian” meant. Rather, it was much more easily portrayed as a concession to foreign values and foreign histories. For this reason, the traditionalizing version of the popular committees won the day. Likewise, in the BBC Prison Study, the leadership of DM won out over that of PB because while PB represented himself as “an individual individual,” DM tapped into group members’ shared aspirations (Haslam & Reicher, 2007a, p. 138) and created structures in which these could be lived out. In both the world and in the laboratory, leadership that is grounded in shared identity will always win out over that which is grounded in ego.

The second constant that runs through this chapter concerns the demanding nature of the activities we have outlined. Make no mistake about it, leadership is hard work. As we will discuss more in the next chapter, it involves a range of exacting skills. Moreover, a lot of effort is involved in honing, adapting, and applying these in the particular situation at hand. But in the end it is worth it. To reiterate a core point: this is because those who have control over the definition of identity have a world-making and self renewing power. The more they exercise that power in making the social world, the more they are able to continue doing so. It is for this reason that so much energy is expended on the task of defining identity and ring-fencing one’s definition of it. Indeed, one could argue that, in some way, all aspects of group process are bound up with authorizing some version of who we are.

As a final illustration of these various points, it is instructive to conclude by reflecting on work by contemporary theologians that has examined Paul’s leadership of the Romans. Paul, it will be recalled, was the Pharisee who took an active part in the persecution of Christians but then had a vision that led him to convert to Christianity and enjoin a great many others to do likewise through the power and clarity of his teaching. This was a radical, dangerous course (putting it mildly), but, of course, it came to exert a massive impact on world history that has affected all our lives. As a result, Paul was canonized and is now celebrated (by Christians) as a charismatic leader par excellence.

So how did he do it? Based on an exhaustive analysis of relevant texts, Philip Esler’s definitive answer helps draw together a number of points we have made here and in the previous chapter. Specifically, he observes that: In congregations that he founded, Paul based his claim to exemplify the group on his behaviour when among them. In particular, he went so far as to portray himself as the model of life in Christ that other Christ believers should imitate. . . . Paul’s position is that he epitomizes the social category of Christ-follower (that is, he both defines it and is defined by it) and that other believers . . . should copy him; thus he exercises leadership. To do this he needs to persuade his audience that he is an exemplary Christ-follower, encapsulating all that such identity entails. (Esler, 2003, p. 223)

In this regard, as well as being a superb entrepreneur of identity, the major practical feat of Paul’s leadership was to establish a series of congregations within which he institutionalized a number of key rites, ceremonies, and practices (notably baptism and the Lord’s supper, “the two main rituals of early Christianity”; Horrell, 2005, pp. 129–130). Importantly, these served to formalize a Christian church that had not hitherto existed. This involved a massive amount of labor—specifically in the form of an extensive travel itinerary and a prodigious amount of letter writing—that served to set in place both a new religion and his own leadership. As David Horrell writes in his book Solidarity and Difference: The key social achievement of these community-forming actions [consisted] in the bringing together of many people into one body, the construction of a new form of corporate solidarity. Both rituals, baptism and the Lord’s supper . . . communicate and reinforce a worldview in which the death and resurrection of Christ are the central event in a cosmic story—these events give meaning to the world, providing a fundamental hermeneutical orientation by which it is to be understood— and at the same time convey as the central theme of the Christian ethos the notion of a solidarity in Christ that transcends former distinctions. (2005, p. 110)

Moreover, through these various novel forms of activity Paul succeeded in: Turn[ing] himself and [his would-be followers] into an “us” in relation to their identity as Christ-followers, thus gaining their commitment to a sense of self from which they would derive meaning, purpose and value. (Esler, 2003, p. 223)

In short, then, the secret of Paul’s success was that he understood that, in order to propel his mission forward, he needed to build new structures with his followers that were founded on a sense of shared social identity (with himself at its center) and that allowed them to live out that shared identity. Without this, his charisma would have gone unrecognized and his vision would have been just another dream. Without this, the road to Damascus would have been just another road.

**Recommended literature:**

1. The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence, and power (2011) S. Alexander Haslam, Stephen Reicher, and Michael Platow Ch 7

**Lecture 8. Human relations supervision in organizations. Coaching: In business What is Coaching?**

**Overview**

We define coaching as:

*The process of helping people* ***enhance*** *or* ***improve*** *their performance through reflection on how they apply a specific skill and/or knowledge.*

Coaching is about developing individuals beyond where they currently are. Before we say more about what coaching is, perhaps we should say something about development in general terms.

Development is fundamental to the survival of both the individual and the organization; it is to the business world the same as evolution is to the biological world. Few companies have a business plan which aims to make their organization extinct or less competitive and successful. All individuals need to adapt to the rapidly changing, and increasingly complex world in which we live – whether they adapt by opting out or by embracing newness.

Development is defined as:

*A continuous process of growing and learning; by developing, we continuously become more than we were.*

Development is about gaining new knowledge, skills and behaviors; or about adapting the ones we have (i.e. learning). It is, therefore, about change. Change is something that happens to everybody but that does not stop it being difficult and stressful, even at times painful. In her book *Message from Forever*, Marlo Morgan says, ‘Life is change. Some big, some little, but without change there can be no growing. And change and growth do not imply either pain or sacrifice.’

Coaching is one tool that can be used to help others develop. It is, therefore, about supporting the change process and, used effectively, coaching should help lessen the impact of change and maximize the opportunities for growth.

Change is a cyclical process. As a coach it is useful for you to be aware of the cycle, which describes our natural response to change, so that you can help your coachees to move through the cycle.

**Development needs**

We define a development need as:

*The difference between current and required (or desired) performance.*

Identifying a development need involves being clear about what your start point is and what the desired end point is going to be.

Development needs can be met in a number of ways – coaching is one of them – we will talk shortly about the correlation between coaching and other development activities such as line management, training and counselling.

**Development – core values and beliefs**

Given that coaching is about development, we believe that successful coaches are people who believe the following:

* All people are capable of development.
* People can only change if they want to and are ready to.
* What others believe about our potential can influence the level of our success.
* What we believe about our own potential is directly linked to our success.
* How we define success will have a direct impact upon what we achieve.
* We limit our potential by having limiting beliefs, e.g. believing that certain things are not

possible due to environmental or situational constraints.

* People will only learn when they are truly engaged with the process.
* It is possible to learn from everything that we do, but learning only happens when we

reflect and plan for next time (see Kolb’s learning theory in Chapter 2).

* People don’t need to be experts before they can help someone learn – in fact sometimes

it is better if they are not as they will not be stuck in the ‘right way’ of doing things.

* In order to help others, develop, we must continue to develop ourselves.

**Training**

One development tool that is often confused with coaching is training.

Training is the process by which someone learns a new skill or piece of knowledge. It is giving someone the tools to do a job, thereby moving that person from conscious incompetence to conscious competence (see Chapter 2). At the end of a training session the learner may be able to do the job, but not necessarily achieve the required standard all of the time. Training can be formal (eg training courses) or informal (such as on-the-job instruction).

True learning does not take place until the learner has transferred it from the training environment into the ‘real world’, and made a persistent change in behaviour.

This is where coaching comes in. Coaching takes place either when a person is consciously competent or unconsciously competent, but needs to move his or her performance to the next level.

It is worth noting that sometimes learners will describe themselves as being consciously incompetent, where in reality they have the skills and/or knowledge required to undertake the task, but they have not used them in this particular way. In this situation we believe that there will not necessarily be a requirement for training and that coaching will support individuals in transferring their skills into another setting. This is an excellent example of why it is so important to get to know your learner prior to coaching.

Coaching helps people to reflect on their performance in a specific area with an informed, objective helper. It is about helping individuals to implement their learning within the workplace and therefore improve their performance. It is not about teaching something new. The prime focus of coaching should be on using existing knowledge and skills, perhaps reviewing attitude and approach, to maximize performance.

Many trainers struggle to define the difference between coaching and training – some because they like to think that training has a bigger impact on performance than it has; others because their style is more facilitative and they incorporate coaching within their sessions.

We believe that training and coaching will often overlap. Sometimes when coaching someone, it may become apparent that he or she does not have the necessary skills or background knowledge; at this point, the coaching stops and training begins. Training and coaching are part of the continuum of development.

It is possible, therefore, that within a person’s role there will be many coaching experiences – potentially for as many skills as are required for that position (see Figure 1.3). An effective personal development plan (PDP) will prioritize the skills that need working on at any particular time in order to ensure that the individual is fulfilling his or her potential and achieving business objectives.

Coaching is fundamentally a relationship between two people that exists for a given purpose; once that purpose has been achieved, that relationship is no longer required. The purpose? To help individuals move from where they are to where they want or need to be – to develop them.

Let’s look at some other terms that are linked to and confused with coaching.

**Mentoring**

Many organizations couple coaching and mentoring together as part of the same scheme or process. Again, we would agree that there is an element of overlapping; but for the purpose of this book, we have excluded mentoring. We define mentoring as:

General guidance or advice regarding life or career.

Mentoring, which covers a range of issues, is much more general than coaching, which looks at a specific skill or area. It usually helps people progress within a specific field or organization and helps individuals look at how they use their networking, profile and organizational politics.

More often than not a mentor is someone who is senior to their mentee, either within the organization or within their specialist field. In seeking a mentor, individuals will look for a role model who they can relate to on a personal level as well as someone who is well-respected within their area. This differs from coaching in a number of ways:

* The coach does not have to be senior to their coachee.
* The relationship is not so personal – the coachee does not need to like his or her coach, but a mentee generally needs to like his or her mentor.
* Coaching is about one specific subject, where mentoring is about general issues of career and life development.

**Counselling**

We mention counselling because it uses similar skills to coaching. A counsellor will generally be used by individuals to help them deal with a specific problem; counselling focuses on emotions and feelings rather than performance. Counselling tends to look at the causes for today’s issues; it looks at the past and the route taken to arrive at the point where the individual currently is. Coaching turns the attention to the future, with the starting point being where the individual is today; its focus is on planning a route to arrive at a pre-agreed point.

Within the workplace, individuals would generally only seek the advice of a counsellor if they had a problem, whereas coaching can involve the development of good performance as well as under-performance.

**Line management**

Line management is the art of getting the best out of people to achieve an objective and therefore an effective line manager may employ the other roles outlined above as appropriate to the situation. Much has been written about the role of the line manager in coaching. Current thinking seems to suggest that an effective line manager will coach his or her team members as and when this is required. We think that what line managers are actually being asked to adopt is a coaching style, rather than necessarily do the coaching. A coaching style is one where individual development is encouraged, through whichever means is appropriate for that individual, team and organization – it is a style which is able to adapt and be flexible to changing needs. An effective manager, therefore, is one who recognizes that a development need exists and knows whether or not he or she is the right person to conduct the coaching (when coaching is chosen to fulfill the need). If that manager is not the right person, he or she may choose someone else in the team or organization or look externally for a coach.

Indicators that the line manager will not be an effective coach are:

* There is not a good relationship between the line manager and the individual.
* Relationships within the organization are formal and laid down by procedure and hierarchy.
* The line manager is still developing his or her coaching skills and the situation does not lend itself to being used for ‘practising’.
* The work of the department would make it difficult for both coach and coachee to allocate time to the coaching.
* The coachee would value or benefit from third party involvement.

A key fault with some coaching schemes is that they ask line managers to become coaches without first checking whether these individuals believe in, and understand, development.

**Benefits of coaching**

Coaching is a person-centered activity; working with individuals in this way makes them feel valued which has an immediate effect upon their motivation and therefore their performance. Addressing individual needs means that budgets can be allocated more specifically and outcomes can be more readily measured. Coaching is a flexible approach – it can be used within organizations and environments where it is not generally possible to take whole groups of staff away for off-the-job, formal training. Equally, it can be used to address one-off needs as and when they arise. The organization therefore gets performance-related development in a more cost-effective and flexible way. Individuals gain practical and realistic help to achieve their full potential and work on their areas of weakness – they get targeted, practical development from coaching, where training tends to be broader and looser and requires follow-up within the workplace if it is to be effective.

**Summary**

* Coaching is the process of enhancing or improving skills and/or knowledge in a specific area.
* It is a one-to-one activity.
* Coaching could take place on the job or in a separate setting.
* Each cycle of coaching is about applying the skills and knowledge already learnt to a specific situation or purpose. The learning of those skills and knowledge may have taken place recently, or some time previously; it may be the result of a formal training or informal experience.
* Successful coaching will result in an improvement in performance, as its ultimate aim is to help someone to transfer his or her learning.
* A person will never be coached unless the skill or knowledge is to be used in the near future.

The coach needs to know what the skill or knowledge will look like when it is being implemented and have the skill or knowledge at a certain level – the coach does not necessarily need to be able to perform the skill or knowledge at the level required by the coachee.

**Recommended literature:**

1. Julie Starr. The Coaching Manual. The definitive guide to the process, principles and skills of personal coaching ch 1
2. The Coaching Handbook: An Action Kit for Trainers & Managers by Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford ch 1
3. Wilson, Carol (2007) Best practice in performance coaching: a handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals, and organizations ch 1

**Lecture 9.** Successful strategies of supervision. Collaborative coaching

In this chapter, we have collated some of the theories that underpin current thinking on learning and development. You may be familiar with these; however, we include them as a reminder, or for those of you who have not been exposed to them previously.

**Theory of competence**

This theory states that learning is a four-stage process, which involves the journey from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence.

**Unconscious incompetence**

This is where you are unaware that you do not know something or cannot do it – it is the ‘I don’t know what I don’t know’ level. There is probably little need or requirement for you to have the skill or knowledge in question and this is why you have not yet developed the awareness of your lack of competence. For example, as a very young child in a car you will have been aware of travelling from one place to another in the car, but may not have realized that you didn’t know how to drive – so were unaware of the inability.

**Conscious incompetence**

This is where you become aware of your lack of capability, usually because a need or desire to do something has arisen. This is the stage of ‘I know what I don’t know’. Back to our example – as a teenager who can’t drive you become aware of constantly asking for lifts to get to places and are acutely aware of your inability to drive.

**Conscious competence**

To become consciously competent, you will go through some form of learning – either formal or informal. Often at this stage you will do things in exactly the way you have been shown how to do them (subject to your memory). You are aware at every moment of what you are doing – you ‘know what you know’. Back to the driving example – say, for example, that at 17 you have driving lessons and duly pass your test; for a while you will still be thinking ‘mirror, signal and manoeuvre’ – you have to think about how to drive.

**Unconscious competence**

This is where your knowledge and skills have been used so often they are ‘habits’– you don’t need to think about the next part of the process to carry it out, as it is stored in the unconscious (or subconscious) part of your brain. It is the ‘I don’t know what I know’. When you have been driving for a few years it will have become second nature. Say, for example, you try to teach your child to drive – you are unaware of the detail of what you do when you drive as it is ingrained behaviour.

**Kolb’s learning cycle**

Kolb stated that for true learning to take place, we need to have an experience, reflect upon this experience, make sense of it (often through creating theories) and finally apply our theories to our lives by planning what we would do next time we were in the same or similar situation.

In order to learn from an experience, you have to go through the learning cycle; sometimes you may do this unconsciously. Formal development processes (training, coaching, mentoring, self-study etc) involve bringing all four stages into consciousness and ensuring that the process of learning is completed. Learning is inhibited when one of Kolb’s stages is missed.

**Honey and Mumford’s learning styles**

Honey and Mumford identified four styles of learning preference, which map onto Kolb’s learning cycle:

People with a strong preference as described by Honey and Mumford are more likely to want to miss out, or stay within, one of the stages. For example: a strong activist likes to try experience after experience and will try to avoid reflection or theorizing. Therefore, the role of the development specialist working with a learner is to ensure that all stages are addressed in a way which is easiest for the individual. Often, to make a major change, we might go around the circle more than once. This is the only way of ensuring that we get the practice required for behaviour to become a habit. As we discuss later, this is particularly important in coaching.

**Barriers to learning**

Having described how learning takes place, it is worth considering that there are some barriers which may get in the way of an individual’s learning.

**Previous experience**

An individual who has had a bad learning experience either at school or on a training course or who has been embarrassed by a line manager or colleague may be nervous about entering the coaching process: he or she may fear being ‘put on the spot’ or being made to feel foolish. The coach can overcome this by spending time at the start of the relationship reassuring the coachee about how they are going to work together and what coaching actually involves.

**Lack of confidence**

Coachees who lack confidence may be reluctant to enter into a dialogue with their coach. Many coaching situations will involve looking at the coachee’s confidence level, not just about interacting with the coach but about the skill or job being discussed. A major part of the coach’s role is to help learners by enabling them to see the positives in their performance and thus build up their self-confidence.

**Lack of motivation**

Motivation is an internally generated attitude and every individual comes to any learning experience with different levels of motivation. Some may have been forced to attend against their wishes. Others may not see the reason for the coaching. Yet others may feel that they already know what they think the coaching is going to cover. One fact is certain – you cannot motivate people to learn. What you can do is provide all the factors available to encourage them to motivate themselves.

**Fear of change**

Change is frequently an unwanted event, usually because it is feared. The principal purpose of coaching is to produce change, whether this is a change in processes, knowledge, skill, attitudes or behaviour. Previous changes may have resulted in unwanted results. The coach needs to consider how the coachee is responding to change, and encourage commitment to change by clearly communicating the benefits/results intended from the experience.

**Fear of failure**

If the fear of change is not a barrier to motivation, the fear of failure may be. Fear of failure may be the result of previous failures. The coach obviously cannot ensure success, but if the coaching process is implemented effectively, there should be a minimized chance of failure.

**‘Old dog’ syndrome**

The belief that ‘you can’t teach old dogs new tricks’ is in fact not completely true. If an older person has kept his or her mind active and in a learning mode, that person’s experience may well mean he or she is in a better position to learn than a younger person. While this syndrome often emerges when older workers attend learning events during the last few years of their careers, the ‘old dog’ excuse is used for a variety of other barriers, including ‘Why bother at this stage in my life? ’To overcome this, you need to explore the individual’s true reasons for not wanting to make the changes, as well as the benefits if he or she does. Having examples or role models that the person can identify with will help.

**Physical/mental condition**

If learners are experiencing physical discomfort (eg they are too hot, or hungry, or in pain) this can affect their ability to concentrate and learn. The coach should endeavour to ensure adequate refreshment, breaks and the right environment to limit the effect of physical discomfort. If the coachee is mentally pre-occupied this will also affect his or her ability to learn.

**Personal working styles**

When working with others it is useful to know that there are five distinctly different working styles, also known as ‘drivers’. Drivers occur outside our awareness – they are subconscious attempts by us to behave in ways which will gain recognition from others. There are five drivers, as described by Julie Hay in her book *Working it Out at Work: understanding attitudes and building relationships*.

**Hurry Ups**

Hurry Ups work to get things done quickly and efficiently in the shortest possible time. Their major strength is the amount they can deliver; they respond well to deadlines and their energy peaks under pressure. Their underlying motivation is to do everything as soon as possible and they feel good if they complete tasks in the shortest possible time. They will say things like ‘Quick’, ‘Get going’, ‘Hurry up’, and ‘Don’t waste time’. They may speak quickly and will usually be doing more than one thing at a time. Non-verbal behaviour displayed by a Hurry Up includes foot tapping, finger tapping and checking of the watch. Hurry Ups’ distress is caused by having time to think, silence and having nothing to do.

When coaching Hurry Ups be aware that they might become frustrated at the planning and reflection stages of the process and that they may want to see immediate improvements in their performance. Whilst you can take this into account when you are planning the coaching programme, you cannot avoid these stages altogether and you may need to give additional support to the Hurry Up coachee to help him or her complete the process fully. Things that you could try which would support Hurry Ups include:

* Praising them for their efficiency.
* Enjoying their spontaneity.
* Not being intimidated by their energy, enthusiasm or outbursts, but acknowledging these features and talking about why they are happening.
* Not advocating speed or the benefits of being able to do several things at once.
* Encouraging them to take time and thanking them for the time that they are committing to the coaching process.

**Try Hards**

Try Hards display determination and enthusiasm in their work. Their working style is all about putting effort into a task. They are good at seeing the big picture and when involved in project work they will be recognized for the way in which they follow up all the possibilities in a very thorough way. However, they may lose interest before the end of a task or project as they are more committed to trying than succeeding. They will use words or phrases such as ‘Try’, ‘This is a better approach or idea’, ‘Can you. . . ’. They fire off lots of questions – sometimes the Try Hard person strings so many questions together that the listener may need to work out what question to respond to. When asked questions, Try Hards may well answer a different question and often their sentences go off on tangents. Non-verbal behaviour includes a puzzled or frowned expression, sitting forward, an impatient manner and clenched fists. Being criticized for not caring or for being irresponsible causes their distress; being told ‘You’re not trying’ will be a big issue for them.

When coaching Try Hards help them to clarify their goals and direction and encourage them to focus on completion of activities. Never let them off what they have committed themselves to do and don’t praise trying: praise finishing. If the coachee is being very competitive, ignore it. Do not get involved in arguments that focus on comparisons.

**Be Strongs**

Be Strong people stay calm under pressure; they are self-sufficient and task orientated. They feel energized when they are able to cope and will still think logically when others around them are panicking. Be Strongs are considered to be steady and reliable workers whose strong sense of duty and ability to detach from emotions will help them tackle the most unpleasant tasks. This type of coachee hates admitting weaknesses and will come to regard failure as a weakness. He or she will tend to become overloaded with work, rather than admit to not being able to cope. These people may be highly self-critical about their shortcomings as well as considering as weak those who do ask for help. Verbal behaviour includes ‘The facts here are. . . ’, ‘Let me sort it out’ and ‘I will work 15 hours tomorrow to complete it’. Be Strongs do not ask for help easily, therefore they may find the whole idea of coaching difficult. Non-verbal behaviour includes immobile face and body (because they are trying to hide any evidence of feelings that may mean weakness), dispassionate tone of voice, straightening of clothes and an aloof manner. Be Strongs will become distressed when they fear rejection because they may be seen as vulnerable, being forced to say what they feel and exposing their weaknesses.

Coaching a Be Strong may be highly challenging, especially if your work style is profoundly

different. Here are some things that you can do when working with Be Strongs:

* Be factual rather than effusive and emotional.
* Praise them for consideration and kindness as they often get taken for granted.
* Encourage them to delegate and to take on realistic amounts of work.
* Do not force them into expressions of vulnerability, but encourage them to express their feelings more openly.
* Do not shout, or they will retreat even further.
* When action planning with Be Strongs, spell out exactly what each task involves, so that they only do what is expected of them.

**Be Perfect**

The motto of the Be Perfect is ‘If a job is worth doing, it is worth doing well’. This driver is the opposite of the Hurry Up. Be Perfect types strive for perfection and excellence, first time and with no errors. They check facts and detail, they plan ahead and are well organized. Sometimes their drive for perfection means that they miss deadlines as, for example, they need to check for mistakes and make minor alterations to layout. They have high expectations and fail to recognize when a lower standard would be appropriate and equally acceptable. They make statements like ‘That’s right’, ‘Perfect’, ‘Obviously’, ‘There’s something missing here’ and ‘Actually. . . ’ . Non-verbal behaviour includes pursing of lips, smart and coordinated dress, controlled tone and obsessive/ compulsive habits. Their distress is caused by anything that indicates the danger of loss of control, eg others’ perceived low standards or illogical behaviour, over-emotionalism from other people and failure to achieve goals.

When coaching Be Perfects it is important to be punctual and keep the agreements that you have with them. Set pragmatic, rather than perfect, performance standards and always work with facts rather than emotions. If you do have to confront them, do it gently and firmly and if you have a difference of opinion, express your own thoughts with conviction. Explore with them the consequences of less than perfection and explain that it is OK to make mistakes.

**Please People**

These are good team members, who enjoy being with other people; their aim is to please others without asking, to work out what others would like and then provide it. They are understanding and empathetic and strive for harmony. They spend a lot of time smiling and nodding at people to indicate their agreement with them. When criticized by others they tend to take the criticism personally and may be upset. They let people interrupt them. They are hesitant to ask questions because they feel they should somehow know the answer. They say things like ‘Really’, ‘I thought you might like to’, ‘Is that OK with you?’ and are reluctant to say ‘No’. Their non-verbal behaviour includes a lot of smiling, allowing others to interrupt them and good listening. Please People are distressed by being ignored and/or criticized. Please People coachees fear that they will be rejected by being found to be blameworthy. If you have Please People coachees, encourage them to get in touch with their own needs and ask for what they want from the process. Be careful that they do not turn the coaching programme into an exercise of keeping you happy. You need to keep the focus all the time on them and be careful not to express your own wants. When you are giving feedback, it needs to be couched very positively in order to ensure that the coachees will be able to take the content ‘on board’, rather than using it to ‘beat themselves up’.

When not under stress, drivers will appear as strengths and the beneficial side of them will become more obvious. Individuals who are not under stress do not have strong needs to gain recognition from others. When stress levels are high, the disadvantages of the drivers are more apparent as individuals seek to become more of what they think they should be – ie the driver takes over. The role of the coach is to create an environment that helps reduce stress and encourages coachees to accentuate the positives of their drivers.

**Areas and levels of learning (Bloom’s taxonomy)**

Learning can be separated into three distinct areas (domains) which are categorized into different levels. Each level deals with a progressively higher and more complex type of learning. The three areas are:

**Cognitive domain (knowledge)**

This is related to the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding. It deals mainly with learning of an intellectual nature. The levels within it are:

* Knowledge. This is the recalling or recognition of information as it was learnt, ie remembering.
* Comprehension. This is where the individual demonstrates understanding of the material
* and is able to interpret, not just recall, the information, ie understanding.
* Application. At this level the individual is able to use the information to solve problems.
* Analysis. This is where the information can be broken down into parts, and examined in order to make inferences from it.
* Synthesis. This is using knowledge that has been acquired in an original way, by applying the information to a new situation creatively.
* Evaluation. This is the highest level of learning, where an individual is able to judge the merits of an idea, make value judgements and offer his or her own views.

**Affective domain (attitudes)**

This domain is concerned with attitudes and feelings which are brought about or altered as a result of some learning experience. It deals with learning which has a substantial emotional basis. Learning in this domain is usually linked to learning in the cognitive domain. The levels within it are:

* Receiving. This is basically having an awareness of an idea and being willing to give attention to it.
* Responding. At this level, individuals display a positive interest in a topic or idea and react to it.
* Valuing. This is where individuals show some commitment to an idea.
* Organization. This is where individuals begin to develop an internally consistent value system, as they come to terms with an idea and modify their behaviour and views.
* Characterization. At these level individuals integrate the idea or concept into their life style by developing an attitude and behaviour consistent with it.

**Psychomotor domain (skill)**

This domain deals with the development of skills, largely of a physical nature. The levels within this domain are:

* Competency. The individual demonstrates the ability to carry out a skill, ie ability.
* Proficiency. The individual is able to perform a skill accurately, smoothly and with minimal effort, ie efficiency.
* Mastery. The person is able to perform the skill at the highest level and is able to adapt and originate. This is the expert level, where the individual is able to use the skill in new situations and creates new methods of operation.

**Recommended literature:**

1. Julie Starr. The Coaching Manual. The definitive guide to the process, principles and skills of personal coaching ch 3
2. The Coaching Handbook: An Action Kit for Trainers & Managers by Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford ch 2
3. Wilson, Carol (2007) Best practice in performance coaching: a handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals, and organizations Ch. 2

**Lecture 10. Successful strategies of supervision. Collaborative coaching**

Whilst the key to successful coaching is about the relationship between the two people involved, it is possible to identify a process that can be followed to achieve the required outcome.

For a person who coaches on a regular basis, the process of coaching is a very integrated one but, like driving or even walking, there are various steps within the process that can be identified, even though in reality they may not appear to be separate at all. We have broken the coaching process down into these steps with the aim of helping you to think about what you need to do as a coach. As you become more experienced with this form of development you will reach the stage of unconscious competence and developing a coaching programme for your coachee will be as natural as walking or making a cup of tea.

There are three ways in which coaching might be initiated:

* An individual may have approached you directly and asked you to coach him or her, either because you are this person’s line manager or because the individual thinks that you have skills/knowledge that would help.
* You have noticed that someone is not performing to his or her full capacity and feel that you could help this person by offering coaching.
* A third party, such as a person’s line manager or a training department, may have asked you to coach the individual.

Whoever has initiated the coaching, however, we believe that there are six broad stages that need to be followed in any successful coaching relationship:

1. Clarifying the overall need for, and goals of, the coaching programme.

2. Agreeing specific development needs.

3. Formulating a detailed plan for the coaching programme.

4. Doing a task or activity from the plan.

5. Reviewing activities and planning for improved performance.

6. Ending the coaching relationship.

The process may be followed from stages 1–6; however, in many instances you will find that in order to achieve your goals, you need to repeat stages 3–5 a number of times. This relates to the aim of coaching which is to achieve a persistent change in behaviour – to do this requires practice. Therefore, coachees may require a number of experiences (practice sessions or doing it for real) and review discussions so that they can achieve their goals.

Our process model offers both a systematic and flexible approach, which can be adapted to suit both the environment and the individuals involved in the coaching relationship. Some steps may be quite short, or even merge into each other. At other times, you will be able to see each step quite separately. However, completely missing out stages in the process will have a profound impact upon the learning experience of coachees, as they will not have experienced the whole learning cycle required to formulate a persistent change of behaviour. Chapters 6 to 11 cover each of these stages in detail.

**Recommended literature:**

1. Julie Starr. The Coaching Manual. The definitive guide to the process, principles and skills of personal coaching ch 2
2. The Coaching Handbook: An Action Kit for Trainers & Managers by Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford ch 3
3. Wilson, Carol (2007) Best practice in performance coaching: a handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals, and organizations Ch. 3

**Lecture 11. Fundamental skills of coaching. Skill one – building rapport or relationship. Skill two – different levels of listening. Skill three – using intuition**

By the end of this stage of the coaching process, you should have the following outcomes:

* Agreement that a development need exists and a broad idea of what that need is.
* An understanding, by the coachee and all stakeholders, of what coaching is and what the process will involve.
* Clearly stated goals for the coaching programme.

This is the first stage of the coaching process. During this stage the coach and the coachee will establish that there is a real need for coaching and will discuss the overall goals for the process. The specific objectives will come a little later – perhaps during the same meeting, or, more likely, during the next meeting.

**What you do**

The first thing you do is explore the reasons behind the request for coaching.

If ***you*** have initiated the coaching, ask yourself the following list of questions and be prepared to discuss your thoughts with the potential coachee.

* What makes you think that this person will benefit from coaching?
* What specific behaviours have you noticed that you would like to see changing?
* What do you want this person to be able to do better?
* What is the person not doing that you believe he or she is capable of?
* What achievements do you see this person being able to make as a result of coaching?
* What specific incidents can you describe that have led to you suggesting coaching?
* What have you told this person about why you think coaching would help him or her?
* Why have you chosen coaching, rather than other methods of development?
* What support will you be able to give this person during the coaching period and beyond?
* What do you think the impact of any changes in this person will be on the team and on others with whom the person comes into contact? What might the coachee need to do to deal with this impact?

If the ***coachee*** has initiated the coaching, it may be worth sending the person a revised version of this list of questions so that he or she can put some thought into his or her reasons for wanting coaching before your first meeting. This list of questions may then become the agenda for the first part of your initial meeting.

**Is coaching the right approach?**

In order to make sure that coaching is appropriate, very simply, go back to the definition of

coaching:

*The process of helping people* ***enhance*** *or* ***improve*** *their performance through*

*reflection on how they apply a specific skill and/or knowledge.*

Once a development need has been identified the main question is how will this need be fulfilled – is coaching the appropriate answer?

The key questions to ask yourself at this stage are:

* Does the person already have the skill or knowledge to perform this task?
* Will the person be performing the task in the near future?
* If you work with this person on a one-to-one basis, will you be able to help the person enhance or improve the relevant aspect of his or her performance?

If the answer to these questions is ‘Yes’, then coaching is probably the way forward. If the answer is ‘No’ then the following learning methods should be considered:

* classroom training;
* e-learning;
* on-the-job training;
* self-study material;
* action learning.

Other factors that need to be considered before starting the coaching process are:

* Does the potential coach have the skill or knowledge that this person is going to use?
* Do the potential coach and coachee have the time to participate in the coaching process? Have you considered the implications on productivity?
* Does the potential coach have well-developed coaching skills?
* Are there any known relationship issues between the potential coach and the coachee, eg previous conflicts?
* Does the coach have a clear understanding of what the development goal is and how to measure its achievement?
* Are there standards/competency statements laid down against which performance will be assessed?
* Is the coachee aware that he or she has the development need?
* Is the coachee willing to be coached?
* Is the chosen coach willing to coach this coachee?
* Has the coach considered the implications of coaching this person for the rest of his or her team members?

**Initial conversations**

Having explored the needs for coaching individually you now enter the most crucial part of this stage, which is discussing these with the coachee. While this could happen over the telephone, there is much to gain by having a face-to-face meeting. The aim is to have an honest and open conversation around the question ‘Why are we here?’. This is also an opportunity to explore what you both understand about the purpose of coaching in general, ie that coaching is not necessarily remedial and is actually about moving performance forward from where it is today, whether this performance is good or poor.

Another point to make during this conversation is your motive as the coach. This is especially important if you have an existing relationship with the person as he or she may be wondering about this. If you are the person’s line manager, you may be viewed with extreme suspicion unless you explain exactly what you are doing and why you are doing it. Equally, if you are not the coachee’s line manager, he or she may wonder why you are doing this, what it really means, who else knows and what you will be getting out of it.

Part of this conversation will be about explaining the model of coaching so that the coachee understands the systematic approach that you are intending to follow. Go through the model and, if appropriate, give the coachee a copy of the process (shown in Chapter 3). As well as being open about the process, this allows the opportunity for you to tailor it to specific styles of working and opens the discussion about other requirements such as working hours and meeting places. This is also where you can talk about how you are going to work together, including any feedback that you will be giving to the coachees’ managers, or others; requirements that you both should meet such as being on time for meetings or the coachee completing ‘homework’. Explain to the coachee your ethics and stance on confidentiality, making mistakes and receiving feedback yourself. Ask the coachee if there are any ground rules that he or she would like you both to work with.

At the end of your meeting, ask the coachee if he or she feels that you will be able to work together. Chances are that the person will not say ‘No’, but the way in which ‘Yes’ is said will tell you a great deal. Observe body language, listen to the tone of voice used and decide whether you need to probe any further.

You may not wish to continue coaching this person if:

You cannot get on. There is little rapport between you and you question whether you will

be able to work together in this way. Rapport takes some time to build, but you will have

an initial feel for how your relationship is likely to develop. Remember that you do not

have to like each other, but you do need to have mutual respect and be able to establish

a working relationship. If you feel that rapport can never be developed, now is the time to

withdraw from the relationship.

* You don’t feel that you are the right person to coach because you feel that you do not have enough knowledge of the subject matter. Depending on what you are coaching, it is not essential that you are able to perform at the level that the coachee is attempting to achieve. You need enough experience and knowledge of the subject matter to be able to help identify where the coachee could do better and help steer him or her towards the identified targets or standards.
* Having talked to the coachee you don’t feel that coaching is the right development solution. It may become apparent that the coachee has training needs or even that his or her learning or communication style is such that the intense nature of the coaching relationship will not be right for this person.
* Having established the overall development needs and decided that coaching is the right solution, you need to summarize the main points and create clear goals for the coaching that are agreed with your coachee. A development goal describes the overall purpose of what you will be doing. It describes what the coachee hopes to achieve from the process – the goal is about deciding where you are going, not how you will get there.

If practical, record this conversation in writing, and pass a copy of your notes to the coachee, so that you have the same understanding of what went on and an agreed way forward. Your notes here can then feed into Stage 2 of the process where you set the specific objectives for the coaching (see Chapter 7).

**What could go wrong**

*The coachee didn’t know that you had been asked to coach him or her and therefore wonders why you are arranging a meeting.*

Discounting the option that the coachee is ‘in denial’, that is, he or she has been told, but tells you that this hasn’t happened, the most usual situation is that he or she really has not been told. This might be for a variety of reasons:

The person’s manager has forgotten, being very busy with other things. Poor communication and the general personal relationship between the manager and member of staff means that the manager has not initiated the conversation, because he or she is unsure how to, or prefers not to.

The manager wants to abdicate all responsibility to you, usually because he or she fears the reaction of the staff member and/or this is the easy option.

The solution is the same for any of the reasons listed and is formed from the desire to maintain the relationship with the coachee. Talk about what coaching is, how you got involved, the potential benefits for the coachee and what the process will involve – then ask the coachee if he or she is happy to proceed. If the coachee is happy to go on, then you can continue with the meeting.

If the coachee is not happy, it is not possible to proceed. You can ask some questions such as, ‘What could we do to make you more comfortable with this?’ or ‘Why do you think your manager suggested this?’ Fundamentally, however, coaching is a two-way relationship and if one party does not wish to participate you cannot be successful. Together you will need to agree how this decision is communicated to the line manager; either the coachee talks to the manager, you talk to the manager or you talk to him or her together. Wherever possible it is good to encourage the coachee to take responsibility and own his or her own decisions; therefore the ideal is to get the coachee to talk to his or her line manager. Follow up with both parties afterwards to review the situation and check that both parties are still happy.

*The coachee doesn’t agree to your ground rules*.

The whole point of ground rules is to get agreement about how you will work together. You need to use your negotiation and influencing skills to arrive at an agreed position. Probe to establish the underlying reasons why some ground rules are acceptable and others are not – often this is about perception and understanding of the language that is being used. Remember that your disagreement may arise from some of your own personal beliefs, so ask yourself ‘Is it really that important on this occasion and, if so, why?’

*Your existing relationship may get in the way.*

Given that you may be the coachee’s line manager, are you the right person for the coachee to share his or her fears and doubts with? Can you maintain the role of coach no matter what the coachee tells you? Line managers can be very effective coaches by being clear about the purpose of their actions and explaining this to the member of staff. What gets in the way, if you are the person’s line manager as well as the coach, is the coachee’s concern that you are criticizing or telling him or her off. As coach, you need to be very honest at the start of each meeting about what the purpose of the discussion is and what role you are taking. Therefore, we recommend that if you are offering coaching to overcome a poor performance situation, you separate the giving of feedback from the start of the coaching process. Another solution here may be to find another coach from within or outside the organization.

*The coachee doesn’t want to be coached or sees it as a bad reflection on his or her abilities*.

Your role here is to ‘sell’ the concept of coaching and to explain the developmental nature of the process. It is useful here to be able to explain the concept of continuous development – that however good we are already; we should always strive for future development. Perhaps give examples of when you have coached or been coached in the past and how it has helped.

**Skills required**

communication;

* questioning
* listening
* interpreting non-verbal communication
* summarizing
* assertiveness

interpreting and analysing information.

**Stage 2: Agreeing Specific Development Needs**

**Overview**

By the end of this stage of the coaching process, you should have the following outcomes:

* A closer working relationship with the coachee (or a decision that you cannot continue the coaching programme).
* Detail about the precise development needs.
* A clear picture of the coachee’s current ability and background experiences, including training to date.
* Agreed objectives for the coaching programme, including success criteria.

The purpose of this stage is to effectively discover what the current position of your coachee is and where he or she wants or needs to get to; this will take place through building rapport and discussion with your coachee. This stage will involve a meeting with your coachee – this may be a continuation of the meeting at Stage 1 (see Chapter 6) or it may be a separate event.

**What you do**

**Build rapport**

In order to identify the development needs effectively you need to build rapport with your coachee. Rapport is having a relationship where you are comfortable with each other, there is no competition and the flow of conversation is very natural. Each person feels that they are being listened to and often, if you watch people who have rapport, you will notice that they have similar body language, tones and breathing patterns – they are ‘in tune’.

Rapport building means establishing common ground and showing each other mutual respect. It is about establishing a relationship based on trust and honesty. It is important to begin the rapport building at this stage because at this point you are laying the foundations for the whole coaching experience. Rapport building involves good communication skills and showing the other person that you understand his or her view of the world – empathy. This in turn involves having a genuine interest in the other person.

Small talk is useful in helping build rapport; you might want to start by talking about the sort of day you have had, your journeys, shared or similar experiences, the latest news etc. In order to establish credibility as a coach and build the trust of your coachee, you probably need to share some information about yourself, if you haven’t already done so. At some point consider sharing information about your background and experience, explain your working style and perhaps why you have been selected to coach. Be wary, however, of coming over as patronizing or as a ‘know it all’ – nothing can kill rapport more quickly! In addition to telling coachees what you think they want to know, or what you want them to know, ask them what they would like to know about you. Some coachees may like to know this first, others will be happy to leave it until you have talked about their needs.

To get onto the other person’s wavelength, watch and listen – what is the non-verbal communication telling you? We all give away clues to our preferences by the words we use: if someone you are talking to is using visual language, use the same sort of words and note that he or she will like to *see* things on paper or in reality. By matching and mirroring other people’s behaviour (not mimicking) you can help make them feel more at ease and comfortable with you, and you will notice that in return they will become more responsive and receptive with you. (See Chapter 13 for more about using language and nonverbal communication).

As a coach, you are responsible for helping the coachee become comfortable – with you and with the process. This involves thinking about the environment as well as what you say and do. Meeting somewhere that the person will feel at ease, having drinks available, and good seating all helps.

**Identify needs**

Identifying needs requires two things to be established: first, what the current position is; second, what the desired end position looks like. Let’s look at the first one – what is the current position? This is about clarifying where individuals are – what skills and knowledge they have and how they would rate their existing ability in the specific area. It is important here to use self-appraisal and open questioning as much as possible.

Discuss with the coachee what has brought him or her to this point – what training and what experience has he or she had? As the coachee answers these points, encourage him or her to give examples and evidence to back up his or her views, especially if the coachee has had feedback from others.

A good technique is to ask a coachee how he or she feels when doing the task; as a general guide, we usually feel good about the things we are better at, and vice versa. Negative feelings can arise from some doubt in our heads about our capabilities or uncertainty about what others think.

Try to get the person to think wider than the immediate task or process; and to relate any similar activities that he or she has experienced which may be relevant. Considering other tasks that use a similar set of skills can also help coachees identify the areas that they want to look at.

Some questions for clarifying needs are:

* How did you learn what you know about this subject/activity?
* What training have you had on this subject/activity?
* What experience did you have before your training?
* What experience have you had since your training?
* How do you feel about this subject/activity?
* What feedback have you had about your performance around this subject/ activity?
* What examples can I see of your performance in this subject/activity?
* What skills do you use when you are performing this activity?
* In what other situations do you use these skills?
* Is there any specific part of this task that you find easy or enjoy doing? Why?
* Is there any specific part of this activity that you find difficult or do not like?
* Why do you think you find this aspect of the task problematic?
* What factors do you think influence how you perform this task?

Next it is vital to describe the desired outcome. This is the second part of identifying needs – assessing current competency depends on having a clear benchmark against which to assess.

Rather than assume or work towards an invisible goal, an essential part of coaching is asking coachees what they want to achieve and how they will know when they have been successful. Some will have a clear goal in mind: ‘I want to be able to do. . . ’, others will initially just want to get better or feel more confident. These latter statements need to be explored and made more visual. Asking the following questions will help:

* What would you like to be able to do by the end of this coaching experience?
* What does ‘better’ look like?
* If others were to give you feedback in two months’ time, what would you like them to say?
* How will you know when you have improved?
* Do you know anyone else who is better than you at this?
* What do they do? When do you think you can apply this skill? What do the good performers do that you would like to be able to do?

In identifying the desired outcome, it may be useful to refer to corporate or nationally recognized standards or competency frameworks.

While you are having this discussion, you may want to make some notes. We all have different ways of recalling conversations. Some of us are able to rely on our memory; others (including us!) need to jot notes down. These are not formal, but are aide memoires. If you decide to make notes, explain to your coachee what you are writing and the reasons for writing it as people worry about what might happen to the notes. Another option is to ask the coachee to write the notes – although be careful that this does not distract the coachee away from thinking about the questions that you are asking.

**Develop the objectives**

This is the stage of the process where you agree what the coaching process is going to achieve – what are the outcomes and targets you will work towards together. This can take place during the meeting or you can go away with your notes and produce a list of what you perceive the objectives to be and send them to the coachee for comments – they can then be discussed, either at another meeting or over the telephone. If you choose to correspond about the objectives via e-mail, follow up the final version with a phone call or meeting to check how the coachee really feels about things.

The broad goal(s) that you agreed during Stage 1 (see Chapter 6) now needs to be broken down into more detailed objectives, which reflect the needs you have analysed. Coaching objectives turn the goal into measurable outputs. An objective is a specific statement of something the coachee will be able to do at the end of the coaching process.

Before agreeing the objectives with the coachee, in addition to remembering the needs that you have already identified, it will be worth revisiting the following questions:

* What is any third party (eg line manager, HR department) expecting to see at the end of the coaching process?
* How much time has been allocated for the coaching?
* What factors are likely to impact upon the coaching, eg changes of work deadlines for the coachee, available resources, working hours?

**Effective objectives**

When creating objectives, focus on the coachee – what will this person be able to do as a result of being coached? It is vital to remember that the coaching process is not about the coach and what he or she wants to achieve. The process is about what the coachee needs and wants to achieve and therefore all the objectives that are written must be about the needs of the coachee.

A good opening statement for objectives is: ‘Having completed this coaching programme you will be able to. . . ’. Starting each objective with this statement will focus it on the specific behaviour that the coachee will demonstrate as a result of the coaching and will cause the coach to concentrate on ‘SMART’ objectives.

**SMART objectives**

SMART has become a well-known acronym to describe well-constructed objectives. SMART objectives have the following characteristics:

1. They are **specific** – they focus on a particular aspect of the individual’s performance or on the job/task in question.
2. They are **measurable** in that their achievement can be assessed and there will be a visible outcome when they are achieved.
3. They are **agreed**. This is particularly pertinent to the coaching situation where it is absolutely vital that the coach, coachee and, where applicable the third party, have all agreed on the objectives for the coaching programme.
4. They are **realistic**. Again this is vital in the coaching process. If the objectives are not realistic then the coaching will fail. This may result in demotivation of both coach and coachee and in the line manager losing faith in the coaching process.
5. They are **timed** in that there is a time frame set for their achievement. From the perspective of the coach, coachee, manager and organization, setting time frames for the coaching programme is very important so that all concerned will know what to expect in terms of how long the process will take and what can be achieved in the time allocated.

Another acronym which is often applied to objectives is SMAC: specific, measurable, achievable and challenging.

Take time to think about the words that you use when you create your objectives. These words will inform your choice of method and provide a guide for measuring the achievement of the objectives. Non-measurable words include ‘understand’, ‘value’, ‘appreciate’, ‘enjoy’, ‘feel’, ‘believe’ and ‘know’.

Having finalized the objectives, the coach should put them in writing so that the coachee and any other individuals who have a stake in the coaching programme can review them. This way there can be no misunderstandings about what the programme is and is not setting out to achieve.

At this point the coach and coachee need to agree that achievement of the objectives will meet the identified needs. Are all the needs reflected in the objectives or has anything been missed or misinterpreted? Of course, as the coaching programme proceeds objectives may change. If this happens then the new objectives should also be put in writing and circulated to all those involved. It may be useful for the coach, coachee and line manager to sign the objectives document to confirm that all are in agreement about the objectives for the programme.

**What could go wrong**

*You don’t feel that you are the right person to coach.*

You feel that you do not have enough knowledge of the subject matter.

Depending on what you are coaching, it is not essential that you are able to perform at the level that the coachee is attempting to achieve. You need enough experience and knowledge of the subject matter to be able to help identify where the coachee could do better. A more valuable asset is the ability to facilitate the coachee’s learning and to explore options for improvement. Bearing this in mind, if you still don’t believe that you are the right person, after tactfully explaining why to the coachee, help him or her to find someone else.

*Time frames are too short.*

Having got a better feel for the development needs you are aware that the time frames that you have been given are too short or other things will take priority. At this point you will need to renegotiate the time frames or do whatever is necessary for you both to free up the time for coaching. Alternatively, consider reducing the number of objectives.

*It is a training issue not a coaching issue.*

Let’s go back to our definition of the difference between these two activities – it is a training issue if there is a gap in the skills and or knowledge required to carry out the task; it is a coaching issue if the skills or knowledge exist, but the individual cannot implement them fully to achieve the required level of performance. In this case you can either stop coaching and begin training or have the training need met from a third party (training course, distance learning etc). If you choose to train, be clear both for yourself and the coachee which hat you are wearing and when, to avoid any confusion about method and approach.

*You have not allowed enough time to complete this meeting.*

You may find that your discussion with the coachee about his or her needs and the subsequent objective setting is going to take longer than you thought. The best thing to do in this situation is to end the meeting once you have analysed the needs and to set another time where you will discuss objectives. As soon as you are aware that time is running out, you should start to renegotiate how you will complete this stage.

*You are unable to get to the bottom of the needs.*

You find that you are unable to really identify the difference between the current and the desired position. Your questions do not provide you with the information that would enable you to see what needs to be changed in order for the coachee to perform better. In this case perhaps the coachee could return to his or her workplace and get feedback from colleagues and line manager. Alternatively you could volunteer to observe the coachee and give some feedback yourself. The real need might be around self-confidence – the coachee may be performing to a high standard, but be self-critical or unsure. It might even be that there is no development need and that this conversation has been enough in itself to bolster the coachee’s confidence.

**Skills required**

The following skills are required at Stage 2 of the coaching process:

1. analytical skills;
2. verbal and written communication skills;

* negotiation skills
* questioning
* listening
* presenting information
* rapport building

1. summarizing;
2. time management;
3. facilitation.

**Stage 3: Formulating a Detailed Plan for Coaching**

**Overview**

By the end of this stage of the coaching process, you should have the following outcomes:

* A detailed plan for the coaching programme.
* Clear steps for achieving the development objectives.
* A timescale for the coaching programme.

Having agreed the objectives for the coaching, the next thing that needs to be considered is how the objectives will be achieved. This stage is about formulating a plan which details how you will proceed during the coaching process.

**What you do**

You must formulate the plan with your coachee, not present it as a *fait accompli*. If others are involved in the plan, communicate the relevant parts of the plan to them as well.

The general plan for the coaching will include and take into account:

1/ A review of each of the objectives. This means looking at each objective and asking:

* What does this objective mean?
* What activities need to take place in order to achieve this objective?
* Will the activities be real or simulated?
* When do the activities need to happen? This will be particularly important where the
* objectives relate to specific tasks that the coachee does at certain times in the
* week, month or year.

2/ The time available for coaching.

* Time for each meeting.
* Time for the whole process.

3/ Preliminary tasks that the coachee will need to carry out – such as refresher reading or gathering data.

4/ Involvement of others. The topics of the coaching may involve other people, eg the coachee may wish to improve his or her skills in leading meetings.

5/ Equipment required.

As the coaching process is linked very closely to Kolb’s learning cycle, as illustrated in Chapter 2, your plan must include each of the following at least once:

**Having an experience**

The coachee needs to have an experience, that is, to do the task or use the skill that the coaching is concerned with. This experience may be real or simulated. It may be planned or unplanned. It may be observed by the coach or described by the coachee. Whatever the subject, the coachee must carry out the task or do the activity in as near real-life situation as possible. The type of experiences that you may use during coaching are:

* Doing all or part of the task.
* Seeking and receiving feedback.
* Revisiting activities that have been done in the past.
* Completing self-assessment questionnaires.
* Reading books, articles or other documentation.
* Finding out how others do it.
* Observing others.

**Reflecting on the experience**

This is where the main activity of the coach begins and, as such, it needs to be shown as an action or activity on the plan. The role of the coach is to provide the coachee with tools to help him or her reflect upon the experience and start to draw out some learning from it. It will involve thinking and discussing the experience, what happened, the outcome(s) from it and how the people involved felt.

**Making sense of the experience**

In practice, this will happen as the coachee reflects on the experience. This is where the coach helps the coachee to think about why things happened the way they did. What were the underpinning processes? What was going on ‘behind the scenes’?

**Doing it differently**

In coaching, this is where the coach and coachee discuss and identify what the coachee could do differently the next time and what he or she should repeat. This is the ‘planning for next time’ phase.

**Repeating the experience**

The coachee should then have the opportunity to do the task or activity again, incorporating the ideas that were discussed during the coaching session. Your plan may then be to repeat the reflection–making sense–planning activities–repeating experience until the coaching objectives have been achieved. Part 3 offers you a series of activities to use as part of the coaching process. These activities are for you to select from, deciding which will be appropriate for the subject of your coaching and your coachee.

**What could go wrong**

*There is no opportunity for the coachee to practise in real life.*

The first thing to question in this case is why coaching is taking place now. If coaching is about helping a person implement skills and knowledge back in the workplace, the ideal time for coaching is either immediately before that person is required to do a particular task or whilst he or she is doing it. Therefore, you may want to postpone the coaching until it is more relevant to the coachee’s current work.

However, there may be situations where coaching needs to take place even if the task is not going to be performed for some time. An example of this would be where you have been asked to coach someone in crisis management. You will not want to wait until a crisis happens, and you will not be able to predict when this will be, so coaching needs to happen when the coachee and coach are available and will take place around a simulated event.

*There are too many things to do, for either the coach or coachee.*

This is likely to occur if the task is very large and/or you are working to very tight timescales. Remember to be realistic when you are planning. It is easier, and better for motivation, to move dates forward than to put them back or not achieve at all. ‘Under-promise, overachieve.’ Has a look at your plan and think about which of the activities could be taken out of it, eg, would it be possible to leave out the reading or to have someone else observe the coachee? The coachee or coach may need to negotiate with his or her line manager to have some time freed up for the coaching process – whether this is possible will depend on the priority that is placed upon the coachee improving his or her performance in the area concerned.

**Recommended literature:**

1. Julie Starr. The Coaching Manual. The definitive guide to the process, principles and skills of personal coaching ch 5
2. The Coaching Handbook: An Action Kit for Trainers & Managers by Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford ch 6-8
3. Wilson, Carol (2007) Best practice in performance coaching: a handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals, and organizations ch 4

**Lecture 12. Stage 4: Doing a Task or Activity**

By the end of this stage of the coaching process, you should have the following outcomes:

* A completed task or activity.
* Evidence of how the coachee has performed on which to base your reflection/review.

The fourth stage of the coaching process is to start to implement your agreed plan. It is about focusing on carrying out your planned activities so that together, in the next stage, you can work on the specific areas/behaviours that will need to be changed in order for the overall performance to be improved.

Your plan will involve actions under two main categories: first, application – practising the job/task or activity that the coachee wants to improve; second, collecting data and evidence about how well the coachee has done during that practice. Evidence in this sense means information about how the person has performed – this may be data gained via self-appraisal, observation, feedback or tangible results such as reports, statistical data or products.

**What you do**

This stage is about organizing and structuring the hands-on experience so that the coachee gets the most from it. It is where the coachee uses skills or knowledge in the way that he or she would in real life. That might mean carrying out a specific task or job (or a part of it) or doing something where he or she can practise applying, or think about applying, some of the appropriate skills or knowledge. This is the experience stage of the learning cycle.

There are two options: either the coachee does it for real; or you arrange a simulation. Both options have advantages but we prefer, wherever possible, getting the coachee to do it in the ‘live’ environment, either with you observing or with him or her reporting back to you on the experience or activity (see below).

If the subject is about applying a skill, it is about having the opportunity to use that skill in a real life situation (or similar). It is about the coachee demonstrating the knowledge, skill or behaviour so that, working with his or her coach, that individual can reflect upon it and identify where he or she goes to next.

Before the experience or activity takes place, you and the coachee need to:

* Arrange for the experience or activity to happen if it is not a regular part of the coachee’s role.
* Discuss how to ensure that performance is as natural as possible.
* Consider how the coachee wants to use the experience or activity, ie what he or she wants to learn from it.
* Decide what help and support the coachee wants to receive during the actual experience or activity, ie define the points at which he or she wants you to intervene, observe or take part.
* Identify potential risk areas, eg ‘What happens if I get this wrong at this stage and if I do, what will be the consequences? What mistakes can I make without causing irreparable damage?’
* Establish the starting and ending points for the experience or activity. This is particularly relevant if the activity is part of the coachee’s day-to-day role.
* Decide how and when you will review the experience or activity – this might be immediately after the activity or later, or perhaps both.

**Simulation or real life?**

The starting point is deciding whether it is appropriate for the coachee to practise in real life – ie do the activity. Usually the coachee will have already done it for real as this is how a coaching need is identified. At some stage before the coaching relationship ends the coachee should do the task or activity in real life, so that you can really assess whether the coachee has achieved his or her goal. However, early on in the coaching programme, you may want to consider practising via a simulated situation; some of the questions you may want to explore with the coachee as you decide are:

* Is the timing right – is an opportunity to do it going to occur naturally within the workplace within the time boundaries of the coaching plan?
* Is it safe – for the coachee and for others involved in the activity?
* What are the implications of getting it wrong, eg lost business or reputation of the coachee with colleagues?

Is the coachee confident and experienced enough to ‘perform’ in real life?

**Using real life**

Any experience that takes place in real life offers a more effective learning opportunity than a simulation. Doing a task or performing in real life means that it is impossible to control the environment and situation and therefore provides an authentic experience. When using real life experiences, consider:

* Which part of the experience is important at this stage of the coaching programme – will you review the activity in totality or focus this time on parts of it?
* Will you observe or not?
* What will you do if the experience doesn’t provide the evidence that you want it to?
* What is your agreed strategy for dealing with errors or unexpected scenarios during the event? If you are present, does the coachee want you to intervene or take over if they are getting it wrong?
* Will you explain to others involved that you are using this as a coaching opportunity?

**Using simulation**

A simulation is the creation of a true-to-life event within a controlled setting. Simulations are used when it is not possible to observe or arrange a real experience for your coachee at an appropriate time during the coaching process.

This technique is very useful where mistakes with the subject being coached have the potential to cause major damage, losses or a disaster; for example, counselling or resuscitation. They provide a protected environment in which coachees can act and discuss their actions without fear of the consequences. The lack of consequences should be considered when reviewing a simulation as this may have an impact upon the way in which the coachee and participants act and react. It may also limit understanding of real life, eg when practising resuscitation, if I do not fear that I may kill someone, I may not fully understand that this could happen in reality.

Each simulation is unique. It is impossible to give guidelines that apply to all situations; however, factors to consider when you are creating a simulation are:

* What equipment will you need?
* What people need to be involved?
* Where will you do the simulation?
* How will you set up the simulation (brief the participants)?
* What background information do you need?
* How much time do you have available for the simulation?
* How can you recreate the real-life situation?
* How can you avoid the ‘It’s only make believe’ reaction?
* How many times will you need to rerun this simulation and, if several times, how many
* different versions do you need?
* What elements need to be contained within the simulation (what should the content be)?

**Collecting evidence**

While the focus at this stage of coaching must be on performing an activity, as true-to-life as possible, in order for the coaching process to be effective, the coach and coachee need to be collecting information for discussion once the activity or experience is completed.

It is important that data collection does not detract from the activity and the best way of doing this is to consider what data you need and how you will collect it. It all comes back to knowing the objectives for the coaching. If you know what standards the coachee is working towards, you can work out what evidence will tell you how well he or she is doing against these standards and this will tell you what data you need to collect. You can then work out how you can collect the data in as unobtrusive a way as possible. It is recommended that you look for more than one data source.

**Observation**

Observation, the act of watching the coachee perform a task or activity, can be done in three different ways:

* The coach observes.
* Someone other than the coach is given the role of observer.
* The coachee is video-taped (or audio-taped if appropriate).

In deciding whether observation is the best method to use to achieve the coaching objectives, consider:

* Appropriateness of observing. What is the confidentiality of what you are likely to be observing, eg is it appropriate that you sit in on something like a counselling session or a disciplinary interview? Think about whether your presence will impact the event in such a way that it means it is not a true experience. Whilst the coachee may be happy for you to observe, other people may not be. People certainly should not be presented with a *fait accompli;* their permission must be sought prior to or at the start of the event.
* Environment. Is there space and is it safe for you to observe? For example, if your coachee is driving a specialized machine or doing something in a confined space, observing him or her will be impractical. Have you got the right equipment to attend the place of work, eg high visibility clothing or safety equipment?
* Time. It might be that the task that you are observing takes several days, so you may agree that you do not watch all of it, only parts. There may be a finite amount of time that has been allocated for the coaching (eg if a coach is being paid for externally or the coach can only be taken out of the workplace for a specific time), so this time may be better spent on other activities such as reviewing performance from recalled events or task outputs.
* Your ability to stay quiet and observe! Are you likely to interfere or take over?

Very few of us can observe an event and keep everything that we have seen and heard in our heads. There is a need to make notes and to avoid subjectivity. When we observe something, our natural response is to interpret what we see and to describe what we perceive is happening. For example: we hear someone shouting and we describe them as being angry and aggressive. We are interpreting their behaviour based on ‘If I was doing that, it would be because I was. . . ’ or ‘In my experience, people do that when. . . ’ . However, in our example, this person could be shouting because the other person cannot hear or because he or she was excited!

We need to ensure that we are objective and that our observations are based on the facts of what we have seen or heard – ie, to continue our example, we could note that the volume of the person’s voice went up.

**Tip for effective observation**

Prior to the experience, discuss with the coachee what you will be looking for, including what he or she wants you to look for.

Write these criteria down one side of a page – then you can note down what the coachee says or does against the relevant point.

Think about the key things you might see during the observation. Write down:

* What you would expect to see.
* What you would expect to hear.
* What behaviours you would expect the coachee to demonstrate.
* What you hope not to see.
* Tick each time you see or hear each thing happening.

In identifying what is truly happening, use any or all of your five senses that are appropriate for the task – avoid interpretation or intuition at this stage. You need to note *what* has happened not *why* you think it happened; you will discuss the *why* with the coachee later.

If you do see or hear something and you think you know the reason for it happening, you may want to make a note of your thoughts as a memory jog for yourself later. Be cautious that this doesn’t colour your impression of what happens next or influences the rest of your observation because you are solely looking for confirmation of your assumptions. Equally, when you come to review the task later with the coachee, remember to get the coachee to tell you why he or she did something rather than assuming your interpretation of the coachee’s behaviour is the right one.

Whenever creating your own shorthand, write yourself a key so that when you review your notes later, you will understand what you wrote.

Choose a writing tool that lets you write quickly and that will not smudge. Always have a spare pen or pencil to hand.

Take a note of the time at the start of the activity and the times of ‘events’ during the activity. Note the time when the activity finishes. This is useful when you are discussing your notes with the coachee as you can explain how long it took him or her to do certain things, you can review the pattern of action, and you can minimize disputes of when things did or did not happen.

If observing something that involves other people, have a column where you can note those people’s reactions or responses to what your coachee said or did.

Have plenty of paper to hand and use a clipboard if you do not have a table to rest on.

Keep your notes out of view of other people in the room.

**The impact of observation**

As coaches, we should be aware that some people will perform better because we are observing them, while some people’s performance will worsen. The impact of observing your coachee will probably lessen the more you do it and the more the relationship develops – as long as the relationship is developing positively of course! This is known as the Hawthorne Effect, which originated from a series of experiments carried out within a factory setting. The researchers found that the act of simply observing workers at work had an impact upon their performance. In some instances, this impact was positive and in some it was negative. Another point to consider is that some people will perform, in the sense that they will ‘act’ for you in the way which they think they should act, rather than the way which they would normally act. We also need to remember that our impact may be upon others involved in the ‘activity’ not just on the coachee.

You can minimize the impact that you might have by reminding the coachee that you are not observing him or her in order to criticize – observation is a tool for gathering information which you will both discuss later. Stress to the coachee that mistakes are OK, so long as they do not put anyone at risk (see later in this chapter for more discussion about risks and when to intervene).

You will also need to explain to other participants in the activity exactly what the purpose of your observing the event is, how you will be doing it and that you need them to behave as normally as possible. Finally make yourself as unobtrusive as possible – do your best to blend in with the background by positioning yourself as much out of view as possible, without compromising your view of the coachee or causing a distraction.

**Intervention – when and how**

People learn from their mistakes and therefore we should not try to shield them or prevent them from making mistakes. There is a difference between helping somebody and taking over – however frustrating it may be to see someone struggling, you should resist the temptation to leap in saying ‘No, no, let me do it’.

You must agree with your coachee, during the planning stage, the boundaries for the activity and the times when you will intervene. The times when it is appropriate to intervene fall into three broad categories:

* The coachee is going to harm him- or herself (either physically or mentally).
* The coachee is going to harm another person (either physically or mentally).
* The coachee is going to compromise the business or organization in some way.

You may also agree with your coachee that you will intervene if you see him or her exhibiting a certain behaviour that he or she is trying to work on and wants to receive feedback about immediately. The following are useful statements to use when intervening:

* ‘I need to stop you there. Before you move on we need to discuss what’s happening. ’
* ‘Stop now. ’ (Use in dangerous situations only).
* ‘Before you do that, tell me what you are hoping will happen as a result of doing it. ’
* ‘You asked me to tell you if I saw you. . . ’
* ‘What you have just done is an example of what we talked about when. . . ’

You may ask someone else to do the observation. This is especially useful when you are an integral part of the process or activity, or when you are unable to attend at the time that the coachee will be doing the task. The same guidelines apply and you may want to run through these with the nominated person beforehand.

Using video and/or audio tapes is useful when you cannot attend or it isn’t appropriate because of the nature of the job for you to be there – eg, your presence would change the relationship between the coachee and others involved. All participants should agree to be filmed or taped, and they must be informed about what will happen with the tapes. Another advantage is that you can re-play all or some of the tape to examine specific behaviours. However, on the down side, not many of us like to be video-taped, and this may have an adverse impact on performance. Audio tapes have the obvious difficulty that you cannot see what has happened, so we prefer only to use these when coaching on telephone techniques or other situations when non-verbal behaviour is not involved.

**Getting feedback from others**

Third-party feedback can be very useful for coachees – how have others reacted to their behaviour and what impact has it had? We feel it is important that third-party feedback is always given directly to the coachee by the person that observed him or her and not given to the coach to ‘pass on’. Feedback needs to be detailed and owned by the person giving it. Feedback that is passed on by another person can often be watered down or misinterpreted and there is no room for the person receiving it to ask for clarification or further detail. You may need to help your coachee ask for feedback and/or help the third party think about how he or she will give it.

To help your coachee ask for feedback, the two of you could role-play the situation until the coachee feels able to ask the other person, or help the coachee construct a questionnaire, which they discuss with the giver of feedback.

To help the third party give feedback, discuss why it is beneficial for the coachee to receive it at this time (without breaking confidences), explore why the third party prefers not to if this is the case and offer him or her guidelines to follow. (See the model for giving feedback in Chapter 10).

Sometimes you may plan to ask others involved in the activity for feedback. There is an argument for telling the third party beforehand that you will be asking. This will prepare him or her for your questions. However, we can also see that this could have a detrimental effect on the activity, because the third party is so busy assessing the performance of the coachee that it affects his or her behaviour.

**Output data**

Output is something you can physically see as a result of a task being completed. Most processes or tasks will have some form of output whether it be a report, a letter or a physical object such as a cake or brick wall. Wherever appropriate, arrange to receive a copy or sample of the output and use it to review against performance standards.

**What could go wrong**

*The planned activity does not happen.*

This could be because someone else cancels it, the business no longer requires it or unforeseen circumstances come into play. If this happens, then you either need to rearrange or, if that is impractical, look towards running a simulation. You may also consider doing something different from the planned activity.

*The activity does not turn out to involve the things that you thought it would*.

Perhaps it takes an unexpected turn of events or it does not provide the opportunity to practise the skills you thought it would. This is a golden opportunity to work with your coachee and discuss why events did not happen as planned and what can be learnt when this occurs. It might be that, on reflection, you could have pre-empted this at the planning stages.

*Everything happens as planned but the coachee performs so badly, or has such a bad experience, that his or her confidence is shattered*.

In this situation, you can’t start analysing immediately – the coachee will not be ready to do so and will not be able to be positive about the experience. It is time to ‘hug’ the person – be supportive and upbeat, with the aim of helping the coachee restore his or her self-esteem. Tell the coachee to tell you when he or she is ready to discuss the activity. When the coachee does tell you, you may find that you don’t need to spend a lot of time reflecting on the experience, but can focus on ‘If you were to do that again, what would you do differently?’.

This gets away from reliving a bad experience and on to positive action for the future. You can continue the coaching as planned, with a silent agreement not to discuss this situation until the coachee is ready, if at all. Individuals have their own ways of dealing with things and it is not for us to insist that this is through discussion or analysis.

**Stage 5: Reviewing Activities and Planning Improved Performance**

**Overview**

By the end of this stage of the coaching process you should have the following outcomes:

A list of the coachee’s strengths and areas for development.

A plan for what the coachee will do differently next time he or she performs the task or activity.

This stage incorporates reflection/discussion with the coach about what happened and how to improve next time the task is carried out. This is the part of the process where the coach and coachee meet to discuss the experience that the coachee has had and how the coachee can build upon this experience in order to improve his or her performance.

Key information that will feed into this stage of the process is:

The coachee’s perception of what happened and how he or she performed.

The coach’s observations.

Comments and observations from third parties, eg customers, line managers, colleagues – gathered by the coachee.

Comparison of the output of the activity to the required standard.

**What you do**

This is the point where coachees may start to feel vulnerable. They may feel as if you will be judging them or getting them to confess their weaknesses. Therefore, overcome some of these anxieties by starting with a reminder of the purpose of your discussions.

Explain to coachees that this is an important part of the learning process, the purpose of which is to review their performance during the activity with a view to assessing how near they are to achieving their coaching goals. To this end it is important that the coachee is open, honest and willing to discuss what happened. It may be a useful time to remind coachees that you are there to help and not to criticize or judge.

The whole point is to review what happened, the outputs and feelings, and compare them with the required performance outcomes. So it is important to revisit the original purpose for the coaching and review against your objectives.

**Tips to help your coachee relax**

Arrange to meet in a neutral place.

Allow sufficient time for a prolonged discussion.

Focus your attention fully on the coachee – leave all your day-to-day distractions at the door.

Use open questions to encourage discussion.

Remember the impact of your body language and tone of voice.

Ensure that the environment is comfortable – consider heating, lighting, seating, availability of refreshments etc.

Your role as a coach is to help progress the review discussion to encourage the coachee to evaluate his or her own performance – using your skills and qualities of questioning, listening, challenging, encouraging, observing and giving feedback to support the process.

There are three phases to this discussion. They are:

Discussing what happened during the experience. Considering the facts and the implications of what happened.

Discussing why things happened the way they did. Coming up with a set of theories about the experience.

Discussing what might be done differently, how this will benefit the situation and consider what needs to be repeated.

**What comes first – self-evaluation or feedback?**

Self-evaluation is the art of reflecting on your own performance in as objective a way as possible. It involves thinking about what went well, what difficulties you experienced and what you would do differently next time. Feedback involves a third party describing to you what he or she heard or saw, the impact of this and what he or she would like to see in future.

So, should you get the coachee to self-evaluate and then give feedback or do you give feedback and then get the coachee to self-evaluate? Most writing on this topic advocates using self-evaluation first. The logic seems to be that if the person does this, he or she will be more likely to hear the evaluation and take notice of it. It is considered more beneficial for individuals to identify their own mistakes than to have them pointed out. It is all about ownership – if I identify my mistakes, I will own them and it is more likely that I will correct them; if someone else points out my mistakes I am more likely to get defensive and cling on to the old way of doing things.

We do not dispute the value of self-evaluation; however, our culture has conditioned us to look outside ourselves to validate what we are doing. A ‘Well done’ from our teacher generally means a good deal more than the feeling of ‘I have done that well’. Even in adult life we all have examples of when we have felt good about something and have been disappointed by someone else’s reaction. On occasions we may even have had the opposite response – we think we have done a mediocre job and someone else tells us it was excellent! In reality most of us want to know what the other people think and until we do we may not be able to give an honest self-appraisal. It is hard to open up and be honest if you think the other person may disagree.

Our conclusions are that there seem to be two options. Firstly, give some overall feedback and then let the coachee self-evaluate, eg ‘Generally I thought you did very well; you picked up on most of the things we planned. What are your thoughts?’. The second option is to ask the coachee how he or she wants to structure the conversation with a statement/question such as ‘I want to hear from you how you think it went; I also have some views of my own. How would you like to do this?’.

Sometimes when you have a specific message to give, self-evaluation used first can muddy the issue or not give you the platform you hoped for. For example, if the performance was poor, and the coachee’s self-appraisal is that it was excellent, you have set up a potential conflict situation, which might have been avoided if you had given your feedback at the start. A second example could be where the coach asks the coachee what he or she could have done differently, the coachee says x, which is not the answer that the coach wanted. The coach then asks what else, which shows the coachee that the coach has something in mind but introduces a guessing game. The motive could be kindness or the coach’s need to be clever.

Fundamentally, your approach depends on the people involved and the situation. What we recommend is that you seriously consider your approach and what is right for the coachee.

**Giving feedback – the coach’s observations**

The word feedback is used to describe constructive comment about actions, situations or issues. This means it can provide praise, as well as point out areas for improvement. Whatever process you use to give feedback, your motive is to help the other person develop. Consider the feedback that you are going to give and ask yourself two questions: Why am I doing this? How will it help the other person?

The following is a list of factors to consider:

Concentrate on the behaviour not the person.

Direct the feedback towards behaviour that the person can do something about.

Be specific.

Use observations not inferences.

Give feedback as soon as possible after an event.

Be clear about your motives.

Give positive as well as negative feedback where appropriate.

Don’t overload a person with feedback.

Before giving feedback, consider the likely reaction of the coachee. Put yourself in the coachee’s shoes – what might he or she say? This will help you to plan and be prepared for whatever might happen.

**Model for giving feedback**

Tell the person what you have observed. Concentrate on performance and behaviour (what we do) rather than personality (what we are). Give specific examples that the person can link to the precise behaviour and circumstances.

Explain the result of what you have observed. For this, you need to ask yourself ‘How did the behaviour affect the situation or people involved? What was the general effect and how did you think or feel?’. This could be a good or negative impact and you need to explain why it was good or bad.

State that you want to look at options for the future. Initiate a conversation about options for improvement or change, or how to maintain good performance.

**Receiving feedback**

One of the challenges of giving feedback is our fear of how the other person will receive the message that we are giving. As a coach, you may need to help your coachee with some tips on how to receive feedback and you need to be prepared to receive feedback yourself.

Coaching should be a two-way process; your coachee may want to comment on how you have performed or behaved during the process and we would encourage you to actively seek this evaluative information.

Some coaches may not ask for feedback because:

They feel that the whole process should be focused on the coachee and therefore they have no right to ask for the feedback.

They believes that they must ‘play the teacher’ and therefore it would not be appropriate to ask for feedback.

They feel insecure in their abilities and therefore do not want to ask for feedback for fear of hearing something detrimental.

All of these reasons are valid; however, the whole principle of coaching is around improving performance and therefore coaches should lead by example.

**Dealing with coachee reactions to your feedback**

Let’s imagine that you have given your coachee some feedback relating to your observations and he or she has reacted badly – having begun by denying that what you saw is what happened, the coachee has now given you a range of excuses for it. The coachee is obviously upset and at this stage he or she is probably being defensive. So what can you do? You should have considered this possible reaction before giving your feedback and ideally have built up a strategy for dealing with it, based upon your knowledge of this person.

However, if you have not – or even if you have and your strategy is not working – the first thing that you must do is ‘centre’ yourself. This may sound like a very ‘fluffy’ term, but what it means is that you must take control of your own emotions about the situation. Remember what you are trying to achieve – what are the objectives of the coaching process? Have confidence in the quality of the feedback you are giving – your feedback is based upon facts and not inferences. Remember that, similar to an angry customer reacting to a member of staff in a shop, the coachee is not reacting to you, but to what they have heard you say or even what they have done. Don’t get drawn into an argument – ‘stay on the same side’.

Once you have centered yourself, consider addressing the behaviour that the coachee is exhibiting now. Move away from the activity and potential arguments of ‘Yes, you did’, ‘No, I didn’t’ and tell the person what he or she is doing and the impact it is having on you and/or the feedback process. At this point you may find the following expressions useful: ‘**I note that** you seem to be upset.’

‘ **It’s almost as if** you think I’m picking on you. ’

‘ **You are** shouting at me. Please stop; I don’t like it. ’

‘ **You seem to feel** very strongly about this. Can we talk about that? It is important to me

that we don’t fall out about this. ’

‘ **My intention was to explain** what I saw. ’

‘ **Tell me** how you feel/what you are thinking now. ’

Having addressed the reaction to the feedback, establish with your coachee whether you can carry on now or need to meet at a later date.

**Self-appraisal – the coachee’s perception**

The purpose of self-appraisal (self-evaluation) is to get the coachee to reflect upon his or her own performance and behaviour. While mainly we will ask coachees to do this in an objective way, an important part of the process is encouraging them to respond to their own intuitions about the situation or activity. It is difficult for any of us to be objective when faced with ourselves! So, in addition to asking them to think about what went well and what difficulties they experienced, they should also ask ‘How do I feel about this?’

To a certain extent, everybody self-evaluates. The question is what people do with the results of their self-evaluation. Are they constructive or destructive? Do they ask themselves ‘What can I learn from this?’ and then move on or do they go over and over their ‘mistakes’ until they are gibbering wrecks who cannot function? The difference is on the focus – are they looking to the future, thinking about next time or are they stuck in the past? The role of the coach is to help their coachees to keep moving towards their desired outcomes.

So, how do we self-appraise? There are many ways in which you can encourage your coachee to self-appraise; however, a simple and straightforward method involves asking a series of questions:

* What happened?
* What aspects of it were positive?
* What aspects were negative?
* Why were they positive and negative?
* What do I want to replicate next time?
* What do I want to avoid next time?
* How will I do this?

Ideally the coachee will be able to work through these questions and then discuss ideas with you, the coach. However, we all know that this is not an ideal world and you may need to ask these questions and challenge the coachee’s answers during the subsequent discussion.

Another technique is to use learning logs or reflective journals. A learning log is a tool to assist reflection. Just as with a personal diary, it is rare that the coachee will be able to write notes about the activity as it is happening. However, it is vital that the coachee completes the learning log immediately on completion of the activity – the coaching plan should therefore include time for completion of the learning log.

One suggestion is that the coachee uses a learning log *pro forma* similar to that which the coach has used for his or her observation notes – this will make it easier to discuss and compare thoughts during review meetings.

**Third-party feedback**

We have already recommended that you do not pass on third-party feedback to your coachee. If third-party feedback is to be involved then your coaching plan should include the coachee collecting this feedback; however, you will need to discuss it at your review meetings.

Be prepared for different reactions from your coachee to this type of feedback. Imagine a scenario where the coachee thinks he or she has done well but a customer or colleague thinks the opposite – who is correct? It could be that the other person is measuring the coachee against different standards or has different expectations; in which case, neither is right or wrong. You and your coachee need to discuss why the difference exists; look again at the facts and why the coachee thinks the experience has gone well. This is where you need to ask some probing questions about what really happened.

**Planning for improved performance**

This is the point where you need to pull the evidence and reflections together and ask ‘What does it all mean?’ within the context of what we are trying to achieve. Scientifically, this could be as simple as listing the original objectives, putting evidence next to the objectives to show where the coachee did and did not meet the criteria and noting the gaps.

In reality, it may be harder, as some of the evidence may not easily link to the objectives or there may not be sufficient evidence that the desired performance goals have been achieved. In the first instance, the implication is that the coaching plan was flawed and/or the methods chosen were inappropriate. In the second case, a lack of sufficient evidence means that there is a need to redo the task and collect more – perhaps targeted at the specific things missed the first time. In both cases, it could be a reflection on the quality of evidence – perhaps the observer missed some elements of behaviour or the coachee is not being truly honest. When you have considered the experience from all angles and discussed why things happened the way they did then it is time to move on to action planning. You are ready to think about what needs to happen next time.

You now begin to highlight options for action. At this point you will have a list, arising from the activity and subsequent analysis, of what worked for the coachee and what did not produce the desired results. This list is a valuable asset as it tells the coachee what he or she needs to do – it provides information about how close the coachee is to achieving the coaching objectives. What you need to do now is look at all the gaps and come up with options for closing them. In addition to this you will be looking at what the coachee has done well and how this good performance can be maintained. This is then going to be turned into a plan of what the coachee will do next time he or she carries out this job or task.

The art to this stage is creativity – producing ideas, thinking ‘outside the box’ and looking at all the possible routes to the required outcome. Your role as coach now is to:

* encourage creativity;
* maintain a non-judgmental attitude about the ideas;
* facilitate the coachee to produce ideas;
* offer suggestions;
* write all the ideas down.

Your job is to encourage the coachee to produce ideas and stop him or her discounting or selecting options until later. In order to do this, you must have an open mind yourself and not be thinking that there is a right or wrong answer (or if you know there is a right answer, you must allow the coachee to get to the next stage where he or she will explore the pros and cons of each option).

Hence the requirement to ask open, and sometimes challenging questions, such as:

* ‘What could you do?’
* ‘What needs to happen?’
* ‘What didn’t you do this time?’
* ‘What else could you do?’
* ‘What other options did you have?’
* ‘If you didn’t do that next time, what could you do instead?’
* ‘What do you wish you had done?’

It is your role to stop the coachee coming up with one solution and deciding that that is the only way forward – selection comes later.

There may be times when coachees have no ideas – they are not happy with how they have performed but can’t see options for changing their behaviour. In this situation, you want them to think about what is unsettling them; you may need to return to the evidence – ‘This is what you did, what happened and how do you feel about it?’ This in itself may help them identify alternative behaviours and strategies.

**Dealing with reactions to feedback**

If the person disagrees constructively:

* Listen, check your facts, get additional information.
* Give the coachee time to think over your comments.
* Be prepared to change your ideas.

If the person shifts blame:

* Ask why the coachee does this.
* Listen carefully.
* Ask what help the coachee needs to give him or her confidence.
* Ask how this help can be given.
* If the person loses his or her temper:
* Listen.
* Do not argue.
* Terminate the discussion and continue later.

If the person is passive and unresponsive:

* Ask why the coachee is taking this attitude.
* Give the coachee plenty of opportunity to talk.
* Watch for any interest.
* Explain and re-explain the constructive purpose of the discussion.
* Ask plenty of open questions.

*New training or coaching needs come to light.*

**Stage 6: Ending the Coaching Relationship**

**Overview**

A coaching relationship should have a start and end point. Ending the relationship will mean that the coach is ready to continue without your support, not necessarily that he or she has finished developing. You may continue a relationship with your coachee, especially if you are the person’s line manager, but it is important to highlight the end of the coaching process so that you are clear about the purpose of future interactions.

By the end of this stage of the coaching process you should have the following outcomes:

An evaluation of the coaching programme.

Actions to include on your own development plan as a coach.

**What you do**

You only evaluate and end the relationship when all the learning objectives have been met.

You are evaluating in order to assess whether you have achieved what you set out to achieve in terms of meeting the original development need. By the very nature of going through the process you will be evaluating against your objectives continually, as you progress.

Additionally, you will want to find out how you did as a coach. To do this you will probably employ some of the review techniques that you encouraged your coachee to use.

You and the coachee may choose to celebrate the end of the relationship.

**What could go wrong**

*The coachee does not want to end the relationship.*

This may be because the coachee suddenly loses his or her confidence when you say that the coaching has finished. The coachee has been performing confidently up to this point, but is now scared to continue completely alone. It may be that the coachee does not want to take final responsibility for performing the task or job and as long as the person can claim to be in a coaching relationship he or she will not have to. You will need to use your judgement and knowledge of the individual and decide whether you are going to gradually wean him or her off the coaching sessions or stick to what you have said and withdraw totally and immediately.

**Recommended literature:**

1. Julie Starr. The Coaching Manual. The definitive guide to the process, principles and skills of personal coaching ch 5
2. The Coaching Handbook: An Action Kit for Trainers & Managers by Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford ch 9-11
3. Wilson, Carol (2007) Best practice in performance coaching: a handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals, and organizations ch 4

**Lecture 13. Barriers to coaching**

**Physical and environmental barriers**

The type of room you use can make a real difference to a coaching session. When I coach within business I have less control over where I’ll be coaching than when I coach within my own premises. I’ll request a private, quiet room of a reasonable size and location but I don’t always get it! It’s then up to my own judgement as to whether to attempt the coaching within that environment or not.

**Fatigue**

Some barriers relate simply to the state of the coach. Avoiding fatigue can become a problem, especially when coaching sessions are quite long or a coach is doing many different sessions in one day. Fatigue can cause a lack of concentration, poor retention/memory, lack of patience, inflexibility, etc. The experience of dealing with a worn-out coach isn’t great for the coachee either. The coachee may view the coach’s low energy as disinterest, boredom or a simple inability to listen properly. One solution obviously lies in scheduling a reasonable amount of sessions in one day, and allowing time between sessions to recuperate. For example, a coach might schedule four 11⁄2 hour sessions, with 15 minutes between each session. In theory, this leaves the coach enough time to take a walk, grab a drink, and relax a little. In addition, the coach would schedule at least a 45-minute lunch break, to enable them to recuperate even more.

**Barriers relating to the coach’s behaviour and belief**

* Too much talking - For the coachee, silence is often a good thing.
* Emotional states - Sympathy as an emotional state, when empathy seems cold
* Seeking to control or dominate the conversation - Collaborative coaching is based on encouraging the coachee to explore their own thoughts or experiences in a way that promotes insight and learning.
* **Needing to be ‘right’ -** If a coach makes a mistake or gets something wrong, they should deal with it in a mature, unattached way.
* Playing ‘fix-it’
* Assuming your experience is relevant
* Looking for the ‘perfect solution’ - Personal coaching is usually an ongoing process, where insights
* and learning can emerge as much between coaching sessions as they do in them.
* **Trying to look good in the conversation**
* **Strategizing in the conversation -** If the coach is busy strategizing, they are not fully present with the coachee and are not being authentic in their views.
* Focusing on what not to do

Much of the skill of coaching lies in what a good coach doesn’t do, as well as what they do. Some behaviour is counterproductive to the coaching process, and simply gets in the way of a great conversation. Some of these are simple behaviours, like talking too much, whilst others relate to the coach’s belief, e.g. a need to be right, or find the ‘perfect solution’.

Once we become aware of these behavioural barriers, we are able to let them go. This follows a three-step process:

1 To become aware that we’re doing or thinking something that’s not working.

2 Acknowledge that – and give it up, i.e. let the thought go.

3 Substitute or refocus with another more effective intention or behaviour.

So key to avoiding these barriers to effective coaching is an ability to develop an intuitive sense of when we’re doing them. As I’ve mentioned before, this begins with awareness. This includes awareness of the pitfalls, which potentially begins by you reading this. Then develop this awareness by consciously noticing your own tendencies to adopt these behaviours. First, create a focus for just one of them, e.g. playing fix-it, in your next conversation with someone who appears to have a problem. Make it a game to catch yourself doing it, then decide to give up doing it.

Over time, you won’t have to wonder if you’re doing it, as your subconscious will let you know. Intuitively, you may get a feeling or thought that you’re not comfortable with the conversation. If you attend to that thought, you’ll probably notice what it is that you’re doing. At that point, simply acknowledge the realization, give up doing whatever you’re doing, and move on, letting the thought go.

*The power of substitution*

One way for a coach to let go of a thought is to replace it with another thought in order to refocus their mind. For example, if a coach notices herself playing fix-it, she might remind herself, ‘Just let the solutions emerge.’ Alternatively, if the coach notices that they are talking too much in the conversation, they might silently say, ‘listen and focus back on them.’ It’s rather like noticing that you’ve got a lamp shining on the wrong side of a room. By moving the light you illuminate the appropriate area, whilst returning the other side to darkness.

**Recommended literature:**

Julie Starr. The Coaching Manual. The definitive guide to the process, principles and skills of personal coaching ch 6

**Lecture 14. How to create a coaching culture in organizations**

Third-party Initiated Coaching

**Overview**

Coaching is sometimes initiated by someone other than the coachee or the coach. In this case there are some things that you, the coach, will want to consider. These will include how much involvement the third party wants to have in the coaching process and how much you are prepared to allow. There will also be issues of confidentiality between you and the coachee and the possibility that the third party and the coachee may have different agendas.

If a third party has initiated the coaching, the coach should have a conversation with this person to establish the exact reasons for the request. The following list of questions may be helpful here:

* What makes you think that this person will benefit from coaching?
* What specific behaviours have you noticed that you would like to see changing?
* What do you want this person to be able to do better?
* What is the person not doing that you believe he or she is capable of?
* What achievements do you see this person being able to make as a result of coaching?
* What specific incidents can you describe that have led to this request for coaching?
* What have you told this person about your request for coaching?
* Why have you chosen coaching, rather than other methods of development?
* What support will you be able to give this person during the coaching period and beyond?
* What do you think the impact of any changes in this person will be on your team and on others with whom the person comes into contact?
* How do you plan to deal with this impact?
* What feedback are you expecting to receive from me and from the coachee?

It is important to establish whether the third person has told the coachee that he or she is being nominated for coaching. The coach should not be the one who tells the coachee that he or she needs coaching. This is the job of the third party, usually the line manager – in reality, however, the line manager may hope that you will take this on as part of the job of coaching. This is a crucial part of the process of preparing the coachee. Imagine the problems that might arise during your first contact with the coachee if that person did not know that he or she was a candidate for this type of development! It may be that the line manager does not feel able to give the coachee the feedback that is required and therefore the coach will need to do some work with the line manager before getting involved with the coachee.

**Establishing the coaching contract**

The coaching contract is the agreement that you have with the stakeholders. Very often this will be in writing. Whether you are an in-house coach, or you have been commissioned as an external

provider, some ethical issues may come up for you. Who are you responsible to? At one level your main responsibility is to the coachee; you will be working with the coachee on a one-to one basis, you will be gaining his or her trust and potentially sharing confidences. On another level, when asked to coach by a third person you are in effect being contracted to complete a task by that person and therefore you are accountable to him or her. There may be things that you are told by the third party, or which you are aware of because of your role within the organization, that you cannot pass on to the coachee. *You* will need to decide what to do, probably on each occasion, but with consideration to your own values, the organizational culture/needs and the precise nature of your relationship with both coachee and third party. These following areas would be included in a coaching contract.

**Agreeing objectives**

An important issue is whose objectives you will be working to. Regardless of the briefing that you receive from the third party, you will still complete all the stages of the coaching process, including analysing the coaching need and setting objectives for the programme with the coachee. Potentially, therefore, there may be some conflict or differences between what the coachee wants to achieve and what the line manager thinks the coachee should achieve.

Your role is to negotiate, and perhaps mediate, between coachee and line manager until all three of you can agree on a set of objectives for the coaching programme. This sounds easy, but it could take a long time, involve a number of meetings and may even result in the cancellation of the coaching altogether! The coachee must completely buy into the coaching objectives for the process to be successful.

**Feedback**

The contract should establish what feedback the third party will receive. Experience suggests that line managers and other stakeholders will want feedback on how the coachee is doing. You have a responsibility to provide feedback to them; the issue is what type of feedback you will give and how much detail you will go into. This is part of your initial negotiations and all parties should agree before the coaching programme begins. The coachee must be made aware of what feedback you have promised to give to whom. One option in dealing with this situation is to encourage the

coachee to give the feedback; this could be part of the learning process for the coachee and is particularly important if the third party is the line manager as the coachee should be discussing his or her progress with the line manager. There will be times when the third party still wants you to give him or her feedback; at the end of each coaching session, agree with the coachee what you will each report back on.

**Support for the coachee**

What support is the coachee going to get back in the workplace, both during and after the coaching programme? It is important that as the coachee makes changes in behaviour and performance, he or she is given positive encouragement and reinforcement. Equally if the coachee is focusing on specific jobs or tasks, he or she should be given the opportunity to continue to carry them out during and after the coaching. Some changes are difficult to make, especially if they concern making changes about ourselves or jobs that we have done for a long time; this change process can be helped or hindered by the way the people around us react to it. Identify the support available for the coachee whilst talking to the person who initiated the coaching, and be prepared to pass this information on to the coachee.

In summary, if a third party approaches you to provide coaching, take the following steps: Meet with the third party to discuss what he or she thinks are the needs, how the needs were identified and what the coachee has been told about the needs and the process to address them. This is an opportunity to find out what the third party is expecting from you and what he or she is expecting to see as a result of the coaching.

Clarify the coaching process with the third party. Even when a manager has asked for coaching, it may be that that person doesn’t really know what he or she is asking for. Clarify principles and ground rules for the third party’s involvement in the coaching process. This includes discussing the type and content of any feedback that you will be providing for him or her.

Discuss how the third party can support this process by creating an environment in which the coachee will feel able to change and implement his or her learning. This includes giving personal support to the individual as well as providing the opportunity for the coachee to practise – in some cases that might mean reallocating some of the coachee’s tasks to other people.

Summarize this in the coaching contract, in writing if appropriate.

**Skills**

As we have talked about the process, we have identified the different skills that you will need to use as you carry out coaching. This chapter gives a short summary of each of these skills and a few tips about how to develop them. This alone will not enable you to develop the skills to the required level, but, we hope, will offer enough for you to be able to identify your strengths and areas to include in your own development plan. (You may even want to get yourself a coach!) We have also included a section entitled Skills in the list of Further Reading at the end of the book – the publications listed there are useful if you wish to explore any of the skills in greater depth.

In this chapter we have identified skills and listed them in alphabetical order. However, we have discovered that in reality the skills overlap, sometimes even merge into each other, ie you can’t use one skill without using another.

**Analytical skills**

You will be using analytical skills throughout the coaching process. At each stage you will have some information that you will need to make sense of in order to move you on through the process. One option is that you simply gather the information, mull it over in your brain and let conclusions seep through from your unconscious mind. The other option is to take a more systematic approach to analysis and involve your coachee. The benefits of the latter are that you are creating a structured approach and encouraging the coachee to own the analysis, enabling the coachee to do it him- or herself in the future.

Analysis is about looking at information and drawing conclusions from it. There are a number

of steps that you take in carrying out analysis.

1. Collection of information.

2. Categorization of information.

3. Creating and testing hypotheses, theories and assumptions.

4. Checking hypotheses and theories and drawing final conclusions.

In the coaching relationship, most of the information that you will be analysing will come from the coachee. Some may come from third parties and possibly from task outputs/observations. The real skill is around categorizing the information and drawing conclusions from it. A number of things may inform the categories that you choose: Questions such as ‘What do I want to know from this information?’ or ‘What does this information tell me?’.

Things that the coachee has told you about what he or she wants to achieve from the coaching.

The objectives that you have agreed for the coaching.

Your knowledge of the subject.

Having categorized your information, you can begin to create some hypotheses, theories or assumptions. These will generally come from looking for themes or patterns that run through the information and a number of different sources of evidence all saying the same thing.

**Assertiveness**

Assertiveness is based on a philosophy of personal responsibility and awareness of the rights of other people. Being assertive means being honest with yourself and others. It means having the ability to say directly what it is you want, you need or you feel, but not at the expense of other people. It means having confidence in yourself and being positive while at the same time understanding other people’s points of view. It means being able to behave in a rational and adult way. Being assertive means being able to negotiate and reach workable compromises. Above all, being assertive means having self-respect and respect for other people.

A coach needs to be assertive because generally this type of behaviour is the most effective way to communicate with others. The philosophies of coaching and assertiveness are closely aligned – they are both about personal responsibility and increasing confidence. In order to encourage this in others, it is important that we model this behaviour ourselves.

In order for the coachee to be able to learn, your role is to support his or her self-esteem at all times. Self-esteem means the level of belief you have in yourself and it indicates the level of self-acceptance. It is a way of measuring how worthwhile you judge yourself to be and a way of measuring your psychological well-being.

**Conflict management**

The Chinese symbol for conflict combines two symbols – one of which is danger, the other opportunity. The way you deal with conflict will decide which way it goes. Here are some reasons why you might get into a conflict situation with your coachee:

* You give the coachee some feedback which he or she is not ready or willing to hear and/or you do it in a clumsy or inappropriate way.
* One of you suggests something that the other disagrees with.
* The coachee is not keeping to the ground rules that you laid down together.
* One of you feels that the coaching is finished, but the other does not.

All these situations describe times when you and your coachee are on opposing sides of an argument. A conflict arises when one or other of you is not willing to negotiate or talk about the fact that there is a disagreement.

There is a useful model which helps to look at the source of conflict. Most conflicts have three levels at which they operate. The first level is the ‘issue’ level; this is what the conflict or disagreement is actually about, eg washing up being left in the sink or someone being late for meetings you’ve arranged. The second level is the ‘relationship’ level; this is what the conflict is *really* about – this is also the level that people usually get emotional about. For example, being late for a meeting is about not respecting you, or what the people in the meeting are doing, enough to turn up on time. This is the level that often does not get discussed in conflicts – we focus on the issue rather than admit our feelings or concerns about the relationship. The problem is that because you do not talk about the relationship, the other person may not understand why there is a difficulty. The third level is ‘source’ – the psychology of why things have the impact on us that they do. Because this can be rooted in our childhood or past experiences, we tend to encourage people to stay away from this area, unless trained to deal with these types of issues.

This means that, in terms of dealing with conflict, you need to have a discussion with the coachee at the relationship level, not just the issue level.

If you find yourself in a conflict situation:

* Deal with the situation immediately. Do not let it fester.
* Deal with your own emotions about the situation. Part of this is about acknowledging what your emotions are and why they have come about.
* Get a perspective on the situation, perhaps by taking a step back and looking at it objectively.
* Talk to the coachee, while remaining calm and assertive. Point out the behaviour that is causing a problem and discuss ways in which the problem can be resolved. Acknowledge the coachee’s emotions about the conflict.
* Try to reach a mutually acceptable solution, even if that is agreeing to differ.
* If emotions are running too high to enable you to reach a solution, you may have to call the meeting to a close.

**Facilitation**

The word facilitation derives from the Latin word *facilis*, meaning ‘to make easy’. So in facilitating the coaching process you are making it as easy as possible for the coachee to develop.

TASK – is the subject of the coaching – the reason for you and the coachee being together.

PROCESS – is how something is happening; this is the actual coaching process. The coach will need to listen and observe carefully, being aware of the processes and their impact.

PEOPLE – is the coach and coachee relationship. You may also need to think about relationships with third parties, either stakeholders or other people involved in the task. As the coach, you have the prime responsibility for facilitating the relationship to ensure that the task and process take place.

As a facilitator, you will need to work on all three levels at any one time to ensure that your

work with the coachee is effective and productive. An effective facilitator:

* keeps focused on the task;
* follows the process;
* uses listening, observing and questioning skills at appropriate times;
* challenges perceptions and ideas in a supportive manner;
* maintains objectivity;
* helps others identify options;
* builds useful relationships that work;
* helps draw conclusions about the way forward.

A facilitator basically draws out more than he or she puts in; this means helping the other person access their full potential in the coaching subject area.

**Influencing**

Consider the following dictionary definitions:

‘Influence **–** the power of producing an effect, especially unobtrusively; the effect of power exerted; a person exercising such power; a spiritual influx’.

‘Influential **–** effectively active in bringing something about’.

In his book *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman (1999) includes influence within our social competence (determining how we handle relationships). He defines influence as ‘wielding effective tactics for persuasion’, and explains that people with this competence:

* are skilled at winning people over;
* fine-tune presentations to appeal to the listener;
* use complex strategies like indirect influence to build consensus and support;
* orchestrate dramatic events to effectively make a point.

When you are influencing someone, you are attempting to alter his or her perceptions, views, beliefs, attitudes etc. This means helping the person to make sense of your views, think them through, accept them and then act upon them. It therefore relies upon the way you communicate with that person.

**Listening**

Hearing is only the first part of listening – the physical part when your ears **sense** sound waves. There are three other equally important parts. There’s the **interpretation** of what was heard that leads to understanding, or misunderstanding. Then comes the **evaluation** stage when you weigh the information and decide how you’ll use it. Finally, based on what you heard and how you evaluated it, you react. That’s listening.

Tests have shown that immediately after listening to a 10-minute oral presentation, the average listener has heard, understood, properly evaluated and retained approximately half of what was said. And within 48 hours, that drops off another 50 per cent to a final 25 per cent level of effectiveness – in other words, we quite often comprehend and retain only one quarter of what was said.

**10 keys to effective listening**

In order to *really* listen to another person, use the following points as guidelines:

* Concentrate on the other person. Try to give him or her 100 per cent of your attention. If you feel that you need to take notes, explain what you are doing and why.
* Encourage the other person to feel comfortable with you and to want to speak to you. Nod and smile appropriately, ask constructive and relevant questions that are based upon what you have heard.
* Respond to the other person as detailed above and demonstrate that you have been listening by reflecting back what you are hearing. Use phrases like: ‘What I am hearing is. . . ’, ‘You seem to be saying that. . . ’, ‘I sense that you. . . ’ and so on.
* Non-verbal signals will tell the other person whether you are listening.
* Eye contact will show that you are interested in the other person. Do not stare, but maintain eye contact for the majority of the time that you are in discussion.
* Body language such as that described earlier will help the other person to know that you are listening. You should also adopt an open, interested position. Turning away from the person or folding your arms will send messages of disapproval and may cause the person to ‘dry up’.
* Speech rhythm/tone/silence all have an effect on the way in which people feel about communicating with you. If, when you speak, you do so in a hurried and rushed fashion, then the other person will feel as if you do not have the time to listen to him or her. Your tone of voice can either pass on the message that you are listening or that you are impatient and wish to move the conversation on. Silence can be used very effectively to prompt the other person to speak to you.
* We are often afraid of silences and therefore try to fill them with conversation; this temptation is best avoided.
* Ask questions relating to what you have been told. This will assist in clarifying and in encouraging the coachee to give you further details.
* Try to remain objective and neutral as you are listening – avoid relating your own experiences to those that you are hearing about – ‘I remember when a similar thing happened to me. . . ’ will not be helpful when you are focusing your attention on the speaker and his or her experience.
* Listen for recurring themes in what the person is saying to you. Does the speaker repeat the same phrase? Does he or she refer back to a specific situation? Ask questions relating to any themes that you are hearing.
* Recap on what you have heard the speaker say to you at the end of each session.

**Reflection and paraphrasing**

Reflection and paraphrasing are methods of feeding back to the speaker the information that you have just been given. When you reflect back what someone has been telling you, you relay to him or her the **whole** of the message that you have just received. The whole of the message (as indicated previously) comes not only from the words that the speaker is using, but also from his or her tone of voice and body language.

To paraphrase is to express what you have been told in other words. Paraphrasing is a useful tool when you wish to check your understanding of what the speaker is telling you. For example, the speaker may be describing a particular procedure to you. When you paraphrase what you have been told you will describe the procedure to the speaker, but using your own words to explain your understanding of what you have been told. In summary, an effective coaching session will have a balance of talking and listening – the coachee will do most of the talking, the coach will do most of the listening.

**Observation**

The starting point for observation is to have a clear view of what you are trying to accomplish. What do you need to look for in order to achieve the coaching objectives? What information are you trying to gather? If there are laid down standards for the way in which a task is to be completed, you should always take this into account when carrying out your observation. Treat every observation as a separate event – even if you are observing a task that you have seen several times before. If you don’t do this, the danger is that you may become complacent and assume that you are seeing something that you aren’t. Every situation is unique and therefore there will be differences from the last time the task was carried out – focus on what you are seeing this time and what you can learn from it.

**Primacy and recency effect**

This is where you remember what you saw at the start and end of the observation, but forget what went on in the middle. Timing your note-taking will help you with this.

**Most significant events effect**

This effect occurs when you base your assessment of the coachee’s performance upon one or two significant events that take place during the period of your observation, rather than the whole performance. Taking comprehensive notes across the whole period of the observation will help lessen this effect.

**Halo effect**

This is where one good behaviour or action influences you into believing that the person you are observing is a saint, ie the coachee can do no wrong and everything has gone perfectly. Having clear criteria for your observation and maintaining your objectivity will lessen the chances of this.

**Stereotyping**

This is where your impression of the coachee, based upon your general observations about ‘this type of person’, colours your view on what happens. If you have already made up your mind that the coachee is good or bad at something you will only observe behaviour that reinforces that view. It is important when observing that you note both positive and negative behaviours and also that you try to discover any of your personal biases before the observation session. Another way of lessening the impact of this is by noting what you saw, rather than making a judgement about it.

**Central tendency**

This effect occurs when you are using a rating scale against which to assess the performance of the coachee. Rather than give a rating at either end of the scale, you may be tempted to rate the coachee at the middle. Your motivation here may be that you do not want to give the coachee difficult feedback or that you do not want the coachee to become complacent about his or her performance. It may also mean that you are not assessing the coachee against the appropriate scale. Whatever the reason for this effect, it can be overcome by making notes about the reasons for your ratings and/or by avoiding assessment against a rating scale.

**Leniency/severity effect**

This occurs when the observer is not fully objective about the coachee’s performance, but judges the performance too kindly or too harshly. In order to keep this effect to a minimum, always bear in mind your reasons for observing the coachee, make notes of what you are actually seeing and hearing and remind yourself that you are attempting to be an impartial observer in order to give objective feedback to your coachee.

**Cloning effect**

When a coach has very fixed ideas about the way in which a task should be carried out, he or she is in danger of exhibiting the cloning effect – this is where the coach judges the coachee only in relation to the coach’s own way of doing things. One of the best ways to avoid this effect is to discuss what you will be looking for before the observation takes place and to agree the standards with the coachee, based upon what he or she wants to improve and the way in which he or she wants to do this.

**Planning and prioritizing**

Planning skills are about identifying what you want to do and deciding, in small steps, how you are going to do it. The skill of planning is breaking down a task into key steps, putting them in the right order and then allocating time and other resources for each step. Successful planning involves:

* Identifying the overall aim or goal – where do I want to go?
* Writing outcome or success statements – how will I know when I have got where I want to go; what will it look and sound like?
* Identifying what actions, I need to take – how will I get there?
* Prioritizing the actions required – what do I need in order to take each action? What equipment, money, time or people are required? Which actions must I take first?
* Reviewing priorities within the plan based on resources needed, which might involve reordering the steps based on availability of resources.
* Deciding how I will review my plan, both during and after implementation.

The priority of action steps will be influenced by dependencies, ie whether one thing needs to happen in order for another to take place. The other traditional way of prioritizing actions is by assessing their urgency and their importance: urgent actions are things that need to happen now, or within an immediate time frame, in order for the effect of that action to be valid. If an urgent action is not taken at the point of it being urgent, it is unlikely that you will need to take it at all. You might need to take a larger but different action, or not do anything because the moment is lost. Importance is measured in terms of the impact of the action, how vital it is to the achievement of the goal. Therefore, all tasks or actions can be viewed as being:

urgent and important;

urgent and not important;

important and not urgent;

not important and not urgent.

As a coach, you need planning skills in a number of ways. These include:

fitting coaching time into your diary and around other responsibilities that you have;

planning the coaching programme with your coachee;

planning each individual coaching session.

The coachee needs to do the same planning; and sometimes your plans, and the priority level you have given to actions, may not match the coachee’s. There may be times when, in the greater scheme of your life, attending the coaching session is not as important or urgent as other things; however, remember that if you decide to move the coaching session, this may adversely impact your relationship with the coachee. This isn’t to say that you must never move a coaching session, only that this needs discussion and explanation.

All plans need to be flexible, in order to take account of the unknown or the unexpected. You can achieve this by building in contingency (or buffer zones), and by reviewing plans regularly with your coachee. Particularly check out if you have missed any action points that now need to be included, and that your coachee is comfortable with any deviation from the original plan. At the start of each coaching session, you will agree a broad plan for the time you have with your coachee; as the coach it is your role to ensure that time is managed according to the plan, and if you deviate from the plan, you bring it back on course or agree a new plan.

**Questioning**

The purpose of using questions is generally to encourage another person to provide you with information. In coaching situations there is an additional purpose for which questions may be used and that is to encourage the coachee to think about something.

Questions should be:

Simple – words used should be easily understood.

Short – longwinded questions may be misinterpreted.

Questions should be put:

Logically – they are less confusing in a logical sequence.

Singly – put one question or make one point at a time.

There are different types of questions, which have different purposes.

**Open questions**

Open questions are used when you wish to encourage the other person to talk to you and in doing so offer large amounts of information about the subject. This type of question is also used when you want the person to think widely around an issue or topic.

Famously, open questions begin with Kipling’s ‘Six Serving Men’; we prefer ‘The Magnificent

Seven’: Who? What? Where? When? How? Which? Why?

As a result of asking an open question, your full attention is necessary and you will need to

observe, listen to and check everything in order to truly understand what you are being told.

There are other words that are not questioning words which can be used to elicit information

such as ‘Explain. . . ’, ‘Tell me. . . ’, ‘I’m interested in knowing about. . . ’ and ‘Talk to me

about. . . ’.

**Closed or narrow questions**

These are questions that invite only a short, confined or even one word reply. They often restrict the information obtained to within the wording of the question. To most closed questions, there is a right or wrong answer. Many people frown on closed questions, but they do have their uses. They are useful when:

* seeking a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ answer;
* selecting between alternatives;
* checking identity;
* clarifying a point.

Examples of closed questions are those starting with:

* Are you. . .?
* Did you. . .?
* Was it. . .?
* Can you. . .?

**Leading questions**

As a rule, in coaching, you should avoid using questions that may suggest the answer in their wording, that is, leading questions. For example, ‘Did it fail because you need more practice?’. Coachees may give the expected answer just to be helpful, because they are confused or because they are frightened. They may believe that you know more about a subject than they do and feel unsure or foolish to contradict you. Leading questions may easily put information in their minds about things that they do not know for themselves, or produce ideas they have not previously formulated. However, leading questions can be useful to summarize or confirm information, eg ‘So what you are saying is. . . ?’.

**Echoing**

This is the process of repeating a phrase or the last few words of a reply. Its effect is to act like a question to prompt elaboration of a specific point and invite the other person to continue speaking about the subject. Echoing can be particularly effective when a person who has been talking freely, stops speaking. Using echoing shows that you are listening and encourages the person to continue.

Select relevant phrases or words and do not overuse this technique. Mindless repeating of words and overuse will have the opposite effect to what you intended and can show that you are not really listening. You should take care that any emphasis you place on words repeated does not unintentionally indicate any judgmental feelings about the other person.

**Use of silence**

Whilst not strictly a question, silence can be used supportively or to prompt a reluctant person to speak. Silence can feel uncomfortable for both people: there seems a natural urge to fill pauses or

gaps. However, you can learn to use silence. The selective use of silence can be a powerful tool to prompt a person to speak. When a natural break seems right, a speaker will look at the listener and pause to allow the other to speak. By using an encouraging gesture and not speaking, the listener invites the person to continue. You should allow both the other person and yourself space and thinking time. You both can then assimilate information and formulate questions or replies. Breaking eye contact may encourage this to occur. When people concentrate hard they remain silent and normally focus on a neutral space such as the floor or the ceiling. Do not interrupt this process and you may obtain that extra piece of information. In summary, here is a process for getting good information from other people:

* Be aware of the purpose of your discussion and use this awareness to help you focus it on the information that you need.
* Use open questions to expand the discussion.
* When you are looking for specific information, or when you wish to confirm your understanding, use closed questions.
* Use your body language and tone of voice to encourage the conversation.
* Check that what you have heard is what the person meant.
* Summarize your understanding of what you have heard.

**Rapport building**

Rapport is built with other people when they feel as if you understand their view of the world and have respect for it. In neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) there are a number of ideas for developing rapport. Let’s look at some factors that will aid the building of rapport.

**Effective non-verbal communication**

As a coach your non-verbal communication will be the key factor in ensuring that rapport is built with the coachee. Excellent communicators build rapport by paying conscious attention to the use of body language, tone of voice and facial expressions. Rapport may be built by matching the following areas with the interviewee:

* Posture. The position of the body, the legs and feet and weight distribution. The position of the arms, hands and fingers. The way in which the shoulders are held. The inclination of the head.
* Expression*.* The direction and movement of the eyes.
* Breathing. The rate of breathing and position of breathing, ie chest or abdomen.
* Movement. This refers to the pace at which the other person moves and the rhythm of their movements.
* Voice. Pace, volume, pitch, tone and type of words that are used.
* Language patterns. The use of language that is visual (‘I see’, ‘I look at it this way’), auditory (‘I hear’, ‘It sounds like’) or feelings-based (‘I feel’, ‘The impact of this is. . . ’).

Matching these areas in a subtle way gives the message to the coachee that you are like them, that you understand ‘where he or she is coming from’ and in turn this will help the interviewee to relax and open up to your questioning.

**A person-centred approach**

In building rapport with your coachee you must always bear in mind that you are dealing with another human being, an individual who has his or her own needs, wants and experiences. Maslow identified, in *Motivation and Personality* (1954), that we all have a set of basic human needs:

* Physiological stability. The need for sufficient food, water and oxygen.
* Safety and security. The need for shelter.
* Love and belonging. The need for companionship.
* Esteem, competence and prestige. The need for recognition and achievement.
* Self-actualization. The need to become what one is capable of becoming.

**Using and interpreting non-verbal communication**

Our bodies, through posture, gesture and facial expression, are constantly sending messages to others. Most of us interpret non-verbal communication on an intuitive level. Body language can support or discount your verbal communication and therefore it is important for coaches to think about both their own, and their coachee’s, non-verbal signals. Be wary, however, that movements and gestures sometimes have straightforward physical explanations and it is possible to over analyse everything you see the other person doing, eg someone who is scratching her nose may simply have an itch, rather than be telling a lie.

Effective body language for you as a coach includes:

* Facing the person in a way which is not confrontational.
* Maintaining an open and receptive posture.
* Finding a comfortable seating arrangement that respects the other person’s personal space, but enables you to have an open conversation.
* Taking care with your appearance and dressing in a way which is appropriate for your coachee.
* Being aware of your tone of voice and using variety and contrast to enhance your messages. This includes lowering your voice to emphasize important points.
* Matching and mirroring the body language of the speaker without directly copying.
* Showing enthusiasm and sincerity using eye contact, gestures and tone of voice.
* Being aware of facial movements such as smiling, grimacing or frowning. Even small movements such as a raised eyebrow will cause others to make an interpretation of what you are thinking.

When interpreting the coachee’s body language:

* Be aware that the same signal may have a variety of different meanings.
* Treat every element of body language as a message. Consider each element and look for any themes or patterns – it is difficult to properly read a single event, but a cluster of signals may provide you with a more accurate picture.

If you are making an interpretation of any non-verbal communication, it is always worth checking that you have made the right one.

**Recommended literature:**

The Coaching Handbook: An Action Kit for Trainers & Managers by Sara Thorpe and Jackie Clifford ch 12, 13

**Lecture 15. Running a professional coaching practice**

**MARKETING -** Networking v advertising, Dealing with cynics, Selling without selling, Describing what a coach does

**FINDING CORPORATE CLIENTS**

**INTERNET MARKETING –** Websites, Search engines, Small world networks, Pay per click, Marketing copy, Newsletter

**WHAT TO CHARGE**

This is the part that makes coaches cringe. It helps to start by deciding what the job is worth to you:

■ Are you keen to get some testimonials and experience under your belt? Many coaches start off with pro bono (non-paying) coachees in order to build up their confidence and credentials.

■ Or are you so busy that you would like to have fewer coachees? In that case, put your prices up and pass potential coachees who can’t meet your charges on to other coaches. If you only want five coachees a week and have access to more, setting your prices high means you will lose some but get paid higher fees for a smaller number of hours.

■ Is there an organization you have been particularly keen to get into and the work is out to tender? Companies are unlikely to make a decision based solely on cost, but if they like you and you are offering to do the work for less than a competitor they favour equally, you will get the job**.**

**PAPERWORK**

Paperwork is not a word that looms large in coaching, which tends to focus on the ‘being’ and the ‘doing’. However, a small amount of paperwork is beneficial for record keeping, for setting out clear agreements between the parties and for bringing added insight and awareness.

■ coach’s worksheet;

■ coachee’s worksheet;

■ personal coaching agreement;

■ corporate coaching agreement;

■ forms for evaluating the coaching.

**NICHE COACHING**

A ‘niche’ refers to a particular area in which a coach might choose to specialize, such as career, finance, the pharmaceutical industry or weight loss. Opinion is divided on whether there is any advantage for a coach to operate within a niche field. On the one hand, the title ‘career’ coach might cut out coachees who are not looking for that type of coaching; on the other, it will attract those who are.

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Acting professionally as a coach involves a number of areas, the main components of which are:

■ punctuality;

■ well-ordered paperwork;

■ looking the part;

■ respecting the coachee’s confidentiality;

■ fulfilling promises;

■ walking the talk, ie being a good coaching role model.

**ETHICS**

Coaching has a strict code of ethics, and being a relatively new profession, is currently grappling with some tricky questions of conflict of interest between coachee, coach and sponsor organization.

Coaches may hear information from their coachees which the coach feels morally bound to pass on to the coachee’s organization: for instance, if the coachee is acting unethically towards the organization without its knowledge. The coach has a responsibility to the organization which is paying the fee; however, the coachee will have been assured of confidentiality and trusts the coach to abide by this. Deciding what would be the ethical way to behave in a case like this can be extremely difficult, and there is no simple answer. Each coach has to decide how to handle the particular situation according to its circumstances and the people involved. The best advice I can give is that there is always the door. Coaches have the right to terminate the arrangement if they feel they are being ethically compromised in any way, and this can be done openly or subtly, by pleading overwork or persuading the coachee that he or she might find another coach more suitable.

Unlike the medical profession or the priesthood, there is no protection for coaches in law against disclosure. If a coach becomes aware that a coachee is doing something illegal – stealing, child abuse, animal abuse or whatever – he or she can, and probably should, report the person. There may be other avenues available, and the best of all is to raise the coachee’s awareness until the coachee takes ownership in seeking other professional help or ceasing the illegal activity.

**Recommended literature:**

Wilson, Carol (2007) Best practice in performance coaching: a handbook for leaders, coaches, HR professionals, and organizations ch 6