



"promoting excellence & ethics in coaching"

Guidelines for Coaching in organisations

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Guidelines for coaching in organisations

1. Context

Change is constant and inherent in all living and non-living systems and change today is becoming faster, deeper and more complex as environmental transformation increases pace. This is a particular challenge for organisations, which need to develop the capability to manage change in order to remain effective. Human change is at the core of what coaches do and they are well placed to support organisations in managing unprecedented levels of uncertainty.

1.1 Definitions:

Our view here is of the external coach. These definitions also apply where the coach is internal to the organisation, however the nature of the relationship may be subtly different.

i. Coaching

Coaching enables the client to be the best they can be in the areas they choose to focus on.

Typically the client meets with the coach in a 1:1 confidential partnership. The client chooses the focus of the conversation and the coach works with them by listening and contributing observations and questions to help them clarify their understanding of the situation and move them into action to progress towards their goals. (The client brings the content; the coach provides a process, which can apply in any context).

Coaching accelerates the clients' progress by helping them to focus on where they want to go, become aware of blocks, attitudes and aptitudes that affect their choices and by supporting them in developing strategies to achieve their goals. Ownership of content and decisions remain with the client throughout.

There are a number of terms used in coaching and we seek to define them below:

ii. Corporate coaching

This variation of the coaching relationship can be likened to coaching a football team. The coach has the interests of the whole team at heart and is seeking to support the team to achieve its goals. For the team to achieve its goals, each of the players and other members must be aligned to the team goals, and their own goals must be in tune with them. The coach may work with individuals in the team to support them to achieve their goals and / or may work with the whole team to support it in achieving its goals.

The corporate coach has the corporate goals at heart and may work with individuals or teams within the organisation to support them in achieving the goals. Corporate coaches need to have an understanding of the operational dimensions of the organisation, although they will focus on the two elements of People and Leadership.

Executive coaching is a subset of Corporate coaching and focuses on the executive. Executive coaching may be synonymous with Leadership coaching in that Executive coaching is typically with the more senior members or leaders of the organisation.

iii. **Business coaching**

The difference between 'corporate' and 'business' coaching is the size of the organisation involved *and also the type of support from the coach*. Business coaching is typically 1:1 coaching with business owners or managers; the focus of the coaching is the success of the business, which is usually dependent on the performance of the business owner/manager. Typically the business coach will have experience in business and will take the role of a mentor, offering guidance and advice as well as using coaching skills to help the business owner/manager identify solutions.

Where the clients need specific expertise (eg Financial Management), the coach will help them to identify suitable sources of that expertise; in some cases the coach will have the required expertise and in this case can offer the knowledge and expertise as a consultant.

iv. **Executive coaching (Leadership coaching)**

Here the coach works with the executive (or high potential manager) as above in the generic definition of coaching. The coach is committed to the executives' goals. It is the responsibility of the executive and the organisation to ensure that their goals are aligned.

For example, this may involve working within specific areas of leadership development, such as assessment of their leadership style, talents and vision; and / or in skill development areas, such as time management, confidence, impact and influence, leading change. Additionally, the coach can provide an external support system that encourages the executive to deal with the challenges that may arise from change within an organisation.

v. **Psychological Coaching**

Psychological Coaching is a tool used to help Clients overcome psychological blocks. It is used as a coaching tool as and when necessary in all types of coaching situations. Forms of psychological coaching include for example, Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). Psychological Coaching should only be performed by appropriately qualified Coaches and clear boundaries should be agreed at contract stage.

vi. **Group Coaching or Team Coaching**

Here the coaching methodology is used for teams and team development, for example with functional teams or peer groups. Group coaching may address specific processes with the team, eg problem-solving, decision-making, communication, etc

vii. **Specific coaching**

Here the coach offers their services in a context they have expertise in, eg career, health, stress management or outplacement. The coaching process is similar to coaching above in that the ownership remains with the client, *and* the coach often has a proven process for this particular focus and permission to offer information, guidance and advice.

viii. **Mentoring**

In the mentoring relationship the client seeks out an individual with more relevant experience, who will help fast-track the client through the organisation / industry / profession. The mentor

will give advice within the context based on their experience and the relationship is typically ongoing over a long period of time. Mentoring uses some of the same skills as coaching and the process is similar, except that the individual receives guidance from the mentor. The relationship is one of the experienced person passing on knowledge and skills to the individual, who accepts these and decides what to use to help in their own situation. The focus of attention is more on the mentor passing on their wisdom, although based on the individual's agenda.

ix. **Counselling**

Typically an individual will seek a professional counsellor when they experience blockage, due to past experiences, preventing them moving forward. The counsellor works 1:1 with the individual to identify the causes of the blockage and help them come to terms with it and thereby prepare them to move on. Professional counsellors deal with personal issues in much greater depth than would generally be the case in coaching. Counselling should only be performed by appropriately qualified Counsellors and clear boundaries should be agreed at contract stage

x. **Consulting**

The consulting relationship varies enormously. Consultants work on behalf of the organisation and are called in due to their experience in the situation the organisation faces. Typically the consultant will give advice and / or provide processes that the organisation can use to short-cut the route to their goal and benefit from the learning of the consultants. This service is typically provided 1: many and the consultant is working for the organisation, rather than the individual.

1.2 When to use

Coaching is a personal service and is always tailored to the needs of the individual(s). It is flexible, immediate, and focused on a specific requirement. Coaching only works when the client has *chosen* this form of support for their personal development.

An organisation may select Coaching as a development tool to:

- Identify talent and potential leaders and support their growth as part of a retention strategy
- Improve communication, where the blocks are not technical but personal
- Solve problems and improve decision-making
- Support culture change
- Develop Leaders
- Improve management style
- Achieve successful Mergers and Acquisitions
- Fast-track performance
- Support individuals to raise their performance to the next level (eg about to or having promoted them)
- Improve individuals' performance in certain skills, especially where the blockage is not technical but personal.
- Support team development and cohesion
- Support career change and transitions
- Support exit from the organisation
- etc

2 Quality standards

These quality points are designed to help clients choose an appropriate coach and to help new coaches identify what is important to clients.

2.1 Fit for the client's purpose.

The client first has to decide what they want from a coach. The process of choosing a coach will help the client clarify what they can gain from coaching and what the coaching process involves.

2.2 Developing an effective Coach/Client relationship

It's important that the client selects a coach they have confidence in and can work honestly with.

Typically the first session is one where client and coach get to know each other and can test that both feel they can work well together to achieve the client's goals. A coaching relationship involves both support and challenge from the coach and the client needs to feel comfortable enough with the coach to accept this.

2.3 How will quality be tested in this relationship?

The client needs to identify clear outcomes they expect from the coaching, this could include numerical targets e.g. improved team sales, or qualitative criteria e.g. more positive feedback on team working. If the client knows they have an issue to resolve through coaching and is not sure exactly what the outcomes should be, the first session with the coach can be used to define objectives. Additionally the quality of the relationship and how coach and client are working together counts to the likely success.

Indicators of effective coaching technique include:

- Does the coach listen well, are they supportive and non-judgmental yet challenging?
- Does the coach help the client to understand their situation and find their own solutions?
- Does the client feel they are in control?

2.4 Experience, background, training & professional qualifications.

Coaches come from a range of professional backgrounds including: Personnel, Psychology, Management, Training, Counselling, Health and Therapy.

Look for experience and background that show the coach has previously worked with the issues and challenges the client wants to bring to coaching. In many cases experience of a specific industry is less relevant than the breadth of experience a coach can bring to the challenge.

Coaches use different models and philosophies of coaching, the client may ask the coach what model they use and ask how it is suitable for addressing the client's current requirement. For the client, knowing that the coach works to a useful model that they can understand is a test of the coach's quality.

2.5 Professional memberships and supervision.

A coach should belong to at least one association that indicates they are working to certain ethical and professional standards and maintaining their continuous professional development

(CPD). The coach should be able to show you a copy of the standards that they are adhering to.

The coach may participate in co-coaching and/or supervision to support their learning and quality standards. This is a strong indicator that the coach takes their professionalism seriously and is seeking to maintain high quality standards.

2.6 Testimonials, references (evidence of success)

If the client is still in doubt about the credibility of the coach, they should be able to provide references and testimonials from previous clients. Although it must be acknowledged that each coaching relationship is individual and testimonials are essentially only evidence that the coach has experience.

3. Contracting

It is recommended to agree a clear contract and some clear rules and boundaries for the coaching process. This will ensure that all involved can focus on achieving results.

3.1 Contract

This can be a full legal contract or a short written agreement.

At the minimum it needs to cover:

- Fees
- Cancellation and payment terms.

It is also helpful to cover:

- **Organisation of sessions** – Location, length and frequency and how and on what basis contact is made between sessions
- **Commitment to sessions / hours** – Is the coach being contracted on an open ended basis or will a fixed number of sessions be determined at the outset. If open ended, it would be essential to identify review dates
- **Review dates** and the agreed measurements to be used at review and the people to be involved in the review.
- **Terms of relationships** – As outlined elsewhere in this document Coaching involves the coach and client as well as the sponsor (the employer (often represented by HR) paying for the coaching and/or the Line Manager). Depending on the nature of the Coaching other people may also be involved. A clear statement identifying what is expected of each party clarifies the contract
- **Boundaries** - This links with relationships and confidentiality and should identify the purpose of the coach's role and therefore the boundaries of the relationship
- **Confidentiality.** Basics include
 - Existing organisation confidentiality agreements will be adhered to by the coach
 - Coach should be part of professional association and abide by code of ethics, not revealing any personal information.
 - The sponsor recognises the right to confidentiality but may ask for some success measures.

3.2 Data Protection

The coach will take essential notes to support the process and keep records of meetings/contact; however your personal details will not be shared with any outside agency. Storage and use of individually identifiable data must be in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1984.

3.3 Disciplinary procedures

Should you have cause to complain about the coach to a third party, (ie because the issue could not be resolved directly with the coach or through the organisation) you can complain to the association that they belong to. The association should have a complaints procedure to deal with situations where a member has failed to comply with their code of conduct.

4. Relationships and commitments

See diagram following for a map of the relationships.

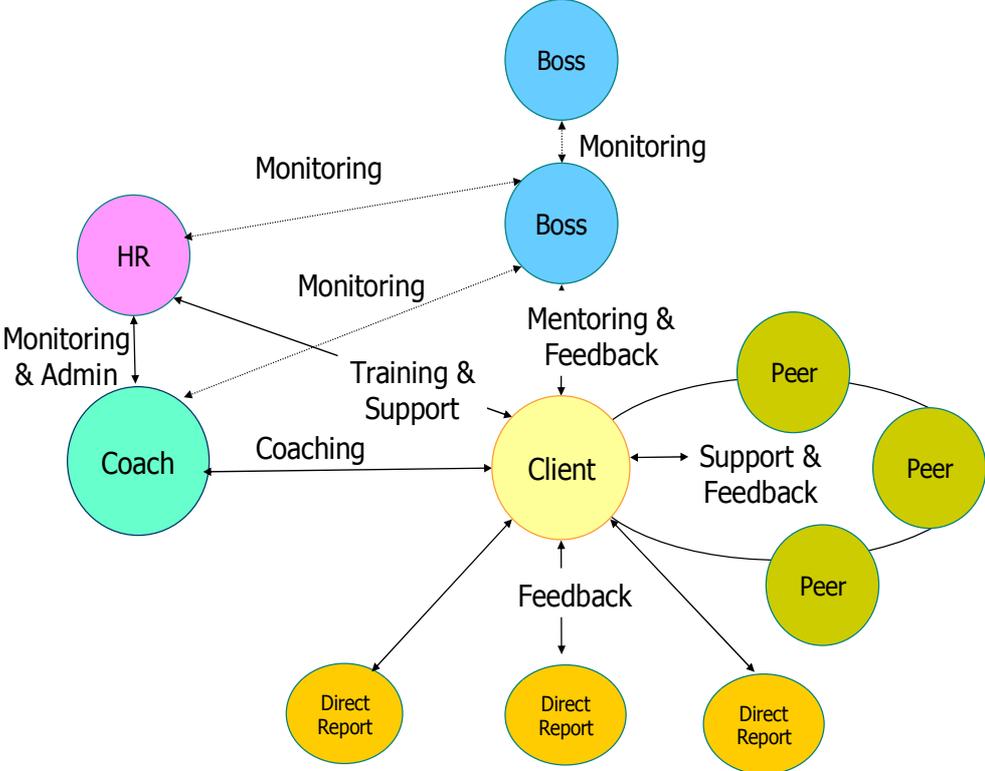
Responsibility	Coach	Client	Organisation
Goals	Committed to client's goals and supports them to ensure alignment.	Sets goals aligned with organisation <i>and</i> with personal needs.	Agrees goals with client and ensures fit with organisational goals
Learning / change	Provides the process to help client change. Maintains own knowledge and skills at high standard to offer client most effective methods of change.	Wants to learn and change and is committed to the process.	Wants to help client learn and change and supports implementation
Confidentiality	Keeps confidentiality on personal issues and respects the organisation's Non-disclosure Agreement	Keeps organisational confidentiality as appropriate, shares information in confidence as s/he prefers	Does not ask for confidential information.
Presence	Attends all sessions promptly and ready	Arrives on time and prepared for all sessions	Makes it possible for client to attend sessions
Plan	Develops appropriate plan with the client, agrees budget, outcomes and timing with organisation	Commits to plan of learning and change	Agrees outline plan and budget with coach and client
Respect	Respects client and organisation and is non-judgmental	Respects coach and organisation	Respects client and coach
Measures	Agrees where client is now and measures for growth / goal achievement with	Agrees current position and measures for growth with coach and in outline with	Agrees measures / evidence for progress with client



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	client	organisation	
Ownership	Coach helps client with process	Client makes decisions and owns the results and takes responsibility for own behaviours	Accepts client decisions and makes organisations decisions
Environment	Creates learning environment for client in the sessions	Establishes goals and seeks change within his/her control	Creates no-blame environment so client can address issues and make mistakes as part of the learning
Responsibility	Coach	Client	Organisation
Relationship	Builds rapport with client and members of the organisation. Establishes permission-based working relationship with client.	Develops open and honest working relationship with coach and facilitates contact with other members of the organisation as appropriate.	Creates effective working relationship with coach as needed to support client and maintains open and honest relationship with client.
Knowledge	Ensures they have relevant knowledge of the organisation as well as maintaining their coaching knowledge and expertise. Is highly self-aware and disciplined in managing the coaching relationship.	Brings appropriate knowledge of the organisation to the sessions. Develops self-awareness as the foundation for personal change.	Provides relevant knowledge on the organisation to coach and client.

Comprehensive picture of the reporting relationships



Courtesy of A. Cailet, © Prescient Leaders LLC, 2004

5. Organisational climate

For coaching to flourish as a means of individual and organisational development the organisational culture needs to encourage learning. For example the following elements indicate a learning culture:

- **Learning environment** – share knowledge and experiences to learn from each other and this is recognised and rewarded
- **Not a 'blame' culture** – can make a mistake and share experience so we all learn from the feedback, people actively seek feedback
- **Actively encourage creativity, ideas generation and innovation** – it is desirable to think of new and better ways of doing things and try them out
- **Respect for the individual** – appreciate diversity and difference as a means of encouraging creativity and change
- **Coaching style of working** – managers use coaching to encourage performance growth, a coaching structure exists, external and internal coaches are accessible to all, there are strong role models of good coaching practice
- **Clear core values** of learning, ownership, results orientation, relationship-building are lived every day
- **Clear understanding of the benefits**
 - **For individual** – Improve self-awareness and flexibility, greater confidence, improve relationships with others, improve managerial and leadership skills, improve ability to deal with change and support others through change, develop clear goals, improve ability to solve problems and make decisions, acquire new skills, improve performance and productivity, learn a process to self-coach and to identify and act on learning needs
 - **For organisation** – improve performance, productivity, quality, business results, improve morale and employee commitment (retention), demonstrate commitment to learning in the organisation and reinforce learning culture, develop coaching capability in the organisation, support organisational change, support other learning and development activity and reinforce the new ways embedding them quickly, support individuals through a personal change (eg promotion)

6. Acknowledgements

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See appendix for Coaching Evaluation Forum

www.associationforcoaching.com

The AC is an independent, non profit organisation with the goal to promote best practice and raise the awareness, standards and professionalism of Coaching while providing value added benefits to its members – whether they are professional Coaches or Organisations involved in Coaching.

Appendix – Coaching Evaluation Form

PART ONE

We would like to know how you rate your Coach on a number of variables covering skills, techniques and attributes.

A. How good was your Coach at...

1 = low 5 = high

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 1 | Keeping agreed appointments | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2 | Allowing you to set the agenda for your sessions | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3 | Keeping a check on the points agreed during your sessions and feeding these back to you including reviewing points from previous sessions | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4 | Encouraging you to use a log or reflection note to reflect on learning experiences | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5 | Sharing experiences and ideas as options for you to consider | 1 2 3 4 5 |

B. How well did your Coach...

1 = low 5 = high

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 6 | Establish rapport with you – listening to what you said and displaying empathy with your thoughts and ideas, giving clear responses and summaries, communicating openly with you etc. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7 | Explain clearly any necessary concepts, information and techniques giving clear, concise and constructive feedback | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8 | Use questionnaires and/or self-assessment profiles (if appropriate) to help you understand yourself better | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9 | Ensure you retained responsibility to solve problems and change your behaviour gaining your commitment to a Personal Action Plan | 1 2 3 4 5 |

C. How good was your Coach at...

1 = low 5 = high

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 10 | Asserting him/herself without being aggressive or passive | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11 | Showing that he/she was knowledgeable, skilful and willing to liaise with other appropriate experts | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12 | Demonstrating good time management practices | 1 2 3 4 5 |

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 13 | Communicating a genuine belief in the potential for people to improve their performance | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14 | Managing your emotions | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15 | Acting as a good role model | 1 2 3 4 5 |

D. How good was the coaching programme at helping you to

1 = low 5 = high

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| 16 | Assess your current levels of competence | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 17 | Improve your performance | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 18 | Become more aware of learning | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 19 | Prioritise your development needs | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 20 | Maximise any learning opportunities | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 21 | Set yourself development goals or targets | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 22 | Monitor and/or evaluate the achievement of your objectives | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 23 | Set yourself new goals | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 24 | Create a Personal Development Plan | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 25 | Feel more positive about your development | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 26 | Raise your morale | 1 2 3 4 5 |

PART TWO

All development initiatives should deliver some business benefits. We would like to know how well you thought the coaching programme worked from this point of view by answering as many of the following questions as possible.

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.
1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree; n/a = not applicable

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------|
| 1 | The provision of coaching demonstrates to me that this company/organisation cares about my development. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 2 | I believe that the coaching I have received has had a direct beneficial impact upon the business/work in my area. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 3 | My motivation has increased as a result of the coaching. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 4 | My coaching has helped me sort out personal issues which may otherwise have affected my performance at work. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 5 | I am more likely to stay with the company/organisation as a result of receiving coaching. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 6 | It would not be difficult for me to demonstrate how coaching has improved my personal performance at work. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 7 | My performance at work has definitely been enhanced as a result of my coaching. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 8 | My coaching has directly resulted in business benefits. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 9 | My coaching has indirectly resulted in business benefits. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |

PART THREE

How far did your coach help you to reach your agreed outcome measurements?

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3 | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Are there any other personal or business benefits you believe have been derived from your coaching?

Please add any further comments

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. It will help us greatly in evaluating the Coaching programme and in providing feedback to your coach.