

## **Introduction to Coaching in general ...**

*A personalized view of coaching freely edited & adapted from Robbie Steinhouse's 'How to Coach with NLP'*

**Coaching is mainly about you talking and me asking you questions. It's about getting clear about the issues you want to work on and goals you want to achieve, then about me asking you questions to direct your attention on the steps that may be useful to take to achieve those outcomes.**

**Coaching is not something I do to you; it is both of us working as equals in a team, working together to enable you to achieve or resolve whatever you bring to a session. It is a 'designed alliance': you as the client take responsibility and ownership for your own progress and the coach is there to support you in this endeavour.**

Traditionally, a **Mentor** is usually someone who has 'been there and done that' and will share their experience of going through similar situations to the one that you currently face. The point of being mentored is to spend some time with someone who is highly experienced in this particular area, so you can be positively influenced by the mentor's attitude.

**Therapy** is more about resolving issues from the past that are affecting your performance, relationships or wellbeing in the present. I am also qualified in a form of applied psychology called NLP that stands for Neuro-Linguistic Programming and if an issue of this type arises, I have various processes we can go through. I am also qualified Clinical Hypnotherapist. I will not go down either of these routes without explicitly first seeking your agreement.

**Consulting** is asking a professional to research your business or organisational processes and present a set of ideas of how these could be improved. Although conducting research of this type is not in the remit of coaching, I am familiar with a number of organisational & psychological models and if I believe one might be useful to you with the issue you face, I will once again ask your permission to explain it. This usually only takes a couple of minutes and most clients find this useful.

**Friendship** resembles coaching reasonably closely: a good friend will listen to you attentively and ask you questions. The differences being that a friend will want to have 'their say' - while in coaching it is a one-way street. Coaching is all about what you want to talk about. A coach does not have any agenda; I am just here for you, period.

**Teaching or Instructing** is the art of giving knowledge to students in the most effective way. It is part guidance, part training and may involve a "coach approach" in many instances. The relationship is based on the teacher having a strong, fundamental understanding of the topic to be taught and the content being presented to the student. The student teacher relationship is very unequal in this respect.

### **Confidentiality**

I want you to know that whatever you say to me during the coaching session will be fully confidential. I will not tell anyone about what you have said, no one at all. As a qualified coach, if it came to your attention that I had breached confidentiality there is a complaints procedure under the ICF and you could get me struck off. I would also ask that if I have a personal story I want to disclose to you, would you likewise be willing to keep confidentiality?

### **Safety**

I want to let you know that coaching is a safe process. I am, an experienced coach and I know what to do. It is like a safe container where the space inside belongs to you, so you can explore whatever you wish to explore. The outside of the container belongs to the coach, so I can remind you of what you wanted to work on and keep you focused on that space if you choose to continue to do so.

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### ***Terms , conditions and money***

Just a reminder: the charge has all been taken care of. If you need to cancel a session, I need at least 24 hours' notice and ideally a little more. If it's less than 24 hours, and it happens regularly, I may choose to report this back to the commissioning agent after some discussion with you first, sorry about that, but I'm very busy.

### ***Style of Coaching***

How do you like to be treated? Here's some ideas:-

- 1. Gaining clarity of issues*
- 2. Understanding what is important and what motivates me*
- 3. Exploring and understanding blocks or obstacles to your success*
- 4. Gaining an insight into who I am, my strengths, capabilities and potential*
- 5. Providing encouragement, support & validation*
- 6. Brainstorming strategies together*
- 7. Helping to identify action and next steps*
- 8. Challenging you with difficult questions*
- 9. Providing honest and direct feedback*
- 10. Making you accountable for your goals*

### ***Challenge and the 'wrong question'***

Is it OK if I challenge you? Is it OK if I ask you what I call the 'wrong question'? What I mean by that is that sometimes when I ask you a question, it may be that you sense it is taking you in the wrong direction. When that happens, just say to me: 'That was a wrong question.' As a coach, sometimes I have a certain anxiety that every question I ask you must be brilliant. With permission to make a mistake, I can say, 'this might be a wrong question, but..' and if you feel it is wrong, you just tell me and don't have to answer it.

### ***Accountability***

As your coach, I offer you optional accountability. What I mean by that is that most of my clients are usually not held accountable or micro-managed. Accountability is also in your control. If you want me to hold you accountable for something, tell me at the end of the session and I will hold you to it in a preagreed way.

### ***Summaries and note taking***

How do you learn? Human beings are principally experiential learners So how will you be able to feed forward any discoveries you make within the session? Usually clients either like to ask me to stop for a minute while they take notes, or like to have some time at the end of the session to summarise and carry forward any actions, make notes, etc. This is better than the coach taking notes for you, as I would record what seemed important to me, rather than what was important to you. It also avoids any confidentiality issues arising from notes I made being sent to the wrong place. Generally I have been taught not to take notes.

### ***Loss of momentum***

I have found that, from time to time, a session can be a bit wishy-washy, as if you are treading water, and you may think that coaching is not worth continuing after an experience like that. But I have found that following a session of that sort; the next session is usually very powerful. What I would like to agree with you is that you will complete the agreed package of sessions so you can properly go through a coaching process and evaluate the entire experience rather than each session individually. Also, I believe in agreeing, an end to the coaching from the outset, so you know this is not open ended. During the final session, we can reflect on how the coaching went and, if it is appropriate, we can agree to continue with another package. Usually I recommend that clients take a little break before continuing. ***That's one of the good things about coaching: it does come to an end!***

*concluded over>*

### ***Legals and Ethics***

Like all forms of HR interaction there are boundaries. Our conversations and communications are absolutely confidential. The only time I may feel compromised is if you share with me something that is illegal. At this point our coaching relationship is terminated. I am an ICF Member Coach and as such I am bound by a Code of Ethics that is clearly defined and published at

