

MAGIC OF COACHING CONVERSATION

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Introduction

Let the conversation flow at its own pace. Don't try to rush it or control it full stop. You need to let it go and be a part of the conversation. ~ Max Weiss

A conversation is like free-flowing water. It moves with its pace, up and down, and if you try to control it, it overflows. It is an exchange of thoughts between two or more people. It has its own pace. Its own flow. It is magic. It needs to be learned, polished, and applied.

Quality coaching conversations are more about listening and asking good questions than talking. It is like 90/10. Do 90% of the listening and 10% of the talking. Ideally, your talking happens in the form of questions that help the coachee discover the answers for themselves. Come, let us discover the magic of coaching conversation.



What is a Coaching Conversation?

A conversation is basically an exchange of ideas and knowledge between two people. This normally involves giving advice and addressing other's problems. A coaching conversation on the other hand is a transition from telling, addressing problems, and giving advice to empowering the other person to own their problems and take responsibility for their actions.

This is done by employing an “ask” strategy, listening, and asking them questions to help them discover their own solutions. There are occasions when you should direct or respond, but Conversations about coaching are about the other person. It's about learning, not about your viewpoint or expertise.

The goal of coaching conversations is to promote actionable thought, growth, and change. As professional coaches, we may not always consider our method of session preparation to be planning because it is something we do naturally. Nonetheless, planning and outlining the conversation you will have with your coachee are critical components of guiding them toward their goals.

NEXT, LET US DISCOVER THE THREE NOTIONS OF A COACHING CONVERSATION.



Three Notions of a Coaching Conversation



Not all conversations are coaching conversations.

- » To begin, a coach-like conversation is highly deliberate and frequently includes pre-thought.
- » Second, a coaching conversation is centered on the other person, his or her strengths and weaknesses, and the characteristics that he or she brings to the discussion.
- » Thirdly, coaching conversations are intended to stimulate thought, growth, and change that result in action.

How to Have A Coaching Conversation

A coaching conversation can be broken down into three steps.

Active listening-

The first step of having a coaching conversation is building your active listening skills. A coach should listen carefully and allow the coachee the space to think, reflect and express themselves. The key is listening to focus on understanding the idea at a multi-level of information that they must tune into their coaching conversation. A coach should be present not only physically but mentally, emotionally, and mindfully to have better conversations.



Consider your response-

The second step of having a coaching conversation is to respond in a thoughtful manner. It does not mean giving quick solutions but rather it is about finding answers through inquiry and exploration. A coach should always start a conversation by asking powerful questions like

- » What else could be a path?
- » What else could you do?
- » Who have you talked to about this?

Be sure to have a comfortable tone when having a conversation, give time for your individual to react and respond and the most important thing encourage them to express themselves.

Never impose your solution-

You are there to help the individual in finding answers, not give him answers to his questions. Shift from the tendency to give advice and solve problems. A coaching conversation is about the process of learning not about providing your own opinion and expertise. The art of having a coaching conversation is a balanced mix of challenge and support

Lead your conversation like this.

- » How would you want to move ahead?
- » What action do you feel is appropriate for you?
- » Do you feel you are right?

Essentials of a Coaching Conversation

Knowing how to engage the coachee in conversation during a session is critical. The introspective nature of coaching conversations enables us to develop and strengthen new neural pathways in the brain.

Both parties leave coaching conversations feeling competent and confident in themselves and appreciative of the other person's support. Here are 4 must-have skills to amplify the value in your coaching conversation.

01

Committed Listening



Committed listening strengthens your relationships with others by focusing your attention on the other person. Your undivided attention demonstrates your respect for the speaker and a sincere desire to engage in dialogue rather than a monologue. Committed listening contributes to the development of trusting relationships. Indeed, committed listening is a necessary component of all coaching conversations. When you are a dedicated listener, you pay close attention to the speaker's verbal and nonverbal cues.

02

Continuing the Conversation Further by Paraphrasing



This is one of those skills that one learns over time. Unless you are a dedicated listener first you can not come to this step.

Paraphrasing is a colloquial term that refers to a concise statement or summary of what another person says. It assists the speaker in articulating his thoughts and aligns the speaker's and listener's thinking. Once you have a better understanding of the speaker's thinking, you will be able to engage him in a more productive conversation. Simultaneously, by listening to him and paraphrasing his statements without offering advice or interjecting your own judgment or story, you've increased your mutual trust. Paraphrasing communicates that you are paying close attention, taking an interest in what he is saying, and comprehending, or attempting to comprehend, his point of view.

03

Asking Powerful Questions



Our language is filled with negativity. You are wrong. That is incorrect. Why don't you think before you act? You must be mistaken. How could you possibly say that?

For many of us, assuming positive intent is a novel way of thinking. Assuming positive intent means that we enter a conversation with a positive attitude toward the other person, and our language reflects this attitude.

Effective questions are open-ended and posed with genuine intent.

One of the most effective ways to ascertain the coachee's intentions is to ask how and why framing the questions around the coachee's intent or purpose. By leaving questions open-ended, you encourage your coachee to consider the significance of their objectives and the steps necessary to achieve them, which is critical for understanding the self-improvement process.

04

Keeping Room Open for Discovery and Feedback



Start your conversation with the mindset that all feedback is a gift.

Giving feedback is a gift to your client, one that you sincerely want to provide, and a great coach must be empathetic. However, because we dislike conflict, we project our own insecurities onto our clients. Alternatively, we avoid initiating the conversation out of a desire to be liked.

Don't forget that empathy and compassion go hand in hand. When you put yourself in the shoes of your coachee, you gain a better understanding of how to best guide the conversation and deliver feedback in a positive, constructive manner.

Here, your **“soft skills”** come into play: how you say something is just as critical as what you say if you want to have an emotionally intelligent conversation. Assure the employee that both of you are working toward the same goal of assisting them in reaching their full potential.

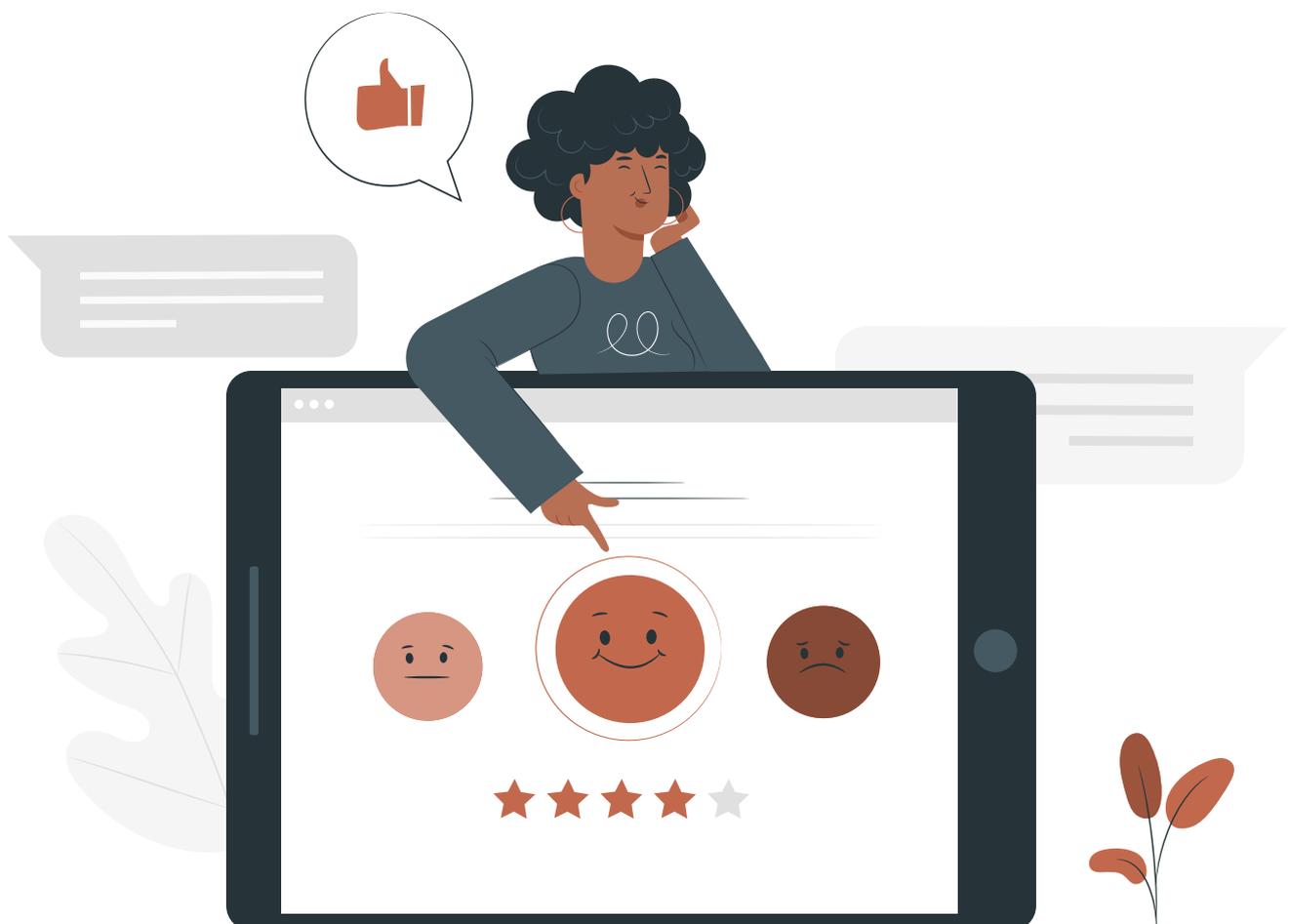
After you've shared your feedback, inquire of the employee what assistance they require from you to carry out the coaching you provided.

If giving feedback continues to make you feel uneasy, try being vulnerable.

A statement such as, "I wish I was more practiced at providing feedback," may establish a foundation of trust and authenticity for the conversation. They're likely already aware of your discomfort – might as well own it!

A clear commitment to results and a heightened trust in the partnership are the end results of any excellent coaching talk. You're laying the groundwork for both of you to grow and succeed in the future.

Productive coaching conversations are within your grasp. Be clear, compassionate, and curious. Constantly seek confirmation and then get a commitment. At times, you may find it difficult to initiate certain conversations for fear of endangering a relationship, provoking anger, or speaking incoherently. True coaching conversations, on the other hand, create space for you and others to reflect deeply, to understand one another's perspectives, and to provide feedback that is not critical of an individual, but rather creates space for personal choice and productive action. The more intentional and inviting you are in your conversations, the more frequently you will experience positive outcomes from your interactions with others.



The GROW Model of Coaching Conversation

Goal - Establish the Goal with these questions:

- » What results do you want to achieve?
- » How would you want to achieve your goal?
- » What is your ideal outcome?
- » Why do you want to achieve this goal?

Reality - Solve the problems with these questions:

- » How would you like to describe this situation?
- » What solution would you give me if I were at your place?
- » What alternative solution have you tried already?

Options - Discuss the options with these questions:

- » What do you think is the strongest solution to this problem?
- » What else could you do?
- » Is there any advantage of this solution?
- » What are the disadvantages of this option?
- » What if this or that constraint were removed?

Way Forward - Help your clients find their way forward through these questions:

- » What steps would you take to resolve this problem?
- » What obstacles might hinder your progress?
- » How can we eliminate these obstacles?
- » How can I help you?

Why Having A Conversation is an important Leadership Skill



1. **Clarity-** A successful conclusion is ensured by establishing the aim of the conversation and ensuring that all parties are on the same page.
2. **Questioning-** Curiosity is expressed through asking questions rather than making statements or providing advice. A good coaching conversation contains 90% questioning and 10% advice. Some examples are as follows:
 - » What do you want to achieve by our next conversation?
 - » What factors do you take into account when planning your work?
 - » What would you have to change in order for...?
 - » What's another way you might look at this?
 - » How was... different from...?
3. **Self-exploration-** A successful coaching conversation will result in the coachee examining their own alternative solutions that will help them unveil their faults without the help of a coach.
4. **Possibility-** Every good coaching conversation starts with the end goal in mind, this opens up new opportunities for bigger and better solutions.
5. **Commitment-** A coaching-style conversation will always assess the coachee's level of commitment to any action they have decided or agreed to take, ensuring that they are not deceived.
6. **Accountability-** Commitments create accountability of action. Once the coachee gets in the action, they need to be accountable for the same.
7. **Action-** Every insight and awareness, as well as every aim, is put into action. This guarantees that concepts are brought to life and transformed into tangible outcomes.
8. **Feedback-** A good coaching conversation requires feedback along with its implementation. This step ensures that the conversation is put in place.

Conclusion



Coaching is more about learning and teaching. In the same way, planning a coaching conversation might seem weird. But, it is one of the most essential skills to develop as a coach. It maximizes your ability as a coach and provides more time for your clients to have a targeted conversation that helps them achieve their goals.

Follow all the necessary coaching conversation requirements. Learn them and develop them in order for your coaching engagement to be more successful.

To sum up, your coaching conversation must have the following aspects:

- » Active listening
- » Selective questioning
- » Helping them find answers
- » Feedback

Amp up your Coaching game by following, and understanding these conversation skills. The key to remember is that you are there to help the coachees find the answers, not give them one.



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