

vibrant**faith**

2022

VIBRANT FAITH

COACHING MANUAL

COACHING CHANGE IN LEADERS, TEAMS,
COHORTS, AND CONGREGATIONS

Coaching is one of many pathways for empowering individuals, teams, and congregations to live into God's preferred future. It's an interactive, spiritual process that involves walking alongside pastors and lay leaders who wonder, "What is God up to in their lives and their ministries?" If done well, it results in developing followers of Christ who bring out the best in others, are able to become unstuck from their dilemmas, and learn how to transfer their ideas and insights into tangible results. Coaching has the capacity to help people paint a picture of their preferred future and then gather the tools, knowledge, and skills they need to turn their dreams into reality. Drawing upon the eight core competencies embraced by the International Coaching Federation, coaches help facilitate change as they bring out God's best in individuals, teams, and churches.

While Vibrant Faith enthusiastically adheres to the ICF's coaching approach and practices, we also understand that relationships are as important as tasks, that stories are as important as strategies, that people are as important as organizations, and that building on strengths is as important as working around weaknesses. Coaching is a continuous process of discovery, implementation, evaluation, and re-imagination rather than a single event or an occasional conversation.

Vibrant Faith's Coaching School is designed to help the new and experienced coaches understand, embrace, and trust the process outlined in the core competencies. We equip coaches to follow the client's lead, and through the use of powerful questioning, guide their clients toward their intended outcomes. Through active listening and powerful questions, a coach can help reveal a client's most pressing issues or uncover emerging possibilities in one's life. You'll find questions woven throughout the Coaching Manual and at the end of every chapter to help you focus on what matters most.

"The essence of executive coaching is helping leaders get unstuck from their dilemmas and assisting them to transfer their learning into results for the organization"

This quote from Mary Beth O'Neil describes our wish for every coach and Coaching School participant. Our goal is to help coaches help clients become unstuck and unshackled from what's preventing them from living their best lives. As you read through this book, may you discover and "try on" new approaches and practices that move clients beyond "what is" in their lives to "what might be?"

Be well and best wishes!



JIM LADOUX
VIBRANT FAITH MINISTRIES
DIRECTOR OF COACHING AND COACHING SCHOOLS

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: What is coaching?	5
CHAPTER 2: The 8 Core Competencies.....	11
CHAPTER 3: Common Coaching Models	27
CHAPTER 4: Using Appreciative Inquiry When Coaching.....	33
CHAPTER 5: Tips for Coaching Teams and Groups	41
CHAPTER 6: Coaching Tips and Truths.....	47
CHAPTER 7: Develop Your Coaching Capacities	53
CHAPTER 8: Marketing Your Coaching Business.....	61
APPENDIX A: Commonly Used Coaching Terms	65
APPENDIX B: Books Used in Our Coaching Courses.....	71
APPENDIX C: Ethical Guidelines/Professional Standards	73
APPENDIX D: 100 Powerful Questions	77
APPENDIX E: 25 Questions to Ask a Mentor	81
APPENDIX F: 8 Types of Coaching Questions.....	83
APPENDIX G: Asset-Based Coaching Questions	85
APPENDIX H: Sample Life Coaching Questions	87
APPENDIX I: Helping Clients Prepare for Coaching.....	89
APPENDIX J: Pre-Work for Coaching Sessions.....	91
APPENDIX K: Questions to Ask at First Session	93
APPENDIX L: Coaching Self-Assessment Form	95
APPENDIX M: Sample Assignments for Clients.....	97

— CHAPTER 1 —

What is coaching?

The International Coach Federation (www.coachfederation.org) defines coaching as “partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.” I often describe coaching as framing conversations through powerful questions to help clients achieve their desired outcomes.

Whether you use the International Coach Federation definition of coaching, or one of your own, you’ll notice that there are some common threads that are woven into these definitions. Typically, there are five elements that “show up” in just about every coaching situation and relationship:

1. **Coaching is a partnership.** Coaches often talk about walking alongside their clients. They serve as dialogue partners who bring out God’s best in the people they coach as they evoke new possibilities and new ways of thinking, being, and doing. This is done in a safe, sacred environment.
2. **Coaching is an accelerant for bringing about transformation.** Coaches have a mindset of curiosity and wonder as they help clients tap into their passions and preferred futures. Through deep listening and powerful questions, the coach helps the other person gain greater clarity about what they really want and what goals and strategy they need to employ to get there.
3. **Coaches maximize potential as they move from what is to what might be.** Coaches look for and develop the strengths and giftedness of the person being coached. They guide people toward developing plans to move forward, learn from their results, and make course corrections as needed.
4. **Coaching focuses on the end result as well as short-term wins and shifts in attitudes, assumptions, words, and actions.** These shifts often include trying on new habits and ways of being, or helping people recognize limiting beliefs that may be holding them back from experiencing a better, brighter future. There’s a heavy emphasis on what clients will do NEXT so that intentions become reality.
5. **Coaching envisions people as full of potential, insights, and wisdom.** Effective coaching draws out the strengths and wisdom of the client. Coaches help clients identify where they can find the resources they need to move forward.

According to Tim Roehl and Steve Ogne, authors of *TransforMissional Coaching: Empowering Leaders in a Changing Ministry World*, a coach:

- C – Comes alongside
- O – Observes carefully.
- A – Asks questions wisely.
- C – Communicates options and resources.
- H – Holds accountable (and cares for the heart).

How is Coaching Different from Therapy, Consulting, and Mentoring?

Therapists, consultants, and mentors contribute to the ongoing success of those we coach. Our clients also use the services of therapists, consultants, and mentors. As a coach, I often help clients identify mentors and consultants that can accelerate their progress toward their preferred futures.

Coaching Versus Therapy

Coaching assumes an overall level of health and well-being and therefore is focused discovery rather than recovery. The coaching process happens in an environment of curiosity and wonder as we seek peak performance and new possibilities in those we coach. Coaching is future-oriented and forward-thinking. Unless there is forward progress, or signs of forward progress, it's probably not coaching.

Coaching Versus Consulting

My coach and mentor, Dr. Felix Villanueva, frequently reminds me that the difference between a coach and a consultant (a role I often play) boils down to how you respond to the following two questions:

- Who is the recognized expert?
- Who is responsible for the outcome?

In consulting, the recognized expert is the consultant. Most people work with a consultant because they believe that the consultant's expertise will benefit them or their organization. The consultant helps diagnose problems and may prescribe a set of solutions. In coaching, the recognized expert is the person or team being coached. Coaching recognizes that the client is capable of generating their own solutions. Coaches make the greatest contributions to the empowerment of others when they repeat three simple words: "I don't know." By admitting "I don't know," the coach helps the client to launch into new solutions, as they tap into their own wisdom and web of resources. Coaches demonstrate their expertise through the way they craft powerful questions that frame conversations in new, thought-provoking ways.

Coaching Versus Mentoring

Mentoring is a learning relationship, generally focused on long term career development. The primary purpose is to drive personal growth; building skills, knowledge and understanding. A mentor shares his or her own experiences and learnings, often accelerating the learning curve of the one being mentored.

There are times when it may seem logical for the coach to play the role of a mentor. If a client seems stuck, sometimes I will ask, "Would you be interested in what other individual organizations have done in similar situations?" I do this very infrequently so that I avoid disempowering clients from finding their own solutions.

What Does a Typical Coaching Session Look Like?

The easiest way to begin to understand the process of coaching is to envision or actually experience a coaching conversation. You'll find that almost every coaching session will include a series of **five sequential steps**:

1. **What would you like to talk about?** This question identifies the general theme or topic for conversation. It narrows the scope of what will be discussed during the session and reminds the client that they are in charge.
2. **What would you like to "take away" from today's session?** The goal is not just to have a great conversation, but also to have one that moves people forward in tangible ways. I refer to these as the "deliverables" that help reveal that coaching makes a difference.
3. **Are we still talking about what's most important to you?** It's easy to get sidetracked and enter into conversations that have little or nothing to do with what the client originally wanted to talk about. Mindful that the client is in charge, coaches periodically check to see if they're still addressing the client's most important issues.

4. **What will you say or do this week to act on your intentions?** Experienced coaches help clients take action within a certain time period. Without specific timelines, action items turn into nice-sounding intentions.
5. **Who can support you or hold you accountable?** Coaches build accountability into the process. They help clients envision who else might be a resource or source of wisdom.

To wrap up a coaching session, a coach may ask the client to share what was most helpful from the conversation or to summarize action items that come out of the conversation. If the coaching relationship is ongoing, a coach will confirm when the next session will be held.

Seven Commonly-Used Coaching Strategies

Building on the five key questions to ask during a coaching conversation, consider sprinkling these statements when appropriate:

1. **Ask the leader to say more.** A good place to begin is to simply invite the person to “say more” or suggest “what else could you . . .” These short yet powerful statements are effective tools when you’re not sure what to say next.
2. **Mirror back what you are hearing and observing.** It’s often helpful for the client to hear what they are saying and see how they are framing the conversation. You can also invite the client to summarize what they just said.
3. **Ask the client to rate a situation.** Ask questions similar to these: “On a scale of 1-10, how important is this project to you right now?” In a similar vein, ask: “On a scale of 1-10, how passionate or invested are you in this project?” Ask follow-up questions such as: “How invested are your team members in this project?”
4. **Place the person in another role.** Ask questions such as: “If you were the leader of this team, what would you do differently?” Or: “If you were _____ how do you think you would have responded?”
5. **Invite the leader to describe the end result or a picture of their preferred future.** When I coach individuals or organizations over an extended period of time, I often ask, “What do you hope to be celebrating by the time this coaching process is done?” I also ask, “What your dream for . . .” or “What do you want to be different by the end of the year or coaching process? Most individuals and groups move too quickly in naming strategies and action steps without clarifying the WHY and the big WHATS. Coaches help clients name the WHAT, the SO WHAT, and the NOW WHAT in their coaching conversations.
6. **Ask about next steps.** I often invite clients to think bifocals - keeping the end result in mind as well as having clarity about their initial steps for moving forward. Help the client think about what they could accomplish between now and the next coaching session, or the next week or month.
7. **Ask about their support system.** Who can help them with this? Who has done what they’re seeking to do? What resources will you need to pull together to make this happen? Who might serve as a dialogue partner or sounding board for you? These types of questions are needed if people are to move forward, faster.

Quick Review of Intentions for This Chapter

- You will know ICF’s definition for coaching.
- You’ll be able to articulate the difference between coaching, consulting, mentoring, and counseling.
- You’ll begin using the basic coaching agreement (the 5 questions) to guide coaching conversations.

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | Memorize ICF's definition of coaching (see below).

"Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential."

2 | Memorize the 5 questions that make up the basic coaching agreement (see below)

1. What would you like to talk about?
2. What would you like to take away from our session?
3. Are we still talking about what matters most to you?
4. What will you say or do (this week) to act on your intentions?
5. Who can support you in your next steps? Who will hold you accountable?

3 | Complete the sentence: "Three ways that clients benefit from coaching include..."

4 | Reply to: "In what ways is a coach different from a dialogue partner?"

— CHAPTER 2 —

The 8 Core Competencies

The eight core competencies highlighted by the International Coach Federation’s Core Competency Model reflect the most current thinking about the essential skills a coach needs to facilitate transformational coaching sessions. The updated model places particular emphasis on ethical behavior and confidentiality, the importance of a coaching mindset and ongoing reflective practice, the various levels of coaching agreements, and the partnership between coach and client. Listed below is a summary of how each core competency is defined and how a coach would demonstrate the use of each competency.

A. Foundation

1 | Demonstrates Ethical Practice

Definition: Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards of coaching

1. Demonstrates personal integrity and honesty in interactions with clients, sponsors, and relevant stakeholders.
2. Is sensitive to clients’ identity, environment, experiences, values, and beliefs.
3. Uses language appropriate and respectful to clients, sponsors, and relevant stakeholders.
4. Abides by the ICF Code of Ethics and upholds the Core Values.
5. Maintains confidentiality with client information per stakeholder agreements and pertinent laws.
6. Maintains the distinctions between coaching, consulting, psychotherapy, and other support professions.
7. Refers clients to other support professionals, as appropriate.

Demonstrating ethical practices is all about setting appropriate boundaries in the coaching relationship that allow it to flourish. A boundary is the space you provide between yourself and others—physically, emotionally, and mentally. They set parameters for the coaching services that you will provide and define what you need from others. Specifically, they:

- Provide parameters for what you will and will not do.
- Protect the coaching relationship between you and the client.
- Foster mutual respect and accountability.
- Reduce confusion and stress.

The best time to set boundaries is “proactively” before a boundary has been violated. Boundaries are often violated when they are assumed rather than explicitly stated. Make a list of what you need from the client to do your best work and invite the client to list what they need as well. During the Coaching School you’ll to review lists of expectations, norms and boundaries and determine which ones are appropriate for your setting.

2 | Embodies a Coaching Mindset

Definition: Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible, and client-centered

1. Acknowledges that clients are responsible for their own choices.
2. Engages in ongoing learning and development as a coach.
3. Develops an ongoing reflective practice to enhance one's coaching.
4. Remains aware of and open to the influence of context and culture on self and others.
5. Uses awareness of self and one's intuition to benefit clients.
6. Develops and maintains the ability to regulate one's emotions.
7. Mentally and emotionally prepares for sessions.
8. Seeks help from outside sources when necessary.

Coaches are naturally curious about their clients and how they can best serve their interests. They find ways to encourage and draw out clients without enabling them. They take time to prepare for coaching sessions and then reflect on the sessions after they occur. They are self-aware while also paying attention to their clients' unique situations and ministry context. Committed coaches strive to be mentally and emotionally ready to bring out God's best in their clients, spark new awareness and possibilities in others, and remain laser-focused on the client's needs and desires.

B. Co-Creating the Relationship

3 | Establishes and Maintains Agreements

Definition: Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans, and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as those for each coaching session.

1. Explains what coaching is and is not, and describes the process to the client and relevant stakeholders.
2. Reaches agreement about what is and is not appropriate in the relationship, what is and is not being offered, and the responsibilities of the client and relevant stakeholders.
3. Reaches agreement about the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship such as logistics, fees, scheduling, duration, termination, confidentiality, and inclusion of others.
4. Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to establish an overall coaching plan and goals.
5. Partners with the client to determine client-coach compatibility.
6. Partners with the client to identify or re-confirm what they want to accomplish in the session.
7. Partners with the client to define what the client believes they need to address, or resolve to achieve what they want to accomplish in the session.
8. Partners with the client to define or reconfirm measures of success for what the client wants to accomplish in the coaching engagement or individual session.
9. Partners with the client to manage the time and focus of the session.
10. Continues coaching in the direction of the client's desired outcome unless the client indicates otherwise.
11. Partners with the client to end the coaching relationship in a way that honors the experience.

Creating and Reviewing the Coaching Agreements

The coaching agreement defines the parameters of the coaching relationship, aiding the coach's desire to follow the client's lead rather than the other way around. Coaches understand the ongoing nature of the three coaching agreements listed below:

- The overarching agreement.
- The ongoing agreement (the 5 questions listed in chapter one).
- The periodic review of the overarching agreement.

PART 1 | Co-create the overarching agreement with the client

- The terms of the coaching relationship in writing. It outlines fees, schedules, responsibilities, and expectations of the coach and client. Whether you are coaching internal or external clients, it's still recommended that coaches create a coaching agreement that outlines expectations, and possible desired outcomes.
- What coaching is and isn't.
- Whether or not the coach and client appear to be a good match.
- The needs of the client and the purpose for working with a coach. Consider asking, "What do you want to be able to say three months from now that you cannot say today?" This helps both the coach and client gain clarity about the desired outcome.

PART 2 | Use the ongoing agreement to guide all coaching conversations

- What do you want to talk about?
- What do you wish to take away from the session?
- Are we still addressing what you wish to discuss?
- What will you do next to act on your intentions?
- Who will hold you responsible for your next steps?

PART 3 | Schedule periodic reviews of the overarching agreement

Determine when you'll review the overarching agreement with your client to determine if the original overarching agreement needs to be updated. Questions frequently addressed during reviews include:

- Based on our original agreement, what's still working? What should we both keep doing?
- Is there anything one or both of us need to stop doing?
- Is there anything one or both of us need to start doing?
- Are the goals and intentions we established for this coaching relationship still valid?
- Are there any additional items we should discuss at this time?

When creating the original overarching agreement, consider raising some of the items below with your client.

- Tell me more about what you want and expect from a coach, and what you hope will be different at the end of a coaching relationship. Because people are so busy, they rarely have time to think and talk. It's extremely beneficial to intentionally provide space for people to say more. Time and time again we hear clients extol the benefits of "getting things out." Many clients need to verbalize their thoughts and intentions before acting upon them.
- What do I need to know about you, your background, your strengths, and your challenges, to be an effective coach for you? This helps the clients be laser-focused and selective about sharing only what's absolutely critical to their overall progress.
- What would be some important indicators that our coaching relationship is fruitful, and working well? This question helps clients focus on the issues that contribute most to their overall success and satisfaction.

Effective coaching requires building into the process ongoing feedback loops that allow both the coach and the client to make course corrections in the relationship and the outcomes.

4 | Cultivates Trust and Safety

Definition: Partners with the client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

1. Seeks to understand the client within their context, which may include their identity, environment, experiences, values, and beliefs.
2. Demonstrates respect for the client's identity, perceptions, style, and language—and adapts one's coaching to the client.
3. Acknowledges and respects the client's unique talents, insights, and work in the coaching process
4. Shows support, empathy, and concern for the client.
5. Acknowledges and supports the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs, and suggestions.
6. Demonstrates openness and transparency as a way to display vulnerability and build trust with the client.

Trust is the foundation of all relationships. Clients must know that the coaching environment is a safe place to share what's really on their minds. For many clients, their coach is one of the few people in their lives with whom they can be entirely vulnerable. Confidentiality is key, as is maintaining a neutral, non-judgemental presence throughout the coaching relationship.

5 | Maintains Presence

Definition: Is fully conscious and present with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded, and confident.

1. Remains focused, observant, empathetic, and responsive to the client.
2. Demonstrates curiosity during the coaching process.
3. Manages one's emotions to stay present with the client.
4. Demonstrates confidence in working with strong client emotions during the coaching process.
5. Is comfortable working in a space of not-knowing.
6. Creates or allows space for silence, pause, or reflection.

C. Communicating Effectively.

This fundamental and powerful skill can make-or-break a coach/client relationship. The International Coach Federation describes presence as the “ability to be fully conscious and create spontaneous relationship with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, and confident.”

Being present is about being in the moment with a laser focus on the client. Coaches strive to eliminate potential distractions and filters, including their own preconceived thoughts and judgments. Being fully present means listening to understand and asking open-ended questions that help your clients explore issues, opportunities, and challenges more deeply. Listed below are five tips for increasing your coaching presence.

TIP 1 | Remember, it’s not about you, it’s about the people you coach.

The coach is confident about not-knowing or identifying the solution. Their focus is on helping the client shift perspectives and explore possibilities. The client is always in charge and the coach is a solid support partner. Like being a dance partner, the coach follows the client’s lead.

TIP 2 | Silence is okay.

Coaches often we feel the need to fill in the gaps during a conversation. Being fully present may involve periods of silence. The practice of allowing silence to linger often leads to clients sharing more of what’s on their mind.

TIP 3 | Seek to understand rather than to be understood.

This habit, highlighted in Stephen Covey’s book, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is an essential element in developing a coaching presence. Too often, people listen only enough to respond. Instead of really hearing what the other person is saying, energy is spent preparing an answer or response. Effective coaches practice active listening—listening with the expectation of hearing something new or surprising.

TIP 4 | Share your truth through thoughtfully crafted questions.

Maintaining a coaching presence often shows up when the coach calls out what they are observing and trusts their intuition to support the client in gaining clarity, increasing self-awareness, and finding the right solutions. Try using phrases similar to the ones below:

- “I’ve noticed that _____ and I’m curious how you came to that conclusion.”
- “You’ve mentioned that you’ve been _____. I’m wondering how that approach is working for you.”

TIP 5 | Be curious, present, and positive.

One of the most important things a coach can do in any coaching or personal relationship is to be fully present and in the moment. Your coaching presence shines through when you show that you care and that you’re listening to understand. Listen to truly understand the other person’s perspective—what they are saying and feeling—without quickly forming a judgment or jumping to share your thoughts. Through their words and actions, effective coaches create settings that lead to new insights, ideas, and possibilities. Coaches also pay attention to how their tone and body language may shut down rather than spark an atmosphere of openness and possibilities.

6 | Listens Actively

Definition: Focuses on what the client is and is not saying, to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression

1. Considers the client’s context, identity, environment, experiences, values, and beliefs to enhance understanding of what the client is communicating.
2. Reflects or summarizes what the client communicated to ensure clarity and understanding.
3. Recognizes and inquires when there is more to what the client is communicating
4. Notices, acknowledges, and explores the client’s emotions, energy shifts, non-verbal cues, or other behaviors.
5. Integrates the client’s words, tone of voice, and body language to determine the full meaning of what is being communicated.
6. Notices trends in the client’s behaviors and emotions across sessions to discern themes and patterns.

All coaching begins with active, engaged listening. The capacity of one’s listening skills has a direct bearing on the quality of the coaching experience. We can’t draw out the best in others if we haven’t listened for it. Effective listening involves:

- Being curious about the other person.
- Creating a safe space for someone to revisit past results and core assumptions.
- Exploring possibilities rather than giving answers.
- Reflecting back what you’ve heard or observed from the client.

Active listening is much more than hearing what a person says:

- Listening is an intentional process.
- Listening involves all of the senses and the total being.
- Listening includes words, tone of voice, pace, body language, facial expressions, and all sensory inputs.

Coaches are encouraged to listen 80% of the time and respond 20% of the time, as they:

- Listen to what the other person is saying, as well as what they are not saying.
- Listen without judgment, criticism, or agenda.
- Listen without thinking about what you will say next.
- Listen for values, frustrations, motivation, and needs.
- Listen for the greatness in the people being coached.
- Listen for limiting beliefs and false assumptions.
- Listen for *shoulds*, *oughts*, and *musts* that distort what people really want.
- Listen for what the other person is not seeing or not aware of.
- Listen for the tone, pace, volume, inflection, and frequently-used words.
- Listen for the larger context as well as the important details.

Sample Listening Exercises (recommended by Coaching4Clergy)

- **Mute the TV.** Guess what's being communicated. Read people's body language. Notice people's facial expressions and nonverbal cues.
- **Mirror.** Pair up with a partner and reflect back what you heard.
- **Record a conversation.** With the permission of the other person, record a conversation. Right after the conversation, write down what you observed. Then, go back and listen to the recording of the conversation. What more did you hear? What had you missed?
- **Practice selective listening.** Decide for the next week that you are going to be selective in your listening and really listen for one specific element. such as one's facial expressions, frequency of smiles, pace of speaking, or tone of voice. Note your observations and interpret their meanings.

Great listeners hear with their ears, eyes, heart, and stomach.:

- **Ears.** They listen to the spoken words, as well as tone, pace, pitch, and inflection.
- **Eyes.** Notice the body language of the one speaking.
- **Heart:** Pay attention to yearnings, hopes, frustrations, and other emotions.
- **Stomach:** Ask, "What's your gut telling you right. now?"

Pay attention to how language is being used.

Words matter. Think about your language through four angles of vision:

1. **Our Actual Words.** Ask yourself, "How are my words resonating with the other person?" Do my words foster a safe, inviting environment that encourages people to go deeper and address core issues? Do my words infuse assumptions, presuppositions, judgments, or suggestions into the conversation? Coaches intentionally choose words that are neutral and free of agendas.
2. **The Matching of Words and Language.** Notice the words and phrases of the other person. When appropriate, coaches will match their words and phrases with the person they are coaching and introduce new words or phrases. Pay attention to the pace and tone of the client's language. Strive to mirror the other person's words and language to convey a feeling of acceptance. On occasion, the coach may change up the pace and pattern to get a client's attention and emphasize key points.

3. **Distinctions.** Distinctions means noticing two words or phrases that are close in meaning yet convey subtle differences. Those subtle differences create a new awareness that is instrumental in propelling the individual forward. Consider the how the following distinctions may shape or reframe how conversations progress:
- Do we define life by its obstacles versus its opportunities?
 - Do we focus on perfection or excellence?
 - Are we adding more versus adding value?
 - Do we live by default or live by design?
 - Do we focus on working hard or producing results?
 - Do we categorize options with an “either/or” mindset or a “both/and” perspective?
 - Do you prioritize what’s on your schedule or schedule your priorities?
 - Do you plan to prepare, or prepare to plan?
 - Do you diagnose or develop?
 - Do you do it or empower others to do it?
 - Do you tell or inquire?
 - Do you state or wonder?
 - Do you move from mindlessness to mindfulness?
 - Do you focus on excellence or effectiveness?
4. **Acknowledgment.** Acknowledgment creates an environment of acceptance and safety. In what ways do you acknowledge a person’s insights? Strengths? Dreams? Accomplishments? Recent wins? New learnings and new approaches?

Active listening is a skill—and when used consistently, enhances all our relationships. Practice active listening with your friends, family members, and colleagues in addition to the people you coach.

7 | Evokes Awareness

Definition: Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor, or analogy. Coaches evoke awareness in clients when they:

1. Consider the client’s experience when deciding what might be most useful.
2. Challenge the client in way to evoke awareness, insights, and approaches.
3. Ask questions about the client, such as their way of thinking, values, needs, wants, and beliefs.
4. Ask questions that help clients explore elements beyond their current thinking.
5. Invite clients to share more about their experience in the moment.
6. Notice what is working or not working to enhance client progress.
7. Adjust their coaching approaches in response to the client’s needs.
8. Help clients identify factors that influence current and future patterns of behavior, thinking, or emotion.
9. Invite clients to generate ideas about how they can move forward and what they are willing or able to do.
10. Support clients in reframing perspectives.
11. Share observations, insights, and feelings, without attachment, that have the potential to create new learnings for the client

New awareness is fostered when coaches:

- Ask clarifying questions.
- Encourage curiosity and new perspectives.
- Help clients articulate their values, beliefs, and assumptions.
- Help clients interpret data in different ways.

How does the coach facilitate new awareness?

- **Contextual listening.** The coach considers and explores the various contexts of the person being coached (e.g., the bigger picture, the total person, previous experiences, and the values of the person).
- **Missing pieces.** The coach helps individuals and groups see and say what they can't quite see or say. Because the coach is listening on multiple levels, the coach hears underlying values, motivation, greatness, frustration, etc. Simply being a mirror and holding up for the other what we're observing creates new awareness.
- **Drilling down.** Similar to the layers of an onion, the coaching process peels away the layers and gets to the core issues.
- **Listening for clues.** Clients always offer clues about themselves. If we fail to notice these clues, we miss opportunities for helping clients call forth new possibilities in their lives.

Addressing Limiting Beliefs and False Assumptions

Coaches help clients identify and transform their limiting beliefs and false assumptions. Limiting beliefs coaches often encounter include:

- I have little or no options.
- I have no power or control.
- It's my fault if people get upset.
- It's too much work to change the system.
- I'm not good enough.
- People don't care what I think.

Limiting beliefs and false assumptions can be simple, yet very harmful. Coaches make the values, beliefs, and assumptions of their clients transparent so that they can be examined, tested, and potentially reimagined. New awareness is fostered when:

- Curiosity is encouraged.
- Clarifying questions are raised.
- Beliefs and assumptions are expressed.
- Clients explore alternative viewpoints.
- Clients interpret the same setting different than before.

Sample questions that raise new awareness

- What kind of problems and crises do you keep attracting?
- What do you keep doing that limits your success?
- Who do I invite into my life and why?
- What's keeping me up at night, and why?
- What would _____ do in this situation?
- What is NOT the problem?

Powerful Questions and Powerful Questioning

Individuals, teams, and organizations change when they start asking different questions. Here are some sample questions you might be asking now:

- What would happen if we went to the people we seek to serve rather than waiting for them to come to us?
- What else could we try besides what we've always done in the past?
- What do people need to know or do before they'd be willing to embrace this proposal?
- Who else could help you with this project?
- Who else might have insights or be a source of wisdom related to this challenge?

Powerful questioning helps people re-frame the problem and potential solutions. They address limiting beliefs or inaccurate assumptions. Powerful questions move people beyond a scarcity mindset toward one of growth and abundance. List the questions you frequently ask during a coaching session. Are they limiting or are they powerful? Do they leave room for contemplation and reflection? Do they spark new possibilities and stimulate creativity? Do they help individuals and groups know and do what is right for them?

Powerful questions are:

- **Directly connected to deep listening**, enabling the coach to craft the most effective questions. Most powerful questions are created in the moment, which requires deep, engaged listening.
- **Brief**. They get right to the point, and one point only.
- **Free of any hidden agenda**. They are not leading or suggestive.
- **Usually open-ended**. Yes/no questions usually result in a yes/no response, which forces an end to the conversation and enables either/or thinking. Powerful questions promote both/and thinking, opening up clients to a fuller range of possibilities.
- **Clarifying**. They help clarify and slow down automatic responses and thinking.
- **Perspective-shifting**. Powerful questions invite us to view situations from a different angle or perspective.
- **Ones that draw out the client's wisdom**. Craft questions that help clients discover and develop their own perspective and wisdom about the situation.

Types of Powerful Questions

Questions that build on what's already present:

- How could you make better use of your personal strengths? Your team's strengths?
- Who else could we invite that would be interested in this cause/event?
- What energizes you about your current role? How could you do more of what you enjoy?
- Who else could benefit from the services you provide?

Questions that help client's gain new perspectives and understanding:

- What's the truth about this situation?
- Who do you remind yourself of?
- What keeps you up at night?
- Which strengths of yours are being underutilized right now?

Questions that evoke discovery:

- What do you really, really want?
- What's preventing you from having what you really want?
- What's perfect about this?
- What is the gift of this?
- What additional information do you need?
- How much is this costing you?
- Who can help you with this?

Questions that promote clarity and learning:

- What if things are as bad as you say they are?
- Where are you sabotaging yourself?
- What's the cost of not changing?

Questions that call for action:

- What's possible today?
- How soon can you resolve this?
- Who do you know that's going through this?
- What does success look like?
- What's the first step? When will you take this step?

Create a List of Your “Top 10” Questions (Jim’s sample list below)

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate ...?
2. What are you tolerating in life or ministry? What’s the payoff for not taking action?
3. What’s working for you in this situation? What’s not?
4. What would you like to be celebrating a year from now?
5. What keeps getting in the way?
6. In what ways are you contributing to the problem?
7. What are viable solutions? What is the simplest solution?
8. Who can help you with this?
9. What can you do this week to act on your intentions?
10. Are you willing to make the necessary sacrifices to achieve what you really, really want?

Jump-Start Meetings With Powerful Questions

When building meeting agendas, encourage leaders to replace meeting topics with powerful questions that promote constructive conversations. Listed below are a few samples:

- In place of a “hospitality” agenda item, ask, “What would a 'wow' experience look and feel like for a first-time visitor?”
- In place of “stewardship” agenda item, ask, “How could we move more of our members toward giving online?”
- In place of “pastor’s report” ask, “How can we help more members share in fulfilling God’s mission?”
- In place of “strategic plan report,” ask, “Where do we see our members discussing and acting on our core values?”

D. Cultivating Learning and Growth

8 | Facilitates Client Growth

Definition: Partners with the client to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process.

1. Works with the client to integrate new awareness, insight, or learning into their worldview and behaviors.
2. Partners with the client to design goals, actions, and accountability measures that integrate and expand new learning.
3. Acknowledges and supports client autonomy in the design of goals, actions, and methods of accountability.
4. Supports the client in identifying potential results or learning from identified action steps.
5. Invites the client to consider how to move forward, including resources, support, and potential barriers.
6. Partners with the client to summarize learning and insight within or between sessions
7. Celebrates the client’s progress and successes.
8. Partners with the client to close the session.

The process of moving toward a preferred future usually involves brainstorming, designing the action, and following through. Try using the three-step process to facilitate client growth:

STEP 1: Brainstorm. Brainstorming helps people see the same things differently. It helps people realize that there's more than one approach or pathway for moving ministry forward. Sometimes the most fruitful brainstorming sessions involve "question-storming" where time is spent brainstorming a list of questions that help leaders better understand the issues and problems related to a project before moving on to finding solutions, new pathways, and possible action steps. Question-storming ensures that the most pressing issues are addressed before locking in on a particular course of action.

STEP 2: Designing the Action. Within the context of brainstorming, a plan begins to emerge. The plan includes SMART steps that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-specific. The plan indicates who is doing what, by when. Breaking the action steps into smaller steps can help leaders begin taking action. Common approaches to designing actions often include:

- **Acknowledging:** Recognizing what has already been accomplished.
- **Backward planning:** Begin at the end (the goal) and then move backward and develop steps to get to the goal.
- **Creating structure:** Identifying what and who will keep the client focused on the task at hand.
- **Recognizing road blocks:** Considering what might derail progress and design action steps in advance.
- **Anchoring:** Regularly reminding the person or group of the importance of what they are doing and where they are in the plan.
- **Establishing Blitz Days:** Helping them carve out solid blocks of time to tackle what needs to be done to stay on task.
- **Identifying daily actions:** Helping clients list and act to create daily "wins."

Sometimes formulas can be helpful. Consider the G.R.O.W. Model:

- **G: Goal** (What's the goal?)
- **R: Current Reality** (How are we doing?)
- **O: Opportunities** (What are our current opportunities?)
- **W: What's next** (What's the next step?)

STEP 3: Follow Through. Coaching relationships foster continuous progress and course corrections. Coaches help guide people toward a preferred future and regularly ask questions that help people see where they've been, where they are now, and where they need to go next. Ask clarifying questions during sessions similar to the ones below:

- What's happened since the last time we met?
- What didn't happen that you really intended to happen?
- What got in the way? What were the challenges?
- What will you report back to me the next time we meet, regarding this action?
- What do you want to focus on today?

Accountability is about helping clients take responsibility for their words and action, and being willing to be held accountable for fulfilling one's goals and intentions.

Tending to and Tracking the Coaching Relationship

The coaching relationship is often viewed as a dance where the coach follows the client's lead and where coach anticipates and adjusts to the client's needs and desires. Tending to the coaching relationship often shows up through:

- **Note-taking.** Jot down what you're noticing in the coaching session. Take notes in such a way it enhances, rather than interferes with, your deep listening.
- **Review your coaching.** Make a recording of a coaching session and then review it. Then take it one step further and ask your mentor-coach to review it and give you feedback, specifically about your coaching presence.
- **Quiet your mind.** Intentionally quiet yourself before and after a coaching session. Show up with a clean frame of reference and a quiet mind. Then spend time reflecting after the session on what worked and what you might do differently the next time you coach.
- **Listen with your head AND heart.** Be intentional in shifting from intellect to intuition. Invite clients get out of their head and listen from the heart. Ask them "What are you feeling in your body right now? What might your body be trying to tell you?"
- **Ask rather than assume.** Check-in with your clients to make sure your helping them fulfill their goals and addressing their issues and needs.

Maintaining a positive coaching relationship will increase your client's likelihood of success. Since they relate well to you, they are more likely to explore further and take bigger steps, plus they will stick with their plan of action longer.

Quick Review of intentions for this chapter

- You gain insight on ICF's 8 core competencies that coaches learn to demonstrate.
- You will begin to think about how these competencies show up in your current coaching relationships.
- You'll begin thinking about ways you'll embed these competencies into your coaching conversations.

ASSIGNMENTS

- 1 | List a limiting belief you have about yourself, and a limiting belief about your clients. Describe ways your limiting beliefs impact you as well as your clients.

- 2 | List a core competency you feel comes naturally to you. Describe how this strength shows up when you coach clients.

- 3 | List one competency you're most interested in developing right now.

— CHAPTER 3 —

Common Coaching Models

The basic coaching agreement discussed earlier always serves as the foundation for defining and describing what a coaching conversation looks like. The three models highlighted in this chapter reflect the basic agreement and also provide interesting twists on how the five questions that make up the basic agreement might unfold during a session. Many students find the language used to describe the steps listed in these models to be helpful. Consider how these models might help you guide a client toward their desired outcomes.

The Five-Step Coaching Model

The following coaching model will provide a framework you can come back to over and over again as your skills progress and you coach more diverse and interesting people and situations.

It's a model I learned about in my training with Val Hastings and his organization, Coaching 4 Clergy. You'll notice that it reflects the flow of the ongoing agreement that was highlighted in Chapter One.

Many students like this model because it's based on the image of building a solid house that has a foundation (Step 1: Listen and Step 2: Evoke), a supportive frame (Step 3: Clarify and Step 4: Brainstorm), and a strong roof (Step 5: Support). Imagine that image as you review the five steps.

Step 1: Listen

The goal as a coach is to listen so closely to your client that the answers come out. The ideal ratio is that you are listening 80% of the time and responding 20% of the time. It is absolutely critical that the client feels fully understood. Listen deeply by using these suggestions:

- Listen not just with your ears, but with your eyes and your whole being.
- Listen to the tone, inflection, rate, and pitch.
- Listen not just to what's said, but to what's not said.
- Pay particular attention to the last thing that is said.
- Listen without judgment, criticism, or agenda.
- Listen without thinking about what you will be saying next.

Step 2: Evoke

Prompt the client to say more. Evoking is like opening the tap. You are attempting to get beyond the surface and move to the source of the issue. Examples of evocative responses:

- Hmmmm . . . tell me more.
- What else do you want to say about this?
- Is there anything else you want me to know?

Step 3: Clarify

Once the client has shared and has actively engaged with you, it's important to respond and clarify what is being said. This offers the client an opportunity to hear what they have just verbalized from a slightly different perspective. It also ensures that you and the client are on the same page. Examples of clarifying techniques:

- I heard you say... (mirroring)
- I sense that... (paraphrasing or reflecting back)
- Is this what you mean? (verifying)
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to this, with 1 being not important and 10 being extremely important? (rating)
- Number these things based on which is most important to you, with 1 being not important and 10 being extremely important. (ranking)

Step 4: Brainstorm

Once there is clarity about the topic at hand, you and the client can now begin to go below the surface and further discuss the issue. Questions are central to the coaching process.

A few examples of questions include:

- What are the options/opportunities here? Let's list them all.
- What's the simplest solution? What's the craziest solution?
- What's the payoff of NOT dealing with this?
- What's stopping you?
- What do you want to be able to say about this situation three months from now that you can't say today?
- What do you really, want?

Step 5: Support

Action is central to the coaching experience. Supporting the client to design an action step helps move the client forward, closing the gap between where they currently are and where they want to be. A typical coaching conversation might end like this:

- What action would you like to take? And when will these actions be completed?
- What do you want to report back to me at our next coaching session?
- What will bring you closer to your goal? Who can help you with this?
- What will you need to be able to focus on this next week?
- What will get in the way?

In subsequent coaching sessions, you'll follow up by asking questions such as:

- What did you accomplish?
- What didn't you accomplish that you said you would? What are the loose ends?
- What got in the way?
- What's next?

The 5Rs Coaching Model

This is a model I frequently use with cohort groups that are working toward mutually agreed-upon outcomes. It emphasizes building trust and community among participants, forces people to reflect on their result, and charts a path forward. It may also be used with individuals or when guiding project teams and task forces. The model works best when you have 45-to-60-minute sessions and participants come prepared to respond some of the questions. Coaches typically ask just one or two questions from each step. Listed below are the steps and sample questions.

STEP 1 | RELATE

- How are you doing? How is it with your soul?
- What's new since we last spoke?
- What have you been practicing? Learning? Reading?
- What's come up that we need to discuss during this session?
- What faith practices have you been incorporating into your life recently?
- When have you experienced Sabbath moments this past month?

STEP 2 | REVIEW

- What progress have you made on your goals since last month?
- What obstacles have you been facing, or are you currently facing?
- What were the contributing factors that led to your successes? Your challenges?

STEP 3 | REFLECT

- What have you been learning about yourself? Others?
- What seems to be working? What's not working?
- What might you do differently in the future?
- What skills or resources were lacking? How might you address this in the future?
- What might you do to increase your effectiveness and influence in the future?
- On a scale of 1-10 (10= very willing), how willing are you to make these changes?
- Are you modeling the change you desire for others?

STEP 4 | REFOCUS

- What are your goals/next steps for the next 30 days?
- What would you like to be celebrating a month from now?
- What are the possible ways to get there?
- How will you select your course of action?
- What will you do (who, what, where, when, how)?
- How will you measure your progress?
- Where do you anticipate you might get stuck or experience resistance?
- What will you do in the next 48-72 hours?
- What's next in our coaching relationship?

STEP 5 | RESOURCE & WRAP UP

- What did we accomplish today?
- What did each of us commit to between now and our next meeting?
- What was the most helpful portion of the meeting for you? What was least helpful? How might we better utilize our time together in the future?
- Are there any people or concerns that you'd like me to keep in my prayers?
- When is our next meeting?

The GROW Coaching Model

This model was mentioned briefly in an earlier chapter. You'll find a more detailed version of the model below. It provides a useful structure for coaches to help clients move forward in tangible ways in whatever area of their life—work, relationships, personal growth—in which they wish to move forward. Developed by John Whitmore, author of *Coaching for Performance: The Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership*, he identifies four focus areas for moving forward in a positive direction. GROW serves as an acronym for *Goal, Reality, Options, and Will*.

GOAL: Where are we headed?

- How can I be most helpful to you today?
- What do you need to get the most out of this conversation?
- What role do you need a listener or advisor to play?
- What topic should we concentrate on during this session?
- What is the one topic on which we could focus today that will have the most impact on moving you forward in a meaningful direction?
- What are the issues that you face today?
- What's getting in the way of your intentions? What's holding you back?

REALITY: Where are we starting from?

- Tell me about your current situation. Describe it as honestly as you can, yet as objectively as possible. What are the difficulties that you face?
- Name the obstacles and how each is impacting your attitude.
- How are you resourcing yourself around this issue?
- In what ways have you sought advice or expertise to work through this issue?
- What is your biggest area of discomfort about this issue?
- What is the one thing that is causing you the most stress and anxiety?

OPTIONS: How can we get there?

- Tell me what you think are some options for a solution.
- What else? Probe more deeply around all angles of the issue. What are you missing?
- What other options might present themselves as you take on other perspectives?
- If there were no obstacles (like money or people) what else would you consider?
- If all options were possible, what would be the best path forward?
- Is it possible to choose an option that you perceived as not an option?

WILL: What are you willing to do? What will it take to get there?

- What do you need to do this? What specific things you will need to make it happen?
- How will you prioritize your options? What needs to be done first? What can wait?
- What one thing can you accomplish this week that will move you in the right direction?

Quick Review of intentions for this chapter

- You've learned about other coaching models and how they build on the basic agreement.
- You consider how different coaching situation may require different approaches.

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | List which model described in this chapter most intrigues you, and why.

2 | Describe how coaching models help you remain focused on the client and their outcomes.

3 | How might you help your clients pay attention to and fulfill the intentions they set for themselves?

— CHAPTER 4 —

Using Appreciative Inquiry When Coaching

A relatively new approach to coaching called Appreciative Inquiry Coaching (AIC) has its roots in Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI evolved in the 1980s as a revolutionary and positive philosophy towards organizational change and is a process that focuses on leveraging an organization's core strengths rather than seeking to overcome or minimize its weaknesses. Appreciative Inquiry Coaching engages and focuses clients on both the positive present and possible future, rather than on the problems of the past and present. AI recognizes the best in people or the world around us. It affirms past and present strengths, successes, and potentials. It focuses on health, vitality, excellence, and what's already present in a situation.

The AIC process is an act of exploration and discovery that, through the use of questions, invites clients to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities. AI is regarded as a positive, strengths-based operational approach to change, learning, and development that blends well with other coaching approaches and practices. Two essential components of AI are its five core principles and five (5-D) core processes. These principles and processes are understood to have emerged from theoretical and research foundations, and research on the power of imagery.

The five principles

1. **Constructionist Principle** (words create worlds). Reality, as we know it, is a subjective vs. objective state and is socially created through language and conversations.
2. **Simultaneity Principle** (inquiry creates change). The moment we ask a question, we begin to create a change. "The questions we ask are fateful."
3. **Poetic Principle** (we can choose what we study). Teams and organizations, like open books, are endless sources of study and learning. What we choose to study makes a difference. It describes—even creates—the world as we know it.
4. **Anticipatory Principle** (images inspire action). Human systems move in the direction of their images of the future. The more positive and hopeful the image of the future, the more positive the present-day action.
5. **Positive Principle** (positive questions lead to positive change). Momentum for small or large-scale change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding. This momentum is best generated through positive questions that amplify the positive core.

The 5-D Processes (often called steps or stages)

1. **Define** – *What is the topic of inquiry?* It is important to define the overall focus of the inquiry (what the system wants more of). Definition is used to clarify the area of work to be considered. In spite of being the starting point of the cycle, it's a recent addition—the 5Ds were originally the 4Ds, including discover, dream, design, and destiny. Definition defines the project's purpose, content, and what needs to be achieved. In this phase, the guiding question is, "What generative topic do we want to focus on together?"
2. **Discover** – *Appreciating the best of "what is."* Discovery is based on a dialogue, as a way of finding 'what works'. It rediscovers and remembers the organization or community's successes, strengths, and periods of excellence.
3. **Dream** – *Imagining "what could be."* Imagining uses past achievements and successes identified in the discovery phase to imagine new possibilities and envisage a preferred future. It allows people to identify their dreams for a community or organization, having discovered "what is best." They have the chance to project it into their wishes, hopes, and aspirations for the future
4. **Design** – *Determining "what should be."* Design brings together the stories from discovery with the imagination and creativity from dream. We call it bringing the 'best of what is' together with 'what might be', to create 'what should be – the ideal'.
5. **Deliver/Destiny/Do** – *Creating "what will be."* The fifth stage in the 5Ds process identifies how the design is delivered, and how it's embedded into groups, communities, and organizations. In early appreciative inquiry development, it was called "delivery," based on more traditional organizational development practice. The term "destiny" is more prevalent now. Vibrant Faith frequently uses the phrase "DO what matters every day" to describe this stage.

Replace standard questions with AI-oriented questions (samples below)

- Instead of "Tell me what the problem is" ask, "What gives you energy?"
- Instead of "Tell me what's wrong" ask, "What do you most value about yourself?"
- Instead of "What are you worried about?" ask, "What do you want more of?"
- Instead of "What do you need help with?" ask, "What worked well for you before?"
- Instead of "What's bothering you?" ask, "What's working well now?"
- Instead of "What is and isn't working?" ask, "What first attracted you to...?"
- Instead of "What are you going to do about...?" ask, "What did you do to contribute?"
- Instead of "How are you going to fix this?" ask, "What does it look like when you...?"

Sample DISCOVER Questions

- Describe what you consider stress at work to be. Can you offer a definition, phrase or quote to describe it and provide an example?
- When recently have you displayed the ability to cope with stress at work? What was the situation which required coping behavior?
- What attitude(s) did you adopt at that time? What were you thinking?
- Describe your emotions while you were coping with stress.
- How did you react? What did you do?

Sample DREAM Questions

- Imagine one night while you were asleep a miracle occurred, and when you woke up your coping behavior was just as you've described, in all stressful situations. How would you know you were handling stress well?
- What would be different?
- What would have changed in your habits?
- Who would be the first to notice these changes?
- What would they say or do, and how will you respond?

Sample DESIGN Questions

- How will you act differently to make the above work?
- How best can you develop your ability to handle stress?
- Are there “significant others” who you feel play a crucial role in the development of your ability to handle stress?
- What do you think these individuals do to help? What do they not do?
- Are there any techniques or methods that you have experienced which you feel influence your ability to handle stress?
- Think of someone you know who you would characterize as being able to handle stress. How do you think they have developed their ability?

Sample DO Questions

- Reflecting on what you really want and where you are right now regarding coping with stress, what do you see as the most significant changes you could make that would help you get what you want?
- What one small change could you make right now, no matter how small, that would improve your ability to handle stress? The change does not have to be a physical action—it could be a shift in thinking or attitude.

Sample LIFE COACHING Questions

Your History

- Describe your three greatest accomplishments to date.
- What made these accomplishments stand out for you?
- What have you incorporated into your current actions from your past accomplishments?
- How could you use what you've learned from these accomplishments to assist you in making future changes?
- What major transitions have you had in the past two years? (For example, new assignment, new residence, new relationship, etc.)
- If you worked with a coach before or a similar one-on-one adult relationship (for example, tennis coach, piano teacher, therapist) what worked well for you?
- If you have worked with a coach, and you are not currently, how did that relationship end?

Your Life

- Who are or have been your major role models?
- What attributes of these role models do you admire and want to emulate?
- What are the five most positive things in your life?
- What are five things you would like to change in your life that would make it even more satisfying, effective, and joyful? (Examples include relationships, information, environment, job.)
- Who are the key supportive people in your life, and what do they provide for you?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being least effective and 10 being most effective), rate the quality of your life.
- By what criteria did you rate yourself? What percentage of the life you are leading is actually YOUR life?

Your Self Today

- List five adjectives that describe you at your best.
- What prevents you from being at your best?
- What energizes you? What saps your energy?
- What are you learning and accepting about yourself at present?

Your Potential

- What is your personal and/or professional vision?
- What would you like to contribute to the world?
- What are you most wanting to achieve in the next three years?
- What are you most wanting to achieve in the next six months?
- How ready are you to go for it?

Sample CAREER DEVELOPMENT questions

- When you look over your work history, what role did you enjoy the most, and why?
- What are your strengths at work—what are you good at?
- What gives you pleasure at work—what do you enjoy doing?
- What gives you meaning at work—what gives you a sense of purpose?
- What do you consider to be your ideal job?
- Where do you see yourself in a year/three to five years/10 years?
- What is it about this career goal that you're interested in?
- How ready do you think you are for the next step in your career?
- What do you see as your next challenge?
- What do you think you'll find the most challenging/rewarding aspect of your career goal?

Sample TEAMWORK Questions

- What gives life to our team when it is at its best...?
- What are the qualities of our colleagues that most foster enthusiasm, information sharing, and collaboration towards common goals?
- Describe the best teamwork that you have seen or been part of recently. What was it about that teamwork that caused you to define it as ‘the best’?
- What were the conditions that allowed that winning teamwork to emerge?
- Think of other successful “teams” that also have winning teamwork, teamwork that you admire. What makes that teamwork tick?
- What does that team do that we could try, or learn from, to do better?

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | Describe how often you hear *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) questions used in current coaching situations

2 | List ways you could use *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) questions more often during meetings.

3 | Describe how your coaching would change if you used *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) principles more often.

— CHAPTER 5 —

Tips for Coaching Teams and Groups

What's the difference between teams and groups? Each is an assemblage of people, yet important differences between the two exist. Complicating the issue is that each organization will have its own definitions for the terms. That said, a number of general distinctions can be made, as follows:

Teams:

- Share a common vision, purpose, and values.
- Are often long-term in nature, depending on their purpose.
- Pull together in the same direction to achieve a common goal.
- Are composed of members who need each other to accomplish the common goal.

Athletic coaches serve as a helpful metaphor for the difference between coaching individuals versus coaching a team. A tennis coach will, for example, help a single player to sharpen his or her game. A soccer coach, in contrast, will focus on getting team members to work together, while leveraging the strengths of individuals, mitigating weaknesses, and creating partnerships and systems within the team. A coach for an individual will always put the best interest of that player ahead of anyone else; for the team coach, the best interests of the group will come first.

A person coaching teams knows what is required to make the sum of the parts greater than the whole.

Groups:

- Come together for a specific purpose, such as to learn a new skill-set, to support each other during a challenging time, or to give input on a specific topic.
- They can be short- or long-term arrangements.
- Are composed of members who do not necessarily need each other to achieve the common goal.

Certain coaching techniques can be applied successfully in both team and group settings.

Teams and groups both need to establish shared expectations and norms in order to do their best work and accomplish their goals. Confidentiality is as critical to the success of team coaching as it is to individual coaching. No good can come when a team coach betrays confidences, takes sides, or, worse, “triangulates” between members. Certain individuals on the team will naturally try to influence the coach. When this happens, the coach must direct these individuals to others on the team or to the team as a whole, reminding them to use the agreed-on communication tools. Teams must clarify outcomes, expectations, and norms if they are to thrive. Therefore, one of the first steps a team coach must take is to gain consensus as to how everyone will deal with every possible scenario the team will face. Teams, at their inception, should discuss:

- Purpose and goals
- Vision and values
- Norms
- Roles
- Purpose and Goals

TEAM COACHING

The team leader may have a clear *vision* of what he or she wants the team to accomplish, but it is rare that the vision is articulated in a clear and compelling way. When all members of the team work together to craft a shared vision, the chances are greater of achieving universal buy-in for that vision.

Values, too, must be set and shared. These can be developed with help from the coach, who can solicit from each team member his or her personal sense of what is most important when working with others. For example, the coach may learn that some team members value timeliness and accurate record-keeping. Others may value the idea that every voice be heard and everyone be treated equally. Ultimately, the team can use majority rule to prioritize what will be most important. Admittedly, going through the discussions about what is most important to arrive at shared values can be time-consuming and grueling; however, sharing values can help the team avoid all kinds of trouble down the line. Unfortunately, too often teams don't start talking about shared values until after trouble and/or emotional upheaval have occurred. Effective coaches ensure that conversations take place that address anticipated obstacles and issues before they occur.

Norms

After the values have been prioritized, coaches can help a team clarify its code of conduct—which results in its “norms.” The code of conduct should include clear consequences for failure to abide by the code. For example, if timeliness is an agreed-upon value, then an aspect of the code of conduct might be to schedule all meetings for 15 minutes past the hour so that everyone has time to get from previous meetings. The norm becomes that meetings will start on time, with all members in attendance and no excuses.

Finally, a well-functioning team will establish clear standards and agreements regarding communications—voicemail, email, and memos. This will result in the norms of a clear, common language and efficiency among team members.

Roles

It is also key that teams identify who will play what role to avoid confusion and overlapping of responsibilities. A coach can help untangle such problems by asking questions about possibly ill-informed assumptions. A good exercise to help with this is to have all team members write down what they believe their areas of responsibility to be, in order of importance, and then share them with their fellow team members. Most will be surprised by their expectations and assumptions, many of them faulty.

When you consider purpose and goals, vision and values, norms and roles, which do you think the teams in your organization need to give the most attention to? What steps will you take to guide the teams in this direction?

Settings agendas for team coaching sessions.

When coaching individuals, we usually follow the basic agreement, asking the critical questions, “What would you like to talk about?” and “What would you like to take away from today’s session?” When coaching teams, a coach should know the answer to those questions BEFORE the start of a session. Those who coach teams may carve out time at the end of a coaching session to build the agenda for the next session while all parties are present. Some coaches will solicit feedback from members by text or email before the next meeting to help frame the agenda. The key point is to have the focus of the team coaching session decided before the meeting begins.

GROUP COACHING

Like team coaching, group coaching also benefits from having clear outcomes, expectations, and norms for when the group gathers. Where group coaching differentiates from team coaching shows up in two distinct ways:

- Members usually are seeking to fulfill individual desired outcomes rather than having shared vision that all members are contributing toward. Several of groups I coach share a common goal of creating and implementing annual leadership development plans. All members follow a similar process for creating their plans but each person's plan looks significantly different.
- Because the desired outcomes for each member are unique, members are ***not as dependent on one another*** for the achieving their desired outcomes. Members of these groups are formed to share a similar experience, to learn and collaborate with each other, and often, to be held accountable for living out their intentions.

Successful Group Coaching

Successful group coaching experiences share a number of characteristics, itemized in the following subsections.

Shared Purpose

Every group has to have a reason to exist, and a clear and compelling reason to meet regularly. Group coaching works well to support a group in using new behaviors or skills learned in a training program, and to provide support and inspiration to individuals who are developing new habits or working to achieve a goal.

Clearly Stated Individual Goals

These goals must include mileposts for check-in at each meeting. One way to create a sense of urgency and interest in a coaching group is to assign each individual a goal that is broken down into segments, whose progress can be reported on at each meeting. Following these reports, individuals can either ask for help to brainstorm solutions to obstacles or to get recognition and celebrate success with the group.

Adequate Preparation

Group coaching sessions should be structured enough so that participants can feel progress in meeting their goals, yet loose enough to allow for natural emergence of valuable learning. To accomplish this balancing act, the coach needs to stay present in the moment and maintain a strong sense of where the group is headed. Less is more, in terms of structure.

Strong, Compelling Coach Presence

A group coach must be a strong leader, one who can command the group's respect and direct its focus. The coach's communication style should be clear, concise, and to the point. In fact, he or she should speak less than anyone else during the meeting, communicating mainly to greet individuals, direct/ redirect attention, request clarity, and facilitate discussion. It is the members of the group who should be adding the most value. The coach needs to listen for the question to be asked next.

The coach must pay close attention to each individual in the group and may track his or her comments. Participants should know in advance that they will be called on if they are not actively participating. Conversely, the coach may need to “reel in” group members who are talking too much, becoming repetitive, or no longer adding value to the conversation. In sum, it is the responsibility of the coach to pay attention to the time arc of the meeting and make sure that everyone participates. The coach can also solicit information or request that members of the group with specific expertise share small bits of information that might help members achieve goals.

Finite Timeline

A successful group coaching experience will have a defined beginning, middle, and end. All participants must be clear on the start date, must understand the dates and times of all meetings, and must be working toward the conclusion, when successes will be celebrated.

Ground Rules for Communication for Teams and Groups

As with a team, in a group all members should agree on norms at the beginning of their journey together. The coach can point out any break in norms and request ideas from the group about how to address the infraction. Effective communication is key to establishing positive group dynamics. Coaches may:

- Send out a brief email after each session, including content such as a list of the top three learning points generated at the meeting, a reminder of any homework that the group agreed to, and a reminder of the date, time, and location of the next meeting.
- Announcing via email, two to three days before the next meeting, the agenda of the upcoming meeting, along with reminders about assignments.
- Send emails, text messages, or blog posts that introduce helpful resources, new ideas, inspiring quotes, or updates about the group.

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | List 3 keys to successful group/team coaching.

2 | Describe how you would create shared outcomes, values, and norms for a group.

— CHAPTER 6 —

Coaching Tips and Truths

Over the years, I find that I keep coming back to some of the essential coaching practices and approaches that result in consistently good coaching conversations. These practices help surface the most pressing issues, accelerate the client's progress, keep the primary focus on the client, and bring out God's best in them. Review the 15 tips found in this chapter and think about which tips are most relevant to increasing your impact as a coach.

TIP 1: Make getting the relationship right your first priority.

The better you get at developing a trusting, confidential relationship the right way, the more likely you'll be an effective coach. Coaching is always about the client, and where he or she wishes to go, rather than the needs or intentions of the coach. Coaching assumes a relational connection that's built on transparency, trust, and vulnerability. Effective coaches are able to present themselves exactly as they are. They create safe and sacred space that allows clients to share their hopes, dreams, challenges, and shortcomings. Coaching starts with connecting and is exemplified when coaches are naturally curious and laser-focused on the wellbeing of their clients.

TIP 2: Follow the client's lead.

Coaching is a partnership where, like dancing, you follow the client's lead. "What do you want to talk about?" is a great opener and is the beginning of honoring the basic coaching agreement. Questions coaches ask should help clarify the focus of the coaching relationship, the purpose of the coaching session, and where clients want to end up as a result of coaching. Coaches allow clients to pick the topic, the measurements, the depth, and even the pace of the conversations. If the client doesn't say it, then the subject is off the table. Coaches must avoid digging deeper into topics that clients haven't commented on during the conversation.

TIP 3: Always make the client the hero in the story.

Donald Miller, the founder of the company Storybrand, states that the best marketing always makes the client the hero in the story. Coaches help clients identify their preferred future, describe the gap between their current situation and the preferred future along with the challenges they face, and then find ways to overcome their challenges that prevent them from achieving their desired outcomes. In the process of helping their clients shine, coaches help clients create a plan that moves them consistently toward their brighter future. When coaches become the "hero" in the story, it's usually because they've switched, intentionally or otherwise, to playing the role of a counselor, mentor, or consultant.

TIP 4: Tap into the client's vision to accelerate transformation.

Vision-casting is a powerful catalyst for sparking transformation. Coaches help their clients define their dreams and better understand what motivates them. Coaches help clients connect what they do next with the dreams they're seeking to fulfill. Questions coaches often ask to tap into a client's vision include:

- "What would you like to be different in your life or ministry a year from now?"
- "If you could wave a magic wand, what would you change about your current setting?"
- "What's the legacy you'd like to leave for your children or grandchildren?"
- "What do you want this organization to remember you for?"
- "How soon do you want this done?"
- "What will finishing this do for you and your vision?"

Keep your client's attention on how their vision will require them to change. Help them name the measurable changes the transition process will require.

TIP 5: If nothing's changing, you're not coaching.

Coaches go beyond walking alongside clients and serving as confidential dialogue partners. They help clients name and act on their intentions. They nudge clients toward their preferred futures and invite clients to set short-term wins and deadlines. Coaches invite their clients to pay attention to changes in their attitudes, assumptions, approaches, and actions. They help clients take shuffle steps toward their desired outcomes. After helping clients describe their dreams, coaches help them drill down on their intentions and list what they need to do now, or next, to live into their preferred future.

TIP 6: Get your facts straight and focus on the right issues.

Perhaps the biggest challenge in a coaching conversation is figuring out the primary focus of the conversation and the most pressing issues. It's easy to rush this process and end up not addressing the client's most pressing or significant issues based on misleading information and false assumptions. Some questions I often raise to surface these issues include:

- Help me understand how you arrived at this conclusion.
- "On a scale of 1-10, how important is this issue to you personally?"
- "In addition to this problem, what else prevents you from moving forward?"
- "What are the three most pressing issues you're currently facing? Which one is most important? Most urgent?"
- "What leads you to believe that this is your biggest issue? What else, or who else, plays a contributing role?"

TIP 7: Search for the right questions rather than the right answers.

If you tend to be a fixer or like being the expert, you may find it hard to not give advice or suggest ways to move forward. Great coaches find ways to tap into the client's wisdom through powerful questions such as, "I don't know, what do you think?" I like to ask BOLD questions that:

- BUILD forward momentum.
- OPEN up possibilities and new pathways.
- LEAVE space for reflection and reimagination.
- DO something that helps the client dive into action.

Bold questions have more than one answer. They create space for the client to explore something that is unfamiliar or even daunting. They point the client toward something that wasn't on their radar.

TIP 8: Ask shorter questions to get better answers.

Keep your questions short (6-8 words) and concrete. Allow space for the client to reflect and respond. Record a few of your coaching sessions (with the express permission of the client). Create a transcript of the coaching conversation. Notice how long your questions are. Pay attention to how much you're talking compared to your client. I find that the best coaches almost always speak less than 20% of the time. You may discover that the power of your questions is inversely proportional to their length.

TIP 9: Avoid explaining your questions.

Leave out the details when asking questions. Allow the client to fill in the gaps as needed. When you seek to set up or explain your questions, you increase the likelihood of injecting your assumptions and values into the conversation. You may lead clients in directions they didn't wish to go.

TIP 10: Create space between coaching sessions.

Leave at least 15 minutes between coaching sessions to clear your mind. I like to take a short walk or do some stretching exercises. I like to pray for my clients and discern which core competency I want to pay closer attention to during the session.

TIP 11: Smile while on the phone or via Zoom.

This may sound foolish, but it usually helps coaches be more present and playful during the coaching conversations. Coaching can be fun AND impactful. Enjoy the clients you seek to serve. In similar fashion, think about how you might draw out the gifts, strengths, and potential of your clients.

Tip 12: Share observations while avoiding interpretations.

Coaches listen actively, and do so with their eyes and ears. Share your observations using "I noticed" statements such as (allow space for silent reflection):

- "I noticed some hesitation when you responded to that last question..."
- "I noticed that you seemed energized/animated when discussing..."
- "Your tone of voice changed when you began talking about..."
- "You broke into a big smile when mentioning..."
- "I sense some sadness in your recent remark about..."
- "I noticed that you didn't mention what you did to help ensure that project's success..."

Tip 13: Frame questions that stretch clients and inspire action.

Coaches facilitate change in clients by stretching their capacities, their awareness, and perceived limitations. Coaches raise questions that help clients step back and learn from results, or step forward to a new way of thinking, doing, and being. Great coaches strive to move people beyond a state of inertia and toward a state of learning, experimentation, and action.

Tip 14: Invite the client to do pre-work or post-work.

To accelerate a client's learning and progress, ask the client if they'd be open to learning about, or reflecting on, topics or projects that increase their awareness or capacities. This could include items like making a list of resources (assets) to support their progress, listing 3-5 people who could help, mentor, or hold them accountable, listing skills they need to develop, etc. Having clients tend to these types of action steps often helps them move forward, faster.

Tip 15: Ask the client, "What did you find most helpful from our conversation today?"

This question helps you understand what is stirring in the mind of your clients and shows you what types of shifts may be occurring in their assumptions, attitudes, actions, and approaches. Also, it gives you a window into how your coaching is impacting other people. It may give you insights on what to raise in a future session and help you refine your coaching approach and practices.

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | What are your takeaways after reading and reflecting on the 15 tips?

2 | List 3 tips you need to pay closer attention to in the future.

3 | Based on your own learnings as a coach, what tips would you add to this list?

— CHAPTER 7 —

Develop Your Coaching Capacities

Coaching is a skill that, after learning the basic agreement process, you can use immediately. Coaching is also a craft that you'll continue to refine for the rest of your life. This course focuses primarily on developing and demonstrating the eight core competencies. In addition to these competencies, we find the that following traits listed below help contribute to a coach's capacity to spark transformation in people's lives and ministries.

Self-Knowledge

For coaches to be effective to others, they must first be well-informed about their own values, needs, interests, abilities, personality type, sensitivities, and hot buttons. Coaches should be keenly aware of anything and everything about themselves that might affect how they come across to other people.

Ability to Be Present

The ability to be completely present in the moment is one of the most difficult competencies for coaches—as it is for us all. Coaches must be able to put aside their personal worries and to-do lists, and quiet their self-critical voices and all of the other “noise” that keeps them from paying full attention to what's happening with their clients. People being coached will know when the coach is distracted and won't feel they are being well served.

Ability to Connect

Highly skilled coaches need to be able to connect with those they coach. Traits coaches must exemplify include:

- A deep respect for and willingness to value all people, regardless of their foibles and flaws.
- Adaptability to different thinking/learning styles and cultural norms.
- Ability to put aside personal preferences, especially when they differ from those of the person being coached.
- Knowledge of one's own personality traits and their potential impact on other personality types.

Ability to Build Trust and Respect

Building trust and respect is integrally related to the previous competency, ability to connect. Trust is built out of the sum total of all the competencies. Respect is earned through a consistent display of competence. Each person being coached will, of course, accord trust and respect based on his or her own set of personal values, but there are a number of factors that go a long way toward ensuring coaches will be trusted and respected by their clients. Coaches must exhibit:

- Professionalism.
- Basic knowledge of related subject matter.
- Ironclad confidentiality.

Ability to Match Personal Style with Client Style

Whether a coach and client are matched by someone in the organization, or the coach is selected personally by the individual, it is the coach's responsibility to take note of and match as closely as possible that person's style preferences. And at advanced levels, a coach may be called on not only to match the client's style but also to influence the style of the person being coached, should the need arise. Style issues include:

- **Energy.** Is the person a low-energy type? Is he or she anxious? Does he or she speak too loudly, or quietly? The coach must notice all this and bring to the person's attention any behavior that needs adjustment.
- **Thinking style and speed.** If a coach responds to an analytical thinker with a conceptual response, it will interrupt the process flow. Likewise, if the coach slows down a lightning-speed thinker with poorly timed questions, or vice versa.

Ability to Listen

Coaches who are not good listeners do not stay employed as coaches for very long. A coach should:

- Hear what is being said, reflect back to check for accuracy, and show evidence of understanding what was said.
- Pay attention to style, personality type, communication preferences, and sense of humor of the person being coached.
- Listen for values, needs, and any other information that has bearing on the conversation.
- Discern what is not being said and to draw it out.

Coaches who listen actively not only hear what is not being said, they also can also pick up on what the person being coached might not be aware he or she is really feeling.

Ability to Inquire

Closely linked to the ability to listen, an effective coach asks high-quality questions based on what he or she has heard and observed. In addition to crafting appropriate and helpful questions, the coach should constantly assess whether a given line of inquiry is the most useful one at the time, for the person being coached. Good coaches rarely ask "filler questions" which lead to small talk and have no real value. Clients will perceive this and most likely will be frustrated if they are not moving forward in a meaningful way.

Coaches inquire when they ask clarifying questions to ensure understanding about what is being communicated and help fill in knowledge gaps. Clarifying questions help clients gain greater understanding and may include questions such as:

- What do you really think?
- What does that mean?
- Is there anything else you think I should know?
- Could you give me a little more detail about this so I understand it better?

Coaches inquire when they use focus questions such as:

- Of all the things we could delve into right now, which is going to be most helpful to you?
- You've mentioned three different things. Where would you like to start?
- How can I help you with this right now?
- What do you want from this conversation?

Coaches inquire when they use discovery questions such as:

- If you could wave a magic wand and have this situation go exactly the way you want it to, what would occur?
- If you were a risk-taker, what would you do?
- How do you think this will look to you a year from now?
- If you were to do this perfectly, what would need to happen?

Coaches inquire when they ask challenging questions that test their client's assumptions, perspectives, approaches, and norms. Typical questions include:

- What if you could do it? How would you start?
- What is the worst thing that could happen?
- How else might you look at this?
- What do you really want?
- What will cause the breakthrough here?
- What would happen if you raised your standards?

Capacity to Offer and Accept Feedback

Sometimes a coach is given feedback from others in the organization that he or she is expected to share with the person being coached. Or the coach may have personal observations he or she wants to bring to the attention of the person being coached. In a coaching relationship where trust and respect have been established, feedback is often welcome; but in offering feedback, coaches must restrain the desire to tell people what to do and try to change them. Feedback also must be timely and connected to something important to the client. One effective way for coaches to approach feedback is to ask permission to share the information. If the client agrees, then the coach should share the feedback in a way appropriate to the person being coached. If the person declines, the coach should respect that decision—though the choice not to hear the feedback might subsequently become a topic for coaching.

Conversely, coaches must be able to solicit feedback about themselves and about the quality of their coaching, and then be willing to make appropriate changes, to demonstrate flexibility and adaptability. In this way, coaches serve as role models, demonstrating how to respond graciously to feedback with gratitude and thoughtfulness.

Ability to Rein-In the Desire to Give Advice

Many people moving into the coaching field because they are gifted at giving advice and helping people figure out what to do. Unfortunately, giving advice is not coaching, and indulging the desire to do so can be detrimental to a coaching relationship.

Willingness to Challenge

Knowing when and how to challenge is essential to effective coaching. Challenging a person being coached can only be done successfully if the coach has first established trust and respect.

Several factors are involved in the ability to challenge appropriately:

- **Timing:** There are those who can be challenged in the first 10 minutes of the first coaching conversation. Others need time to develop a strong working relationship before they can accept a challenge. Coaches must evaluate the style of the person being coached and time their challenges appropriately.

- **Permission:** The coach must ask permission to challenge the person being coached. Gaining permission to challenge is not optional, but methods vary according to the style of the person being coached. For example, a coach might ask, “May I have permission to challenge you on the belief that’s behind the statement you just made?”
- **Content:** The rule of thumb is to ask a little more of the person being coached than he or she thinks is achievable.
- **Language:** Knowing how to ask for something is as important as knowing what to ask for. This requires a coach’s attention to context, history, and use of language. For example, some people respond well to sports metaphors; others prefer quotes from poets. People without children will probably not respond to parenting parallels. Be sure to use language that resonate with the person being coached.
- **Risk-taking:** The coach should take occasional risks. Challenging a person being coached can sometimes backfire, and the coach should be ready to deal with that possibility.

Ability to Share Multiple Perspectives

Good coaches are adept at seeing both the forest and the trees. Often, it makes sense to use inquiry to help the person being coached acknowledge alternative, useful perspectives, so the coach should offer other ways to look at something. Note, however, that a coach who is gifted at systems thinking, or is highly creative, will have to rein-in the need to share everything he or she sees as a possibility, for doing so only serves the coach’s ego, not the need of the person being coached. The key is to share other perspectives only when they are most useful.

Ability to Remain Neutral

Coaches have to be hypervigilant not to reveal or impose their personal beliefs and agendas regarding “hot topics” such as gender, race, politics, and religion.

Skilled at Different Thinking Styles

Coaches need to be able to adjust their thinking style to the person and the situation at hand. Coaches often have to think:

- **Strategically.** A coach should be able to take a broad-scale, long-term view of the person being coached and his or her situation, helping to assess options and the implication of choices. One of the greatest services a coach can provide is to help the person being coached thoughtfully define his or her best result. The coach can take a “mental helicopter ride,” to view the big picture, in order to help the person being coached see other perspectives and make new discoveries that will enhance his or her decision-making process.
- **Conceptually.** A coach collects data over time and needs to synthesize seemingly unrelated data streams into new ideas or perspectives. An effective coach who is a conceptual thinker can help the person being coached reach the goal most efficiently.
- **Systematically.** Coaches who are skilled at “systems thinking” are able to observe the environment and the structures in it and determine how it all either helps or hinders the success of the client. The coach helps clients to acknowledge the system and understand how they fit into it.
- **Analytical thinking.** Analytical thinking is often defined as critical thinking or critical reasoning. Coaches who excel at this type of thinking process should guard against relying too heavily on the skill. However, when working with people who are of the same type, and can reason an argument all the way through, the coach should be able to follow the thought processes.

A coach also should be able to identify connections that are not obvious. It is helpful when a coach can think several steps ahead of his or her clients, encouraging ideas for courses of action and anticipating likely outcomes.

Ability to Brainstorm Creatively

Brainstorming is helping the person being coached generate ideas; the more creative, the better. In the right circumstances, a real brainstorming session can be extremely useful. If you choose to brainstorm with your client, here are some guidelines you may find helpful:

- State the problem clearly.
- Allow no criticism, evaluation, judgment, or defense of ideas during the brainstorming session.
- Place no limits on ideas, no matter how outrageous or impractical they may seem. Every idea is to be expressed.
- Encourage quantity over quality.
- Encourage “piggybacking,” or building on ideas.
- Record all ideas.

Although, traditionally, brainstorming involves more than two people, in the coaching relationship, two are usually enough. The key is to be sure that the person being coached starts the brainstorming session. This activity is an appropriate option when the person being coached seems stuck or limited in options. The coach might suggest that they brainstorm, and then ask the person being coached to start. Often, once the person being coached gets going, he or she will generate a number of options. If more good ideas are needed, the person being coached may want to gather a group of colleagues to help with the process. Just be sure the brainstorming rules apply with the group.

Ability to Remember

The ability to note and loop back to relevant threads in prior discussions is a critical skill for a coach. People being coached are often amazed when the coach recalls a remark made months earlier.

Ability to Empathize

A person being coached needs to know that the coach understands the situation and has had personal experience with frustration, fear, and unhappiness. The coach should be able to express understanding and care and, at the same time, be able to keep the person being coached moving—not let the person wallow. In rare cases, the coach may share personal information about a similar situation he or she has experienced. When this is the case, the coach should first ask permission, and if given, be brief so the conversation doesn’t become about the coach. Personal sharing should be used judiciously. A reliable general rule is the more the coach is talking, the less effective they are being, so when sharing stories or information, get to the point.

Commitment to Maintain Professional Standards

A coach must set and maintain the highest standards of professionalism. He or she must:

- Be on time.
- Send only appropriate, well-written communications.
- Keep commitments.
- Use correct language.

These days, a critical factor in being able to maintain professional standards is the need to stay up to date technologically. The coach should have at least the same level of knowledge and technological capability as his or her clients—although, ideally, the coach will be a little more advanced.

Ability to Set and Maintain Boundaries

There is always the risk that coaches might become too friendly with their clients; certainly, close friendships have grown from coaching relationships. But this is appropriate only after the coaching relationship has been officially terminated. While the coaching is in progress, appropriate professional boundaries must be set and observed. This can be tricky, however, because professional boundaries are established on a case-by-case basis. That said, generally, it is recommended that a coach:

- Refrain from socializing with clients during the coaching process.
- Communicate with clients using only business contact numbers.
- Avoid communicating outside of business hours, unless it is to leave a message, and is absolutely necessary.
- Never discuss personal issues in any detail, unless an experience has critical relevance to the client's situation.

Knowledge and Understanding of Client's Business

Having some degree of knowledge and understanding of the client's field of work is essential to the coaching initiative. For example, a salesperson will need a coach who understands the selling process, who has a strong grounding in sales process models, and has compassion for the difficulties inherent to the sales profession.

Industry experience is a plus, though not absolutely crucial for a coach to be successful. However, coaches who don't have experience in their clients' fields should be able to climb the learning curve quickly, to understand the inner workings of their business—for example, how it generates revenue and tracks profitability, how people are compensated and rewarded, what the "lingo" is, and so forth. The coach also should learn how the client training base works, how the performance review system is set up, and what models and systems are in use in the business.

Understanding of Management Basics

A coach should have a solid grounding in the basics of management skill-sets. Often, individuals being coached will need a little just-in-time tune-up in basics, similar to the regular one-to-one weekly or biweekly meetings between the manager and the employee, when they catch up, address questions, review tasks and responsibilities, brainstorm, and solve problems. These basics include goal-setting, performance planning, timely feedback, and appropriate direction and support.

Political Awareness

An effective organizational coach has a healthy grasp of the power dynamics common to all organizations and is willing and able to share this insight with people being coached. The coach understands that power is not always related to position, and so can help the person being coached to work on his or her personal power base and leverage that to achieve goals.

Cross-Cultural Insight

With the global economy, coaches today often are called upon to work with individuals from all over the world, from cultures very different from their own. Coaches should therefore become familiar with the cultural implications of those they are working with. Having this awareness and sensitivity will help them to gain greater professional credibility, enabling them to help the person being coached understand when cultural differences might impact success.

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | List possible next steps in your ongoing development as a coach.

2 | List what you will do within the next 30 days to act on your intentions.

3 | List who will support you and hold you accountable for your next steps.

How do you define your niche? Start with what you are passionate about. This is another reason why defining your avatar is so important. Equally important is doing research to find out what are the needs of the market. For example, I am an executive coach. There are plenty of coaches who market themselves as executive coaches. What makes me unique is that I have had experience as an executive in a couple of organizations and I have taken the time to acquire training and tools that put me above many of my competitors. I have also done some research to see what my competition is doing. Knowing what the market needs will allow you to set yourself for success. It would also give you data to see if you can make your passion into your niche. If the market is flooded with what you're passionate about, that means that either you are not going to be as successful as you might think or you might have to become extraordinary at what you do in order to be successful. I'm not saying this to discourage you from following your passion. What I'm saying is that if you choose to follow your passion regardless of what the market says, you might have to work harder at it.

Once you determine your niche, you will need to determine what services you are offering. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the question here is, what separates you from the rest? The final step in defining your niche is to develop 30-second and one-minute elevator speeches. The goal here is to spark the interest of potential clients. A well-crafted elevator speech is bold but not exaggerated. The best way to develop an effective elevator speech is to work with another coach who can give you honest feedback and help you polish it.

Business Formation Steps

Now that we have taken care of the preliminaries, it is time to get more practical. I strongly suggest that you choose some form of incorporation to set up your business coaching practice. The economy of the United States is geared to support and protect businesses. In addition, there are several tax deductions available to corporations that are not available to you as an individual or as a sole proprietor. Another benefit of incorporating is that you can set up healthcare insurance, 401(k), and other benefits for yourself as an employee of your own corporation. A final benefit of incorporating is that you can separate yourself from your business, thus protecting your personal assets.

Before setting up a corporation, I suggest you consult a tax professional who is a qualified corporate formation expert. Please be advised that not all accountants are corporate experts. Finally, read one or two good books about the benefits of incorporation. Resources in this area abound. My preferred method of incorporation is a Single-Member Limited Liability Corporation or LLC. This method of incorporation gives you all the benefits of a regular corporation without the hassle or paperwork required to set up a regular corporation.

Once you choose your method of incorporation, then it is time to choose a name for your corporation. Every state has a process to incorporate. Choosing a name is part of this process. It is important for you to check with your state to see if the name you have chosen is available. Your home state usually makes this process very easy. Most states offer information about this on their Secretary of State's website.

After choosing your corporate name then you can apply for an employer identification number or EIN. This number is free and you can apply for it through the IRS website. You will then apply for a State Identification Number and a business license if required. Again, check with your city and state as the requirements may vary. Incorporating to your state and city usually costs money. There are states that are friendly to business and this cost is minimal. Other states such as California, charge a lot of money for incorporation and corporate taxes. There are certain advantages to incorporate in a different state if your state is not corporate-friendly, but that is a subject you will need to discuss with a tax professional. If you choose to do the incorporation paperwork yourself, take your time and read carefully the instructions provided by your state. Filling out the paperwork incorrectly may cost you additional money. For this reason, some people choose to hire someone to fill out the paperwork for them. There are many online services that will incorporate for a reasonable price.

Unfortunately, we live in a litigious society. Regardless of whether you decide to incorporate or not, you will need to get liability insurance for yourself and/or your company. The International Coach Federation (ICF) offers third-party insurance at a reasonable cost for its members (<https://westminster.global/i/ICF/>). My suggestion is that your insurance covers a minimum of \$1 million per instance. This assures that you and your company would be protected in case of a lawsuit.

Once you are incorporated, your next step is to open a business bank account. These accounts usually come with an ATM card that you can use to build credit. One important reminder is that you will need to keep your business income and expenses separate from your personal finances. Failing to do so may impact your taxes. A separate checking account will clearly separate the two. Otherwise, you will be commingling funds, a practice that can easily get you into hot water with the IRS.

Depending on the size of your business you might want to register your business with Duns & Bradbury (DUNS) and NAV. Keep in mind that your business is treated as an individual by the IRS. Like any individual, your business can build credit on its own. DUNS will provide you with a number that you can give other businesses you do business with in order to build business credit. NAV is the equivalent of EQUIFAX or other credit agencies, but for business. DUNS is free, so is the basic NAV service. Establishing a positive credit score for your business will open doors to commercial credit. The beauty of this system is that any incurred by your business does not affect your personal credit score.

Marketing

The first step in marketing your business is determining your price points. This will probably be the hardest decision you will have to make. Knowing how much to charge for services presents a challenge since we are accustomed to paying for tangible things. We go to the store and pay for groceries without thinking too much about it. We go to see a physician and pay for their services because they make us feel better and we don't think much about it, either. But when it comes to charging for coaching services, we are hesitant. If you're a minister, charging for your coaching services is affected by the limiting belief that says that ministers shouldn't make a lot of money. Unfortunately, this is a limiting belief common in our culture and which we have embraced.

The way I was able to work through this limiting belief was to think not about the fact that I was charging for talking to someone for 30 minutes but to think in terms of the resulting transformational change in the coachee. The fact of the matter is that what I offer has a life-long impact on the person I'm coaching. As the commercial used to say, "that is priceless." Having said all this, the best way to determine your price point is to check what other coaches at your level and within your niche are charging. I personally like to set a price point and then ask the possible client how they feel about what I'm charging. I will then adjust it, accordingly. My price points vary. I contract with an outfit that does all the marketing for me and feeds me, my clients. Since I get a lot of clients through them, my price point is lower than if this was a client that I received through my own marketing efforts. The fact that I don't have to work to get these clients justifies my decision. Remember, your time is your most precious asset!

Some entrepreneurs spend a lot of time designing a logo. This will be justified if you were thinking about creating a multimillion-dollar company. For most of us, this is not the case. A simple logo will suffice. Creating a simple logo allows you to have a visual image for your business. In addition, a logo gives the image of a serious business plus it looks cool on a website. Along with the logo, you might want to create a tagline. Your tagline should be short and should quickly state your main purpose. My tag line is: "Revealing the heart of transformation." Short, sweet, and to the point.

Having business cards is a subject that has changed with time. In the past, having business cards were a must. Today, it all depends on your niche. I used to have business cards. I handed them out to people at different events. The return on investment (ROI) was zero. Meaning that I never attracted a client using my business cards. These days I rely more on having an electronic business card on my phone that I can text or email to someone. These are cost-effective as all they require is a few minutes for me to set it up.

Creating a website, on the other hand, is a must. Websites function the way the business cards used to function. Prospective clients go to your website after they meet you on social media. In other words, your website serves as a reference to your business. When you create your website use the Eight-second Rule. This rule states that visitors to your website will only spend eight seconds to determine if they are interested in the content or not. If your website doesn't capture their attention in that time period, they will move on. In addition, you should always offer something for free in exchange for visitors' email addresses. This will create a "funnel" of possible leads. You should also add "Google Analytics" to your website to track traffic. This will provide data to measure the impact of your marketing efforts.

In order to create a website, you will need to purchase a URL. Most URLs come with multiple email addresses. When choosing a URL make it simple and easy to type. In this era of immediate satisfaction, people don't want to think too hard when typing a website name. In addition, a simple URL is easy to remember.

What Does Success Look Like?

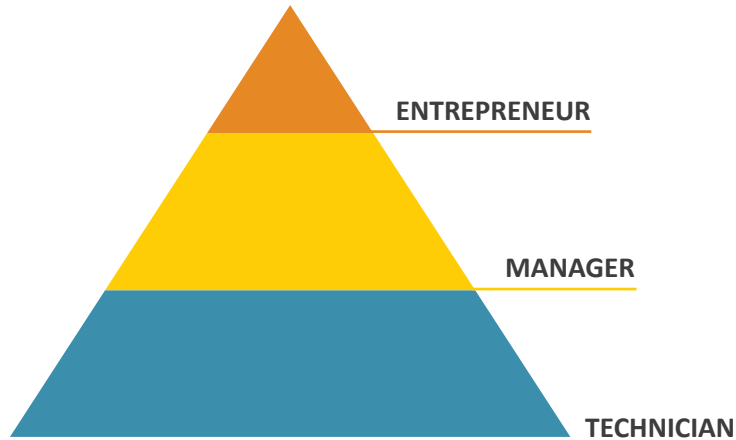
At first glance, this might seem like a "no-brainer" question. Most people dream about being successful, but the meaning of success varies from person to person. For some of my clients, success means an accumulation of over \$2 million in cash and investments, retiring by the age of 50, and making over \$250,000 annually. For them, this seems to be a pretty realistic definition. For others, this might not be the case. I am over 60 and until a few years ago, I have never made that kind of money. For me, success is to have some money in the bank with enough residual income that will carry me into my last days, while enjoying life to its fullest. Thankfully, I started early and have been successful in carrying out my plan.

What does success look like for you? This is a really important question as it sets the foundation for your future. The second question is as important: How realistic is your definition of success? There are other questions that are as important such as: How long do you think it will take you to get there? What do you need to get there? What is it that you don't know you don't know? What is your first step?

Both, Michael Gerber and Bill Baren offer models to assist entrepreneurs in defining success. In his book, "The E Myth" (Harper Business, 2004), Gerber differentiates between being a technician, a manager, and an entrepreneur. In a nutshell, when you begin your own business, you are mostly a technician (unless you have a lot of money to invest in your efforts). In other words, you are in charge of performing every task needed for the success of your business. As a technician, you are "in the weeds." As your business starts to grow, you become a manager. As a manager, you are still doing some of the technical stuff, but you are also hiring other people to take over some of the functions of the business. At this point, your job is to manage those people as well as be in charge of some of the technical requirements of the business. According to Gerber, your goal is to become an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur doesn't take care of any of the details of the business nor manage people. A true entrepreneur creates systems that run the business. The job of the entrepreneur is to make sure that the systems are working and to continue to provide a vision for the future of the business. Given this model, what would your ideal state be? Is your vision realistic?

How to Market Your Coaching Practice

THE “E” MYTH*



**The “E” Myth Revisited by Michael E. Gerber*

Bill Baren is a business coach. He has delineated five stages for business success. These stages are: Establish, Expanded, Leverage, Leadership, and Legacy.

Stage 1: Establish (\$0 – 39,999)

This is the initial stage of any business startup. The main goal here is to build your business foundation. This includes:

- **Become an expert in finding clients:** A smart way of going about this is networking with people who can connect you with possible clients. Make a list of possible network connectors and follow-through in contacting them. In addition, create “funnels” on your social media to collect information about possible contacts.
- **Create a big vision:** If you are going to dream about the future, dream BIG! Without a vision, your coaching practice will stagnate. Once you create the vision, plan accordingly.
- **Implement proven systems:** A mistake some entrepreneurs make is to try to “reinvent the wheel.” This takes a lot of time and effort. Why not adapt what’s already available? There are plenty of systems out there that you can implement and adapt to assist you in developing your business. Remember, your time is your most precious commodity! The less time you spend in the minutia, the more time you will have for your clients.
- **“Iron sharpens iron”:** Network and create relationships with other successful coaches. Learn from them. Ask for their feedback.
- **Choose your niche:** We have already talked about this. Your niche will determine your client base.
- **Create your marketing message:** What’s your elevator speech?
- **Open and use a business account:** This is one of the first practical steps after you choose what type of business entity you want to create for your business.

Stage 2: Expand (\$40,000 – 69,999)

- **Expand your marketing**
- **Become comfortable with visibility:** How much would you like to be known as a coach? How would you manage your success as a coach and as a minister? Are they separate?
- **Address your limiting beliefs:** Limiting beliefs, as well as the Impostor Syndrome, do not go away with success. In many instances, if unchecked, they tend to get in the way of your success. Knowing where your limiting beliefs reside is key to a successful coaching career.
- **Celebrate successes and seek new clients:** We don't celebrate successes enough! Get in the practice of celebrating every time you achieve one of your goals. In addition, getting new clients is the key to a healthy coaching practice.
- **Improve message and hone niche:** As your business grows, your message and your niche might change. You might discover that there are better opportunities elsewhere. It is important to remain open to those changes. I know coaches that have limited their success by clinging to a niche that is not providing enough opportunities for them.
- **Develop your signature talk:** In Stage 1 we talked about creating your elevator speech. In Stage 2 it is as important to develop a signature talk. This is your branding. You will use this speech every time you get to talk to people in addition to whatever subject you have been invited to share. When you watch successful presenters, you will notice that they will give you a small "commercial" about the business, usually at the end of their presentation. That's their signature talk!
- **Be bold about what you offer:** This takes some confidence development. Do you believe in what you are offering? If so, then be bold about it! In my practice, I offer transformation in a very short amount of time. What do you offer?
- **Hire a virtual assistant:** In Stage 1 we talked about starting to learn how to automate. A virtual assistant is one more way to release you from the small details that take so much time. In addition to giving back more time to coach, a virtual assistant will offer the opportunity to show that your business is growing.

Stage 3: Leverage (\$70,000 – 250,00)

- **Focus on systems that save you time and money**
- **Shift from being an "operator" to becoming an "entrepreneur"**
- **Maximize the use of webinars and live events:** This is the time to start exploring how to get in the "Ted Talks" circle and as an expert speaker in various venues.
- **Develop "packages"**

Stage 4: Leadership (\$250,000 – \$1M)

- **Become an influential leader in your industry**

Stage 5: Legacy (\$1M - \$10M)

- **Create a business that lives beyond you and thrives without you**

Final Word

As I began my coaching journey, I was often overwhelmed by how much I didn't know and how much I had to do. I later discovered that this is a very common feeling. I also learned that if I applied what I learned in my coach training to my business marketing process, I could overcome that feeling. For me, it all started by defining my present. After that, I explored my desired future and established goals to achieve it. Finally, I started my business by taking the first step. Along the way, I created S.M.A.R.T. goals and learned to explore alternate paths when things were not working. I also added accountability partners and a business coach. Above all, I gave myself grace and patience. Finally, I learned that there is no such thing as failure. What we call failure is nothing more than an opportunity to learn something new.

INSIGHTS ON ON MARKETING FROM COACHING PROFESSIONALS

"So often coaches fail before they start because they do not have a concrete plan for succeeding." This quote from a coach I interviewed summed up the importance of having a plan and adequate margins to do the necessary work that leads to success. Coaches I've interviewed this past year within my ICF Chapter and coaching network emphasized the importance of having clarity about their business plan, their next steps, and their own skills and capacities. In the following section is a summary of their insights and recommendations for succeeding in this field.

Several coaches mentioned that the barriers to entry for launching a coaching business are low. You can start a coaching business with a computer and basic software along with adequate training in coaching principles and practices. As you grow your client base, you can upgrade to better tools, software, and technology. Most coaches stated that having an engaging website and LinkedIn presence was worth the time and energy creating them so that potential customers could find you and see that you're "legit." Potential clients want to know who you are, what you offer, and what's unique about working with you. Coaches kept their sites simple, engaging and focused on the needs of their clients and how they could help them solve their most significant challenges. They used engaging images, often had a welcome video, sprinkled their site with quotes from past clients, and made it easy for people to schedule time with them. Several coaches found that sending emails to current, past, and present clients a few times a month was also a great way to remain in people's stream of consciousness.

The following information is a distillation of comments by coaches, organized into 5 themes, about what it took for them to develop a sustainable, profitable business based on overarching themes. May you learn from their wisdom and apply what's helpful to your coaching plans.

— Jim LaDoux

THEME 1 – Set your mind right and have a support network

Coaches were candid about how fear, lack of self-confidence, and lack of adequate planning often sabotaged their best efforts. Their suggestions below will get you to start strong and avoid the pitfalls they experienced.

1. **Get out there.** Start your coaching business now! It doesn't matter if you coach for free of charge. Find ways to coach others every week. The faster you get going, the more you'll learn and grow. Continue to sharpen your coaching skills. After a coaching session, be willing to ask a coachee if they have someone in mind that would benefit from a complimentary coaching session. Some coaches offered a free 30-45 minute session and one person offered a 2-hour mini-retreat. Many coaches developed their coaching skills by coaching people within their church or workplace.
2. **Read your marketplace:** Pay attention to what people are willing to pay for in the areas you seek to offer coaching. Listen for their pain points, their challenges, and the opportunities you might have to help solve their most pressing issues. Keep a running list of your observations, insights, and ideas. Review the list at least twice a month to stay grounded to current reality.

3. **Give yourself permission to succeed and fail, and to learn from both experiences.** Coaches viewed failure as learning experiences and opportunities to recalibrate how they coached and how they positioned themselves in the marketplace. One coach hired a coach to help him unpack and learn from his failures. Successes are worth celebrating and learning from. If something works, how might you do more of it?
4. **Reframe how you view other coaches and consultants.** Successful coaches viewed other coaches as teachers rather than competitors. They studied how other coaches positioned themselves, kept lists of services others provided and what they charged for them, and noted their “call to action” statements to help people invest in a coaching relationship. They embedded the best practices they observed from other coaches into their coaching setting. They noted what didn’t work particularly well and found better ways to do it. A few coaches said they needed to give up their scarcity mindset, understanding that there is more work to do in coaching than there are coaches.
5. **Be prepared for people to say “no” and to say “yes.”** Get comfortable with inviting people into a coaching relationship. Expect most people to say no to your offer and a few to say yes. But you won’t reach new clients unless you’re willing to deal with rejection. Once people say yes, you need to be able to share with them what are the next steps for moving forward. Three coaches said that if you can’t get over the fear of rejection, you’ll struggle with being able to close the sale and build a business.
6. **List the skills you have now, the skills you need to develop, and the skills you need to delegate.** You’ll need skills and a plan for marketing your business, running your business, and tending to the clients you already have. You may need others to help you set up an LLC, find business insurance, develop an online presence, and create systems needed to automate much of your work. A coach from Wisconsin said, “Don’t be a lone ranger. You’ll need others to fill your gaps. Keep in mind that others are hiring you to help fill their gaps.”
7. **Become an ICF member and join an ICF chapter.** Join a network of like-minded people who will support you, challenge you, and be a resource for helping you grow your business. An ICF member of a local chapter acknowledged, “I received some of my best ideas from other coaches in my chapter and I received their support and encouragement when I had doubts about my capacity to coach others well.” Who will be those teachers, collaborators, and cheerleaders for you as you build your business?
8. **Find a coach to support your efforts.** Every coach should have a coach. Decide on who will be your coach in this endeavor. Keep in mind that it may be someone who is in your current class!

THEME 2 – Keep developing and refining your coaching niche

Finding profitable coaching niches can be difficult. You’ll want to coach everyone at first but avoid doing so. If you want to get coaching clients fast, learn how to find a profitable niche as soon as possible. You may hear coaches say, the “riches are in the niches.” Knowing every want, need, and desire of your niche will simplify your business processes and marketing. Listed below are comments from coaches about their niches:

- “I began developing my niches around things I loved, what I was good at, and what people were willing to pay for.”
- “I floundered for 2 ½ years until I finally crafted a marketing message that concretely told people what I do and why it should matter to them.”
- “Quit trying to reach everyone with your coaching services. My business quit sputtering when I became laser-focused on finding 50 clients who sought to rebuild their lives after ending a marriage.”
- “It’s a lot easier to write marketing content and update your website when you know who your audience is. I saved a ton of time when I quit trying to network with people that didn’t fit my customer profile.”
- Developing coaching packages and programs seemed to flow out of the needs I was hearing from the people I was already serving. I focused on getting referrals from my current clients because the names they gave me fit the niche I was offering.”

Questions coaches found help when discerning their niche included:

- Who is your ideal customer?
- Who do you want to coach?
- What makes your heart sing?
- What do you want a coaching relationship to do for others? How will it help them succeed?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses according to your client's perspective?
- How can your coaching help the people you're already in contact with?
- Who seeks you out for advice or assistance with solving a problem?
- Who are the people you want to spend more of your time with?

A coach who built her business around supporting physicians to find wholeness for themselves stated, "I doubt I'd still be coaching now if I had failed to find my niche."

Budgeting for the expenses you'll incur the first year will give you a good idea of the amount of money you'll need to initially invest in your business. You may wish to place that amount into your business account right away rather than waiting for coaching revenue to cover these costs.

THEME 3 - Build your in-person and virtual team

A common theme among coaches was their recognition for needing additional administrative, marketing, and technical support, to do their best work. A coach from Iowa stated that she "wore way too many hats, most of which were ill-fitting." Just because you're a solo entrepreneur, doesn't mean you can do everything. In fact, it's not advisable. Even if they can do these items, it's not always the best use of their time. If you can get paid \$100 or more an hour for coaching, why would you spend your time updating your database when someone else can do it for \$15 an hour? Coaches built out their teams using freelancers who could do bookkeeping and administrative work, editing and graphic design work, or offer website, social media, and marketing support. When hiring freelancers, coaches conducted "video" interviews and created a 60-90 day tryout period. Successful team builders created agreements and guidelines to ensure a shared understanding of the outcomes and expectations of the position. Keep in mind that there are IRS and compliance requirements for contractors which are designed to protect the contractor and you. Ensure you read over the compliance requirements from the IRS website. Seek legal advice if you have any questions.

THEME 4 - Create a written plan; review and update it monthly

As part of the Coaching School training, you'll be asked to explain your coaching business plans (if that's the route you're seeking). A business plan is a cohesive strategy for your business that you may plan in your mind or in a written document that covers each major component of your business, how those major components will work well with one another, and your plan for executing those strategies. The process of writing a business plan will help you organize your ideas. The value of business planning is to identify problems and fix them early while it's still cheap to do so. Writing out your plan also gives you a central place that contains strategies that you and your partners can agree upon which will reduce misunderstandings among team members and facilitate discussions and brainstorming sessions. Another benefit of having a written plan is that you can send it out to gather feedback. You will be able to use it for reference in case you forget any details.

A business model is how every component of your business works on its own and in relationship to every other component of your business. A business is made up of many separate components like marketing, creating improving the product, finances, employees, customer relationships, and much more. What is important in a business model is that its different components are not just great individually, but also work well together. Your business model and business plan are not static. They will continually evolve and you must constantly refine them.

Start with the simplest possible business plan. According to Albert Einstein, “If you can’t explain it to a six-year-old, you don’t understand it.” All plans include information about the products or services you provide, information about who you plan to reach and how you will reach them, and how will you become and remain financially sustainable.

The coaches I interviewed responded to many of the questions below about their services, marketing plans, and financial goals and budgets.

Product or service

- What are your products or services?
- What benefit does it provide to whom?
- What will each product or service cost?

Marketing

- How will the right people find you and your services?
- Who can you partner with?

Finances

- What are the major sources of revenue?
- When will you achieve financial sustainability?
- Do you need to raise money for this? How much?
- What are your financial goals?

Most coaches did not have a concrete, written plan for building their business, and as a result, the time it took for them to achieve financial sustainability in their coaching business took significantly longer. A common refrain was, “I was forced to eventually create a plan because it was the only way I could keep on top of what I was trying to achieve.” Plans rarely exceeded 10-pages and most were 3-5 pages long. A few did exceedingly well with 1-2 page plans that addressed the following items:

1. **An Executive Summary.** The executive summary includes one or two paragraphs that serve as an introduction to the business plan. It explains the problems you’re seeking to solve and may include a mission statement if the coach has created one. The summary briefly explains what the key products are, and who the target audience is (which may include demographic/psychographic information).
2. **An overview of your products and services.** This is a section where coaches are more precise about the services or products being offered to clients and how they benefit the target audience.
3. **A description of the stage your business is in.** This section simply establishes where you are in the process of building your business along with some of the related key outcomes and key success factors for this stage in business.
4. **Your target market and marketing strategies.** The best plans seem to highlight who were the ideal customers for your services and how they planned to reach them.
5. **Your anticipated revenue.** List how much revenue you’re anticipating from individual clients. Providing group coaching? Selling subscription services? Training? Leading retreats? Selling books and other services?

THEME 5 - Learn from other coaches' mistakes; avoid repeating them

Coaches that were interviewed were eager to pass along suggestions for building the best possible plan and avoiding the mistakes they made along the way.

Coaches that intentionally used their plans to build their business reviewed them regularly (at least monthly), updated them often to reflect current realities, and referred to them as they set new short-term goals. Again simplicity was the key as well as continuously referring to it. As one coach said, "I measured my business plan in sentences, not in pages, but every sentence and bullet point mattered." The plans that were transformational were designed to be a flexible resource, not something you never touched."

The final two questions that were asked of coaches who experienced business success included:

- "If you could do it all over, what would you do differently?"
- "What mistakes did you make that you hope others might avoid?"

Listed below are the 5 mistakes that coaches most frequently mentioned.

5 Mistakes People Make When Creating a Plan

Mistake #1: Using planning to procrastinate. Don't use planning as an excuse to put off starting work on your business. Many people deliberately and perpetually remain in the planning and research phase while never starting. At some point, you must start doing the actual work. Give yourself a planning and research deadline. Create and maintain a daily to-do list of things you actually do for your business after the planning deadline expires. You should continue to plan, strategize, and research different aspects of your business after that deadline, but use that date as a point in which at least some of your effort will be actual work instead of planning.

Mistake #2: Not tending to financials. Many people find the finance section of a business plan confusing and put it off you will need to face this at some point. It is much better to understand the financials of your business before you launch to provide preventable mistakes. Start by making a cash flow statement. If you have a piece of paper or excel ready, make two columns. Use one column for a list of ways that money comes into your business, and the other column is for ways that money goes out of your business. You can do this if your business is already started or just planning it. Over time the items from these lists will help you create more accurate statements. It is a simple way to get your finances organized and understand how much money you will need to raise before you start your business.

Mistake #3: Being all things to all people. When asked who their ideal customer is, many first-time entrepreneurs often say their business will appeal to everyone. This is almost never the case. You must have a very specific kind of customer in mind in order to truly satisfy them with your service and reach them with your marketing. Talk to people who you think might be your customers and get their feedback on whether they need your product or service and whether they would buy it. Understand the reasons for why or why not they would buy your service. This will help you develop a greater sense of who your potential customers truly are and who they are not. A common recommendation is to find the first hundred customers who will absolutely love your service rather than trying to please everyone.

Mistake #4: Failure to flesh out business ideas, products, and services. Clearly describe each item. Who is it for? What are the benefits? What is the price? How is it delivered? How do people sign up? What are the deliverables that a client will receive? You can't promote your ideas, products, and services without providing a sufficient level of detail for yourself and the customer.

As part of the class, you'll have an opportunity to share your plan with other students and get their feedback. Be ready to ask them questions you'd find most helpful as you continue to refine them.

Mistake #5: Failure to create consistent habits around doing what matters most. Coaches mention their regrets about not consistently reaching new people or nurturing the relationships of past and present clients. They regretted not creating systems for managing leads, invoices, and payments. They regretted not scheduling time to create content, send email updates to clients, and not having systems for creating new products and services. Small things that are of high value, and are consistently done, make a big difference long-term.

ASSIGNMENTS

1 | Write a draft Executive Summary for your business plan.

2 | Describe who your target audience is and how you plan to reach them.

3 | Describe the type of coaching products/services plan to offer your clients. What will you charge?

— APPENDIX A —

Commonly Used Coaching Terms

Having a common language to discuss coaching concepts and approaches is important. In this session, we'll identify and address the most frequently used terms that "show up" in coaching relationships. The terms, listed alphabetically, relate to the roles people play, the process for coaching and navigating change, and steps toward fulfilling coaching outcomes.

Accountability: A phase that explores the level of obligation, responsibility, and commitment that an individual has for their actions.

Action: The conscious act of doing/starting something in order to achieve the desired change/objective.

Action Learning: A learning technique performed in groups to enable an individual to learn by questioning and involving others in coming up with proposed actions/solutions to a problem or issue.

Alignment: A state of agreement. In the context of people—reaching agreement over an issue, problem, etc. In the context of getting things done—spending time doing the things that result in your achieving what you want to achieve (alignment of the 'want' and 'do').

Assessment: A measurement process used to assess the level of current performance. This could be prior to or after training has taken place when measured against learning outcomes, or could be used to assess certain behaviors that would demonstrate a learning style preference, or a preference to approach conflict, etc.

Behavior: The manner of conducting oneself or responding in a situation. In training we try to change behavior directly connected to the overall learning objectives and outcomes. This would be observable and measurable.

Buy-in: Signifies the commitment of interest and level of support to a decision or idea that is being proposed.

Change Management: An approach by organizations to shift individuals, teams, and the organization from its current state to a desired/planned future state. More often than not, it is supported in a number of ways—e.g. workshops, training, conferences, etc.

Coaching Contract: An agreement that is reached at the outset of a coaching session to determine the terms of business. This will include the duration of the coaching (the number of months or weeks the coaching will take place over), number of sessions and length of sessions, the levels of commitment from the coach and coaching partner, confirmation of confidentiality boundaries, and respective expectations of suitable outcomes from the sessions.

Competence or Competency: The ability of an individual to undertake and successfully complete defined tasks. Often this is described in the workplace as the behaviors required to complete a job or task. An example of a management competency would be influencing. The shortfall of relevant competencies that are required by an organization is often referred to as competency gaps.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Management Instrument: To deal with conflict, it is important to understand what our choices are in any given conflict situation. According to the works of Thomas and Kilmann, there are five conflict-handling modes: competing, collaborating, compromising, accommodating, and avoiding. The Thomas-Kilmann Instrument allows us to measure the conflict-handling modes we are using too much or too little, and as a result, adapt our style of handling the conflict dependent on each conflict situation.

Consulting: Providing expert knowledge to a third party for a fee. Consulting is most often used when a company needs an outside expert opinion regarding a business decision.

Core Competencies: The key behaviors demonstrated and measured in the workplace enabling the organization (and individuals within it) to work within them. Competency is also underpinned by the skills and knowledge of the individuals within the organization.

Counseling: To give professional psychological help and advice on how to cope and move forward from an existing situation that is causing the person discomfort, stress, and unhappiness.

Culture Change: Making a conscious change to the culture of an organization from what it is currently to something new. This may be done as a result of a merger or takeover, or a need to move the business on so it's equipped to deal with a different set of circumstances. It is likely to start, support, and maintain this change that an organization will carry out a launch to the new culture, along with workshops and training to deliver and embed the change.

De Bono—Six Hats: The Six Hats Thinking was designed by Edward de Bono to help contextualize ideas in a more lateral way with our way of thinking. Each of the six different colored hats (White, Green, Blue, Black, Yellow, and Red) represent different characteristics, by wearing one of the colored hats, you can then look at any issue from a different perspective by taking on that role and characteristic. It is an excellent creative thinking tool that works really well with a team and is effective in demonstrating the importance of being able to consider an issue from a number of different ways.

Development: Training people to acquire new knowledge, skills, and behaviors that result in them being able to complete their objectives and tasks more effectively and profitably.

DMAIC (pronounced “Duh-MAY-ick”): This is a structured problem-solving methodology used in Six Sigma improvement (see Six Sigma) it has five phases, they are:

- Define – specifically the problem and the project goals.
- Measure – the current key processes and collect all relevant data.
- Analyze – the data to verify the cause and effect relationships, seek out the root causes of any defect you choose to investigate. This could be done using Fishbone Thinking (see Fishbone Thinking).
- Improve – the current processes using an implementation plan to ensure all project goals identified are included. In this phase, you may also use pilot runs to ensure actual capability.
- Control – ensure that any changes and deviations from the targets are corrected and that opportunities for project lessons are applied and continuously monitored.
- EEF – A feedback tool that structures the positive or negative feedback to focus on the facts, rather than emotional feelings.
- Example – a tangible example on which you want to specifically give feedback.
- Effect – what effect is this having on the individual, Manager, Team, Organization, or Customer.
- Change – what you would like them to ‘change’ about their behavior or actions to improve the situation. This can also include the option to continue what you would like them to ‘continue’ and do more.

Facilitation: A technique used to enhance the learning experience and improve its success by drawing on the knowledge of participants and building upon this to fill in any gaps in knowledge or skill.

Facilitator: A person who leads a training event by delivering the appropriate and required theory and content by establishing, through questioning, what they already know, listening to their current level of understanding, and providing suggestions, alternatives, resources, and solutions.

Feedback: Providing other people with feedback on their actions, attitude, and behavior in order for them to continue doing more of what is good. This also includes helping them recognize and continue doing what they should be doing and changing what they are not doing correctly/effectively. There are a number of effective feedback models; a simple and highly effective one is EEC – Example, Effect, Change, or Continue.

Focus Group: A temporary group of people that are brought together to offer insight and opinion to a topic or issue to give a wider perspective. It is often used if an organization is considering a form of change or a new initiative to give a wider perspective of issues or questions they will need to provide answers to.

GROW Model: John Whitmore developed the GROW model. It is used by individuals and organizations as a coaching method. GROW is an acronym for Goal, Reality, Options, and Will—they are seen by Whitmore as the four key components of a coaching session. GROW is also sometimes seen as TGROW—this was an adaptation by Miles Downey who introduced T, which stands for Topic.

- What do you want (goals)?
- What is happening now (reality)?
- What could you do (options)?
- What will you do (what’s next)?

Johari Window: A technique developed and used by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in California in 1955 to help people improve self-awareness, mutual understanding, and relationships between themselves and others. The model includes four ‘windows’ to represent the location of ideas and information available within a group. This tool helps to develop a leader’s role through self-awareness—by increasing the Public Window, you will deliver greater mutuality.

Public -

- Information that is KNOWN or SHARED by all parties.
- Clarity in what you want and what others want.

Hidden -

- Information YOU know but OTHERS DO NOT.
- Others cannot use information they do not have.

Blind Spot -

- Information OTHERS KNOW but YOU DO NOT.
- You cannot address what you do not know.

Unknown -

- Unknown opportunities.
- Everyone is in the dark.

Kaizen: Means ‘improvement’, or ‘change for the better’ in Japanese, and refers to philosophy or practices that focus upon continuous improvement of processes in manufacturing, engineering, game development, and business management (see Six Sigma). Embedding Kaizen into the workplace ensures that the organization and all of its people will work toward continuously improving its processes to reduce waste and cost (improving efficiency and productivity). The process of Kaizen is embedded into Toyota, and it has for many years now been a role model example of the results it can enable an organization to achieve.

Management: The overall function of a manager to organize, develop, and work with others to achieve common goals and objectives

Outcome/Objective: Something a person focuses their efforts and actions on to achieve or accomplish, for example a specific goal or target they wish to achieve through a series of goals and tasks.

OODA Loop: This practical model outlines a four-point decision loop that supports quick, effective and proactive decision making.

- Observe – collect current information,
- Orient – analyze the information you have and update your current reality,
- Decide – what will be your course of action,
- Act – follow through on your decision.

With this approach, the faster you can move through the phases, the better. And when you have acted, you can repeat the loop by observing the results of your actions etc.

Performance Gap: The accomplishment of an objective or task, in accordance with a set standard of completeness and accuracy. The demonstrable gap that exists between desired and actual performance.

Performance Improvement: A systematic process of discovering and analyzing human performance improvement gaps, planning for future improvements in human performance, designing and developing interventions to close performance gaps, implementing the interventions, and evaluating the financial and non-financial results.

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): A plan used to structure performance improvement objectives where you are trying to avoid formal action. It gives the opportunity for the underperformer to improve in areas that have been identified as a cause for concern and where there is a required improvement to achieve the desired and acceptable level of performance.

Performance Measures: Actions that can be objectively observed and measured to determine if a person has performed them to the required standard.

Personal Development Plan: The output of a Personal Development Review (see Personal Development Review). It is a commitment to a series of development objectives that are driven from a number of sources they are likely to place under Personal and Business. The Personal objectives will include those that relate to competencies and behaviors, and Business ones are likely to relate to Strategic Aims and objectives and the overall Business or department objectives.

Personal Development Review: An annual review meeting to appraise the year’s performance against set criteria (e.g. competencies and behaviors). This could involve numerical scoring. The review meeting will be proceeded by the reviewee and the reviewer collecting evidence to demonstrate their opinion on the level of performance or lack of performance, in order for them to have a meaningful discussion. The output of the review will be the creation of a Performance Development Plan.

Pilot: A Pilot will sometimes be run with a sample of the target participants to try out the training course, program, or workshop. This provides the opportunity to measure its effectiveness, review, and change exercises and timings to ensure a fit-for-purpose roll-out to the wider audience.

Practice: Repeated and systematic performance of a job or task to gain the required skills to perform proficiently.

Seven Habits: In 1989 Stephen R. Covey published a book that described an approach to being effective in attaining goals by aligning oneself to what he called “true north” principles of character. The book initially introduces the concept of a paradigm shift and change in mindset and psychologically how two people can see the same thing differently. Each chapter of the book is dedicated to one of the Habits, the first three chapters encouraging the reader to move from dependence to independence. They are:

- Habit 1 – Be proactive
- Habit 2 – Begin with the End in mind
- Habit 3 – Put First Things First.

The next three Habits relate to interdependence (working with others)

- Habit 4 – Think Win-Win,
- Habit 5 – Seek First to Understand, then be Understood,
- Habit 6 – Synergize.

The final Habit relates to self-rejuvenation

- Habit 7 – Sharpen the Saw.

Shadowing: A learning technique whereby a more experienced or knowledgeable individual allows someone with less experience/knowledge to observe and/or participate in their daily tasks by following and observing them in action and, as a result, developing individual skills and building confidence. Pairing up an individual with a peer or colleague whose skill or knowledge is greater in an area they require development. This allows real-time, on-the-job development.

Simulation: Any representation or imitation of reality. Often used to simulate a strategy or situation such as problem-solving, participants are given scenario(s) that enables them to take on role(s) and tasks to deliver a series of objectives. Actions and performance are observed and analyzed to give feedback on performance. It provides a safe environment to use practical real-life skills and is especially valuable in situations where an error or mistake could be dangerous or costly to an organization.

Skill: The ability to perform an activity that contributes to the effective performance of a task.

Skills Matrix: A method of analyzing team or departmental learning requirements by comparing business requirements alongside the names of team members to illustrate competence against the range of required technical and soft skills. As each member attains a suitable level of proficiency they can be “ticked off” against each of the skills.

SWOT Assessment: A tool used for assessing a situation relating to a person, team, department or organization. By asking and recording what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are of the point in question, you will gain a wider view on the areas that require strengthening, removing, changing, and building on. It is an excellent team activity for those participating to make a valuable contribution. It also looks at a situation from different perspectives.

Task (Sprinter Tasks): An element of work that is completed to achieve a larger objective or goal. It has a start and endpoint and it is ultimately what you do to change the outcome.

Tuckman’s Stages of Group/Team Development: In 1965 Bruce Tuckman first proposed that for a group/team to face up to new challenges, tackle problems, and deliver results, they had to go through four phases. They are:

- *Forming* – Initial stage, the group is only a collection of individuals at this stage. They are polite, guarded, watchful, and impersonal, concerned about the structure and their place in it and dependent on the leader.
- *Storming* – Confronting people, sub-grouping, conflicts, feeling stuck, noisy, rebellion, frustration about goals and actions, dissatisfaction with dependence on authority, competing for power and/or attention, feeling confused and incompetent.
- *Norming* – Clear roles emerge, skills developing, establishment of procedures, giving feedback, confronting issues, open exchanges, more listening, a move to group cohesion. Increased satisfaction; discrepancies resolved; greater harmony, self-esteem, confidence, support, and respect; greater sharing of responsibility and control; team language developing.
- *Performing* – Resourceful, flexible, open, effective, close, supportive, collaborative, inter-dependent, positive, feeling of team strength, shares leadership, high performance.

— APPENDIX B —

Books Used in Our Coaching Courses

Links to the recommended books may be found on Coaching School website

Books highlighted during Vibrant Faith's ACC- and PCC-level training courses

- 50 Top Tools for Coaching: A Complete Toolkit for Developing and Empowering People.
- Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change
- The Art of Coaching Clergy: A Handbook for Clergy, Church Leaders, and Coaches
- The Art of Coaching Teams
- Becoming an Exceptional Executive Coach
- Change Your Questions, Change Your Church: How to Lead with Powerful Questions
- Change Your Questions, Change Your Life: 12 Powerful Tools for Leadership, Coaching, and Life
- Co-Active Coaching, Fourth Edition:
- The COACH Model for Christian Leaders
- Coach the Person, Not the Problem: A Guide to Reflective Inquiry
- Coaching: Evoking Excellence in Others
- Coaching for Performance Fifth Edition: The Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership
- Effective Group Coaching
- Executive Coaching for Results
- Executive Coaching with Backbone and Heart
- The Heart of Coaching: Using Transformational Coaching to Create a High Performance Coaching Culture
- The Heart of Laser-focused Coaching: A Revolutionary Approach to Masterful Coaching
- How Coaching Works: The Essential Guide to the History and Practice of Effective Coaching
- Humble Inquiry
- The HeART of Laser-focused Coaching
- Leadership Team Coaching
- The Practitioner's Handbook of Team Coaching
- Professional Coaching Competencies: The Complete Guide
- Thriving in the Fire: Coaching the Conflicts of Change

Additional Books to Add to Your Coaching Library

- The 4 Greatest Coaching Conversations
- The 7 Laws of Coaching
- The Art of Executive Coaching: Secrets to Unlock Leadership Performance
- Ask Powerful Questions: Create Conversations that Matter
- Becoming an Exceptional Executive Coach
- The Book of Coaching for Extraordinary Coaches
- Coaching for Leadership
- Coaching Questions: A Coach's Guide to Powerful Asking Skills
- The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More and Change the Way You Lead Forever
- Coaching Hacks
- The Coaching Mindset: 8 Ways to Think Like a Coach
- The Coaching Questions Handbook: 150 Powerful Questions for Life Coaching and Personal Growth
- The Completely Revised Handbook of Coaching: A Developmental Approach
- Conversations Worth Having
- The Discomfort Zone: How Leaders Turn Difficult Conversations into Breakthroughs
- Effective Coaching
- Helping People Change
- How Coaching Works: The Essential Guide to the History and Practice of Effective Coaching
- The Language of Life and Business Coaching
- Leadership Coaching: The Disciplines, Skills, and Heart of a Christian Coach
- Leadership Team Coaching
- Leadership Team Coaching in Practice: Case Studies in Developing High-Performing Teams
- The Life Coaching Handbook: Everything You Need to Be an Effective Life Coach
- Masterful Coaching
- Ministry 3.0: How Today's Church Leaders are Using Coaching to Transform Ministry
- On Becoming a Leadership Coach: A Holistic Approach to Leadership Excellence
- Professional Coaching: Principles and Practice
- Quantum Coaching Questions
- Transformational Coaching
- Unlocking Potential: 7 Coaching Skills That Transform Individuals, Teams, and Organizations

— APPENDIX C —

Ethical Guidelines/Professional Standards

Section 1: Professional Conduct at Large

As a coach, I:

1. Conduct myself in accordance with the ICF Code of Ethics in all interactions, including coach training, coach mentoring, and coach supervisory activities.
2. Commit to take the appropriate action with the coach, trainer, or coach mentor and/or will contact ICF to address any ethics violation or possible breach as soon as I become aware, whether it involves me or others.
3. Communicate and create awareness in others, including organizations, employees, sponsors, coaches, and others, who might need to be informed of the responsibilities established by this Code.
4. Refrain from unlawful discrimination in occupational activities, including age, race, gender orientation, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, or disability.
5. Make verbal and written statements that are true and accurate about what I offer as a coach, the coaching profession, or ICF.
6. Accurately identify my coaching qualifications, expertise, experience, training, certifications, and ICF Credentials.
7. Recognize and honor the efforts and contributions of others and only claim ownership of my own material. I understand that violating this standard may leave me subject to legal remedy by a third party.
8. Strive at all times to recognize my personal issues that may impair, conflict with, or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will promptly seek the relevant professional assistance and determine the action to be taken, including whether it is appropriate to suspend or terminate my coaching relationship(s) whenever the facts and circumstances necessitate.
9. Recognize that the Code of Ethics applies to my relationship with coaching clients, coachees, students, mentees, and supervisees.
10. Conduct and report research with competence, honesty, and within recognized scientific standards and applicable subject guidelines. My research will be carried out with the necessary consent and approval of those involved, and with an approach that will protect participants from any potential harm. All research efforts will be performed in a manner that complies with all the applicable laws of the country in which the research is conducted.
11. Maintain, store, and dispose of any records, including electronic files and communications, created during my coaching engagements in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security, and privacy and complies with any applicable laws and agreements.
12. Use ICF Member contact information (email addresses, telephone numbers, and so on) only in the manner and to the extent authorized by the ICF.

ICF is committed to maintaining and promoting excellence in coaching. Therefore, ICF expects all members and credentialed coaches (coaches, coach mentors, coaching supervisors, coach trainers, or students), to adhere to the elements and principles of ethical conduct: to be competent and integrate ICF Core Competencies effectively in their work. In line with the ICF core values and ICF definition of coaching, the Code of Ethics is designed to provide appropriate guidelines, accountability, and enforceable standards of conduct for all ICF Members and ICF Credential-holders, who commit to abiding by the following ICF Code of Ethics:

Part One: Definitions

Coaching

Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

ICF Coach

An ICF coach agrees to practice the ICF Core Competencies and pledges accountability to the ICF Code of Ethics.

Professional Coaching Relationship

A professional coaching relationship exists when coaching includes an agreement (including contracts) that defines the responsibilities of each party.

Roles in the Coaching Relationship

In order to clarify roles in the coaching relationship it is often necessary to distinguish between the client and the sponsor. In most cases, the client and sponsor are the same person and are therefore jointly referred to as the client. For purposes of identification, however, the ICF defines these roles as follows:

Client

The “Client/Coachee” is the person(s) being coached.

Sponsor

The “sponsor” is the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging for coaching services to be provided. In all cases, coaching engagement agreements should clearly establish the rights, roles, and responsibilities for both the client and sponsor if the client and sponsor are different people.

Student

The “student” is someone enrolled in a coach training program or working with a coaching supervisor or coach mentor in order to learn the coaching process or enhance and develop their coaching skills.

Conflict of Interest

A situation in which a coach has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his or her official duties as a coach and a professional.

Section 2: Conflict of Interest

As a coach, I:

13. Seek to be conscious of any conflict or potential conflict of interest, openly disclose any such conflict, and offer to remove myself when a conflict arises.
14. Clarify roles for internal coaches, set boundaries, and review with stakeholders conflicts of interest that may emerge between coaching and other role functions.
15. Disclose to my client and the sponsor(s) all anticipated compensation from third parties that I may receive for referrals of clients or pay to receive clients.
16. Honor an equitable coach/client relationship, regardless of the form of compensation.

Section 3: Professional Conduct with Clients

As a coach, I:

17. Ethically speak what I know to be true to clients, prospective clients, or sponsors about the potential value of the coaching process or of me as a coach.
18. Carefully explain and strive to ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching client and sponsor(s) understand the nature of coaching, the nature and limits of confidentiality, financial arrangements, and any other terms of the coaching agreement.
19. Have a clear coaching service agreement with my clients and sponsor(s) before beginning the coaching relationship and honor this agreement. The agreement shall include the roles, responsibilities, and rights of all parties involved.
20. Hold responsibility for being aware of and setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern interactions, physical or otherwise, I may have with my clients or sponsor(s).
21. Avoid any sexual or romantic relationship with current clients or sponsor(s) or students, mentees, or supervisees. Further, I will be alert to the possibility of any potential sexual intimacy among the parties including my support staff and/or assistants and will take the appropriate action to address the issue or cancel the engagement in order to provide a safe environment overall.
22. Respect the client's right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point during the process, subject to the provisions of the agreement. I shall remain alert to indications that there is a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship.
23. Encourage the client or sponsor to make a change if I believe the client or sponsor would be better served by another coach or by another resource and suggest my client seek the services of other professionals when deemed necessary or appropriate.

Section 4: Confidentiality/Privacy

As a coach, I:

24. Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information unless release is required by law.
25. Have a clear agreement about how coaching information will be exchanged among coach, client, and sponsor.
26. Have a clear agreement when acting as a coach, coach mentor, coaching supervisor, or trainer, with both client and sponsor, student, mentee, or supervisee about the conditions under which confidentiality may not be maintained (e.g., illegal activity, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena, imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others, etc) and make sure both client and sponsor, student, mentee, or supervisee voluntarily and knowingly agree in writing to that limit of confidentiality. Where I reasonably believe that one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.
27. Require all those who work with me in support of my clients to adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics, Number 26, Section 4, Confidentiality and Privacy Standards, and any other sections of the Code of Ethics that might be applicable.

Section 5: Continuing Development

As a coach, I:

28. Commit to the need for continued and ongoing development of my professional skills.

Part Three: The ICF Pledge of Ethics

As an ICF coach, I acknowledge and agree to honor my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching clients and sponsors, colleagues, and to the public at large. I pledge to comply with the ICF Code of Ethics and to practice these standards with those whom I coach, teach, mentor, or supervise.

If I breach this Pledge of Ethics or any part of the ICF Code of Ethics, I agree that the ICF in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for so doing. I further agree that my accountability to the ICF for any breach may include sanctions, such as loss of my ICF Membership and/or my ICF Credentials.

Name _____ Date _____

— APPENDIX D —

100 Powerful Questions

How to use this RESOURCE?

New coaches usually ask me for questions they can keep in their pocket to use during sessions. Although every coaching session is different, it is helpful to have a resource we can utilize to stimulate our thought process. The more questions we can create, the more powerful our questions can become. This book offers some examples of powerful questions. Before using them, take time to familiarize yourself with their structure and content. The questions are not exhaustive, but might offer fodder for creating your own.

This resource is divided into five different types of questions: Spiritual or Faith-based, Goal-Oriented, Current Reality, Options, and What's Next? I suggest you keep this book handy and refer to it, especially in those moments when you are not sure what question to ask. I hope this book augments your powerful questions toolkit. — Dr. Felix C. Villanueva, MCC

"If I had only an hour to solve a problem. I would spend 55 minutes trying to ask the right question. Because once I know the right question, it would take me less than five minutes to solve the problem."

—Albert Einstein

Spiritual or Faith-based Questions

1. In what ways has God been generous to you?
2. How have you experienced God's abundant love today?
3. What's the most wonderful thing about God?
4. What is God inviting you to be a part of today?
5. Where is God in all of this?
6. What is God's dream for your life?
7. What would life be like without anger?
8. Who can you forgive today?
9. When was God most real to you today?
10. When are you most aware of God's amazing love for you?
11. What keeps you from experiencing God's amazing love for you?
12. What is God's deepest desire for you?
13. What part of God's responsibility are you feeling responsible for?
14. What are the signs that your church is headed in the wrong direction?
15. What's God already doing that you can join?
16. What would the heroes of our faith say to us about our big picture?
17. What is God's invitation to you, right now, today?
18. What are you learning about God on this journey?
19. What's the leap of faith you need to take?
20. What are the best ways for you to experience the sacred each day?

Goal-oriented Questions

1. What do you want to achieve from this coaching session?
2. What goal do you want to achieve?
3. What would you like to happen with...?
4. What do you really want?
5. What would you like to accomplish?
6. What result are you trying to achieve?
7. What outcome would be ideal?
8. What do you want to change?
9. Why are you hoping to achieve this goal?
10. What would the benefits be if you achieved this goal?
11. If you had a magic wand and could make things happen, what would you like to see?
12. What is your dream?
13. What would happen if you could achieve your dream?
14. What would your life look like if you accomplished your goal?
15. What is your superpower?
16. What is your kryptonite?
17. What is your big picture?
18. What is it that you don't know you don't know?
19. What's really possible?
20. How well do you deal with uncertainty?

Current Reality Questions

1. What is happening now (what, who, when, and how often)?
2. What is the effect or result of this?
3. Have you already taken any steps towards your goal?
4. How would you describe what you did?
5. Where are you now in relation to your goal?
6. On a scale of one to 10, where are you?
7. What has contributed to your success so far?
8. What progress have you made so far?
9. What is working well right now?
10. What is required of you?
11. Why haven't you reached that goal already?
12. What's your definition of the big picture?
13. In what ways are you playing too small right now?
14. What's possible?
15. What are you not seeing, and who can help you see bigger?
16. What needs more attention, right now, today?
17. What needs less attention, right now, today?
18. What is most important for you to tackle today?
19. What are you pretending not to know?
20. When has worrying paid off for you?

Options Questions

1. What are your options?
2. What do you think you need to do next?
3. What could be your first step?
4. What do you think you need to do to get a better result (or closer to your goal)?
5. What else could you do?
6. Who else might be able to help?
7. What would happen if you did nothing?
8. What has worked for you already? How could you do more of that?
9. What would happen if you did that?
10. What is the hardest/most challenging part of that for you?
11. What advice would you give to a friend about that?
12. What would you gain/lose by doing/saying that?
13. If someone did/said that to you what do you think would happen?
14. What's the best/worst thing about that option?
15. Which option do you feel ready to act on?
16. How have you tackled this/a similar situation before?
17. What could you do differently?
18. Who do you know who has encountered a similar situation?
19. If anything was possible, what would you do?
20. Say more...

What's Next Questions

1. How are going to go about it?
2. What do you think you need to do right now?
3. Tell me how you're going to do that.
4. How will you know when you have done it?
5. Is there anything else you can do?
6. On a scale of one to 10, what is the likelihood of your plan succeeding?
7. What would it take to make it a 10?
8. What obstacles are getting in the way of success?
9. What roadblocks do you expect or require planning?
10. What resources can help you?
11. What is missing?
12. What will one small step you take now?
13. When are you going to start?
14. How will you know you have been successful?
15. What support do you need to get that done?
16. What will happen (or, what is the cost) of you NOT doing this?
17. What do you need from me/others to help you achieve this?
18. What are three actions you can take that would make sense this week?
19. On a scale of one to 10, how committed/motivated are you to doing it?
20. What would it take to make it a 10?

— APPENDIX E —

25 Questions to Ask a Mentor

As you are seeking feedback from a mentor, consider asking your mentor one or more of the questions below.

Ask your mentor to tell a STORY.

1. How did you land your current role?
2. Think back to five years ago.
Did you envision this is where you would be?
3. Can you tell me about a time when you had a difficult boss? How did you handle it?
4. How did you learn to embrace failure?
5. What's the most important leadership lesson you've learned and how is it valuable?
6. Tell me about a recent setback and how you recovered?
7. Was there ever a job position that you applied for and got, but you weren't 100% qualified?
8. How did you build the skill of always speaking so engagingly in front of others?

Ask your mentor to be a sounding board.

1. I'm considering a career transition.
What do you see as the pros and cons?
2. Who are the people I need to align with in this organization to achieve success?
3. What advice can you offer on how to progress in my career?
4. How do you successfully stay connected to key influencers who do not work in same office or geographical area?
5. When trying to gain buy-in to implement a new program, what tactics have worked for you?

Ask a mentor for FEEDBACK.

1. Where do you see my strengths and what should I focus on to improve?
2. What do you see as some of my blind spots?
3. How do you think others perceive me?
4. How I am viewed by leadership?
5. Do I come across as poised and calm?
6. How am I viewed (i.e., what's my personal brand) in our organization?
7. Did everyone understand what I presented at the last meeting?
8. How could I have communicated my idea more clearly?

Ask your mentor for advice or resources.

1. How do you approach risk-taking?
2. What new skills do I need to move ahead?
3. How can I become a more assertive negotiator?
4. How can I become better at managing people who do not report to me?

— APPENDIX F —

8 Types of Coaching Questions

Powerful questions are provocative queries that put a halt to evasion and confusion. By asking the powerful question, the coach invites the client to clarity, action, and discovery at a whole new level. As you can see from the following examples, these generally are open-ended questions that create greater possibility for expanded learning and fresh perspective:

ANTICIPATION

- What is possible?
- What if it works out exactly as you want it to?
- What is the dream?
- What is exciting to you about this?
- What is the urge?
- What does your intuition tell you?

CLARIFICATION

- What do you mean?
- What does it feel like?
- What is the part that is not yet clear?
- Can you say more?
- What do you want?

EVALUATION

- What is the opportunity here?
- What is the challenge?
- How does this fit with your plans/
way of life/values?
- What do you think that means?
- What is your assessment?

EXPLORATION

- What is here that you want to explore?
- What part of the situation have you not
yet explored?
- What other angles can you think of?
- What are your other options?
- What is just one more possibility?

ASSESSMENT

- What do you make of it?
- What do you think is best?
- How does it look to you?
- How do you feel about it?
- What resonates for you?

ELABORATION

- Can you tell me more?
- What else?
- What other ideas/thoughts/feelings
do you have about it?

EXAMPLE

- Can you give me an example?
- For instance?
- Such as?
- What would it look like?

FOR INSTANCE

- If you could do it over, what would
you do differently?
- If it had been you, what would you have done?
- If you could do anything you wanted, what
would you do?
- How else could a person handle this?

— APPENDIX G —

Asset-Based Coaching Questions

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

Questions for Focusing Attention

- What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of _____ ?
- What's important to you about _____ and why do you care?
- What draws you/us to this inquiry?
- What's our intention here? What's the deeper purpose (the big "why") that is worthy of our best effort?
- What opportunities can you see in _____ ?
- What do we know so far/still need to learn about _____ ?
- What are the dilemmas/opportunities in _____ ?
- What assumptions do we need to test or challenge here in thinking about _____ ?
- What would someone with a very different set of beliefs than we do say about _____ ?

QUESTIONS FOR CONNECTING IDEAS AND FINDING DEEPER INSIGHT

- What's taking shape? What are you hearing underneath the variety of opinions being expressed?
- What's in the center of the table?
- What's emerging here for you? What new connections are you making?
- What had real meaning for you from what you've heard? What surprised you? What challenged you?
- What's missing from this picture so far? What is it we're not seeing? Where do we need more clarity
- What's been your/our major learning, insight, or discovery so far?
- What's the next level of thinking we need to do?
- If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding/ clarity, what would it be?

QUESTIONS THAT CREATE FORWARD MOVEMENT

- What would it take to create change on this issue?
- What could happen that would enable you/us to feel fully engaged and energized about _____ ?
- What's possible here and who cares? (Rather than "What's wrong here and who's responsible?")
- What needs our immediate attention going forward?
- If our success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might we choose?
- How can we support each other in taking the next steps? What unique contribution can we each make?
- What challenges might come our way and how might we meet them?
- What conversation, if begun today, could ripple out in a way that created new possibilities for the future of _____ ?
- What seed might we plant together today that could make the most difference to the future of _____ ?

— APPENDIX I —

Helping Clients Prepare for Coaching

HAVE CLIENTS RESPOND TO THESE QUESTIONS BEFORE THE SESSION

1. What do you wish to talk about during our session? What are the pressing issues?
2. What do you want to "take away" from our time together? What might be the "wins" for our session?
3. Are there any documents or information you'd like your coach to review before the session?
4. Identify factors that play a role in helping or hindering the fulfillment of your next steps.

FOUR WAYS CLIENTS CAN PREPARE FOR FUTURE SESSIONS

1. Pray for discernment, clarity, and an openness about where God might lead our conversation.
2. Review your organization's mission, vision, values, and annual goals.
3. Review notes and documents from previous sessions.
4. List 5 or more options you see for moving forward on the topic you'd like to discuss during the coaching session.

NINE QUESTIONS FOR CLIENTS TO REFLECT ON BEFORE FUTURE SESSIONS

1. What are you learning about yourself and your capacity to lead transformation?
2. What's God up to in your life? What is God up to in our church and community?
3. On a scale of 1-10 (10=very energized), how energized are you about your life, ministry, and teams?
4. What have been the recent "wins" and bright spots in ministry?
5. How do you feel about the pace and impact of the coaching process?
6. Moving forward, how might you need to refocus your time, energy, attention, and talents?
7. What resources are present and can be more fully utilized in the future?
8. What do you want your coach to hold you accountable for? Pay attention to?
9. What do you need most from your upcoming coaching session?

— APPENDIX J —

Pre-Work for Coaching Sessions

Coaches and coachees have the opportunity to make good meetings become great if both parties conduct some pre-work before the session. Listed below are 7 helpful questions clients can use to review their progress and to discern which issues to discuss at the next coaching session.

Name(s):

Date of Coaching Meeting:

1. What have you accomplished since our last meeting?
2. What bright spots are you grateful for? What are you learning about yourself and your setting?
3. What didn't get done and is still a priority for you?
4. Based on recent results, what is it that you plan to keep doing? Stop doing? Start doing?
5. What ideas, insights, challenges, or opportunities have surfaced recently?
6. What do you wish to talk about during our next coaching session?
7. What do you hope to accomplish or take away from our next session?

FOUR SUGGESTIONS

1. Before completing this form, review coaching notes and correspondence to see which issues still need attention.
2. Decide where to archive these notes for future reference. Create a coaching folder if you don't already have one.
3. Please submit responses to this form to your coach a few days before your next session.
4. If you're part of a coaching team, please share your responses with team members before your next session.

— APPENDIX K —

Questions to Ask at First Session

QUESTIONS TO DISCERN COACHING FOCUS

- "So, how have you been?" (Great open-ended question to drill down from)
- "What would a home run in your life look like this week?" (Make a list)
- "What's been working for you since our last session?"
- "What hasn't been working for you?"
- "What do you need most from me today?"
- "So, what have been your 'highlights' since our last session?" "And your 'lowlights'?"
- "I'm curious, how do you think I can help you this week?"

QUESTIONS TO DEFINE SESSION OUTCOMES

- "What, if you got it finished this week, would make you jump for joy?"
- "What is the biggest change you are willing to make today?"
- "What would you love to have happen by the end of this session?"
- "What would you most like to get out of the next 30/45/60 minutes?"
- "What would be the most helpful thing for you to take away from this session?"
- "What if you worked on it right NOW, would REALLY put a smile on your face?"
- "Imagine you've just had an ideal week. What 3 things did you complete?"
- "What could we work on that would help you the most over the next few weeks?"
- "What would you be disappointed we didn't work on today?"

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO RAISE DURING THE FIRST SESSION

- "Tell me about yourself..."
- "What specific goals would you like to meet by working with a coach?"
- "What have you already done towards your goals?"
- "How will we evaluate the success of the coaching at the end?"
- "What kind of coach would you like me to be for you?"
- "What are you expecting from the coaching?"
- "What do you need most from me during our coaching?"
- "What is the one thing I should not do/say to you?"
- "What is the most exciting part of working with a coach?"
- "What is the scariest part of working with a coach?"
- "What is the biggest change you are willing to make today?"
- "What is one thing you will do immediately after our session today?"

— APPENDIX L —

Coaching Self-Assessment Form

1. Whom am I coaching now?
2. How did I gain credibility in these relationships?
3. What causes people to seek my counsel initially?
4. What keeps them coming back?
5. How long do my coaching relationships last?
6. Have I ever abused my authority?
7. How can I increase my expertise?
8. How do I build relationships with those I am coaching?
9. How can I increase my spiritual authority?
10. What are my first 3 steps to increasing my coaching confidence?
11. Who can help me?
12. Do I tend to be a grace-giver or a truth-teller?
13. How can I practice truth-telling in my current relationships?
14. How can I practice grace-giving in my current relationships?

— APPENDIX M —

Sample Assignments for Clients

Explore ways you can help clients accelerate learning and transformation through using assignments.

Listed below is a sampling of suggestions of what you might invite a client to consider.

1 | ASSIGN QUESTIONS

- Ask clients to list how they think things are going in their life or ministry, or for their team members.
- Ask clients what prevents them from being their best selves with their family, colleagues, etc.
- Ask clients to reflect on how passionate they are about the causes they're investing in.
- Ask clients what they'd need to do to obtain different results than what they're getting now.
- Ask clients to identify at least 4 new approaches or actions beyond what they've already considered.

2 | LIST OBSERVATIONS

- Invite clients to reflect on the pace and the progress of their transformation. List what's changed.
- Invite clients to list what has helped or hinder their progress so far.
- Invite clients to list who speaks up and who doesn't in a team meeting.
- Invite clients to list who needs your help and who needs some nudging.
- Invite clients to list who are the dreamers, doers, or delegators in the group.

3 | READ BOOKS & ARTICLES; VIEW WEBSITES

- Invite clients to learn more about the process of change.
- Invite clients to learn more about themselves (i.e. Enneagram, Strengthsfinder, DISC, etc.).
- Invite clients to learn more about subject they seek to influence.
- Invite clients to learn more about discernment, spiritual practices, and theological perspectives.

4 | GATHER & INTERPRET RESEARCH

- Invite clients to learn more about their organization or faith community.
- Invite clients to learn more about the demographics of their local community.
- Invite clients to learn more about the trends shaping society or people's religiosity.
- Invite clients to learn what similar organizations are paying attention to or doing related to key issues.

5 | INTERVIEW PEOPLE

- Invite clients to ask 5 members 3 questions that are related to your initiative.
- Invite clients to ask 3 people how they handled or would hand a certain situation in life and ministry.
- Invite clients to ask 3 people how they could see themselves contributing to this project.
- Invite clients to ask 3 people in the community a question about your church or the community.

6 | KEEP A JOURNAL; SHARE TWO INSIGHTS

- Invite clients to write about their patterns of success; list what they do well.
- Invite clients to write about what they could let go of so they could focus on the “one” thing.
- Invite clients to describe the perfect day, week, meeting, vacation, or staff member.
- Invite clients to list what they’d want to be different in their life/ministry within 30 days, 90 days, or one year.
- Invite clients to list about what they’ll no longer tolerate in life, and what it’s costing them right now.
- Invite clients to list the things they’re willing to give up to get what they really want.

7 | PREPARE FOR NEXT COACHING SESSION

- Invite clients to list what they want to take away from the next coaching session.
- Invite clients to list what they’re learning about themselves and their setting.
- Invite clients to list what they plan to do within the next 30 days related to their preferred future.
- Invite clients to describe in greater detail their desired results or preferred future.



vibrantfaith

 vibrantfaith.org |  hello@vibrantfaith.org

 877-239-2492 |   [@vibrantfaith](https://www.instagram.com/vibrantfaith)