

Study Guide: 5 Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers

What are coaching skills? (1:38 – 3:48)

Development Distinctions

Training

- Trainer possesses skills or information students lack.
- Primary activity is transmission of information.
- Teacher/student relationship is typically temporary and narrow in focus.

Mentoring

- Senior person conveys wisdom and corporate culture.
- Mentor has traveled the path mentee is seeking.
- Provides connections, references, and advice.

Coaching

- Coach could be superior, subordinate, or peer.
- Coach does not need same background or experiences.
- Enables others to work through and solve their own problems.

The importance of self-awareness

- Self-awareness is a starting point for coaching others.
- If you are not aware of your beliefs, your strengths, your limitations, your values, your emotions, and your reactions, how can you help others gain awareness?
- Self-awareness can improve with practice.



Here are some steps you can take to increase your self-awareness:

- **Reflection:** Set aside time regularly to reflect on your thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Consider journaling to capture your reflections and insights.
- **Practice mindfulness:** Engage in mindfulness meditation or other mindfulness practices to become more aware of your thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations in the present moment.
- **Seek feedback:** Ask trusted friends, family members, mentors, or colleagues for honest feedback about your strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

- **Assess your personality and preferences:** Take personality assessments or psychometric tests such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Big Five personality traits, or StrengthsFinder to gain insight into your personality, values, and preferences.
- **Explore your past experiences:** Reflect on significant events, challenges, successes, and failures to identify patterns and themes that can provide valuable insights into your beliefs, values, and behaviors.
- **Practice self-observation:** Pay attention to your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in various situations throughout your day. Notice any recurring patterns or triggers that influence your reactions and responses.
- **Cultivate curiosity:** Approach yourself with a curious and non-judgmental attitude, exploring your inner world with openness and acceptance.
- **Engage in self-assessment exercises:** Use self-assessment tools, exercises, or prompts to explore different aspects of yourself, such as your strengths, values, passions, and goals.
- **Seek professional support:** Consider working with a therapist, counselor, coach, or mentor who can provide guidance, support, and insights as you explore your self-awareness journey.
- **Embrace feedback and learning opportunities:** Be open to feedback from others, even if it is difficult to hear, and view challenges and setbacks as opportunities for growth and self-discovery.

There are numerous personal development tools available in the market designed to help individuals gain self-awareness. Here are some popular ones:



1. Personality Assessments:

- **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI):** Assesses personality based on four dichotomies (Extraversion vs. Introversion, sensing vs. Intuition, Thinking vs. Feeling, Judging vs. Perceiving).
- **DISC Assessment:** Evaluates behavior styles based on Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness.
- **Big Five Personality Test:** Measures personality traits based on openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

2. Strengths Assessment:

- **StrengthsFinder:** Identifies individuals' top strengths out of a list of 34 themes, helping them leverage their strengths in various aspects of life.

3. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Tools:

- **Emotional Intelligence 2.0:** Provides strategies for improving emotional intelligence skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills.

4. Mindfulness and Meditation Apps:

- **Headspace:** Offers guided meditation sessions, mindfulness exercises, and sleep exercises to enhance self-awareness and well-being.
- **Calm:** Provides meditation sessions, breathing exercises, and sleep stories to promote relaxation and mindfulness.

5. Journaling Apps:

- **Day One:** Allows users to journal their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, facilitating self-reflection and self-awareness.
- **Journey:** Provides a platform for digital journaling with features such as photo and video integration, mood tracking, and prompts for self-reflection.
- **Goal Setting and Tracking Apps:**
 - **Todoist:** Helps users set and track personal and professional goals, prioritize tasks, and stay organized, fostering self-awareness around time management and productivity.
 - **Habitica:** Gamifies goal setting and habit formation, encouraging users to track their habits, daily tasks, and long-term goals in a fun and interactive way.

6. Feedback and Assessment Platforms:

- **360-Degree Feedback Tools:** Platforms like SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, or specialized HR software allow individuals to gather feedback from multiple sources to gain insights into their strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Strengths and Weaknesses Assessments:** Online tools and surveys that help individuals assess their strengths, weaknesses, skills, and areas for development.

7. Self-Coaching Books and Workbooks:

- **"The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey:** Offers principles for personal effectiveness and self-awareness, helping individuals align their values with their actions.
- **"Daring Greatly" by Brené Brown:** Explores vulnerability and shame, encouraging individuals to cultivate self-awareness and authenticity in their lives.

These tools can be valuable resources for individuals seeking to enhance their self-awareness and personal development journey. It's essential to choose tools that resonate with your preferences, goals, and learning style. Additionally, combining multiple tools and approaches can provide a holistic and comprehensive approach to self-awareness and growth.

4 Behaviors to support coaching skills (3:49 – 6:14)



1. Demonstrate genuine concern and care for team members.

It is obvious to your team members that you really care about them, their development and their wellbeing. You can show you care by listening carefully and taking people's thoughts and ideas seriously. Consider people's strengths and development areas and give advice that supports them. Fight for your team.

Work on your own mindset and the behaviors you demonstrate. Doing so will make a big difference on how your team responds to you.

2. Play to the strengths of the people you are coaching.

Play to your team's strengths more than trying to improve their weaknesses. Most people find it quicker and easier to improve in areas they enjoy or are good at.

In today's world, it is better to be a specialist in one thing you are very good at than being just ok at many things.

3. Don't punish failure – coach through mistakes.

Punishing failure does not encourage learning. Punishing your team will also reduce risk-taking and will prevent individuals from stepping outside their comfort zones. These behaviors will reduce or stop any improvements.

Instead of punishment, coach the individuals on what went wrong and discuss how they would do it differently next time. This is a more useful approach to learning, and you will see a greater improvement in performance by taking this approach.

4. Make the time to celebrate success.

Celebrating success is much more motivational to team members than listening to motivational speeches from you. Positive reinforcement works, and everyone likes being complimented. Make the time to celebrate success privately and publicly.

The power of asking questions (6:15 – 8:36)



Asking the right questions is a brilliant skill to develop. Questions require the other person to think, so they can put together an answer, and needing to speak the answer out loud, further improves the thinking. Assuming you are listening properly, you can also learn a lot from those answers.

Rather than telling your team members what you know, or how you would solve the problem, ask them what they think or what they would do. Ask for their opinion and the solutions they can think of to a given problem. Ask them why they think that is the best solution and how they will implement it.

Effective coaching involves asking a variety of questions to facilitate reflection, insight, and action in the coachee. Different types of questions serve different purposes and can help coaches guide the conversation toward desired outcomes. Here are several types of questions commonly used in coaching:

- **Open-ended questions:** These questions encourage expansive responses and invite the coachee to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in depth. Examples include:

"What are your goals for this coaching session?"

"Can you tell me more about your current challenges?"

"How do you envision success in this situation?"

- **Closed-ended questions:** These questions elicit specific, factual answers and are useful for clarifying information or obtaining quick responses. Examples include:

"Did you complete the task on time?"

"Are you satisfied with your progress?"

"Have you considered trying a different approach?"

- **Clarifying questions:** These questions seek to deepen understanding and provide clarity on specific points raised by the coachee. Examples include:

"Can you clarify what you mean by that?"

"Could you give me an example to illustrate your point?"

"What specifically is challenging about this situation?"

- **Reflective questions:** These questions encourage the coachee to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, promoting self-awareness and insight. Examples include:

"How do you feel about the progress you've made so far?"

"What have you learned from this experience?"

"What insights have you gained from our discussion?"

- **Summarizing questions:** These questions help the coach recap key points, themes, or action steps discussed during the session, reinforcing understanding and facilitating closure. Examples include:

"So, if I understand correctly, your main priorities are X, Y, and Z. Is that accurate?"

"Let's summarize the action steps we've identified. What will you do next?"

"What do you take away from our conversation today?"

- **Challenging questions:** These questions encourage the coachee to reconsider assumptions, explore new perspectives, or confront limiting beliefs, fostering growth and development. Examples include:

"What if you approached this situation from a different angle?"

"How might your thinking change if you viewed this challenge as an opportunity?"

"What is holding you back from taking action on this goal?"

- **Empowering questions:** These questions help the coachee tap into their own resources, strengths, and potential solutions, fostering autonomy and self-efficacy. Examples include:

"What steps can you take to overcome this obstacle?"

"What strengths can you leverage to achieve your goals?"

"How can you build on your past successes in this area?"

By using a combination of these types of questions, coaches can facilitate meaningful conversations, promote self-discovery and growth, and support coachees in achieving their objectives.

Try avoiding "leading questions" such as "we know that option A is a poor choice, don't you think..."

Active Listening (8:37 – 10:53)



Active listening is a fundamental communication skill that involves fully concentrating, understanding, responding to, and remembering what is being said by another person. It's a technique used in various interpersonal interactions, including coaching, counseling, conflict resolution, and everyday conversations. Active listening goes beyond merely hearing words; it involves engaging with the speaker on a deeper level, both verbally and non-verbally, to demonstrate understanding and empathy. Here are some key components of active listening:

- **Paying Attention:** Giving the speaker your full attention by focusing on their words, body language, tone of voice, and other non-verbal cues. Minimizing distractions and maintaining eye contact can signal to the speaker that you are fully engaged.
- **Withholding Judgment:** Avoiding premature evaluation or criticism of the speaker's message, opinions, or emotions. Instead, strive to understand their perspective and feelings without jumping to conclusions.

- **Reflecting and Paraphrasing:** Restating the speaker's message in your own words to confirm understanding and show empathy. Paraphrasing can help clarify any misunderstandings and demonstrate that you are actively processing the information.
- **Clarifying:** Asking questions or seeking clarification to ensure that you understand the speaker's message accurately. Clarifying questions can help fill in gaps, resolve ambiguities, and deepen comprehension.
- **Empathizing:** Trying to see things from the speaker's perspective and acknowledging their feelings, emotions, and experiences. Empathy involves showing genuine concern and understanding for the speaker's situation, even if you may not agree with their viewpoint.
- **Providing Feedback:** Offering constructive feedback and validation to the speaker, reflecting their emotions, thoughts, and concerns. Feedback should be supportive, non-judgmental, and focused on fostering mutual understanding and communication.
- **Suspending Assumptions:** Setting aside preconceived notions, biases, or stereotypes and approaching the conversation with an open mind. Suspending assumptions allows for genuine curiosity and exploration of the speaker's perspective.
- **Being Patient:** Allowing the speaker to express themselves fully without interrupting or rushing them. Being patient demonstrates respect for the speaker's thoughts and feelings and encourages them to share more openly.

Active listening is NOT:

- **Interrupting:** Active listening does not involve constantly interrupting the speaker or cutting them off mid-sentence. Interrupting can disrupt the flow of conversation and indicate a lack of respect for the speaker's perspective.

- **Distraction:** Active listening means giving the speaker your full attention. It's not checking your phone, scrolling through social media, or multitasking while the other person is talking. Distractions can signal disinterest or disrespect.
- **Daydreaming:** Active listening requires staying mentally focused on the speaker's words and message. It's not letting your mind wander or thinking about unrelated matters while the speaker is talking. Daydreaming can cause you to miss important information and cues from the speaker.
- **Judging or Evaluating:** Active listening involves suspending judgment and refraining from prematurely forming opinions about the speaker or their message. It's not jumping to conclusions, making assumptions, or evaluating the speaker's ideas based on your own biases or preconceptions.
- **Offering Unsolicited Advice:** Active listening is about understanding the speaker's perspective and feelings before offering any advice or solutions. It's not immediately jumping in with advice, opinions, or solutions without first allowing the speaker to fully express themselves.
- **Talking About Yourself:** Active listening focuses on the speaker's experiences, thoughts, and feelings, not on redirecting the conversation to yourself. It's not turning the discussion into an opportunity to talk about your own experiences, opinions, or achievements.
- **Showing Disinterest:** Active listening involves demonstrating genuine interest in the speaker and their message through verbal and nonverbal cues. It's not displaying signs of boredom, impatience, or indifference, such as yawning, checking the time, or avoiding eye contact.

- **Finishing the Speaker's Sentences:** Active listening respects the speaker's pace and allows them to express themselves fully without interruption. It's not finishing the speaker's sentences or assuming you know what they're going to say before they finish.
- **Ignoring Nonverbal Cues:** Active listening involves paying attention to both verbal and nonverbal cues to fully understand the speaker's message. It's not ignoring or disregarding the speaker's body language, facial expressions, or tone of voice, which can convey important information.
- **Forgetting or Misremembering:** Active listening includes remembering and acknowledging important points made by the speaker. It's not forgetting or misremembering key details, which can indicate a lack of attentiveness or interest in the conversation.

Coaching for Performance (10:54 – 16:51)



To coach for performance, you should start by choosing goals, and then measure performance against those goals.

Framework to structure your coaching sessions: **The growth model.**

G - Goal setting: Deciding and defining the goals to achieve

R – What is reality? An honest assessment of the current situation

O – What options? List option without limiting them – Assumptions and beliefs.

W – What will you do? What actions will they agree to as the next steps?