



Business Coaching

Producing Extraordinary Performance and Results From Your People

One of the most important ways to produce extraordinary results in business is to develop a powerful relationship with your employees. This relationship can only be developed when both you and your employees are “on the same page” and the results that you require from them are being accomplished.

If you are willing to consider the possibility that using an outside presence such as a business coach can produce positive results from your people, then please read on.

The kind of coaching we’re referring to is simply a kind of communication/training that leaves the person being coached with the ability to accomplish results beyond where they are today, given their abilities and talents. This ability is *developed* by working with the natural talent of the individual and supplying them the knowledge and tools to excel.

In sports, coaching works. In fact, it regularly produces extraordinary results. An effective coach creates a context (training and support) that will alter the

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performance of all the players. This may sound like a new idea but it's not. For example, you can look at an 8-ounce glass of water with 4 ounces of water as either half empty or half full -- two different contexts -- and both will give you a different reaction to the same glass of water.

In business developing a new context within your employees can produce performance that exceeds your expectations -- and you don't have to *change* the people to do so. You only have to change how they think and then build the knowledge base that they have. By coaching, you can produce star performers in business -- even when the players are people of ordinary talent and ability.

If you are willing to consider that coaching could produce such results, the next question is how does it work? It's simple: just observe what great coaches do.

Let's consider what a sports coach does. First, a great coach is someone who can detect a coachable player. A coachable player is someone who has a commitment to the game. The coach can detect the player's commitment even when the player doesn't really know what the commitment is.

So how does a business coach find out whether your employees are committed to the "game", i.e. your business? There are two good indicators. The first good indicator of what a person is committed to is where the person's body is. As the great business philosopher, Woody Allen, once said: "Eighty percent of life is showing up."

The second indicator is what the person says. If we hear complaints, we listen for what comes after the complaint. If we hear suggestions or promises, we're hearing commitment.

The power of coaching is not only in seeing though but also in speaking. Speaking in a way that alters the performance. Of course, a catch to this is that the person being coached must be listening. It's a big catch because it's human nature to hear coaching first as criticism -- to be defensive or invalidated. People tend to ignore what they don't want to hear.

Therefore, another important job of a coach is to be sensitive to how people listen. Take the natural reaction into account and get the employee to listen to the coaching anyway. Finding out how someone interpreted what is being presented is one of the most effective techniques for coaching. It's really the person's interpretation of what they are hearing/getting that shapes the person's actions.

Once you find out what the person's interpretation is, you say something that alters or strengthens the player's interpretation -- you change or deepen their context. All this must be done with care and most importantly with compassion. Great coaches are empathetic.

To be an effective coach, we must also develop your employees' trust. As Tim Gallwey, author of THE INNER GAME OF TENNIS, said: "You can ask anything out of trust." How do we generate that kind of trust? We earn trust through integrity (doing what we say), communicating and being straight with people, and giving them valuable tools and insight. We earn trust by relating to people as the great people they can be, not as the mistakes that they made in the past.

Why not experiment with coaching? It could make a big difference in the results of your business -- and in your satisfaction.