

Becoming a Coach

Coaching Questions Module

Lesson Objective:

To cover the basic coaching components necessary to utilize coaching questions on a regular basis.

This includes:

- The Golden Rule of Coaching
- General Questioning Guidelines
- Questions For Every Scenario -**Additional Skills Practice**
- Questions and Goal Setting
- Pre-Coaching Questionnaire- **Coaching Prep Exercise**
- The 3 Parts of a Coaching Session
- Progress Management Questions
- Additional Questions for Use During the Coaching Session
- **Assignments**
- 50 Coaching Questions

The *Golden* Rule of Coaching

Golden rule of questioning:

When in a "rut" with a client (meaning you do not know what to say next or the session has stalled) there is not something you need to do, there is something you need to ask.

General Questioning Guidelines

- ✓ Asking questions comprises almost 90% of the Coaches words in a coaching session.
- ✓ The Coach also should only account for 20% of the total words spoken in a coaching session since they are listening 80% of the time. We will cover "Listening" during our next class.
- ✓ The primary objective of questioning (and often coaching) is to stimulate insight and client self discovery.
- ✓ Asking questions is also important because it takes the pressure off of you to be the expert and puts it back on your clients, who are the foremost experts on themselves.
- ✓ Even if you have been through a similar situation before, what was best for you then is not necessarily what is best for your client, as you are two completely different people with different perspectives and values.
- ✓ There are no wrong answers.
- ✓ Only the client knows what is best for him/her.
- ✓ Although their answer may not be what you would do, this does not necessarily mean that their answer doesn't have validity.
- ✓ Give the client time to answer the question. This maybe a little nerve-racking for you if the client does not answer right away, but they are just thinking about their answer. Thinking is good.

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- ✓ You do not want to grill the client. Asking one question at a time is enough as we do not want to overwhelm them.
- ✓ The purpose of questioning is to allow the client to gain insight into themselves. It is our job to facilitate self discovery.
- ✓ To give your client the best opportunity to discover what they really want, ask questions that begin with “what” and “how” never “why”. “Why” questions put people on the defensive.
- ✓ Remember: What works with one client may not work with another.

Questions for Every Scenario

Below are a few coaching scenarios and possible questions that may work in that situation. You may decide to include these questions in your Client Welcome Packet (explained during the Business of Coaching Module).

Discovering What is On the Client's Mind

To gain insight into what the client would like to discuss during their coaching session, an example of a good question to ask is:

- “Where would you like this session to go today?”
- Or
- “What do you want to cover today?”

Discovering How You Can Best Coach Your Client

Examples of good pre-coaching session questions (as stated above these can also be included in your Client Welcome Packet) are:

- How will you know by the end of this session that we have accomplished what you want to accomplish on this call?
- What is the most empowering thing I can do for you during our sessions?
- What can I do to help you achieve your goals?
- How can I most impact your life in the next 30 days?
- What are some signs I can look for that indicate you are feeling discouraged?

Enabling the Client to Remember Their Strength

Below are some sample questions to enable your client to remember they have the strength to go on and achieve their goals. For clients with low self esteem, focus on the fact that they have called you, and that doing such a thing is in itself an accomplishment, as most people who want to change their life do nothing about it.

- What are the three most fulfilling accomplishments in your life thus far?
- What is the biggest thing that you have had to overcome?
- What is your greatest asset?
- What do other people think you are good at?
- When have you handled something like this in the past?

Working with Your Client to Build Their Support Network

Below are some sample questions designed to help clients find their support network as they will need one when

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completing their weekly action plan that leads them to their ultimate goal.

- Who or what is holding you back most right now?
- Who offers you the most support in your life right now?
- Who are the key people in your life and what do they provide for you?
- Is there anyone you wish you had less contact with? How come?
- What do you think you can do about that?

Finding a Path

Below are some questions designed to help your client figure out what they like in their life and what they want their life to be like. This is for clients who do not like their life as it is and have very little idea as to how they want their life to be.

- What is the best part of your day right now?
- What is the worst part of your day?
- What would you rather have? (If they are complaining about something)
- If you had all the money you needed, what would your life be like?
- Where would you live and work?
- In your ideal life, who would you be friends with?
- Do you have a vision of your ideal or perfect life? What does it look like?
- What does your home life and work life look like?
- What dream or goal have you given up on?
- What goal have you put aside because you did not feel the timing was right?

Clarifying the Need For Goals (Life Change)

- If nothing changes in your life, what will that feel like to you?
- What does your ideal life look like?
- What do you think would help make that new life possible?

Identifying Strengths, Passions and Gifts

Identifying their strengths, passions and gifts will also help your clients find the direction their life needs to take to create the peace and happiness for which they ultimately hope to find.

- What is it you love to do?
- What makes you smile?
- Is there anything you feel you were born to do?
- What do you do best?
- What can you do with little effort?
- What areas in your life are you naturally strong?
- What has helped you get where you are today?
- What skills will help you get where you want in the future?
- What excites you and gets you out of bed each morning?
- What part of tomorrow excites you?
- What fulfills you?

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- What part of your work do you love?
- When you leave this earth (death) what will you feel better knowing you have accomplished? How do think you can accomplish this?
- What would you like to do more of in your life?
- When you were 12 years old, what was your favorite thing to do?
- What thought makes you the happiest? What about these thoughts make you happy?

Generating Income

- What are your strengths?
- What talents or special skills do you have?
- If you would receive 2 million dollars in the 24 hours just for gaining a new client, what would you do first?
- What resources do you have access to that could assist you?
- What are 10 ways you could generate extra income?

Identifying the Roadblocks

Identifying roadblock (obstacles) is an important part to the coaching process.

- What thinking is standing in the way from attaining this goal?
- What do you think has the potential stop you from attaining this goal?
- What obstacles do you think may pop up along the way as we work to attain this goal?

Follow up questions:

- What can we do to prepare and minimize the potential result of this obstacle?
- What can we do to overcome this obstacle? Awareness by itself of the obstacle is a very good way to prepare.

Using Questions to Navigate Through Problem Scenarios

Sometimes during the coaching relationship real life problems come up and a client feels the need to talk about it during a coaching session. This is fine as long as you feel equipped to deal with it and discussing it will ultimately benefit the client.

- How do you think you have learned from this situation, as awful as it is?
(Identifying the and understanding the seriousness of a situation helps the client feel validated)
- Okay, now where do you think we can go from here?
(Identifying yourself as a team may help bring comfort and a renewed sense to your client that they are not alone)
- What comfort, if any, can be derived from this situation?
- If this situation cannot be changed, what can we do to deal with the emotions and feelings that are not very positive and are even painful?
- What is the next step?
- Do you have any ideas about what you can do to improve this situation?
- What could you do differently next time you find yourself in this situation?
- What other options or choices do you have right now?

Additional Skills Practice

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Asking questions is a very important part of coaching.

Using who, where, why, when, what and how questions think of 3 questions you would pose to a client during the situations listed below. This is not an assignment. This is for your own personal use.

Situation 1:

What questions would you ask a client who is currently dissatisfied with their life?

Situation 2:

What questions would you ask a client who says they want to be successful (remember: "Success" must be broken down until it is tangible and measurable).

Situation 3:

What questions would you ask a client who had recently had a work conflict?

Questions and Goal Setting

- Goal setting is an emotional process.
- Clients choose goals based on how they believe the attainment of that goal will make them feel (happier, more content, secure etc.).
- Therefore discovering what matters to clients most is as important part of creating goals.
- Goal setting is based on the client's ideal vision that they have for their life.
- Thus when setting goals the client's vision is ultimately what drives the entire coaching and goal setting process.

Finding a Vision

The clearer your client is able to imagine their goal being attained, the faster and easier it will manifest into their reality.

- What does your ideal life look like?
- What course does your ideal day run?
- What are three things that would drastically improve the quality of your life?
- If you had all the money in the world, what would your life look like?
- If money was no object how would you live?
- What does success look like for you?
- What are you currently working toward creating?
- What is your lifelong dream?

The best visions are written out and re-read every day.

Using the Vision to Create Goals

Take their visions and work to create goals. Then ask your clients what the first big step (translation: short term goal) would be to getting closer to their vision.

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- What goals can be derived from how you envision your ideal life?
- Accomplishing what will help you get closer to that dream?

Pre-Coaching Questionnaire

Prior to your first session with your new client it is highly recommended that you create a questionnaire for your client to complete and return to you.

This will help you understand where your client may be coming from and in what direction they may want to head to improve the quality of their life. In addition this will also give you an idea as to the support network your client will have while making changes and working towards goal attainment.

This questionnaire is often included in the Client Welcome Packet (discussed in later modules).

Possible questions you could include on your questionnaire:

- Who do you consider in your support network?
- What is your current career or job?
- As your coach how can I most impact your life in the next 30 days?

Coaching Prep Exercise

What other information would like to know about your potential client? List some possible questions you would add to your questionnaire.

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The 3 Parts of a Coaching Session

Aside from your first official goal setting session your coaching sessions will generally last 20 minutes in length and progress using some version of the following.

Part 1 of the Coaching Session

At the beginning of every call you may want to try asking any one of these questions:

- What do you want to be coached on today?
- How will you know by the end of this call we have accomplished your goal for this call?
- How did your week progress?
- Any successes or challenges completing the tasks?

Through your coaching sessions remember to use questions to clarify the need for change in the client's life (to create awareness or a perspective shift) and to identify possible resources or actions that will assist the client in making successful like change. This includes attitude shifts.

Part 2 of the Coaching Session

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This involves strategizing any obstacles that have come into play since the previous session.

- What hindered your task completion last week?
- Who or what can help you this week to avoid that?
- What are 5 options for overcoming that for this week?

As mentioned above, helping your client to identify possible obstacles on the road to their goal, and come up with ideas to deal with them is pivotal to the goal setting process.

This may seem to be more negative than you might like, but this will help your client become more realistic about the journey they are about to embark on and it will be easier for them to maintain their momentum when these come up as they will have been forewarned.

Part 3 of the Coaching Session

This involves formulating the action plan for the coming week.

The action plan can be made up of assignments (known as fieldwork, homework or short term goals) that the client completes during the week designed to bring them one step closer to goal attainment.

With the goal in mind ask the client what they feel the first step/ next step they need to take to attain this goal.

Other questions that may help to identify the first step are:

- What is the best thing you can do this week to attain this goal?
- What activities are you willing to do to get you closer to your goal?
- What do you need to change to attain this goal?
- What do you feel is the best first step (action) you can take to attain this goal?
- What are you willing to complete by our next coaching session?

Fieldwork, Homework or Short Term Goals

The action(s) that are decided upon is known as fieldwork, homework or short term goals that the client will complete before the next session.

In order to increase the chances that the fieldwork will be completed be sure to ask the following questions:

- What needs to happen in your life to attain this (list action here)?
- What are some of the potential obstacles?
- What can you do to compensate or prepare for them?
- What shift in your thinking must occur to complete your fieldwork?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to completing this action?
- What needs to happen for you to be at a 10??

Progress Management Questions

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How will you know when your client is making progress towards this goal?

Losing weight is a relatively simple goal to measure progress (pounds lost). With other types of goals the progress is not so obvious.

- During the goal setting process make sure to ask you client how they will know that they are making progress.
- Does your client's goal require a time line? Ask them for a goal completion date. Then ask them what has to be done each week to meet that deadline.

Tip: Find something positive every week, whether or not the action was completed. But also remain firm in the plan that fieldwork will be completed the coming week (balance).

Additional Questions for Use During the Coaching Session

- What stopped you from completing this goal?
- What do you think went well this week?
- What do you think can be improved upon?
- May I make a request of you? How about you increase _____ to 4 times instead of 3?
- What would make this upcoming week just the most powerful week?

Assignments

There is no length requirement for these assignments.

Submit your assignments together with your final exam.

Save these assignments as "Coaching Questions Module Assignments."

Assignment 3 can be completed anytime. Simply note that you have completed it in your notes.

Assignment 1

Choose a personal or profession goal that you would like to attain. Using **The 3 Parts to the Coaching Session** as a guideline complete the following and include the details in your assignment:

- DECIDE UPON GOAL. (PHRASE GOAL CORRECTLY!)
- DISCOVER (TROUGH SELF QUESTIONNING) AND LIST POTENTIAL OBSTACLES TO GOAL ATTAINMENT.
- LIST WAYS TO COMPENSATE/PREPARE FOR POTENTIAL OBSTACLES.
- FORMULATE ACTION PLAN FOR THE COMING WEEK.

Assignment 2

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Work to uncover your true self.

Complete the questions above designed for self discovery (listed under "**Uncovering Strengths, Passions and Gifts**"). Include any questions that you think would also help uncover a client's true self.

Assignment 3

At anytime between now and your final exam click the link below and add 3 questions you found powerful or helpful. Questions can come from the notes above (or below) or from your own personal experience.

<http://becomeacoachtrainer.com/?p=613>

50 Coaching Questions

Visit the link below for the 50 Coaching Questions resource!

<http://becomeacoachtrainer.com/?p=715>

You are welcome to add this resource to your website.

