

Greater Hayward House of Hope, Inc.



**COACHING BASICS
FOR
MENTORS & MINISTRY LEADERS**

INTRODUCTION & LISTENING SKILLS

Coaching for Mentors & Ministry Leaders

Moving a person from where they are to where God wants them.

WHAT IS MENTOR COACHING

Mentor Coaching requires some fundamental assumptions (as a starting point)

1. God speaks into the conscience to everyone (Ro.1).
2. God illuminates and applies His word to His people (2 Cor 1)
3. God has spoken to the person being coached (p.b.c.).
4. The person being coached (p.b.c.) wants to do a good job (starting assumption)
5. The person being coached (p.b.c.) might not need your advice or pressure.
6. You are not the Holy Spirit.
7. You can be a servant of God by creating an environment in which people can process things and embrace the illuminating work of The Spirit of God.

The coaching process involves listening for the direction and convictions God is bringing into the p.b.c.'s heart and life, and, helping them organize their thoughts and desired actions, which culminates with an accountability plan.

OCCASIONS FOR NOT USING COACHING

There are occasions in which directive actions are necessary. If I need a form filled out in the office I don't go into a coaching role. And if I am truly the only expert in the room and the people would be best served by directives or instructions, I switch hats from coaching to manager/teacher and serve people by providing information.

OCCASIONS FOR USING COACHING

What are some occasions where coaching skills will be best put to use?

- When a person needs to make a critical decision and requests your involvement.
- When a person is trying to change patterns of behavior in his or her life.
- When a person is stuck and unable to reach personal goals.
- When you are involving a team and want maximum investment.
- When someone is asking for ongoing accountability that is consistent not overbearing or obnoxious

SKILLS USED

Mentor Coaching employs three primary skills: listening, summarizing and asking questions. The most difficult part of listening and asking questions is that most of us are eager to give advice. For some people who are eager to help others, the answer to every problem begins with advice, even when the advice is unwanted and not requested. Mentor Coaching begins with listening.

LISTENING SKILLS FOR MENTORS

WHY LISTEN?

- The primary tool of the coach is his or her relationship to the p.b.c.
 - Listening skills are a great tool for relationship building
 - Coaching is primarily not about transmitting information
 - Coaching is about helping the p.b.c. discover what God is already teaching them and providing encouragement & graceful accountability
 - Listening skills are a great tool to accurately address the right things
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SUMMARIZING / PARAPHRASING

In every conversation there are two elements present-

1. CONTENT - what the person is talking about
2. FEELINGS - how the person feels about it

After listening to the p.b.c. for a bit, summarize the content and feelings back to p.b.c. Summarizing (also called paraphrasing) gives the p.b.c. an opportunity to solve his or her own problems and discover what they already know. A coach is not the answer guy.

The most difficult part of listening (and coaching) is leaving out your opinions. Your opinions will mean more when you have complete information and the relationship is stronger. The first goal is to accurately understand the p.b.c. & help them understand God's will.

When coaching a believer, we can assume they know how to discern what God is saying through his word, through listening prayer and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Often believers just need the right environment and involvement of other believer(s) to clarify and confirm God's will.

EXERCISE: CONTENT AND FEELINGS SUMMARIZED

(Instructor models this skill 1st)

Participants pair up with someone. One person tells the story of something important that is going on in their life. The other person will listen for the content and feelings, and repeat back a summary of the content and feelings. Every p.b.c. should know they are the focus and you are listening.

End Session One

ATTENDING SKILLS:

Another skill related to listening is attending. Attending is showing a person with your body language that you are listening.

ATTENDING SKILL BASICS:

1. keep **at least** as much eye contact as the speaker
2. Try to **copy** the body language of the speaker
3. Look interested. If you are not interested, fake it and pray for help.

EXERCISE: Instructor models this: Have a participant tell a story and then model both poor and then helpful attending skills.

Ask for comments after the exercise is completed.

COMMON MISTAKES WHILE USING LISTENING SKILLS

- Poor attending skills (or body language).
- You sound good, but you look as if you could not care less.
- Sound like a parrot or a robot.
- Rushing in to give cheap advice.
- Talk about content only, ignoring feelings.
- Shifting attention to yourself.

- No energy. You must be as intense in your words and emphasis as the other person.
- Summarizing when it is not the best method to use under the circumstances.

LISTENING WELL INVOLVES

- Use good attending skills.
- Listen closely to what is said and how it is said.
- Watch for nonverbal clues to feeling.
- Remember the content (what the other person is talking about) and the feelings (how they feel about what they are talking about).
- Summarize both content and feelings.
- Summarize what you hear, but nothing more (time for that later).

WHEN TO USE LISTENING SKILLS

- To begin or develop a relationship.
- To help other persons understand themselves better and get more closely in touch with their feelings and attitudes.
- When you find it hard to understand what another person means by what they say.
- **To discover an entry point into a coaching opportunity.**

WHEN **NOT** TO USE LISTENING SKILLS

- When the other person is seeking only information, or needs immediate action (physical assistance).
- When the other person is inappropriate, or abusive.
- When the other person talks too much.
- When the other person is not in touch with reality, is suicidal, intoxicated

or depressed.

- When listening skills no longer produces new information.

EXERCISE: BASIC MIRRORING

(Review: Content, feelings, summarizing, and body language)

Exercise Two: participants practice it with the person next to them

NINE NUGGETS FOR LISTENING

1. Proverbs 18:13 says, *“He who answers before listening — that is his folly and his shame.”*
2. Listen more than you talk.
3. Listen for feelings as well as facts.
4. Listen and work with what God is already doing.
5. Start with the other person’s “world”—their context and frame of reference.
6. Listen beyond words for tone of voice and body language.
Communication is 7% words, 35% tone, 58% body language.
7. Beware of “autobiographical” responses: interpreting and advising from your own experience.
8. Don’t be afraid of silence. A “pregnant pause” can give birth to great insights!
9. Listen for “aha” or “uh-oh” moments—they are turning points.

COACHING SKILLS

MENTOR & MINISTRY COACHING SKILLS

SKILLS USED DURING ENTIRE COACHING PROCESS

There are other skills used in every phase of the coaching process. Let's take a look at these skills.

LISTENING

Listening skills are a primary coaching skill. If we don't listen well, we will not be an effective coach. In coaching you must always **W.A.I.T.** to speak:

W.A.I.T. = Why Am I Talking

If you are advising, then you are not coaching. You have switched to a consultant or advisor role. There are times for advising and teaching. But not in coaching.

ME to **YOU** posture - Not a: ME to you posture

In the coaching process we are acting as a servant, not an expert. Therefore, our role is reduced while the Holy Spirit and the P.B.C. are spotlighted. The next skill that is used throughout the coaching appointment is authentic encouragement.

AUTHENTIC ENCOURAGEMENT

What does non-authentic encouragement look like? Non-authentic encouragement is speaking in platitudes, or without feeling or caring.

Non-authentic encouragement is trying to encourage a person before you really understand what is going on. If you encourage a person too soon you might come across as phony and lose your credibility as a truth teller.

Authentic encouragement is about the p.b.c. When you encourage a person make it about him or her and not “me”. Let’s look at “me centered encouragement” vs. “other oriented encouragement”.

“Me” centered encouragement

*You were a blessing to **me** when you taught the class.*

“Other” oriented encouragement

*You were a blessing to **others** when you taught the class.*

COACHING QUESTIONS

Another skill that is used during the entire coaching process is asking questions. There is a way of asking questions that is helpful to the coaching process and there is a way of asking questions that will prevent coaching from taking place.

Let’s talk about how we ask coaching questions.

TOP FIVE MISTAKES WHILE ASKING COACHING QUESTIONS

1. Closed Questions

Closed questions produce a brief “yes” or “no” answer and closes conversations

Question: Give me some examples of closed questions

Open questions encourage the sharing of ideas and information

Question: Give me some examples of open questions

CHANGING QUESTIONS FROM CLOSED TO OPEN

Closed: Is there a way to do that and still keep evenings for family?

Open: What could you do to still keep evenings for family?

Closed: Can you realistically take that on too?

Open: how would your life change if you take that on, too?

Closed: Could there be any other ways to approach that?

Open: How else could you approach that?

Closed: Do you have any other options?

Open: What other options do you have?

COMMENT ON CLOSED QUESTIONS

Open questions let the p.b.c. direct the conversation and they make the p.b.c. think by eliciting more than one-word answers.

2. Solution Oriented Questions

If the 2nd word in your question is “you”, then you probably have asked a solution-oriented question. Solution oriented questions are pieces of advice with a question mark pasted on the end. We want to tell the p.b.c. the answer, but we remember we are supposed to be coaching, so we give our solution in the form of a question such as:

- Shouldn't you check in with your boss before you act on this?
- Could you do your jogging with your spouse?
- Do you think that affirming the person would give you a better result?
- Can you give her the benefit of the doubt on this one?
- Don't you think you are too fat for those jeans?

3. Seeking the “One True Question”

New coaches often feel like they have to ask the perfect question. It is not the perfect question that makes the difference: you just need to help the

person you are coaching think a little farther down the road than they can on their own. Trust the process to help the person, not the greatness of your insight. Lean on simple questions like; “tell me more” or “what else?”

Another technique you could use as a beginner is to repeat the words back to the p.b.c. and ask them to expand on it, like this:

- “You mentioned that _____. Tell me more about that.”

4. Rambling Questions

Some coaches can't stop themselves from asking the same question in three different ways. Or they ask disjointed questions that do not follow the natural flow of the conversation. The solution is simple: allow it to be silent for a moment or two while you formulate the question. Our discomfort with silence leads us to jump in before we are ready to ask. When you start doing this (allowing silence) you'll often find that a little silence will lead the p.b.c. to continue the process without you asking any question at all.

5. Interpretive Questions (Not Using Their Own Words)

Sometimes our questions reveal an inaccurate spin on what the p.b.c. is saying. For instance, a client says, “I'm finding it tough lately to want to get up on Monday morning. I'm frustrated with my current project, I'm not getting the support I need, and I keep finding myself looking at the clock and wishing the day was over.” A response like, “How long have you hated your job?” is likely to get a reaction from the p.b.c. (“wait a minute – I never said I hated my job...!”) The reason? Our coaching question reveals our interpretation of what the p.b.c. said. We don't know yet whether this person hates his job, dislikes it, or even loves it. We only know what the client says. Interpretive questions erode trust and block the conversational flow.

Interpretative questions are easy to correct: simply make a habit of incorporating the client's own words in your question. For the example above, we might ask. “How long have you been frustrated with your current project?” or “What kind of support do you need that you are not getting?”

ASK EVALUATIVE, REFLECTIVE, BEHAVIORAL AND ACTION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Evaluative question: How effective is your strategy?

Reflective question: What programs do you have in place?

Behavioral question: What are you doing...?

Action question: What is going to keep you from doing this?

QUOTE: "If there ain't no action there weren't no coaching"

EXAMPLES OF POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- How can I be most useful to you during this conversation?
- What is the end result you would like to see at the end of our conversation?
- What do you need right now?
- What might be a God sized goal for you right now?
- What have you done thus far?
- What are you thinking about as a next step?
- What consequences might there be?
- What other options are you considering?
- What resources will you need to accomplish the task?
- Who can you talk to about this?
- How might you compensate for the risks?

Notice these questions are designed to make the p.b.c. look for the solutions themselves.

GROUP EXERCISE

ASK, DON'T TELL!

Turn the following statements into questions.

- That's unethical...
- That's a stupid idea?
- You're not following through....
- Your interpersonal skills are weak...
- That schedule is unrealistic...
- It's not as bad as you think...
- You're neglecting your family

WHY ASK QUESTIONS?

- To seek clarity and understanding
- To generate options

THE COACHING SEQUENCE

Let's put all of this together. We know that listening and asking questions are the primary tools used in coaching. We also know that the results are important. So how do we put all of this together?

I have developed a model that shows how the coaching process flows from the 1st things we do to the last things.

THE DOUBLE FUNNEL MODEL

Listen

In the double funnel model there is a clear process that you will be working through as you coach a person. The coaching begins with listening. When you begin your session you will be listening to a broad range of subjects, ideas and stories. This is typically how this phase works for me.

1. Question: How are you and your family doing?
2. Answer: _____
3. Question: So what's going on with the goals we targeted last time?
4. Answer: Typically the p.b.c. talks about all kinds of stuff plus one or two areas that stand out that may need to be explored further.

Focus

The second step of the coach process is to focus on one subject chosen by the p.b.c.

A good way to move from listening to focusing is to ask a focusing question.

Focusing Questions

- How can I be most useful to you during this conversation?
- What is the end result you would like to see at the end of our conversation?
- Of the three issues you mentioned which one would you like to address 1st?

Explore Options

Now that the p.b.c. has selected an issue they want to address we can use good questions to guide them to explore options. For example; if the p.b.c. wants to work on his or her relationship with his or her spouse you might

ask; “what areas of your relationship most contribute to a good or bad marriage?” They might say; “communication, or less fighting, or more romance ect.” Then to further explore options we might say; “what are two things that you have tried or could try to improve your communication (or relationship) with your husband or wife?”

Pregnant pauses:

Pregnant pauses are ok. Give the p.b.c. time to hear from God and think about his or her answer. Pause long enough to allow a thought to be fully developed and birthed.

Action steps = Smart goals

Our last phase of coaching is to turn options into action steps. A well placed coaching question can move the p.b.c. from options to concrete action steps.

A few questions that might help turn options into action are:

1. You mentioned you want to lose weight, and you mentioned three things you could do; “join the YMCA, buy an accurate scale and weigh yourself once per week; and chart your weight.”
2. Is there a date you have in mind by which you will take each of these steps?

REVIEW

After you have made it through the coaching sequence and the p.b.c. has a good set of action steps they have agreed to take, it is helpful to review what has been covered. The best way for the session to stick in the p.b.c.^s mind is to have the p.b.c. review what was covered during the session. Here is an example of how you might be able to move to review.

“Just so it sticks with us longer, could you review what we talked about and the action steps that you have agreed to take before our next meeting?”

Most of the time I write notes as I speak to the p.b.c. and I review the action steps they have agreed to take. Then I ask them if we are on the same page and if they still feel comfortable that they are going to be able to achieve each of these goals.

FOLLOW UP

Lastly, I pray with the p.b.c. and set a next appointment time. Setting a next appointment time is crucial because it gives the p.b.c. a deadline by which he or she will meet the goals to which they have agreed.

EXERCISE: Model a coaching conversation. Move through each phase of the double funnel and ask class members to holler out when you are moving into the next phase of the model.

DOUBLE FUNNEL MODEL WALK THROUGH WITH SAMPLE QUESTIONS

To further demonstrate how to move a person through this 2 cone sequence let's look at some possible questions you could ask the p.b.c. that might move him or her from the beginning to the end of the sequence.

1. Listen (use active listening)
2. Focus on one issue
 - Example question: Is there one issue that has been on your mind lately that you would like to address today?
 - Example question: What one thing would you like to accomplish before you walk away from our time today?
3. Explore options
 - Example question: What have you done thus far?
 - Example question: What are you thinking about as a next step?
 - Example question: What consequences might there be?
 - Example question: What is most likely to stop you from reaching this goal?
4. Action steps
 - Example question: So what is one step you will take?
 - Example question: How will you do it?
 - Example question: By what date will you take this action?
 - Example question: What question do you want me to ask you the next time we speak?

EXERCISE: Take turns coaching in front of the class. Offer critique and applause.

EXERCISE: Pair up and coach one another. Have each person being coached report to the group what was great and what could have been improved.

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENT FOR FUTURE TRAINING

NEXT STEPS