

The Professional Coaching Program (PCP) 2023

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Evaluating Coaching Effectiveness

"How well did the coaching that I just completed achieve its goals?" Or, Human Resource people often ask, "How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your coaching?"

Answering these questions is an endeavor more generally labeled "program evaluation" and can apply to determining the value of any organizational intervention. A key challenge is to specify or operationalize the goals of the "program" being evaluated so that measurements can be made. In other words, program goals need to be turned into something measurable, and then those measures need to be applied to the post-program context. For example, if a coaching engagement is aimed at improving a leader's ability to inspire others, we need to find ways of measuring his or her inspirational behavior to see if improvements have occurred. This can be complex but there are some useful guidelines that are quite actionable by individual coaches.

Informal Evaluation

The most immediate evaluation of coaching effectiveness is the coach's ongoing sensitivity to the signals sent by the client and others in the organization. Some of these cues are sent by client's themselves: being prepared for appointments, or not; missing or postponing appointments; not trying the behaviors agreed to in the development plan; etc. Coaches need to watch for these cues carefully and explore causes as they arise. Keeping in regular contact with coaching sponsors is also essential, asking them how they think the coaching is going, what are their observations, and so on. This is informal evaluation yet very useful both in keeping a dialogue between coach and sponsors and also in providing valuable progress information to the coach to allow for adjustments.

Formal Evaluation

There is also a more formal answer to the evaluation question. In the 1960's, Kirkpatrick defined four ways, or levels, of operationalizing the goals of training programs. They are directly applicable to coaching:

1. **Reactions or relative satisfaction**, i.e., in a completely subjective way, how satisfied, or how much did participants, and sponsors, feel positive about the coaching?

2. **Learning or retention**, i.e., focusing on cognitive change, what did participants actually learn during coaching?
3. **Behavior or observable changes**, i.e., to what extent has behavior changed in those dimensions that the coaching was focused on (or, how did the participant do in changing behavior based on the stated behavioral objectives in the development plan)?
4. **Organizational results or Return on Investment (ROI)**, i.e., building on the goals above, to what extent has the program yielded tangible benefits to the organization such as increased revenue, more customers, more efficient and cost effective processes, etc.? (These types of goals are always speculative but coaches can look for them. However, there needs to be a conceptual link between the cognitive or behavioral targets of the coaching and these types of organizational benefits. As it is, the link between coaching and organizational outcomes is tentative at best.)

Level 1:

The first level is relatively easy to measure. Clients can be surveyed about their satisfaction after coaching is completed with a simple questionnaire or with a few direct questions in a discussion. It is also good practice to survey bosses and HR sponsors after coaching is completed. These surveys are the usual "applause meters" used after training programs, blatantly subjective, but they do have usefulness in surfacing satisfiers and problems.

Level 2:

The second level reflects Kirkpatrick's training program roots and is not formally measured in coaching since cognitive learning isn't usually the main focus. However, to the extent to which a coach uses readings, books, or conceptual models (such as Situational Leadership, emotional intelligence, or listening skills), the coach does get a sense of how well the client is absorbing this content. Such learning could also be asked about on a post-coaching questionnaire. Coaches do not actually test for cognitive learning as one might do in a training program.

Level 3:

The third level is the main focus in evaluating coaching. Development plans used in coaching usually are behavioral in their goals and language. They therefore lend themselves to being either built into a customized multi-rater form (360-degree, just boss, or some other sample), or linked with a standardized multi-rater (360-degree) questionnaire. Although this isn't strictly measurement of "behavior" because it is measuring other's perceptions of the client's behavior, most people would see them as close or even equivalent. However, this type of measure would need to wait until at least six months into coaching, or probably longer.

If a multi-rater questionnaire is used before or as a basis for coaching, then the post-coaching evaluation of behavior change would be the classic "pre-post" paradigm that is used in many applied research settings. One looks for changes (hopefully improvements) in those behaviors/dimensions targeted in the coaching, but at the same time, no change would be expected in all other behaviors. If everything improves, there is no way to conceptually link the results to coaching (often called the Hawthorne Effect after early organization experiment results that were proven erroneous). An interesting application of this idea is to create development plans that can be used directly as a behavioral multi-rater questionnaire and can be sent to a sample of co-workers, although this wouldn't have the rigor of being anchored by the same "pre" measure. Still, it would give respondents very coaching-specific behaviors on which to evaluate the client.

Other possible behavioral measures include the coach's own observations of the client, especially if that observation has occurred early and then late/at closure in the coaching, coach interviews of boss or other stakeholders about changes they have seen (360-degree interviews as a post-coaching measure), and the coach's observations of the client during role plays as coaching sessions have progressed. Another form of measurement are the client's own "self reports" regarding the targeted behaviors.

Level 4:

The fourth level of evaluation involves measures that are a stretch for coaching, not because coaching lacks a bottom-line impact but because coaching is always a one-at-a-time endeavor. It is unlikely to tightly tie improved performance of an individual to tangible business results. One can suggest that the big new account or the creative breakthrough of the team is a result of a sales manager's or team leader's coaching but it would be speculative at best. A stronger case could be made if there were several clients whose coaching-sparked activity seemed to coincide with a business units' success. Improvements in a client's performance appraisal, bonus, or succession plan evaluation could be used as a level 4 evaluation, although these processes are unlikely to align closely with the timeframe of coaching. Furthermore, whatever behavioral successes clients have through coaching, there is a lag effect of such changes being perceived by others, further breaking the connection between coaching and particular organizational outcomes.

In conclusion, the first and third levels of Kirkpatrick's hierarchy (subjective reactions and behavior changes as measured by other's perceptions) should be routinely evaluated during and after coaching programs. More practically, however, coaches should always have their "evaluative" antenna up, seeking information about how the client is doing, from both the client and sponsors.

Evaluation Questions to Ask Myself

During the assignment:

- What am I learning? How am I discovering what I am learning?
- What makes my coaching potent?
- What in coaching makes me uncomfortable?
- Am I being honest, authentic?

Debriefing sessions with the client:

- Getting the client to assess his/her own effectiveness
- Providing feedback to the client
- Speaking to both strengths and needs
- Keeping the business goal in mind
- Re-contracting with the client as needed

After the engagement:

- What did I learn about coaching?
- How did I learn it?
- What did I learn about my competence as a coach?
- How was I flexible? How was I rigid?
- What can I take to my next coaching assignment?
- Who do I need as resources and support?

*from James Flaherty (modified)

Sample Coaching Contracts

Coaching *engagement contracts* or *letters of agreement* are typically designed to make clear what is covered in an engagement so all parties are clear as to expectations, processes, phases, confidentiality, deliverables and fees. What you arrive at for a workable document may depend upon your coaching approach, the nature of the engagement, your understanding of the organization, your prior conversations with sponsors and or manager and your experience. These samples represent some stylistic options for consideration.

Coach One: Sample Contract

Janice Wilson
Human Capital
United Marketing Group
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Janice:

I was glad that we were able to speak today by phone to discuss your interest in utilizing my services as an executive coach. I have been providing coaching services to managers and executives for over 15 years and have a 25-year career as an organizational psychologist and am currently engaged in a variety of coaching assignments, as well as publishing and teaching on the topic.

I will use this letter to outline steps and fees for the type of coaching we discussed. For convenience, I have separated coaching into two connected sections, which could be offered individually or together. These are: "Needs Assessment and Development Planning" and "Active Coaching". Each is described below.

Needs Assessment and Development Planning

This is the typical way in which coaching begins. It includes the following steps involving 12-15 professional hours:

1. Interview the coaching client
2. Interview the boss and relevant HR professional (i.e., coaching sponsors);
3. Administration of several self-report instruments (e.g., MBTI etc.);
4. Informational interviewing of 6 - 8 direct reports, peers, internal clients etc. (probably by phone unless face-to-face can be handled efficiently or is requested for other reasons)
5. Feedback to the client and discussion of themes
6. Drafting of development plan (themes and actions)
7. Discussion of the development plan at a meeting with coaching sponsors and/or manager

Active Coaching

Building upon the needs assessment above, this section mobilizes developmental activity for the client. It includes six months of biweekly coaching meetings of two hours each, at the client's work location, or some other mutually agreed upon site. The content of these meetings would be aimed at the developmental objectives outlined in the development plan. Discussion would focus on the application of new approaches to current work challenges, obstacles to change, and other challenges. When deemed relevant, I would also teach managerial and interpersonal models, use video feedback, mock presentations, role-plays and other techniques. Also included are regular phone contacts with coaching sponsors to check on progress and understand organizational dynamics.

A supportive follow-up phase is often part of coaching as well. It reduces the number of coaching hours while still providing the client with guidance. It can be structured in many different ways (phone, quarterly meetings, email) so I will wait for further discussion with you to price that phase, if you are interested in it.

The contents of all conversations are confidential. The development plan, however, is not confidential and is meant as a guide for all parties invested in the development of the client. Obviously, I would have regular contact with coaching sponsors about progress on the plan; to the extent that the plan is shared more widely should up to the client.

Fees

This engagement would involve 26 - 30 professional hours, which computes to a fee of \$XX,XXX. For my coaching work, I prefer to invoice monthly for actual professional time rendered. This provides maximum flexibility and cost effectiveness in dealing with the need to customize individual coaching programs. If desired, we could agree on an upper limit for each section and, unless notified by me, you could assume that fees would be less than that amount.

The only items not included in the above fees are: 1. Out-of-pocket expenses associated with travel, 2. Actual time I am required to travel to deliver coaching services, and 3. Appointments canceled by the client on short notice. Out-of-pocket expenses are simply included on my invoices with the required documentation. For travel time, my practice is to invoice for half of the actual time I am in transit, after the first 30 minutes each way. If these services were to be delivered in Hartford CT, we could establish a standard expected fee for travel time after looking into travel options. Finally, I reserve the right to charge for appointments canceled on short notice (less than a week). These items would be in addition to the fees outlined above.

I hope this proposal letter addresses the facets of coaching that you want to offer the client we discussed. I will call you to discuss this proposal in the next few days.

Coach One

Coach Two: Sample Contract

CONFIDENTIAL

Stephan Gear
Managing Director
Fine Group, Inc.
100 Snow Street
New York, NY 11111

Via email: sggear@finegroup.com

10/10/XX

Dear Stephan,

Thank you for your interest in Executive Coaching for X.

At this point, and based upon our initial discussion, three developmental goals emerge as the focus of the coaching:

- "" Working with X to understand and alter her work behavior that contributed to recent complaints while rebuilding trust and encouraging good performance from her group
- "" Assisting X in identifying her range of successful leadership skills, behaviors and practices that can be further leveraged and targeting those behaviors requiring further development
- "" Supporting X in enhancing her team building and conflict management skills. This may include direct work with X and selected team members

As we discussed, additional goals or refinement of the above may naturally flow as coaching evolves.

Coaching includes: Clarifying the engagement scope and commitment with the client; one Standardized Assessment, if selected; 360 Interviews with boss, peers and direct reports with Data Analysis; Feedback; Development Planning; Assignments that aid Plan Implementation; Regularly scheduled meetings of 1-2 hours; Phone Consultation, Real Time Observations (Shadowing,) as appropriate and periodic three way Management Updates including a three way Development Plan Meeting with you.

X will be expected to keep a log to capture her insights, new learning and assignments. While her log and discussions are confidential she is also encouraged to openly discuss her goals and progress with you on a regular basis.

The inclusive six months Executive Coaching fee is \$XX,XXX payable at the beginning of the assignment. If the engagement is extended each three-month period would be additional of \$XX,XXX.

Expenses, if incurred, are billed at cost. I am happy to comply with your organizations guidelines for expenses.

Please do not hesitate to call to further discuss any of these partnering on developmental opportunity for X.

Sincerely,
Coach Two

Coach Three: Sample Contract

December 2, 20XX
Mr. John Doe
General Manager
High Flying Airways
2468 Who Do We Appreciate Highway

Via: John.Doe@highflyingairways.com

Dear John,

This letter is to outline our Executive Coaching Engagement, by and Coach Three and High Flying Airways (Holdings) USA, Inc ("High Flying"), commencing with and effective as of the execution of this Agreement.

This Agreement summarizes the engagement Coach Three will provide, in the capacity of Executive Coach and consultant to Frank Smith, a Director with High Flying. It also spells out possible options of other High Flying key Executives under Schedule B.

It should be understood that the role of RRC is strictly advisory and that all decisions and action steps are the responsibility of Mr. Smith and High Flying.

Scope of Engagement

Coach Three, in the capacity of Executive Coach, will work with Frank Smith in his capacity as Director- High Flying:

- ε to assist him in better understanding himself and his impact on others in the organization and outside the organization. The approach will be based on coaching sessions with him, shadowing him and conversations with his boss and other key stakeholders where indicated. Coach Three will utilize any assessment tools including MBTI, etc. that it may deem useful in gathering information about him in his work at High Flying.
- ε to develop ideas and strategies for Frank Smith becoming a more effective leader, consistent with High Flying's core values and his personal vision of success. These strategies will focus on continuing to develop his leadership and management effectiveness.
- ε to assist Frank Smith as he develops his leadership so he'll make an even more positive impact on High Flying's Client and team relationships as well as business results moving forward, and also enhance his sense of well-being.

Privacy of information

It is agreed as an integral part of this Executive Coaching process that Coach Three will hold all information it receives from Frank Smith as private to be retained as his property within High Flying. We will report on all process issues including trends and progress in Executive Coaching, including if coaching is going well, mixed, or not well, to his boss and to Leadership Development/HR as part of our contract with the organization. These reports, if either mixed or not favorable, will only be made after consultation with him. All other reports to executives within High Flying will only be made after receiving the coaching client's consent, or with him present in person or on the phone. Coach Three's over-all policy regarding communication of information is that we can "receive information but we can't send information (without consent)". Of course, he is entirely free to divulge any and all

coaching data that he will find useful to his boss or other key stakeholders and we will usually encourage him to do so for sake of his development within the company.

Professional Fees and Business Arrangements

Fees for Coach Three’s consulting services are \$ XX,000 for six months, commencing at the first meeting of coach and Client. This fee is inclusive and covers all regularly scheduled coaching sessions every two or three weeks at the discretion of the coach and the client, shadowing, attendance at team meetings, meetings with key stakeholders surrounding the client, all assessment tools used, all travel time, and telephone costs. It does not cover travel costs such as airfare, to points distant from the New York Metro area which will be billed separately to High Flying at Coach Three’s reasonable cost (per High Flying contractor guidelines) with itemized receipts provided for items over \$25.00 in the event such travel is requested by the Coaching Client or the Client sponsoring organization.

As per our understanding, High Flying will submit \$ XX,000 via check or ACH electronic transfer to Coach Three ZZZ, upon receipt of this letter against time billed and all other costs for the first half of the six months of consulting. Coach Three will invoice High Flying \$ XX,000 for the second half of the Engagement after the conclusion in six months.

If the foregoing adequately summarizes our understanding, please sign and return one copy of this letter. Please send the attached invoice to High Flying accounts payable in order to expedite the ACH electronic payment or check.

Sincerely,

Coach Three

Date:

Agreed and Accepted

By: John Doe

General Manager, Americas Region,

High Flying Airways, USA, Inc.

Date

CONFIDENTIAL

Coach Four: Sample Contract

Date

XXXXX
Big Company
XXXXX

RE: Letter of Agreement for X Employee and Program Overview

Dear Sponsor,

Thank you for selecting X Consulting Firm for Executive Coaching with X Employee. We look forward to working with you in the provision of services for this employee development process.

I would like to summarize the X Consulting Firm approach to Executive Coaching for our mutual understanding and agreement. Please review the following information and, if you are satisfied with the content as written, sign a copy of this letter and return it to me at XXXX.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

OVERVIEW

PHASE 1: Assessment and Exploration

- "" Understand the culture and context
- "" Develop rapport and begin relationship and trust-building
- "" Understand the purpose of the coaching process and agree on initial goals
- "" Assess personal style, using assessment instruments, as appropriate
- "" Conduct 360 Stakeholder Interviews
- "" Clarify key behavior patterns, using personal history and critical incidents

PHASE 2: Goals and Strategies

- "" Develop coaching action plan
- "" Establish long-term behavior change goals
- "" Conduct meeting with participant and manager to review coaching plan
- "" Design exercises to build awareness of behavior patterns
- "" Determine development strategies, and set weekly goals
- "" Provide coaching and conduct exercises to experiment with, practice and get feedback on new patterns

PHASE 3: On-Going Development and Reinforcement

- "" Track behavior change
- "" Modify goals and strategies to adapt to changing conditions
- "" Conduct meeting with participant and manager to review progress on development plan and create a plan for ongoing support for development
- "" Prepare for end of formal coaching relationship

PROGRAM DURATION AND CONTENT

It is anticipated that this coaching program will be optimally administered over the course of 6 months of one-on-one coaching sessions with phone sessions when necessary, and will be held weekly initially and last 60 to 90 minutes. In addition, it is anticipated that substantial time will be spent on supplementary activities such as:

- "" Feedback and information-gathering from managers
- "" 360° Feedback, as appropriate (including administration, interviews, development of questionnaires, analysis of results, written reports)
- "" Development of a tailored coaching plan/revision of same as 1) program progresses, 2) new behaviors are adopted, 3) conditions change
- "" Preparation for one-on-one sessions as well as written and verbal reports
- "" Phone consultation on timely issues (in between regularly scheduled coaching sessions)
- "" Additional activities, which may become imperative, i.e., additional time with the President human resources, and with direct reports.

CONSULTING FEES AND EXPENSES

The fee for this 6-month program is \$XX,000. This is an all-inclusive fee covering activities related to the coaching program, as outlined above. Should Big Company require travel to other locations, travel and related expenses will be billed separately in keeping with X Company's travel policies.

Big Company will be invoiced half of the fee for the coaching assignment prior to commencement of the first session and the balance mid-way. Any sessions beyond the six-month period will be billed at an hourly rate in agreement with X Firm. Upon signing this letter agreement, Big Company agrees to pay for all invoices within 30 days of invoice date.

If Big Company requires additional work, thereby expanding the scope of the project, additional charges may be billed. All additional work will only commence upon the execution of a change order mutually agreeable to Big Company and to X Consultant Firm.

SCHEDULING AND CANCELLATION

Coach and Client will agree upon a regular schedule of coaching sessions. Client will be expected to make every effort to hold to the mutually agreed upon meeting times. However, there may be times when business needs or other schedule demands will require adjustments to the schedule. Client may cancel appointments without penalty, provided 1.) The cancellation is made at least 3 business days in advance; 2.) The session is adjusted to a mutually convenient time and 3.) The continuity and cohesiveness of the program is not impinged by the cancellation. When a cancellation is made with less than 24 hours' notice, that session will be deemed to have occurred.

If, after signing this contract, Big Company cancels this agreement for any reason, X Company agrees to pay for all work completed to date.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE

Any and all information regarding Big Company, its employees and its practices shared with X Consulting Firm, its employees and/or other assigns as a result of preparation for and delivery of this program and related contracted services shall be held strictly confidential. X Consulting agrees to abide by Big Company's policies regarding Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure.

Acknowledgment

I have read and understand this document and by my signature agree to uphold the terms and conditions herein.

This proposal is accepted and forms an agreement between Big Company and X Consulting Firm.

Sponsor

(date)

Global Head of Human Resources
X Company

Coach

(date)

Title

Firm

Defining My Practice:

- Leadership Coaching? Transition Coaching? Career Coaching? Individuals? Team Development? Other?
- Relating Coaching to the rest of what I do
- Sponsor relationships
- How will I assess potential coaching engagements?
- What type of review will I do? With whom?
- Boundaries I will manage
- Continuing to learn
 - What will I do to keep growing as a coach?
 - Supervision
 - Learning Groups
 - Professional Organizations
 - Workshops
 - Self-directed learning

Marketing

Positioning/Branding:

- Who are my potential clients?
- How can I get to them?
- How can I nurture relationships with them?
- How do I differentiate myself from other coaches?
- How do I build my networks?

Promotion Materials:

- Bio sketch
- Brochure
- Website
- Blog
- Business cards
- Logo/Stationery
- References/Testimonials
- Presentations

Business Structure

- Independent
- Partnerships
- Third party vendor
- Large-scale projects capacity
- Office space
- Email/cell

Business Practice

- Contracts
- Proposals/Letters of Agreement
- Pricing strategies & fee structure; length of engagements
- Billing arrangements
- Record keeping
- Insurance
- Taxes
- Supervision
- Confidentiality

Contracting: Setting Process Expectations

What's in an Agreement? Some or all of the following:

- Reason for initiating the coaching
- Probably duration of the coaching relationship
- General flow of the coaching assignment: data gathering, feedback, revision of goals, action planning
- Implementation, review
- Frequency and length of meetings
- Privacy, confidentiality and reporting issues, email usage
- Relationships with significant stakeholders
- Data gathering methods: interviews, assessments, observation, etc.
- Fees and terms, covered expenses if any

What's the Form of an Agreement?

- Letter of Agreement to HR and/or client
- Notes shared by Coach
- Discussion

Other possible documents:

- Non-disclosure Agreement [NDA]
- Progress reports
- Feedback summary
- Action / Development Plan
- Closure Review [coaching evaluation, wrap-up with future development ideas]

Understanding What Happened During the Coaching Engagement

Effects of this Engagement	On me as a Coach
<p>1 - Business Performance</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue • References 	
<p>2 - Skills, Knowledge, Competencies (Used, Learned, Needed)</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication techniques • Interpersonal dynamics • Organization analysis • Observation of events • Data collection and interpretation • Giving feedback 	
<p>3 - Behavior</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions • Listen and show patience • Manage anxiety • Create possibilities • Simplify and summarize the client's situation • Help client plan for action to get to desired outcomes 	

Effects of this Engagement

On me as a Coach

4 - Self Awareness

- The relevance of my life experience
- Values
- Assumptions
- Personal style of interacting
- Learning methods and style
- Self-management

5 –Role as Coach

- Understanding of "change"
- Theory of coaching process
- Connection to other practice fields (OD, HR, etc.)
- Coach's place in the client's world
- Value and limits of coaching
- Marginality of the coach
- Ownership of the changes

6 - Plans and Expectations

- Applications at work/in my practice
- Development needs -next things to learn
- Techniques to learn
- Support network to build
- Certifications to get
- Career implications

Understanding What Happened During the Coaching Engagement

Effects of this Engagement

On my Client

<p>1 - Business Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted goals • Unanticipated outcomes • Likely future changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organization generally b. Client personally
<p>2 - Skills, Knowledge, Competencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication techniques • Interpersonal dynamics • Supervisory practices • Administrative practices 	
<p>3 – Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work efficiently • Show consideration for others • Build relationships • Provide direction • Foster teamwork • Show work commitment • Recognize implications of actions • Adaptability, flexibility • Greater inclusiveness 	

Effects

On My Client

4- Self Awareness

- Career plans
- Priorities at work
- Priorities in life
- Values
- Personal style
- Function of learning in leadership
- Learning style
- Personal motivation
- Self-management
(presence, anxiety)

5- Role Perspectives

- As a manager/leader
- Position within the company
- Current vs. future
organizational role

6 - Plans and Expectations

- Development needs/plans
- Experiments to carry out
- Personal support system

SAMPLE Form

Evaluation of Coaching Engagement: Client

Your name _____ Your Coach's name _____

Coaching Sponsor name _____ Date _____

Please answer the following questions about
your experience of coaching and your coach

Please describe the ways in which the coaching engagement was a productive experience for you:

On a scale of 1 (very little) – 5 (an outstanding amount), how would you rate the coaching in helping you improve in the following broad areas:

1. *Your self-insight (e.g., "Aha moments," changing you attitude or assumptions, freeing up your thinking, seeing better ways to do things, etc.) _____*

Please give examples:

2. *Your content learning about concepts, models or ideas in management, leadership, team work, or other relevant topics _____*

Please give examples:

3. *Your behavioral change to become a more effective in the "soft-skill" areas of your job (e.g., managerial, leadership, teamwork, communication, etc.):* __

Please give examples:

4. *How much of what you have gained during coaching has been useful in any aspects of your work?* _____

Please give examples:

In what ways was your coach effective in helping you achieve positive outcomes from the engagement? In other words, what did your coach actually do that you experienced as helpful, both during meetings with you and between or outside of coaching meetings?

What changes or adjustments in the coach's methods or behavior would have made this a stronger or more useful experience for you?

What changes or adjustments in the overall coaching process (e.g., flow of meetings, data collection, feedback, sponsor meetings, etc.) would have made this a stronger or more useful experience for you?

On a scale of 1 (poor) – 5 (outstanding), how would you rate the overall coaching experience? ____

Feel free to add specific comments:

Please provide any other comments about the coaching process, the coach, or your experience and results:

Thank You

SAMPLE Form

Evaluation of Coaching Engagement: Sponsors

Your name _____ Your coaching client's name _____

Client's Coach _____ Date _____

Please answer the following questions as they relate to the recent coaching experience that you were part of sponsoring for this client.

Please describe the ways in which the coaching engagement was a productive experience:

For the client:

For you:

On a scale of 1 (very little) – 5 (an outstanding amount), how would you rate the coaching in helping the client improve behavior to become more effective:
Please give examples:

On a scale of 1 (very little) – 5 (an outstanding amount), how much of what the client has gained during coaching has been noticeably useful in any aspects of his/her work and role as a manager or leader? _
Please give examples:

What changes or adjustments in the overall coaching process would have made this a stronger or more useful experience for you as a sponsor of the engagement?

To the extent that you had some exposure to the coach, how would you describe the coach's strengths?

What changes or adjustments in the coach's methods or behavior would have made this a stronger or more useful experience for you as a sponsor of the engagement?

On a scale of 1 (very little) – 5 (an outstanding amount), how would you rate the overall coaching experience? _

Please explain:

Please provide any other comments about the coaching process, the coach, or the results:

Thank You

Coaching Senior Leaders

As coaches we often find that our clients are dealing with *leadership* issues in one way or another. For some coaches this may be the largest part of their practice. Yet leadership can be a very difficult topic to get our arms around and to discuss with clients.

Libraries and journals are full of information and opinions on leadership, but there are few *answers* that experts agree on. It falls to each of us to come to our own understanding of this concept, informed by the literature, and to use it as we see appropriate in our coaching.

This handout has a selection of concepts, distinctions, tips and perspectives that should be helpful in stimulating your thinking on this topic. Feel free to agree or disagree and add your favorite viewpoints.

The Image of Leadership

Leadership is almost universally seen as a good thing – as a valued contribution to teams, organizations and society. Yet it is often the case that people don't trust their leaders, don't think they're doing good jobs, or resent being led by them. This ambivalence about the image of leaders is widespread. Leadership can be seen as a personality trait, or as a combination of traits. This is useful for selection purposes but doesn't help much when trying to coach someone. It is more productive for coaches to think of leadership as behaviors rather than as traits.

Leadership can be seen as something only a few people do, or as a widely dispersed activity. In this paper the view is that leadership is exercised by people at all levels of an organization, in various ways, and is not limited to those at the top of the pyramid or to those with direct reports.

Leadership may be considered as overlapping with *managing*, or it may be seen as quite a separate set of activities. It may be useful to think of managing as the logical half of being a leader but that mostly leadership is more personal, as a *use of self* skill by the manager, or even as emotional intelligence. It is important for each coach to sort out these possibilities in his/her own mind. Each client, of course, also has his/her own views on leadership, which can be elicited by the coach at many points in discussions.

*Exercise: When I was with a really good leader, how did he/she behave?
What made me and others feel we were in the presence of a good leader?*

Leadership Behaviors Usually Include:

- Setting the organizational direction based on vision of the future
- Creating alignment among the organization's parts
- Fostering commitment and engagement of employees

Other Typical Behaviors Are:

- Managing change
- Defining group boundaries
- Gathering resources
- Controlling conflict
- Setting norms and decision rules
- Helping the organization adapt to challenges
- Making sense of external reality

Some Of The Challenges Of Leadership Roles

1. People may find themselves in leadership roles without ever having decided to take on such work. They may not have known what it would be like. They may not enjoy the tradeoffs of this life, and may not know how to rewind the movie! It may be important to spend time with the executive to explore his/her actual acceptance, or even passion, for this role and its costs/benefits.
2. Leaders have to see themselves as very good at their jobs. Low self-esteem is a fatal flaw for leaders. On the other hand, excessive confidence, or narcissism, causes problems as well. Some people feel that really good leaders have found a way to combine a strong will with genuine humility – not an easy thing to do [Collins].
3. Organizations are political institutions – power and influence are the currencies that get things done. There will be winners and losers as leaders make deals and as people choose whom to trust and follow. Leaders must be comfortable being subject to and using power dynamics with others in the organization.
4. Leaders are visible, and are watched constantly by the organizational members. Small things can be viewed as very important – e.g., who does the leader say “Hello” to in the morning, who is included in meetings and memos, and so on. Leaders live in fishbowls, and this can be a tiresome way to spend one’s working life, yet leaders must be sensitive to those perceptions and try to minimize, or at least stay

tuned into, how others are reading them.

5. Leaders disturb people and organizations. They raise difficult questions, surface conflicts, impose standards, give critical feedback, undertake unpopular initiatives, and so on. They have to allocate limited resources to many parts of the organization. For practically everything they do, someone will be unhappy. Still, they can be popular if others realize and respect why difficult choices are being made. Communication, influence, and building consensus are essential if the tough choices that leaders advocate are to gain real support.
6. It is inevitable that leaders become somewhat marginalized by their followers; distancing is predictable. This is a counterpoint to the desire to be close to leaders, to emulate them, and to curry their favor.
7. Leaders have to make decisions on the basis of incomplete and sometimes insufficient information, in limited time. This is not a fun thing to do and can be quite stressful, especially if the leader prefers to be more analytical
8. Leaders have to make some decisions on the basis of values and ethics rather than information. This can be even less fun because it challenges previous ways of operating and may be quite costly in the short term.
9. Leaders are more likely than others to lose their jobs: they are high exposure roles. At the most senior levels, tenure may be only a few years.
10. Leaders can spend an enormous amount of time and energy doing "symbolic" tasks, and over-communicating to their employees. These are often necessary but can be repetitive or even boring chores.
11. Leaders have to find the simple explanation that doesn't overly simplify the reality of the challenge. Complexity confuses many employees.
12. Leaders can be tempted by the sins of status, popularity,

certainty, harmony and invulnerability [Lencioni]. Yet each of these is needed, within limits.

13. Leaders frequently are challenged by the need to be proactive – to take the initiative in threatening, complex situations. Staying alive during these times is hard to do [Heifetz].

Tips for Coaching Senior Leaders

Senior leaders generally don't get to their positions because they are good at being reflective or conceptual. Whatever it is that did get them to their current role is probably not a set of behaviors they're eager to give up. Thus, coaches trying to build credibility with senior-level managers may not be successful if they lean too heavily or too quickly on introspection, abstraction or pressure to re-examine habits. These can come in time, with a bit of patience.

Initially it may be best to focus directly on the goals the client states. Reshaping the felt need into a more manageable goal may take a few sessions. Expect some "testing" of your credibility as a coach. This process is always part of the start of an assignment, but can be more severe, subtle and abrupt at the senior level. So, do your homework about the client's organization and background, and do your homework on the general topic of leadership.

As for the other use of the word *testing*, the use of psychometrics at the senior level is generally less frequent. The norms are less meaningful, and clients are less eager.

Senior leaders are likely to treat all consultants, including coaches, as "staff". They often don't take notes or do homework. They expect you to be flexible about scheduling. They'll change the contract fairly easily. The good news at senior levels is that there are very few reasons to give "advice" and this makes coaching easier. When you are clear about your views they will usually appreciate you holding firm or pushing back on them. And they often really appreciate a "journey partner" because of the loneliness of their executive role; in fact, the senior client may just want a sounding board.

A final point: C-suite executives may or may not want their HR Directors involved in the coaching. Ask about this relationship and contract with the leader about how to manage it.

Mindfulness, Intentionality and Coaching

If we agree that coaching is a “whole person experience” and effective coaching requires the coach to offer each client his or her full focus and attention, then including Mindfulness and Intentionality can help us expand our practice by increasing our awareness of ourselves, our thinking, feelings, speech and actions and when in relationship with ourselves and our clients.

Benefits of Using Mindfulness and Intentionality in Coaching

1. Reduces anxiety, worry, self-judgment and stress
2. Helps create greater presence to yourself and what you are experiencing
3. Increases capacity to ignore distracting thoughts, urges and feelings
4. Increases ability to focus on the present moment and slow things down
5. Creates stillness and space for clearer thinking
6. Reduces self-judgment and judging others
7. Allows for greater awareness and space for “Use of Self”
8. Increases non-judgment of yourself and your client
9. Increases ability to notice thoughts and not believe them
10. Increases curiosity empathy and compassion

Mindfulness: The dispassionate observation of one’s own mind, speech, thoughts and actions. Mindfulness improves focus and helps us manage our emotions. (It is distilled from Buddhist teachings and posits that things always change, that it is the mind that makes things so, not the things themselves.) You cannot practice mindfulness for another, only for yourself.

Mindfulness includes: Awareness, Attention, Time, Acceptance, Accepting that all things rise and fall/change. No judgments, not evaluations, no comparing. No big investment in your “story” or your client’s. When a coach learns how to notice and resist urges, better choices and more thoughtful decisions can be made.

Noticing things, thoughts, sensations, feelings and patterns is like polishing wood. You suddenly see the grain but only because you applied effort, not because you designed the grain. Author unknown

Four Key Elements Of Mindfulness:

1. Awareness is the mind's ability to constantly monitor and recognize internal and external systems and stimuli.
2. Attention is the mind's ability to focus the awareness to a specific phenomenon and so increasing the sensitivity to it.
3. Time is this moment, now; the only place where we exist, experience and act.
4. Acceptance is the stance taken when we let thoughts move, let go and we are non-judgmental.

Some Common Terms

Meditation: Learning how to create stillness and increasing your awareness of your mind and its contents. It is a way of learning how to discover what you are thinking and sensing so you can make conscious intentional choices, versus reacting to thoughts or being mindlessly yanked around by the voices in your head.

Mediator: One who can watch thoughts whereas a non-mediator believes their thoughts.

Intentionality: Sets the direction of interaction (purpose) and is used as a compass to calibrate and recalibrate direction and dynamics of coaching. A coach needs to stay aware and be able to answer "What is my intention" at each point along the arc of the coaching engagement. Let your intentionality be the guide or your compass throughout coaching engagements.

Purpose of Mindfulness and Intentionality

Mindfulness is what you are aware of and Intentionality is the direction you mindfully choose to take.

Most people live, whether physically, intellectually or morally in a very restricted circle of their potential being. They 'make use' of a very small part of their possible consciousness, of their soul's recourses in general, like a man who, out of this whole bodily organism should get into the habit of using and moving only his little finger...William James, philosopher, psychologist and physician born in 1842:

Neuroscience research has shown that with short daily doses of meditation one can not only have improved health benefits (i.e. lower stress, cholesterol, blood pressure, aches, choices.) but that the brain's ability to change itself occurs. One

can grow new grey matter (Glia cells) in the areas of compassion and self-awareness and shrink the areas of stress.

Coaching Application

Coaches can help clients have the chance to examine what they are doing, thinking, saying or not doing, thinking or saying in light of their intentions.

Mindfulness is useful to create a sense of stillness, presence, ease, focus, attention of how our minds work and it often builds empathy for ourselves and our clients. It is a process that requires practice and daily practice is highly recommended. There are many ways to be "mindful" both in sitting and in daily activities. When we keep our awareness of the process and workings of our own minds, we reduce the tendencies to be mindlessly flooded, confused, overwhelmed or stressed. We can resist the urge to buy into our thoughts plus we use our intentionality front and center throughout the engagement, from first learning about the coaching assignment through to completion: before, during and after.

One could say that mindfulness is becoming aware of awareness. It helps us pay attention to what we are paying attention to. Mindfulness of breath is good skill and practice for learning how your mind works. If we are caught up in thoughts, we are not mindful. If we become aware of our thoughts, we are mindful.

Some Resources

*****nyimc.org/ (New York Insight Meditation Center)*****hbr.org/2016/01/how-mindfulness-improves-executive-coaching (How Mindfulness Improves Executive Coaching)
*****jonathanpassmore.com/resources/The%20role%20of%20mindfulness%20in%20coaching%202007.pdf (Passmore, J., & Marianetti, O. (2013). The role of mindfulness in coaching. The Coaching Psychologist. 3(3), 131-138.)

*****forbes.com/sites/jeannemeister/2015/04/27/future-of-work-mindfulness-as-a-leadership-practice/#2e14cdb5a41b (Future of Work: Mindfulness as A Leadership Practice)
*****davidgelles.com/mindfulwork/ (Mindful Work – David Gelles)
*****umassmed.edu/cfm/index.aspx (University of Mass Center for Mindfulness founded 1995 John Kabat Zinn, Ph.D.)

Mindfulness in Plain English: 20th Anniversary Edition (Henepola Gunaratana Sept 2011)

Mindfulness for Beginners (Kabat-Zinn, Jan 2012)

Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Awakening (Goldstein, Joseph Nov 2013)

Business Context & Trends in Executive Coaching

Considerations for the Business of Executive Coaching

Executive Coaching is increasingly seen as a tool of leadership development and increasingly integrated with overall organizational professional development efforts. For those newer to providing coaching it is helpful to be aware of trends that have been part of the growth of executive coaching and for coaches to have knowledge of and appreciation for the context and shifting context in which they practice.

- "" Increase in sophistication of the buyer of coaching; less selling the concept; more competitive/comparison shopping on the part of the organization
- "" Higher expectations for accountable coaching results and, in some cases, measurable changes in individual client's behavior and impact
- "" More monitoring by centralized "coaching coordinators" within both large and smaller organizations to assure meeting of standards for both internal and external coaches
- "" Companies seeking RFP's (Request for Proposals) from coaching provider firms; at times looking for simultaneous global capability
- "" Some large companies line up and vet a pool of coaches without specific designated engagements
- "" Primary focus on "HiPo" (High Potentials) and other positive or development coaching; fewer requests for clear "fix it" initiatives
- "" Increase of small and large firms that sub-contract coaching services including firms that also offer outplacement, other career services and training and development firms
- "" Growth of internal coaching. Human Resources, Organizational Development and Learning and Development/Training professionals are often considered for taking on internal coaching roles in addition to their current functions
- "" Increase of individual and group supervision provided to external and internal coaches; greater appreciation that coach learning is ongoing

- "" Increase use of coaching at smaller, start up and mid-sized firms using both internal and external coaches
- "" Increase of internal coach training efforts
- "" Coaching clients are not only senior leaders, but are at more levels within organizations; middle level managers, even supervisory levels are coaching clients
- "" A wider variety of coaching programs are being offered including shorter programs, programs tied to training with 360° follow-up and programs aimed at specific competencies
- "" There is some unbundling of coaching services or phases: e.g. feedback facilitation sessions with or without development planning with a specific amount of follow up, if any
- "" Growth of coaching exclusively provided by phone and teleconferencing
- "" Increase in global coaching and coaching of global leaders
- "" Growth of team coaching projects
- "" Applications in coaching for diversity, multi-cultural coaching
- "" Increased price pressure for engagements and (particularly large) companies determining their own ranges of payment and length of engagements
- "" Growth of coach training opportunities:
 - Coach the coach groups/peer learning groups
 - University courses (undergrad and graduate level)
 - Online coach learning programs/tools
 - Ongoing learning/supervision groups in and outside of organizations
 - Coaching certification offerings by universities and independent coach training organizations

- "" Mindfulness training
- "" Growth of coach learning publications, associated research and assessment tools

- "" Increase of professionals trained in a range of disciplines moving into coaching roles and practice
- "" Growth of associations (without any legal entities or licenses for executive coaching)

- "" Diffusion of the use of the term Coaching: meaning that the coaching activity is not always clear; business coaching, life coaching, career coaching and executive coaching are not always distinguished from each other

Coaching Caveats¹

Summary of Variables

What should we look for to determine if coaching is the intervention of choice at any particular moment? These summarized variables, while “scalable,” can determine the effectiveness of a coaching engagement.

Organizational Context

1. Equivocal organizational commitment (go/no-go toggle)

Equivocal organizational commitment is indicated by sponsors who express uncertainty about the value, or likely success, of investing in the client's development.

2. Organization upheaval (scalable)

Organizational structure can be in significant flux for many reasons, such as merger, acquisition, downsizing, outsourcing, or hiring a new CEO.

3. Sponsor-client relationship (scalable)

All experienced coaches understand that a key influence on a client's behavior, for better or for worse, is the client's boss. Also in the coaching "sponsor" role is the line HR professional.

4. Highly political organizational climate (scalable)

Politics exist in every organization. In some organizations, however, politics have an edge that can cut.

5. Coaching as part of a mandated "program" (scalable)

¹ Frisch, M. H. (2005) Coaching Caveats: part I. Human Resource Planning, 28 (2).
and Frisch, M. H. (2005) Coaching Caveats: part II. Human Resource Planning, 28 (3).

When coaching is tied to a broader organizational "program", such as training or a feedback process, the success of the coaching is directly tied to the effectiveness of that larger program

Characteristics of the Client

1. Significant personal or familial problems, upheaval or upset (go/no-go toggle)

While coaching may be viewed as an organization's gift to an individual, it is also involves a significant commitment on the part of the client.

2. Risk tolerance: the willingness to try new approaches and tolerate some discomfort, awkwardness and vulnerability; self-efficacy (scalable).

Coaching is not only an exposed process, it requires that people try new approaches. It definitely assumes a certain level of tolerance of the risk that comes with both experimentation and confidence about outcomes.

3. Emotional resilience: the ability to accept feedback, depersonalize setbacks and stay motivated (scalable).

Emotional resilience focuses on inner reactions to feedback from others. Calming defensiveness and translating feedback into behavioral change is key to the success of coaching.

4. Psychological curiosity and insight (scalable)

You don't have to be a psychologist to be a successful client, but it doesn't hurt to be interested in insights about yourself and others.

5. The classic motivation to change (scalable).

This is the one variable that is routinely evaluated before most coaching assignments. The question is asked, "How motivated is he/she to change?" There may not be a lot of rigor to the answer but it usually focuses on pressure to change, outcomes more or less likely with change, career aspiration, clarity of feedback, etc.

ADVANCED READING: Coach Choice Continua**"The Jim Case"****Polarity # I:****Fostering Client Self-Discovery ----- Providing Insight****Polarity # II:****Focusing on Individual Change ----- Focusing on Client as System Member****Polarity # III:****Using Coach-Generated Data ----- Using External Data****Polarity #IV****Allowing Process to Emerge ----- Following Contracted Process****Polarity #V:****Accepting/Supporting ----- Confronting/Challenging****Polarity #VI:****Helping Clients Learn to Learn ----- Supporting Performance Improvement**

Karen, a professional coach in her own practice, received a call from Martha regarding a new coaching assignment. Martha is one of several professionals in the HR department who coordinate coaching activities at Consumer General, a major player in food, beverage, and household consumer goods. Karen's new coaching client was to be "Jim".

The request for coaching originally came from Jim's boss, and was initiated after the annual performance review. The review had gone reasonably well, but there were some issues that both Jim and his boss agreed Jim should work on. Coaching was suggested because of the complexity of those issues and Jim's rating as a "high potential" for future advancement.

Jim is 35 years old, single, energetic and goal oriented. He had been a District Sales Manager (DSM) for approximately six years before being promoted to his current job as a Director of Marketing at the company's Headquarters. Previous to his DSM job, he was a first-line sales supervisor, motivating and monitoring field sales people. Field operations are very important to the Company because direct contact with retail chains, both big and small, plays a major role in promoting new products, line extensions, and existing brands. The competition is fierce and field sales people fight for special deals for their products, as well as shelf space and other considerations. Jim was great in both the supervisory and DSM roles by keeping people motivated and focused, providing them with support, and generally being a successful leader using an outgoing, friendly, slap-on-the-back kind of style. Born and raised in New York City, Jim had spent most of his life there.

The new job at the company Headquarters required Jim to relocate north, to southern Connecticut where he found himself in an entirely new environment. He had been there for under a year, but was still having trouble fitting into the corporate culture. His loud voice and sometimes, inappropriate jokes got him in trouble on a regular basis. Jim's assertive and direct style was a turn-off for people working in Headquarters who use more diplomatic interactions and a slower, more reasoned, pace in decision-making. Some coworkers described Jim as "walking over people," boisterous, and even abrasive.

Nonetheless, Jim really likes the content of his new job. He is in Marketing, which gives him a larger perspective on the business and puts him in a position to make strategic recommendations for the company's products. Jim is passionate about his work, is learning new analytical tools, and makes progress on his projects. However, the interpersonal stuff is getting in the way and he's on shaky ground with a few coworkers.

During his year at Headquarters, Jim participated in a leadership development program. This was a six-month process involving class sessions, team assignments, and the gathering and use of 360° feedback. Martha made sure that Karen knew that these data were available.

Martha set up the first meeting between Karen and Jim. Karen introduced herself, described her background and asked "What makes you interested in coaching?" Jim described his problems with coworkers. He also expressed some resentment about how Headquarters people seemed to want everyone to be just like them. Yes, he wanted to have greater impact than he was having, but he didn't feel he could change his personality – nor should he have to! His past record of success in sales jobs should be proof enough of his ability, but somehow it wasn't providing him with everything he needed.

Karen expressed confidence that she and Jim could figure out how he could have more impact in his new job. They agreed to meet on several dates over the subsequent weeks. Between those meetings, Karen gathered some additional data about Jim via interviews, and Jim provided her with the results of the leadership development program he had attended, including his 360 report.

Polarity # I:**Fostering Client Self-Discovery ----- Providing Insight**

Fostering Client Self-Discovery: Karen asked Jim to describe the challenges of his current job. He talked about the technical marketing expertise that he was still learning. When she asked about other challenging aspects, he lamented the interpersonal style differences between the field and Headquarters employees. "People are so *nice* here!" he said. Karen also asked him how the feedback from the leadership development program might apply to his job challenges. He reported that he got lots of positive feedback about his willingness to take charge and move groups along. His memory of the negative feedback was less clear, although he remembered being described as "dominating" by some in the group. Karen observed that this job may be the first time that success hadn't come easily to Jim. His usual formula, leveraging his drive and supervisory skills, wasn't as relevant at Headquarters. She asked him to think about two questions: ignoring technical learning, what new skills he needed in this job, and, what were on-the-job situations when those skills are important?

Providing Insight: Karen asked Jim to describe the areas that he needed to improve to have better relationships with his coworkers. He described things he had reined in, such as telling jokes that might offend and letting his enthusiasm get away from him, but he was stumped by what he could do proactively. He felt that he had tried to build relationships with his marketing colleagues but they hadn't responded well. Karen observed that she had seen this pattern with other field sales managers who were promoted to Headquarters. "You guys arrive with a head of steam, but the track is different here." Karen noted that the skills Jim had leveraged very effectively in past jobs were not the same skills needed to succeed in marketing. Furthermore, she shared that she knew his colleagues on the marketing team, including Jim's boss, and the culture among them emphasized analytical rigor rather than decisiveness. They valued the give and take of discussion rather than rapid conclusions. "Don't try to hit the ball out of the park," she advised Jim. "Use your field perspective to expand, but not dominate, the dialogue." Karen offered to provide more specifics about Headquarters' culture as they worked on drafting Jim's action plan.

Consider:

- "" Take note of what the coach actually *says* in each situation. What differences in coach behavior do you notice?
- "" Which polarity choice would you feel more comfortable and confident applying?
- "" In what ways might you learn to apply your less preferred choice?

Polarity # II:**Focusing on Individual Change----- Focusing on Client as System Member**

Focusing on Individual Change: Karen and Jim explored his experiences in his current job. Even though Karen would be getting input from others, she asked Jim what he had already tried to do differently. He reported that he was trying to be "nicer" but he didn't know if this was having a positive effect; mostly he felt inhibited. Karen assured him they would be figuring out more active things he could do to work better with others. She asked him how motivated he felt to try some new approaches. Jim said he was ready to swing into action but that the culture in headquarters was so different than other work situations he had experienced. Karen was confident that they would think of many new angles for him to try. She admitted that the unfamiliarity of the culture was a challenge, but she believed that Jim knew more about it than he realized. She asked Jim to focus on what he could do differently and she would be open to hearing about his discouragement and frustration.

Focusing on Client as System Member: Toward the goal of understanding Jim's world, Karen asked him about his relationship with his boss. He reported that it was fine, but that his boss traveled a lot and had been asked to cover another area on an interim basis. The recent performance appraisal was one of a very few substantive conversations they had had. Jim didn't feel that his boss had provided him with much useful coaching. Looking beyond the boss, Karen asked Jim to think about the system that he was in at Headquarters: What behavior did it value? What did it punish? How was information shared? She observed that in understanding the Headquarters' culture, Jim would be better able to contribute to it. And if Jim was able to persevere, they could strategize on influencing it to provide more robust orientation processes for newly promoted employees. In fact, Jim's coaching could be framed by what he needs to learn to be able to influence the culture. Karen also noted to herself that she needed to get more information from Martha about how Jim's boss might be more available to Jim.

Consider:

- "" Take note of what the coach actually *says* in each situation. What differences in coach behavior do you notice?
- "" Which polarity choice would you feel more comfortable and confident applying?
- "" In what ways might you learn to apply your less preferred choice.

Polarity # III:**Using Coach-Generated Data-----Using External Data**

Using Coach-Generated Data: During a subsequent meeting, Karen summarized some of the feedback themes she had heard from her interviews. But Jim appeared restless. She tried to turn the feedback into a dialogue but she couldn't seem to tap into Jim's interest. She stopped and after a pause, asked him what he was thinking about. Jim said that all this data was fine but what he really wanted to know was what he should do differently. He thought that coaching was going to tell him that. Karen reflected that his frustration was evident. She paused again and said that what was playing out between them illustrated exactly what the issues were for Jim at Headquarters. He hadn't gotten what he wanted from the interaction, which was a quick answer, so he became restless. Karen said, "Now I have a window into what your peers must be feeling." Jim was quiet. "I guess I need to work harder at this," he said. Karen agreed and added, "The work that you and I can do on this issue of what you do with your frustration will help with your colleagues as well."

Using External Data: Karen had spoken with Jim's boss, Martha, and several of Jim's peers. She also had reviewed the results of his 360. The strengths were clear: technical and sales management skills, optimism, energy, resourcefulness, goal oriented, outgoing, assertive and direct. The development areas were less clear but people described Jim as dominating conversations, being loud, and jumping to conclusions. During their feedback session, Karen laid out those themes and asked Jim what he thought. He had heard the strengths many times before but he felt the development areas reflected the headquarters culture more than his nature; he was a "people person" in all the other jobs he had had! Karen offered that these weren't comments about his personality but instead reflected what was getting in the way for others. As a means to help Jim understand what was needed, Karen suggested that he interview a peer whom she hadn't spoke with about what Jim should do to foster a productive relationship.

Consider:

- "" Take note of what the coach actually *says* in each situation. What differences in coach behavior do you notice?
- "" Which polarity choice would you feel more comfortable and confident applying?
- "" In what ways might you learn to apply your less preferred choice?

Polarity #IV**Allowing Process to Emerge ----- Following Contracted Process**

Allowing Process to Emerge: Although they were well into the coaching and were working on a development plan, based on a comment of Jim's, Karen became interested in his early leadership experiences. It turned out that during high school and college, he had been captain of intramural softball teams and had led them to winning seasons. Jim was clearly proud of those times and energized by competition. While sales people are often competitive by nature, Karen hadn't considered how that element of Jim's personality was playing out at Headquarters, where individual achievement was harder to discern. This was not a topic mentioned by Martha or others interviewed. Karen wondered aloud how others were experiencing his competitiveness. Jim suggested that she could observe him interacting with others during one of the frequent presentations he made on product marketing plans. Karen liked this idea because she would get to see Jim in a situation where "winning" would mean reaching a consensus rather than prevailing over others. They looked at calendars in order to make this happen, even though it would require shifting things around in her schedule and in the coaching contract.

Following Contracted Process: Karen and Jim had been through the data-gathering and feedback steps in their coaching and were about to start drafting Jim's development plan. As contracted at the beginning of the coaching process, the development plan would be the main topic at a 4-way meeting with Jim's boss and Martha, which had already been scheduled. Karen asked Jim to set aside 2 hours for their next meeting so they could brainstorm on-the-job action ideas for the two main development themes that had emerged from their feedback discussion. They had discussed some of those ideas but Karen felt an exhaustive discussion would yield important new ideas. They could then incorporate those into the draft development plan before the four-way meeting. Jim had hoped they would have time for Karen to coach him on a presentation he was preparing for, but that would have to wait until after the 4-way meeting.

Consider

- "" Take note of what the coach actually *says* in each situation. What differences in coach behavior do you notice?
- "" Which polarity choice would you feel more comfortable and confident applying?
- "" In what ways might you learn to apply your less preferred choice?

Polarity #V:**Accepting/Supporting ----- Confronting/Challenging**

Accepting/Supporting: Karen asked Jim how he was feeling about coaching. He laughed nervously and said, "Well, I guess I'm enjoying it." Karen said it was OK if he had ambiguous feelings about coaching. "It's only natural to feel uncomfortable about negative feedback, even though it is helpful." She encouraged him to be open with her about his frustration; she would accept whatever he was feeling about the process. She also pointed out that clients sometimes feel inhibited to discuss setbacks and backsliding, but that these too were natural parts of the change process. "It's never a straight line and I hope you will continue to feel comfortable telling me about what goes well *and* what doesn't." Even as she was feeling very optimistic about Jim's development, she wanted him to feel her support and be open about whatever his experience was as he struggled with his newly emerging relationships.

Confronting/Challenging: Karen and Jim had drafted a development plan. It challenged him to be more sensitive to his impact on others and to find ways of collaborating with them. However, it didn't appear to Karen that Jim was doing enough to apply the new behaviors that were in the plan. In recent weeks, there always seemed to be extenuating circumstances or distractions that interfered. Karen voiced her concerns, saying "Jim, having the plan is only half the battle. You can't expect others to see you differently just because you have some insight. You need to avoid the old behaviors and really start applying the new ones, *especially* when work is pressing on you." Jim was quiet. Karen suggested that they do some contracting about monitoring what Jim was actually doing in opportunity situations they had previously identified.

Consider:

- "" Take note of what the coach actually *says* in each situation. What differences in coach behavior do you notice?
- "" Which polarity choice would you feel more comfortable and confident applying?
- "" In what ways might you learn to apply your less preferred choice?

Polarity #VI:**Helping Clients Learn to Learn ----- Supporting Performance Improvement**

Helping Clients learn to learn: Karen and Jim had established a development plan that focused on modulating his interpersonal style to better fit the headquarters situation and actively building a network of colleagues at work, with behavioral action ideas to further these goals. They had also received strong support for this plan from Jim's boss and Martha. Jim was making positive changes, his resentment of headquarters' culture had eased, and he wasn't feeling like he needed a "personality transplant." Still, Karen wondered how he would deal with challenges in the future. During a coaching session, she told him she wanted to shift the subject back to when they started. Without any hint of criticism, she asked him why he had been unable to make these changes before coaching started. He took the question seriously and after some moments of thought, told her he hadn't known what to do to make things better. Karen asked him what the coaching had taught him about what to do in future situations in which he felt stuck. She wanted him not only to improve his current situation but to also be better able to self-correct in the future.

Supporting Performance Improvement: Karen and Jim had established a rhythm for their sessions: Jim would do a "check in" about any new issues, then he would discuss the behavioral changes he was trying out, look at opportunities coming up in the next few weeks, and finally set some short term action goals for the time before the next session. These efforts were guided by the development plan that they had written together and shared with his boss and HR. The goals on that plan emphasized "low hanging fruit" that Jim could readily implement. Karen made sure to check on progress with Jim's boss and Martha and she used this information to help Jim make course adjustments. Jim had also contracted to reach out to his colleagues to get their feedback while it was fresh. Perceptions of Jim were beginning to shift: he was viewed as more accessible and easier to work. This structured process with short-term feedback was very motivating for Jim, in keeping with his results oriented profile.

Consider:

- "" Take note of what the coach actually *says* in each situation. What differences in coaching behavior do you notice?
- "" Which polarity choice would you feel more comfortable applying?
- "" In what ways might you learn to apply your less preferred choice?

