

# HOW TO EXCEL AT THE ART OF COACHING

A guide for implementing  
coaching into your  
daily work



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# WHY COACH?

Coaching is an interpersonal process that stimulates and equips a person to perform at a higher level while accelerating their development. Coaching has been shown to have an enormous impact on individuals and organizations such as boosting engagement, elevating performance, and strengthening company culture.

Coaching is not the exclusive domain of senior leaders and external professional coaches. Leaders at all levels should be focused on developing the skills and approaches to accelerate the growth and development of others.

## **When leaders are equipped to coach, they are capable of:**

- Asking questions that pierce through closely-held assumptions and mental models
- Constructively confronting unhelpful behaviors, practices, and attitudes
- Affirming strengths, talents, and abilities
- Sharing fresh perspectives, no matter how radical



# THE DIMENSIONS OF GREAT COACHING

Great coaching can be attributed to four key dimensions: character, connection, conversation, and culture. Leaders need to develop and continually strengthen each of these dimensions to master the art of coaching.

## CHARACTER

Leaders can earn the right to coach through the quality of their character and being deeply committed to the success of the people they lead.

## CONNECTION

The transformational process of coaching occurs when a unique peer-to-peer connection is built on mutual trust.

### COACHING DIMENSIONS

## CONVERSATION

A coaching conversation challenges assumptions, surfaces obstructions, explores possibilities, and charts exciting new pathways forward.

## CULTURE

A coaching culture is evident when learning is greatly valued, well-intentioned feedback flows freely, and team members challenge each other.



# CHARACTER

## ***Have you earned the right to coach?***

Character is the most essential dimension of coaching. Put most simply, character is about you—who you are as a human being and the qualities you possess that convince others to trust you. It's not just your personality, but the deeper qualities such as integrity, healthy self-esteem, and noble intention. The quality of your character is what earns you the right to coach others.

### **How to start earning the right to coach:**

- Be honest and straightforward
- Seek feedback
- Act consistently with your stated values
- Act with humility
- Accept responsibility for your mistakes
- Help others excel
- Sacrifice your interests for the success of others
- Demonstrate that you care deeply for others
- Treat others with dignity and respect





## CONNECTION

### ***Do you establish the kind of relationships necessary for coaching?***

All coaching requires the creation of a special relationship in which the talent being coached welcomes feedback, accepts personal responsibility, challenges long-held assumptions, explores radically different options, and creates a new pathway forward.

#### **How to set the foundation for strong coaching relationships:**

**Appreciation**—Appreciation focuses on the potential of others rather than their shortcomings. To change, people need to feel that they have potential and are capable of lifting their game.

**Confrontation**—Constructive confrontation is critical for learning and development. Great coaches spend much of their time confronting others with their potential and then challenging them to live up to this potential.

**Accountability**—Coaching can only occur in an environment of radical personal accountability, meaning people take full responsibility for their own emotions, actions, decisions, and careers.

# CONVERSATION

***Are you willing to engage in intensely honest conversations that stimulate profound learning, development, and change?***

The process of coaching involves much more than just talking with others about their goals and dreams. Coaching conversations can be risky and often takes both the coach and the talent out of their comfort zones. These conversations uncover new ideas and generate innovative solutions resulting in entirely new attitudes and behaviors.

## **Questions to ask during a coaching conversation:**

- What specific outcomes are you expecting?
- What is the most potent first step?
- What sacrifices are you prepared to make?
- What promises will you make to yourself and others?
- How will you ensure the changes are enduring?





# CULTURE

***Has your organization established a culture where coaching is seen as everyone's business?***

A coaching culture is evident when people throughout the organization integrate coaching approaches into everyday conversations—with anyone, at any time. These conversations are used as the vehicle to increase performance, deepen learning, and accelerate development.

Senior leaders play a pivotal role in creating an environment where a coaching mindset thrives. They are responsible for setting this standard and being the model for how others should act.

**There are three essential steps to creating a coaching culture:**

**1. Model coaching**—senior leader as coach

The first step is for senior leaders to model great coaching and what they expect out of others. They need to be recognized as an authentic, competent leader who is deeply committed to the success of others.

**2. Expecting coaching**—all leaders are coaching

The second step is to expect coaching throughout your organization by holding all other organization leaders, particularly your direct reports, accountable to coach their team members.

**3. Expand coaching**—coaching is everyone's business

The third step is to expand coaching throughout the organization by encouraging every organization member to invite another to be their coach.

# HOW TO BUILD LONG TERM COACHING RELATIONSHIPS

1. Have great expectations for the person being coached. Never let them sell themselves short or pursue anything but their very best path forward.
2. Accept nothing less than their very best efforts during the coaching process.
3. Help them broaden their worldview by constantly challenging their thinking and sharing alternate perspectives.
4. Coach their values, beliefs, and aspirations, encouraging them to set their standards of performance.
5. Help them discover or rediscover the parts of themselves that are unique and treasured.
6. Always treat them with dignity and respect, especially when they are not at their best.
7. Recognize and celebrate every breakthrough and victory, no matter how small.
8. Always work at their most fertile growing edge.
9. Be generous with kindness and empathy when they struggle with the emotions, self-doubt, and uncertainty of learning and development.
10. Give them tough feedback that others will not.



# ARE YOU EXCELLING AT THE ART OF COACHING?

*Use this self-assessment to identify your strengths and development opportunities.*

**My Strength**

**A Development  
Opportunity**

1. I treat others with dignity and respect.
2. I readily get and stay present with others.
3. I acknowledge and affirm others.
4. I am generous with well-intentioned feedback.
5. I constructively confront others.
6. I promote breakthrough thinking.
7. I hold others accountable for their performance.
8. I listen deeply to others.
9. I engage in difficult conversations most others avoid.
10. I see the best in others.
11. I follow through on commitments.
12. I sacrifice my own interests for those of others.
13. I facilitate action planning.
14. I expect high performance from others.
15. I put myself in the shoes of others.



## ABOUT BLUEPOINT

### ***Your Partners in Leadership Development***

For over 25 years, Bluepoint has worked with organizations of all shapes and sizes, at all levels, to build better leaders—leaders who will have an impact today and build a talent pipeline for tomorrow. We provide complete development solutions including custom design, assessments, experiential in-person workshops, executive and application coaching, live virtual workshops, peer coaching circles, micro eLearning, self-directed learning, and a full range of support tools and resources.

We know coaching is a craft that can be developed. Whether you wish to hire a coach, need a coaching training program, want to develop a coaching culture throughout your organization, or simply need a few helpful tools and resources, we can help.

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