

## Visible Coaching Skills

### Accountability

Accountability is having your clients account for what they said they were going to do. It stems from three questions:

1. What are you going to do?
2. By when will you do this?
3. How will I know?

Accountability does not include blame or judgment. Rather, the coach holds the client accountable to the client's vision or commitment and asks the client to account for the results of the intended action. If need be, holding the client accountable includes defining new actions to be taken.

### Acknowledgment

Acknowledgment addresses the Self and who the client had to be in order to accomplish whatever action he or she took or awareness he or she achieved. It is the articulation of your deep knowing of the other.

- > "I acknowledge the courage it took for you to show up for this session, knowing that you had difficult things to share with me today."

### Articulate What's Going On

This skill involves telling the client what you see them doing; it may be what you're hearing with your Level 2 Listening, or you may speak what has not been said by the client based on your Level 3 Listening and awareness. Sometimes, it is powerful to simply repeat the client's words back to the client so they can really hear themselves.

- > "Debbie, I know how much you want to change your relationship with your dad, yet I hear you are interacting with him the way you always have."
- > "You're annoyed that your manager didn't consider your workload when she assigned you to this new project."
- > "We're really stuck here in this coaching session."

### Asking Permission

This skill enables the client to grant the coaching relationship access to unusually intimate or sometimes impolite areas of focus. For example, "May I tell you a hard truth?" "Is it all right to coach you on this issue?" "May I tell you what I see?"

### Bottom-lining

This is the skill of brevity and succinctness on the part of both the coach and the client. Bottom-lining is also about having the client get to the essence of his or her communication rather than engaging in long descriptive stories.

## Challenge

Challenging involves requesting that a client stretch way beyond his or her self-imposed limits, AND SHAKES UP THE WAY THEY SEE THEMSELVES. Frequently, in the face of a challenge, clients will respond with a counter-offer that is greater than they initially would have allowed themselves to make otherwise.

A client WANTS a high level position that has just been posted in another department. He thinks he will be ready for it in about a year. You challenge him: "I challenge you to apply for this position now." The client counteroffers with "I will meet with my manager and ask her to recommend me to the department head."

Like a request, a challenge includes a specified action, conditions of satisfaction and a date or time by which it will be done. There are three possible responses to a challenge:

1. Yes,
2. No,
3. A counter-offer.

## Championing

When you champion clients, you stand up for them when they doubt or question their abilities. Despite the client's self-doubt, the coach knows clearly who the client is and that he or she is capable of much more than the client thinks. CHAMPIONING IS OFTEN FUTURE FOCUSED. When the client is in the valley, the coach is on the next hill, waving a flag and saying, "Come on. You can make it."

## Dance in the Moment

Dancing in the moment means being completely present with your client, holding your client's agenda, accessing your intuition, letting your client lead you. When you dance in the moment you are open to whatever steps your client takes and are willing to go in the client's direction and flow.

## Enrollment

Enrollment is both a life skill and a coaching skill. Authentically engaging with people and generating excitement, enthusiasm and aliveness is part of communicating effectively whether you are talking to your children, a client, an employee or your manager. Coaches enroll their clients into the possibilities of the client's biggest, most magnificent self, and also into different aspects of coaching.

For example, throughout the life of the coaching relationship, the coach may enroll the client into trying on different perspectives, going up or down the tube, accepting a challenge, and/or choosing to set the Saboteur aside. All of these are areas where enrolling the client to participate fully will empower the coaching.

## Hold the Client's Agenda

Holding the client's agenda is both a philosophical stance and a cornerstone of the Co-active® Coaching model. When a coach holds the client's agenda, the coach lets go of their own opinions, judgments and answers in support of facilitating the client's Fulfillment, Balance and Process. The coach follows the client's lead without knowing the RIGHT answer, without giving solutions or telling the client what to do. Holding the client's agenda requires the coach to put their whole attention on the client and the client's agenda, not the coach's agenda for the client.

## Holding the Focus

Once the client has determined a direction or course of action, the coach's job is to keep the client on track and true to that course. Frequently, clients become distracted by events in their lives, strong feelings elicited by the Saboteur, or the wealth of other possibilities available. The coach consistently reminds the client of his or her focus and helps redirect his or her energy back to the client's desired outcomes and life choices.

## Inquiry

When a powerful question is given as homework to the client, it is intended to deepen the client's learning and provoke further reflection. The intention is for the client to consider the inquiry between sessions or over a longer period of time, and to see what occurs for them. The inquiry is usually based upon a particular situation that the client is currently addressing. An inquiry has multiple answers, no one or two of which are "right."

- > "What are you tolerating?"
- > "What is it to be undaunted?"
- > "What is challenge?"

## Intrude

On occasion, the coach may need to intrude, to interrupt or wake up a client who is going on and on, or who is kidding himself or herself. When you intrude, it is for the sake of the client's agenda, often pointing the client in a specific direction, "Stop a moment. What's at the heart of this?" Intrusion is considered rude in some cultures. The Coaches Training Institute views intrusion as being direct with the client, allowing the client to honestly assess and immediately deal with situations. Sometimes the intrusion is a hard truth such as "You are kidding yourself." Sometimes the intrusion is simply stating what is going on, such as "You are skirting the issue."

## Intuition (Blurring)

Intuiting is the process of accessing and trusting one's inner knowing. Intuition is direct knowing, unencumbered by our thinking mind. The process of intuiting is non-linear and non-rational. Sometimes, the information received through intuiting does not make rational sense to the coach. However, this information is usually quite valuable to the client. Intuiting involves taking risks and trusting your gut. The coach remains unattached to the accuracy of their intuition.

- > "I have a hunch that..."
- > "I wonder if..."

## Metaphor

Metaphors are used to illustrate a point and paint a verbal picture for the client.

- > "Your mind is like a ping pong ball bouncing between one choice and another."
- > "You're almost at the finish line. Go for it! You can win the race!"

## Meta-view

Meta-view is the big picture or perspective. The coach pulls back (or asks the client to pull back) from the client's immediate issues and from the clarity of that expanded perspective reflects back to the client what they see.

- > "If your life were like a road, and we were to take a helicopter ride up above it, what would we see?"

## Powerful Questions

A powerful question evokes clarity, action, discovery, insight or commitment. It creates greater possibility, new learning or clearer vision. Powerful questions are open-ended questions that do not elicit a yes or no response. Powerful questions are derived from holding the client's agenda and either forward the client's action or deepen their learning.

- > "What do you want?"
- > "What's next?"
- > "How will you start?"
- > "What does that cost you?"
- > "What's important for you to remember?"

## Reframing

Reframing involves providing a client with another perspective. When a coach reframes a situation, he or she takes the original data and interprets them in a different way. For example, a client has just been informed that she was selected as second choice for a high-powered position in a very competitive market. She is disappointed and is questioning her professional competence. A reframe of the situation is: To be selected as second choice in such a competitive market indicates the high quality of your expertise and experience.

## Request

One of the most potent coaching skills is that of making a request of the client. The request, based upon the client's agenda, is designed to forward the client's action. The request includes a specified action, conditions of satisfaction and a date or time by which it will be done. There are three possible responses to a request:

1. Yes,
2. No,
3. A counter-offer.

## Take Charge

The coach chooses and directs the path of the coaching in service of the client's agenda. Sometimes clients lose their way in their circumstances, and forget what matters most to them. That's when the coach needs to take charge and direct the coaching back to what is most meaningful to the client.

## Recommended Reading

- > *Anatomy of Peace*, Arbinger Institute
- > *Co-active™ Coaching*, Whitworth, Karen & Henry Kimsey-House, Sandahl
- > *Drive*, Daniel Pink
- > *Fierce Conversation*, Susan Scott
- > *The Four Agreements*, Don Miguel Ruiz
- > *Leadership & Self-Deception*, Arbinger Institute
- > *Once Upon a Cow*, Camilo Cruz
- > *Play*, Dr Stuart Brown
- > *Start With Why*, Simon Sinek
- > *Tribes*, Seth Godin
- > *A Whole New Mind*, Daniel Pink

## Reference Resources - Partial List

Coaches Training Institute, Co-active™ Coaching - [thecoaches.com](http://thecoaches.com)  
 Center for Right Relationship, Organizational & Relationship Systems Coaching - [crrglobal.com](http://crrglobal.com)  
 Sue Walden, ImprovWorks - [improvworks.com](http://improvworks.com)  
 Points of You™ The Coaching Game - [points-of-you.us](http://points-of-you.us) or [thecoachinggame.com](http://thecoachinggame.com)