

# TOP 10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COACHING



Based on a combination of study and personal experience of both internal and external executive coaching, here are some tips (in priority order) for being a great coach:

## 1. Selflessness

A coaching conversation is not about you, your experiences, your thoughts or your agenda. It is about the other person. Effective coaching demands that you believe in the resourcefulness of the other person; that you may not have the best (or any) answers and that you may be wrong – “think it possible that you may be mistaken!”.

## 2. Change Orientation

Coaching is about change and action – otherwise it is just a chat!

## 3. Trust

For people to draw down on their resourcefulness they need to feel safe, to be free from any sense of foolishness and be within a confidential environment.

## 4. Equality

Whatever status or hierarchy may exist outside the coaching conversation, the conversation itself is between equals.

## 5. Contracting/Expectations

Under what terms is the conversation taking place? These need to be explicit and NOT implicit.

## 6. Time and Place

Coaching needs to take place when it is the most appropriate style for a given situation and when certain environmental and attitudinal conditions can be met. Better to arrange an alternative mutually convenient time, than try and coach when it really is not the right time and place either for you or the coachee.

## 7. Listening

Listening can be described on 3 levels (Ref. Jenny Rogers).

*Level 1:* This is more about your own agenda, waiting to speak and being absorbed by your own inner dialogue. This is okay as a coachee, but not as a coach.

*Level 2:* A lot of effective coaching takes place here. Great listening and questioning skills are being deployed by the coach and this serves to extend the coachee's thinking. The coach is noticing what is not being said as well as what is being said.

*Level 3:* This is like the most effective sonar – there is an intellectual as well as an emotional connection that enables further stretch to take place.

## 8. Questioning

Leaders are well equipped to ask fantastic questions. The most common mistake is to then continue to answer them themselves! Questions should be incisive, short and leave space for the coachee to think.

## 9. A Framework (GROW)

In order to ensure change and action take place, a coaching framework (either explicit or implicit) is really helpful. The most common framework is **GROW**:

**G**oals; **R**eality; **O**ptions; **W**ill

## 10. Emergent Behaviour

Be prepared for the unexpected. If you have a preference for a structured approach, this may get in the way when you need to follow emergent behaviour in the conversation.