

Coach: So, when the report is done better than expected, what will that do for you?  
Philip: It will be good to see its reception at the meeting next week.  
Coach: And when you are at the meeting seeing the good reception to your report, what does that do for you?  
Philip: I always exceed the expectation of others, I set high standards for myself, I can do this.

Philip's coach then asked my 'Followers Question' "What stops you?" several times, using each answer to re-phrase the next question:

Coach You say that you cannot get started with the report, so what stops you?  
Philip: It's too big to grasp, too many unknowns.  
Coach: So, up to now, it seems too big and there are too many unknowns? What is it about that, that stops you?  
Philip: I need to break it down into parts and get some information off the web and from other departments  
Coach: And by breaking it down into parts and getting some information off the web and from.....  
Philip: I've got it. I've got it! Can we move on?

By appealing to the two aspects of Philip's dilemma, the coach has helped to stimulate and encourage both Philip's 'follower' and his 'leader'. Philip is no longer following, he is raring to go!

### **Finding a coach**

If there is a catch, it is finding coaches of the best calibre. Coaches can best be found by referral, but failing that, ask the coach to give you a free session on the basis that you pay their travel and decide afterwards on the fee you think it worth.

Coaching fees and engagements vary but it should be possible to acquire professionally excellent coaching from \$500 an hour, less if several people are being coached on the same day on the same premises.

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## Leadership Coaching for Performance Business

By Angus McLeod, PhD.

Coaching is in vogue. Once restricted to tennis and football, the business coach is now here to stay, in fact, if you are a senior executive with a personal fitness trainer but without a Leadership Coach some people might assume that you are not top gun!

Well, that's rubbish of course but coaching is growing massively. Look up 'coaching' on the Amazon.com web-site and they come up with almost 2,000 book titles; many of them business related! But is coaching good for you? Some big corporations have invested. Why do they do it? What does it entail? Are you weak or enlightened to have one?

Executives who hire coaches are the enlightened ones. They are making a statement about their flexibility, openness to feedback and commitment to improved leadership and communication. Coaching skills (unlike mentoring (see box) assists the executive to find THEIR OWN solutions, methods and motivations to succeed. Not only this, but a good coach will effectively train the executive to self-coach! The executive learns the methods and the coach is redundant! Now there's an investment – what's the catch?

**Coaching:** Helping people to move on their thinking and actions towards their (own and corporate) goals. This by using the executive's own strategies and three types of 'intervention.' These are challenge, questioning and silence. Yes, silence. This last sounds daft until you remember that 'the penny drops' in silence and rarely in the middle of word-play!

**Mentoring:** Good mentoring embraces coaching skills but the mentor is often more experienced than the executive and so offers 'advice', or better, choices of action that the executive might take. Choices enable the executive to think about their own solution and thus be more motivated than accepting the ideas of a clever-dick.

Coaches help executives to self-challenge their own thinking. They encourage the executive to new perceptions and to a greater understanding of their own motivation (and that of their key colleagues). Self-determination leads to greater confidence and productivity too. Executives learn how to have motivating concepts of their goals and how they will get to them. Coaching can also help with inner conflicts and actual conflicts ones with staff.

### Coaching Example:

Philip knew that he had to get a report done for his team but kept putting it off. Time was running out. Fortunately he had an appointment with his coach. The coach could see a conflict between the Philip that wanted to succeed and the Philip that was failing or 'following' rather than being proactive.

Philip's coach asked my 'Leaders Question' "What does that do for you?" several times, using each answer to re-phrase the next question:

Coach: You say that you want to write the report. What will writing that report do for you?

Philip: I will feel I have done what was expected, or better than that.