

## **BUSINESS COACHING: AN INTRODUCTION**

*The following notes are designed to help you to know what to expect regarding your coaching sessions and the coaching process. I have included (other people's) definitions and notes about ways of working which inform my coaching approach.*

*You do not need to do any preparation before our first session; however, as with many activities, the more you put in, the more you will get out of the experience. I suggest some areas for you to be thinking about in advance which should help us to make the most of the limited time we will have in each session.*

### **What is Coaching?**

- The art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another
- A dialogue which assists the coachee to see new perspectives and achieve greater clarity about their own thoughts, emotions and actions, and about the situations and people around them
- A process that enables people to find and act on solutions that are most congruent and appropriate for them
- The focus of coaching is to enhance performance
- The crux lies in raising awareness in the coachee

### **What you will do**

- Set the agenda – choose the topics
- Keep control over the process
- Take ownership of any decisions
- Commit to action

### **What your Coach will do**

(See also Coaching Style notes on page 3 below)

- Listen to you
- Ask questions
- Direct your focus forwards to the future
- Help you to focus on solutions
- Hold up a mirror
- Challenge and suggest alternatives to consider
- Support you
- Help to channel your energy into action

### **How to prepare for your Coaching Programme**

1. Provisionally diary dates and times for say 6-8 sessions, making sure you have time in between sessions to take action.
2. Think about what you are aiming to achieve overall via this coaching programme.
3. Choose and prepare an appropriate meeting space where we should not be disturbed and where you will feel comfortable.
4. Come equipped – if you like drawing pictures, bring paper, pencils and crayons!
5. Think what topics you'd like to focus on, and whether there is a particular topic (or issue) that you might find helpful to explore in the first session. (If there is, it might help me to know what it is in advance, but this is not a necessity.)



<b>Session</b>	<b>Topic/Issue</b>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

### **Provisional 'agenda' for our first Coaching Session**

1. Ground rules
2. Programme goals
3. Success measures
4. Provisional list of topics to be addressed
5. Today's Topic
6. Dialogue around selected Topic – to establish your Goal, and to explore the Reality and Options
7. Next steps (including agreeing dates for subsequent sessions)

## MY COACHING STYLE

I shall tend towards a **non-directive** coaching style. However, if appropriate and agreed, I may call upon other more 'directive' skills. I shall draw upon the following **spectrum of coaching skills**:

### Non-directive

Listening to understand  
 Reflecting  
 Paraphrasing  
 Summarising  
 Asking questions to raise awareness  
 Making suggestions  
 Giving feedback  
 Offering guidance  
 Giving advice  
 Instructing  
**Directive**

Whilst I do not follow any one particular approach with rigour, I find that the **GROW** model (and, with the addition of Topic, **ToGROW**) provides a useful structure for any Coaching session. Its application helps to avoid the session becoming merely a 'cosy chat'!

ToGROW stands for **T**opic, **G**oal, **R**eality, **O**ptions, **W**rap-up. ("You" are the coachee or "player")

Stage	Process	Desired outcome
Topic	Gain understanding of the broad territory, scale and significance of the topic	Initial understanding of what you want to talk about
Goal	Establish the desired outcome for the session itself	Set of clear, specific and measurable outcomes (for the session)
Reality	Increase awareness by exploring all aspects of the topic	Clearest possible understanding of the topic
Options	Brainstorm possibilities of what can be done (without judgement)	Longest list of all possibilities for you to do to satisfy session goal
Wrap-up	Select most appropriate action(s) and agree next steps	Commitment to action

In practice we may not move through these stages in a linear fashion but may shuffle between these stages, iterating as we feel fit, until you are able to commit to specific action.