

## Press Release

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### For Immediate Release

## What is this coaching lark, and has it any relevance for today's businesses?

**Coaching is one of the words of the moment, continually bandied around, yet it seems to mean any number of interchangeable ideas.. is it managing? training? help? support? motivational training? What most people agree upon though, is that it's a form of external help which is brought in when targets aren't being hit.**

And does it actually matter if we can't define it if it works? What many companies do is take the plunge to pilot a coaching series, and are usually so convinced of its efficacy, that they continue the series – but even then struggle to create a useful definition.

### **Reverse brainstorming**

It might be easier to have a look at what coaching isn't. It's not telling, advising, or mentoring. It is not transfer of knowledge from one person to another. It is appropriate only when the individual being coached has the capacity and knowledge to actually come up with their own way to solve problems. (If they can't do that, what you may need to look at training first).

Consider this example: Peter goes to his boss Jane with a problem about someone who reports to him.

Scenario 1 – managing: Jane talks it through with Peter, and because she has more experience in this matter, suggests a solution for him to try.

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So how might this make Peter feel? Well, it might be a satisfactory result, but it might equally make Peter feel undermined, less likely to try to resolve issues himself, he might not agree 100% with the suggestion, it might make him feel just like a vehicle for someone else's ideas.

Scenario 2 – coaching: What would happen if Jane had asked Peter what his suggestions were? What resources he would need to resolve the matter himself?

How would he feel now? Valued? Having a part to play? More likely to take responsibility himself? And Jane might also feel relieved that not everyone wanted her to come up with the answers.

As you can see from this quick hypothetical scenario, in the first version, what appears to be the action of a kind boss, might actually stifle effectiveness and career progression. The alternative is certainly riskier – Peter might not come up with the same solution that Jane had in mind – but frankly, is there ever just the one right answer? He might have come up with a far superior plan.

This is 'coaching' in its most basic form, but of course there is a whole science behind it. In fact, already there are a few Universities offering accredited coaching courses, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

"Our feedback suggests that the best coaches are the ones who can't fall back on experience in a particular sector – so they are forced to truly coach an individual, not simply advise" explained Jack Rowlands, CEO of Pinna, a North West England coaching company.

"We describe coaching as the ability to help a performer excel" he continued. "It is hard to put into words – but the proof of the pudding is in the eating... almost all our clients who have decided to try coaching, have gone on to have far more than just the pilot exercise – which is a better recommendation than anything we could say!"

**ENDS**

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