

**5**  
STEPS



## How to coach people

### Five easy steps to great coaching technique.

Top class coaching has a reputation for being one of the most effective ways of engendering behavioural change, but what makes great coaching? Well, part of the answer has to do with the approach and structure of the intervention. Here are five steps that help to ensure your coaching keeps on track and really creates value for the recipients.

- 1 Focus the conversation.** It's no good just having a good chat, coaching has to focus to be effective. The conversation may begin on a wide basis, but your role as coach is to home-in on specific areas of focus. Be sure to discuss the specific scope of the coaching activity, it's helpful to define this not only by logging what's in scope, but what is clearly out of scope too. Sometimes the out of scope is obvious, but most times it provides a helpful boundary that aids keeping the sessions on track.
- 2 Discover the possibilities.** Once focused it's time to open up the options, opportunities and possibilities. This should be an open creative line of dialogue. Keep building new ideas and challenging preconceived ideas about what is possible or not. Try turning things on their heads to explore new possibilities; If someone needs to work through how they are going to achieve, switch it around and think how you would make it fail. Use this stimulus to bounce around even more possibilities that could be considered.

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**Plan the action.** Step three involves some detailed planning. Maybe possibilities need exploring, often new ideas need implementing, and most times action has to be taken. Get granular during this step - look for concrete detailed actions and look for dates for completion. Lots of people use the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time Bound) approach to set goals at this point, if you do be careful that it doesn't limit. On a few occasions try swapping the "Achievable" and "Realistic" with "Awesome" and "Ridicules"!

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**Remove the barriers.** People always have barriers, fears, reasons why not, stumbling blocks and all manner of other hazards. Work through them, help them to see through difficulties and develop work-rounds to mitigate against them. Explore worst case scenarios as these are seldom as bad as perceived, help them to move beyond fears and feel free.

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**Review and agree next steps.** Always review each session, it helps clarify understanding so leave sufficient time to do this well. Keep next steps at the forefront of their minds, and stress the importance of implementation. The best strategy in the world is useless without execution so make sure everyone is clear what must be done.



Depending on the situation each step can be addressed in a single, or across a number of separate sessions. Always remember that a coach is a person who supports people to achieve their goals, with goal setting, encouragement and questions. Unlike a Counselor or Mentor, a coach rarely offers advice. Many will tell you a coach needs to be fully qualified, which of course is good advise, but don't be afraid to have a go, it's really not so difficult if your already a good people person. You never know, it may open up a host of new opportunity and learning to pursue yourself.

