Coaching Conversations

Simple Steps

Setting the Context

Context Setting in the coaching process has two separate but equally useful purposes. The first is becoming aware and acknowledging your identity as a coach. To start uncovering this, ask yourself what attributes do you possess that inform who you will be as a coach? Focus on three characteristics that best describe you as a coach and use that to frame setting the context with the coachee. Setting the context of who you are and what you can offer to the coachee will help you both to evaluate your fit as a pair and provide advanced understanding about your role. Everyone's coaching needs are different and therefore all coaching relationships are unique. With one, all you may need is to clarify a plan while another person may need to develop a whole new relationship to the ways in which they face challenge.

Beginning a Coaching Process

At the start, space is given to the coachee to describe their present situation. A simple initial coaching appointment could be comprised of a few simple open-ended questions. To start, ask them to describe what is going on for them. The opportunity to give voice to this can assist the coachee in developing an awareness of their current situation and give you a sense of their perspective. The next step is asking what they want to be coached on.

Identifying a Focus

Once a coachee has shared what project or skill they are aiming to improve it is important to understand their relationship to its current state and its possibilities. If this situation were improved what would the possibilities be for them and what are they willing to do to make it so? This is a time to reflect back on what you are hearing and also draw out from the coachee what skills they currently bring that can be useful in building confidence to face their challenge.

Stating Commitments

By stating their commitments, coachees let a coach know what they are willing to work on and when. Clarity of these commitments is key for coaching to be effective because it gives a coach actions and milestones to check in on. What will the coachee commit to doing in the next week? These commitments set the grounding for future conversations.

Acknowledging and Checking Progress

The goals of coaching can be varied but improvement and increased self-knowledge are center. How will you center your conversations throughout the duration of coaching relationship to these goals? Notice what strategies work and should stay and which not working that should be disregarded.

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