



Smart Strategies for Talent Development

Strategic Coaching Engagements: How to Bring Focus to Coaching

Presented by Kate Ebner



Welcome!



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How to participate in today's webinar

1. Participate in the poll

- At one point during this webinar, you'll be invited to participate in a group poll. Please do so!

2. Type in your questions

- Kate will save time at the end for answering questions. You will use the Q&A function to type in your questions and we will read them aloud.
- If you have a question at any time during the webinar, please feel free to write-in your question using the 'Q&A' or 'chat' function in your Zoom window.

3. Troubleshooting

- If you need help troubleshooting at any time during the webinar, please send me a direct email at imartens@nebocompany.com



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How to Bring Focus to Coaching

Good coaches know that coaching is a purposeful conversation.

Great coaches know how to make it so by bringing focus and action to coaching.

Key Takeaways:

- Understand the “art and science” of setting and using coaching objectives effectively
- Find balance between action and reflection in coaching engagements
- Apply three strategies for more strategic coaching engagements

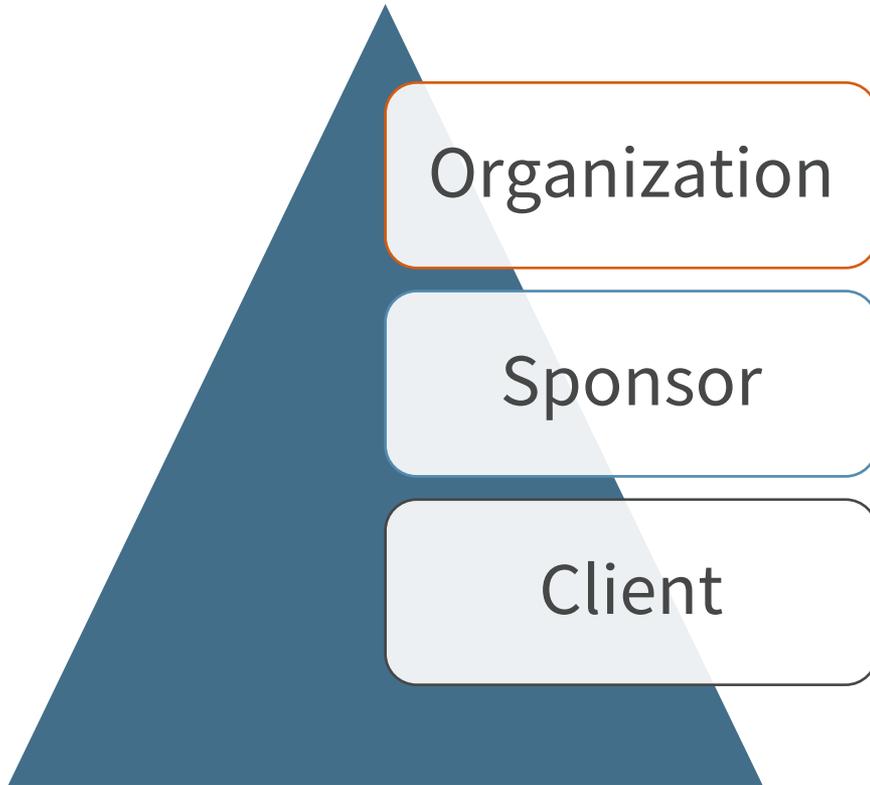
*Group Poll:
What makes for a productive coaching
session?*

Productivity
Making the Hours in the Day Go Further

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.

—STEPHEN COVEY

A Word about the Stakeholder Triangle



“Work is the place where
self meets the world.”

– David Whyte, *Crossing the Unknown Sea:
Work as a Pilgrimage of Identity*

Begin coaching with the end in mind

After

Before

The Flow of Coaching



Great coaching has a beginning, middle and end. For the client, this is a journey that begins with the decision to work with a coach. Often, the coaching process is unfamiliar to the client, who relies upon the coach to bring expertise about how an engagement should unfold and move forward.

Coach brings:	Client brings:
Knowledge and mastery of the coaching process	Commitment to learning, experimenting, exploring and practicing through the coaching process
Methods to ensure purposeful conversation and committed action towards the professed goal or objective	Willingness to be honest, vulnerable and open about challenges and aspirations
Ability to hold a safe “sacred space” for the conversation	Trust in the coach and coaching process

Leaders rarely come into coaching with a clear statement about what they want to gain or accomplish



- Often, people say, “I’m not sure what that is or what I can expect from the coaching.”
- It is the coach’s job to guide the client through the process of establishing the coaching objective.

Setting a coaching objective is vital to purposeful engagement

- The coaching objective is a defining feature of the beginning of a coaching engagement.
- It establishes a shared understanding of the focus or purpose of the coaching work.
- At Nebo, we choose the language of “objective” rather than “goal” to encourage broader, more expansive thinking about what can be accomplished in a coaching engagement.
- Once the coaching objective is set, the coach and client can begin their work together with confidence that there is a clear purpose in mind.

A good coaching objective....

Provides focus for the engagement	Supports the leader's goals, challenges and responsibilities	Aligns with focus areas that have emerged through feedback, not just self-assessment
Understood and supported by the sponsor(s)	Is motivating and meaningful for the leader and the organization	Is broad and expansive enough to allow a flexible, motivating learning process.

Clearly stated as a declaration of intent: My coaching objective is....

Where do coaching objectives “go wrong?”

1. Too broad and vague
2. Too narrow and specific
3. “Should do” rather than “really want to do” – not from the heart
4. Too many objectives or pieced tied into the objective
5. Not connected to work priorities and developmental feedback
6. Not connected to personal priorities Not supported by key stakeholders in the coaching
7. Focused on changing behavior and attitudes of others, not self

“My objective is to be a better leader.”

“I want to be seen as a leader.”

“I want to master PowerPoint.”

“My supervisor tells me that I need to work on delegation.”

“My objectives are to strengthen my leadership presence, gain recognition as a subject matter expert in my field, and be a better mentor to others.”

“I’d like to work on helping my boss take a stronger stand with staff.”

Coaching Questions to Sharpen Objectives

What would you like to focus on?

What would you like to learn through this experience?

What are your priorities over the next 6-12 months? (At work, at home, for you, for your team or division, etc.)

Do you have any recent feedback that might help us shape this objective?

Sample Coaching Objectives

“To develop my presence and voice as a senior leader with peers and executives”

“To become more effective at developing and leading a strong, high performing team”

“To gain confidence, experience and skill as a public speaker”

“To re-energize myself and bring fresh vision to the organization”

“To manage myself more effectively so that I am more balanced and less reactive as a leader, especially when frustrated”

“To create a vision for the next stage of my career”

“To achieve the major changes needed in order to deliver on the company’s strategic plan”

The Coaching Objective



- The Coaching Objective sets the course for the coaching and is a point of return throughout the experience.
- Great coaches circle back throughout the engagement to ask themselves and the leader: how are we doing?
- They also share perspective about progress and plateaus, tracking momentum as the engagement unfolds.

Feedback: What did you take from today's session?



Once established, the coach also can enrich the coaching objective throughout the engagement

- Articles
- Books
- Ted Talks
- Video clips
- Exercises/practices
- Progress Check Ins



Three Strategies to Bring Focus to Coaching

Connect with Priorities

Take a "whole life" approach

Own responsibility for results

Three Strategies to Bring Focus to Coaching

Connect with priorities

- Share your goals with your coach
- Seek and use available feedback
- Define success in the context of your job

Take a "whole life" approach

- Share a full picture of your life with your coach
- Name your personal priorities and goals
- Examine how the interplay of work/life is impacting you

Own responsibility for results

- Schedule all coaching into your calendar upfront
- Make time for your assignments
- Prepare to bring an update and a focus to each session
- Be honest when you are stuck or derailed

10 Tactical Tips

1. Schedule all your coaching upfront. Don't do it session by session.
2. Be realistic in your spacing of the sessions, every two weeks is quite frequent, three weeks might be better. Notice what works best.
3. Try not to cancel a session. If you you are cancelling, stop and talk to your coach about why and come up with a better plan.
4. Capture your coaching objective in writing and post it where you can see it daily.
5. Pay attention to your momentum and discuss plateaus with coach.
6. Talk to your coach about how you would like the process to be.
7. If you feel a loss of focus or energy for the coaching work, talk to your coach about it.
8. Keep a journal during the coaching process to record insights, ideas, assignments, next steps. Review it after a session to note your next actions. Review it prior to coaching sessions.
9. Be succinct in the "update" part of your coaching hour.
10. Alert your coach of any important developments at home or at work.

Reflection vs. Action: Finding the Balance



Using the Coaching Objective at the End of the Process



- The coaching objective is also a defining feature of the end of a coaching engagement.
- Now, it can be used to reflect upon the journey undergone during the coaching process.
- The coaching objective provides a way of assessing how meaningful and purposeful the coaching was for the leader.
- It can be the focal point of a discussion with the sponsor about progress during the engagement.

At the end of the engagement, the coach will use the objective to help the leader to assess and see progress

Let's consider the coaching objective that you set at the beginning. How do you think you did with it?



We began with ideas about what you hoped would be different as a result of your work. Shall we take stock of what has changed?



Considering where you are now, what seems most important as you look to the future? (Opportunity to contribute to the path ahead.)



Share your own observations, encouragement and reflection.

Discussion



Join us for the next webinars in the Smart Strategies for Talent Development Series:

**The Magic and Methods for
Choosing the Right Coach**

October 29, 12pm EST

Coaching Across Cultures

December 10, 1pm EST

Thank you!

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