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| **How to define the coaching goals and ensure a solid contract.****Nov 17, 2014 07:00 am | Bob Tiede****Guest Post by Augusten Del Vento**Coaching questions are different from information gathering – **coaching questions are used as a *catalyst for discovery* *and change*.**

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| **What’s on your mind? What do you want to focus on today?** |   |  |
| **At the end of this conversation, how would you know that our time together was worth your while?** |   |  |
| **What about this do you want to change/improve?** |   |  |
| **If you could have anything you wanted, what would that be?** |   |  |
| **What would you be doing differently if your problem suddenly vanished?** |   |  |
| **Can you tell me more specifically or give me an example of how you would be doing what you want (e.g., listening more, acting more confident, managing your time better)?** |  |  |

**Augusten Del Vento** is the director and founder of [Change Champions Consulting](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=8419c2f84b&e=f8f9a9fe45) |

**QUESTIONS FOR**

**CONCLUDING A COACHING SESSION**

**What would be something that you can start doing/you can commit to?**

**When can you be ready to make the first step towards your goals?**

**What is a realistic timeframe to start?**

**What can get in your way?**

**What will be your next step once you have mastered this?**

**What are you taking away from this conversation?**

**Kris Robertson shares his top 5 Coaching Questions:**

1.  **What else?**

For me probably THE most powerful of questions.  Far more powerful than the closed version “Is there anything else?” which I often hear on practical assessment calls.  The difference simply that the ‘What’ prompts the brain to search and find, whereas the ‘Is there’ results in either a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No’, often with very little need for thought.  Repetition of this question yields the best results.

2.  **If you could wave a magic wand?**

Great for clients who often edit their options or who struggle thinking of a range of different possible ways to approach their goal.

3.  **Tell me about a time in which you have completed something similar to this before.**

A great question to help the client identify the strategies they have used previously which have been successful from which you can then ask ‘What went well?’, ‘What did you learn as a result of this?’, ‘How might you go about things differently this time?’ etc.  Really useful to help your client identify the evidence that they have that they CAN be successful this time.  Avoid closing this question down by asking ‘Have you ever…?’

4.  **What will be the impact of things staying the same?**

Helping raise their awareness and increase their motivation to take action in order to avoid the consequences of inertia.  Also a useful question to ask as occasionally it helps a client realize that actually, they don’t want the outcome they have suggested enough, or they are content with their current situation.

5.  **What have you learned from this session?**

I always think it is a positive and professional way to end a coaching session with a ‘wisdom-accessing’ question along these lines.

[**Kris Robertson**](http://www.the-coaching-academy.com/about/trainers/kris-robertson.html)**,** UK’s leading Coach Mentor/Supervisor and Operations Director of [**The Coaching Academy**](http://www.the-coaching-academy.com/)

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**COACHING QUESTIONS FOR LEADERS**

1. **Situation:** Client is blaming everyone else for failures.  **Question:** So if everyone else wasn’t to blame, who else could be responsible?
2. **Situation:** Answer to a tough question, “I don’t know.”  **Question:**What would you answer if you did know? (I don’t know is a cop-out).
3. **Situation:**Client is controlling the conversation, telling stories and talking about trivial surface level issues.  **Question:**What questions are you hoping I won’t ask you today?
4. **Situation:** Client is talking about something that is making them angry.  **Question:**Where, do you feel this anger? Where in your body? How big is it? What color is it? (get them to really get in touch and embrace the anger in order to motivate them to act)
5. **Situation:** Client is stuck on an issue.  **Question:**If you could wave a magic wand, how would you fix this? (let them brain storm, start with ridiculous and to start towards an answer)
6. **Situation:** Client is telling a story packed with details, facts, assumptions.  **Question:**Can you break this down for me into known facts and assumptions? (start writing down the known facts separate from the assumptions to gain clarity)
7. **Situation:** Client asks what they should do.  **Question:**What do you think I’d do? (You could tell them what you would do and that would work for you. they’re not you)
8. **Situation:** Client is stuck. **Question:** What is currently impossible to do that, if it were possible, would change everything? (Another starting point or way to move from an impasse)
9. **Situation:** Conversation starter **Question:** What do you know about your company that you are pretending not to know (9 times out of 10 the answer is I don’t know, in which case go to #2)?
10. **Situation:** Client responds to a question with a weak answer.  **Question:** What else (continue asking what else until you start getting silly answers. You’ll be surprised how many nuggets will be unleashed)?
11. **Situation:** Client uses the “**can’t**” word (major red flag).  **Question:** Can’t? (say no more…… wait, let silence do the heavy lifting)

**Glen Hellman** is a former hired-gun, turn-around CEO working for Venture Capitalists. He’s a leadership coach, angel investor and a board member of the University of Maryland, Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship.  You can connect with Glen at [**DrivenForward.com**](http://drivenforward.com/)

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| **Guest Post by Jeroen De Flander****How to ask the right coaching questions at the right time…****GROW Coaching Questions: step 1: Goal Setting****What is the aim of this discussion?****What would need to happen for you to walk away feeling that this time was well spent?****If I could grant you a wish for this session, what would it be?****What would you like to happen that is not happening now, or what would you like not to happen that is happening now?****What outcome would you like from this session/discussion/interaction?****Can we do that in the time we have available?****What do you want to achieve long term?****What does success look like?****How much personal control or influence do you have over your goal?****What would be a milestone on the way?****When do you want to achieve it by?****Is that realistic?****Is that positive, challenging, attainable?****Will that be of real value to you?****How will you measure it?****GROW Coaching Questions: step 2: Reality****1. What is happening now? (what, where, when, who, how much, how often). Be precise if possible.****2. How do you know that this is accurate?****3. How have you verified, or would you verify, that that is so?****4. What other factors are relevant?****5. Who is involved (directly and indirectly)?****6. What is their perception?****7. When things are going badly on this issue, what happens to you?****8. What happens to the others directly involved?****9. What is the effect on others?****10. What have you done about this so far?****11. What results did that produce?****12. What is missing in the situation?****13. What do you have that you’re not using?****14. What is holding you back?****15. What is really going on (intuition)?****GROW Coaching Questions: step 3: Options****1. What could you do to change the situation?****2. Tell me what possibilities for action you see. Do not worry about whether they are realistic at this stage.****3. What approach/actions have you seen used, or used yourself, in similar circumstances?****4. What else could you do?****5. What if…? (time, power, money, etc.)****6. Who might be able to help?****7. Would you like another suggestion from me?****8. Which options do you like the most?****9. What are the benefits and costs of each?****10. Which options are of interest to you?****11. Would you like to choose an option to act on?****GROW Coaching Questions: step 4: Will****1. What option or options do you choose?** **2. To what extent does this meet all your objectives?** **3. What are your criteria and measurements for success?** **4. When precisely are you going to start and finish each action step?** **5. What could arise to hinder you in taking these steps?** **6. What personal resistance do you have, if any, to taking these steps?** **7. What will you do to eliminate these external and internal factors?** **8. Who needs to know what your plans are?** **9. What support do you need and from whom?** **10. What will you do to obtain that support and when?** **11. What could I do to support you?** **12. What commitment on a 1-to-10 scale do you have to taking these agreed actions?** **13. What prevents this from being a 10?** **14. What could you do or alter to raise this commitment closer to 10?** **15. Is there anything else you want to talk about now or are we finished?****Want more? Check out the free guide** [**‘101 coaching tips for great performance coaching‘**](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=5519f2f46b&e=f8f9a9fe45)[**Jeroen De Flander**](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=7f89bcddfc&e=f8f9a9fe45) **is one of the world’s most influential thinkers on strategy execution and a highly regarded keynote speaker. He has shared the stage with prominent strategists like Michael Porter and reached out to 23,500+ leaders in 35+ countries. His first book Strategy Execution Heroes reached the Amazon bestseller list in 5 countries and was nominated for Management Book of the Year 2012 in the Netherlands. His second book, The Execution Shortcut, reach the #3 spot in its category on Amazon. You can follow Jeroen De Flander’s writing on his blog:**[**Jeroen-De-Flander.com**](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=290d3e1ca0&e=f8f9a9fe45)**or** [**LinkedIn Pulse**](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=f54e532d2e&e=f8f9a9fe45) |
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