

# COACHING TIPS ✓✓✓

## HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR COACHING: Guidelines for Coaches

In my experience, the best way to develop your coaching is by pursuing "**knowledge for the sake of knowledge**". That is, by seeking knowledge and/or skills development when you want to know or be able to do something in your 'real life' coaching.

This is different from trying to develop your coaching by pursuing "**knowledge for knowledge's sake**". That is, by acquiring knowledge and/or skills development just for the sake of acquiring it.

"Knowledge for the sake of knowledge" tends to lead to learning, progress and improvement. "Knowledge for knowledge's sake" tends to lead to information or skills gathering that aren't applied in any real sense. The result is little or no learning, progress or improvement.

When coaches ask me for, "any coaching information or drills", or when they say, "do you know of any workshops or courses I could go on", I am immediately alerted to "knowledge for knowledge's sake". Similarly, when I hear coach development officers or coach educators say, "We need to provide some workshops", I have the same response.

**REAL coach development** - **REAL** as in **R**elevant, **E**veryday, **A**pplicable and **L**asting - by necessity starts with where you are now, and needs to be linked to where you want to be.

Starting with where you are now means the knowledge and/or skills you seek are relevant, linked to your everyday practice applicable and lasting - rather than being unplaced, unlinked, not applied and short lived. Likewise, linking where you are now to where you want to be means the knowledge and/or skills you seek are highly likely to move you forward and/or upwards towards your unique personal goal(s).

We all need dreams, ideal visions of the future, and challenges to overcome - these things fuel our motivation. As long as we can see in our mind's eye the steps we need to take to move forward (what we need to know, what we need to be able to do, or what we need to create), and as long as these steps are sensibly linked to current reality, we will develop and make progress towards our goal(s).

However, too many coaches and people involved in trying to support the development of coaches, either make the mistake of thinking up grand visions of the future that are not linked sensibly to current reality, or make the mistake of not linking the acquisition of knowledge, skills or experience to anything really meaningful in terms of moving towards a personal goal(s).

This is where the need for having a **Personal Development Plan (PDP)** arises. The PDP process supports and challenges you to get clear about: -

- Where you are now
- Where you want to be
- What you need to know, be able to do, or be able to create to reach your goal(s) or to overcome your challenge(s)
- How you might go about getting to know, being able to do, or being able to create - the resources (things and people) you can use
- What you are committed to actually doing and by when

Once you have a clear plan, all you need do is implement it. Taking action along these lines makes your development as a coach – your **REAL** development - inevitable.

If you are interested in developing your coaching, the following steps sets out some clear guidelines for you to follow:

### **Step 1**

**What:** Take time out to think about **where you are now** with your coaching in relation to **where you (or others) want you to be**

**How:**

- Assess your training needs using a formal process or
- Use your own informal assessment (informal opinions from relevant others)

### **Step 2**

**What:** Take time out to think about **what you need to know, what you need to be able to do, or what you need to create** to get where you want or need to be

**How:**

- Assess your training needs using a formal process or
- Use your own informal assessment (informal opinions from relevant others)

### **Step 3**

**What:** Take time out to think about **how you might go about** getting to know, being able to do, or being able to create. Think about **the resources** (things and people) you can use

**How:**

- Seeking out new information, advice or guidance
- Existing knowledge

### **Step 4**

**What:** Take time out to write a plan that states **what you are actually going to do and by when**

**How:**

- Standard Personal Development Plan templates
- Own Personal Development Plan template

### **Step 5**

**What: Implement** your plan

**How:**

- Take action
- Find ways to overcome any barriers that get in the way

### **Step 6**

**What:** Take time out to **review** and **re-plan** to **continue developing**

**How:**

- Schedule in weekly informal reviews and re-planning time
- Schedule in formal 6 monthly or 12 monthly reviews and re-writing of plans
- Repeat steps 1 to 5 above