

# **Chapter 2: What Is Coaching?**

## **Coaching for Change**

# Focus

- What is coaching?
- In what ways is coaching used as an intervention?
- How is coaching distinct from, yet related to, other professional helping relationships?
- How has coaching evolved as a discipline?
- How is coaching evolving as a profession?

# Executive Coaching

“... an action-learning process to enhance effective action and learning agility. It involves a professional relationship and a deliberate, personalized process to provide an executive client with valid information, free and informed choices based on that information, and internal commitment to those choices.”  
(Witherspoon, 2000, p. 167)

# **Executive Coaching/Coaching Psychology**

“Coaching Psychology is for enhancing well-being and performance in personal life and work domains, underpinned by models of coaching grounded in established adult learning or psychological approaches.” (British Psychological Society)

# Executive Coaching

“Coaching is helping another person figure out the best way to achieve his or her goals, build skill sets or expertise, and produce the results the organization needs.” (BlessingWhite, 2008)

# Executive Coaching

Coaching is a helping relationship built on trust that employs a discovery process intended to help the person being coached to discover his focus, identify actions to be taken, and assume responsibility for the outcomes. In other words, it is an action-oriented, results-focused conversation between a coach and a person or group being coached. (Executive Coaching Forum)

# Coaching

“Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.” (ICF website, ICF Code of Ethics)

# Executive Coaching

Coaching is “a development process that builds a leader’s capabilities to achieve professional and organizational goals.”  
(Graduate School Alliance for Executive Coaching, 2012)



# Coaching

Coaching “is a helping and facilitative process that enables individuals, groups/teams and organizations to acquire new skills, to improve existing skills, competence and performance, and to enhance their personal effectiveness or personal development or personal growth.” (Hamlin, Ellinger, & Beattie, 2009, p. 18)

# So, what is change coaching?

- **Helping relationship**
- **Client centered, action oriented, results focused**
- **Is grounded in numerous disciplines** and is an applied behavioral science
- Involves **cognitive, emotional, behavioral, spiritual** components
- Requires **self-awareness**
- Is an **emerging and evolving** discipline and profession
- **Helps individuals, teams, and organizations** prepare for, excel through, and improve from change
- Is a **skill, tool, and role**
- Can be **used by leaders at all levels**
- Can be **taught and competencies developed**
- Focused on change: **performance, development, and/or transformation**

# Key Characteristics of Coaching

- Engaging in a discovery process
- Establishing an environment where individuals and groups can learn and develop
- Using a repeatable process
- Investing in behavioral change that is sustainable and can evolve
- Developing potential/growth

## Some Benefits of Coaching

- Improves virtual team performance (Derosa & Lepsinger, 2010)
- Improves executive productivity, quality, organizational strength, customer service, and shareholder value; six times ROI (McGovern, Lindermann, Bergara, Murphy, Barker, & Warrenfeltz, 2001)
- Is a critical role managers/supervisors must play (80% ranked as extremely or very important) in times of change (Creasey & Hiatt, 2009)

# What Is Change Coaching Used For?

- **Performing.** Coaching focuses on refining skills and actions for performance in a particular context.
- **Developing.** Coaching focuses on changing thinking, feelings, and actions, as well as learning (gaining knowledge in one or more contexts) to improve experience and success in a variety of contexts.
- **Transforming.** Coaching focuses on the whole person in a wide range of contexts.

# Examples of Coaching Agendas

- Building relationships
- Communication skills
- Developing self
- Career advancement
- Executive presence
- Internal visibility/image
- Listening skills
- Self-awareness/self-reflection
- Skill development
- Career development
- Job/career transition and onboarding
- Performance improvement
- Personal development
- Relationship improvement/enhancement
- Teambuilding
- Conflict resolution
- Executive presence
- Leadership development
- Innovation and creativity
- Employee morale and motivation
- Retention and job satisfaction
- Personal growth
- Interpersonal skills
- Stress management
- Strategic thinking
- Time management
- Staffing
- Management style
- Leadership
- Communication
- Adaptability/versatility
- Motivation

# Focus of Coaching

Focus	Examples
<b>Performing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applying knowledge and skills to achieve a desired result (e.g., sales)</li><li>• Acting on a plan, making decisions, and following through (accountability)</li></ul>
<b>Developing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gaining self-awareness of strengths</li><li>• Acquiring knowledge about a barrier to performance</li><li>• Developing a skill</li><li>• Creating an action plan and building supportive relationships required to implement a course of action</li><li>• Moving to a new level of human development</li></ul>
<b>Transforming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shifting professional and career focus</li><li>• Transitioning from one level of responsibility to another (e.g., supervisor to manager, or senior leader to executive)</li><li>• Focusing intentionally, creating a legacy and a desired future</li></ul>

# Primary Areas of Executive Change

## **Effective people management**

- Increased insights into how colleagues perceive one's actions and decisions
- Better self-awareness and understanding of one's personal strengths
- Better results managing one's direct reports and internal customers

## **Better relationships with managers**

- More-productive relationships with better communication and feedback

## **Improved goal-setting and prioritization**

- Ability to define performance goals
- Ability to define business objectives with direct reports
- Gained insights into the business drivers of decisions and their impact on others

## **Increased engagement and productivity**

- Better able to adapt to the work environment and more productive and more satisfied

## **More-effective dialogue and communication**

- Increased partnership and open dialogue between managers and executives

(Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker, and Fernandes, 2008)



# Benefits Sought

- Increase productivity
- Improve quality
- Improve customer service
- Reduce customer complaints
- Retain leaders
- Reduce costs
- Increase bottom-line profitability
- Improve working relationships with direct reports, immediate supervisor, peers
- Improve teamwork
- Improve job satisfaction
- Develop to the next level of leadership
- Improve individual and/or team performance
- Improve working relationships
- Gain new and different perspectives on business issues
- Support learning and development efforts
- Address derailing behaviors
- Enhance career planning, decisions, and development

# Helping Relationship

If I can create a relationship characterized on my part:

...by a genuineness and transparency, in which I share my real feelings;

...by a warm acceptance of and prizing of the other person as a separate individual;

...by a sensitive ability to see his world and himself as he sees them;

Then the other individual in the relationship:

...will experience and understand aspects of himself which previously he has repressed;

...will find himself becoming better integrated, more able to function effectively;

...will become more similar to the person he would like to be;

...will be more self-directing and self-confident;

...will be more of a person, more unique and more self-expressive;

...will be more understanding, more accepting of others;

...will be able to cope with the problems of life more adequately and more comfortably.

(Rogers, 1989, pp. 37–38)

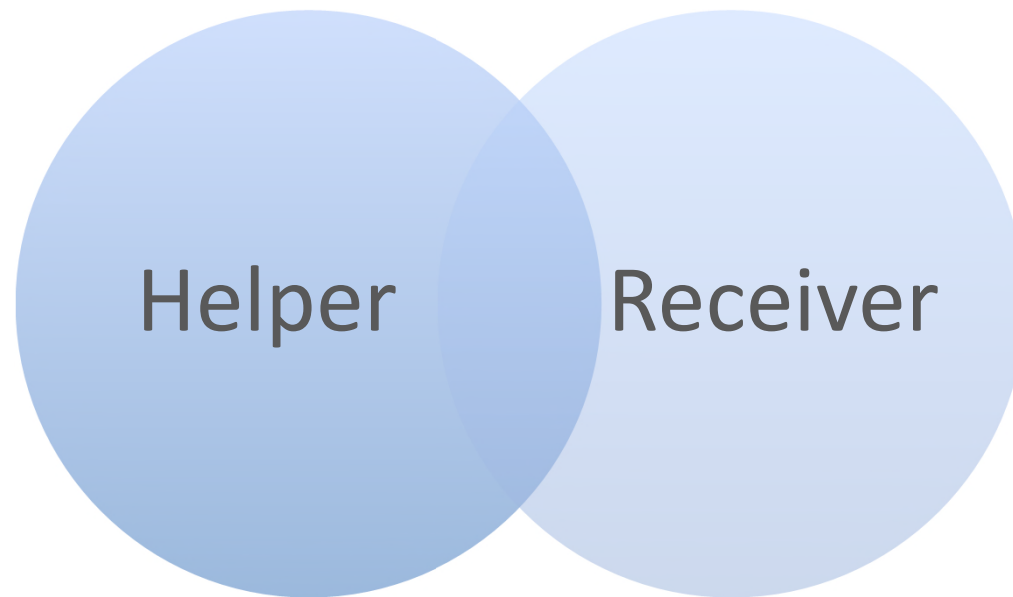
# Helping Relationships

	Consulting	Mentoring	Therapy	Coaching
<b>Person Being Helped</b>	Client: individual, sponsors, and/or organization	Protégé	Client: individual, group, family	Client: individual, team
<b>Helper</b>	Consultant	Mentor	Therapist or counselor	Coach or person using coaching process and skills
<b>Focus of Attention</b>	Group, team, organizational System	Individual	Individual, group	Individual, group, team
<b>Expertise</b>	Content and/or process	Organizational culture; resources; career progress; job; personal experience	Psychological framework, process	Process & sometimes content knowledge/expertise
<b>Formality</b>	Formal, structured	Informal or formal; structured or unstructured	Formal, structured	Informal or formal; structured or unstructured

# Helping Relationships (continued)

	Consulting	Mentoring	Therapy	Coaching
<b>Remediation</b>	Frequently	No	Usually	Infrequently
<b>Assessment</b>	Diagnostic	Current and future	Diagnostic; psycho-social history; pathology	Awareness and progress
<b>Frame of Reference</b>	Past, present and/or future	Past, present, and future	Past and/or present, and future	Present and future
<b>Terms</b>	Contract	Agreement (formal or informal)	Treatment plan	Contract or agreement
<b>Credential</b>	Not required	Not required	Required	Not required
<b>Remuneration</b>	Sponsoring organization	Organization or voluntary	Individual or third party	Individual or organization

# Helping Requires...



# Some Potential Traps

## *Helper*

- Dispensing wisdom prematurely
- Meeting defensiveness with more pressure
- Accepting the problem and over-reacting to the dependence
- Giving support and reassurance
- Resisting taking on the helper role

## *Receiver of Help*

- Initial mistrust
- Relief
- Looking for attention, reassurance and/or validation instead of help
- Resentment and defensiveness
- Stereotyping, unrealistic expectations, and transference of perceptions

(Schein, 2009)

# Roles Helper Can Choose

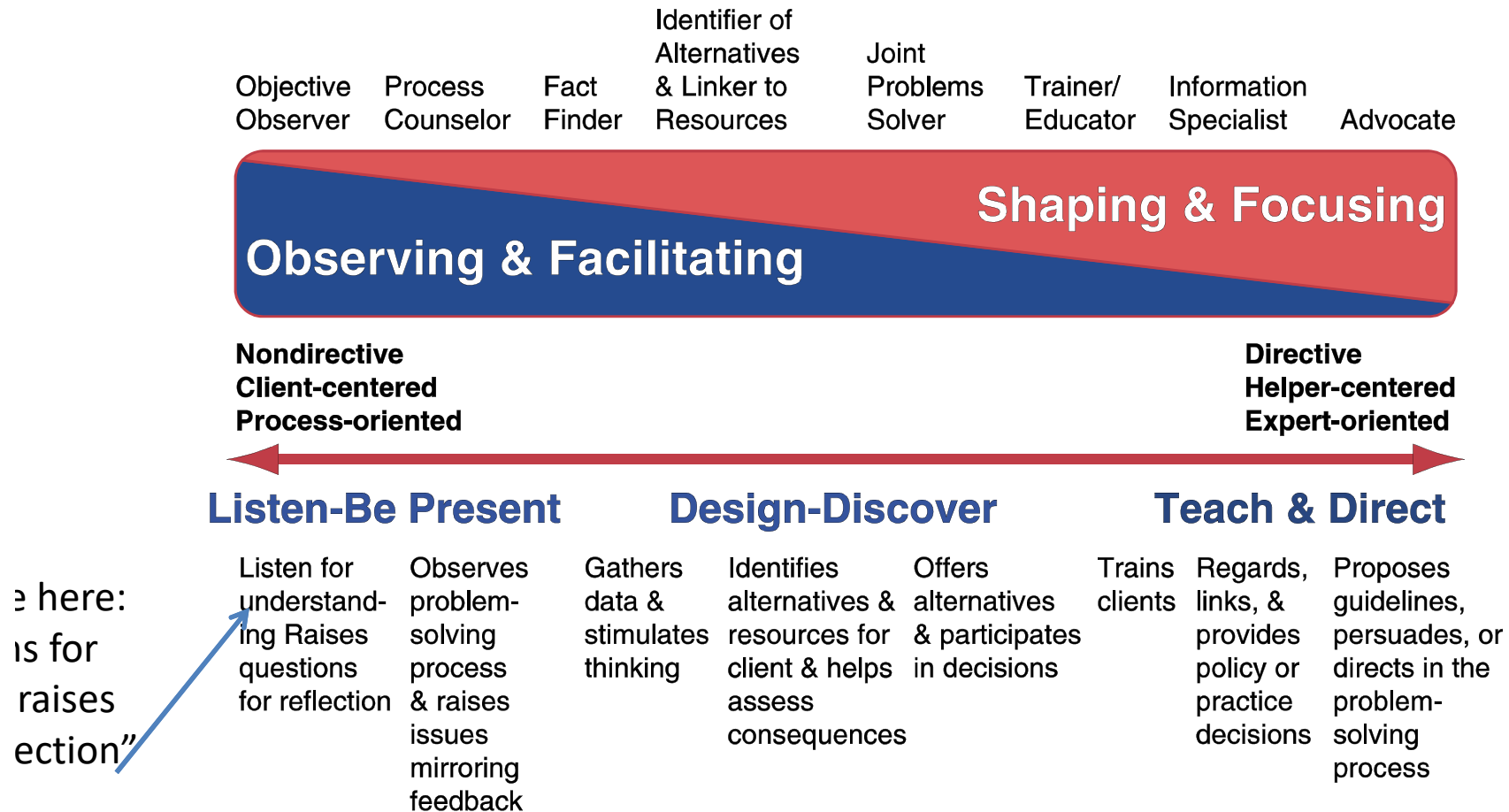
- Expert—“Sage on the stage”
- Doctor—“Diagnostician and Healer/Fixer”
- **Process Consultant—“Guide on the side”**

# The Nature of Coaching

- Competence and a Role
- Profession or Professional



# Continuum of Helping Relationships



# Coaching: A Growth Industry

- Coaching has been around for centuries—perhaps millennia
- 1937: First academic article on the topic of organizational coaching
- Between 1950 and 1990, the idea of executive coaching took hold in the business world
- Distinct focus on performance improvement and corrective action emerging during the 1970s
- Coach training programs proliferated in the 1980s
- Mid-1990s business magazines and the media popularized coaching in the mainstream press
- 2012: 47,500 coaches

# Knowledge Check

1. What is coaching? Define coaching based on the information in this chapter.
2. What are the three focus areas of coaching?
3. How is coaching similar to and different from three other helping relationships?
4. What traps have you experienced as a helper? How have these traps impacted your work as a helper?
5. What are three of the hallmarks of a “helping” relationship?
6. What is the current state of coaching?
7. What are the factors that affect the designation of coaching as a profession?
8. What are the primary differences between coaching and therapy, mentoring, training, and consulting?
9. What are the characteristics of a good coach?