

# Taking People Where They Can't Go Themselves

One way to define the role of a coach is to “take people where they can't go themselves.” I think that is a pretty good definition, because it does two important things in just seven words:

- It reminds us as coaches that it is all about the success of the person we are coaching,
- And, we have a valuable role that we can play.

In this short article I want to briefly identify five things you can provide to assist them in achieving what that haven't been able to achieve alone.

**Focus.** Perhaps what someone needs most is focus. The focus to identify the one thing that will make the most difference for them and the ability to stay dialed in to that one thing. As a coach you can provide this, even if you are not as focused personally as you would like to be. If you know this is the need and keep it at the forefront of your coaching thoughts and actions (and in your notes), you can support and encourage the focus that might be needed.

**Perspective.** When we are in the forest, all we can see are trees. As a coach we can help people see things differently, through our eyes. We can identify, illuminate and therefore help people overcome blind-spots — the blind-spots that might be the biggest hurdle to higher levels of performance.

**Feedback.** This is perhaps the most obvious one, at least from a supervisor/coach role. Feedback is incredibly valuable, but it is most valuable when it is provided in a way that creates discovery for the person being coached. When done in this way, the resistance, anxiety and surprise that comes with it can be reduced, and the feedback becomes more accepted and applied. Our job as a coach isn't just to provide or give feedback, but do it skillfully so that people can grow from and apply it for greater success.

**Accountability.** Sometimes what someone needs most is for someone to help them stay on track with what they have already determined to be important. For example, I could identify a behavior that I want to implement and I could ask you as my coach ask me about that behavior, help me measure my success with that behavior and more. This points to the idea that coaches can help us be accountable and not just “hold us” accountable. While both are needed, I find that when we do more of the helping, we will have to do less of the holding; and greater accountability will occur.

**Synergy.** Two heads can be better than one. When we as a coach work to build a trusting relationship with those they are coaching, there is a real opportunity for synergy to occur. At some level, our coaching as taking people where they can't go themselves implies synergy. The best ways to build synergy are to build trust and truly understand where the person you are coaching wants to go ... and why.

Chances are you are delivering one or more of these well, but likely based on your habit, not based on the needs of the individuals you are coaching. It is my hope that you will think about all five, work on your skills in doing each, and apply them based on what each person you coach most needs — so they can get where they

deserve to go.

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