

Top 10 Ways To Get The Most From Your Coaching

by Thomas J. Leonard

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Just by having a coach and chatting with him/her on a regular basis, you will get plenty of value -- you don't have to work hard at it -- for the benefits of coaching to occur. This is because the synergy that occurs as a result of the coach and client relationship is what makes the biggest difference to any well-motivated client.

But if you do want to maximize the value of the coaching relationship, here are 10 ways to do so that I've seen work very, very well. If some of the ideas are new to you, we can talk about them as part of our first several sessions.

1. Focus on how you feel and want to feel, not just on what you want to produce.

Sometimes, clients feel the need to focus the coaching time on how to produce more tangible or financial results. But don't forget the intangibles, such as feeling happier, more peaceful and more inspired. Results are very important, but the feelings you experience during your day are equally important. Think of a brick wall -- the bricks are the results, the mortar is the feelings. Enjoy having both.

2. Talk about what matters most to you.

You may talk about anything you want to during the coaching session. This includes your goals, your life, your needs, what you want to improve, what's bothering you, an idea you have, a problem you are dealing with, even stuff that may not appear to be all that 'useful' to talk about. It's surprising what a difference it makes in the long run when you focus on what you most selfishly want to talk about during coaching, not what you feel you 'should' talk about during the session in order to get the most value from your session.

3. Sensitize yourself so that you see and experience things earlier than before.

As you know, time is collapsing, meaning that things are happening faster and faster and that the pace of change continues to increase. For some, this causes stress because they feel both the pressure to keep up and the fear of getting left behind. But for others, they recognize this phenomena as a chance to recognize opportunities as they occur, instead of seeing them too late. How does one do this? By reducing whatever is clouding your ability to see or numbing your ability to sense; we call this process 'sensitizing yourself.' The more you can feel, the faster you can respond to events and opportunities. You sensitize yourself by reducing or eliminating alcohol, television, adrenaline, stress and caffeine.

4. Feel coached during the 10,000 minutes of your week not just the 30 minutes of your session.

There are 10,080 minutes in a 7-day week. Coaching is occurring all during your week, not just during your coaching session -- such is the power of coaching and the coaching relationship. What you and you coach talk about during your sessions will resonate with you during your week, and some of the seeds or ideas that have been discussed will grow between sessions. All you have to do is to fully live your life between coaching sessions and be open to seeing what you and your coach talked about.

5. Reduce the drain and strain in your life.

Coaching works because it focuses you in two areas. First, you'll be helped to stretch yourself further, take more actions than you would on your own, and devise/implement effective strategies to get what you want. At the same time, you will also be identifying and reducing things that drain and strain you, such as tolerations, stressful situations, difficult relationships, pressured environments and recurring problems. So, don't just hoist a bigger sail, make sure there are no cracks or barnacles on your hull.

6. Get more space, not just time, in your life

Coaching needs room in order to work. If you're too busy, rushed, adrenalized or burdened, you'll be using coaching to push yourself harder, instead of using coaching to become more effective. We strongly suggest that you put some projects on hold, reduce your roles, simplify your day, reduce your goals, streamline your work, install personal management systems, etc., before or immediately after starting with a coach. Simplification gets you space. Space is needed to learn and evolve yourself beyond where you are today.

7. Become incredibly selfish.

Coaching is about you and what you most want. As such, you'll probably need to start putting yourself first if you haven't done so already. At the very least, you'll want to become selfish, in the sense that **you** are what matters most. When you are happy and are doing well, others will benefit as well.

8. Be open to seeing things differently.

In coaching, you will be working with your goals (called, the 'what') and your strategies to reach these goals (called, the 'how'). But you will also be working on you (called, the 'who'). In other words, you will get more from coaching if you are willing to relook at some of your assumptions, ways of thinking, expectations, beliefs, reactions and approaches to success. There are always newly developed concepts, principles, distinctions and evolutionary steps to learn. You won't be forced or even encouraged to make these changes given they are so personal, but we do ask that you at least consider different approaches and ways of thinking and try them out to see if they work for you.

9. Be willing to evolve yourself, not just develop yourself.

Coaching is both a developmental process as well as an evolutionary one. In other words, you'll be learning how to accomplish more with less effort -- let's call this the developmental aspect of coaching. But you will also be thinking differently and expanding yourself and your world, which we call evolving. Perhaps surprisingly, evolving is a **skill** and it's worth learning because life itself is evolving, not just developing.

10. Design and strengthen your personal and business environments.

The value of coaching can be extended if you use part of your coaching time to design the perfect environment in which to live and work. Where you live and how you live are key to your success. Who you spend time with and are inspired by can make the difference between success and failure. Be willing to invest some time -- and money -- in improving your environment so that you feel supported to be your best.

About the Submitter

This piece was written by Thomas J. Leonard, CEO of www.CoachVille.com, Founder of Coach U and Author of the Portable Coach.

