

Psychology of Exceptional Learning

Coaching : A strategy for change

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What is coaching ?

The metaphors most of us have of coaching

- elite sports coach and improved performance,
- tutor coach and cramming in a subject area,
- 'life-style' coach and personal improvement
- executive -managerial coach and improvement in organisational and business situations.

They are all to do with

- self-motivated knowledge management; individuals seeking to change what they know / can do.
- highly motivated learner with the single minded commitment to improve in a narrow area
- coach who observes learner's knowledge at any time, adjusts teaching and provides feedback.

Peer coaching

- teachers, following professional development needed direct coaching to apply new procedures
- staff organised into coaching teams of two members
- each team identified teaching procedures to apply, saw these demonstrated, discussed its learning foundation and practised it before using it in their classes, watched each other teach.
- success of peer coaching may require coaches to learn how to develop mutual co-operation; not all staff equally competent coaches.

Cognitive and attitudinal coaching Coaching in educational contexts aims to improve thinking and learning, modify attitudes and beliefs; attitudinal coaching, to assist learners to improve

- how they think, see a wider range of options, broaden perspectives, independence, flexible and confident learning, planning, self-monitoring and management, consolidation and review.
- self-esteem for example, coaching to use more adaptive self-talk.
- attitudinal knowledge, beliefs and dispositions.

Aim of coaching; to lead person being coached to

- identify solution ; frame up goals, purposes for change, map these into a pathway
- use existing knowledge
- scaffolding change in knowledge
- consolidating, reviewing change, how it can be used, transferred, generalised
- ensuring individuals can see themselves making progress
- take responsibility for on-going management of performance in area being coached-
knowledge of self-management and self regulation

How coaching differs from other instructional models. In extent to which it involves

In coaching	What coach will do
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• coach and student negotiate explicit goals, follow goal selection by the student; 'learner-coach partnership'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• have staff member identify aspects of teaching she / he is interested in developing further, changing, fine tuning.• accept aspects identified and assist staff to clarify aspects, to narrow and sharpen them, use supportive questioning, discussion, negotiation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a specific focus, for example, to improve how well a person reads, interacts with peers, teaches science. Traditional teaching and counselling have a broader focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• coach and staff member work on specifying clearly the desired goal or outcome; what will be done / achieved, when, under what conditions, etc.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a self-motivated student committed overtly to achieving outcome and challenged to learn who continues spontaneously to pursue goal, practise, explore options between coaching sessions. 	<p>coach uses intrinsic motivation conditions; encourages staff member to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> control and manage the learning, increasingly take responsibility for it teach others. see their competence increasing, decide how they will monitor progress, balance the difficulty of tasks organize learning into parts, develop action plans decide how feedback will be provided work collaboratively focus on self improvement, improving competence respond to challenges, interest, take risks, engage positively with tasks, increase time spent, persist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognising, drawing on, valuing and auditing what students know and the belief that they can achieve the goals; 'unlocking the person's potential to maximise performance'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assist staff to self-audit their relevant knowledge, see what they know / can do, show a valuing of this encourage staff to plan ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a recognition of the knowledge and skills of the coach. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a student-instructor interaction characterised by high-trust partnership, two-way feedback that fosters personal creativity, risk-taking and exploring new options and ways of operating. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accounting for context in which the learning will occur (for example, organizational dynamics and politics in which learning will occur); the learning is 'contextualised' 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the student monitoring progress to the goal, uses new knowledge as self-driven procedures in their own contexts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourage staff to monitor and map their progress along the coaching pathway, celebrate successes publicly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> having a limited duration or a limited criterion level of performance. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a trend to effective self-managed learning. 	

What are the characteristics of a coach ?

- assists learner to identify the preferred outcome, negotiate and unpack this, establish possible pathway
- assess entry level of performance
- assess approach to learning
- modifies, negotiates pathway, might use contract, specify indicators of progress, what might be expected
- implements teaching
- scaffolding, two aspects; support and encouragement, prompts that are gradually withdrawn
- trend from attention demanding to automatic performance
- assess the influence of coaching on performance
- provide expert advice, look at an issue from different perspectives or slants, for example, "What if ...?" or "Have you ...?", introduce other people (resource investigator)
- be truthful
- assist student to prioritise, to focus on what is important
- give constructive feedback that highlights how and for what purpose
- build trust, massage self esteem
- encourages, motivates, inspires
- develop skills
- observe strategically, listen strategically
- challenge thoughts, ideas, question
- be a role model
- build rapport
- be available
- able to communicate effectively
- interpret and analyse performance, goals, progress, operate objectively in a data-based way

- reflect, refract performance
- be a marketer, sell ideas
- interface between team and others ---> balancing an objective perspective.

Key steps in implementing a coaching program

The aim of the coaching is to foster active, self-regulated learning in the presence of positive feedback. Although coaches working in educational situations differ in how they implement the teaching regime, most would include at least some of the following student-coach interactions:

<i>How will you</i>	
<p><i>introduce the coaching approach.</i>; negotiate a set of ground rules by which the coach and learner operate</p>	<p>Reality of coaching - you won't get immediate results Negotiate the need for change Explain coaching program -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how it differs from other types of intervention • why it is appropriate in this case <p>Examples of ground rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what do you expect re input, gradual control and management of program • what are regarded as acceptable 'rules of play'
<p><i>select and negotiate goals with student.</i> make these explicit., foster the belief that the learner can achieve the goals, develop a reasonably specific focus.</p> <p>Students come to the coaching context having selected a desired outcome that may be broad and diffuse. They work with coach to decide mutually accepted specific, measurable goals.</p>	<p>Describe key outcomes to be targeted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attitudinal change, build self-concept? • need to help staff to proceduralise, contextualise ? • has staff tried other forms of change without success ? • do you need to foster different ways of thinking ? • do you need to work against the effect of peer group influence ? <p>Coach asks student to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visualise what you would like as outcomes, imagine them taking place, list key words • how would you like the situation to be different ? What would you know/ think / be doing that is different ? Where could you improve ? • what are your 'wish list' outcomes, operationalise them; say what you will be able to, in what contexts, with what level of accuracy, in what time frame • reality-test the goals, in terms of their feasibility, relevance, time constraints
<p><i>engage what learner knows :</i> recognise, draw on, value and audit what the learner knows, how learner learns, help learner recode what they know to match the teaching, prepare the learner attitudinally and emotionally.</p> <p><i>develop an impression of how student learns</i> Coach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forms impression of how student learns, reflect on how to match coaching to it. • is an active listener- observer, compiles impressions, • reflects on how to direct students' desire or creative tension for achieving the goals. 	<p>establish relevant base level knowledge / ability / attitudes; investigate what student knows/feels/can do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiences, imagery knowledge • verbal knowledge; able to talk about ideas • procedural knowledge; able to do <p>Value existing knowledge. Help them see how what they know links with where they need to go</p> <p>Earlier attempts at learning the ideas, when, why they were successful / unsuccessful</p> <p>Attitude, disposition of learner to ideas/ skills to be learnt</p> <p>Help them 'dump' negative thoughts, garbage. Acknowledge negative feelings and help them see how coaching will help them move on</p> <p>Sometimes it is better to depersonalise the need for change initially - talk generally about the outcome- validate group goal setting where there may be a personal loss (eg individual teacher change)</p> <p>The coach may note, for example, whether a student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinks about the topic more in imagery, contexted, procedural or verbal ways. • learns better through modelling, exploring, being told. • responds better to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation schedules. • thinks about ideas in more analytic / global ways.

organise the learning environment to facilitate progress

- develop impression of how a learner learns and self concept as a learner
- allow self-motivation, response to challenge develop
- negotiate how the coaching will be delivered, how feedback will be delivered. What are the preferred types of feedback ?
- develop a progress-monitoring schedule. How will the student monitor progress, expect to be able to do as the program proceeds ?
- examine ways of organising the learning environment to facilitate progress and negotiate how the coaching will be delivered.
- help students recode what they know to match the teaching. A mismatch will lead to less effective coaching, students feeling less secure and the learning taking longer.
- prepare the student attitudinally and emotionally, perhaps by dealing with negative self efficacy, feelings of insecurity.

What do you know about how the learner learns and self concept as a learner, level of self-motivation, endurance, importance of goals - analyse earlier learning attempts, the learning outcomes student can display, comments and evaluations by earlier teachers and parents. When was past learning most likely to be successful ? How well does student

- set up and manage practise sessions ?
- ignore distracters
- transfer knowledge, apply and recall what is to be learnt/ Do you need to build transfer, role play into sessions ?
- manage negative self talk in learning / practice
- monitor her / his learning and progress ? Do you need to teach this ?

Negotiate how the coaching will be delivered,

- how coaching sessions will be conducted
- what is expected of student re input, student growth
- gradual control and management of program
- develop a progress-monitoring schedule
- negotiate how feedback will be delivered
- what is regarded as acceptable 'rules of play'
- how often how feedback will be provided
- how apparent confusions, perceived barriers of progress will be handled
- will student have the opportunity to work with peers in peer coaching context, co-operative learning ?

Analyse context/s in which student will learn. How do these need to be managed / modified to allow optimal learning ? Are there distracters that need to be managed ? If student is to learn, practise by her / himself

map a pathway to the outcomes. ;

Clarifying and explicating the pathway helps students see

- the coaching program has an explicit, concrete direction
- student has a high probability of moving along it,
- take account of the context in which the learning will occur

In the peer coaching approach this is planning collaboratively.

Discuss

- a possible action plan that shows explicitly a path student will take. Make sure this in sufficiently small steps but not too daunting. Let student see what she / already knows / can do.
- indicators of progress; what might be achieved, in what order, how these can be used to monitor progress. How will path be described, drawn so that student can use it most effectively ?
- how path can be modified ?

<p><i>implement a part of the teaching ;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scaffold the learning, use cueing and direction • adjust tasks and information in terms of level of difficulty. • provide digestible feedback that focuses on the objectives in a positive, balanced, non-evaluative way • recognise gains made and use questions to assist learner to clarify what did / didn't work, what might they do differently. • help learner consolidate, review change in knowledge how it can be used, transferred. • help learner practise and automatise the new knowledge or skills. • help learner control and gradually manage the learning • teach learner how to plan, monitor their learning progress, bench-mark and review what and how they learnt. • have learner invest positive emotion in the ideas / procedures learnt, to motivate future learning. • help learners store the new knowledge in long term memory, practise retrieving it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set the scene for the present coaching session; • have staff outline goals, outcomes for session, clarify what will be achieved at end of session, where it is going • review earlier success and gains, • stimulate what students know that is relevant, help them see what they know / can do that is part of what they will learn, revise prerequisite knowledge + skills, check they have automatized the relevant knowledge • link what they know with what they will learn, help them recode their knowledge to match the teaching, identify what they don't know / cannot do at this time, unanswered questions • introduce new idea / procedure in a familiar context, model, student practises with verbal scaffolding, receives corrective feedback, learns self script and uses this with skills being learnt, reviews new knowledge, skills, attitudes in that context • have student transfer to other contexts, student imagines applying new knowledge / skill to new situations • have student respond positively to what has been learnt; that it is interesting /useful, moves student along pathway, is something student has learnt / can do • ask student to review/ reflect on how she / he learnt skill / idea • have student generalise the knowledge /skill /attitude; suggest situations in which they could use it, how they could tell when to use it • have student review the change and consolidate it • have student store the new knowledge in long term memory, practise retrieving it, imagining her / himself using it in the future, linking it with what they know. • identify practice regime for intervening period to next session, put in place conditions to optimise practise (memory cues, rehearsal, etc)
<p><i>develop on-going high-trust partnership interaction</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optimise staff contribution to program, show that staff knowledge and contribution to program is valued. • discuss the provision of feedback; how can this be improved ? • celebrate successes, gains • develop and foster the attitude of 'travelling together'
<p><i>help student monitor progress to the desired goal</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have staff map student progress, reflect on gains • have staff visualise outcomes, goals
<p><i>a trend to effective self-managed learning.</i></p>	<p>encourage staff to take more control of the program, to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-orient program, • build knowledge of self-management and self regulation • believe they can achieve the outcomes and see that significant others also believe this • are motivated to achieve these goals • build a positive attitude or motivation to self-change • can visualise a pathway to the goals • believe that the coach can assist them • see that the coach values what they know • see they can learn in their preferred ways • feel they can take risks, explore options, question, seek guidance and support without threat • see how they can have a role in the learning • read and use the feedback provided • consolidate, review, integrate transfer, generalise • see themselves making progress

As the coaching proceeds, the coach and student may re-negotiate the desired outcome and modify the pathway.

