

Seeking Clarity Through Coaching

by Jeffrey Leventry

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As the summer weather fades in the northeast and the cold winds blow to welcome early November, my thrice-weekly bike rides become more of an adventure. I prepare for my 50 minute workout with special riding gear, including insulated gloves and extra layers for warmth. Despite my efforts, on most days the first 8 - 10 minutes of my ride can be “bone chilling” until my body generates heat and my mind adjusts to the elements. For the remaining part of my workout, I **“get lost in the ride”** and block out the cold and wind that attempts to overcome me.

I achieve what many call a “runner’s high” as my body produces a surplus of endorphins. When this happens, I start to see things more clearly which allows me to solve problems and create solutions for issues that have dogged me for days. On average, I am able to solve about 2 – 3 problems during my ride as the normal interference fades away during my workout.

In like manner, creating the right environment for a productive coaching session is very important. For most of us, daily interference from a variety of sources prevents us from seeing situations clearly. As a result, the potential solutions to the issues or problems we face are unclear because of the obstacles that stand in our way.

During my coaching sessions, I invite the coachee to **“get lost in the coaching experience”** and block out the things that interfere with seeing the situation clearly. In order to create the right environment and achieve clarity I ask the coachee to meet with me one-on-one in a conference room that is away from his / her office space. I also request that we take a break from e-mail, voice mail and handheld devices that distract us from the task at hand. When we do this, we are able to tap into the individual’s inherent capacity and discuss the situation with a sense of focus that permits creative thought and an exchange of ideas.

As I ask questions that help us understand the goal of our discussion and the coachee’s current reality, we begin to uncover the real issues and set the stage for developing options that can be explored further.

By the end of the coaching session, we normally uncover solutions that were unclear hours or days before because of interference and / or obstacles. We are also ready to articulate the way forward as the coachee makes choices for action, including next steps, milestones and other elements of the coaching action plan.

In closing, my role as a thought partner in the coaching session is to bring clarity to the issue and help the coachee develop a plan of action for tackling it. When we create the right environment and eliminate interference we optimize the value of the session and are able to develop a plan of action that ensures the coachee’s success!