

The Leader as COACH



SPROUT

A SIMPLE AND ACCESSIBLE
COACHING MODEL

Ed Temple, MCC



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Book Recommendations

"Through his own dedicated commitment to self and others, Ed delivers a resource that supports leaders in applying the foundations of coaching in all areas of life. As a colleague and friend who has personally felt the impact of Ed's gifts, you'll find his wisdom comes from an applied, practical perspective. If your goals include maximizing influence and realizing the potential in others, this book is for you!"

Lisa Strogal, CEO at ShadowLight Global

"Coaching cultures are emerging as one of the most important elements of employee engagement in today's world of work. Ed leverages his extensive coaching experience to develop an easy-to-use and easy-to-implement coaching model for leaders. If you are looking to establish a coaching culture in your organization, this model is an ideal place to begin."

Rod Miller, Past President CPHR Alberta

"Ed has spent thousands of hours honing his craft as a coach, facilitator, and community builder. This handbook contains valuable coaching stories and tools to help leaders shift to a coach-like approach. Every leader can benefit from The Leader as Coach."

Jason Donkersgoed, Director Lethbridge College Extension

"Ed's coaching process has brought me many new insights. This book is a gift to leaders looking to level up."

Braeden Pauls, CEO at FÜM | Accelerating humanities breakup with destructive habits through flavored air

Acknowledgments

I am profoundly grateful to the individuals and organizations who have played a significant role in shaping my journey as a coach and in the creation of the "The Leader as Coach" Their unwavering support, expertise, and encouragement have been instrumental in my growth and development as a coach.

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To my team of editors and contributors, Tambourine, Matthew, Ken, Rod, Brent, Braeden and Cody thank you for your valuable input. You helped me see things in new ways through your comments and observations.

To my spouse, Hannah, I am eternally grateful for being an outstanding coach, thought partner and person to contend with. You enrich my life in so many ways. Your support and guidance have challenged me to see the world with greater diversity and depth. Your belief in me has been a constant source of motivation and encouragement.

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challenged me to be the best version of myself as a coach. Your growth through your teen years has been a testament to the power of coaching in nurturing potential and fostering personal development.

To my predeceased parents, I owe such a debt which can only be paid forward. To my dad David, who challenged me to think. To my mom Linda, who gave me my energy and passion.

In conclusion, I owe a debt of gratitude to all those mentioned and countless others who have touched my life and contributed to my journey as a coach. Your support, insights, and belief in my abilities have made this book possible, and I am forever thankful for your presence in my life.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Ed Temple, MCC

Part 1 | Context for Coaching

1. | My Coaching Origin Story

*"That's the beauty of coaching. You get to touch lives.
You get to make a difference."*

Morgan Wootten

This book, "The Leader as Coach," is born out of two transformative stories that have shaped my journey as a leader and coach. These stories reflect the profound impact coaching can have on individuals and their relationships, both personally and professionally.

The first story takes me back to my high school years when I met my best friend at a ranch camp. Despite our contrasting backgrounds - I was a jock, and he was a wrangler - an uncommon friendship blossomed, one that has lasted a lifetime. Little did I know that his father, the late Dr. Bob Rose, would introduce me to my purpose in life. Years later as a young executive leader, Bob became my first coach. I asked Bob about coaching and why he became a coach as he was already a very successful leader. He described coaching as a **sacred space**, a place where a coach goes "behind the curtain" with a leader. Bob spoke about what happens when you are able to make a tremendous impact on a leader and the rippling effect on everyone the leader encounters. This concept captivated me, and I embarked on a journey to become a better leader through coaching. To my surprise, as I grew and developed as a leader, everything in my life changed for the better - my relationships, my family, and my profession. I realized that coaching is about helping people become better humans, not just better leaders who deliver results.

The second story revolves around a pivotal moment with my then six-year-old son, Elijah. Back then, early in my career, I was driven and focused on accomplishing great results while I was learning and applying coaching skills with my team members at work. One evening, however, when I arrived home, Elijah innocently asked, "Why does work get the good daddy, and we get the grouchy daddy?" His words hit me hard and left me devastated. Previously I would have made an excuse or said something sweet to get him to move on. But coaching had

instilled self-reflective skills equipping me to take pause and truly consider the impact of my actions. This moment became a catalyst for my personal growth and development. I realized that coaching is not just about achieving professional success; it is about nurturing meaningful relationships, fostering personal growth, and being the best version of ourselves for those who matter most.

This handbook is a testament to the power of coaching and its ability to transform individuals and their interactions. It provides a practical framework, the Sprout model, which embodies the essence of non-directive coaching. Through this model, leaders will discover the art of coaching which includes such things as active listening, powerful questioning, and creating a safe space for growth and exploration. It is my belief that by embracing coaching as a key leadership competency, we can make a profound impact on our teams, organizations, and ourselves.

I wrote this book with the vision to democratize coaching, making coaching skills accessible to every leader. Believing that "leadership is influence," a concept first articulated by John C. Maxwell, I am passionate about empowering individuals to become leaders in their own right by learning coaching skills. I firmly believe that if you can influence others, you are a leader, and coaching provides a powerful tool for enhancing that influence. My goal is to break down the barriers that often limit access to coaching and ensure that these valuable skills are available to everyone. By equipping leaders with non-directive coaching skills, we can create a supportive and collaborative environment where individuals can help each other become their best versions. Ultimately, my hope is that this book serves as a catalyst for personal and professional growth, fostering a global community of empowered leaders committed to driving positive change and unlocking their full potential.

Coaching is not merely about achieving results; it is about helping people become better humans. As you embark on this journey of learning coaching skills through the non-directive approach, may this handbook serve as your guide, empowering you to develop the skills, mindset, and presence of a leader as a coach. Together, let us unlock the potential within ourselves and those we lead, creating a ripple effect of invaluable change and growth.

2. | Handbook Introduction

"Coaching is designed to be the leadership approach of the 21st century."

James Belasco

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, the role of leaders has significantly changed. Gone are the days of top-down, command-and-control leadership styles. Instead, leaders are now expected to inspire, empower, and develop their teams to reach their full potential. To meet these expectations, a new approach to leadership has emerged—one that embraces coaching as a fundamental skill set. "The Leader as Coach" is a comprehensive guide for leaders seeking to develop their coaching abilities and create a culture of growth and excellence within their organizations.

This book is designed to equip leaders with the tools, techniques, and mindset required to adopt a non-directive coaching approach. At the heart of this handbook is the Sprout coaching model, a powerful framework that empowers leaders to guide their team members toward achieving their goals through self-discovery and personal growth. Sprout, a gardening metaphor using the concepts of Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest—represents the different phases of the coaching process.

Throughout the book, readers will embark on a transformative journey of self-reflection, skill development, and practical application. The Sprout model is demonstrated in various leadership scenarios through real-life coaching examples. By embracing the non-directive coaching approach, leaders will learn how to create an environment that fosters trust, collaboration, and innovation. They will discover the art of asking powerful questions, active listening, and providing meaningful observations—skills that are essential for empowering team members and unlocking their potential.

The Sprout model, inspired by the natural cycle of growth, offers a valuable structure for leaders to embrace their role as coaches and create transformative experiences for their team members.

By following the four distinct phases of Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest, leaders can tap into the innate wisdom and capabilities of their team members, empowering them to set meaningful goals, explore possibilities, make informed choices, and ultimately achieve remarkable results. This book takes you on a journey through real-life coaching examples, highlighting how the Sprout model enables leaders to cultivate an environment of trust, curiosity, and self-discovery, where individuals thrive and reach their fullest potential. Through the pages that follow, you will learn the art of non-directive coaching, honing your skills to become a leader who not only inspires but also guides others towards personal and professional excellence. Get ready to see how coaching can transform your approach to leadership and develop excellence in others by embracing the Sprout model.

3. | Sprout Coaching App

"Technology is best when it brings people together."

Matt Mullenweg

Introducing the user-friendly Sprout app – your ultimate companion on the journey to becoming a skilled leader as coach. Download the Sprout app in the app store searching under "Sprout Coaching." The Sprout app is a tool to help you develop coaching skills as a leader.

Whether you're a seasoned leader aiming to refine your coaching skills or a newcomer aspiring to inspire growth as a leader, the Sprout app's tailored Sprout questions cater to your specific requirements. Offering a comprehensive set of inquiries spanning Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest phases, these questions empower you to confidently have any non-directive coaching conversation with effectiveness. The Sprout questions feature an intuitive interface, seamlessly guiding you through the coaching process's diverse stages. With a rich assortment of queries for each phase, you'll always have the right prompts at your disposal, ensuring you never lack for words or miss a strategic opportunity. Whether engaging in coaching conversations with employees, colleagues, or family members, the Sprout questions in the app equips you with the essential tools to cultivate trust, facilitate meaningful dialogues, and propel positive change.

As leaders embark on the journey of acquiring coaching skills, we present three impactful ways to utilize this app for skill acquisition and practice through the Sprout coaching model:

1:1 Coaching

The 1:1 Coaching approach within the Sprout app is designed to facilitate coaching practice with various individuals, including direct leaders, peers, supervisors, and others. This method provides a structured framework for honing coaching skills. It involves setting a mutually agreed upon time for the coaching session, utilizing the Sprout coaching model's open-ended questions to guide the conversation, and then concluding with a reflective debrief with the Coachee. Through this approach,

practitioners gain insights into the nuances of non-directive coaching while fostering meaningful conversations that lead to growth.

Pod Coaching:

In the context of learning coaching skills, the Pod Coaching approach brings together a cohort of 3-4 like-minded learners to engage in collaborative practice. Each member takes on distinct roles as Coach, Coachee, and Observer/s. This method fosters a dynamic learning environment where participants rotate roles, enabling them to experience coaching from different perspectives. Pod Coaching involves selecting roles, determining a coaching practice time, applying the Sprout coaching questions to guide the session, and concluding with a facilitated conversation led by the Observer. This comprehensive approach encourages constructive feedback, skill development, and an appreciation for the diverse aspects of the coaching process.

Reciprocal Coaching:

Reciprocal Coaching, an integral practice method offered by the Sprout app, emphasizes partnership and shared learning. This approach involves pairing with a like-minded leader who is also on the journey of acquiring coaching skills through Sprout. Together, you set a coaching session time, employ the Sprout questions to navigate the coaching model, and then engage in a reflective discussion post-coaching. Through this dialogue, the Coach evaluates their performance, the Coachee assesses the coaching's impact, and both parties exchange valuable insights. This reciprocal exchange of perspectives enriches the learning experience and contributes to the development of effective coaching strategies.

Download the Sprout app today and embark on a transformative coaching journey. Join a community of leaders committed to fostering growth, empowerment, and exceptional results. Don't wait – start coaching with purpose and impact today!

4. | When do Leaders Coach?

"Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others."

John Maxwell

Leadership is a dynamic and multifaceted role that demands a diverse set of skills and attributes. Beyond just providing direction, leaders must be adept at understanding the complexities of human behavior, building meaningful relationships, and inspiring their teams to achieve collective goals. They must possess emotional intelligence to empathize with the challenges faced by their team members and lead with compassion. Adaptability and strategic thinking are essential as leaders navigate through uncertain and ever-changing environments. In the future, non-directive coaching emerges as a crucial leadership skill. By embracing a coaching approach, leaders can empower their team members to unlock their full potential, foster a culture of continuous learning, and develop the autonomy and confidence needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and fast-paced world. Non-directive coaching enables leaders to facilitate self-discovery, drive innovation, and create an inclusive and high-performing workplace, making it a valuable asset for effective leadership in the future.

Equipping the leader as coach begins with the important question, when should the leader coach? This is something that will be mastered uniquely by each leader, situation, context and over time with practice. This is something far better perceived as a journey and not a destination. On this journey, there are two key elements that the leader as coach needs to keep in mind. First, the challenge of when to use a directive approach versus a non-directive approach, demonstrated through the Sprout model. Second, the important difference between types of feedback conversations for which the Sprout model is best suited to empower.

4.1 | Directive vs Non-Directive

"Coaching is one of the most effective leadership styles that can transform, empower and unlock people's potential. Ask more, give advice less, and elevate your impact forever."

Farshad Asl

Directive coaching and non-directive coaching represent two distinct approaches to coaching, each with its own advantages and considerations. However, the non-directive coaching approach, as embodied by the Sprout model, offers unique benefits that empower coachees and facilitate their personal and professional growth.

In directive coaching, the coach takes on a more prescriptive role, providing specific advice, solutions, and directions to the coachee. This approach can be useful in situations where the answers are obvious and clear, quick decisions or immediate actions are required or the problems are simple. Examples of when a directive approach is helpful is when a coachee is new to a job, gaining technical skills, needing to follow procedures or policy, issues that require compliance or is missing readily available information. There are many situations where a directive approach is necessary, helpful and appropriate. However, if the issue is complex and a non-directive approach is relevant, a directive approach may restrict the coachee's autonomy, limit creativity, and not add to long-term development. The directive coach assumes the role of an expert or authority figure, which can inadvertently create dependence on the coach's input.

Using sports as an example, it makes sense for a coach to take a more directive approach when working with a youth learning to play a sport. When they first start a sport it would involve providing clear instructions, giving specific tasks and assignments, and closely supervising their progress. The leader assumes the role of an instructor, guiding the youth through the basics of the sport and teaching them the fundamental skills and techniques. For example, in a basketball practice, the coach may break down the dribbling technique into step-by-step instructions, instruct the youth to practice specific drills, and provide immediate feedback to help them improve their skills.

The coach, using a directive approach ensures that the youth have a solid foundation and understanding of the sport. They focus on teaching the necessary skills, rules, and strategies to build a strong base for future development. The coach's role is to provide structure, guidance, and correction, allowing the youth to gain confidence and competence in their athletic abilities.

It's important to note that the directive approach is particularly effective when working with beginners who have little to no experience in the sport. As the youth gain proficiency and more knowledge, the coach can gradually transition to a more non-directive approach, encouraging their autonomy and decision-making skills. The goal is to create a supportive and empowering environment that fosters both skill development and the enjoyment of the sport.

On the other hand, non-directive coaching, exemplified by the Sprout model, emphasizes the coachee's ownership of their growth and fosters self-discovery. The coach adopts a facilitative role, encouraging the coachee to explore their thoughts, perspectives, and potential solutions. By actively listening, asking open-ended questions and providing a supportive environment, the non-directive coach empowers the coachee to tap into their own knowledge, reflect on their mindset, reflect on hindrances and gain insights on what may be getting in the way. This approach promotes self-reflection, creativity, and autonomy, leading to more sustainable and impactful results focused on growth and development.

Non-directive coaching recognizes that individuals possess unique knowledge, experiences, and capabilities. It respects the coachee's expertise in their own life and work, encouraging them to set their goals, uncover their strengths, and identify solutions that align with their values and aspirations. By fostering self-awareness and self-reliance, non-directive coaching cultivates a sense of ownership and accountability in the coachee, empowering them to make informed decisions and take meaningful action.

The Sprout model provides a powerful framework that embraces the values of autonomy, self-discovery, and personal agency. It enables coaches to create a safe and supportive space for coachees to explore, reflect, and grow. By adopting a non-directive approach, coaches can unlock the full potential of their coachees, helping them develop their skills,

gain confidence, and navigate their own unique journeys of transformation.

Returning to the sports metaphor, a leader taking a non-directive approach in coaching is more like coaching an elite professional athlete where the coach recognizes the athlete's expertise and respects their autonomy. Instead of providing explicit instructions and guidance, the leader acts as a facilitator, creating an environment for the athlete to explore their own strengths, weaknesses, and strategies. The coach encourages the athlete to set their own goals, make decisions, and take ownership of their training and performance.

For example, in coaching a professional tennis player, the coach may engage in open-ended conversations about the athlete's game, asking thought-provoking questions to help them reflect on their strengths, mindset, beliefs and areas for improvement. The coach allows the athlete to identify their own training needs, set personal goals, and devise strategies to achieve them. Rather than imposing a rigid training regimen, the coach collaborates with the elite athlete's internal motivation to perform and collaborates with them to develop a personalized plan that aligns with their unique abilities and aspirations.

The non-directive approach recognizes that elite athletes have a deep understanding of their sport and possess valuable insights into their own performance. The coach acts as a sounding board, providing support, encouragement, and guidance when needed. This approach fosters the athlete's sense of ownership, responsibility, and self-motivation, leading to greater engagement, growth, and success.

In summary, a leader using a non-directive coach approach with an elite professional athlete empowers the athlete to take the lead in their own development. By fostering autonomy, self-reflection, and decision-making, the coach helps the athlete tap into their full potential, enabling them to reach new heights in their career.

In today's complex and rapidly changing business landscape, the role of a leader as a coach has become increasingly crucial. As leaders, adopting a coaching mindset allows us to navigate the challenges and uncertainties with greater agility and effectiveness. When faced with complex problems, particularly those involving people, relationships, independent work,

innovation, creativity and more, non-directive coaching becomes paramount. Unlike situations that have clear-cut answers based on technical expertise, complex problems demand a different approach that fosters critical thinking, self-reflection, and collaborative problem-solving.

Taking a non-directive approach allows leaders to leverage the collective intelligence and diverse perspectives of their team members. Instead of providing quick solutions or dictating the course of action, leaders create an environment where individuals feel safe to explore possibilities, share ideas, and take ownership of their own development. By adopting a non-directive stance, leaders encourage team members to think critically, ask powerful questions, and challenge their assumptions, leading to more innovative and effective problem-solving.

Moreover, the non-directive coaching approach aligns with the principles of empowerment and growth. It recognizes that individuals have unique experiences, strengths, and insights, and encourages them to tap into their own wisdom and resourcefulness. By trusting team members to find their own solutions, leaders foster a sense of ownership, accountability, and self-reliance. This approach also promotes continuous learning and development, as team members become more adept at navigating complex challenges and adapting to evolving circumstances.

In summary, the importance of a leader as a coach lies in their ability to recognize when a non-directive approach is needed, particularly in complex problems that lack clear-cut answers and involve human dynamics. By embracing a non-directive coaching approach, leaders empower their team members, unlock their potential, and cultivate a culture of collaboration, critical thinking, and continuous learning. Through effective coaching, leaders can navigate the complexities of the modern business world with greater agility, resilience, and success.

4.2 | Types of Feedback

"The manager needs to have a coaching mindset, looking for opportunities to help others learn.... The coach and coachee relationship must be one that rests on a foundation of trust that can allow the coaching dialogue to take place."

James M. Hunt

There are many other applications of using coaching skills as a leader but a key and most common opportunity for non-directive coaching is in the context of feedback conversations between a leader (coach) and a direct report (coachee). There are numerous ways to categorize or describe various types of feedback. For simplicity and applying a non-directive coaching we have identified three types of feedback categories: 1) Performance, 2) Positive and 3) Development. All three of these types of feedback can be enhanced by utilizing aspects of non-directive coaching. Development feedback is the category that most aligns and benefits from the non-directive coaching approach.

The first type, and the one that leaders typically think of as the most common, is performance feedback. This is also often framed as constructive feedback which can be misleading as the typical experience of this is negative and critical resulting in a defensive response from the coachee. This happens due to the fact that performance feedback requires judgment from the leader and the judgment typically results in people not feeling safe and responding in a defensive manner. In neuroscience, the defensive response aligns with what is known as an amygdala hijack where the response is either to fight back, flee or freeze. Any of these responses do not result in a person's best thinking, which happens in the prefrontal cortex. Safety is required for a person to engage their prefrontal cortex where creativity, innovation and openness to change happens.

Performance feedback is where the coach provides specific direction and guidance regarding what the coachee is doing right, what needs improvement, and what should be corrected. This is typically done through the lens of the leader making judgements of what is correct or the best approach. This feedback aims to address performance issues and align

the coachee's actions with the desired outcomes. When not navigated effectively, performance feedback often creates anxiety for leaders and has high risks for hurting relationships due to misunderstandings, judgements made by the leader, and negative responses from the direct report due to their experience of not feeling safe.

The second type is positive feedback, where the coach acknowledges and appreciates the coachee's efforts, growth, and accomplishments. This feedback serves to motivate and reinforce positive behaviors and outcomes, fostering a culture of recognition and appreciation. This type of feedback is often overlooked or undervalued in building relationships with trust and safety.

Research supports the notion that focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses can lead to greater growth and development. Several studies have shown that individuals who leverage their strengths and talents tend to be more engaged, motivated, and satisfied in their work. When people are given the opportunity to use and develop their strengths, they experience a sense of competence and fulfillment, which contributes to their overall well-being and professional growth. One key finding comes from the field of positive psychology, which emphasizes the importance of identifying and cultivating strengths. Research by Gallup, for example, has consistently shown that employees who have the opportunity to focus on their strengths are more likely to be productive and perform at their best. Furthermore, organizations that adopt a strengths-based approach tend to have higher employee engagement and retention rates.

Focusing on strengths also allows individuals to tap into their natural talents and abilities, enhancing their learning and development potential. When people are encouraged to build upon their existing strengths, they are more likely to experience a sense of mastery and continuous improvement. By leveraging their strengths, individuals can overcome challenges more effectively and achieve higher levels of performance.

However, it is important to note that addressing weaknesses should not be completely disregarded. While emphasizing strengths can have significant benefits, addressing skill gaps or areas for improvement are essential for valuable growth and development. The key is to strike a balance between leveraging strengths and addressing weaknesses, ensuring that individuals

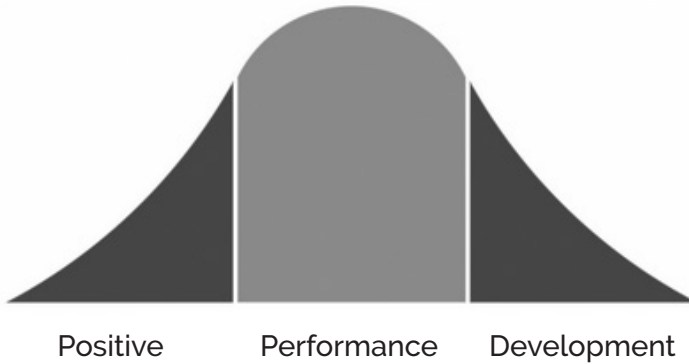
have the necessary support through coaching to maximize their potential. Taking a non-directive approach can enhance the exploration and discovery of strategies to leverage strengths or discover insights on how to improve weaknesses.

Lastly, there are developmental feedback conversations, where a non-directive coach approach is particularly effective. The goal of these conversations is to empower the coachee's professional growth and development by asking open-ended questions that encourage reflection, self-assessment, exploration of new perspectives, creating their own solutions, committing to actions and being accountable to self. Instead of providing answers or solutions, the non-directive coach creates a safe space for the coachee to explore their own thoughts, ideas, gaps, beliefs, potential solutions and choose how to move forward. This approach stimulates critical thinking, encourages autonomy, and nurtures a sense of ownership over one's own development journey.

In the context of developmental feedback conversations, the non-directive coach approach allows the coachee to tap into their own wisdom, insights, and capabilities. By posing open-ended questions demonstrated by the Sprout model, the coach helps the coachee gain clarity, expand their thinking, and explore different possibilities. This approach fosters self-awareness, promotes self-reflection, and encourages the coachee to take ownership of their own professional growth. It empowers the coachee to set their own goals, identify areas for development, and devise action plans that align with their aspirations, unique strengths and organizational goals. The leader as coach can provide developmental feedback, confirm direction, encourage growth and support the coachees chosen accountability as part of the non-directive coaching. Most importantly, the non-directive leader as coach serves as a facilitator and guide, supporting the coachee's journey of self-discovery and empowering them to unlock their full potential.

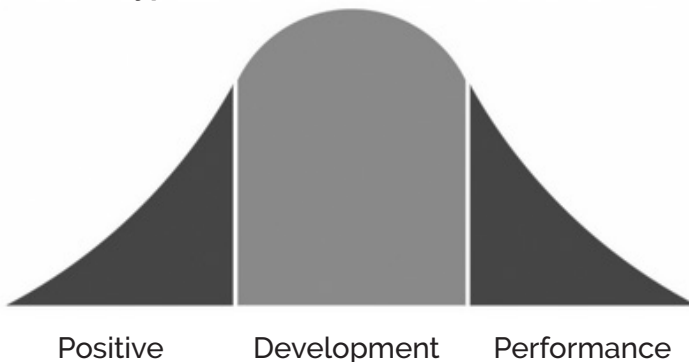
The distribution of the three types of feedback conversations—positive, performance, and developmental—can be visualized as a bell curve, with the majority of conversations falling within the realm of performance feedback. Traditionally, leaders tend to start with a higher emphasis on performance feedback, as it focuses on the leader's current knowledge, addressing immediate issues, correcting errors, and ensuring alignment with the leaders goals and expectations.

Types of Feedback Conversations



However, as leaders acquire coaching skills and become proficient in the non-directive approach, they recognize the transformative power of developmental feedback conversations making these types of conversations more common and routine. Leaders who embrace the role of a coach understand that fostering a culture of growth and development is essential for building strong teams and high-performing organizations. By shifting the focus towards developmental feedback conversations, leaders create an environment where individuals are not only recognized for their current achievements but are also encouraged to continuously improve and reach their full potential. This approach fosters a sense of trust, psychological safety, and empowerment within the team, as individuals feel valued and supported in their professional growth.

Types of Feedback Conversations



In a coach-led culture, the expectation becomes one of continuous learning, personal development, and the pursuit of excellence. Leaders serve as facilitators of growth, guiding their team members through self-reflection, goal-setting, and action planning. By embracing a non-directive coaching approach, leaders empower individuals to take ownership of their development, explore new possibilities, and unleash their untapped potential. This shift to focus and emphasize from performance feedback to developmental feedback creates a positive ripple effect throughout the organization, enhancing engagement, motivation, and overall team effectiveness.

The Sprout model for non-directive coaching can be a transformative journey for leaders to become more skilled at non-directive coaching effectively normalizing developmental feedback conversations. By learning and trusting the process, leaders can unlock the full potential of their team members, foster a culture of collaboration and innovation, and navigate complex challenges with greater ease. It requires a shift in mindset from being a directive leader focused on performance feedback to becoming a facilitator of growth through developmental feedback conversations using a non-directive coach approach. By honing their coaching skills, leaders can empower individuals to discover their own solutions, think critically, and take ownership of their own success. The Sprout model provides a roadmap for leaders to navigate the intricacies of coaching conversations, helping them create a safe and supportive space where individuals can explore, learn, and thrive. By committing to learning and applying the principles of non-directive coaching, leaders can unleash the untapped potential within their teams and drive sustainable success in today's dynamic business environment.

5. | Introduction to the Sprout Coaching Model

"Probably my best quality as a coach is I ask a lot of questions and let the person come up with the answers."

Phil Dixon

The Sprout coaching model is a powerful framework designed to guide non-directive coaching conversations and facilitate personal growth and development. Inspired by the natural process of a Plant's growth, the model consists of four distinct phases: Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest. Each phase represents a crucial aspect of the coaching journey, offering unique opportunities for exploration, reflection, and action.

The first phase, Plant, sets the foundation for the coaching session. In this phase, the coach facilitates the coachee in choosing the topic and goal of the session. It empowers the coachee to take ownership of their coaching experience and ensures that the conversation aligns with their needs and aspirations. By planting the seeds of intention, the coach creates a safe and focused space for exploration and growth.

Moving on to the Water phase, the coach becomes a partner in the coachee's journey, supporting them in delving deeper into their situation and exploring potential options for moving forward. The coach actively listens, asks powerful questions, and encourages the coachee to tap into their inner wisdom and resources. The Water phase is all about nurturing growth, helping the coachee gain clarity and perspective while fostering a sense of empowerment and self-discovery.

Next comes the Prune phase, where the coach invites the coachee to explore various ideas and make choices to propel them forward. Here, the coachee is encouraged to critically examine their thoughts, beliefs, values, emotions, identity and assumptions, considering what might be holding them back or hindering their progress. The coach facilitates this process by asking thought-provoking questions, challenging limiting beliefs, and guiding the coachee in identifying actions that align with their goals and aspirations.

It's important to note that the Water and Prune phases in the Sprout Coaching model are not strictly sequential and can be interchangeable depending on the needs and dynamics of the coaching conversation. While Water typically involves exploring the coachee's situation and generating options, Prune focuses on evaluating and making choices. However, in practice, these phases may blend and overlap as the coach adapts to the coachee's unique circumstances and coaching goals. The coach may fluidly switch between asking exploratory questions (Water) and challenging assumptions or encouraging decision-making (Prune) to ensure a comprehensive and effective coaching experience. This flexibility allows for a dynamic and responsive coaching process that meets the coachee's needs at the moment.

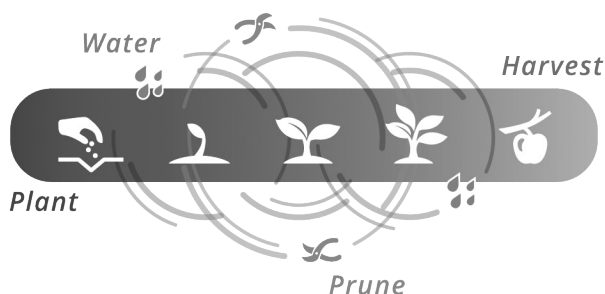
Finally, the Harvest phase brings the coaching session to a close, capturing learning and focusing on choosing and committing to a specific course of action. The coach works collaboratively with the coachee to reflect on the insights gained throughout the session, identifying key takeaways and determining how to move forward. The Harvest phase ensures that the coachee leaves the coaching session with a clear action plan, feeling empowered and motivated to implement their chosen path. Throughout the Sprout coaching model, the coach operates from a non-directive approach, allowing the coachee to drive the conversation and discover their own solutions. The model emphasizes the coachee's autonomy, self-reflection, and commitment to growth, ensuring a transformative coaching experience. By embracing the natural progression of a plant's growth, the Sprout coaching model provides a structured yet flexible framework that nurtures and cultivates the coachee's personal and professional development.

6. | Sprout Visual and Icons






"Coaching will become the model for leaders in the future ... I am certain that leadership can be learned and that terrific coaches ... facilitate learning."

Warren Bennis

The visual graphic for the Sprout model is a captivating representation of the natural growth process, capturing the essence of each phase: Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest. At the left of the graphic a seed is planted symbolizing the coachee's initial goal or topic for the coaching conversation. Radiating forward are flowing water droplets, illustrating the process of exploration and nurturing that takes place during the Water phase, where coach and coachee dive deep into the situation and consider various possibilities. Next, delicate pruning shears come into view, signifying the Prune phase, where the coachee carefully evaluates and makes choices to move forward, eliminating any obstacles in their path. The circulation between Water and Prune demonstrates the flow between these phases navigated in partnerships between coach and coachee. Finally, the image culminates in a bountiful harvest, depicting the tangible outcomes, learnings and commitments that result from the coaching journey. This visual representation serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of coaching, where growth, discovery, and achievement come together to create flourishing and purposeful leadership conversations.



The icons simply capture the essence of each phase helping create a visual anchor for leaders to quickly and easily adopt. The Plant icon features a seedling, representing the initial Planting of a goal or topic for the coaching conversation. It symbolizes the beginning, the potential, and the desire for growth. The Water icon depicts a flowing water droplet, embodying the exploration and nurturing that takes place during the Water phase. It signifies the continuous flow of ideas, insights, options and possibilities. The Prune icon showcases a pair of pruning shears, illustrating the process of evaluation, choice and refinement. It represents the deliberate actions taken to remove obstacles, limiting beliefs, unnecessary elements and making difficult decisions for the greater good for the plant to flourish. Finally, the Harvest icon displays a full grown fruit ready for harvest, reflecting the tangible outcomes, learnings, growth, achievements, and commitments that result from the coaching journey. These icons serve as visual reminders of the transformative nature of coaching, guiding individuals through the phases of growth, exploration, refinement, and fruition.

Logo	 SPROUT
Plant	
Water	
Prune	
Harvest	

7. | Chapter Sections and Concepts

"Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn, rather than teaching them."

Sir John Whitmore

This chapter serves to introduce the key sections and concepts found in each chapter for the four phases of the Sprout coaching model. In 7.1 there is a table provided with shorthand for each of the chapter concepts.

Chapter Sections

Coaching Examples

The "Coaching Example" section of the book serves as a practical illustration of the Sprout coaching model's four phases: Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest. In each chapter dedicated to these phases, readers will find a non-directive coaching conversation example that vividly showcases the application of the specific phase's techniques. These conversations feature a rich array of questions that are intricately aligned with the phase being introduced, allowing readers to witness the power of each phase in action. These coaching demonstrations are centered around diverse topics and scenarios, offering concrete insights into how a leader, acting as a coach, can effectively guide a direct report through real-life challenges. In the Kindle version of the book, these questions are thoughtfully color-coded to correspond with the specific phase of the Sprout model they are exemplifying, creating a visually intuitive guide for readers to grasp the nuances of each phase's techniques.

Personal Context

In the "Personal Context" section of "The Leader, as Coach," readers are invited into a collection of poignant personal narratives that delve into the author's firsthand experiences and transformative journey as a leader harnessing the power of non-directive coaching. Through these illuminating stories, the author

candidly shares invaluable lessons and insights gained while navigating the dynamic realm of leadership. These anecdotes provide a unique window into how the principles of non-directive coaching were applied in real-life scenarios, showcasing the evolution from a conventional leadership style to one that embraces coaching as a catalyst for growth, empowerment, and meaningful change within individuals and teams. As readers immerse themselves in these authentic accounts, they are offered a relatable and impactful exploration of the profound shifts that occur when leadership is reframed through the lens of coaching.

Application

The “Application” section of the book serves as a practical guide for readers to seamlessly integrate the insights and principles discussed in the chapter into their own leadership journeys. This section offers a roadmap for readers to effectively employ non-directive coaching techniques in their leadership roles. It encourages readers to engage in self-reflection, allowing them to consider their unique context and challenges. To personalize the learning, readers are prompted to generate their own open-ended questions tailored to their situations. These questions serve as the linchpin for cultivating a coaching mindset and fostering transformative dialogues. Furthermore, the “Application” section introduces exercises designed to apply the chapter’s concepts. These exercises empower readers to actively practice and internalize their newfound knowledge, honing their ability to lead with coaching principles. By immersing themselves in these exercises, readers can grow more comfortable with the nuances of non-directive coaching, embracing its potential to unlock personal and professional growth while nurturing a culture of empowerment and collaboration within their peers, direct reports and teams.

Chapter Concepts

Summary

Each phase is aligned with two words that help briefly describe what is to happen in this phase of the coaching. These are used as part of the title of the chapter on each phase of the coaching model and not explained further.

Definition

Each concept of a non-directive coaching conversation is clearly defined to provide a solid foundation and understanding. The Definition of each phase of the model ensures clarity for the coach on what this phase is about and how to align with their role as coach in order to best support the coachee in a non-directive coaching conversation. Over time this also ensures a shared understanding of the coaching framework, allowing both the coach and coachee to align their expectations and objectives through the coaching process.

Metaphor

The model incorporates a powerful operative Metaphor that guides the coaching process. The visual Metaphor ensures accessibility for a leader to use the coaching model. One key question represents the Metaphor and anchors this phase of the model. The Metaphor also aims to ensure the coach connects and stays focused on managing the process of coaching while trusting the coachee to manage the topic, discovery and outcomes for the coaching conversation.

Neuroscience

Understanding the basics of how people change through coaching is an essential aspect of the Sprout model. By integrating introductory Neuroscience principles, coaches gain insight into the brain's functioning and its impact on behavior change. This knowledge enhances their ability to support and facilitate meaningful transformations in the coachee. This also helps the coach understand the science behind the methodology of non-directive coaching and most importantly how it is distinct from a directive coach approach.

Importance

Recognizing the Importance and role of each phase of a coaching conversation is crucial to distinguish between what happens and when. Each phase of the model serves a specific purpose in the coaching process. This empowers the coach to stay focused on what they ought to be hearing and seeing for the coachee and to stay true to managing the process of coaching while the coachee manages the topic.

Understanding the significance of these phases enables coaches to navigate the conversation effectively and maximize its impact.

Risk

Identifying and avoiding Risks that may lead to ineffective coaching conversations is a key aspect of the Sprout model. Coaches need to be aware of potential pitfalls in each phase of the coaching model, such as imposing their own agenda, giving advice, or leading the conversation. Each phase has unique Risks which can jeopardize the effectiveness of the coaching. By staying mindful and adhering to the principles of non-directive coaching, coaches can navigate the Risks aligned with the phase of the model in order to create a safe and empowering space for the coachee's growth and self-discovery.

Doing

The Doing concept focuses on the practical application of coaching skills that are easily identifiable and aligned with the coaching model. Here, the coach actively deploys a range of techniques and tools to support the coachee's growth and development and lead them through the coaching model. By skillfully applying these coaching skills, the coach empowers the coachee to gain new insights, challenge assumptions, and expand their perspectives. The Doing phase highlights the coach's active role in facilitating the coachee's learning and progress aligned with the relevant part of the coaching model. These are key Doing skills that a leader as coach can hone over time and which will come more easily through learning the Sprout coaching model.

Being

The Being concept unpacks the significant concepts associated with powerful coaching conversations. Although the Doing is where a Coach needs to start as they learn coaching skills, the priority and heavy lifting of coaching is through the Being. This is where truly transformational coaching conversations happen through such concepts and emphasis on things like presence, connection, silence, space, attentiveness, empathy, non-judgment and more. Through Being the coach enables the coachee to freely explore their thoughts, identity, beliefs, emotions, and aspirations to have transformational insights.

This phase highlights the power of authentic connection and self-awareness of the coach to facilitate meaningful coaching interactions.

Saying

The Saying concept encompasses the common words and phrases the coach may use in a coaching conversation aligned with the coaching model. These include open-ended questions, invitations for reflection, statements of empathy and encouragement, and insightful observations. The coach's choice of language and communication style plays a crucial role in creating a supportive and empowering coaching environment. By carefully selecting their words, the coach can help the coachee explore possibilities, overcome obstacles, and gain clarity on their goals. The Saying concept highlights the coach's skill in guiding the coachee's thought process and fostering meaningful dialogue through what they choose to say in the coaching conversation.

Hearing

The Hearing concept involves actively listening for specific words and cues from the coachee that indicate progression through the phases of the coaching model. The coach pays attention to words the coachee says that are clues for increased self-awareness, shifts in perspective and progression through the model. By the coach attuning their ears to Hearing indicators of growth and insight, the coach can offer feedback for what has been said in powerful coach-like ways. Firstly, the coach asks questions in response to what they are Hearing. Secondly, the coach may provide space and silence which allows the coachee to connect with what they are saying and feeling in the moment and have insights from what they are reflecting on. Thirdly, in response to what the coach is Hearing they may make observations or react to what has been said as a form of feedback. To stay true to a coach's approach it is important that the coach does not judge or interpret what has been said and to leave this in the domain of the coachee. Finally, the coach may respond to what has been said by making statements that help the coachee reflect and connect with what they are saying. For example, "That sounds hard" or "I can't imagine being in your position" or "Interesting". Each of these invite the coachee to continue speaking and exploring which cultivates learning and growth.

ICF Competency

Rooted in the International Coach Federation (ICF) Competency framework, the book explores the essential elements of effective coaching through the lens of the global standards and best practices for all accredited coaches. The competencies highlight important features connected with the Sprout coaching model. Through practical strategies and real-life coaching examples, this handbook equips leaders with the skills and knowledge to learn coaching skills through the valuable framework of the ICF Core Competencies.

7.1 | Table of Concepts

Summary	Two words describing what happens in the phase
Definition	A clear definition for each phase of a coaching conversation
Metaphor	A key question linked to the metaphor of the coaching model
Neuroscience	The basics of how people change through coaching
Importance	Understanding the important role of each phase of coaching
Risk	Identify Risks resulting in ineffective coaching conversations
Doing	The "do" of coaching skills easily identifiable
Being	How the coach is to "be" for powerful coaching conversations
Saying	Common words the coach may say in a coaching conversation
Hearing	What the coach may hear showing progression through coaching
ICF Competency	Linking the model and competencies of global standards

Part 2 | Coaching with Sprout

8. | Plant



"Sometimes reducing a problem to one short sentence can be enough to bring about insight on its own."

David Rock

8.1 | Plant Coaching Example

Coach: Welcome to our coaching session. It's great to have you here. What would you like to be coached on today?

Coachee: (Nervously) I am glad to have the time with you today. I've been struggling with some issues since I took on this new leadership role. I used to be one of the team members, and now I'm leading them. I feel like a fraud, and I'm lacking the confidence I need to succeed in this position.

Coach: Thank you for sharing that with me. It takes courage to acknowledge those feelings. What do you want to walk away with after our conversation today?

Coachee: I want to gain some clarity and confidence in my new role as a leader. I need to overcome this feeling of not belonging and learn how to effectively lead my former peers.

Coach: I understand how important this is for you. What is getting in the way of you feeling like you belong in this new position?

Coachee: I think it's partly the fear of judgment from my team and the pressure to perform at a higher level. I also worry that I don't have the same level of expertise as some of my team members, which makes me doubt my abilities as a leader.

Coach: Those are valid concerns. What makes this important to you today?

Coachee: This is important because I don't want to let myself or my team down. I have a strong desire to be an effective leader, but I feel like I'm not living up to expectations, especially my own.

Coach: It's clear that you care deeply about your team's success and your own growth. How will you know we were successful in this coaching conversation?

Coachee: I'll know we were successful if I gain some clarity on how to approach my leadership role with confidence and if I start to believe in myself more.

Coach: That's a great measure of success. What part of this topic feels most relevant for us to explore today?

Coachee: I think exploring ways to build my confidence and overcome the feeling of being a fraud would be a good starting point.

Coach: What is your goal for this conversation?

Coachee: My goal is to identify specific actions or strategies I can implement to feel more confident as a leader and to address the impostor syndrome I'm experiencing.

8.2 | Plant | Topic and Goal



Personal Context

In my role as the second-in-command (2IC), leading our team meetings had become a familiar routine. Our discussions were often a whirlwind of animated opinions and passionate ideas. With a highly talented team came equally strong viewpoints, and our official leader wielded the strongest of them all. As 2IC, I held considerable influence in these meetings, owing to both my role and my proven leadership efficacy.

One day, amid the familiar cadence of our spirited debates, a realization struck me like a bolt of lightning. It was the youngest, newest, and most junior member of our team who held my attention. While his input during these meetings was sparse, his presence was significant, almost as if he had a secret weapon up his sleeve. He was a maestro of asking thought-provoking questions, and his inquiries often served as lighthouses guiding our ship when it got lost in the tumultuous sea of differing opinions.

It was astonishing how he managed to steer our discussions towards clarity, helping us break free from the shackles of indecision. He displayed a unique knack for posing open-ended questions that unveiled uncharted territories of thought, gradually pulling everyone towards a consensus. With each meeting, I watched as his credibility and influence blossomed. Intrigued by this enigma, I set out to uncover the source of his uncanny ability. It was during an impromptu conversation over coffee that I unearthed the secret to his method. As it turns out, both his parents were seasoned coaches, and he had imbibed a wealth of coaching wisdom from them. His approach, built on a foundation of open-ended inquiries and a focus on facilitating others' thinking, was truly transformative.

The impact of this revelation was profound. I had been witness to firsthand proof of the immense power of non-directive coaching. The junior member, the least experienced among us, had emerged as an invaluable aid by harnessing the potential of well-placed questions. His approach stood as a testament to the idea that fostering discussions and guiding others towards self-discovery through thoughtful inquiry could be more influential than imposing one's opinions.

In that moment, my perspective on leadership shifted. I realized that the conventional approach of asserting authority and imposing solutions could be replaced with a more empowering method. This experience opened my eyes to the potential of a coach's approach – one that prioritizes asking the right questions over providing the right answers. The impact of this young team member's contribution was a testament to the value of adopting a non-directive coaching mindset. If leadership is influence, this team member's influence scaled up exponentially. It was enough to convince me of the value of coaching as a leader.

Definition

Facilitate coachee to choose the topic and goal of the session

In the Sprout non-directive coaching model, the initial phase, known as Plant, focuses on empowering the coachee to take ownership of the coaching process. The core Definition of Plant in this context is to facilitate the coachee in choosing the topic and goal of the coaching session and also known as the coaching agreement among coaching professionals. The coach creates a supportive and non-judgmental space where the coachee feels comfortable exploring their thoughts, desires, and aspirations. By allowing the coachee to determine the focus of the session, the coach honors their autonomy and encourages self-discovery. This Definition aligns with the non-directive approach, as the coach refrains from imposing their own agenda or solutions on the coachee. Instead, they trust in the coachee's inherent wisdom and capacity to identify the most meaningful areas for exploration and growth. The Plant phase establishes a solid foundation for the coaching journey, nurturing the coachee's self-awareness and fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to their own development.

Metaphor

What needs to grow?

The Metaphor associated with the Plant phase of Sprout poses the question, "What needs to grow?" This inquiry evokes the image of a seed being planted, representing the potential for growth and transformation within the coaching journey. Just as a gardener carefully selects the seeds to sow, the coach invites the coachee to explore their inner landscape and identify the areas in their life (professional or personal) that are in need of growth. The Metaphor can be expanded to include the preparation of the garden bed by removing rocks and weeds, tilling the soil, digging the trench and eventually planting the seed. These ideas found in the Metaphor parallel the importance of introspection and self-reflection, prompting the coachee to consider their aspirations, desires, and goals.

By posing the question, it firstly places the coachee at the center of the coaching process, empowering them to identify and prioritize their own coaching topic - preparing the garden bed. By inviting the coachee to define what they want to be coached on, the coach acknowledges their autonomy and ownership of their development journey. Secondly, this question encourages self-reflection and introspection, prompting the coachee to examine their current challenges, goals, and aspirations. It invites the coachee to explore their desires, passions, and areas of growth they wish to focus on. By starting with this question, the coach sets the foundation for a coaching conversation that is tailored to the coachee's specific needs and interests. This question also serves as a catalyst for goal setting, allowing the coachee to define the direction and outcomes they seek to achieve through the coaching process. This encourages a deeper exploration of the coachee's potential and sets the phase for meaningful growth and progress throughout the coaching process.

Neuroscience

Safety and Trust

Neuroscience research has shown that creating a safe and trusting environment is crucial for optimal brain functioning and effective coaching outcomes. When individuals feel safe and trust their coach, their amygdala, the brain's fear center or defensive mechanism, becomes less active, allowing them to

engage in open and honest self-reflection. This promotes a state of psychological safety that enables the coachee to explore their thoughts, emotions, and goals without fear of judgment or negative consequences. Additionally, when safety and trust are established, the brain releases oxytocin, a hormone associated with bonding and social connection, which further enhances the coaching experience. By integrating the Neuroscience concept of safety and trust into the Plant phase, coaches can create a neurologically supportive environment that maximizes the coachee's cognitive and emotional engagement, leading to deeper insights and transformative growth.

The Neuroscience of non-directive coaching encompasses various concepts that contribute to the effectiveness of the Plant phase in the Sprout model. One key concept is neuroplasticity, which refers to the brain's ability to reorganize itself and form new neural connections. Non-directive coaching creates an environment that stimulates neuroplasticity by encouraging self-reflection, exploration, and goal setting. Through focused questioning and active listening, coaches can help coachees activate specific neural pathways and enhance cognitive flexibility, enabling them to develop new perspectives and approaches to their challenges. Another important concept is the brain's reward system, particularly dopamine, which is associated with motivation and goal-directed behavior. By fostering a safe and trusting coaching environment, coaches can activate the brain's reward system, providing a positive reinforcement that supports the coachee's engagement, motivation, and commitment to their goals. Furthermore, non-directive coaching acknowledges the brain's social nature, emphasizing the importance of empathetic listening and emotional attunement. This activates the brain's mirror neuron system, facilitating social connection and empathy between coach and coachee, which enhances the coaching experience and promotes deeper understanding and growth. Overall, understanding and incorporating neuroscience concepts into non-directive coaching practices can optimize the brain's functioning and facilitate transformative change in the Plant phase and beyond.

Importance

Create goal

Focus attention

Align on expectations

The Plant phase in the Sprout non-directive coaching model holds immense Importance as it serves as the foundational step in the coaching process. It is during this phase that a goal is carefully crafted for the coaching conversation, which can range from creating an action plan, fostering a new mindset, gaining clarity on a particular topic, discovering a starting point, overcoming obstacles, or even experiencing a shift in perspective. Defining a clear and specific goal sets the direction for the entire coaching journey, ensuring that both the coach and coachee are aligned and focused on achieving the desired outcomes.

Moreover, the Plant phase emphasizes the significance of undivided attention and presence during the coaching conversation. By eliminating distractions and fully engaging with both the coach and coachee, this phase fosters a space for deep and meaningful exploration. Being present allows the coach to actively listen and empathize, promoting a safe and supportive environment for the coachee to express their thoughts and feelings openly.

Lastly, the Plant phase emphasizes the Importance of aligning expectations between the coach, who introduces the topic, and the coachee, who plays an active role in managing the coaching process. By establishing a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, and desired outcomes, both parties are more likely to collaborate effectively and make the most of the coaching experience. The Plant phase serves as the anchor of the Sprout non-directive coaching model, setting clear goals, fostering attentive presence, and creating a strong partnership between the coach and coachee, ultimately leading to a successful and transformative coaching journey.

Risk

Lack of trust

No clear value set

Session goes in circles

Coachee does not make progress or learn

While the Plant phase of the Sprout non-directive coaching model holds great potential for coachee growth, there are Risks that coaches must be mindful of. One Risk is the absence of setting clear value. Without a shared understanding for what the value of the coaching conversation will be, the coaching session may lack a cohesive foundation, resulting in confusion and potential misalignment. Another Risk is the session going in circles, with no clear progress or forward movement. This can occur when the coach and coachee struggle to identify and address the underlying issues or when the coachee gets caught in a cycle of self-doubt or indecision. Additionally, if the coachee does not experience genuine progress or learning during the Plant phase, the coaching process may stagnate, impeding the coachee's growth and development. Lastly, a lack of trust between the coach and coachee can hinder the effectiveness of the Plant phase. Without a trusting relationship, the coachee may be hesitant to open up, share honestly, or fully engage in the coaching process. To mitigate these Risks, coaches should prioritize defining the value for the coaching, facilitating focused conversations, nurturing progress and learning, and building a foundation of trust with their coachees. This approach promotes a more productive and impactful coaching experience.

Doing

Focusing

Listening

Questioning

The Doing part associated with the Plant phase of the Sprout non-directive coaching model involves specific actions aimed at facilitating coachee growth and exploration. Focusing plays a central role in this phase, as the coach works to narrow down the topic of coaching. By honing in on a specific area of interest or concern, the coach helps the coachee gain clarity and direction, enabling them to delve deeper into the subject matter. Questioning is another essential aspect of the Doing part, allowing the coach to skillfully inquire and explore various

connected elements of the topic at hand. Thoughtful and thought-provoking questions prompt the coachee to consider different perspectives, uncover underlying assumptions, and expand their understanding of the issue. Lastly, listening on multiple levels is a crucial skill in the Plant phase. The coach actively listens to the coachee's words, paying attention not only to the content but also to the emotions, values, and beliefs expressed. This multi-level listening helps the coach gain deeper insights and assists in guiding the coaching process effectively. By engaging in these actions of focusing, questioning, and multi-level listening, the coach facilitates a rich and purposeful Plant phase, nurturing the coachee's growth and setting the phase for further exploration.

Being

Safe

Open

Non-judgement

The Being part associated with the Plant phase of the Sprout non-directive coaching model encompasses key qualities such as Being open, non-judgmental, and creating a safe space. Being open entails the coach's ability to approach the coaching session with a genuine sense of curiosity, receptiveness, and willingness to explore various perspectives and possibilities. It allows the coach to embrace the coachee's experiences and narratives without preconceived notions or biases. Non-judgment is another crucial aspect, where the coach creates an environment free from criticism, allowing the coachee to express themselves fully and authentically. By withholding judgment, the coach fosters trust and encourages the coachee's self-reflection and growth. Additionally, the Being part emphasizes creating a safe space where the coachee feels secure to explore thoughts, emotions, and vulnerabilities. This safe environment encourages the coachee to take risks, challenge themselves, and share openly without fear of judgment or repercussions. By embodying these qualities of Being open, non-judgmental, and creating a safe space, the coach establishes a foundation for trust and genuine exploration during the Plant phase, setting the phase for a fruitful coaching journey.

Saying

What do you want?

What is getting in the way?

What does success look like?

What makes this important to you?

The Saying part within the Plant phase of the Sprout non-directive coaching model involves skillful questioning to guide the coachee's self-discovery and exploration. Through questions such as "What do you want?" the coach prompts the coachee to articulate their desires and goals, fostering clarity and intentionality. The question "What is getting in the way?" prompts the coachee to identify and examine potential obstacles or challenges that hinder their progress, promoting self-awareness and empowering them to develop strategies for overcoming those barriers. Additionally, the coach may ask "What does success look like?" to assist the coachee in envisioning their desired outcomes and defining what achievement means to them. Through the Saying part, the coach supports the coachee's self-reflection, goal-setting, and problem-solving, enabling them to gain clarity, overcome obstacles, and create a vision of success that is aligned with their aspirations and values. By asking "Why is this important?" the coach encourages the coachee to delve into the underlying motivations and values behind their aspirations, helping them establish a strong sense of purpose.

Hearing

Layers

Complexity

Interconnection

The Hearing part within the Plant phase of the Sprout model involves attentive listening to the coachee's words and beyond. The coach recognizes that there are layers to what is being said, and they strive to listen deeply, capturing not only the explicit content but also the underlying emotions, values, motivations, and beliefs. This active listening enables the coach to discern the interconnections between different aspects of the coachee's experience, understanding how various elements relate and influence one another. The coach acknowledges the complexity of the coachee's identity and their relationship with the world, recognizing that their thoughts, feelings, and actions are shaped

by a multitude of factors. By truly Hearing and understanding the coachee's multifaceted perspective, the coach can offer meaningful questions, silence and observations that help the coachee gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their world. The Hearing part allows the coach to create a safe and supportive space where the coachee feels truly heard, valued, and understood, fostering a strong coaching relationship and facilitating the coachee's growth and self-discovery.

ICF Competency

Cultivates Safety and Trust
Establishes and Maintains Agreements

The International Coaching Federation's (ICF) core competencies of Cultivating Safety and Trust and Establishing and Maintaining Agreements play crucial roles within the Plant part of the Sprout non-directive coaching model. Cultivating Safety and Trust is essential in creating an environment where the coachee feels comfortable, supported, and respected. The coach's ability to establish trust through active listening, empathy, and non-judgment allows the coachee to openly explore their thoughts, emotions, and goals. This safe space enables the coachee to dig deep, express vulnerabilities, and engage in meaningful self-reflection during the Plant phase. In parallel, the competency of Establishing and Maintaining Agreements ensures a shared understanding between the coach and coachee. Through clear communication and collaborative dialogue, they co-create a coaching agreement that outlines the coaching process, including desired outcomes, boundaries, and expectations. This agreement sets the foundation for the Plant phase, providing a framework within which the coachee's chosen topic and goal can be nurtured and developed. By incorporating these ICF Competencies into the Plant phase, coaches create a trusting and supportive space that allows for fruitful exploration and growth, while establishing a clear roadmap for the coaching journey ahead.

Plant Conclusion

In summary, the Plant phase is an important compass to guide the whole coaching conversation to ensure there is an ongoing alignment between coach and coachee. It involves empowering coachees to define session topics and goals using the gardening metaphor. The goal may change throughout the conversation

as new discoveries about what is important are made by the coachee, however, this is normal and a common experience. Creating space for the coachee to move towards a new goal is key to facilitating these new discoveries and enhances trust. This phase fosters ownership, and direction for the conversation while cultivating safety and trust. On the contrary, when there is no clear agreement, the risk here can lead to the coach becoming directive or cyclical, without a clear outcome. Mitigation involves the coach letting the coachee lead the conversation topic and goal while the coach facilitates gaining clarity for the agreement in a context of cultivating safety and trust. Key actions like focused questioning and deep listening drive exploration and self-discovery. Skillful questions, such as "What do you want?" and "Why is this important?" steer self-reflection. Active listening highlights layers of meaning. The Plant phase ignites transformative coaching, allowing coachees to sow aspirations and commence their growth journey.

8.3 | Plant Application

From your learning in this chapter, write down five Plant type questions:

- 1. At your next one on one, ask a couple Plant questions to see what the other person wants from the conversation.
- 2. At your next team meeting, ask Plant questions that help get the team aligned on the outcome from the meeting.
- 3. In a social setting, ask Plant questions to see how it changes the conversation.

9. | Water



"If there is anything I would like to be remembered for it is that I helped people understand that leadership is helping other people grow and succeed. To repeat myself, leadership is not just about you. It's about them."

Jack Welch

9.1 | Water Coaching Example

Coachee: I've been really frustrated with how slow things are moving on this project. I need to engage so many stakeholders, and it feels like I'm stuck in a web of differing opinions and views.

Coach: How does your environment shape your thinking on this topic?

Coachee: Well, my environment, with all these stakeholders, influences me to be more cautious and seek alignment before moving forward. I don't want to make decisions that could create conflicts or cause disengagement. I am learning that consensus-building takes time and patience.

Coach: How do you feel about this challenge you're facing?

Coachee: Honestly, I feel torn. On one hand, I know it's crucial to get everyone's input and build consensus. On the other hand, I'm frustrated because I'm used to making quick decisions when I was in a purely technical role. Now, it's like I'm stuck, and it's affecting my morale in leading this project.

Coach: What past experiences can you draw from to navigate through this?

Coachee: In previous projects, I've faced tough challenges where stakeholders had opposing views. Looking back, I learned that building strong relationships and open communication were key to finding common ground. I guess I need to apply those lessons here too.

Coach: If you could hear from the older, wiser version of yourself, what would they tell you about this moment?

Coachee: They'd probably say, "Be patient and trust the process. Building consensus takes time, but it's worth it in the end. Stay true to your values and communicate openly with everyone involved."

Coach: What resources do you have that can help you navigate through this complex situation?

Coachee: I have a supportive team that can provide insights and diverse perspectives. Additionally, I have a mentor who has experience in stakeholder engagement, and I can seek their advice.

Coach: How do your values shape your thinking on this?

Coachee: My values of collaboration and inclusivity are driving me to seek input from all stakeholders. I want everyone to feel heard and valued in the decision-making process.

Coach: What is possible for you in this situation?

Coachee: I think it's possible to create a shared vision that aligns everyone's interests and find a way to move forward together.

Coach: What would you do if you didn't care what people thought?

Coachee: If I didn't care what people thought, I would trust my instincts more and make decisions based on what I believe is right for the project and the team.

Coach: What are other options you can explore to move this project forward?

Coachee: I can hold facilitated workshops to gather input and encourage open discussions. I can also seek alignment on core values and goals to create a common understanding.

Coach: How do you feel after exploring these options?

Coachee: I feel more empowered and motivated to take action. I know there are challenges ahead, but I also see the possibilities for growth and success.

9.2 | Water | Explore and Dream

Personal Context

Amid the intricate landscape of team dynamics and project management, I embarked on a coaching journey with a team member who was steering the helm of a complex project. This endeavor demanded her to harmonize the myriad voices of stakeholders, a task that seemed to cast shadows of conflict and uncertainty across her path. As she detailed her strategic approach and outlined her path forward in our weekly coaching conversations, a subtle paradox emerged before my eyes – her brow furrowed, her countenance contorted into an unintended scowl.

In that short lived moment, an incongruence flickered between her words and her face. I had coached long enough to trust my instincts and share my observations so I seized the moment. "While you eloquently laid out your strategic steps," I began, "I also saw on your face a shift in your expression, your face looked pained."

Her eyes widened, a mix of astonishment and realization painting her features. It was as if a hidden veil had been lifted, revealing a realm beneath the surface. She blurted out, "That is right, I know what to do... I really do not want to do it. I think my face gave away what I was feeling."

In this sacred space of introspection, revelation blossomed through a simple observation without my interpretation. This leader experienced a spark of internal insight and clarity emerged like a beacon through the fog. The trajectory she had envisioned, although meticulously charted, now lay open to scrutiny. The plan was not the problem, how she felt about the plan was what was holding her back. A pause enveloped the conversation, a pregnant silence within which realization danced.

Acknowledging the observation, the leader discovered insight without resistance. A profound shift transpired, unearthing a connection between her core values and the project's demands. The rest of the conversation shifted to investigating how to align the leader's values with what they knew needed to be done. This took minimal time as a surge of energy came into

the conversation as the leader connected with what they saw as most important through their values. Together, we embarked on a journey of navigating the terrain where authenticity and responsibility converged.

In this realm of guided inquiry, the art of non-directive coaching wielded its transformative prowess. An apparently unassuming observation – the metamorphosis of a facial expression – unfurled the gateway to profound self-discovery. The path of alignment between values and actions had unfurled, revealing a reservoir of potential waiting to be tapped.

As she charted her newly illuminated course, a dawning realization emerged – that within the unspoken, unjudged realms lies the kernel of enlightenment. The potency of feedback, offered without interpretation or judgment, had illuminated her path to self-awareness. And so, a powerful lesson etched itself into the annals of our coaching journey – that in the realm of introspection, the unadorned truth, mirrored through empathetic feedback, becomes the catalyst for profound insight.

In this conversation I learned the power of facilitating someone to have insight about themselves and not insights necessarily from me, their leader. I had seen something which my intuition said was important. But I could not imagine what it may unlock inside my direct report. The energy and clarity that came was something I could barely comprehend but it convinced me of the power of coaching to facilitate transformation within.

Definition

Partner with coachee to explore situation and options to move forward

In the Sprout non-directive coaching model, the Water phase typically follows the Plant phase. It involves providing nourishment and support to the seeds planted during the Plant phase. The Definition of Water in this context is the act of nurturing and sustaining the coachee's growth and development through asking non-directive questions to explore additional thinking and options to move forward. Just as water is vital for the growth of Plants, this phase focuses on providing the necessary resources, encouragement, and guidance to help the coachee explore further. The coach creates a safe and supportive environment where the coachee feels comfortable exploring

their goals, values, and beliefs. Through active listening, empathy, and reflection, the coach ensures that the coachee's needs and aspirations are understood and validated. Additionally, the Water phase may involve opportunities to reflect through silence, provoke new thinking through powerful questions and the coachee making observations to bring new awareness. This phase is crucial for facilitating the coachee's ongoing progress and enabling them to move closer to their desired outcomes.

Metaphor

What brings ideas and nourishment to the issue?

The Metaphor of water holds significant relevance and symbolism. Water, in this context, represents the nourishment, support, and sustenance required for growth and development. Just as water is essential for plants to thrive, the Water phase focuses on providing the necessary resources through questions, encouragement, and presence to foster the coachee's progress. Water, as a Metaphor, signifies the coach's role in creating a nurturing and supportive environment where the coachee's potential can be realized. It represents the coach's commitment to support the coachee with the elements necessary for growth, such as active listening, empathy, and opportunity for reflection. Moreover, water is flexible and adaptable, adapting to the needs of the plants it nurtures. Similarly, in the Water phase, the coach adjusts their approach to meet the coachee's evolving requirements, tailoring their support and interventions accordingly. This Metaphor underscores the importance of ongoing support and the coach's commitment to facilitating the coachee's continued progress and development throughout the coaching journey.

Neuroscience

Change and Emotions

The neuroscience of how we change provides valuable insights into the inner workings of our brains and the processes involved in personal transformation. Our brains are highly adaptable and capable of change, which is known as neuroplasticity. Through coaching, we can leverage this neuroplasticity to help individuals create lasting shifts in their thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors.

Neuroscience reveals that change occurs through the formation of new neural connections and the strengthening or weakening of existing ones. Coaching interventions such as powerful questions, reflective exercises, and goal-setting, activate specific neural pathways and stimulate the brain to rewire itself. By repeating and reinforcing new patterns of thinking and behavior, individuals can create sustainable change. Furthermore, neuroscience highlights the importance of emotions in the change process. Emotions play a significant role in decision-making, motivation, and learning. By understanding and addressing the emotional aspects of change, coaches can help coachees navigate resistance, overcome limiting beliefs, and tap into their intrinsic motivation to achieve their desired outcomes.

Incorporating neuroscience understanding into coaching practices allows coaches to work more effectively with their coachees, tailoring interventions to support the brain's natural capacity for change. By aligning coaching strategies with the principles of neuroplasticity and emotional intelligence, coaches can facilitate meaningful and long-lasting transformation in their coachee's lives.

Importance

Raise awareness

Create new thinking

Uncover the fuller story

The Water phase holds immense Importance in the coaching journey. It plays a vital role in uncovering the fuller story related to the coachee's chosen topic. Through the nurturing and supportive environment provided during the Water phase, the coach helps the coachee explore deeper layers of their topic, raising awareness of the underlying values, emotions, identity, and beliefs that influence their perspective. By delving into these aspects, the coachee gains a more comprehensive understanding of themselves and their aspirations, facilitating personal growth and transformation. Moreover, the Water phase promotes new thinking by encouraging the coachee to make connections and discoveries. It stimulates cognitive flexibility and creativity, enabling the coachee to generate fresh insights and perspectives that can lead to breakthrough moments. This phase fosters self-reflection and exploration, allowing the coachee to expand their awareness, challenge assumptions, and develop

alternative ways of thinking. Ultimately, the Importance of the Water phase lies in its ability to uncover the fuller story, raise awareness of internal dynamics, and facilitate the creation of new thinking, empowering the coachee to move forward with clarity, purpose, and growth.

Risk

Coach directs the path forward
Coachee does not get to the root of issues
Explore options too soon before discovery
Random exploration not connected to goal

The Water phase carries certain Risks that coaches must be aware of to ensure the effectiveness of the coaching process. One Risk is exploring an option too soon before the necessary discovery has occurred. Rushing into exploring potential paths or solutions prematurely can hinder the coachee's ability to fully uncover the underlying issues and gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their goals. Another Risk is when the coach takes a directive approach by choosing the path forward or asking questions based on their own assumptions about what is important. This can limit the coachee's autonomy and hinder their ability to discover their own insights and solutions. Additionally, there is a Risk that the coachee may not delve deep enough to reach the root of the issues they are facing, leading to surface-level exploration that fails to address the underlying causes. Lastly, random exploration that is disconnected from the coachee's goal established during the Plant phase can result in a lack of focus and direction. It is important for coaches to be mindful of these Risks and maintain a non-directive approach during the Water phase, allowing the coachee to lead the exploration and ensuring that the process remains aligned with the coachee's goals and objectives.

Doing

Intuition
Exploring
Possibility

The Doing part associated with the Water phase of the model encompasses specific actions that the coach undertakes to facilitate the coachee's exploration and growth. Firstly, the coach trusts their intuition when formulating questions and

responding to the coachee. This intuitive approach allows the coach to tap into their deep understanding and connection with the coachee, enabling them to ask insightful questions that stimulate reflection and encourage the coachee's self-discovery. Secondly, the coach actively focuses on what is possible without imposing any limitations. By adopting a mindset of expansive thinking, the coach encourages the coachee to explore new perspectives and potential solutions, fostering creativity and innovation. This open-ended approach helps the coachee break free from self-imposed limitations and envision new possibilities. Lastly, the coach embraces exploration far and wide to support the coachee's discovery. They encourage the coachee to delve into various avenues and consider diverse perspectives, creating a rich and expansive learning environment. By supporting the coachee in exploring different angles and approaches, the coach facilitates the coachee's discovery of fresh insights and alternative pathways. The Doing part of the Water phase emphasizes the coach's reliance on intuition, the focus on limitless possibilities, and the commitment to broad exploration to foster the coachee's self-discovery and growth.

Being

Present

Curious

Believing

The Being part associated with the Water phase is characterized by specific qualities that the coach embodies during this phase. First and foremost, the coach needs to be genuinely curious about the coachee, prioritizing their understanding and connection with the coachee over solely focusing on the topic discussed during the Plant phase. By maintaining a curiosity about the coachee, the coach demonstrates a deep interest in their unique perspectives, experiences, and aspirations, fostering a safe and trusting environment for exploration. Additionally, the coach should believe in what is possible for the coachee, holding a positive and optimistic mindset. This belief in the coachee's potential serves as a catalyst for growth and encourages the coachee to explore new possibilities and perspectives during the Water phase. Finally, the coach must be fully present in the moment, attentively listening and responding authentically and spontaneously. By Being fully present, the coach can effectively attune to the coachee's needs, cues, and emotions, establishing a strong rapport and facilitating a deep level of exploration.

and discovery. The Being part of the Water phase underscores the importance of the coach's curiosity, belief in the coachee's potential, and authentic presence, all of which contribute to creating a transformative coaching experience.

Saying

What else?

What are other options?

What are your beliefs about this?

The Saying part of the coach during the Water phase of the model involves the use of specific questions and statements that encourage the coachee's exploration and self-reflection. The coach may ask questions such as, "What are other options?" to prompt the coachee to consider alternative perspectives and possibilities. This question encourages the coachee to expand their thinking and explore different pathways that may lead to desired outcomes. Another question, "What are your beliefs about this?" invites the coachee to examine their underlying beliefs and assumptions that may be influencing their perspectives and choices. This inquiry supports the coachee in gaining awareness of their beliefs and opens up opportunities for reframing and shifting perspectives. Additionally, and at any time in the coaching conversation, the coach may inquire with, "What else?" to prompt the coachee to continue thinking and exploring for additional insights, relevant connections, or simply continuing on in the reflection to see what may be discovered. This question fosters an opportunity to go beyond the current thinking by employing these types of questions, the coach facilitates the coachee's self-reflection, promotes critical thinking, and supports the coachee in gaining new insights and perspectives throughout the Water phase of the coaching process.

Hearing

Options

Strengths

Discovery

The Hearing part for the coach during Water involves deep listening and attentiveness to various aspects of the coachee's expressions and experiences. The coach actively listens to ask the coachee what options are emerging from the coachee's exploration, allowing the coachee to take ownership of their

choices and decisions. By attentively being present to the coachee's thoughts and ideas, the coach creates a space for the coachee to explore different possibilities and make informed decisions aligned with their values and the goal of the coaching conversation. The coach also listens for the coachee's sources of strength, identifying the inherent capabilities, resources, and past successes that the coachee can draw upon to overcome challenges and problem-solve effectively. This deep listening allows the coach to support the coachee in leveraging their strengths and developing empowering strategies. Additionally, the coach listens for what is really important to the coachee, exploring their values, desires, and aspirations. By understanding the coachee's core priorities, the coach can ask powerful questions related to meaningful and purposeful outcomes that align with the coachee's deepest aspirations. The Hearing part involves attuning to the options emerging, identifying sources of strength, and discovering what truly matters to the coachee, all of which facilitate a transformative coaching experience and support the coachee's growth and self-discovery.

ICF Competency

Listens Actively

Maintains Presence

The International Coaching Federation's core competencies of Maintains Presence and Listens Actively play a crucial role in the Water phase of the coaching model. Maintaining Presence refers to the coach's ability to be fully engaged and attentive in the coaching session, both mentally and emotionally. During the Water phase, the coach's presence creates a safe and supportive space for the coachee to explore their thoughts, emotions, and experiences. By staying fully present, the coach can establish a deep connection with the coachee and demonstrate their genuine interest and commitment to the coachee's growth. Listening Actively complements maintaining presence by emphasizing the coach's active and focused attention to the coachee's verbal and non-verbal communication, what is not being said, and what has been said through the arch of the coaching relationship. The coach listens deeply to the coachee's words, tone, and body language, discerning not only what is being said but also the underlying emotions, beliefs, and values. Active listening during the Water phase enables the coach to pick up on nuances, patterns, and emerging themes in the coachee's exploration. It helps the coach identify

the connections between different aspects of the coachee's experiences, supporting the coachee in gaining valuable insights for asking powerful questions and promoting the coachee's self-discovery. By maintaining presence and listening actively, the coach fosters a collaborative and transformative coaching relationship, allowing the coachee to delve deeper into their exploration and facilitating their growth and development in the Water phase of the Sprout coaching model.

Water Conclusion

In conclusion, the Water phase of the Sprout non-directive coaching model plays a pivotal role in the leader's journey toward becoming an effective coach. By exploring how the environment shapes their thinking and coaching approach, leaders gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence their leadership style and the dynamics within their teams. The Water phase prompts leaders to ask questions to reflect on the impact of culture, relationships, and external influences, enabling them to harness the power of their environment to support and enhance their coaching efforts. By embracing the insights gained from this phase, leaders can create a nurturing and empowering ecosystem where growth, collaboration, and innovation flourish. The Water phase serves as a vital bridge between the Plant phase, where the coaching foundation is established, and the Prune phase, where barriers and limiting beliefs are addressed. It sets the phase for leaders to cultivate a coaching mindset and foster an environment conducive to continuous learning and development. Through the Water phase, leaders gain the awareness and perspective necessary to shape a coaching culture that inspires their teams to reach new heights of achievement and fulfillment.

9.3 | Water Application

From your learner in this chapter write down five Water type questions:

1. At your next one on one, ask a couple Water questions to see what the other person discovers.
2. At your next team meeting, look for opportunities to ask open-ended questions to see how it changes the conversation.
3. In a social setting, keep asking open-ended questions to see what happens to the conversation.

10. | Prune



To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

10.1 | Prune Coaching Example

Coach: Thank you for joining me today. What would you like to discuss today?

Coachee: I have been working on some solutions for creating new sales goals, but I am feeling frustrated because my team doesn't seem as motivated as I am. I've worked on setting clear and achievable sales goals, and I've provided training and resources to help my team improve their skills. However, despite all this effort, their motivation levels still seem low.

Coach: It sounds like you've taken some important steps. What have you noticed about your team's response to the new goals and the training you've provided?

Coachee: Well, they seem interested during the team meetings, but when it comes to implementing what they've learned, I see a lack of enthusiasm. It's frustrating because I believe in these goals, and I want them to succeed as much as I do.

Coach: It's clear that you're passionate about this. What would you do if nothing was holding you back?

Coachee: If nothing was holding me back, I would probably spend more time individually connecting with each team member. I would understand their personal goals and aspirations and align them with the team goals. I would also look for ways to make the training more engaging and relevant to their day-to-day challenges.

Coach: That's a great vision. What can you change in your current approach to create more individual connections and make the training more engaging?

Coachee: I could schedule regular one-on-one meetings to discuss their progress and challenges. And for the training, maybe I could involve them in identifying specific areas where they need improvement.

Coach: Those are actionable steps. What have you not considered yet in terms of connecting with your team and making the training more effective?

Coachee: I haven't really considered asking them directly what motivates them and what kind of training format they find most beneficial. Maybe I've been too focused on my own solutions without involving them in the process.

Coach: It's great that you're open to involving them in this process. What does your gut tell you about how involving them in identifying their motivations and preferred training format might impact their engagement?

Coachee: My gut tells me that when they're part of the decision-making process, they'll feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility. It might boost their motivation knowing that their input matters.

Coach: It's insightful that you're recognizing the importance of involving them. What will matter about this situation in the future?

Coachee: In the future, I believe that putting in the effort to understand their motivations and preferences will lead to a more motivated and productive team. It could improve team dynamics and overall performance, and as a leader, I'll have learned the value of involving my team in decision-making.

Coach: That's a compelling vision. What is currently working well in your interactions with your team?

Coachee: I think what's working is that I genuinely care about their success. I'm always there to offer guidance and support when they need it. We have a strong relationship and I think I may have forgotten that in this process.

Coach: Your genuine care is a powerful asset. Considering the situation, what part of your current approach feels easy and natural for you?

Coachee: Connecting with my team members on a personal level feels easy for me. I enjoy building relationships and understanding their individual strengths.

Coach: That's a great strength to leverage. What do you think might happen if you don't take action?

Coachee: If I don't take action, I'm worried that the team's performance might continue to decline. They might become disengaged and uninterested, which would affect our overall results.

Coach: It's important to consider those potential outcomes. Given our discussion, what's one thing you haven't tried yet that you could implement to better motivate your team?

Coachee: I haven't tried involving them in the goal-setting process. Maybe they could provide input and suggestions that would make the goals more meaningful to them.

Coach: That's a proactive step. Before we finish, let's revisit the situation where you're frustrated by the lack of motivation in your team. Considering what we've discussed, how might you approach that situation differently in the future?

Coachee: Instead of just presenting the goals and training, I'll involve them in the process. I'll ask for their input on what motivates them and how they'd like to improve their skills.

Coach: It sounds like you're ready to embrace a more collaborative approach. How does that feel for you?

Coachee: It feels empowering. I'm realizing that I don't have to figure everything out on my own and that involving the team can lead to better results.

Coach: Absolutely. It's been a pleasure exploring this with you. Remember, your team's motivation is a shared responsibility, and involving them in the process can make a significant difference. Is there anything else you'd like to discuss or explore further?

Coachee: No, I think this conversation has given me a lot to think about and implement. Thank you for guiding me through this process.

Coach: You're welcome. I'm here to support you on your journey to motivating your team and achieving your goals. Feel free to reach out anytime.

10.2 | Prune | Narrow and Choose



Personal Context

Amid the vast expanse of coaching, there exists a realm where conversations morph into transformative journeys, and safe spaces become arenas for profound introspection and growth. This is where I found myself one day, seated across from a coachee whose frustration radiated through their words. Their voice was a river of pent-up emotions, carrying with it a resounding theme – a narrative of brilliant ideas that fell flat in the face of passive and unmotivated team members. The crux of their distress lay in the challenge of harnessing their team's enthusiasm and translating it into actionable motivation.

With a deep understanding of this individual's journey, I knew the moment had come to introduce a catalyst for change – a challenge that would unshackle their thinking and propel them towards new dimensions of leadership. As the words tumbled out, I said, "Imagine for a moment, if I were on your team, someone inherently competitive. Frankly, I might loathe being a part of your team because it would feel like a perpetual losing battle against you."

Silence hung in the air, the atmosphere thick with the weight of those audacious words. Their mouth agape, my coachee stared at me, a mix of astonishment and contemplation etched across their face. I allowed the moment to linger, fully aware of the seismic impact that this unfiltered challenge could have.

Slowly, as the seconds ticked by, their gaze shifted from surprise to contemplation. In their eyes, I saw the wheels turning, gears shifting as they processed this novel perspective.

"No one has ever spoken to me like that before," they finally admitted, the words tinged with a mixture of curiosity and intrigue. I maintained my silence, allowing the thought to settle, knowing that it was not judgment but rather a spark intended to kindle the flames of self-discovery.

In the subsequent moments, their mind seemed to race through a labyrinth of insights and realizations. And then, like a dam breaking, the words flowed, a profound insight springing forth. "You know what? I think my team might be feeling the same way – as if they're constantly competing against me. That's why their motivation is waning."

The revelation hung in the air, a pivotal juncture in their coaching journey. From that moment, the narrative shifted. A cascade of ideas surged forth, each one laced with newfound purpose and clarity. Their epiphany ignited a transformational process that rippled through their leadership approach.

With renewed vigor, they embarked on a journey of empowerment, swapping the role of the answer provider for that of an enabler – a catalyst for their team's own creative ideas. The initial step involved learning the art of asking powerful questions, fostering an environment where team members could unearth their own solutions. As their team began to generate their ideas, the ripple of ownership carried through each project, sparking a renewed sense of motivation and commitment.

In the end, the narrative transformed from one of frustration to one of empowerment. Through a daring challenge, carefully crafted within the framework of non-directive coaching, the course of leadership had shifted. The journey had unveiled the potential of fostering a collaborative and vibrant team dynamic, where shared ownership of ideas led to unprecedented motivation and success. And in that singular moment, I had witnessed the true power of non-directive coaching – the power to challenge, to evoke introspection, and to kindle the flames of transformation.

I learned from this conversation that leaders typically by default are successful doers. It is what has made them successful and elevated them into leadership positions. The difficult transition

for so many is to shift from high performer to being a facilitator of high performers through coaching. It requires leaders letting go of being the rock star who shines, to seeing themselves as developers of other rock stars. This transition is challenging, however, coaching is the modality for this to happen.

Definition

*Invites coachee to explore ideas
and make choices to move forward*

The Prune phase involves inviting the coachee to explore ideas and make choices to move forward. Just like the act of pruning in gardening, this phase encourages the coachee to trim away unnecessary or unproductive thoughts, actions, or beliefs that might be hindering their progress. The coach facilitates this process by creating a safe and supportive space for the coachee to reflect on their insights gained from the Water* phase. Through open-ended questions and active listening, the coach empowers the coachee to make intentional decisions and shape a clear path towards their desired outcomes. This phase focuses on refining the coachee's vision and helping them identify specific actions or strategies to bring about positive change and growth.

* The Water and Prune phases are cyclical and not sequential. This means a leader, taking a coach approach, may navigate between these two phases depending on the situation. A coaching conversation, just like the metaphor of planting, usually requires some exploring and dreaming (watering) before anything is ready to be pruned.

Metaphor

What needs to be cut or removed to thrive?

The Metaphor associated with the Prune phase of the coaching model is powerful and insightful. When we think of pruning in a garden, we understand that certain branches, leaves, or parts of a plant need to be cut or removed to ensure its overall health. Similarly, in coaching, the question "What needs to be cut or removed to thrive?" invites the coachee to consider the elements or aspects of their thoughts, behaviors, or patterns that may no longer serve them. It encourages them to reflect on what might be holding them back or limiting their growth. Just as pruning allows the plant to direct its energy towards healthy growth,

the coachee is prompted to identify what needs to be let go or released in order to create space for new possibilities and flourishing. This Metaphor highlights the transformative nature of the coaching process, where the coachee gains awareness of what is no longer beneficial and can actively choose to remove those hindrances, allowing them to thrive and reach their full potential.

Neuroscience

Limiting Beliefs

The neuroscience of limiting beliefs is particularly relevant in the Prune phase of the Sprout non-directive coaching model. Limiting beliefs are deeply ingrained patterns of thinking that constrain individuals and prevent them from realizing their full potential. Neurologically, these beliefs are encoded in neural pathways and can trigger automatic, self-defeating responses. However, the process of pruning these limiting beliefs involves neuroplasticity—the brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new connections and pruning unused ones. By engaging in non-directive coaching conversations during the Prune phase, the coachee can explore and challenge their limiting beliefs. This exploration activates the prefrontal cortex, which plays a crucial role in self-reflection and cognitive flexibility. Through questioning, reflecting, and making choices, the coachee has the opportunity to disrupt and weaken the neural pathways associated with limiting beliefs while strengthening alternative pathways that support growth and expansion. This neurobiological process aligns with the intention of the Prune phase—to invite the coachee to explore ideas and make choices to move forward, ultimately enabling them to break free from the constraints of limiting beliefs and cultivate a mindset that fosters personal and professional growth.

Importance

Removing obstacles

Building off discovery

Exploring possibilities

The Prune phase of the coaching model holds significant Importance in the coaching process. It allows for the exploration of possibilities without hindrance, enabling the coachee to expand their perspectives and consider new avenues for growth.

By building off previous discoveries and insights gained during the Plant and Water phases, the Prune phase facilitates the development of a deeper understanding of the coachee's barriers and limiting beliefs. This self-awareness empowers the coachee to identify and remove the obstacles that hinder their progress. Through this process, the coachee can challenge and reframe their existing beliefs, opening up space for transformative change. By embracing the important work of pruning, individuals can let go of outdated patterns and behaviors that no longer serve them, paving the way for personal and professional advancement. Ultimately, the Prune phase helps the coachee create a clear path forward, free from the limitations that previously held them back.

Risk

Moves too quickly to actions

Focus on barriers not resources

Coach jumps to problem solving

Avoids important things connected to topic

Within the Prune phase of the coaching model, it is important to be mindful of the potential Risks involved. One such Risk is when the coach hastily jumps to offer suggestions and solutions, unintentionally shifting the coaching conversation into a more directive approach. This can hinder the coachee's autonomy and prevent them from fully exploring their own ideas and insights. Additionally, if the coach overly focuses on the barriers and challenges, neglecting to explore and tap into the coachee's power sources and strengths, it may limit the coachee's ability to leverage their inner resources for growth and progress. Another Risk is when the coach avoids addressing important aspects connected to the initial topic identified during the Plant or Water phases, overlooking valuable insights and opportunities for transformation. Moving too quickly to action without thoroughly examining and understanding the underlying dynamics may result in short-lived or ineffective solutions. It is essential for the coach to be willing to sit in silence, create space for reflection, and encourage the coachee to do the necessary inner work. Lastly, it is crucial for the coach to resist the urge to rescue or provide quick fixes, allowing the coachee to take ownership of their growth journey. By being aware of these Risks, the coach can navigate the Prune phase with sensitivity, fostering a truly non-directive and empowering coaching experience.

Doing

Silence

Challenge

Insightful

The Doing part of Prune is where the coach engages in specific actions that facilitate the coachee's exploration and growth. One of the key aspects of the coach's Doing is the art of asking challenging questions that others may avoid, delving into areas that might be uncomfortable but essential for the coachee's progress. These questions encourage deep self-reflection and open up new perspectives for the coachee. Additionally, the coach provides valuable insights through their observations, reflecting back patterns, strengths, and blind spots that the coachee might not be aware of. By offering these reflections, the coach supports the coachee in gaining greater self-awareness and clarity. Another significant aspect of the coach's Doing is the willingness to sit in silence, allowing the coachee to embrace discomfort and navigate their own thoughts and emotions. This silence is a powerful tool that encourages the coachee to dig deeper and find their answers within. Through these actions, the coach creates a space of trust and support, empowering the coachee to overcome limiting beliefs, prune away barriers, and move forward towards their aspirations with newfound clarity and confidence.

Being

Connecting

Unattached

Holding space

The Being part associated with the Prune phase in the coaching model is characterized by the coach's profound presence and connection with the coachee. During this phase, the coach embodies a state of Being unattached to the coachee's problems or to predefined solutions, creating an environment of genuine exploration and discovery. By setting aside personal biases or agendas, the coach holds space for the coachee to delve deep into their thoughts and feelings, encouraging them to confront limiting beliefs and barriers. The coach's ability to maintain a safe and supportive space allows the coachee to embrace discomfort and uncertainty, knowing that it is a necessary part of the growth process. Through this unwavering presence and trust in the

coachee's capacity to have breakthroughs, the coach fosters a nurturing environment where transformational and authentic insights can flourish, ultimately leading to meaningful and sustainable change.

Saying

What are your beliefs?

What I have noticed...

What would you do with a magic wand?

In the Prune phase of coaching model, the coach employs specific language and questioning techniques to facilitate the coachee's self-discovery and decision-making. The coach's Saying part involves asking powerful questions that prompt the coachee to examine their beliefs and assumptions. Questions like "What are your beliefs about this situation?" invite the coachee to reflect on their thought patterns and explore whether these beliefs are serving them well. Additionally, the coach makes observations and shares their insights by Saying, "What I have noticed is..." This allows the coach to provide objective feedback and highlight patterns or behaviors that the coachee may not have been aware of. Lastly, the coach may use the question, "What would you do with a magic wand?" to encourage the coachee to think outside the box and envision their ideal outcome without any limitations. By posing these questions, the coach fosters deep reflection, expands the coachee's perspective, and helps them tap into their own inner wisdom and resourcefulness. The coach's skillful use of language and inquiry empowers the coachee to explore new possibilities, challenge their assumptions, and make conscious choices that align with their values and aspirations.

Hearing

Stuck

Stories

Bias and Barriers

In the Prune phase of the coaching model, the coach's Hearing part plays a crucial role in understanding the coachee's underlying beliefs, biases, and barriers. The coach actively listens to the coachee's words and listens for any unquestioned bias or limiting beliefs that might be hindering their progress. These biases and barriers often manifest as internal and subconscious

scripts that the coachee lives by, shaping their thoughts, feelings, and actions. By attuning to these patterns, the coach can identify areas where the coachee is stuck and help them challenge and reframe these self-limiting narratives. Skillful listening allows the coach to observe and make insights into the coachee's perspectives, enabling them to ask relevant and powerful questions that lead to breakthroughs and personal growth. The coach's ability to hear beyond the surface level of the coachee's words empowers them to facilitate transformative change, supporting the coachee in pruning away the mental and emotional obstacles that impede their progress and nurturing the conditions for lasting transformation.

ICF Competency

Evokes Awareness

Embodies a Coaching Mindset

In the Prune phase of the coaching model, the International Coaching Federation's core competencies of Embodies a Coaching Mindset and Evokes Awareness are of paramount importance. Embodies a Coaching Mindset refers to the coach's ability to create a supportive and empowering environment for the coachee. In this phase, the coach remains unattached to potential solutions and holds space for the coachee to explore ideas without judgment. By embodying a coaching mindset, the coach fosters trust and psychological safety, enabling the coachee to delve into deeper layers of self-discovery.

Concurrently, Evokes Awareness is instrumental in the Prune phase as it prompts the coach to use challenging questions, observations, and silence to evoke new insights and self-awareness in the coachee. The coach actively listens to the coachee's internal and subconscious beliefs, biases, and barriers, helping them become aware of their limiting narratives. By evoking awareness, the coach assists the coachee in identifying areas where they may be stuck or hesitant to remove barriers that hinder their growth.

By synergistically applying these core competencies, the coach can support the coachee in the Prune phase to remove obstacles, limiting beliefs, and unproductive scripts that may hinder progress. Embodying a coaching mindset ensures that the coach remains fully present and supportive, while evoking awareness helps the coachee gain a deeper understanding of

themselves and their situation. Together, these competencies facilitate a transformative and empowering coaching experience in which the coachee can freely explore new possibilities and make meaningful choices to move forward in their personal and professional journey.

Prune Conclusion

In conclusion, the Prune phase in the Sprout non-directive coaching model is a transformative process that empowers leaders to refine their coaching approach and create sustainable growth within themselves and their teams. By identifying and addressing limiting beliefs, assumptions, and outdated strategies, leaders can effectively clear away the obstacles that hinder their progress. The Prune phase also allows leaders to make tough decisions, letting go of practices that no longer serve them and embracing new possibilities with an open mind. This critical phase enables leaders to build resilience, adaptability, and self-awareness, thus enhancing their coaching effectiveness and leadership impact. As leaders courageously prune away what no longer serves them, they make space for new opportunities, insights, and potential to emerge in the Harvest phase. Ultimately, the Prune phase is a powerful catalyst for transformation, propelling leaders towards a future marked by clarity, growth, and the realization of their full coaching potential.

10.3 | Prune Application

From your learning in this chapter write down five Prune type questions:

1. At your next one on one, ask a couple Prune questions to see how this changes their thinking?
2. At your next team meeting, look for opportunities to ask Prune questions that evoke new awareness, get unstuck or move past a barrier?
3. In a social setting, ask a Prune question that evokes new thinking, or narrows the thinking on a given topic.

11. | Harvest



"The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark."

Michelangelo

11.1 | Harvest Coaching Example

Coach: We have a few minutes left, so what have you learned about yourself during this coaching conversation?

Coachee: Well, I've realized that my beliefs about always being busy and constantly needing to do everything myself are contributing to the feeling of being overwhelmed. I've been running around like a chicken with my head cut off, trying to manage everything.

Coach: A chicken with no head, that sounds like that will end badly. What is another way to look at that metaphor?

Coachee: Hmmm... good question...
(Silence and the coach does not interrupt the silence)

Coachee: You know, a more productive metaphor might be something like "busy as a bee"

Coach: That sounds like a much more energizing way to look at this. One that doesn't end with you dead and headless.

Coachee: [Laughing] Absolutely, I say and think that too much... running around like a chicken with no head... that can not be a beneficial way of looking at things.

Coach: Sounds like your beliefs are influencing your reality and how you approach your schedule. How would you like to shift this perspective and approach to managing your busy schedule?

Coachee: I want to adopt a new way of thinking—I want to be busy like a bee, focused and purposeful in my actions, rather than chaotic and scattered.

Coach: That's a great shift in perspective! Being busy like a bee means being intentional and focused. What action will you commit to taking to incorporate this new way of thinking into your daily life?

Coachee: I commit to setting aside time each morning to prioritize my tasks for the day and identify what is most important. I will also practice making trade-offs and delegating tasks to others when possible.

Coach: That's a fantastic action plan! How will you celebrate your progress in implementing these changes?

Coachee: I haven't thought about that yet. Maybe I can treat myself to something special when I consistently stick to my prioritization routine.

Coach: What would that look like?

Coachee: I think it can be simple. It is about building momentum in this direction. I had this professor that used to pass out paper clips for a job well done. She gave them out for a lot of different things. It was really silly, but students in our undergrad classes made it into a game... like bragging rights for collecting the most paper clips. It was the silliest thing but really motivating. I have a box of paper clips on my desk. I have a mug on my desk from my last job that represents a significant accomplishment. I think I will drop a paperclip into my mug each day I stick to my routine. Silly as it sounds, that will help me.

Coach: I love it! It works for you and it means something unique and special to you. I will be watching your mug fill when I walk by your office. Now that you're adopting this new way of thinking, what do you envision happening in your daily life and work?

Coachee: I envision feeling more in control of my schedule and being able to focus on tasks that truly matter. I believe this will lead to increased productivity and a better work-life balance.

Coach: It's great to hear that you have a clear vision of the positive changes you expect to see. As you move forward on this journey, what image or symbol represents your learning and transformation?

Coachee: I like to garden and I have a picture in my office of a beautiful garden. I imagine a busy bee buzzing around a flower, symbolizing focus, productivity, and the ability to accomplish tasks efficiently. When I look at that photo I am going to imagine myself in the photo busy as a bee pollinating all the flowers. That symbolizes me at work!

Coach: That's a powerful symbol! Keeping that image in mind can serve as a reminder of your new way of thinking. Looking into the future, what do you think you'll be most proud of as you successfully manage your busy schedule?

Coachee: I'll be most proud of how I've been able to take charge of my time and create a more balanced and fulfilling life for myself. I know it will have a positive impact on my team and my overall well-being.

Coach: It's clear that this journey is deeply meaningful to you, and your commitment is inspiring. How can you use this learning to inspire and lead your team?

Coachee: I will keep a journal to reflect on my experiences, challenges, and victories as I implement these changes. It will help me stay accountable and track my growth. I will also share this learning with my team to support them to follow in similar ways. I think they could use this as much as I do.

Coach: Speaking of accountability, how will you hold yourself accountable to sticking to your action plan?

Coachee: I'll share my action plan with a close colleague who can check in on my progress and provide encouragement and support.

Coach: Having someone to support and hold you accountable is a great idea. Returning to what you originally wanted from this conversation—better management of your busy schedule. How does this new way of thinking apply to what you wanted to achieve?

Coachee: It aligns perfectly with what I wanted. By being busy like a bee—focused and intentional—I can achieve better time management and accomplish my tasks with more efficiency.

Coach: It's wonderful to see how your new approach aligns with your original goals. Lastly, what do you need to acknowledge for yourself as you continue on this journey of managing your busy schedule?

Coachee: I need to acknowledge that it's okay to take breaks and ask for help when needed. I don't have to do everything alone.

Coach: Acknowledging the need for self-care and support is essential. Embracing these aspects will help you maintain a healthier and more sustainable approach to managing your busy schedule. You've made excellent progress today. How would you like to close our time?

Coachee: I think this covers everything for now. I feel more confident and motivated to implement these changes. Thank you!

Coach: I'm glad to hear that and you are welcome! Remember, change takes time, so be patient with yourself. Celebrate every step you take towards your goals, and know that I'm here to support you throughout this journey. You're doing great, and I look forward to seeing your continued growth and success.

Coachee: Thank you so much for your guidance and support. I appreciate it!

Coach: You're very welcome. Have a fantastic day, and I'll check in with you soon to see how things are progressing. Take care!

11.2 | Harvest | Learn and Commit



Personal Context

In the intricate web of my role as COO, where juggling clients, bookings, and stakeholders was a daily symphony, conflict and challenges among various teams were commonplace. Each strand of this intricate tapestry, from facility staff to booking coordinators and client services, was interwoven with a unique set of dynamics. My team reported to me, and often, in the face of issues that seemed intractable, the practice was to elevate decisions to my desk.

On a particular occasion, a challenge bubbled to the surface, brought forth by the facility manager and the booking coordinator. The latter reported to the former, and as the booking coordinator narrated the issue, a series of questions flowed from my lips – “What exactly is the challenge?” “Where are the conflicts stemming from?” “What is an optimal outcome?”

As the questions flowed, a pause ensued, punctuated by the facility manager’s interjection, “You’re coaching them, aren’t you?” A smile tugged at the corner of my mouth, and with a nod, I continued, “And what do you think we should do?”

In a dance of introspection and exploration, the booking coordinator’s words shifted from a recounting of problems to the unveiling of a solution. Amid the collaborative dialogue, the gears of their mind turned, culminating in a recommendation that

held the potential to untangle the complex web. Turning to the facility manager, I sought their nod of agreement, which was met with affirmation. "Then go ahead and implement your solution," I declared. "You have my complete support".

The room seemed to resonate with newfound energy – a collective understanding that a different kind of empowerment had transpired. The booking coordinator, the very individual who faced the clients head-on, now stood armed with their own solution, underpinned by a sense of ownership and confidence. It was a transformation that resonated deeply, echoing in the satisfaction etched across their face.

And as I reflected on the scene before me, I realized the profound power of the coach approach – the ability to channel leadership not through dictation, but through empowerment. A ripple effect emerged, as the facility manager bore witness to the unfolding transformation. A realization dawned – the coach approach was more than just a toolkit; it was a catalyst for empowerment, igniting the flames of potential and fostering a culture of autonomous decision-making.

In that moment, I was not just a COO solving a challenge, but a facilitator of growth, navigating the intricate dance of leadership and empowerment. It was a lesson that transcended that room, echoing through the corridors of our organization – a testament to the invaluable impact of non-directive coaching.

This marked one of several discussions in which, after years of experience, I finally released my grip on the role of the all-knowing problem solver and fully embraced the mantle of coach and people developer. The profound consequence of this shift was that team members took ownership of their decisions, leading to a notable reduction in my need to enforce accountability. As they exited my office, they carried with them a newfound clarity and unwavering commitment to their own solutions. While I retained the capacity to interject or shape their strategies, I gradually developed a deep trust in my team's innate desire to make sound choices and achieve tangible outcomes. Coaching became an exponential catalyst, magnifying my ability to unlock the latent potential residing within each team member.

Definition

Works with coachee to choose and commit how to move forward

The Harvest phase represents the culmination of the coaching journey. It is the phase where the coach and coachee work together to determine the next steps and commitments for moving forward. The Definition of Harvest in this context is centered around the coach's role in supporting the coachee to make informed choices and commitments based on their insights, discoveries, and desired outcomes. The coach helps the coachee reflect on their progress, assess their growth, and identify the actions or strategies that align with their goals and values. Through open and collaborative dialogue, the coach guides the coachee in determining the most appropriate and meaningful path forward. The Harvest phase is an opportunity for the coachee to take ownership of their development, make concrete plans, and commit to taking the necessary steps to achieve their desired outcomes. It encapsulates the essence of the Sprout non-directive coaching model, where the coachee's autonomy and empowerment are prioritized, allowing them to harvest the fruits of their coaching experience and set themselves up for continued growth and success.

Metaphor

What learning is harvested and applied to the Planting?

The Metaphor of Harvest serves as a powerful tool to deepen the coachee's understanding of their coaching journey. The question "What learning is harvested and applied to the Plant phase?" invites the coachee to reflect on the insights, wisdom, and growth they have gained throughout the coaching process and how they can use this newfound knowledge to inform their future actions. The Metaphor of Harvest implies that the coaching experience is not a one-time event but rather a continuous cycle of growth and learning. It emphasizes the importance of taking the valuable lessons learned and applying them to future endeavors, just as a farmer gathers the fruits of their labor and utilizes them as seeds for the next planting season. By exploring the learning that has been harvested, the coachee gains a deeper appreciation for their progress and can make intentional choices that align with their personal and professional

aspirations. The Metaphor of Harvest reinforces the idea that coaching is a transformative process that extends beyond the immediate coaching sessions, empowering the coachee to cultivate a mindset of ongoing development and apply their newfound insights to sow the seeds of success in their future endeavors.

Neuroscience

Growth and Adaptability

The Neuroscience of growth associated with Harvest is a fascinating exploration of the brain's capacity for change and development. As the coachee reflects on their coaching journey and identifies the learning that has been harvested, the brain undergoes significant neurological processes that contribute to personal growth. Neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to reorganize and form new neural connections, plays a crucial role in this process. The act of consciously recognizing and applying the insights gained from coaching stimulates neural pathways associated with self-reflection, self-awareness, and cognitive flexibility. It strengthens existing connections and creates new ones, enabling the brain to adapt and integrate the new knowledge into its existing neural networks. Additionally, the positive emotions and sense of accomplishment that come with the Harvest phase of coaching trigger the release of neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin, which enhance motivation, learning, and overall well-being. This neurochemical response reinforces the brain's inclination to seek out growth-oriented experiences and strengthens the neural circuits associated with goal-setting and achievement. The Neuroscience of growth related to Harvest reveals the remarkable plasticity and adaptability of the brain, highlighting its innate capacity to embrace change, acquire new skills, and continue evolving. Through the intentional application of harvested learning, the brain rewires itself, paving the way for sustained personal and professional growth.

Importance

Deliver value
Closure with clarity
Envisioning the future

The Importance of the Harvest within the Sprout model is

multifaceted and holds significant value for both the coachee and the coaching process as a whole. As the final phase of the coaching journey, Harvest brings closure and clarity to the coachee's experience. It provides an opportunity for reflection, consolidation, and integration of the insights and learning acquired throughout the coaching engagement. By working collaboratively with the coach, the coachee can identify and articulate their next steps and commitments, ensuring that they leave the coaching relationship with a clear path forward. This empowers the coachee to take ownership of their growth and progress, as they have actively participated in shaping their desired outcomes. Additionally, Harvest is instrumental in delivering value aligned with the coachee's initial intentions set in the Plant phase also called the goal or coaching agreement. It serves as a benchmark to evaluate the effectiveness of the coaching process and highlights the transformative impact that coaching has had on the coachee's personal and professional life. Moreover, the Harvest phase enables the coachee to envision a compelling future that is inspired by their newfound awareness, insights, and growth. By celebrating achievements, acknowledging progress, and setting intentions for the future, Harvest fosters a sense of accomplishment, motivation, and possibility. It allows the coachee to embark on the next chapter of their journey with confidence and a deeper understanding of their potential. In essence, the Importance of Harvest lies in its ability to provide closure, clarity, value, and an inspired vision for the coachee, ensuring a meaningful and transformational coaching experience.

Risk

Run out of time
Learning not captured
Ends without commitments
Miss creating accountability

The Harvest phase holds certain Risks that coaches must be mindful of to ensure a comprehensive and effective coaching journey. One of the Risks is the possibility of valuable learning and insights not being adequately captured or acknowledged. If the coachee fails to reflect on their progress or integrate their newfound awareness, the coaching process may miss its full potential for transformation. Additionally, there is a Risk that the coaching engagement might conclude without the coachee making tangible commitments or action plans to move forward.

Without clear next steps and goals, the coachee may struggle to apply their learnings and implement positive changes in their life. Furthermore, the Harvest phase also entails the Risk of missing opportunities to establish accountability mechanisms. If the coachee does not hold themselves accountable for their commitments, there is a chance that they may not follow through with the action plans discussed during coaching, leading to limited growth and development. Lastly, time constraints in the coaching conversation can pose a Risk, as the Harvest phase may be rushed, preventing the coachee from fully processing and internalizing their growth journey. Coaches need to be vigilant in managing these Risks, guiding the coachee to embrace the Harvest phase as a critical aspect of their coaching experience, facilitating the integration of insights, and ensuring the coachee's commitment to their desired transformation. By addressing these Risks, coaches can maximize the potential impact of the Harvest phase and create a more fulfilling and purposeful coaching journey for their coachees.

Doing

Closing

Envisioning

Capturing learning

The Doing part associated with the Harvest phase in the coaching model encompasses a series of actions aimed at creating a meaningful closure for the coachee and ensuring the integration of their learnings. First and foremost, the coach facilitates the closing of the coaching journey in a way that resonates with the coachee. This involves acknowledging the progress made, celebrating achievements, and honoring the coachee's growth and transformation. By creating a sense of closure, the coachee is able to reflect on their coaching experience and gain a deeper understanding of their personal development. Furthermore, the Doing part of Harvest involves envisioning success. The coach collaborates with the coachee to envision a future aligned with their newfound clarity, learning, and takeaways. By painting a vivid picture of success, the coach helps the coachee solidify their aspirations and goals, fostering a sense of direction and motivation moving forward. Lastly, the Doing part encompasses capturing the coachee's learnings through integration. The coach supports the coachee in finding effective ways to integrate their insights into their everyday life. This can be achieved through the use of symbols, rituals, or

routines that serve as reminders and anchors for the coachee's growth. These tools help the coachee reinforce their learning, sustain their progress, and make meaningful connections between their coaching experience and their ongoing personal and professional journey.

Through purposeful actions of closure, envisioning success, and capturing learnings, the Doing part of the Harvest phase empowers the coachee to embrace their growth, integrate their newfound insights, and move forward with clarity and intentionality.

Being

Clarifying
Celebrating
Empowering

The Being part associated with the Harvest phase is integral to creating a supportive and empowering environment for the coachee. As the coachee reaches the culmination of their coaching journey, the coach embraces a mindset of celebration, acknowledging and honoring the coachee's progress and achievements. By recognizing and celebrating success, the coach reinforces the coachee's confidence and self-belief, fostering a positive and uplifting atmosphere. Moreover, the coach embodies a sense of empowerment, encouraging the coachee to make requests and express their needs and desires. By granting the coachee agency and autonomy, the coach promotes a sense of ownership and accountability for the outcomes of the coaching process. Additionally, the coach plays a crucial role in helping the coachee clarify their goals, commitments, and takeaways from the coaching experience. Through open and exploratory conversations, the coach supports the coachee in articulating their intentions, establishing concrete action plans, and identifying key learnings to carry forward. By facilitating this process of reflection and goal-setting, the coach nurtures the coachee's sense of purpose and direction, ensuring that the Harvest phase is a transformative and meaningful conclusion to their coaching journey.

Saying

What will you do?

What have you learned?

How will you be accountable?

The Saying part for the coach in the Harvest phase of the coaching model is focused on helping the coachee reflect on their journey, make decisions, and establish accountability. The coach uses powerful questions to elicit the coachee's insights and learnings, such as "What have you learned?" This question encourages the coachee to articulate their key takeaways, bringing awareness to their personal growth and development. Additionally, the coach guides the coachee in determining their next steps by asking questions like "What will you do?" These questions prompt the coachee to identify actionable strategies and commitments that align with their goals and aspirations. Through this process, the coachee gains clarity on the specific actions they will take to move forward. Furthermore, the coach supports the coachee in establishing accountability by inquiring about their plans for follow-up and self-assessment. Questions like "How will you be accountable?" encourage the coachee to identify mechanisms for tracking their progress, seeking support, or engaging in reflective practices. This helps the coachee stay committed to their goals and ensures their ongoing growth beyond the coaching engagement.

By utilizing the Saying part effectively, the coach empowers the coachee to articulate their learnings, make meaningful decisions, and establish a sense of accountability. The coach's thoughtful questions during the Harvest phase guide the coachee towards greater self-awareness, goal-oriented action, and a sense of responsibility for their ongoing development.

Hearing

Actions

New beliefs

Accountability

The Hearing part for the coach in the Harvest phase of the coaching model involves Hearing the coachee's reflections, beliefs, actions, and accountability. The coach attunes to the

coachee's words, paying attention to any new beliefs or insights that emerge giving space for the coachee to connect with them or making observations that facilitate the coachee's connections with insights. The coach will hear indications of the coachee's confidence and clarity in their chosen actions. Signs of self-assurance through actions align with the coachee's goals and intentions. Additionally, the coach attends to the coachee's accountability to themselves and their commitment to follow through on the identified actions. The coach can discern the coachee's level of self-accountability and their willingness to seek support when needed. This allows the coach to provide appropriate observations or resources to assist the coachee in maintaining their accountability and accessing the necessary support systems. The coach will truly hear and understand the coachee's reflections, beliefs, actions, and accountability. This deep listening allows the coach to offer relevant support, affirm the coachee's progress, and ensure that the coachee remains connected to their goals and committed to their own growth.

ICF Competency

Facilitates Coachee Growth

The International Coaching Federation's core competency of Facilitates coachee Growth is crucially connected to the Harvest phase of the Sprout coaching model. During this phase, the coach plays a pivotal role in guiding and supporting the coachee's growth journey. Although the Harvest brings the coachee back to the Plant (the coaching agreement) to create action related to the desired outcome, this competency rightfully reminds the coach that the focus is on supporting the coachee for growth. Growth for the coachee is of paramount importance. By employing effective coaching techniques and creating a safe and empowering space, the coach facilitates the coachee's reflection, learning, and integration of their experiences. Through thought-provoking questions related to capturing learning, harvesting their insights and making commitments the coach assists the coachee to translate them into actionable steps for growth. The coach's facilitation skills are essential in encouraging the coachee to explore their potential, set meaningful goals, and cultivate sustainable changes in their personal and professional lives. By skillfully facilitating growth, the coach empowers the coachee to realize their aspirations and unlock their full potential beyond the coaching relationship.

Harvest Conclusion

In conclusion, the Harvest phase in the Sprout coaching model represents the culmination of the coaching conversation, where leaders reap the rewards of their efforts and embrace the positive outcomes they have achieved. It is a time of action, where leaders take decisive steps based on the insights and learnings gained throughout the coaching process. The Harvest phase empowers leaders to translate their newfound clarity and self-awareness into tangible results, making a meaningful impact on themselves, their teams, and their organizations. Through celebrating achievements, leaders recognize their progress and acknowledge the growth they have experienced. By capturing their learning and reflecting on their accomplishments, leaders ensure that the insights gained during the coaching conversation continue to shape their future success. The Harvest phase signifies a new beginning, where leaders can leverage their enhanced coaching skills and expanded perspectives to navigate future challenges with confidence and purpose. It is a time of fulfillment, as leaders embrace their potential, honor their journey, and embrace the continued growth that lies ahead. The Harvest phase serves as a testament to the transformative power of non-directive coaching, enabling leaders to cultivate an environment of growth, foster deeper connections, and create lasting change for themselves and those they lead.

11.3 | Harvest Application

From your learning in this chapter write down five Harvest type questions:

1. At your next one on one, ask a couple Harvest questions to help capture learning and make a commitment for action.
2. At your next team meeting, end the meeting by asking what people learned.
3. In a social setting, ask a Harvest question that helps the person envision the future differently.

12 | Cultivating Coaching Conversations

"Fate is the hand of cards we've been dealt. Choice is how we play the hand."

Marshall Goldsmith

Just like a sprout gradually grows into a mature plant, so does the coaching conversation progress, from the initial planting of seeds to the nurturing of growth through watering and pruning, culminating in the fruitful harvest of insights and transformation. As we cultivate what has been learned through Sprout and you use coaching as a key leadership skill, there are some important elements that would be amiss if not addressed.

As we traverse the coaching landscape, we acknowledge that coaching conversations thrive when separated from traditional managing-type interactions. While reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs), providing updates, seeking approvals, and discussing policies and procedures are essential aspects of leadership, they differ from the space that non-directive coaching conversations create. We acknowledge that not every interaction between a leader and direct report is or should be a non-directive coaching conversation. Coaching offers a dedicated arena where leaders can delve deep into self-reflection, explore their beliefs, and harness their strengths to find solutions and realize their potential. Choosing strategically is dependent on the leader's expertise, maturity and discernment.

Another aspect not touched on through this handbook, is how much a non-directive coaching conversation is impacted by the amount of time the coach and coachee agree to use for non-directive coaching. The Sprout coaching model is highly shaped by the agreed-upon time between the coach and coachee, underscoring the importance of nurturing growth throughout the coaching conversation. A coaching conversation that is 10 minutes versus 60 minutes is going to have very different pacing, depth and breadth of exploration and result in different outcomes. For learning and practicing non-directive coaching using the Sprout framework it is recommended to utilize 15

minute coaching conversations. After many opportunities to refine one's coaching skills it is encouraged to experiment with different time frames for coaching. It is key to be aligned on the time frame between the coach and coachee.

Related to the pacing of a coaching conversation is the development of skills related to when and how to move from one phase to the next. The pacing will have a significant impact on this when considering what is possible in a 10 minute versus a 60 minute coaching conversation. Simply put, this is a skill mastered over time and an important responsibility of the coach. The coachee is responsible for the coaching topic, the coach is responsible to manage the coaching process and the agreed upon time frame.

A key distinction that helps develop non-directive coaching skills is whether or not the coach has subject matter expertise on the topics being coached on. Although it is anti-intuitive, the more knowledge and expertise the coach has about a topic the harder it is for them to take a non-directive approach to coaching when learning coaching skills. Although a coach works with a coachee to move from a topic to a goal (a coaching agreement) in the Plant phase the skilled coach knows their concern is much more with the person being coached than with the topic and goal of the coaching. The coachee cares the most about the topic and goal, the coach cares most about the person being coached. For this reason, when learning these skills it is highly recommended to practice using the Sprout model coaching people that have topics the coach may have minimal knowledge about. It is encouraged to find people outside the coach's domain of leadership to practice learning coaching skills. The key to this approach is to focus the questions on the coachee thinking through their issue and not asking questions to learn more about the issue. An easy way to differentiate is through contrasting two questions demonstrating what not to do (1) and what to do (2):

1. What happened? A question satisfying the coach's interest
2. What did you think (or feel) about what happened? A question helping the coachee connect with their experience

Finally, there is the issue of who to coach especially while learning and practicing coaching skills. A key element to who is the issue of permission. Gain permission from those being coached in order to keep the safety and trust high. Fully disclosing a shift to one's approach or how one is attempting to

learn a new skill will enhance relationships through authentic disclosure and embracing feedback from others. Choose those who are safest and the most open to being coached. This may be direct reports, friends, family, peers, colleagues in your network or others. As one develops skills for coaching, continue to challenge oneself with new people to coach and develop new skills and strategies.

With the Sprout coaching model as our guide, we encourage leaders to take the time to invest in themselves and their teams through developing coaching skills. Just as a diligent gardener tends to their plants, leaders can nurture the potential within themselves and their team members, allowing them to blossom and thrive. Coaching, like gardening, is a learned skill with much trial and error required. Let the Sprout coaching model be your garden to cultivate as you embark on your coaching journey, enriching lives, and creating a positive ripple effect in the world. As leaders embrace coaching skills and become catalysts for positive change, the harvest of our efforts will be a world where every individual has the opportunity to reach their full potential and soar to new heights of excellence.

13 | Conclusion

"If you want to improve performance, the most effective way to do this is to improve thinking."

David Rock

Personal Context

One day, a close friend reached out to me, his voice tinged with uncertainty and anxiety. He was grappling with a monumental life decision that held the power to reshape the trajectory of his career and profoundly impact his family. Seeking guidance, he turned to me, someone he trusted implicitly, and asked for my input.

Recognizing the gravity of the situation, I posed a question that would set the tone for our conversation: "Do you want me to approach this as a friend offering advice, or would you prefer that I coach you through this?" Without hesitation, he chose the coaching route, intrigued by the idea of navigating his thoughts and feelings through a non-directive approach.

As our conversation unfolded, he shared his dilemmas, hopes, and fears, painting a vivid picture of the intricate web of considerations he faced. Midway through, his voice trembled as he posed a question that echoed his inner turmoil: "What do you think I should do?" It was a pivotal moment, and I gently reminded him of our coaching agreement. I offered him a choice: I could step out of my coaching role and provide my opinion as a friend, or we could continue the coaching process, and if he wished, I would share my perspective at the end.

He deliberated for a moment and then, with a newfound determination, chose to stick with the coaching process. The conversation flowed, punctuated by moments of introspection and profound realization. By the end, he had unraveled the knots of uncertainty and emerged with a newfound clarity. He had come to a decision that involved moving his family to a new city for a fresh job opportunity.

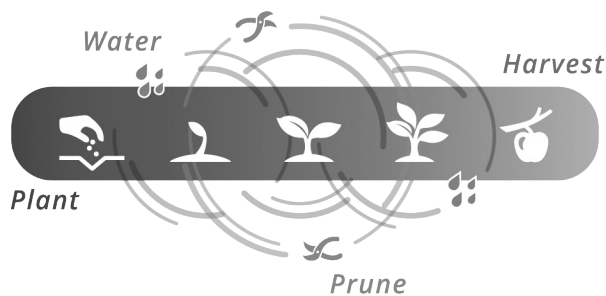
Interestingly, he never came back to ask me for my personal opinion, the one he had sought initially. I couldn't help but reflect on my unspoken advice, which would have been contrary to his chosen path. But the beauty of the situation lay in the fact that he had owned his decision completely, arriving at a conclusion that resonated with his values and aspirations.

This experience left an indelible mark on me. It illuminated the power of non-directive coaching, a process that allowed him to explore his inner landscape, weigh his options, and arrive at a decision imbued with conviction. The coaching had provided him with a safe space to delve into his thoughts, unburdened by external influences. In relinquishing the urge to impose my opinion, I had unknowingly given him the invaluable gift of empowerment.

The lesson was clear: coaching, in its purest form, can be the ultimate gesture of support, a profound gift of self-discovery and clarity. Through this journey, my friend had tapped into his own wisdom, aligning his decision with his values and aspirations. And as I witnessed his journey unfold, I learned that sometimes, the most meaningful way to guide a friend is by enabling them to guide themselves.

Conclusion

In conclusion, "The Leader as Coach" offers a comprehensive guide for leaders seeking to enhance their coaching skills and embrace the mindset of a leader as a coach. Through the practical application of the Sprout model, leaders can cultivate the necessary skills and techniques to empower their teams, foster growth, and drive positive change. The visualization of the coaching framework aims to remind the coach of how simple and accessible the Sprout model is.



In addition, below provides key example questions from each phase of Sprout showing the simplicity of the coaching process. With the knowledge and insight from this book, the coach is equipped to compile a more extensive list of Plant, Water, Prune and Harvest type questions.

Plant

1. What do you want to be coached on?
2. What would success look like?
3. What is your goal for this conversation?
4. What makes this relevant?
5. What is getting in your way?

Water

1. What resources do you have that can help?
2. How do your values shape your thinking on this topic?
3. What past experience can you draw from?
4. What else is connected to this topic?
5. How does your environment shape your thinking on this topic?

Prune

1. What is currently working?
2. What belief do you need to change?
3. What would you do, if nothing was holding you back?
4. What will matter about this in the future?
5. What have you not tried?

Harvest

1. What have you learned about yourself?
2. How does your learning apply to what you wanted?
3. What action will you commit to?
4. How will you hold yourself accountable?
5. How will you celebrate this?

By embracing the Sprout model, leaders can transform their leadership style and can begin creating a culture of coaching within their organizations. They will be equipped with the necessary tools to engage in meaningful conversations, empower their team members, and facilitate personal and professional growth.

The non-directive coaching approach promotes active listening, powerful questioning, and deep reflection, allowing leaders to tap into the potential of their teams and inspire them to achieve their highest potential.

As readers embark on their journey of becoming a leader as a coach, it is important to remember that mastering coaching skills requires dedication, practice, and an ongoing commitment to personal growth. By embodying the principles of the Sprout model leaders can make a profound impact on their teams, organizations, and themselves.

"The Leader, as Coach" empowers leaders to embrace the transformative power of coaching and guides them on a path to becoming impactful leaders who inspire, develop, and elevate their direct reports, peers, and teams. This book serves as a valuable resource and reference for leaders at all levels, providing them with the necessary tools and insights to navigate the complex landscape of leadership and achieve sustainable success.

To unleash leaders and ignite brilliance, that is the core of the leader, as coach. Enjoy the coaching journey!

Appendices

Appendix A: Intro to Coaching Examples Using Sprout

Welcome to a transformative journey of learning coaching skills through the non-directive Sprout coaching model. These coaching examples are designed to support leaders in honing their coaching abilities and adopting a coach approach to leadership challenges and opportunities. The Sprout coaching model, with its four distinct phases of Plant, Water, Prune, and Harvest, provides a powerful framework for guiding coaching conversations that foster self-discovery, growth, and empowerment.

In these coaching examples, you will witness the art of non-directive coaching in action as leaders leverage the Sprout model to create meaningful and impactful conversations. Through the Plant phase, leaders will learn to facilitate coachees in identifying their desired coaching topics and goals, setting the phase for a coachee-centered approach. The Water phase emphasizes active listening, powerful questioning, and deep exploration of the coachee's situation, enabling leaders to create a safe and supportive environment for self-reflection and learning.

As leaders progress to the Prune phase, they will develop the skill of guiding coachees in exploring ideas, challenging assumptions, and making choices that align with their values and aspirations. This phase empowers leaders to support coachees in gaining clarity, expanding their perspectives, and uncovering new possibilities. Finally, in the Harvest phase, leaders will learn to help coachees translate their insights into actionable steps, foster accountability, and celebrate achievements.

Through these coaching examples, leaders will witness the transformative potential of the Sprout coaching model and gain practical insights into how to apply its principles in real-life coaching scenarios. By embodying a coach approach to leadership mindset and utilizing the Sprout coaching model, leaders can unlock the full potential of their teams, foster a culture of growth and development, and create lasting impact in their organizations. Get ready to embark on a journey of learning and growth as you explore these coaching examples and

develop your coaching skills using the Sprout coaching model. In the first two coaching examples, the questions are coloured (Kindle only) to coincide with the phases of the Sprout non-directive coaching conversation in order to demonstrate both the intentional process along with the organic free flow approach the coach takes in this conversation. The final two coaching examples do not have the questions coloured with the phases of the Sprout model in order to provide an opportunity for the reader to identify the questions with the phase of the Sprout model.

Appendix B: Coaching

Example | Work Life Balance

Coach: Hello, thank you for joining me today. What would you like to be coached on?

Coachee: I need help with finding a better work-life balance, especially with having young kids. It's been challenging to juggle my responsibilities at work and still be present for my family.

Coach: What makes this topic important to you today?

Coachee: It's essential for me to create a healthy balance between my career and family life. I want to be there for my kids' milestones while also excelling in my profession.

Coach: How do you feel about your current work-life balance?

Coachee: I feel overwhelmed and guilty because I often have to choose between work commitments and spending time with my kids.

Coach: What part of this topic is most relevant to explore further?

Coachee: I think it would be helpful to explore strategies for managing my time more efficiently and setting boundaries between work and family.

Coach: What have you tried so far to improve your work-life balance?

Coachee: I've tried setting boundaries with my work hours, but it's challenging to stick to them consistently. I've also considered delegating some tasks at work, but I'm afraid it might affect my performance.

Coach: What do you want to walk away with after our conversation today?

Coachee: I want to have a concrete plan on how to balance my work and family life better. I also want to feel more confident in my decisions regarding time management.

Coach: What resources do you have that can help you in achieving a better work-life balance?

Coachee: I have a supportive partner who can help with childcare, and I can also explore flexible work options with my employer.

Coach: What would you do differently if nothing was holding you back?

Coachee: If nothing was holding me back, I would confidently prioritize my family time without feeling guilty about not being fully available for work all the time.

Coach: How do your values shape your thinking about work-life balance?

Coachee: Family is a significant value for me, and I want to create a nurturing environment for my children. I also value excellence in my career, which is why finding balance is crucial.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coachee: As I think about it more, I think I'm struggling with feeling guilty no matter what I do. Maybe that is what I need to change.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coach: That sounds tough.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coach: What are your concerns related to finding a better work-life balance?

Coachee: I'm concerned that if I prioritize family more, it might impact my career growth, and vice versa. I want to find a way to have both without sacrificing either.

Coach: How will you know if you have found both?

Coachee: I think I would feel differently. At least that is what I think. Maybe I need to find a new way to feel about the tension

between the two. I think I default to feeling guilty but not sure what else I should be feeling. Maybe I need to find or maybe define the feeling I want to have or should have about my choices. I mean, I care about my work and I care about my family. I care a lot and no matter how much I care I feel guilty about both not being enough.

Coach: What is enough?

Coachee: That's an impossible question!

[Long Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coachee: (Hesitantly) Deep down, I know I am enough. My family doesn't need me to prove anything. I am successful at work and it really is my own drive and ambition that drives this anxiety or guilt or whatever it is. I don't know why I am doing this to myself. It is so much in my head. People would think I am crazy for thinking like this. I need a new way of thinking about myself and maybe for what is enough.

Coach: What would that look like?

Coachee: I think I need to change my expectations for myself. Feeling guilty doesn't help and I am doing my best to live out multiple values. It isn't one or the other. You know what, I am not taking enough time for myself to reflect and get control of my thoughts. That is what I have lost in the last number of years. I used to do yoga regularly and that helped me be centered. I have lost connection with practices like that.

Coach: Where are you now compared to where we started?

Coachee: A very different place. It isn't about a plan as much as a new way of thinking. I need to come back to some practices that help me with being grounded. I think it would change how I am with my family... and at work. It would also help with this damn guilt or anxiety.

Coach: What action steps will you commit to taking after our conversation today?

Coachee: It starts with yoga. I have to get back into this practice. This will give me a new perspective on family and work commitments. I need to start with myself.

From here I think I can come up with setting specific boundaries for my work hours and discuss the possibility of flexible work arrangements with my employer. I will also allocate dedicated family time and make the most out of it. But I need to start with myself.

Coach: How will you hold yourself accountable for implementing these action steps?

Coachee: I have a friend who became a yoga instructor. I need to reconnect with her.

Coach: What have you learned about yourself through this coaching process?

Coachee: It was closer than I thought. But looking back I realize my emotions were clouding my thinking on the whole thing. I've learned that I have more ability to take charge of my work-life balance than I realized.

Coach: How will you celebrate the progress you make in achieving a better work-life balance?

Coachee: This week we are going for supper on Friday. I am going to share with my family my insights and celebrate with a glass of wine!

Coach: Thanks for sharing and your willingness to do some heavy lifting. How would you like to end our time?

Coachee: Namaste! Haha, I think that is an appropriate way to end our time. Thank you.

Coach: You are welcome, and Namaste to you as well.

Appendix C: Coaching

Example | Advancing Career

Coach: Welcome! What would you like to be coached on today?

Coachee: I want to discuss strategies for advancing in my career. I feel stuck in my current position and want to explore opportunities for growth.

Coach: What makes this topic important to you today?

Coachee: Career growth is essential to me because I want to achieve my full potential and have a meaningful impact in my field. I have done well in my career and looking back my advancement seemed to happen without really intentionally pursuing it. I worked hard and delivered really good results. That proved successful. Now everyone I am surrounded by is doing that and I am not sure how to position myself to get ahead of others. The opportunities are few and far between. I am still bothered by a position I applied for a couple months ago which I didn't get. I think that shook my confidence and made me much more aware of the limited options there are.

Coach: What would you like to walk away with?

Coachee: I am not sure at this point. I am not sure where to start. I guess I need a plan or something to that effect. I just need the answer, can you give me that? Tell me what I should do! Haha.

Coach: Well I could do that, but I am guessing that a complex issue like this could be like sharing a retainer for your teeth. It just won't fit you and your unique style. Let me coach you and see what value that brings.

Coachee: I figured you might say something like that, I am game to try.

Coach: What do you think is getting in the way of your career advancement?

Coachee: It is a really competitive landscape. I am not sure what makes me stand out. And to be honest, more often now self-doubt and fear of failure holds me back from taking necessary risks and pursuing new opportunities. I am playing it safe more often. But I also have learned a lot and am not as naive as I used to be. I am not willing to take uncalculated risks.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coachee: Comes with age I guess. I wish I could just leap like I used to.

Coach: What elements from your past experiences can you draw from that might be relevant to your career advancement?

Coachee: In the past, I was a "yes" person. I put my hand up all the time. I once took on a massive, challenging project that required me to learn new skills, and it turned out to be a significant achievement for me. It opened the doors for my next opportunity and it was almost completely a discretionary effort while I maintained other responsibilities.

Coach: If you had no fear now, what would you try?

Coachee: I would take more initiative; put my hand up more often for projects and additional opportunities. But I am so busy with current responsibilities. It's not fear as much as not wanting to drop the ball on what I am managing. My brand is that I deliver. I don't want to do anything that might jeopardize my brand.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coachee: I am at a loss. Just stuck.

Coach: What resources do you have that can help you in your career advancement?

Coachee: I have access to professional development programs and funds for additional training. I already have my MBA and have taken lots of training and courses.

Coach: What else do you have?

Coachee: I have my colleagues from my MBA who I haven't engaged in a while. I do have a network and some people I

consider mentors. They may provide guidance and ideas. I also have leaders in our organization I look up to. I haven't sought them out to ask for their input. That would not be difficult to do.

Coach: Checking in on where we started, what if any progress have you made so far?

Coachee: I think I have underestimated the fear of taking a risk, it is causing me to hesitate and feel stuck. That isn't like me. I need to find some small steps to start building momentum towards what I want for the next phase of my career.

Coach: What does a baby step, kidding, a small step look like?

Coachee: I need to grab coffee with a couple leaders in our organization. I also need to go talk to HR. I need to put some feelers out and get feedback for areas I may need to develop and grow.

Coach: What will you ask these leaders?

Coachee: Good question... I need to think about that... First, hear their story of their career to see what I can learn. I will likely gain something from how things happened for them. And I need to ask what skills I need to develop for the next level.

Coach: I have a coaching one you might want to try.

Coachee: Yes for sure.. What is it?

Coach: Well, you know I always ask open ended questions... What advice do you have for me?

Coachee: I love that!

Coach: This will give them the chance to cut to the chase of what they think is most important. The best advice they have so to speak.

Coachee: Got it. I like that.

Coach: We have a few more minutes, what have you learned about yourself?

Coachee: I was reminded that I have my head down so much

focusing on delivering I forget about the people around me. I forget to reach out and connect with people and get their input. I am overdue for a coffee with a couple people I have in mind to reach out to. I know it will be energizing. I always get energized talking to my MBA colleagues and leaders I respect in the organization. Beyond career advancement, this is really overdue and I am excited to have an excuse to go book some meetings that will be energizing

Coach: What will help you remember the learning related to reaching out and connecting with your network?

Coachee: I have a picture of aspen trees in my office. It is about teamwork as aspens grow closely together because their root systems are interconnected. When I look at that picture now I need to remember it reminds me of my network and I need to connect with people to help me advance and grow. That is really helpful!

Coach: Glad it has helped. Better than the tips and tricks you may have wanted from me at the beginning of the conversation. How do you want to end our time?

Coachee: Thanks, that was helpful.

Coach: You are welcome. Stand tall, pun intended!

Appendix D: Coaching

Example | Difficult Employee

Coach: Hello, thank you for joining me today. What do you want to be coached on?

Coachee: I need some guidance on managing a difficult employee. I'm finding it challenging to address their behavior and improve their performance.

Coach: What makes this important to you today?

Coachee: It's crucial because this employee's behavior is affecting team dynamics and overall productivity. I want to create a positive work environment and help this employee reach their full potential. I have worked hard at creating a strong team and this team member is just not responsive.

Coach: What are your concerns related to managing this difficult employee?

Coachee: I'm concerned about damaging our working relationship and potentially demotivating the employee further. I also worry about the impact their behavior is having on the team as a whole. It also potentially reflects on my through the results I am responsible for and for other team members carrying extra load due to a weak link.

Coach: How does your environment shape your thinking on this topic?

Coachee: The organizational culture values collaboration and growth, and I believe in empowering employees to develop their skills. But, our organization is also not good at holding people accountable. This isn't the only bad behavior. Some people get away with a lot.

Coach: What resources do you have that can help you in managing this employee?

Coachee: I have access to HR policies and guidelines, which can provide a framework for addressing performance issues. Additionally, I can seek advice from my supervisor or colleagues who have dealt with similar situations.

Coach: What have you not yet considered in managing this difficult employee?

[Silence and delay in response. Coach is patient and waits while the Coachee thinks.]

Coachee: I may not have fully considered the underlying reasons behind the employee's behavior. Taking the time to understand their perspective and potential challenges they may be facing could be beneficial. I am frustrated with them and I really do not have any clue where the behavior is coming from.

Coach: What is getting in the way of effectively managing this employee?

[Silence - the coachee thinking]

Coachee: I think my fear of confrontation and not knowing the best approach to address the behavior are significant obstacles. I want to find a balance between being firm and supportive. The rest of my team likes me and we work together really effectively. It bugs me that I can not figure out this team member.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coach: What does that tell you about yourself?

Coachee: I pride myself on being a great team leader. It isn't often I find someone challenging like this... I guess it is a shot to my ego. I am taking this too personally. I don't think this is so much about me. This team member has this reputation. This is more about them.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coach: How does this insight help you?

Coachee: I think I need to chill. I can't take this personally. I need to come back to why I am a good leader. I care about people, I ask good questions and I give people the benefit of the doubt.

I need to come back to that for this leader and not let them make me lose sight of what I think I offer of value.

Coach: What would that look like?

Coachee: I need to schedule a one-on-one meeting with the employee. I need to share perspective to see what they may say. I need to bring up my performance concerns and gather their perspective. I feel good about that.

Coach: How will you hold yourself accountable for taking these steps?

Coachee: I will set a deadline for the meeting. I will report back on how this conversation goes in our next coaching conversation.

Coach: What do you want to be most proud of in the future regarding managing this difficult employee?

Coachee: I want to be proud of having the courage to address the issue head-on and for creating a positive impact on the employee's growth and the overall team dynamics.

Coach: How will you celebrate your progress and learning in managing this situation?

Coachee: Once I have successfully addressed the employee's behavior and witnessed positive changes, I will celebrate by acknowledging their growth and sharing my success with my team or supervisor.

Coach: What do you need to acknowledge for yourself in this process of managing a difficult employee?

Coachee: I need to acknowledge my commitment to creating a supportive work environment and my dedication to helping individuals reach their full potential.

Coach: In our next conversation, what would be helpful for me to ask you?

Coachee: Hmmmmm, good questions. (Pause) Ask me how it went in my one on one conversation with this employee. Also, ask whether I took the conversation personally or not. I need to remember to be objective and not take it personally.

Coach: I can do that. I want to acknowledge your commitment and courage to engage this team member. I have no doubt you will make progress as you navigate this important conversation. I look forward to hearing how it goes. Thank you for sharing your thoughts and your commitment to leading your team effectively.

Appendix E: Coaching Examples | Challenging Project

Coach: Welcome to our coaching conversation. I'm here to support you as both your leader and as a coach. I want to acknowledge I have a role and vested interest in your success. Your performance also reflects on me. With that being said, I am going to do my best to keep my coaching hat on and coach you through the complexities of leading this challenging project. You were chosen for a reason and I believe in your abilities. So, what specifically would you like to be coached on in relation to this project?

Coachee: Thanks for that reminder of your belief in me, that means a lot to me. I want to be coached on how to effectively lead and manage this project amidst its complexity. I want to ensure that I overcome the challenges, make informed decisions, and drive successful outcomes.

Coach: That's a great focus. What specifically do you want out of this conversation?

Coachee: I want to gain a better understanding of the project's key objectives and milestones, develop strategies for managing the complexity, and identify any potential blind spots that I might have missed. Additionally, I hope to explore ways to leverage my strengths and resources effectively in leading this project.

Coach: What else do you need to consider?

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coachee: One challenge I anticipate is coordinating the efforts of multiple teams and stakeholders involved in this project. Additionally, managing the project timeline and ensuring effective communication are areas where I foresee potential difficulties.

Coach: What do you already know?

Coachee: In previous projects, I successfully led cross-functional teams and fostered collaboration among diverse stakeholders. I also have experience in project planning and risk management. These skills and experiences can be valuable assets as I navigate this complex project.

Coach: How do your core values align with the responsibilities and expectations of leading this complex initiative?

Coachee: Integrity, resilience, and continuous improvement are core values that guide my approach to leadership. I believe these values will influence my decision-making, drive accountability, and inspire a culture of learning and growth within the project team.

Coach: So, where do you need to start?

Coachee: I can start by breaking down the project into manageable phases and setting clear milestones. I also need to improve my delegation skills to ensure that tasks are appropriately assigned and deadlines are met. Additionally, fostering open communication channels and actively seeking feedback will be crucial in managing the project's complexity. I commit to creating a detailed project plan with clear objectives and deliverables. I will ensure regular communication and collaboration among team members and stakeholders. Additionally, I will regularly assess and reassess the project's progress, making adjustments as needed to keep it on track.

Coach: What is missing?

Coachee: Hmmm, interesting question. I need to think about that.

[Silence - allowing the coachee to reflect]

Coachee: The intangibles I guess. The project part I have a firm handle on. I need to bring energy and a real positive attitude. These will help drive the success. I need to help the team feel really energized and positive about the impact. I need to help cast vision for why this matters and the team members' role in the success.

Coach: What is becoming more clear from this conversation?

Coachee: Some good reminders of the importance of good project planning but also the leadership aspect of vision. To hold myself accountable, I will create a project tracking system to monitor progress against milestones. I will also schedule regular check-ins with the project team to address any challenges and evaluate our collective efforts. In these check ins I need to remember to not just focus on milestones and objectives but to also remember to cast vision. Additionally, I will seek feedback from key stakeholders to assess the project's impact and make necessary adjustments.

Coachee: What will matter about this in 5 years?

Coachee: Beside the project and delivery it will be the people and how we come together as a team. I usually remember this mostly through the lens of being in the trenches with the team.

Coach: What is your commitment moving forward?

Coachee: I need to build in a reminder of not losing sight of the importance of relationships in this project. I can get so dialed in on milestones, budgets and timelines I lose sight of the people. I need to remember that.

Coach: How will you hold yourself accountable to do that?

Coachee: [Long pause] My Project Coordinator is a strong relational person. I can get his help. He is great at remembering birthdays, writing cards and doing some really great things that help people feel valued. I need his help for sure. I am going to share with him and solicit his support.

Coach: What will that look like?

Coachee: I can give him a budget and tell him this is really important. I need his help to hold me accountable. I will ask him to check in with me about this at our weekly meetings.

Coach: Sounds like a great plan. I would affirm this important leadership skill of delegation according to team members strengths. This sounds like an excellent example of doing this. How are you leaving this conversation?

Coachee: I appreciate your guidance and support. This coaching conversation has provided me with valuable insights and a clear

plan of action. I feel more confident and equipped to tackle the challenges of this project. I am sure there will be more next week, but for now, thank you.

Coach: You're very welcome! It's been a pleasure having this conversation with you. Embrace this opportunity to showcase your leadership skills and make a positive impact. I would affirm your thinking on the importance of casting the vision for this project. This is where a lot of discretionary effort may come from. If people believe in the value and impact of the project this helps keep the motivation high. This is a very exciting project and many people across the organization are watching.

Coachee: That is a good reminder. That reminds me of the importance of delegation and holding people accountable. I would like to come back to that next week in our next coaching conversation.

Coach: Sounds like a plan. I have a good article on this I will share with you to read before our next conversation. I look forward to hearing about your progress from this week. Talk to you next week. Have a good day.

Coachee: You as well!

Appendix F: Sprout and ICF

Core Competencies




The International Coach Federation (ICF) has established a set of core competencies that serve as guidelines for professional coaches to deliver effective and impactful coaching sessions. These competencies outline the skills, behaviors, and attitudes required to uphold the highest standards in coaching. When aligning these competencies with the Sprout non-directive coaching model, we can identify how the model supports the development and application of these skills in a non-directive coaching context.



While the competency of "Demonstrates Ethical Practice" is an essential component of coaching, it is not explicitly mentioned in the Sprout non-directive coaching model. This omission is not due to its lack of importance but rather because ethical practice is considered a fundamental aspect that underlies the entire coaching process, regardless of the coaching approach used.

Ethical practice encompasses maintaining coachee confidentiality, establishing clear boundaries and agreements, conducting oneself with integrity and professionalism, and adhering to the ICF's Code of Ethics. These ethical principles are expected to be upheld by all professional and accredited coaches with the ICF, regardless of their coaching style or approach. The Sprout coaching model focuses on developing non-directive coaching skills for leaders regardless of whether or not they pursue credentialing with the ICF and for this reason there is not a focus on the ethics of coaching while learning coaching skills for leaders. While not explicitly mentioned within the Sprout model, ethical practice is a fundamental requirement for any coach working within the non-directive framework.

By integrating the ICF competencies with the Sprout non-directive coaching model, coaches can ensure that they are upholding the highest ethical standards while applying the principles and techniques of non-directive coaching. This alignment enables coaches to create a safe and supportive environment for their coachees, fostering trust, growth, and positive change. Appendix F presents in visual form how the Sprout model aligns with the ICF Core Competencies.

Appendix G: Visual of Sprout and ICF Core Competencies

1. Demonstrates Ethical Practice	
Definition: Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards of coaching.	
2. Embodies a Coaching Mindset	
Definition: Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and coachee centered.	
3. Establishes and Maintains Agreements	
Definition: Partners with the coachee and relevant stakeholders to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as those for each coaching session.	
4. Cultivates Trust and Safety	
Definition: Partners with the coachee to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the coachee to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.	

5. Maintains Presence	
<p>Definition: Is fully conscious and present with the coachee, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded and confident.</p>	
6. Listens Actively	
<p>Definition: Focuses on what the coachee is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the coachee systems and to support coachee self-expression.</p>	
7. Evokes Awareness	
<p>Definition: Facilitates coachee insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor or analogy.</p>	
8. Facilitates coachee Growth	
<p>Definition: Partners with the coachee to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes coachee autonomy in the coaching process.</p>	

Appendix H: Table of Concepts

Summary

Phase	Plant	Water	Prune	Harvest
Summary	Topic & Outcome	Explore & Dream	Narrow & Choose	Learn & Commit
Definition	Facilitate coachee to choose the topic and goal of the session	Partner with coachee to explore situation and options to move forward	Invites coachee to explore ideas and make choices to move forward	Works with coachee to choose and commit how to move forward
Metaphor	What needs to grow?	What brings ideas and nourishment to the issue?	What needs to be cut or removed to thrive?	What learning is harvested and applied to what was Planted?
Neuro science	Safety and Trust	Change and Emotions	Limiting Beliefs	Growth and Adaptability
Importance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create goal 2. Focus attention 3. Align on expectations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Uncover the fuller story 2. Raise awareness 3. Create new thinking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removing obstacles 2. Building off discovery 3. Exploring possibilities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Closure with clarity 2. Deliver value 3. Envisioning the future
Risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No clear value set 2. The session goes in circles 3. The coachee does not make progress or learn 4. Lack of trust 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore options too soon before discovery 2. Coach directs the path forward 3. coachee does not get to the root of issues 4. Random exploration not connected to goal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coach jumps to problem solving 2. Focus on barriers not resources 3. Avoids important things connected to topic 4. Moves too quickly to actions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning not captured 2. Ends without commitment 3. Miss creating accountability 4. Run out of time

Phase	Plant	Water	Prune	Harvest
Doing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focusing 2. Questioning 3. Listening 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intuition 2. Possibility 3. Exploring 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Challenge 2. Insightful 3. Silence 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Closing 2. Envisioning 3. Capturing learning
Being	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open 2. Non-judgement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curious 2. Believing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connecting 2. Unattached 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Celebrating 2. Empowering
Saying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you want? 2. What is getting in the way? 3. What does success look like? 4. What makes this important to you? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What else? 2. What are other options? 3. What are your beliefs about this? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your beliefs? 2. What I have noticed... 3. What would you do with a magic wand? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What have you learned? 2. What will you do? 3. How will you be accountable?
Hearing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Layers 2. Interconnection 3. Complexity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Options 2. Strengths 3. Opportunities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bias and Barriers 2. Stories 3. Stuck 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New beliefs 2. Actions 3. Accountability
ICF Competency	<i>Cultivates Safety and Trust Establishes and Maintains Agreements</i>	<i>Maintains Presence Listens Actively</i>	<i>Embodies a Coaching Mindset Evokes Awareness</i>	<i>Facilitates coachee Growth</i>

About the Author

Ed Temple is an accomplished Executive Coach residing in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, along with his spouse, Hannah, and their three children, Elijah, Madalyn, and Evangeline. As the Program Chair of the Leader as Coach program at Lethbridge College, an accredited International Coach Federation (ICF) coach training program, Ed has made significant contributions to the development of coaching skills among aspiring leaders. His role as a master coach trainer has allowed him to train thousands of leaders from various industries. Ed is an active member of the ICF community demonstrated by serving as the past President of the ICF Calgary Chapter. Ed's dedication to the art of coaching has been demonstrated by coaching thousands of hours with hundreds of clients along with attaining the prestigious Master Certified Coach (MCC) credential from the ICF.

Ed's coaching expertise extends to diverse teams, professionals, owners, and executives, helping them reach higher levels of performance. He excels in helping leaders and teams develop their potential, embrace innovation, and achieve excellence in an ever-changing business landscape.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Ed is a fierce servant, actively involved in his community. Ed's passion for social innovation led to the successful launch of the SEEDS (Social Enterprise Excelsator Development System) program in Alberta, training over 500 charitable leaders with coaching skills. He has served on multiple charitable boards, served as the Board Chair for CAUSE Canada and played a crucial role in overseeing a microfinance project partnership between Rotary International and Opportunity International Canada, raising over \$2.3 million for the entrepreneurial poor in Honduras.

Ed's passion for coaching led him to his Massive Transformative Purpose (MTP) which is "unleashing leaders to ignite brilliance". With a vision to democratize coaching, Ed firmly believes that coaching is the most powerful tool to help individuals become the best versions of themselves, ultimately serving as a catalyst for personal and professional growth and fostering a global community of empowered leaders driving positive change.

Opportunities for Next Steps

Coach training: Every leader becomes more effective as they hone non-directive coaching skills. No matter where leaders are in their journey we help them move forward through developing and sharpening coaching skills through in person or virtual training seminars.

Keynotes: The author provides keynotes for small teams, conferences and large organizations to inspire and educate leaders for learning coaching skills.

Team Coaching: The future of coaching is with teams to help them become high performing. We make teams more effective and aligned by enhancing team dynamics, getting clarity on goals and leveraging effective systems for team excellence.

Executive Coaching: For senior leaders looking to share sacred space for holistic growth, development and attaining greater results, we partner with executives, business owners and successful entrepreneurs for a highly tailored coaching program.

Learn more:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ed-temple/>

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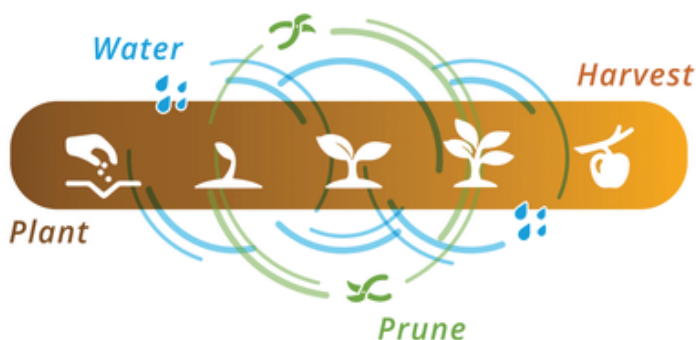


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In a world saturated with buzzwords, coaching often masquerades as "telling people what to do." It's time for a shift, a transformation where leaders cultivate courage, resilience, innovation, and relational prowess in others.

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"Every leader can benefit from The Leader as Coach."

Jason Donkersgoed, Director Lethbridge College Extension