

Coach the Client, Not the Client's Issue

The number one mistake we see repeated most often by novice coaches is that they forget they are coaching a client; instead they think they are solving a problem. They have lost sight of the most important thing in coaching: that “thing” is the living, breathing person sitting across from them, or talking to them on the phone. Instead, these coaches get wrapped up in figuring out, understanding, maneuvering and strategizing. In short, just plain thinking too much. The result is coaching that focuses on solving problems, making problems disappear. The best coaching happens when coaches are focused on coaching the person — not the issue. This means relying on your intuition and Level 3 Listening. You have the advantage of being able to see the big picture for clients when they have their noses to the grindstone. If you spend too much time grinding away at the problem with them you will miss the opportunity to see how this issue — or any topic — is an opportunity for learning and growth.

The surprising realization by many novice coaches is that this really works. Pay less attention to the details of the story; don't let clients succumb to endless reporting and analyzing, telling you things they already know or they've thought about. Instead, get in touch at Level 3 with who your client is being in the moment, and coach that person.