

Infinity-Loop Coaching: On Beyond Questions

Description:

Traditional executive coaching operates on the positive psychology philosophy that people have the knowledge, skills and experiences needed to solve their own problems, or can find others in their world who are willing and able to provide what is needed. Executive coaching as taught by ICF-approved organizations assume that, “the client is creative, resourceful and whole.” Belief in the client paired with an empathic trusting relationship creates positive emotion and an upward spiral of growth. This in turn activates the parasympathetic nervous system and opens up the repertoire of thought-action choices and allows a client to access within far more than they previously knew they knew.

But, does this approach have limits? What about when the internal reservoir has been tapped and is now empty? What about when the deep burning questions simply reflect a lack of information that is widely known? And, what about when the client is about to do something highly dangerous to his or her career? “Following the client’s lead” and assuming the coachee has the internal resources and capabilities to solve their own problems can be augmented by a variety of more active interventions. When applied appropriately, these can significantly augment the effectiveness of the overarching coaching intervention.

These approaches need to be explored and developed. This skill-building session will identify the range of interventions that go beyond the traditional models of coaching, including supporting, confronting, teaching, and directing. We will also discuss the contexts in which a more directive, “consultative” approach is warranted. Factors that influence the choice of intervention include the urgency of the context, risk to the coachee, and the existence of established best practice.

There are significant risks in going beyond the stable, known framework of non-directive, client-centered coaching. It can be far too easy for someone with decades in the business or psychology worlds to feel that their experience leads them to the right answers. Allowing the coach the option of saying and doing things other than the non-directive stance creates the potential to take responsibility for the client, put the client in a one-down position, limit his/her options, and gratify the coach’s own needs rather than the needs of the client. This session will identify ways to identify when the approach is truly in the best interest of the coachee, and when countertransference feelings lead us to think we know better, are smarter, and can provide the “right answer” to the coachee. The real skill is knowing when to actively intervene, and when to stay in a traditional coaching stance.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to explain the difference between classical coaching and infinity loop coaching
2. Participants will be able to identify at least 3 situations when more active interventions are preferable to classical coaching interventions

3. Participants will be able to explain the kinds of risks associated with incorporating active coaching methods in working with executives.

Target Audience: Mid- and Advanced-Level psychologists

How to Access:

- APA 2020 Portal
- At SCP OnDemand for 1.0* CE

**The Society of Consulting Psychology (SCP, Division 13) is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Society of Consulting Psychology maintains responsibility for this program and its content.*

Presenters:



Bill Berman, PhD

Bill is a seasoned consultant with 30+ years' experience as an executive coach, senior line manager, clinician and academic. He has been assessing individuals since 1983, delivered organizational consulting and executive coaching since 1993, and has consulted to executives and C-suite business leaders since returning to full-time consulting in 2004. Bill is also the Past President of the Society of Consulting Psychology, a Fellow of the APA, and ABPP certified in Clinical Psychology.



Carol Kauffman, PhD

Carol is an internationally recognized psychologist and executive coach, with more than 30 years' experience working at the highest levels of global organizations. She is the Founding Director of the Institute of Coaching at McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School has led multiple coaching conferences and is the chief supervisor at the Meyler Campbell business coaching program in London. She has published extensively on positive psychology and executive coaching.