CHAPTER ONE

OUR VIEW OF COACHING FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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To understand CCL's view of coaching, it may be best to start with our intent: to help leaders understand themselves more fully so that they can draw on their strengths and use them more effectively and intentionally, improve identified development needs, and develop untested potential. Much of our coaching work involves helping managers gain clarity about their own motivations, aspirations, and commitment to change.

CCL coaches use approaches anchored in the behavioral sciences and defined by psychological and counseling practices. In addition, their coaching strategies draw on adult learning concepts—chiefly, that adults choose to learn when and what they want. It's no accident that coaching derives much of its practice from the field of psychology and human behavior. After all, psychological and counseling practices help people learn and change, just as coaching does—albeit in a different arena of their lives. This similarity makes it natural that coaching would draw on many of the best practices, skills, and techniques used in the counseling and therapeutic fields. Because of the evolutionary nature of our work in coaching, it is hard to point to one theory of development that forms the foundation of our work. It's fair to say that our approach to leadership coaching reinforces Hudson's perspective (1999) that coaching is informed by a variety of psychological and social theories and

practices, including the work of many well-known theorists such as Jung, Adler, Erikson, Levinson, and Kegan.

Coaching from a base of psychological methodologies is not the same as practicing therapy, however, because the content and context are significantly different. CCL recognizes that there is concern, particularly among leader coaches, about this historical and practical connection. But we believe that their discomfort occurs when the use of skills common to both coaching and therapy are confused with content and outcomes.

These considerations have led us to think of coaching in particular ways and to loosely codify a set of ideas and systems that inform our practice. We start with six essential principles that are integral to our thought and practice, continue on to explore the important elements that define the depth of coaching work, discuss the sometimes too rigid distinction drawn between coaching for performance and development, and describe the role and differentiating skills of the leader coach.

It is important to keep in mind that the discussion of coaching here is foundational and historical. It reflects the conventional wisdom within CCL about leadership coaching and is linked to our history of one-to-one coaching with an external professional coach. Therefore, I do not highlight in this chapter practices that are more peripheral and supplemental but nonetheless highly effective because they've yet to be incorporated into the mainstream of our work. I see those as contributing to the future of leadership coaching practices, which you will read more about as the book unfolds.

The Principles of Leadership Coaching

Six principles guide our coaching. These rules of engagement ensure that our knowledge of leader development is applied across a wide variety of effective coaching styles and coachee needs. They are fundamental to CCL's beliefs about coaching and its practice, and they are significant to the coaching activities of the leader coach. Coaches may have to adapt the mechanics of implementing these principles to their context, but nonetheless the spirit of the principles remains foundational to effective coaching (Ting & Hart, 2004). We note for each principle the salient tension for or adaptation that may be required of the leader coach.

Principle 1: Create a Safe and Challenging Environment

It is the coach's responsibility to create a safe environment in which the coachee can take risks and learn. In the coaching process, the ability to live this principle depends on the coach's skill at balancing challenging and supporting behaviors. Regardless of what the coach believes may be true or right for the coachee, she should take care to ensure the coaching process does not damage the coachee's fundamental sense of self and worth. Creating a sense of safety is a real challenge for leader coaches, who often wear a second evaluative hat that may cause the coachee always to wonder if and how information he shares will be used outside the coaching discussion. At a minimum, it requires the leader coach to aspire to an open and a nonjudgmental attitude.

Principle 2: Work with the Coachee's Agenda

The learning experience is, first and foremost, for and about the individual leaders being coached. They are responsible for driving the process and directing their own learning. They decide which goals to work on and how to go about this work. The coach's role is to influence the agenda, not set it. This does not mean there cannot be alignment between the coachee's and the coach's or organization's goals. To the contrary, it is ideal when there is alignment. Sometimes the leader coach has a clear agenda, such as performance expectations, a specific action that is needed from the coachee, or a message that the organization needs the coach to deliver. In these cases, the leader coach would do well to evaluate if this requires her shifting into the managerial role to avoid the coachee's feeling manipulated or to avoid damaging the coaching relationship.

Principle 3: Facilitate and Collaborate

Although coaches typically possess considerable knowledge and expertise, they do not act like experts, making recommendations or giving answers. They do focus on the coachee's needs and avoid disclosing personal reactions, telling their own stories, or advocating their preferred theories and techniques. They should be highly selective about taking such directive actions and do so only to the extent that it is clearly relevant to the coachee's needs and agreed-on

agenda and only when more facilitative methods will not work just as well. The coach is not there to lecture, opine, or pontificate. And although the coach may suggest options, the ultimate decision about what action to take rests with the coachee. This can be a difficult principle for leader coaches to adopt because they usually have a high investment in achieving the desired outcomes. If a leader coach takes a more directive approach, it should be as a last resort, and she should take some of the responsibility for outcomes.

Principle 4: Advocate Self-Awareness

Knowing one's strengths and development needs is a prerequisite to developing as a leader. By learning to better recognize their own behaviors and understand the impact they may have, coachees are better able to analyze or predict the outcomes of their interactions with others and take steps to achieve desired results.

Principle 5: Promote Sustainable Learning from Experience

Most individuals have the capacity to learn, grow, and change, given that they encounter the right set of experiences and are ready to learn. Reflecting on those experiences is a powerful method for identifying personal strengths and development needs, as well as opportunities and obstacles. We encourage coaches to help their coachees think about events from the perspective of what worked well and what did not and to use their findings to chart a course toward enhanced leader capabilities. A key element of this principle is helping the coachee learn how to move from awareness to action, to sustain that learning, and to create a developmental feedback loop to continually replicate the process.

Principle 6: Model What You Coach

It is the coach's responsibility to exhibit the leadership and emotional competencies (such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills) that the coachee is trying to develop (Goleman, 1998). It can be challenging for the coach to apply this principle because leader coaches themselves are likely to have relative strengths and weaknesses in these areas. Ideally, the leader coach has sufficient self-awareness to know if he has the

capacity and skill to coach around a particular issue and if the coachee can be more effectively served by receiving coaching from another individual. Furthermore, in order to model effective, in-the-moment feedback, coaches may face the challenge of describing the negative impact that the coachee's behavior is having on them, an approach that often feels risky.

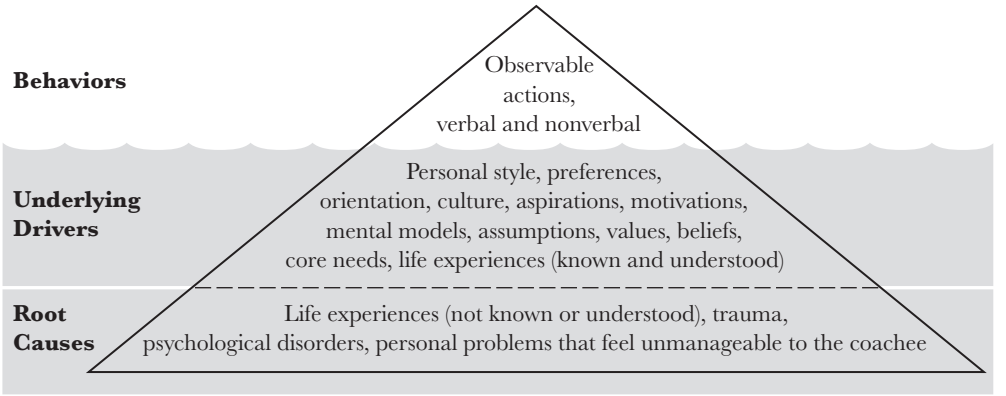
Levels and Depths of Coaching

In our years of working with leader and peer coaches, a recurring issue is their reluctance to fully engage with coachees when they are beginning to self-disclose more significant and sometimes personal information. When we ask why they pull back just when they are closest to facilitating movement in their coachees' thinking, underlying mental models, and self-perception, they often respond that they are afraid—afraid of going too far, of going too deep, of unlocking strong emotions that they feel ill equipped to handle. In short, they have a mental image of a rather tumultuous and out-of-control experience. We believe this reaction results from their discomfort with emotions and an often mistaken image of coaching as therapy in the workplace.

We offer two responses to these concerns. First, when things go bad, you can usually trace it back to poor practice on the part of the coach, not the practice of coaching. Second, coaches can guard against this possibility by thinking in advance about the appropriate ways they should be working with their coachee. A coach who believes there should be no boundaries around topics and depth of discussion is flirting with trouble. And those boundaries should be set by the nature of the relationship and agreement, not simply by what the coach is skilled at. Coaches can usefully characterize their work and articulate their philosophical approach to coaching by thinking about different levels of coaching.

Three levels of coaching that CCL has articulated are *behavioral, underlying drivers,* and *root causes* (see Figure 1.1). As we open this discussion, our intent is to provide guidelines that leader coaches can use to manage what they discuss with their coachees and to determine how deep the coaching conversations might go. Coaches can find reassurance in the fact that the coaching waters deepen gradually; moving from the behavioral level to root causes is not dropping suddenly from the platform to one hundred feet. We encourage leader coaches (and professionally licensed or clinically trained coaches) to

FIGURE 1.1. COACHING LEVELS.



imagine that working at these levels is like moving from dry land into water. The farther out you go, the deeper and less clear the water is. You require different skills and confidence as you go deeper and, in terms of coaching, good judgment in knowing when the coachee's needs have surpassed your capabilities or role to address. The power of coaching often lies in the second level (underlying drivers), a very broad level that encompasses many rich perspectives.

Behavioral Level

Coaching at the behavioral level is certainly the most accessible and comfortable for the leader coach. This level addresses observable actions and behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, that have an impact on others. You are coaching to what is visible and concrete. It relies on the assumptions that the coachee can understand, recognize, and has access to a range of desired behaviors and that the primary goals are to recognize the appropriate context in which to use them and to increase the frequency of their use. It also assumes that internal forces that may be preventing or limiting the coachee's using those skills are not so strong or so deeply entrenched that the coachee is unable to manage.

The approach to behavioral coaching assumes it is not necessary to understand causes or reasons for the behavior as long as the coachee understands that a different behavior is desired or viewed as more effective. The focus is on the desired behavioral change. With this approach, the coach and coachee

focus on understanding what behaviors and skills are desired and relevant to organizational, business unit, or individual goals.

At this level, the coach makes sure that the coachee understands what those effective behaviors look like, identifies times and situations when the coachee is able to demonstrate them, and encourages repetition of skill. (See Chapter Eleven for a detailed discussion of techniques that are particularly useful at this level.)

While coaching at this level feels more familiar to leader coaches, that doesn't lessen the potential results that can be achieved by working at this level. The challenge is staying in the behavioral mode and focusing on future actions rather than rehashing the past and assessing intent. The power lies in the coach's effective use of questioning, probing, and diligence in staying with the process. Exhibit 1.1 provides an example of coaching practiced at this level.

Underlying Drivers

Underlying drivers lie at a deeper coaching level and comprise many elements that may be less visible than behaviors and in fact contribute to their existence. Behaviors are not random acts. Individuals choose how they want to behave. Sometimes those choices are conscious and deliberate; individuals likely understand what the impact will be.

EXHIBIT 1.1. COACHING AT THE BEHAVIORAL LEVEL.

Jon has recently ascended to vice president. After a series of weekly vice-president-level meetings, Jon and his boss, Marla, have a coaching conversation about how he is adapting to his new role. Marla notes that Jon employed a very take-charge style in the meetings and shares her belief that Jon would be more effective if he could adopt a more collaborative approach with his peers. Her specific behavioral feedback is that Jon talked first on every issue, used primarily declarative statements, and always insisted that action steps be taken even when consensus had not been reached.

Desirable collaborative behaviors at the vice-presidential level involve sharing meeting time, asking challenging questions that move the dialogue to a higher level, and building one's points on the ideas of others. Marla and Jon confirm the desired behaviors, discuss past situations where he exhibited those behaviors, and talk about ways Jon can reframe the meetings to support and stimulate his use of the desirable behaviors.

Sometimes, however, those behaviors are automatic. The individual is still making a choice, but it may not require conscious thought because it has become habit or unconscious from years of learning and associating certain behaviors with certain results. Furthermore, individuals may act in ways they know are not likely to have the desired effect, but nonetheless they are at a loss for making another choice and acting differently. In these cases, the less visible (even unconscious) cognitive or emotional processes that drive the less desired behaviors are so strong that even when individuals are motivated to change, they can't or their progress toward change is slow. Anyone who has ever tried to lose weight understands this dynamic.

Much of CCL's coaching practice has been built on examining and understanding underlying drivers as a way of appreciating how, in the coachee's understanding of and orientation to the world, the behavior makes logical sense. For that reason, CCL includes as part of its coaching discipline personality and work-style inventories. While we would not expect leader coaches to become trained in psychological instruments, we do believe through good questioning skills that relevant but less visible aspects about the coachee can surface and be factored into the change process. Some examples of underlying drivers are talents, preferences, orientations, traits, values, mental models, beliefs, needs, and life experiences.

Coaches can easily work in these arenas by taking time to understand what motivates their coachees, what natural skills and orientations they bring to the coaching process, and what experiences have shaped their view of themselves and the world that bear on their effectiveness. Coaches do not need to be licensed clinicians to have these conversations. Coachees are the experts on themselves. Effective coaches observe behaviors and are analytical and intuitive, asking thought-provoking questions to surface these underlying issues more readily. Leader coaches typically have a wealth of opportunities for behavioral observations. Their challenge is to interpret those observations from the perspective of what they reveal about the mental models and orientations of the coachee as well as what they mean for performance and leadership capabilities. Exhibit 1.2 provides an example of coaching practiced at this level.

Root Causes

Sometimes a coachee's behaviors are deeply connected to difficult life experiences, especially traumatic ones, or there is a familial history of psychological disorders, addiction, or chemical abuse. We would distinguish such deeply in-

EXHIBIT 1.2. COACHING AT THE UNDERLYING DRIVER LEVEL.

Andrew is coaching his direct report, Mona, about her behavior related to her expecting staff to routinely stay late or redo their work numerous times. He doesn't understand why it's so difficult for her to modify this behavior since it would reduce her long hours as well. What Andrew learns through informal discussions with Mona is that she has strong values related to doing her best, shaped by her personal and work experiences. Despite Mona's efforts to ease off on the degree of scrutiny to which she subjected her staff's work, she finds it nearly impossible to sustain a more empowering approach. The desired behaviors are competing with strong beliefs shaped by powerful experiences.

grained behaviors from those associated with underlying drivers by the degree of consciousness or ease with which the coachee's beliefs, mental models, and historical events can be revealed and discussed. Another differentiating factor is the extent to which the undesirable behaviors interfere with the coachee's productive functioning or the coachee feels incapable of managing those behaviors.

One behavioral indicator for the need to work at this level is that the coachee appears to be stuck. By *stuck* we don't mean the common experience when making change of overcoming the initial inertia or the natural tendency to revert or regress periodically to the old behavior during the process of shifting to a new behavior. The type of *stuck* we refer to tends to paralyze the coachee in a set of behaviors that are clearly having an adverse impact on work and possibly personal life, or even propelling him or her toward derailment.

Obviously coaches have conversations with their coachees about early life experiences that affect their current leadership style and skills. In fact, a biographical inventory is a useful assessment tool in coaching. Coaches can informally or formally introduce and use such an assessment to better understand the coachee's personal context. The difference between using such biographical assessment and delving into past life experiences is the coachee's ability to frame and make sense of those experiences. If coachees have such ability, then the experience falls within the realm of underlying drivers.

When working at the behavioral or underlying levels proves to be insufficient and the coachee feels the need to delve into past life experiences to relive and heal past wounds, then the leader coach (and professional coaches, for that matter) should consider referring the coachee to a clinical professional with whom the coachee would establish a therapeutic relationship. This relationship

has different structure, goals, and boundaries from leadership coaching. Even if the coach has training in counseling or therapeutic practice, we do not recommend the coach engage in this type of work.

Most leader coaches are familiar with their organization's process for referral. Alternatively, the leader coach might encourage the coachee to seek professional services using his or her own resources and referral sources if the coachee chooses not to use internally offered services. Exhibit 1.3 is an example of coaching at the root causes level.

The Leader Coach: Orientation, Focus, and Skills

Individuals who are responsible for achieving organizational outcomes by directing others have likely exercised coaching skills to facilitate those results. If they did anything more than simply direct and evaluate their direct reports' work, such as asking them how they planned to approach a particular problem or what their career goals were, they were coaching their direct reports even if they were not aware of it or did not label it that way. If the proliferation of books, articles, and training about the subject is any guide, many managers and leaders are eager to learn how to coach better.

CCL's view of the leader coach recognizes that basic premise. Furthermore, we add three distinctions. First, leader coaches are intentional about their responsibility to coach their direct reports. They elicit desirable outcomes

EXHIBIT 1.3. COACHING AT THE LEVEL OF ROOT CAUSES.

Matthew is a young, charismatic, driven manager who is in his organization's high-potential group. One of his identified developmental areas is to become more consistent and predictable in his management style, a goal Matthew agrees with. His boss, Sherri, has been coaching him on the desired behaviors but is finding the process frustrating. What seems like a straightforward developmental issue that would improve as Matthew matured and received feedback and coaching appears more resistant to change. Despite their good coaching relationship and Matthew's articulated desire to improve, his behaviors have become even more volatile, swinging from almost manic periods of activity and engagement to periods of isolation and unpredictable bursts of anger. Sherri is beginning to feel she is at the limit of her capability to support Matthew's development through coaching on her own.

by increasing their direct reports' capacities and capabilities, and they provide ongoing feedback that enables continuous learning. Second, leader coaches focus their coaching on development as much as on performance and see those two paths as reinforcing and compatible. Third, leader coaches are a critical part of the context in which the people they coach operate, which may include a team, business unit, or larger organizational unit, and they cannot divorce themselves from that context. As a result, leader coaches need a heightened awareness about the issues that may emerge from the coaching process for and about themselves as leaders, the team and its dynamics and performance, and the organization's values and practices. They should have a systemic view of their coaching.

Leader Coaches Are Intentional

The process of developing leaders is no longer viewed as the sole responsibility of HR executives and professionals, with other leaders paying lip service. CCL often works with companies that include coaching and developing people as a core competency for individuals who are in leadership positions, which are typically managers and above. The Corporate Leadership Council is a membership based research organization that studies corporate HR issues. Its research supports CCL's view that coaching, developing, and giving feedback are critical skills of leadership, but its members also say that these skills are some of the lowest-rated skills among leaders. These same organizations see coaching and development as one of the most important means of ensuring competitive and effective talent management. Being purposeful about coaching is important for a number of reasons:

- Companies recognize and support the systematic development of coaching skills in their leaders from senior managers to very senior executives.
- The people who are the focus of the leader coach's efforts are more cognizant of the intent, which can increase the probability that they will engage more actively in their own development or at least be more aware of its importance.
- Organizations are better positioned to assess the skills and impact.
- The organizational environment may become more receptive to installing a systemic approach to coaching.
- The leader coaches are further legitimized for accessing coaching for themselves.

Leader coaches occupy unique seats that provide them valuable information that makes their coaching particularly relevant. They have more opportunity to observe and influence coachees' behaviors and development. They are also more likely to have information about the coachee that might anticipate future performance and therefore highlight current development needs and preparation. However, this can occur only if coaches are paying attention and are deliberate in considering their coachees in a holistic way. This means understanding their strengths and development needs and how they fit into the organization's needs, understanding their coachees' personal aspirations, and then overlaying these considerations with a present and future focus. This holistic view isn't possible if coaches take a narrow view and use coaching exclusively to address improvements to short-term business results.

Because their seats are often in the front row or in the middle of the action, leader coaches are especially challenged to not become too invested in their own points of view or lose coaching opportunities. This latter point is an essential aspect of being a leader coach. Opportunities to coach abound in the workplace; however, too often managers and leaders miss what we call the "coachable moment." These are the times when a business problem, organizational challenge, or interpersonal issue arises. What distinguishes the leader coach from the typical manager is how differently they respond. The leader coach seizes those coachable moments. Instead of giving the solution or offering to step into the fray, the intentional leader coach sees an opportunity for his coachee to learn and to achieve a positive outcome. The leader coach steps back and helps his coachee reframe the situation or surface more options for resolution.

That doesn't mean the leader coach won't step out of her coaching role, especially if her coachee seems stuck in his viewpoint or behavioral approach. Leader coaches have the ability at various times to play any of several development roles: feedback provider, sounding board, dialogue partner, accountant, role model, and others (McCauley & Douglas, 2004). A constant balancing act is required to know which role to emphasize and when. In addition, the leader coach has legitimate authority to help coachees access resources and developmental experiences to support their goals.

Leader Coaches Focus on Performance and Development

Coaching is a practice in which the development of common language, terminology, and meaning is evolving. One aspect that continues to engage practitioners and leaders in lively discussions is how coaching is applied in leadership

development; in particular, what is the relationship between coaching for performance and coaching for development? Sometimes the terms are used interchangeably, but more often they are used to differentiate the focus of the coaching. We see the two forms as sitting in different places on a continuum of coaching rather than as polarities, and while our work is best understood as having a development focus, we believe the learning that occurs through coaching can benefit the coachee's performance and development. Calling out some of the differences adds to the perspectives of leader coaches who are more routinely engaged in performance coaching.

Witherspoon and White (1997) differentiate the two by emphasizing that coaching for performance generally relates to learning that focuses on a person's current job. It's geared toward helping people improve their effectiveness on the job, often over some span of time—several months to a year or more. For them, coaching for development focuses on their future. That can mean preparing for a career move, for example, or for advancement to higher levels in the organization.

A key distinction between the two is that developmental coaching has a focus on learning. That distinction helps to bridge the seeming gap between performance and development (Hunt & Weintraub, 2002). When there is a conscious learning focus, an intention to reflect and identify lessons for the purpose of being more effective in the future (whether that future is tomorrow or two years away), then development is occurring. So coaching for performance can be developmental when the learning that improves a coachee's ability to meet the current demands and goals of his current role is understood by the coachee as a step in a longer process of leadership development.

We encourage leader coaches to hold both a developmental and performance mind-set and offer the following supporting business analogy. Organizations pursue both a long-term strategy and short-term goals. The first is aspirational and usually involves the organization's developing new capacities and perspectives. The second are practical and immediate, relying on applying an established set of skills and behaviors to ensure the company's financial strength to pursue its long-term strategy. Both are needed for organizations to be successful. Leaders need to tend to both as well in themselves. They need to be equipped with the skills and attributes that ensure achievement of current expectations as well as anticipate the capabilities and attitudes needed for the next level of leadership demands.

Too often when an executive is unsuccessful at a particular job or derails completely, the warning signs were present but were missed, overlooked, or

rationalized for various reasons (Bunker, Kram, & Ting, 2002). If a more holistic coaching approach that encompassed performance and development had been taken with such an individual, preventive measures might have avoided such a visible and costly failure. Such an approach might mean not using the individual's strengths to optimize short-term results but instead moving that individual into a role that will offer him the opportunity to employ and develop new skills that will benefit the organization's long-term objectives.

Leader coaches who are most often engaged in performance coaching can leverage their coaching by making the learning focus intentional and by making explicit the relationship of the current skills improvements to expanding the coachee's overall leadership capacity. The coach is readying the coachee for future leadership challenges. If the leader coach thinks strategically about his coachee's development, he will also seek to identify skills that may not present a current performance need for the coachee but will be needed in the future.

Leader Coaches Take a Systemic Perspective

Leader coaches look beyond parochial interests and short-term results to help develop the potential of all their direct reports. This requires the leader coach to take an organizational perspective and focus on leadership development (for sustaining and improving the pool of talented managers and leaders) as well as leader development (with its focus on the individual). It may mean facilitating the transition of high performers to another business unit in order to provide them new developmental experiences or constructing a special assignment so they can develop in their current position. It may also involve influencing people higher in the organization who can remove organizational impediments (such as barriers to lateral and cross-functional assignments) to developing greater leadership bench strength. It might even require leader coaches to work with an entire team if it becomes apparent that despite the effectiveness and skill of individual direct reports, their performance as a collective isn't meeting the organization's needs.

Leader coaches who are willing and able to see their coachee as part of a leadership system have less control over the relationship, which can create uncertainty. To operate with this perspective requires judgment and clear boundary management. The possibilities for learning are great at both an individual and organizational level. The potential for gain warrants the risk

these leader coaches take in acknowledging they are not in complete control of the relationship.

Additional Leader Coach Skills

Leadership coaching happens informally and formally inside organizations all the time, and it often involves peers, internal HR professionals, and external coaching consultants. Leader coaches can access and learn to use the skills and approaches these other coaches employ. In fact, organizations can improve their leadership capacity by encouraging many coaching relationships. The skills described throughout this chapter and highlighted in the list below are not comprehensive, but are supplemental to basic coaching skills and essential to creating leader development capacity in organizations:

- Build awareness of and learn to challenge your own assumptions and biases. Assess the impact of those on the coaching relationship, and discipline yourself to initiate improvements.
- Recognize when factors hinder the development of a mutually meaningful coaching relationship, and acknowledge its limits or enlist someone else to coach.
- Clarify the mix of performance and developmental coaching that your coachee needs. In doing so, be keenly aware of what perspective you are taking: the coachee's, the organization's, or your own.
- Recognize and seek help when you need coaching yourself to better support your coachees or when you need coaching because you are too personally involved in the specific leader development issue that has surfaced for your coachee.
- Learn to monitor your self-imposed limitations on the coachee's developmental possibilities.
- Increase your ability to step outside the system and look at it from the perspective of being part of it and outside it at once. From that dual vantage point, assess the impact on your coachee's development.
- Learn when to move out of your coaching role and when to assume another role relative to the coachee. Make sure the coachee understands that you are making that shift and why.
- Help your coachees identify multiple responses to system constraints on their development.
- From the challenges your coachees face, generate positive leverage for change in them as individuals and in the organization as a whole.

Additional Leader Coach Considerations

As organizations explore the idea of coaching as an essential leadership competency, the task of developing and implementing that competency falls to the managers and leaders throughout organizations at all levels. As we discussed in the Introduction, this book is not a coaching primer. It's meant to broaden the leader coach's perspectives and skills so that she can help to develop others and contribute to the organization's sustained success and longevity. That said, there are come considerations general to coaching with which some leader coaches are not experienced. Those considerations include confidentiality, resistance, power and authority, role conflict, and organizational responsibility. Some initial grounding in these issues will enable the leader coach to carry out this important work more effectively.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality becomes a complex issue when applied to a leader coach context because leader coaches don't have the luxury of defining their relationship with coachees as private and personal. As we discussed earlier, leader coaches occupy a unique position from which they gain a view of the coachee that is more comprehensive than the one afforded an external coach. When it comes to confidentiality, it's important that leader coaches and their coachees discuss specific issues, such as: What types of information and discussions can and will remain absolutely confidential? What types of information cannot remain confidential because of organizational ethics, codes of conduct, and reporting requirements? What types of information may enjoy only limited confidentiality because of the leader coach's broader role in the organization? Leader coaches have to monitor constantly how confidential information affects their coaching. They must maintain their awareness about what information they have, how they obtained it, and whose confidence they obligated to ensure.

Resistance

When coachees don't accept feedback, don't agree to make changes, or agree to change but don't follow through, coaches can feel frustrated, impatient, annoyed, or disappointed. A leader coach may conclude that the coachee is not

really committed to change or accepting of development needs. As a result, the leader coach might push harder, become more directive, withdraw energy, or give up. These are all reasonable feelings, thoughts, and reactions, especially if the leader coach regards resistance as unwillingness and defiance. However, we encourage leader coaches to see resistance in a more positive light. It can be a natural self-protection mechanism that some coachees use. After all, their way of reacting to leadership situations has evolved over time, and they have been rewarded for those practices. These tried-and-true behaviors form a natural protective covering that wards off not only negative external influences but also positive opportunities to change. When leader coaches encounter what they feel as resistance, they can benefit from stepping back and trying to better understand how the coachee's behaviors have enabled and supported her career thus far. With this perspective, the coach can then look for alternative approaches and tactics to engage the coachee.

Power and Authority

Good coaching relationships include openness, candor, trust, and dialogue. Leader coaches should be aware of how their coachees respond to power and authority and what impact that may have on the coachee's ability and willingness to engage openly in coaching. At the same time, the leader coach should examine her own views and responses to power and authority and how that might be affecting her expectations about the coaching relationship and about how the coachee should respond. By talking openly about this issue, the coach and the coachee may be able to avoid negative power dynamics from occurring, such as the overly compliant coachee who invests in his development goals primarily because his leader coach sees them as valuable. In such cases, the coachee is often responding to the implicit power and authority that resides in the leader coach's organizational role.

Role Conflict

Leader coaches encounter role conflict because of the multiple roles that they assume in organizations. At any one time they might be a business manager; a leader responsible for getting results; a manager responsible for enabling, evaluating, and developing; or an organizational citizen responsible for participating in and supporting broader organizational agendas. In each of these

roles, the leader coach's relationship to the coachee shifts. These different roles can't be totally separated. Leader coaches need to understand these various roles, assess their ability to juggle their coaching role among them, and judge whether the circumstances have changed in such a way that it is advisable to alter the coaching relationship or its developmental content.

Organizational Responsibility

One of the benefits leader coaches enjoy is the ability to connect back to the organization in different ways. For example, because of an individual coaching relationship, issues may surface about organizational practices, and those practices may invite further examination or improvement. If coaching is defined as an individually focused activity, then what happens to this other learning? We encourage leader coaches to consider the extent to which they have an organizational responsibility to carry forward what they learn, both good and bad, about how the organization's values are enacted. This is not an easy task, but it's one of the unique platforms from which leader coaches can operate and effect positive change.

Conclusion

CCL has made a long-standing and unique contribution to the field of leadership coaching. This book melds its experience and practice into a coherent set of ideas and recommendations that can enhance coaching activities for the leader coach. Coaches can generalize from our six principles of coaching practice to serve their own work. Our evidence of experience endorses their practicality and utility.

The three levels of coaching introduced in this chapter reflect our observations of motivations and behaviors that consistently drive the need for coaching. As leader coaches wonder what exactly their roles are and what is expected of them in this seemingly complex world of coaching options, we hope they will find support in our descriptions of those levels. Leader coaches can coach effectively at different levels of engagement, and their work can benefit themselves as much as it benefits their coachees. The subsequent chapters in this book offer perspectives on the role and practice of the leader coach, as viewed from a particular context or with the help of a particular set of con-

tent. The ever changing and growing areas of coaching, such as that evidenced by organizational demand for leadership development systems, reinforces our eagerness to learn and adapt new ideas and practices and to develop new knowledge for leader coaches embarking on this journey.

Coach's Bookshelf

Bacon, T., & Spear, K. (2003). *Adaptive coaching: The art and practice of a client-centered approach to performance improvement.* Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black.

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