

## COACHING FOR REAL PERFORMANCE

By Jean Strosinski, PCC

Fourth article of six in the series: *Coaching for Performance*

*PBC* is the person being coached. All other names are fictitious and the dialogue content is a composite of multiple coaching scenarios presented to the coach.

Is this scenario familiar in your workplace?

*PBC*: I really don't know what is going on. I'd like to be able to get on with this project, yet I keep getting the message to slow down. I have some great ideas, but I can't seem to get any one to say, "Sure, go ahead."

*Coach*: What do you believe is the real barrier when you speak up and present your ideas?

*PBC*: I think they're listening. Maybe I am not hearing what they want me to do. I'm not even sure who is supposed to give me a go ahead on anything. I think part of it is Stan. He isn't my boss, but he's been there a long time and gets involved with my work. He does know the customer. But I don't believe we are connecting. I feel like he's standing in the way-doesn't hear what I say.

*Coach*: You said Stan may be part of the reason or the barrier. Is there another barrier? Another reason you aren't getting to move into this project?

*PBC*: Well...I 'm not getting any feedback from anyone!

*Coach*: What is the feedback you need for this project?

*PBC*: I would like someone to let me know they are okay with the direction I want to take. The customer seems to be fine with it. But being new to the job, I am not sure what I want to do is within my scope. And then Stan will take what I have done and begin to redo it.

*Coach*: If the customer is giving you one type of feedback, what other feedback do you need?

*PBC*: I really need someone in my work group to let me know I'm on the right track. Maybe then Stan will leave my work alone.  
*Coach*: What do **you** think about your work?

*PBC*: It's very good! I have good, solid ideas and I know I **can** move the project along.

*Coach*: Do you trust the quality of your work?

*PBC*: Well.....to a degree. I'd feel better, being new; to just have someone tell me it is okay.

*Coach*: Okay??? Or good??? If you feel you need to have another level of feedback, what do you want to hear and from whom? Is there something more you can do – something to get the additional feedback you want for this project?

*PBC*: I guess I could ask our boss what he thinks about the ideas. I haven't really done that yet. I guess I am also thinking that maybe I could trust myself more with this project. I mean I do believe I have some good ideas and the customer seems to like what I've done.

*Coach*: So, if **you** trust your work on this project, how might that impact those you work with?

*PBC*: They would probably hear a greater level of confidence from me. Maybe I'd even be clearer about what I'm working on. I think my confidence is a bit shattered, because the communication with Stan is uncomfortable.

*Coach*: What is it you want to do for yourself that will move you forward on this project?

*PBC*: I believe I want to get some feedback from my boss. And I think it would help to have Stan there, so he could also hear the feedback. I could let them know what the customer already likes about the work I have

done. But then I also need to trust myself in my work. Well, they did hire me for what I know, they were impressed with the quality of previous work and the reputation I hold for the kind of work that I do. I do want to improve the communication with Stan. Maybe, I need to find out what about me is comfortable or uncomfortable to Stan.  
*Coach:* That's great about requesting a meeting with your boss to ask for specific feedback. It is a great opportunity to highlight your strengths as the customer sees them. Now...how will you find out about what Stan is comfortable or uncomfortable with?

*PBC:* Well, I could talk with him over a coffee break every once in awhile. He does invite me to go along. That might help. I could listen to him, but then he could also listen to me.

*Coach:* Would you be willing to do both of these things in the next week so you can get the immediate feedback on this project and strengthen your communication with Stan?

*PBC:* Yes, I can do both. I can set up a meeting with my boss for the end of this week when he returns from travel. And Stan - I'll say yes the next time he invites me to a coffee break. That will give us some focused time and I can listen to Stan and begin to determine how he works, vs. how I work.

*Coach:* Great! And what is the value you are taking from our dialogue?

*PBC:* I believe I can trust myself more. I do have the customer's feedback. But what I need is to get feedback from my work group and have a better understanding of work agreements with Stan.

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Coaching for real performance has a focus to coach the **person** through the situation by helping them to value their strengths. The lasting value for the *PBC* is a heightened awareness of personal needs.

Most people generally need to know how to perform always at their best and in all areas

of their work environment. Most situations will show up again - it may be with another person or when working on another project.

**Coaching the person rather than the situation** acknowledges their strengths, allows them to flex these strong muscles of communication and interpersonal skills and this has everything to do with realizing great performance.

In my role as a coach, I know you have all the answers. My role, as a coach, is to help you discover those answers and support your commitment to follow through to action.

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