

Becoming a "Coaching" Business Owner

Dear Small Business Owner:

As I've been working with business owners to improve their management skills, it's become apparent that coaching skills should be used by all business owners who are in people-leading positions. Using these skills help produce environments where people feel valued and want to work.

Let's talk about some of these coaching skills that can help nurture and develop strong work environments.

1. Lead with questions



Many leaders and entrepreneurs are "high D's" in the DISC® Behavioral Profile analysis (a tool for analyzing behaviors in the workplace). This means they have a domineering style. They have reached their place of leadership because of advice they've given, directions they've provided, and orders they've given. These leaders often have very one-sided conversations with their employees.

It's easy for a "high D" to walk into a situation believing they know what happened and can provide the needed solution. A better approach would be to walk into a situation believing you know 50% of what happened and you are there to help the group discover the solution.

What would happen if you asked each of your employees "What are two or three specific things that need to change around here in order for you to be successful?" What would happen if you really listened and asked them how you could help make those changes?

2. 70% listening, 30% talking

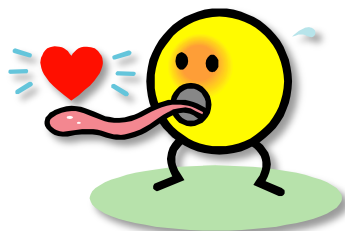
Leaders limit their effectiveness when they simply tell others how they did it so that's how it should be done now. The more people talk, the more they're doing the thinking. The more you talk, the more they're zoning out!

Listening doesn't just mean saying "uh-huh" in the proper pauses. This means actively listening for the deeper motives and intents behind the spoken sentences. This means realizing the discussion is not about you; it's about uncovering what's going on with the other person. What do you need to know to get the full picture?



Becoming a "Coaching" Business Owner

3. Get to the heart issues



This may sound like it doesn't belong in solving a business problem, but let me tell you why it does. People who come to you about a problem have either already tried things that have failed or don't want to do what they know will work. In order to get them past these roadblocks, you need to first uncover what's been tried and didn't work and the WHY's. These whys will be what are really holding them back.

People will not change their habits until something has sunk from their head to their heart and they are inspired to fix it.

4. Lead not push to action

When you're having a discussion with an employee about solving a problem, the goal is to end up with the employee taking ownership of an action that will enable him/her to move forward and be successful. When you ask good questions about motivational hindrances, you'll help the person express themselves and open up their own brain to new solutions. Often they'll discover their own solution if they've been led down the right path in their thinking (through the use of quality questions, of course).



You've probably heard the joke about the psychiatrist who listened to his patient rant about his mother-in-law for the last half hour of the session. All of a sudden the patient stops and says, "Do you think my problems could be centered around my mother-in-law?" The wise psychiatrist says "Well, what do you think. Could it be problems with your mother-in-law?" The patient says "Yeah, I think it's my mother-in-law. Thanks so much for the help. You're so smart," he says to the psychiatrist.¹

If you're ready to make changes in your organization so people are really heard or you need some help asking good questions, give us a call.

Sincerely,

**Lynda Hess, Business Coach
Alpha Business Coaching**

email: lhess@alphabizcoaching.com

phone: 703-738-4634

web: <http://www.AlphaBizCoaching.com>

¹ Some material taken from "Becoming a Coaching Leader" by D. Harkavy