**6 MORE Reasons Why All Leaders Need Coaching**

**Part 2, Are you Underperforming? Coaching for High Performance**

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In today’s world of increased performance demands paired with being crazy busy most leaders are underperforming.

**One reason is that the leader is focused on the tasks and results, where the people they lead are looking for connection, contribution and recognition for good work**.

 This is a big disconnect, **where the manager’s default is to find fault**.  They overlook the directs reports successes, as that is expected, and don’t take enough time to develop the next level leaders.

Executive [Coaching](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/coaching) affords a “**forced focus” on development topics, skill building and empowerment to help get the results**

. High engagement companies are more profitable because of **increased** [**productivity**](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/productivity)**, lower turnover, and lower healthcare costs.**

**What are the top coaching behaviors** ?

**1)   Communicating clearly and candidly, 2) Establishing clear performance objectives and milestones, 3) Delivering on promises made, 4) Respecting their ability to make decisions, and 5) Being an advocate for their development and** [**career**](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/career) **growth.**

The biggest barriers to leaders coaching their direct reports is that:

* **29% said it takes too long**

**Although 72% of employees who receive coaching say it boosts performance.**

A leader receiving coaching can learn skills and behaviors quickly to better coach their direct reports. Once they experience it, it is easier to employ with their team members.

**In the previous blog we went through 6 reasons why leaders need coaching, here are 6 MORE reasons**

1**.    You and we don’t think deep or long, and the need for slow thinking**.

Reflection is becoming a lost art. Leaders are good at fast thinking, but all need to get better at slow thinking when there is not an emergency. Daniel Kahneman who wrote the book, *Thinking: Fast and Slow* has said, “the reason we don’t like to think slow is we are cognitively lazy.” Slow thinking is defined as the deliberate type of thinking involved in focus, consideration, reasoning or analysis.

A coach in the coaching session, can help you think deeper and longer and help you have better [decision making](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/decision-making) by challenging your thinking and mindset. **Can you focus on a** [**growth mindset**](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/growth-mindset) **versus fixed mindset or what would be a proactive response versus a reactive response? These take slow and analytical thinking.**

A coach adds clarity to what is your input about yourself and others and thus enhances your output, your decisions, communications, solutions and results.

Coaching as is [leadership](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/leadership) is a slow thinking process, unless there is an emergency. There is always time to check in with your intentions, values, strengths and asking yourself and others powerful questions.

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Our formula for top performance that we share with leaders is:

* Empathy X Insight X Clarity = Top 10 % Performance or

**Empathy is about others;**

 **insight is about yourself and clarity is knowing how best to use this information for the good.**

2.    **You need to increase your self-awareness and self-management skills for better performance.**

Awareness and self-management are two sides of the coin.  How can you manage what you don’t see? Coaching helps raise self -awareness and contribute to your self-management and performance tool box.

Fritz Perls of [Gestalt Therapy](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapy-types/gestalt-therapy) fame said “**awareness equals responsibility.”**

Tara Eurich in her book *Insigh*t define self-awareness as “…**the ability to see ourselves clearly- to understand who we are, how others see us and how we fit into this world.”**

 Korn/Ferry searched a total of 6,977 self-assessments from professionals at 486 publicly traded companies to identify the “blind spots” in individuals’ leadership characteristics

 **• They found poor-performing companies’ employees were 79 percent more likely to have low overall self-awareness than those at firms with robust ROR.**

A Coach helps you master the moment by putting a spotlight on your inputs about yourself and others so your outputs your decisions, communication, strategies and results are the best they can.

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Often a coaching focus is on accepting yourself more in a friendly and kind way rather than a harsh or critical way.

3**.    You need to build and broaden your strengths and identify derailers.**

Whether it is in training or coaching the focus for leaders is to gain more clarity into your strengths first, which is not natural to do on your own. We have a negativity [bias](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/bias), when we are on autopilot we go to “what is wrong ore could be wrong,” as a protective mechanism.

Your coach helps identify your strengths, increase them, use them more and broaden them to weakness areas. Often this is holding the strength focus when there is magnetic pull of the client to focus on the weakness. This is another example of “forced focus”, where the coach compels the leader to stay with a strength or what is working.

A variety of assessments and coaching tools help this process of building on your strengths, competencies and skills.

If a person has some derailers also called “fatal flaws” those must be addressed first and the coach can help building awareness and management of them. This may involve bringing covert strengths to the derailers that were probably invisible to the client.

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4**.    You are the Emotional Thermostat, enhance your influence**.

Most leaders I have worked have underestimated their influence. This is because they are focused on their task and results, while their direct reports are focused more on their contribution and recognition. This is a major disconnect in their needs and wants from the conversation.

**The leader is the emotional thermostat for the team. Their mood is the most contagious. If they are irritated,** [**stressed**](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/stress) **and short other people catch it. If they are** [**optimistic**](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/optimism)**, encouraging and** [**empathic**](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/empathy) **so are their team.**

Dr. Anthony Grant of Australia and a coaching researcher has found his “clients’ experience that for every executive coached, hundreds of others are positively affected, including their manager, their peers, their direct reports, and those employees’ direct reports as well. This extends to hundreds of people, and even more if one counts customers.

In *Helping People Change* by Richard Boyatzis, Melvin Smith and Ellen van Oosten, state “…given the role of emotional contagion, being able to effectively manage the emotional tone of the coaching discussion also requires having an awareness of one’s own emotions and recognizing the impact that they can have on the person being coached.”

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What are you sending out to your team that they are catching? Optimism or [pessimism](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/pessimism), Challenge or threat, Proactive or reactive, Slow thinking or fast thinking? If you are calm, cool and rational, they will be too.

5**.    Your sense of power leads to less empathy**

 Dacher Keltner a psychology professor at UC Berkeley, speaks and writes about the Power Paradox, once we have it, we lose the capacities we used to gain it.

Sukhvinder Obhi, a neuroscientist at McMaster University, in Ontario, recently found a similar phenomenon. While Keltner studies behaviors, Obhi studies brains. In his experiments he had people who were powerful and others not so powerful under a transcranial-magnetic-stimulation machine. He found that having power, in fact, impairs a specific [neural](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/neuroscience) process, "mirroring," that may be a cornerstone of empathy.

This may explain the neurological basis to what Keltner has termed the "power paradox": Once we have power, we lose some of the capacities we needed to gain it in the first place.

Leaders with power end up thinking they know what is needed in almost every situation and don’t need to hear from others. They think they are the “smartest person in the room.” They value their ideas over all others. Keltner calls this an “empathy deficit.”

6.      **You are creating your Leadership Legacy**:

A coach can help with slow thinking and spending quality time in having conversations about developing each direct report uniquely. This in turn prepares them for quality conversations and coaching with their people.

Leader’s focus is usually on getting results and having a coach compels them in a “forced focus” to focus more on developing their team and emerging leaders.

This where the leader can have their greatest legacy. Their best practices of leadership can be passed down to their direct reports and their direct reports after they are long gone. Leaders impact their people, their families and can increase their life quality.

A 2013 study by Anthony Grant found that executives who received coaching experienced effects that transferred over into the executives' family life, including heightened work–life balance and improved relationships with family members.

          Your direct reports expectations of your coaching include:

1)   Communicating clearly and candidly, 2) Establishing clear performance objectives and milestones, 3) Delivering on promises made, 4) Respecting their ability to make decisions, and 5) Being an advocate for their development and career growth. (Blessingwhite, 2016)

That means you can’t take a short cut to deliver on their hopes and expectancies. Focused time to think deeply and slowly are best done with an experienced coach to act as thinking partner with you and for you.