

thinktwice™ Today

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June 2006—Coaching

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The Loyalty Group :

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ASK THE COACH

Q: What should I ask in an initial coaching session with someone?

A: In an initial coaching session, your objectives are to: establish trust; identify coaching goals, values, strengths and motivations; and uncover barriers to success. To achieve these objectives, try the following three questions:

- **What do you want coaching to accomplish?** Quantify the answer if possible.
- **How ready are you to create change?** Since coaching is action-oriented, the client must be ready to take the necessary steps and receive feedback to achieve goals.
- **What do you need to be successful?** Ex: industry specific or soft skills training, challenges, accountability on a weekly basis.

To get the juices flowing and help someone prep, send out a coaching package with questions and exercises to complete before meeting.

-*Marci Rinkoff is a TLG Associate specializing in coaching.*

Why Invest in Coaching?

Ask 100 managers if a good coach can make a difference in people's performance—99 will likely give an emphatic "yes!" So, why don't we do more of it? And why aren't we better at it?

In our coaching practice, managers often complain that conflicting priorities, time constraints or too many other distractions prevent them from being better coaches. But in today's competitive business environment, coaching can give businesses an edge and boost results. New research shows the business case for investing in coaching.

Manchester Inc. recently released the results of a study of 100 executives that quantifies the business impact of coaching. Companies that provided coaching to their executives realized improvements in productivity, organizational strength, customer service, and shareholder value. They received fewer customer complaints, and were more likely to retain executives who had been coached. In addition, a company's investment in providing coaching to its executives realized an average return on investment of almost *six times* the cost of the coaching.

President's Perspective

Coaching is a lot like exercise. Everyone knows that it's good for you. It's something everyone *should* do. But it's a lot of work. It can be painful. There are always other priorities that get in the way. It takes time.

The ability to give and receive coaching is one of the most critical competency areas needed in business today. For example, imagine the implications of hiring an employee or leader who can't accept coaching. As your business changes and grows, this person will stay the same. He'll shut out objective perspectives and ideas. Worse, hiring this person sends the wrong message to your organization. It says, "Our company isn't serious about learning or innovation."

Among the benefits to companies that provided coaching to executives were improvements in:

- Productivity (reported by 53% of executives)
- Cost reductions (23%)
- Bottom-line profitability (22%)

Another compelling fact—coaching is becoming more mainstream. Several Fortune 500 companies have released data that show how these initiatives have affected the bottom line. According to an article in Forbes Magazine, March 6, 2000, "General Electric, Sony and Johnson & Johnson use coaches... Ernst & Young will spend \$2 million this year on them." The New England branch of Met Life experienced a sales boost of 60% in one year, using coaching. (Fortune, February 2000)

Now that research shows the effects of coaching on the bottom line, the excuses of start to fade. The next time you're "too busy" to coach, ask yourself, "Can I afford *not* to coach?" —*Mitzi Chollampel is TLG Manager of Customer Loyalty*



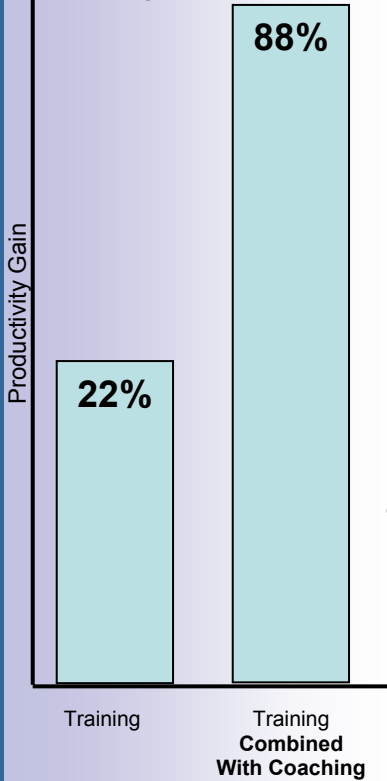
This month's newsletter is dedicated to making the business case for good coaching. This means being a good giver and a good receiver. And check out my latest [Learning Rap](http://www.thelearningrap.blogspot.com) blog posting at www.thelearningrap.blogspot.com to read my personal story of how a business coach impacted my life with some hard-to-hear feedback.

-*Phyllis Roteman, President, The Loyalty Group, proteman@theloyaltygroup.com*



Look What Happens When You Add COACHING With TRAINING!

Figure 1: The Value of Coaching



Source: The International Personnel Management Association

Coaching: It's Better to Give AND Receive

How accountable are people in your organization for giving and receiving feedback effectively? Giving and receiving coaching are two different skill sets. Well-rounded employees and managers with the longest term value have both.

Coaches who are not willing or able to hear feedback, internalize it and change behavior, cannot lead by example. (“Do what I say, not what I do.”) And people who accept coaching but are not willing or able to give it effectively cannot help their peers and customers learn. (They will have limited ability to influence change or help others.)

People in organizations are links in a chain, each giving and receiving coaching, feedback and information. When one person does not participate, the chain breaks. Ultimately, customers, innovation and productivity suffer.

In our work, The Loyalty Group has identified Coaching (Giving and Receiving) as a core competency for all organizational levels. Below is a list of some critical behaviors for both Coaching Givers and Coaching Receivers.

Coaching Giver Behaviors:	Coaching Receiver Behaviors:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listens with the intent to understand, without judging. Documents specific examples, quotes and data to support feedback. Asks questions that make people think. Summarizes and captures agreements. “Reads” people and adapts to their needs. Clarifies roles, expectations and intent up front when coaching. Speaks candidly, with sensitivity. Empathizes when people express concerns or become defensive. Builds on flawed ideas; helps people discover flaws in their own plans. Offers help without taking over. Motivated by seeing others succeed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listens with the intent to understand, without judging. Seeks out, accepts and considers feedback openly. Is humble enough to admit there may be better ways. Possesses the courage to be wrong. Motivated to change. Feels personally accountable for achieving goals. Follows through on commitments without close monitoring. Postpones emotional reactions and doesn't personalize issues. Able to self reflect and accept weaknesses. Demonstrates a passion for learning.

CHECK OUT:

“The Learning Rap”, the new blog by TLG President Phyllis Roteman

RECOMMENDED READING

Co-Active Coaching by Laura Whitworth, Henry Kimsey-House, Phil Sandahl

Coming Next Month:

Retaining Sales Talent

-How to motivate sales reps without a big investment.

-Tips for staying connected to your sales teams.

-What you can do to reduce turnover in your sales force.



PRODUCT CORNER

Looking for a way to make sales meetings more learning-focused and motivational? Bring the thinktwice™ Sales Cards to life with this Leader's Guide for Sales Managers. Check out this easy-to-use guide on how to use the Sales Cards to facilitate 15-45 minute “mini-trainings” during sales meetings on our [e-store](#).

