

Quality Education News

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Dear Supporter of Quality Education

Being a champion coach



The 2018 FIFA World Cup was a stunning soccer spectacular. Billions across the world watched the programmes on TV. Thousands of articles and reports were published. Never have 64 football matches been so minutely micro-analysed by the media. Yet in the midst of all the hype, not much attention was given to a critical contributor to each team.

That critical person was the team coach.

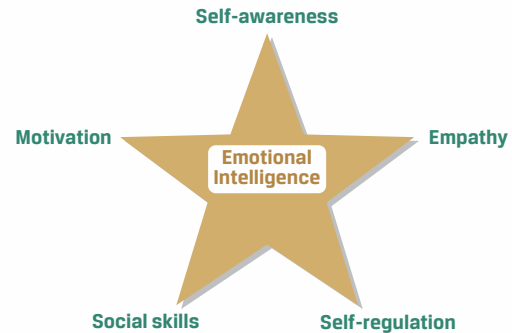
Many readers of this newsletter are teachers and some have also coached sports teams themselves. Even if they haven't personally coached sport, they've been spectators of the triumphs and tribulations of teams from their own schools.

It's a truism that natural talent helps a team come out on top. Yet that's only part of the story. Fifteen star individuals in a rugby team don't guarantee a winning outcome. It's how they play as a 'band of brothers' giving selflessly of their best for each other that takes the team to the top. At this point, enter the often unsung hero that helps make it happen. Enter the coach.

In fact, every teacher is a coach. The coach is traditionally seen as being on the sports field. Yet the coach is to be found in every classroom too. Not every coach is successful. Sometimes there are issues beyond the coach's control. Sometimes it could be the coach's fault when a team fails. The coach could be a de-motivator because of remarks made that are demeaning and harsh. That person could be too demanding.

What do successful coaches do? Perhaps a good starting point is that they nurture Emotional Intelligence (EI). An outstanding coach might not ever talk about EI or even understand the concept. Nevertheless, such coaches themselves display high levels of emotional intelligence when they interact with others.

Daniel Goleman's (McGrath 2017: 238-9) famous theory of emotional intelligence maintains that a person with a high EI or EQ (Emotional Quotient) would have five core characteristics. In a quality coach they would be:



1 Self-awareness

The coach is aware of their own emotional state and would know how it impacts – negatively or positively – on others.

2 Empathy

The coach would understand the impact that their decisions have on the feelings of others and make decisions accordingly.

3 Self-regulation

Here the coach controls personal emotions and is able to adapt to changing circumstances.

4 Social skills

Positive relationships are created, nurtured and maintained with others. The coach is able to influence them to willingly go in a specific direction.

5 Motivation

To keep on carry on coaching especially when enthusiasm is ebbing, the coach needs to have a high level of inner or intrinsic motivation. The motivation to persevere comes from within the DNA of the person's character. Such a coach isn't encouraged solely on extrinsic motivators such as getting a higher salary or getting a bonus because of the team's victory.

The higher the coach's emotional intelligence, the more likely the team will lift the winner's trophy.

Sincerely

Richard Hayward



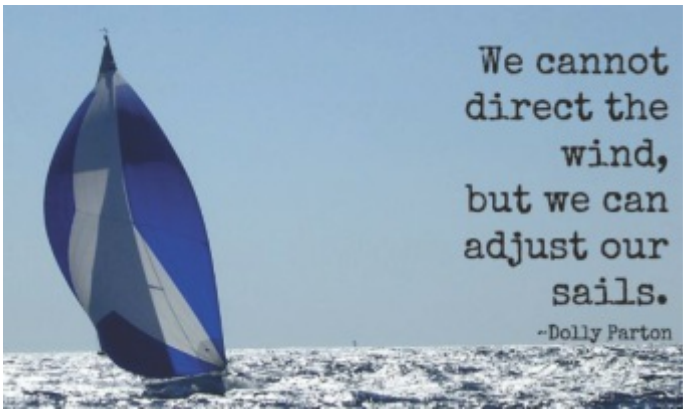
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Dr Richard Hayward, the editor, does school leadership and management programmes under the aegis of SAQI. They are endorsed by the South African Council for Educators (SACE). Programmes earn Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) points. For more details, kindly contact him on rdhayward@yahoo.com or ☎ 011 888 3262.

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Sailing the 7Cs of smooth coaching



A coach might have the best of intentions but it doesn't follow that the best results will be achieved. If the coach doesn't read the situation well, the quality of the coaching will be poor. The coach needs to be aware of those variables that will impact – for better or worse – on the final outcome. There's a need to understand what's holding people back.

Bruce Grimley's 7C Coaching Model (Ibid 84-85) describes seven variables that could be restraining a person or team from achieving full potential. He refers to them as the 7Cs:

- **C**lear about objectives. What does the person or team want to achieve? How will you and they know when the goal has been reached?
- **C**limate must be right. Sometimes the time to set out on a goal is right now. At times it might be better to wait for other factors to be sorted out first. In a school situation, for example, the right time for the Drama Club to put on a major school play might be when sufficient money is available for the production.
- **C**apability to achieve the goal. There's a need to have open and honest discussion about what can be done and what can't be done. There are those parents, for example, who ask teachers to give Maths enrichment lessons for their children. They then expect their offspring to get 80%

or more in a public exam even if there's limited mathematical capability.

- **C**ongruency with the goals of those being coached. Not every sports team wants to win leagues and tournaments. Not every child wants to aim for distinctions in every subject. There needs to be mutual agreement as to what the final outcome should be of the coaching.
- **C**onfidence in their actions. The coach asks questions such as: "How do you see yourself now? How do you see yourself in two or three years time?" Self-belief in potential is needed by those being coached. The coach helps through constant affirmations and continual nudging to "up their game."
- **C**ommitment to working towards the goal. A team might be brimful of individual talent but it's meaningless if there isn't a hunger to achieve the goals. The recent soccer tournament in Russia saw certain teams that played passionately in their obsession to win games. Such teams exceeded their expected abilities.
- **C**ommunication within the team and with the coach. The coach aims to get a feeling as to how each member feels internally. Does the person feel confident or inadequate or overwhelmed? As a team, how do they regard each other? Mutual respect and understanding of each unique personality are found in the best coached teams. There's much listening and talking before moving into action.

Coaches expect those whom they coach to persevere for the long-haul. The 7Cs described above – if applied – will undoubtedly bring results. However, the coach must be prepared to persevere for the long-haul too!



Improving your own coaching effectiveness



On page 2 the focus was on what needs to be done for those being coached to benefit from the offered coaching. The focus now is what you can do personally to be an excellent coach.

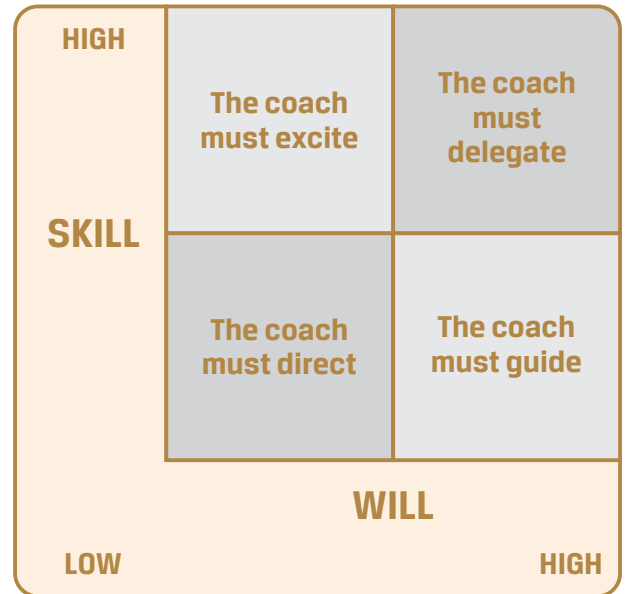
According to Max Landsberg (Ibid: 88-89), the coach's main role is to recognise the individual's readiness to take on a task in terms of both their *skill* and their *will*. The coaching approach will depend on these two factors.

The effective coach has a game plan that has three aspects:

1 Setting the context

At the start, the coach evaluates the level of skills and wills of those who are being helped. There's a need to build mutual trust. The coach tries to find out what excites the person or team. It's a chance to give a compelling vision of what can be achieved.

It's advised not to jump in and tell people the way forward. Even if you've been asked to assist because you're deemed the 'expert' and they might be a totally accepting audience of whatever you say, hold your tongue. Listen to their suggestions first. Build on what's already there. By being a good listener, your own plans could be improved on because of their input.



2 Giving on-going coaching

Now it's time to agree on what format the coaching will take. Agree on how often the coaching will take place and at what times. Be sensitive to what people can cope with intellectually and physically. A single instance could be the coach wanting to give Maths support lessons. If possible, have a gap of a few hours after the end of the mind-sapping school day before having such lessons.

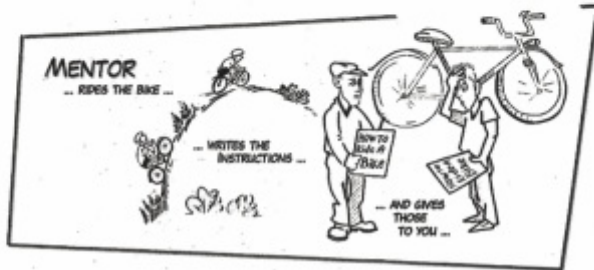
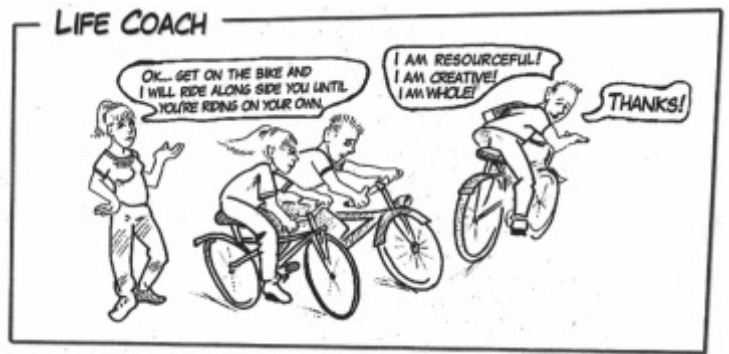
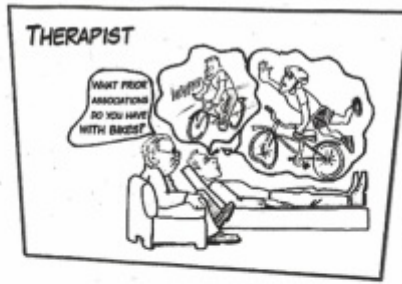
On-going feedback is needed in the coaching process. There should be discussion on the effectiveness or otherwise of the coaching. To refer back to the Maths coaching example above, it's important to keep track of exam and test results.

There will also be a need to keep those being coached in a positive frame of mind and focused on the endpoint goals. No doubt there will be times when enthusiasm flags. There could - and quite likely - be under performance and even experiences of failure. Those are times when the coach needs to keep everyone motivated in a positive and non-threatening manner.

3 Ending effectively

There is reflection on what has been achieved. Ask for feedback from those you've coached. They'll affirm what you've done to improve their knowledge and skills. You might even get suggestions (conveyed diplomatically and gently, of course!) on how to further improve your coaching skills. As a coach it's not only the children who should have been developed. It's you too!

The coaching might have been concluded by you but those that you've helped should be on a lifelong quality improvement journey. Ask those that you've coached about their future plans. You might have suggestions of your own as to what they can still do to further improve their knowledge and skills.



Acknowledgement: <http://life-coaching-with-melody.com/2013/07/life-coaching-cartoon/>

Knowing the differences

Three words that are often used in a school setting are: therapist, mentor and coach. Two roles that cause much confusion are that of being a 'coach' as against being a 'mentor'. A mentor has a more directive, more instructing role. The mentor guides a person as to what they should or not do. Usually they've been in

the same or similar situation themselves in the past. In a school, for example, Grade 12 students mentor Grade 8 learners. They help them become part of the culture and traditions of the school.

In contrast, a coach is also guiding a person in the right direction but they

encourage the person being coached to find their own game plan. The coach might not themselves have been in the same situation. Think of Jake White, the coach of the 1995 Springbok World Cup rugby team. He himself didn't play rugby at that level yet he proved to be a brilliant coach of the game.

Choosing a coaching plan

What steps should a coach follow in the process of coaching? Textbooks on leadership and management offer a wide ranges of approaches. John Whitmore's GROW model is - I believe - an excellent one to use with children. It's easy to explain and for children to understand the process. The four simple questions should lead to meaningful discussions.

In his explanation of the GROW model, Whitmore (Ibid: 92) stresses the importance of the coach in not thinking of himself as being an expert in the other person's situation. The coach isn't meant to solve that person's problems for them. Ultimately, the role of the coach is to be a facilitator who helps the person to personally select the best solutions.

THE GROW MODEL ✓

the GROW Model provides a powerful tool to highlight, elicit and maximize inner potential through a series of sequential coaching conversations.

G	R	O	W
What do you want?	Where are you now?	What could you do?	What will you do?
Understanding your aspirations	Current situation and beliefs	The possibilities and resources open to you	The actions you want to take to achieve your personal and professional goals.

Source: John Whitmore, Coaching For Performance.

A good coach is a good leader. Such a coach helps others to eventually be able to lead themselves. The excellent coach is more often than not in the background. Others are picking up the trophy and getting public adoration. The coach takes quiet pride in the achievements of those they've nurtured to excellence.

References

- Bernstein, J 2013. 5 ways to coach your child to success using the power of EQ. <https://psychologytoday.com/child/5-ways-coach-your-child>
- McGrath, J & Bates, B 2017. The little book of big management theories (2nd edition). Harlow: Pearson.

