

Kata Coaching Dojo Handbook

INTRODUCTION

The Kata Coaching Dojo

Developing World Class Coaching Skills

9

Give Wings to Your Team

The 21st century with all its change and unpredictability also provides us with unparalleled opportunities. Margret Heffernan put it nicely in her 2019 TED talk: "If we foster imagination, inventiveness, and exploration in our teams, we can make any future we want."

Since there is no roadmap for many of these challenges, the ability to successfully, confidently navigate and explore unknown territory seems to be one of the essential abilities of our time, for individuals, teams, and organizations alike.

As a result, coaching is becoming a core skill for anybody entrusted with a leadership role; coaching to develop people's navigation skills, a shared mindset of scientific thin-king, and establishing a climate that inspires.

That's what leadership for me is all about. Helping others to grow, so they can successfully build a path where no one has before, in a joint effort to make the future a better one.

Leaders as Coaches

While more and more organizations require leaders to coach their teams, effective coaching is still scarce. Acceptance by team members is often mediocre. The benefit for those team members from coaching is often mediocre, too.

One reason might be this: We often overestimate our ability to coach. This leads us to neglect our need for practice. In one Harvard Business Review study in 2019, about 25% of the participating managers ranked themselves above average while their colleagues ranked them in the bottom third.

Additionally, in many organizations we lack the means for deliberate practice. Giving managers classroom training on coaching and then letting them practice on the job might be too arbitrary and slow. Michael Jordan put it nicely: "You can practice shooting eight hours a day, but if your technique is wrong, then all you become is very good at shooting the wrong way." In other words, practice doesn't make perfect; it makes permanent.

Although we might be coaching every day, chances are high that we are not as good as we think, and we are not even getting better at it.

Despite all their training programs, managers often lack the ability to truly coach in a non-directive way. They don't know how to distribute decision-making to the team and at the same time ensure superior results by developing their team's adaptiveness and creativity.

As coaches we easily fall into the trap of addressing a team's issue based on our experience. We might give advice and feedback or even orders. While that might create impact in the short term, we will fail to develop team members' skills and a shared meta-skill of scientific thinking within our teams.

Developing the excellent coaching skills that allow you to coach naturally in a highly supportive and motivating way, even when stakes are high, is a challenge. It takes extensive practice.

That is where the Kata Coaching Dojo provides a structured, more effective, and faster approach to develop powerful coaching skills on all levels of an organization.

The Kata Coaching Dojo

Pilots have flight simulators, professional musicians practice in private every day. Where do coaches go to hone their skills? In sports we clearly distinguish between the game and the training court. And there are good reasons for it.

GAME



FIGURE 1 - Game and Practice

PRACTICE



No professional athlete tries a new move for the first time in a tournament. Likewise, leaders might be better off not practicing a new approach or specific coaching technique in real-life situations. That would be like trying a new grip on the racket in the Wimbledon final.

Dojo is a Japanese word for the place of martial arts practice. It also translates to 'the place for finding a better way.'

The Kata Coaching Dojo setup allows coaches to repeatedly practice specific situations and responses. The Dojo provides more frequent guided coaching practice then would occur in daily work life. It provides a safe space and sports-like approach with a series of specially designed training exercises and role play in a safe offline environment.

Establishing a permanent Kata Coaching Dojo offers a deliberate way to develop powerful coaching skills at scale and improve the ability of established coaches.

It helps those starting to coach to transfer classroom knowledge into real world mastery though repeated practice, increase coaches' confidence and sets them on the path to build a coaching habit.

In addition, the Kata Dojo setup allows for individual sessions with a single coach or small group struggling with a specific situation. With a sparring partner to help, they can hone their approach for scenarios they find challenging when coaching or communicating with their teams.

Imagine your organization having a permanent training space for managers, supervisors, and team leaders where they can hone their coaching and communication skills. A place for finding a better way.

game and the training court. And there are good reasons for it.



Coaching for Skill

A coaching conversation to train a certain skill follows a similar pattern as coaching in sports. Imagine hiring a ski instructor to improve your powder skiing to the next level.

- 1. As a first step she would give you a task, maybe ski down a certain part of the hill.
- 2. While you ski, she would observe to evaluate your current condition.
- 3. She would then evaluate what she sees by comparing her observation with a reference of the ideal state she pictures in her mind.
- 4. Based on her evaluation she would then give you one tip to try on the next run.

Let's compare that four step sequence with a coaching cycle. When we the opening questions for one of the five phases of the Coaching Kata Model, we give the other person a task. To answer the question, they need to have done something in the past that they can report. For example, "What is the actual condition now?" To respond they need to have observed the process, summarized and thought about their observations and now, communicate them.

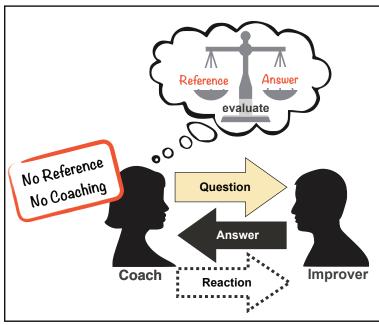


FIGURE 5 - Coaching for skill with a four step pattern

Asking one of the open questions of the Coaching Kata makes the approach and the underlying thinking of the other person visible.

That is, if we listen to the answer carefully without being biased by our own opinion. That might be even harder than asking the right questions. An experienced coach would not only listen to the words but also recognize body language and intonation to grasp how the other person thinks and feels. Just like a ski instructor would.

Next we need to evaluate what we are hearing. Actually this happens in parallel and we often don't even recognize that we are already evaluating. To do so we need a reference to compare against the answer. Asking questions is easy. Listening to and evaluating the answer is the hard part.

The outcome of our evaluation will determine our next action as a coach. If the answer meets our reference, we move on to the next phase of the Coaching Kata. If the answer seems imprecise or the underlying approach incorrect, we will ask deepening questions to help the other person clarify for themself.

The Kata Coaching Dojo helps coaches apply that approach by providing the means to hone their skills in the following four areas.

- 1. Using the five phases of the Coaching Kata Model to structure a conversation.
- 2. Listening to the answer and observing body language carefully.
- 3. Building a reference for each of the five phases to evaluate the answer.
- 4. Teaching how to ask deepening questions to help the other person reflect on their approach and adjust by themselves, if necessary.

Effective coaching depends on having a reference and hearing and comparing the answer with it. Without a reference asking questions is arbitrary. Any answer would be acceptable.

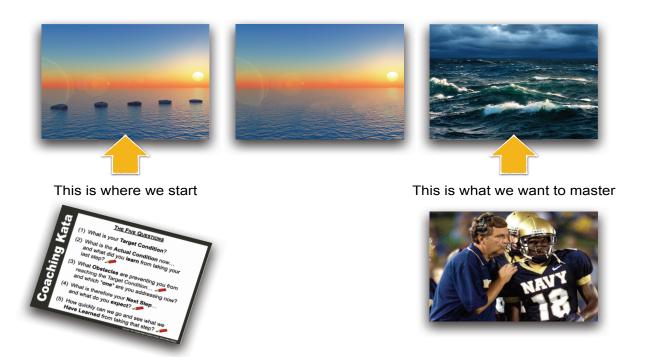


FIGURE 6 - The Coaching Kata - Stepping Stones for the Coach

The Kata Coaching Dojo helps coaches to develop from the Starter Kata of the five questions to coach naturally in a highly supportive and motivating way.

This is a step-by-step process. We start by reading the five questions from the card. Then we learn to use the five questions as a thread in our conversation. They become like steppingstones in the water that help us to stay on track. This is also the point where we start to engage into a richer discussing by asking deepening questions. Then we gradually move on to using situational language in our coaching conversations and start coaching beyond the standard one-on-one coaching cycles. The five questions still serve as our guide-rail, but they become less and less obvious to the person being coached. It's like stones under water that give stability to our coaching. In the long run we want to be able to sail rough waters, to coach with confidence even when stakes are high.

Coaching Needs a Reference

Effective coaching depends on having a reference and hearing and comparing the answer with it. Without a reference asking questions is arbitrary and all answers are acceptable.

In organizations this has a second implication. If coaches have different references, they will coach differently even if they are using the same coaching model and main questions. As their evaluation of the answers will differ, so will their reactions. This is not only ineffective for developing a collective scientific mindset but will also confuse those being coached. Above all, different coaching approaches create different behavior patterns and so, they are unlikely to develop a company's culture in a deliberate way.

The most commonly used references might be comparing the other person's answer with our knowledge and experience. While there are situations where this is helpful and even necessary, this is actually not coaching but rather giving feedback or advice. It usually does not build the other person's skill to navigate for themselves. In addition, especially in a hierarchical setting, sharing your experience all too easily slips into giving orders. It is a hard one to overcome when aspiring coaches have a managerial role.

On the other end of the reference scale is helping the other person think through a topic taking different points of view, or putting it in context with their ideal self, their vision of who they want to be, and what they want to achieve for their future.

These are powerful references helping the other person to develop a multi-faceted view on the world. In addition, putting things in context with a personal vision is not only a powerful reference but might very well be a pre-condition for building a valuable and trustful coaching relationship. However, these references do not necessarily lead to developing a more scientific mindset.

Developing a collective meta-skill of scientific thinking and working needs an additional reference; a reference describing the skill we aim to develop. Just like the ski instructor has a reference, a mental picture for the different movements necessary to run down a

powder slope.

How Can Coaches Build Their Reference?

Besides delivering a starting point for co^aches the five questions of the Coaching Kata also provide a starting point for building a reference. Each of them opens one phase of the Coaching Kata Model.

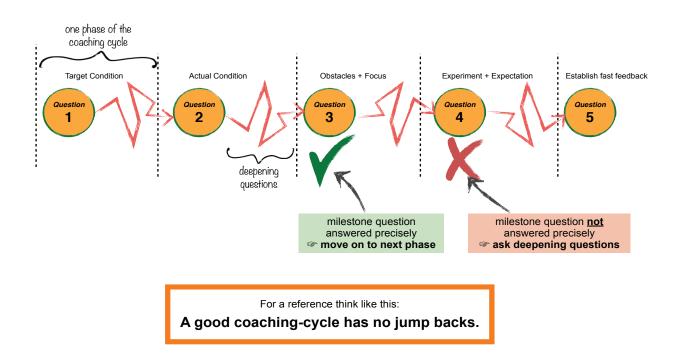


FIGURE 7 - The five phases of a coaching cycle

The questions of the Coaching Kata are also like quality gates. If one of them has not yet been answered precisely don't move on to the next one. Ask deepening questions to help the other person to explore deeper and clarify. If the threshold of knowledge is reached by doing so it is time to conduct a next step to find out.

The first reference coaches have to develop is concerning the answers they expect when asking the steppingstone questions of the Coaching Kata. We call this the "Expected Answer".

Beware though, the expected answer, the coaches' reference is not about the technical content. The coach should focus on the logic and reasoning underlying the answer. Is the answer build on and showing a scientific way of thinking?

The idea is that the coach needs a reference to evaluate the answer. Without reference the coaches' decision on how to react to the answer will be arbitrary or subconsciously guided by the coaches' experience and opinion on the technical content of the answer.

Thus, the expected answer as a coaches' reference is about the methodical aspects a good answer should cover. For example, when asking "What is your target condition" the coach needs an understanding of what aspects about the target condition a good answer should contain and what actually makes a good target condition definition.

The term 'expected answer' might sound strange and imply the assumption that there is only one correct answer. Of course, that is not the case.

The Kata Coaching Dojo offers a deliberate way for coaches to develop and improve their reference. In the Dojo we can practice individual phases of the Coaching Kata rather than a complete coaching conversation. Through repeating the same sequence several times and reflecting and adapting their approach with each round coaches can hone their reference as well as their approach.

When teams of coaches practice in the Dojo, they discuss their individual approaches for coaching in different situations. This helps to build and align their reference as well as to spread best practices as coaching behavior gets more consistent throughout an organization.

How does the Kata Coaching Dojo work?

In the Kata Dojo, one person purposefully takes the role of the person being coached, the learner, playing a scripted situation. This offers coaches the opportunity to test and improve their approach with each round.

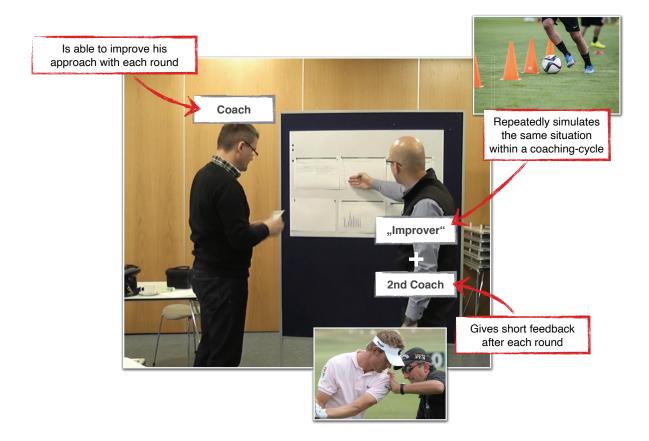


FIGURE 8 - Roles in the Dojo

The Kata Coaching Dojo aims at improving the following fields:

- 1. Using the five phases of the Coaching Kata to structure the conversation.
- 2. Learning to listen to the answer and observe more precisely.
- 3. Building a reference for each of the five phases to evaluate the answer.
- 4. Asking deepening questions to help the other person to reflect on their approach and adjust by themselves. if necessary.

Effective coaching depends on having a reference and hearing and comparing the answer with it. Without a reference, asking questions is arbitrary. Any answer would be acceptable.

In organizations this has a second implication. If coaches have different references, they will coach differently even if they are using the same coaching model and questions. As their evaluation of the answers will differ, so will their reactions. This is not only ineffective for developing a collective scientific mindset but will also confuse those being coached. Above all, different coaching approaches create different behavior patterns and thus, are unlikely to develop a company's culture in a deliberate way.

The Kata Coaching Dojo ensures better learning progress by building on the following pillars:

- The five phases of the Coaching Kata are used as an underlying pattern for the coaching conversation. That allows us to practice coaching phase by phase, reducing complexity. Coaches can build their reference for evaluating answers and accumulate coaching tips phase by phase.
- **Practice focuses on patterns rather than individual events.** When coaching we encounter an unlimited number of individual situations. No two coaching conversations are alike. Practicing and preparing for each situation with an individual reaction from the coach, for example with a list of deepening questions, is impossible. We would need to learn and practice an unlimited number of deepening coaching questions to be prepared for every situation.

However, there seem to be underlying patterns in answers and behavior. Facts and data for the actual condition might be outdated or not relevant. Conclusions might be drawn too early or based on assumptions. A proposed next step could be too big, too expensive, or too risky. Although the situation and the exact words used by the learner will be different, the patterns are there every time.

If coaches are able to identify the underlying thinking or behavior pattern, they can address it with a matching coaching approach. Doug Lemov calls this "identifying and practicing micro skills."

Identifying relevant behavior patterns and developing coaching tips that can be generally used to address a pattern are a powerful way to develop good coaching at scale.

Moreover, we can apply that coaching approach universally, in many different situations.

Use the five phases of the Coaching Kata as an underlying navigation structure for the conversation. Evaluate the answer, find the pattern that needs to be addressed, apply the matching coaching approach and you can coach in a helpful way.

THE EXERCISES

Deliberate Practice for Coaches

Kata Coaching Dojo Starter Exercises

On the following pages you can find a set of basic exercises for practicing the coaching tips described in this book. These exercises were developed based on patterns we have seen most coaches repeatedly struggle with. The exercises serve as a starting point for your Kata Coaching Dojo practice. Beyond that you can and should develop new exercises yourself. We will discuss how to do that at the end of this part of the book.

The Kata Jet Case Study

All exercises in the book are based on the Kata Jet case study. It is designed around a very simple process so everybody can easily understand it. This helps to focus on the coaching aspect rather than struggling to understand the process. Having a simple process also helps to quickly create specific coaching situations without having to explain the technical background. You could also create your own case study and adapt the exercises from this book.

The Roles

For the case study we imagine a team of four people operating the process over two shifts. For each shift there is a team-leader whose task is to improve the process. That is the role of the improver we will simulate in the Dojo exercises.

The Process

The Kata Jet process is about throwing a paper plane into a bucket located 200 cm away. The bucket has a diameter of 40 cm. The process in run in batches of five, i.e., the team members operating the process always do five throws in a row with five different paper planes.

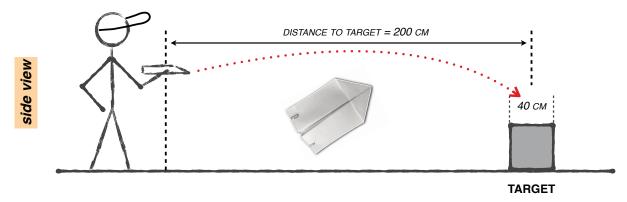


FIGURE 9 - The Kata Jet Process

The "throwing" process we focus on is part of a larger process that produces the Kata Jet. Before the "throwing" process the plane gets folded and trimmed with the paper clips which is done by another team in another department. There are also two different external suppliers involved that deliver the paper and the paper clips for the Kata Jet.

Although that might look like a production environment that does not have to be the case. Think of any kind of process where we deliver a product or service for the customer and want to improve quality, like more hits with the plane. It could also be a process where we want to reduce mistakes.

The Challenge

The challenge, or the longer term target, is to improve the process to achieve five hits out of five. The due date for the challenge is six months from today.

The Outcome Metric

The outcome metric, the lagging indicator, is the hit-rate calculated as percentage of hits over five throws.

The Process Metric

For defining our process metric, the leading indicator we focus on, we will Zoom In by Navigating the Tree; see Tip 13.

The hit-rate is influenced by two parameters, flight distance and cross deviation. To produce a hit the plane has to fly the correct distance and needs to be within a center margin sideways.

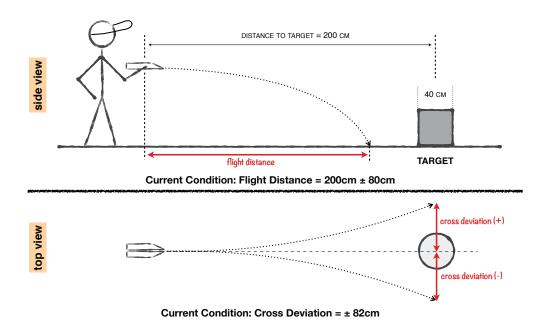


FIGURE 10 - Parameters influencing the hit rate

How to Read the Exercises

The exercises are sorted by phases starting with phase one of the Coaching Kata. You might want to work through them in that order. It is helpful to develop coaching skills and our reference phase by phase as the Coaching Kata phases build on each other. As an example: An imprecise target condition or current condition easily leads to vague obstacles and maybe big steps based on assumptions later on.

The "Situation" section briefly describes the challenge created for the coach. The "Learning Target" explains what we want to practice with the exercise. If you are facilitating a Dojo don't share these pieces of information with the group prior to running the exercise.

The exercise itself is printed in a box. It is identical with the slides of the exercises you can download at kata-dojo.com. At the top of the box is the question asked by the coach that starts the scenario. Below that are several scripted answers form the imaginary improver.

These answers are purposefully designed to be imprecise or even not match the coaches question. Even though that might seem exaggerated they resemble typical patterns we encounter as coaches. The idea is to put coaches in a situation where they can test and improve their reaction.

Before running the exercise, discuss the following with your group.

- What is the problem with each of the scripted answers?
- What is your expected answer, your reference as a coach?
- How would you react as a coach?

When you are reading an exercise for yourself for the first time you should answer these questions before you read on. Reflect on the exercises. Really do it. Just reading on and acknowledging the tips does not give the same benefit.

The problem created by each scripted answer is described right of the exercise box, thus, answering the first of the above three questions. Use this as a guideline when preparing to facilitate an exercise.

The second page of each exercise explains the reference for the coach including the "perfect" answer. Next are helpful tips and approaches for the coach to practice with the specific exercise. When facilitating a Dojo, you might want to write down these tips on a flipchart as a wrap-up after practicing. There is also a section explaining deepening questions that are helpful to use as a coach to put the tips into action. Coaches could pencil them on the back of their 5 Question Card.

References to the coaching tips section are made with tips highlighted in orange. If you have the Toyota Kata Memory Jogger you can find additional tips on the pages indicated in the green cover image.

Having a Precise Target Condition

Situation

Phase 1: The improver explains the target condition too generally, too detailed or only partially.

Learning Targets

Specific: Use deepening questions to help the improver clarify the next target condition in a nutshell. It should be concise, about 30 seconds.

General: Use Repeat & Add to increase precision rather than coming up with a new question or asking a closed question. Avoid statements like 'this is not precise enough,' 'this is too long,' or 'there is a metric missing.'

Help the person orient towards a longer term target AND have a clear short term work focus on the process level.

Learn to ignore premature perceptions. Recognize ambiguity, uncertainty, or fear.

Exercise 1

Coach: What is your target condition for this process?

Improver:

- A. My target condition is to improve the Kata Jet process.
- B. The challenge is to reach a hit rate of 100% within 6 months. At first we aim for a hit rate of just 40%. That is already difficult enough since we cannot change the distance to the target and the \$500 budget is really too small for achieving this.
- C. My target condition is to stabilize the flight distance at 200cm ± 20cm and to reduce the cross deviation so that we hit the center with a maximum deviation to the sides of ± 20cm.

What's the problem with the answer?

- A. Too general and does not include a metric.
- B. Only overall target and impact metric mentioned, process metric missing i.e. no focus for next target condition defined. Assumptions (difficult enough, budget too small) and maybe emotions/fear involved.
- C. No outcome metric mentioned.
 Two process metrics mentioned
 i.e. focus for next target condition
 unclear

The perfect answer

My target condition is [outcome metric] therefore [process indicator] Example: My target condition is to improve the hit rate to 40%. Therefore we have to reach a flight distance of 200cm ± 20cm.

Reference for the Coach

Link with overall challenge AND Slice the Elephant — be relevant and make a focused link to the overall challenge with the outcome metric. Have a clear work focus for reaching the next Target Condition and measure progress on it with the process indicator. Answer should be short. 30 seconds max.

Tips for the Coach

Reference: My target condition is [outcome metric] therefore [process indicator].

Repeat & Add: Repeat the corner stone question and add what you would like to know.

General: If the improver struggles explaining the target condition you might need to go back to the planing phase of the Improvement Kata together.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary: establish means to start having a relationship with — this is the coach's task.

Helpful Deepening Questions

- What does that mean in numbers?
- What is your target condition regarding the outcome metric / the process indicator?
- What is your first target condition regarding the process indicator?
- Which one are you addressing first?

Your notes and reflections on this exercise

Phase 2: Understanding Actual Condition

Situation

The improver explains the actual condition too generally.

Coach: What is the actual condition now?

Learning Targets

Specific: Use open questions to help the improver clarify the next current condition in a nutshell (30 seconds).

General: Use Repeat & Add to increase precision rather than coming up with a new question or asking a closed question. Avoid statements like 'this is not precise enough,' 'this is too long,' or 'there is a metric missing.'

Emotional: Learn to ignore premature perceptions. Recognize ambiguity, uncertainty, or fear.

Exercise 2

Coach: What is the actual condition now?

Improver:

- A. We don't hit the target precisely enough.
- B. The hit rate is at 20%, but with this material quality that is the best possible.
- C. During the last run only one throw was a hit, therefore we have to move the lower clips further to the back.

What's the problem with the answer?

- A. Too general and does not include a metric.
- B. Only outcome metric mentioned. Assumptions (not possible because of material quality), maybe emotions involved.
- C. Only outcome metric mentioned.
 Quick next step proposed.
 Maybe based on assumption.

The perfect answer

My target condition is [outcome metric] therefore [process indicator]. Example: My target condition is to improve the hit rate to 40%, therefore we have to reach a flight distance of $200 \text{cm} \pm 20 \text{cm}$.

Reference for the Coach

Present current facts and data for impact and process metric. Answer should be short. 30 seconds max. The current condition is [outcome metric] because [process metric]. Example:

Currently we have a hit rate of only 20% BECAUSE the flight distance is at 200cm ± 20cm.

Tips for the Coach

- Reference: The current condition is [outcome metric] because [process metric].
- Repeat the corner stone question and add what you would like to know.
- General: Focus on the useful part of the answer.

Helpful Deepening Questions

- What does that mean in numbers?
- What is the actual condition regarding the outcome metric / the process metric?

Your notes and reflections on this exercise

MICRO SKILLS

Tips for the coach to practice in the Dojo

Tips for the Coach

Tips About Fundamental Coaching Concepts

- 1. The Steppingstones
- 2. Stand on Red, Walk on Green
- 3. ToK before Step
- 4. At ToK go to Q4
- 5. Therefore Because
- 6. No Data? Ask for Data!
- 7. Getting Foggy? Go and See!

Repeat and Add

- 8. Repeat and Add
- 9. Repeat and Add a Constraint
- 10. Repeat and Step on the Word

Zoom In

- 11. Navigate The Tree (Climb the Tree?)
- 12. Find the Patterns
- 13. Love at First Sight
- 14. Compare the Patterns

Tips About Coaching Patterns

- 15. The Obstacle Formula
- 16. Make it a Sentence
- 17. Effect First
- 18. Two Types of Obstacles
- 19. The Root Cause Funnel
- 20. Inside Out
- 21. Three Types of Experiments
- 22. The Fortuneteller's Crystal Ball
- 23. The Logic Links / Go West
- 24. Go Back
- 25. Slice the Elephant
- 26. Don't Wait, Prepare

What to Avoid

- 27. Closed Questions
- 28. Rephrasing
- 29. The Me and the More
- 30. Finger-pointing

Tips for the Coach

No two coaching conversations are alike. If we were to try to find a suitable deepening question for each situation, we might end up with an infinite list. Although every coaching cycle is different, there tend to be patterns in people's answers and behaviors. If a coach can identify these patterns it is a lot easier to respond with a matching remedy. Coaches can then learn and practice general approaches rather than a high number of specific deepening questions.

The process in the mind of the coach might look like this:

- 1) Ask an open question.
- 2) Compare the answer with our reference and identify deviations.
- 3) Identify the pattern of thinking and acting that underlies the deviation.
- 4) Identify the matching remedy pattern.
- 5) Use a deepening question to test the hypothesis.

Just to be clear: Although I use the term remedy it is not that the coach is curing something. We are coaching for scientific thinking, to increase people's ability to navigate unknown territory and in that way enable them to reach challenging goals. That is why we compare the approach we hear in the answer with our personal reference for a scientific approach.

The four steps of the Improvement Kata can be used as such a reference. Likewise, think of the kata cycle as a more detailed reference for a scientific approach. Since, we all have individual experience with and understanding of a scientific way of thinking and acting, our references will differ as well.

I find it helpful to treat my analysis and interpretation of an improver's answer as a hypothesis and ask an open deepening question to test it. After all, I could be wrong.

On the following pages we will discuss frequent patterns coaches struggle with, a helpful remedy, and deepening questions to put the remedy into practice. Learning to hear and recognize the patterns, and practicing a general remedy is easier than learning a large number of deepening questions. In addition, a long list of deepening questions is of no use if a coach does not understand the intention behind a deepening question.

Tips About Fundamental Coaching Concepts

These first seven tips are about basic concepts that help structure our coaching cycle and provide reference points to navigate through the conversation.

1. The Steppingstones

Always use the five questions of the Coaching Kata as they are the Steppingstones of a coaching cycle. That might be more important than always having a perfect deepening

question at hand. If a coach can navigate the conversation through the five phases that already provides benefits. Use a card with the Coaching Kata questions to read from and the Rule of Thumb to stay on track.

PATTERN: Beginner coaches sometimes get lost during a coaching cycle and start hopping between the five phases of the Coaching Kata.

REMEDY: Use a card with the Coaching Kata questions to read from and put your thumb on the steppingstone question you asked last.

2. Stand on Red, Walk on Green

The questions of the Coaching Kata are also like quality gates. If one of them has not yet been answered precisely, don't move on to the next one. Ask deepening questions to clarify first. Whenever the threshold of knowledge is reached by a deepening question, it is time to conduct a next step to find out.

PATTERN: Beginner coaches often tend to go to quickly to the next phase of the Coaching Kata.

REMEDY: Think of the steppingstone questions of the Coaching Kata as quality gates. If the answer is imprecise, Stand on Red and ask deepening questions. Once the answer is precise enough, Walk on Green to the next phase.

<Figure 19.1 here>

Figure 19.2: Using the Coaching Kata questions like Quality Gates

For a reference think like this:

A good coaching cycle does not loop back. We can achieve that by sticking to Stand on Red until the phase is green. Of course, that is ideal. If we feel that that the conversation is spinning or getting very imprecise, we might have to jump back to a previous phase and should do so. See Go Back. However, after the coaching cycle that is a good starting point for our reflection. Why did I have to jump back? What did I miss when we first went through the phase we had to come back to later? How could I have coached more precisely the first time? If we have to jump back to the same phase repeatedly, we could ask a peer to observe as a 2nd Coach.

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