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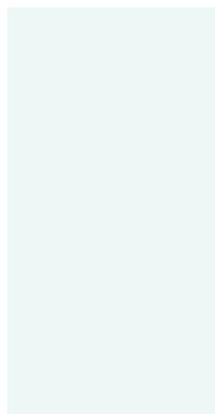
Coaches & Communication

A coach cannot create awareness for the client.
Find out why on **page 33**.

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FROM THE EDITOR: **tuning in**

Here at ICF HQ, when the members of the marketing and communications staff need to power through our to-do lists, we turn to music to fuel our creativity and productivity. (Check out my teammates' workday playlist picks, below.)

As we put together this issue of *Coaching World*, I gleaned musical inspiration from one of my favorite artists, Billy Joel. I've always been drawn to compelling storytelling, and this is an arena where the Piano Man never disappoints. His songs are rich narratives condensed into the space of just a few minutes. Whether he's singing about Brenda and Eddie's young, ultimately doomed, marriage ("Scenes From an Italian Restaurant") or the plight of Long Island's fishermen ("Downeaster Alexa"), he never fails to grab my attention and hold it in thrall until the last note fades.

The best songwriters are artists who have mastered the skill of concisely articulating a larger message. It's hard to miss the parallel with coaching here, especially when you consider that, much like good songwriting, effective coaching takes hard work and know-how. That's where the November issue of *Coaching World* comes in.

As 2013 winds down, we're going back to basics and inviting you to sharpen your coaching skills with several communication-oriented articles rooted in the ICF Core Competencies, including a new take on creating awareness by Carly Anderson, MCC (page 33) and a playful exploration of metaphor by Cynthia Loy Darst, MCC (page 16). You'll also have

the opportunity to step back and consider how your clients learn and communicate, with the help of articles by learning-styles expert Jeanine O'Neill-Blackwell (page 5) and veteran coach-trainer Micki McMillan, MCC (page 28).

In this issue, we're also highlighting another skill central to ICF's mission: communicating the value of coaching within our communities. With the help of the members of ICF Raleigh, who earned an ICF Breaking Barriers Chapter Award for their 2013 International Coaching Week celebration, we've put together a comprehensive resource to help your ICF Chapter kick-start its plans for ICW 2014 (May 19–25, 2014). Don't miss ICF Raleigh's tips and tools for success on page 22, and be sure to download the ICW 2014 toolkit at icf.to/icw.

As you explore the articles in this issue, you may notice that *Coaching World* has a new look. This fresh face is the first of some exciting changes ahead for CW in the coming year as we strive to continue providing content that empowers you to be the best coach you can be. Do you have an idea for how we can better support you? Let me know by dropping me an email at abby.heverin@coachfederation.org.



Abby Heverin

Abby Tripp Heverin
Communications
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What music do you listen to at work?

"Anything with a blues influence and lots of soul. It ends up being a mix of old and new, with lots of Ray Charles and John Mayer."

Lindsay Bodkin,
Director of Brand
Management

"Muse, The Civil Wars, David Guetta and NIN."

Ann Jarvis,
Marketing
Manager

"Lately, I've been leaning heavily toward folk music—particularly Bob Dylan."

Kristin Kelly,
Marketing Specialist

"My go-to right now is 'Sunshine Radio' on Pandora, 'a feel-good, energizing, fun mix' including artists ranging from Natasha Bedingfield and U2 to The Supremes and Stevie Wonder."

Stephanie Wright,
Brand Designer

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25 Powerful Questions to Get Clients Talking



Still not a fan of ICF on Facebook?

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Earlier this year, we asked ICF Global’s Facebook fans and Twitter followers to share their favorite powerful questions to use during coaching sessions. We’ve shared 25 of their responses here to inspire you in your coaching practice.

1. If I were to give you an extra hour a day, what would you do with it?
—Francisco Alvarez
2. What would you do if you had unlimited resources?
—Karen Martin Miner
3. What story is holding you back?
—Chris Padgett
4. What will you do first?
—Katarzyna Wojnar
5. What’s holding you back?
—Jenny Leow
6. How much energy are you willing to put into that?
—Alisa Manjarrez
7. How would your ideal self create a solution?
—Mark Smith
8. What are you trying to prove to yourself?
—Jessica Malavez
9. If I was in your shoes and asked for advice, what would be the first thing you’d tell me?
—Thom J. Ferrie
10. What would you try now if you knew you could not fail?
—Alyssa Gonzalez
11. Just because that happened in the past, why must it happen again?
—Renee Stuart
12. Is what you are doing helping you follow your joy?
—Jen Mickelson
13. If your money could talk, what would it say to you?
—Lucio Andrés Pérez
14. What is the experience you are looking to create?
—Rodney Mueller
15. How does this decision match up with who you know you are?
—Rebecca Macfarlane
16. When will you start?
—Pat Kennedy
17. What small steps can you take to get you closer to your vision?
—Josephine de la Paz
18. What are you waiting for?
—Juan Elías Romero Vázquez
19. What do you think the moral of that story is?
—Brent Nestler
20. What part of what you’ve just said could be an assumption?
—Rachel Mendonca Gojer
21. What are the positive outcomes of this negative situation?
—Vanya L. Marinova
22. What story do you most often hear yourself telling?
—Nancy Mathias
23. And ... ?
—Katy Carolan
24. If you knew the answer, what would it be?
—Rita Tourigny
25. What am I not asking you that you really want me to ask?
—Annie Gelfand

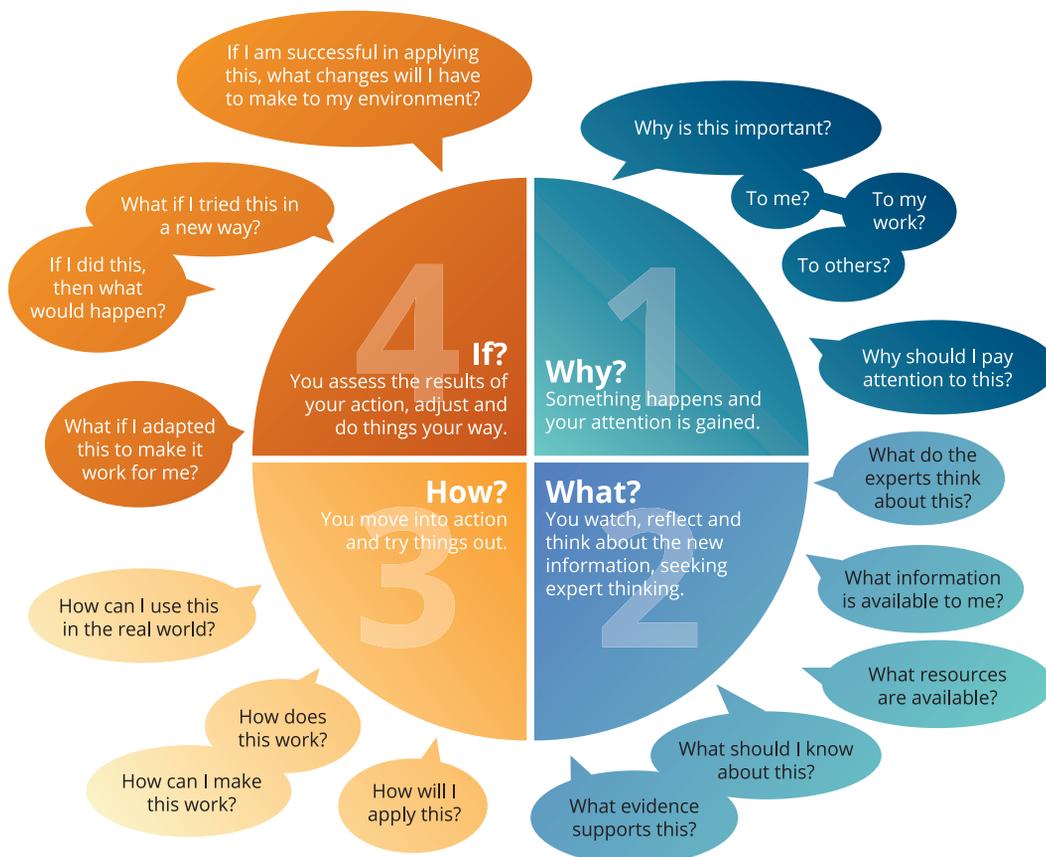
Coaching to Your Client's Learning Style

To help our clients achieve new results, coaches must support them in learning and implementing new behaviors that will create those results. It's just that simple and just that hard. Every client has a learning style; i.e., a preferred way of taking in and making sense of new information. Coaches who understand what is required to focus the attention of each learning style have an enormous advantage in equipping their clients to achieve success.



Tapping Into Your Client's Brain

Learning occurs as a result of how we process our experiences and the meaning we make of them. When we learn, our brains move through a cycle of asking and answering four critical questions: why, what, how and if. Reflect on something you learned recently and think about how you moved through exploring these four questions:



Jeanine O'Neill-Blackwell

Jeanine is the president and CEO of 4MAT 4BUSINESS, a global training and development organization focused on improving performance through brain-based training and coaching certification. Her most recent book is "Engage: The Trainer's Guide to Learning Styles" (Wiley, 2012).

Recognizing Your Client's Learning Style

There are four primary learning styles assessed in the 4MAT Learning Type Measure® assessment tool. These varied learning styles (outlined on the next page) determine which learning experiences a client finds most useful and most painful, as well as influencing which critical question she focuses the most attention on.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >

4MAT® Learning Styles

Type Four: Feelers/Doers

- Seek hidden possibilities
- Need to know what can be done with things
- Learn by trial-and-error, self-discovery
- Enrich reality
- Adaptable to change and relish it
- Enjoy variety and excel in being flexible
- Enjoy taking risks
- Often reach accurate conclusions without logic

Strength: action, carrying out plans

Goal: making things happen

Favorite Question: What if?

Type One: Feelers/Watchers

- Seek meaning
- Need to be personally involved
- Learn by listening and sharing ideas
- Absorb reality
- Interested in people and culture
- Function through social interaction
- Idea people

Strength: innovating and imagination

Goals: self-involvement in important issues, bringing unity to diversity

Favorite Question: Why?

Type Three: Thinkers/Doers

- Seek usability
- Need to know how things work
- Learn by testing theories using practical methods
- Edit reality
- Use factual data to build concepts
- Enjoy hands-on experience
- Problem solving
- Need “real-life” correlation

Strength: practical application of ideas

Goals: bringing their view of the present into line with the future

Favorite Question: How?

Type Two: Thinkers/Watchers

- Seek and examine the facts
- Need to know what the experts think
- Form reality
- Interested in ideas and concepts
- Critique information, collect data
- Thorough and industrious
- Enjoy the traditional classroom
- Function by adapting to experts

Strength: creating concepts and models

Goals: self-satisfaction and intellectual recognition

Favorite Question: What?



Coaching to Each Learning Style

In order to successfully coach to each client's learning style, you must first be aware of your own learning style and its consequent biases. Stretch to reach clients with styles different from your own.

Explore growth options that work with each client's learning style by tailoring the questions, learning opportunities and "stretches" that you explore with them:

Type 1

Questions: Invite reflection on personal experience by asking questions, such as "When have you had an experience of..." or "What did you notice about how you felt in this experience?"

Learning Opportunities: reflection exercises, self-assessments, journals, group learning

Stretch: Encourage them to move from reflection into action.

Type 2

Questions: Ask questions that help your client see patterns and models for understanding. For example, you might ask, "What happened? What about this approach worked? What would you do differently if a similar situation showed up again?"

Learning Opportunities: models, frameworks, formal classes, articles

Stretch: Encourage them to make decisions in the absence of all of the information.

Type 3

Questions: Ask questions that encourage the client to explore application and results, such as, "If you were going to move this into action, what's the first step you might take?" or "What approach have you used in the past that worked?"

Learning Opportunities: hands-on activities, role-playing, application-based practice, challenging assignments

Stretch: Encourage them to reflect and think through options before moving into action.

Type 4

Questions: Appeal to this client's love of adaptation and possibility. Ask questions such as, "In a perfect world, what outcome would you like to see?" or "If you could choose one thing you could do consistently do create this outcome moving forward, what behavior would you choose?"

Learning Opportunities: stretch work assignments, thought-provoking content (videos, articles, books), self-directed learning, experiments ("What could you try...?")

Stretch: Encourage them to focus, commit and implement.

Creating new results begins with engaging the client's focused attention and sustaining attention to new ways of thinking and behaving over time. An effective coach can adapt her style to align with the learning style of her client in order to enhance the coaching process. 

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CLICK TO TWEET:

“Once you notice what is going on inside of you, you then pay attention to what is going on for your coachee.”



**Barb Ann Pierce, BEng,
MBA, PCC, CD, CEC**

Barb is a partner in Coaching Navigator Inc., a company that provides leadership coaching and coach training.

She can be reached at 613.220.1173 or by email at barb@coachingnavigator.com.

com. Visit the website for her forthcoming book, “Become a Coach Leader—One Conversation at a Time,” at becomeacoachleader.com.

Connect with Yourself

Connecting with others is a foundational coaching skill without which a coaching conversation will not flow. Connection is something that all humans crave. It paves the way for safety and trust to blossom, and it unites us at the emotional, intuitive and spiritual levels.

First things first, though.

It is not possible to connect with someone else if you are not first connected with yourself. This involves learning how to pay attention to your physical body, thoughts, emotions, energy and intuition. When you can do this, you will be ready to gather and process information on multiple levels.

Once you notice what is going on inside of you, you can pay attention

to what is going on for your client. This will guide the questions you ask and the pace at which you ask them, ultimately enabling you to take advantage of your intuition.

Two of the simplest ways to connect with yourself are by being mindful and meditating. Jon Kabat-Zinn, professor of medicine emeritus and founding director of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, tells his students that they have only moments to live, meaning that you should be present for every moment. With practice, these moments soon increase in duration, enabling you to live more mindfully.

Being mindful entails paying attention to the present moment and experiencing the sensations, emotions, thoughts and insights that arise, without getting sidetracked by these things. As easy as that sounds, many people find it difficult to live in the moment, instead focusing their thoughts on the past and the future.



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The benefits of meditation and mindfulness can be difficult to appreciate until you experience them firsthand. In addition to helping you become calmer and more focused, meditation can help you get more in touch with your real self. In fact, this is one of its primary goals. Meditation helps you to go inside yourself and experience emotions and feelings that you may have neglected, ignored or been unable to confront in the past.

The benefits of mindfulness are many:

- When you slow down and stop doing so many things, you have the opportunity to notice the endless thoughts that pop into your head.
- When you are mindful during everyday activities, you notice the thought patterns that dominate your thinking.
- You notice your feelings in various situations and

recognize the difference between being in calming, peaceful situations and being in situations that make you feel stressed, angry or sad.

- By observing yourself from a more objective perspective, you can gain insights into why you feel the way you do, eventually noticing triggers, beliefs, values and other filters that you use.

Meditating

When you first start meditating, you often catch yourself getting drawn to other thoughts or images before consciously pulling your attention back to your breath, mantra or meditative movement, only to have your mind wander yet again. It can seem as though you are never going to catch on to meditating. But if you persist you will find that, at some point, you are able to notice the thoughts and images more objectively,



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with the awareness that these are only diversions—they are not who you are. This allows you to acknowledge the thoughts without getting drawn into them.

Becoming more aware of the sea of thoughts constantly moving through your head may initially make you feel as though you are going backwards in your progression toward calmness and peacefulness; however, the simple acknowledgment of your thoughts is a very useful step in the process of awareness. By allowing yourself to observe and acknowledge your thoughts, you have the opportunity to change them.

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CLICK TO TWEET:
“The coach’s
best allies are
calmness and
focus.”

Exercise: Simple Breathing

- Sit upright in a chair or stand up, keeping feet hip-width apart and placing your hands in your lap or letting them hang freely.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Close your eyes.
- Notice your breath going in and out. Pay attention to this for a few minutes.
- When your mind wanders, simply bring your attention back to your breath.

Centering Yourself

Many new coaches find themselves flustered or drawing a blank when they first begin working with clients. Sometimes, this is because they have not taken the time to let go of what they were previously concentrating on and, consequently, are not present to the coaching experience. Sometimes they are nervous and have trouble calming down. In either case, when this happens, they find that their thoughts just do not seem to flow easily.

Your best allies are calmness and focus. When you achieve these, the questions flow naturally. Conversely, when you over-think your questions or anticipate where the conversation will go, it feels much harder and you end up doing more work than the coachee. If you find yourself in this state, slow down the process and re-center yourself.

One of the simplest ways to calm and focus yourself before a coaching session is to practice abdominal breathing; this is as simple as sitting down and spending a few minutes focusing inwards on your breath. Abdominal breathing helps you get more oxygen into your lungs, gives you something to focus your mind on, and slows your heart and breathing rates. This in turn helps you to be calmer and more focused during your coaching meeting. Although it takes a bit of practice in the beginning, it will soon feel natural and effortless.

When you focus inward on your breath, you will notice that your breaths become deeper and slower, thereby calming your nervous system. If you practice abdominal breathing for a few minutes before each coaching session, you will notice that you are calmer and better able to focus. During the meeting, you will be more in touch with yourself and your client as well as more effective and resourceful.

Exercise: Abdominal Breathing

- Sit up tall with one hand on your navel.
- Relax your belly, close your eyes, and inhale deeply through your nose so that the hand over your navel is pushed outward (your belly should swell like a balloon).
- Exhale deeply through your nose and notice how your navel comes back in towards your spine.
- Relax your belly even more and breathe deeply without forcing the breath.
- Continue for a couple of minutes, breathing deeply and slowly.

It is not possible to connect with your client if you are not first connected with yourself. Your best allies in creating a strong connection are calmness and focus. For best results, take a few moments to center yourself before, during or after your coach meeting. 



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The Communication Cure



**Joy Goldman,
RN, MS, PCC**

Joy is an Executive Coach and credentialed physician development coach with more than 30 years' experience working in healthcare. She partners with physicians and other healthcare leaders to create transformational change and improve healthcare delivery and service. She is president of Viewfinder Coaching & Consulting and serves on ICF Maryland's board of directors.

Communication within healthcare has received a great deal of attention since the publication of the Institute of Medicine's landmark 1999 report, "To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System," which documented that between 44,000 and 98,000 patients die each year due to medical errors. Efforts aimed at improving communication among patient-care professionals have included interventions, such as daily huddles and the use of a script to enhance communication between physicians and nurses. Poor communication was found to be the greatest contributor to medical errors.

"Improving Physician-hospital Alignment: Key Drivers and Essential Attributes," a 2008 whitepaper published by the healthcare-industry solutions provider HealthStream, Inc., examined drivers for physician satisfaction and found two of the top five to be active communication and collaborative decision-making. Coaching is playing a more active role in the healthcare environment as it demonstrates its impact on sustainable behavior change for key leaders and teams.

This article uses a case example to illustrate how coaching can develop physician leaders and improve communication across disciplines. It also provides a framework for using coaching within the healthcare setting.

The Physician

Dr. F. is the vice president of quality at a large, suburban hospital system. He practiced surgery when he was in the military and has a long history of excellence in clinical care. He is passionate about quality outcomes and evidence-based care and believed he could have a greater impact on driving quality outcomes as an administrator. Dr. F. was referred for Leadership Coaching as his CEO received increasing complaints from physicians and nurses about his abrupt, curt and seemingly rude communication style. He was perceived as critical and judgmental; as a result, nursing and physician leaders tended to avoid interactions with him. Although he would often say that he wanted direct feedback, other leaders and direct reports felt uncomfortable providing this, worrying about the response they'd receive. Dr. F. wanted decisions to be made immediately, which often conflicted with the process of getting feedback and approvals within his organization. In his new position, Dr. F. often had to speak to physicians about improving their quality of care and on-time surgical starts. These discussions were complicated by the fact that many of these physicians had been peers to Dr. F. when he was a practicing clinician.

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The Transition

Dr. F.'s story illustrates some common issues faced by clinician leaders adjusting to their new roles.

Leadership Transitions: Clinician to Administration	
Clinical	Administration
Problem focus	Solution focus
Rapid assessment and intervention	Complex problems requiring collaboration
Solo expert	Many experts
Immediate feedback and gratitude	Slower feedback cycle and more frequent complaints than appreciation
Strive for perfection	Strive for "good enough" and dynamic response
"All about my success"	All about the organization's success

The above table illustrates some of the more common transitions physicians experience as they move into leadership roles. In a 2011 O'Brien Group whitepaper, Gordon Barnhart terms this phenomenon "physician whiplash." Although quick assessment (judgment) and intervention work when caring for patients who have life and death issues, the world of administration requires a big-picture view and the involvement of many stakeholders and experts. Physician

leaders are at risk of interpreting the time it takes to get feedback from others and implement change as "slow," "bureaucratic," and inefficient. This attitude can interfere with their ability to influence and collaborate with individuals whose support is needed to impact change.

The Coaching Model

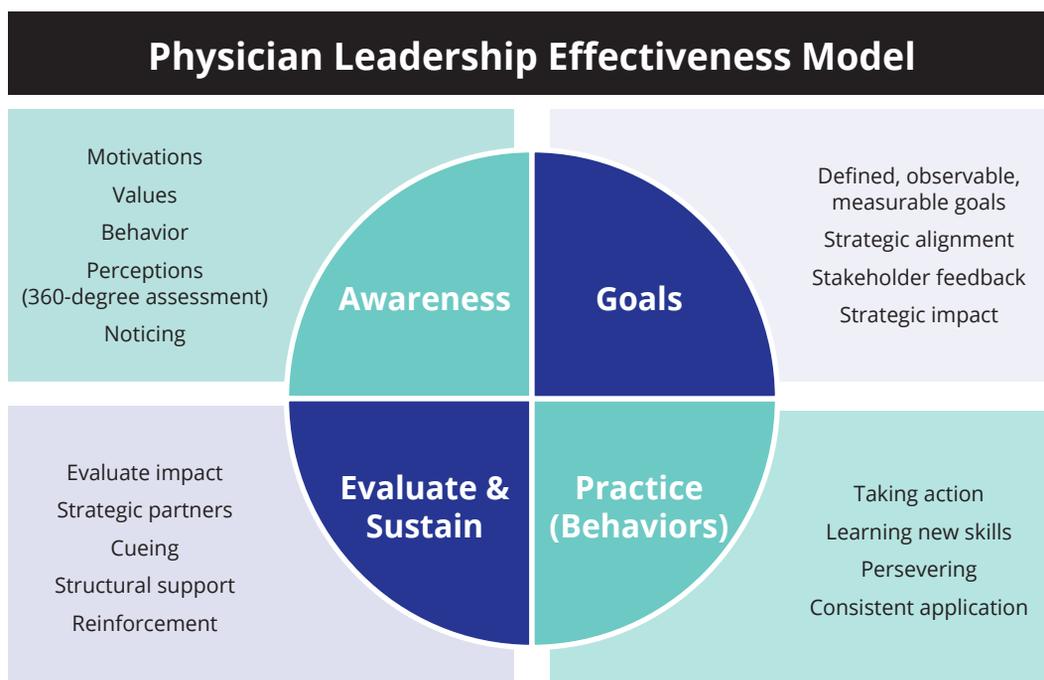
In working with physician leaders, the coaching model that I have found effective is AGPE, which stands for "Awareness, Goals, Practice, and Evaluate and Sustain." The model works from the inside out, recognizing that our beliefs, emotions and subsequent behaviors impact results. As Alexander Caillet describes in his Thinking Path model, our thoughts impact our emotions, and our emotions impact our behavior. Our behavior determines our results.

As coaches, we create awareness through behavioral and motivational assessments as well as through 360-degree feedback surveys. Tools that I have used to great effect include the Strength Deployment Inventory and Portrait of Personal Strengths, which allow for a memorable and quick understanding of differences in motivations and ways to communicate and manage conflict. As my clients learn how to better influence others, it is critical that they learn to make it about

the other person as opposed to focusing on their own agenda. In working with physicians, I have found interview-based 360-degree feedback surveys rich in the stories they provide, as well as indisputable from a "data" perspective. Clients are less likely to question the validity of data when it comes directly from their peers.

Phase two looks at the client's goals and is often the first time that someone has provided a safe space that is "all about them." For many physicians, this is the first time that someone expresses interest in knowing who they are in totality, without any other agenda. For clients who have dedicated most of their lives to being perfect and "getting it right," coaching provides the opportunity to be vulnerable and imperfect. Goals are established that are measurable and meaningful to the client and, if applicable, the sponsoring organization.

Once goals are identified, a plan is created that includes the rehearsal of new skills and behaviors. Using client language, we call these "small tests of change" to encourage experimentation



and “play.” The world of healthcare can feel heavy, and encouraging a spirit of play and improvisation can break down the well-honed habit of negative judgment and perceived failure. Leaders practice different ways to manage conflict, such as asking versus telling, and practice making direct requests for what they want instead of complaining about what they don’t have. Nonverbal approaches (body practices) are very effective in creating awareness and improving emotional agility and leadership presence. For practitioners who like to see immediate results, somatic practices can be instrumental in creating an immediate result.

Finally, the coach partners with the leader to evaluate the effectiveness of new behaviors on desired results, adjust the plan accordingly, and identify key partners within his or her own environment that can help sustain and hardwire new skills.

The Outcome

Because Dr. F. was not self-referred, I was concerned about his ability to own his behavior and not blame others. I scheduled a two-day, in-person meeting to learn about his life story, review assessment results, and identify specific and measurable goals for our coaching. We also met with the CEO to validate focus areas and hear his perspective on desired outcomes.

After some discussion, Dr. F. was able to embrace the opportunity to learn how to be a more effective leader. He was surprised that no one had provided him direct feedback, and we were able to use that as a platform to talk about whether he made it easy for others to give him feedback or behaved in ways that pushed people away.

As we worked together through weekly and biweekly coaching calls, he was able to use actual interactions to practice new behaviors and improve relationships. We would review scripts for crucial conversations and role-play as desired. He practiced inquiry to determine others’ priorities and was able to establish stronger partnerships with key leaders across the organization. I will never forget his exuberance in sharing with me his success in partnering with a previously contentious medical director by finding out what mattered to that physician and putting desired changes within the context of the physician’s goals.

Dr. F. had been promoted to vice president of quality to further the hospital system’s safety culture. As a result of coaching, he also cultivated a culture of safety where interpersonal relationships were concerned. Through coaching, Dr. F. realized that his strength in establishing high standards was also his liability, causing his colleagues and subordinates to perceive him as critical and judgmental. He learned to see that

others needed recognition and pats on the back, though that was not what motivated him. With a coach’s support, Dr. F. even “managed up” the hospital system’s CEO, who grew to appreciate his strength in holding others accountable, a trait the CEO was trying to cultivate in himself. As Dr. F. became more able to form strong partnerships, physician and nursing leaders became less apprehensive in approaching him. As a result, he was effective in facilitating quantitative improvements in quality measures, including readmission rates and hospital-acquired infections.

Coaching can have a real and tangible impact on improving communication within healthcare. By impacting perceptions and attitudes of key leaders and teams within healthcare, coaching provides sustainable change that can impact patient safety and the culture of healthcare. 

**HOW TO
MOTIVATE
CLIENTS**

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Networking 101

During the eight years that I have run my own coaching and training business, one thing stands out for me as imperative for the success of any coach: having a good, strong network of professional and personal contacts that you can turn to if you need support but who are not afraid to challenge you. A strong network can boost you up on those days when things are not going according to plan!

There are many benefits to cultivating a high-quality network. Whether you're an independent practitioner or an internal coach in a large organization, having a network will enable you to tap into valuable information, support and resources. A good network may also generate opportunities for referrals and new clients, as well as other possibilities, such as joint ventures and speaking and writing opportunities. Importantly, a good network will also assist in raising your profile as a coach.

It's normal to experience ups and downs in your business, and a good network will keep you on track to achieving your vision and assist in boosting your own self-belief while further optimizing your ability to achieve your potential and desired outcomes.



Stacey Ashley, PCC

*Stacey is based in Sydney, Australia and is the managing director of **Ashley Coaching & Consulting**.*

Her passion lies in the personal and professional development field, where she utilizes the latest thinking in neuroscience and positive psychology combined with ancient wisdom to support the development of authentic leadership and happiness at work. She regularly speaks at a variety of international events.

A strong network will also connect you with experts who can assist in meeting your business goals. Many coaches are the owners of their own small businesses and can easily fall into the trap of thinking that they need to do everything themselves. In fact, you can end up doing more marketing, business development and social media than you do coaching! The key is to remember that you can't be an expert in everything that you do. If you insist on wearing every expert hat you will end up feeling overwhelmed and drained of your precious energy. You may even lose your passion for your actual coaching services. Reach out to your network and outsource those tasks to others who have strengths in the areas you do not.

Contrary to common belief, networking isn't just about exchanging business cards and hoping someone will get in touch. It is really about developing worthwhile and important relationships and continuing to nurture them over time. Quality, not quantity, is key. It is more important to have a small group of valuable contacts than a large collection of business cards. My own network includes a diverse collection of people, including coaching and training colleagues, clients, mentors, coaching students, suppliers, and former colleagues from my corporate days.

Everyone in your network can offer you a different range of resources and talents. Always make sure that you give the same back. Don't become a pest, only contacting people when you need something from them. Both sides need to benefit from the connection, so ensure you are a resource to them as well.

There are lots of opportunities to become a great networker, both online and in person. Here are my top five networking tips:

1 Attend events.

Make time to attend both formal and informal networking events. To grow your network on an international scale, consider attending an ICF Global Conference or ICF Advance event. ICF Chapter meetings and events are also great opportunities to connect with fellow coaches and meet like-minded people, as well as experience some wonderful learning.

2 Don't just talk about yourself.

When you interact with members of your network, talk about something other than yourself. Ask how they are doing and if you can assist them in any way. Offer to introduce them to other members of your network if it would be beneficial. It is important to demonstrate that you are not just using them for their connections.

3 Keep in touch.

Check in with members of your network regularly. Set aside time in your calendar and commit to catching up with members of your network at least every three months. This might mean a quick email or phone call or scheduling a meet-up for coffee.

4 Leverage social media.

Face-to-face meetings are preferable, as they allow you to forge more meaningful relationships and read valuable nonverbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions. However, you can and should use social media to stay connected between meetings. Determine how each person in your network uses social media and keep in contact this way. Pay attention to any updates and congratulate people in your network when they get a promotion or start something new.

5 Network with integrity.

Be authentic and present, giving your full attention to the person you are communicating with. This will build trust and reputation, both of which are essential for growing a strong business network. Always follow up on any commitments you have made.

In conclusion, learn to manage your network and it will have a huge beneficial impact on your business. It really is "not what you know, it is who you know." 

A virtual assistant can help keep your business running smoothly while you focus on coaching.

Get tips for hiring a VA at icf.to/virtualassistant.



**Cynthia Loy Darst,
MCC**

*Cynthia is a passionate pioneer in the coaching world. She lives in Los Angeles with her coach husband, David Darst. Together, they have **The Inspiration Point.***

Shifting Into High Gear

"I don't get it!" my client exclaimed. "Using metaphor is really hard for me. It is just not the way my brain is wired."

"Really? You just used a couple of metaphors right there," I responded.

"What are you talking about?"

"Really hard.' That's a metaphor. While speaking in metaphor might be challenging or difficult for you, I'm guessing that you cannot show me the place that using metaphor is 'hard.' And, by the way, unless I'm mistaken, I don't think your brain actually has wires in it."

Metaphors, analogies and similes are so woven into our daily language that we often don't even notice when we use them. They range from using one word in a metaphorical way to coming up with an entire scenario. For example, we might say, "Monique has a sunny personality." Just that one word—sunny—gives us an immediate impression of Monique.

ICF Core Competency No. 7, "Direct Communication," calls on us to use metaphor and analogy in our

conversations with clients, and for good reason. Figurative language facilitates a productive—even transformative—coaching conversation by provoking our imagination, unlocking creativity and simulating resourcefulness. Metaphors create powerful images and invite energetic and emotional awareness. They allow us to find more than the logical, linear way that the left side of our brain has established as "the truth" and open a "dream door" for new information to enter into our thinking. Only with new information entering into the mix, and into our brain, can we look at a situation or challenge in a fresh way.

Over the past 19 years, I have trained more than 1,000 people in coaching skills. During that time, I have heard several variations of the same question: "Why should I use metaphor with clients who are factual, literal, linear thinkers?" (The subtext I always hear in this question—the asker's voice tinged with nervousness and a bit of judgment—is, "Won't I sound silly if I use metaphor?")

My answer: We should use metaphor and other figurative language because our clients are really smart. When someone brings a topic to coaching, it is often because she is challenged by it. If she could have figured it out using the logical side (the left side) of her brain, she already would have done it. Our clients come to coaching to think in different ways, to have ideas opened up and to explore. In order to do that, we need to invite the right side of the brain to the party.

So, when do you use metaphor in coaching? In my experience, metaphor is useful in helping clients get a clearer picture of where they are right now and helping them imagine where they are going in the future.

Picturing It

If my client says to me, "I'm in such a rut," this says a lot.

Thanks to this vivid image, she doesn't have to spend our entire conversation telling me the details of her current relationships to her husband, her boss,

her mother and her body. Instead, we can go straight to working with the metaphor in service of a bigger-picture conversation.

Indeed, the rest of my conversation with the client who was “in a rut”—and who just happened to be a linear, left-brained thinker—went something like this:

COACH: You just said you were in a “rut.” May we try something that might seem kind of weird? It’s meant to open up your thinking and stimulate both the right and left sides of your brain to work together. What do you think?

CLIENT: OK, sure. Sounds interesting.

COACH: So, take a moment and let yourself fully imagine that rut. What does it look like?

CLIENT: Well, it’s kind of deep and muddy. I’m really stuck. I keep spinning my wheels trying to get out but instead I just keep getting more and more stuck.

COACH: Like you are driving a car and you’ve gotten stuck in a rut?

CLIENT: Yes. It feels like I’m caught and can’t get away!

COACH: As you speak, I’m noticing a nervous feeling. Is that part of it?

CLIENT: Yes. I feel nervous and frustrated.

COACH: Yeah, I feel it too. (pause) What else are you aware of here?

CLIENT: It’s dark. I keep getting out of the car to look at the rut, and then get back in the car and try to get out.

COACH: I’m getting this image of you going back and forth between the car and the rut—over and over again. (pause) What are you finding out?

CLIENT: I’m trying hard, but it’s not working. I need to get some help—flag someone down or call for a tow truck.

COACH: OK, what’s happening now?

CLIENT: I’m calling for a tow truck.

COACH: Sounds like a good idea.

CLIENT: The truck is here. They are pulling my car out.

COACH: That was fast! Let’s pause for a moment and check in: What are you discovering with this metaphor?

CLIENT: I’m realizing that I’ve been making myself crazy and getting frustrated trying to do this alone. It’s time to ask for help.

From here, it is easy to shift into brainstorming and creating her plan to move forward; however, it’s important to stay connected with the metaphor so that the ‘rut’ doesn’t just take over. As a homework structure, she might put an image of a tow truck on her computer screen to remind her to ask for help or to check in with the metaphor from time to time.

Although this client came to me with a specific set of in-the-moment concerns, tapping into the idea of the rut allowed us to work above and beyond how she was feeling that day. None of the circumstances changed—her husband, her boss, her mother and her body all remained as they were before our conversation—but the way that she was being in relationship to these circumstances shifted entirely. Her anxiety and frustration were diminished, and help was on the way.

Charting a Course

A recent read-through of some journal entries I made several years ago reinforced for me metaphor’s ability to help us determine next

steps. In November 1997, I took on the role of chair for the next year’s ICF Conference. My early journal entries from this time reflect my excitement—as well as my understandable anxiety—over leading up such a significant effort.

Then, just two months before the conference, two of my committee chairs stepped down. Cue the panic. Fortunately, I was able to work with my coach to develop a metaphor that reframed the entire situation: “The conference is like a huge ship,” I wrote in my journal. “We’ve been moving quickly for months, but now we are nearing land. As the captain of the ship, it’s important that I slow things down as we move into port so that we don’t hit the rocks, wreck the ship or hurt any passengers.”

It was easy for me to translate that metaphor into a plan. I stopped and took time to clarify all of the event details and record them on a master calendar and checklist. I reconnected with my ‘crew,’ making sure that everyone knew their job as we came into port. The panic was gone, my purpose and path were clear, and in that moment, it felt easy. The nautical metaphor had given me a new understanding of the tasks at hand and though my to-do list was no shorter, my approach had changed entirely. That’s transformation, and I got there through the power of metaphor.

So, go have fun! Keep your ears peeled and let yourself play and explore with your clients! To use another one of my favorite metaphors—that of coaching as panning for precious metals—that’s where the gold is. 

Check out Ann Betz’s take on the neuroscience of coaching on her blog, **“Your Coaching Brain.”**



Celebrating the Best

Isikkent Schools (Turkey) is the winner of the 2013 ICF International Prism Award. The ICF also awarded an honorable mention to the Defense Acquisition University (USA).

In 2005, ICF Global adopted the Prism Award, a concept developed by ICF Toronto that recognizes businesses and organizations that demonstrate how professional coaching pays off on many fronts. This award represents the epitome of what professional coaching can accomplish within organizations of all sizes and in all sectors.

The 23 programs nominated for this year's award were evaluated by a judging panel comprised of ICF Members from around the world according to four criteria: fulfilling rigorous professional standards, addressing key strategic goals, shaping organizational culture, and yielding discernible and measureable positive impacts.

To learn more about the International Prism Award, visit Coachfederation.org/prism.



Case Study: The Top of the Class

Since the 1990s, coaching has been a key component of many schools' faculty-development plans. In addition to contracting Leadership Coaches and Executive Coaches to support the growth and development of administrators, a growing number of schools are using coaching and coach-skills training to enhance teachers' abilities to implement curriculum; manage their classrooms; and communicate effectively with students, parents and one another. A substantial body of research on Educational Coaching shows that coaching empowers teachers to understand and implement new instructional practices and strategies, resulting in heightened student engagement.

Turkey's Isikkent Schools have taken the use of coaching one step further by developing and implementing a high-impact program designed to directly touch the lives of every member of the school community, from teachers and administrators to parents and students. The success of Isikkent's coaching program has shown that coaching isn't only for adults: When adapted properly, it can benefit individuals as young as three years of age.

The Cutting Edge

The administrators, teachers, students and parents affiliated with Isikkent Schools have always taken pride in being part of a learning community that stands out from the crowd.

Established in 1998 within a nonprofit foundation, Isikkent provides a unique learning environment that brings students ranging from preschool through grade 12 together on one campus—an organizational model seen infrequently in Turkey. The school is also set apart by its educational vision: In a nation where most students are taught to measure success and learning by exam scores, Isikkent focuses on holistic education. With a creative, inquiry-based



All of Isikkent's teachers and support staff have completed several hours of coach-specific training in order to better understand and support the school's coaching culture.



approach to teaching; a high premium on global citizenship; and a commitment to ethical speech and behavior, Isikkent Schools strive to develop young people into highly motivated, self-aware and thoughtful adults passionate about lifelong learning.

Given the willingness of Isikkent's leaders to innovate in service of student development, it's no surprise that the school joined Turkey's coaching movement in its earliest stage, adopting coaching at a time when ICF-approved training curricula had not yet been translated from English into Turkish and collaborating with the coaches who led the charge to create the first Turkish-language coach-training program.

A Foundation for Success

Isikkent has made a significant investment of time and money in coaching with the full support of leading school administrators, allocating 24 percent of the school's professional development budget for coach training for teachers. Since the school implemented coaching in 2009, more than 40 teachers have voluntarily completed an ICF Accredited Coach Training Program. All of Isikkent's teachers and support staff have completed several hours of coach-specific training in order to better understand and support the school's coaching culture, and coach training is integrated into Isikkent's new-teacher orientation. Faculty members are encouraged to

apply their coaching skills to interactions with students, parents and colleagues.

Isikkent's coaching committee, established by coach-teachers in the school's first graduating coach-training class, helped develop an infrastructure for the program. In addition to adapting the ICF Code of Ethics to form a cornerstone of the school's culture, committee members revised commonly used coaching questions to suit different age groups. The coach-teachers collaborated with members of Isikkent's information technology department to develop an electronic coaching log that they could use to document their coaching sessions while ensuring 100-percent confidentiality,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >



... coaching skills can even be applied to Isikkent's youngest citizens, the three- and four-year-old students ...

and they also developed an initiative to market coaching to Isikkent students, teachers and parents, ensuring that it would be perceived as a positive—not remedial—intervention from the outset. As a result, when Isikkent's corps of coach-teachers began providing services, they did so with the full buy-in of the school community.

Unlocking New Approaches

Coaching is available to anyone in the Isikkent community who wants it. The program is closely

aligned with Isikkent's guidance services, and with a parent's permission, students may schedule sessions with coach-teachers. Topics covered during coaching engagements have included goal-setting, planning for the future, interpersonal communication and conflict resolution. The coach-teachers also coach Isikkent teachers and parents on a voluntary basis, and parents have the opportunity to learn coaching skills through school-provided Parent Effectiveness Training courses.

Isikkent's coaching culture has brought the school closer to its goal of achieving International Baccalaureate accreditation by fostering traits aligned with the IB Learner Profile, such as curiosity, open-mindedness and compassion. A video released by Isikkent Schools shows these traits at work, as a group of young students work together—with coach-like support from their teacher—to find out why a conch shell makes a sound when held up to the ear. (Watch the video [here](#).)

School leaders have found that coaching skills can even be applied to Isikkent's youngest citizens, the three- and four-year-old students enrolled in the school's Early Learning Center. During Isikkent's Prism Award interview, school officials told the story of an ELC student who would wander out of the classroom without permission during the school day. Using skills acquired in coach-specific training, including powerful questioning, the teacher was able to find out the cause of this behavior (simply, the student said he'd forget that he needed to stay put), articulate her own feelings about the behavior ("When you leave the classroom and I can't find you, I feel sad and scared"), and provide support for a student-driven solution (the student drew a picture of a door with a sad-looking teacher next to it and hung it by the classroom door as a reminder to himself).

Proof in Numbers

Isikkent's leaders say their investment in coaching has paid off. Students who have received coaching report improvements in their ability to resolve conflict, set and achieve goals, and cooperate and communicate with peers. Teachers who have sought coaching provide similarly positive feedback about the experience, citing enhanced communication with students and parents and improved goal-setting abilities as benefits. Meanwhile, parents who have learned coaching skills through Parent Effectiveness Training report that, as a result of the program, they're more able to articulate their needs to their children, more inclined to resolve conflicts with their children through compromise and more likely to approach conflict with an eye toward protecting the relationship (versus "resolving problems the way I like").

94.1 percent of students in Isikkent's 2013 graduating class earned admission to one of their top-five university choices.

Disciplinary problems in Isikkent's middle and high schools have declined sharply since the introduction of coaching. In the 2008-'09 academic year, the middle school reported carrying out disciplinary actions against approximately 16 percent of the student population. In the high school, administrators reported disciplinary action against 26.5 percent of the student population. By the close of the 2012-'13 school year, however, these averages had fallen to 2.08 percent and 4.74 percent, respectively.

Coaching has also empowered students to achieve their goals for the future, with a whopping

94.1 percent of students in Isikkent's 2013 graduating class earning admission to one of their top five university choices and 70.6 percent of students gaining acceptance to their first-choice school.

As a result of Isikkent's success in implementing a coaching program that benefits not only teachers and administrators but the school community at large, its program today provides the benchmark by which many organizations in Turkey measure their own progress toward constructing high-impact, standards-based programs that are sustainable over time. 





Get Ready for ICW 2014

Taking place May 19–25, 2014, International Coaching Week (ICW) presents ICF Charter Chapters and Chapters around the world with the perfect opportunity to create maximum impact by fostering education and exposure to coaching, strengthening the ICF membership, and enabling individuals in our communities to experience coaching firsthand.

ICF Raleigh

ICF Raleigh is an ICF Charter Chapter. ICF Raleigh was honored with a 2013 ICF Breaking Barriers Award in recognition of its ICW 2013 marketing and promotional efforts.

Give visibility and credibility to coaching by fostering education and exposure.

Strengthen, connect and leverage members.

Impact the community by enabling them to experience coaching.

Because we are joining hands virtually with coaches around the globe, we can't play small. We need to join hands with leaders in our community as well. For one week, all of us are agents with a singular focus: enabling as many people as possible to experience coaching in service of humanity flourishing.

As we planned for ICF Raleigh's 2013 ICW celebration, the question we returned to again and again was, "What can we do to raise aspirations, inspire others, and facilitate meaningful and pivotal experiences?"

What we found is that with a compelling vision, ICF Raleigh coaches and public leaders at the local and state levels were drawn to working together, with each doing what they could to make the efforts of all successful. As a result, lives were changed.

Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Here in Raleigh, our small, committed group accomplished a great deal in one week. We hosted a symposium that educated the community about the proven power of professional coaching, provided valuable professional development through a Cutting Edge Conversation for Raleigh-area coaches and transformed local cafes into coaching suites. We also got the buy-in of city, county and state officials, securing proclamations in recognition of ICW from Raleigh's mayor and city council, Durham County's board of commissioners and the governor of North Carolina.

The impact of our ICW celebration, however, extended far beyond a single week in May. We are proud that we were able to bring public leaders together, despite their political differences, and persuade them of the positive benefits of coaching and the importance of celebrating ICW. Our publicity efforts also empowered us to change lives: Since ICW, we've learned that the information and pro bono coaching we provided during that week helped facilitate life and career transitions for members of our community.

As we begin to plan for ICW 2014, we invite you to mobilize coaches in your community to prepare for the most impactful global celebration of coaching yet. Now is the time to get organized; you can do so with the help of our chapter's ICW checklist, found on pages 24–25. Then, visit icf.to/icw for details about this year's celebration and access to a host of downloadable resources that will help you and your ICF Chapter prepare for ICW and spread the word about the benefits of coaching.

Let's continue to join hands for ICW, and in so doing, realize that we are contributing to something awesome in the world!

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Breaking Barriers with International Coaching Week

Every year, the ICF presents Breaking Barriers Awards to ICF Chapters that have demonstrated success in innovative occasions, extraordinary fundraising events, impactful media relations, creative strategic alliances or exceptional membership growth. In 2013, ICF Raleigh and ICF Kenya were both named Breaking Barriers winners in recognition of their organizational and promotional efforts surrounding International Coaching Week 2013.



ICF Raleigh's efforts, which included the development of the checklist on pages 24–25 and many of the materials showcased in our online ICW toolkit, supported a massive marketing and publicity initiative. In addition to securing proclamations in recognition of ICW from Raleigh, N.C.'s mayor and city council, Durham County's board of commissioners, and the governor of North Carolina, ICF Raleigh staged a signature event for the public, a symposium titled "Coaching: The Secret Strategy to Your Success," and hosted several smaller ICW events to promote the power of coaching and foster practitioners' professional development.

In its first full year as an ICF Chapter, ICF Kenya organized and promoted an ICW celebration that included professional development sessions for coaches, coaching demonstrations and panel discussions, ICF Kenya also leveraged the power of radio, the country's most popular medium, by offering free coaching to people who called in to a popular morning radio show.

To learn more about the ICF's 2013 Chapter Award winners, visit Coachfederation.org/chapterawards.



INTERNATIONAL COACHING WEEK CHECKLIST

Action Item	Person Responsible
JANUARY	
<input type="checkbox"/> Choose ICW Committee Chair:	Chapter Chair and Vice Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Select ICW Committee members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from Programs Committee: <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from Sponsorship Committee: <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from Web Committee: <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from PR Committee: <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter Chair: <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter Vice-chair: <input type="checkbox"/> 2 ICF Chapter Members: 	Committee Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule ICW Committee meetings.	Committee Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify local and state government officials for outreach.	Chapter Chair, PR
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify concept for signature event and secure venue.	Committee Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Download ICW planning tools at icf.to/icw . Arrange to have materials translated from English if necessary.	ICW Committee
FEBRUARY	
<input type="checkbox"/> Decide on additional experiences for the week (e.g., <i>Coaches Cafe, pro bono coaching for local nonprofits, professional development event for coaches</i>)	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Decide on name of signature event.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine budget for each event.	Chapter Chair and Vice-chair, Sponsorship
<input type="checkbox"/> Write request letters to local officials in order to secure official proclamations.	Chapter Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure services of a publicist or PR firm (if using).	PR
<input type="checkbox"/> Use Chapter social media accounts to begin building buzz for ICW.	PR

<input type="checkbox"/> Create publicity schedule.	PR
MARCH	
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure panelists for signature event.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure moderator for panel.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Send save-the-date to Chapter members with reminder of ICW dates and outline of ICW event dates, times and places.	PR
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure photographer(s) and videographer(s) for ICW events.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit ICF Store at Coachfederation.org/onlinestore to purchase ICF-branded merchandise (for giveaways), printed promotional materials and Chapter Event Kit.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Begin securing external sponsors.	Sponsorship
<input type="checkbox"/> Promote ICW to local business schools, coaching schools and professional organizations.	PR
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure volunteers to work events, provide pro bono coaching, etc.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Update website.	ICW Committee / Webmaster
APRIL	
<input type="checkbox"/> Send all-member email to update on events and secure sponsors from within the Chapter.	Sponsorship/PR
<input type="checkbox"/> Begin promoting ICW to personal and professional network; encourage all Chapter Members to do the same.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Delegate remaining publicity efforts to ICW Committee.	PR
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend governmental meetings to share ICF and ICW info and accept proclamations.	Chapter Chair, ICW Committee Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate execution of sponsorships.	Sponsorship
<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct local media outreach and promotion.	PR
MAY	
<input type="checkbox"/> Finalize equipment details and menu plans with venue(s).	ICW Committee Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate details to panelists and volunteers.	ICW Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Create packing list for each event and delegate responsibility for list items.	ICW Committee

For more ICW 2014 planning resources, visit icf.to/icw. 

Winning Web Copy

With a host of social media platforms at your disposal, there are more ways than ever to promote your coaching business to prospective consumers and connect with current clients. However, if your business' website is the foundation for your marketing efforts, you're not alone: A March 2013 poll by "Inc. Magazine" and the marketing software firm Vocus revealed that 86.6 percent of small businesses planned to use their websites to achieve their annual goals.



Abby Tripp Heverin

As ICF's Communications Coordinator, Abby oversees content development for Coaching World, helps implement the organization's public relations strategy and snaps the occasional behind-the-scenes photo for inclusion on ICF Global's Facebook page. If you're interested in submitting to a future issue of Coaching World, email her at abby.heverin@coachfederation.org.

In order to leverage your website as a marketing tool, you need to produce content that stands out to your readers by providing the information they need, speaking to them with a compassionate and authentic voice, and illustrating your commitment to high quality. Whether you're writing copy for the first time or getting ready to give your longstanding site a much-needed refresh, these five tips will help you catch—and keep—clients' attention.

1 Write with the "you attitude."

You may be marketing your services, but the prospective and current clients should be the focus of your copy. To achieve this, adopt the "you attitude" while writing.

First, think about your reader—in this case, your ideal client. What does she want or care about? Why is she visiting your website? How can your services help her achieve her goals? Craft content with those questions in mind.

As you write, look for opportunities to replace first-person pronouns, such as "I," "me" or "my," with second-person addresses to the reader ("you," "your"). Julie Cohen, PCC, demonstrates this on her website (see the screen capture below), directly addressing her readers about their career concerns and proceeding to articulate how her services will help them achieve their goals.

You might even decide to extend your use of you attitude by letting your clients speak for themselves. A few thoughtful, well-written client testimonials that describe the benefits of your coaching can be more persuasive than anything you say yourself.

2 Use (but don't abuse) keywords.

If you already have a website for your coaching business, chances are you're familiar with the abbreviation SEO. Short for search engine optimization, SEO refers to the process of increasing a website or page's visibility in unpaid (i.e., "natural" or "organic") search engine results.

In the early days of SEO, search engines privileged keywords, so it was to a writer's advantage to load her copy with keywords and phrases—even at the expense of meaningful content and high-quality prose. However, a shift is now underway toward the prioritization of factors including natural phrasing, linking and social sharing: Google, for example, determines rankings using algorithms such as Panda, which focuses on content, and Penguin, which looks at the number and quality of links from around the Web that point back to a given page.

With this in mind, don't stuff your copy full of keywords in the hopes of achieving

Career Crossroads

Throughout your career, you encounter challenges and opportunities that affect your professional direction. How you navigate these situations significantly impacts your professional and personal life. **Contact** Julie Cohen Coaching LLC to discuss your Career Crossroads. Here are some situations in which Julie Cohen Coaching, LLC services can support you:

© 2010-2013, Julie Cohen Coaching, LLC

search-engine supremacy. Instead, aim to create meaningful, content-rich text and incorporate keywords when it makes logical sense. This will help prevent search-engine penalties for keyword-spamming, and ensure that once prospective clients find your website, your authorial voice is natural and engaging enough that they want to stick around.

3 Lead with the good stuff.

According to the Web analytics firm Chartbeat, approximately 1/3 of website users don't scroll beyond what they see onscreen when they first land on a page. This is why it's crucial that you front-load each page's copy with the most-important information.

In my college newswriting class, we were taught to structure articles using the inverted pyramid (shown at right). This is a useful model for Web writing, as well. Open with a strong lede; i.e., a succinct but detailed first sentence that hooks the reader and makes the focus of the page explicit. Order the rest of the information from most to least important.

4 Be authentic.

As a coach, your first priority is to forge a connection with your client in service of building trust and intimacy. The intimacy-building process begins when a prospective client visits your website and begins to assess a potential fit. This is why it's crucial that you present your authentic self in your website copy.

Write in your own conversational style, making the same word and sentence-structure choices that you'd make if you were pitching a potential client face-to-face. Don't forget: Conversation is at the heart of your coaching practice, so capitalize on the opportunity to show clients what this will look and sound like.

Consider the personal attributes that you believe characterize your coaching practice and look for ways to infuse your copy with them. Perhaps past clients have praised your sense of humor: In this case, let your playful use of language or wry wit shine through in your Web copy. Showcasing

INVERTED PYRAMID FORMAT

Lede/Headline

Who/What/Where/When/Why

Detail 1/Detail 2/ Detail 3

Final Detail

Newspaper articles are written using an "inverted pyramid format. The most important information at the top (beginning of article) and the least important information at the bottom (end of article).

Adapted from www.readwritethink.org

your true self will help you narrow in on the prospective clients you're meant to be working with.

5 Check, double-check and triple-check your copy.

The quality of your website reflects directly on your practice: Sloppy copy that's riddled with errors sends prospective clients the message that you can't be bothered to attend to details and leaves them wondering if your coaching is characterized by that same inattention. On the other hand, carefully edited copy free of grammatical and mechanical errors conveys the thoughtfulness, professionalism and dedication that consumers seek.

When you've finished writing your copy, print out your pages and edit on a hard copy. (Research published in 2008 in the journal "Journalism & Mass Communications Educator" shows that errors are more likely to be detected on the printed page than on a computer screen.) Read your draft out loud and listen for awkward phrases, missed words, repetition and grammatical errors, such as subject-verb disagreement. Next, edit line by line with a focus on mechanics (e.g., capitalization, punctuation and spelling). Keep a print or electronic dictionary at hand and double-check any spelling or definition that you're unsure of. Finally, take a break from the material for a day or two before returning to it for one last edit: Time away from the text will allow you to approach it with fresh eyes and catch any errors you may have missed before.

If possible, enlist the assistance of a few eagle-eyed colleagues, friends or family members to review your copy, as well. In addition to identifying mistakes that you may have missed, they can provide valuable insight into whether you've followed recommendation No. 1 and created copy that truly speaks to your audience. 



**Micki McMillan,
M.Ed., MCC**

Micki is the CEO and a founding partner of Blue Mesa Group, an Executive Coaching firm. She also serves as co-director for Blue Mesa's Transformational Coaching Program, an ACTP designed for Leadership and Organizational Coaches and based in Fort Collins, Colo. Micki brings years of experience as a corporate leader, Executive Coach and teacher to her work in regions around the globe, including Asia, Australia, North America and Europe. She has also shared her expertise as a speaker at several international conferences, including those hosted by the Association for Quality and Participation, Business Roundtable, Women In Technology and The Leadership Investment (formerly Women's Vision Foundation).

Commitment Conversations: How Coaching Transcends the Pitfalls of Promise-making

Maria, the senior vice president of sales at a large organization, arrived at her coaching session feeling hopeless, with a prepared letter of resignation in her briefcase. Six months into her new position, she had not achieved the results she confidently estimated during her hiring process.

Maria said that her peers and her direct report, the assistant vice president of sales, were the source of her unhappiness and inability to achieve promised results. The assistant vice president had also applied for the senior position and, according to Maria, he seemed to resent Maria's appointment. Her peers, she said, would just ignore her.

When asked for more specifics, Maria explained in detail what both her peers and the assistant VP didn't do. When she delegated, her expectations weren't met. When she asked for cooperation from other departments, they would either not respond, or reply too late. Consequently, she ended up working on her own, tirelessly, to get things done. Could this situation be improved if Maria managed her commitment conversations more effectively?

Communication Breakdown

Maria's situation is common. She perceived that other stakeholders were not fulfilling their commitments and therefore causing her failure. Simple glitches in commitments between people and among organizations cost money, erode trust and compromise integrity. The ability or inability to manage commitments affects an organization's success.

A Winning Formula

A commitment is a pledge between two or more people. Every family, community and organization is a network of commitments. The more effective the commitments, the more effective the organization—in mutual trust, customer satisfaction and profitability.

The formula for a clear commitment outlines who will do what by when and entails three steps: the request or offer, negotiation, and acceptance.

The Request or Offer

Some clients may be defensive when asked how well they manage commitment conversations. Careful inquiry is key. In Maria's case, her coach started by asking specifically about how she would go about making a request:

MARIA: I told my assistant VP to get the report to me ASAP. When I finally got it a week later, it was too late to include in my report to the CEO. The assistant VP dislikes me and wants me to fail.

COACH: How did you ask him?

MARIA: I said, "You need to get that to me ASAP."

COACH: How do you feel when people say things to you that begin with, "You need to do this...?"

MARIA: We all need to get things done.

COACH: But how is it for you when you're told, "You need to do this ...?"

MARIA (UNCOMFORTABLY): It seems ... authoritarian.

COACH: What is an alternative?

MARIA: I need the customer satisfaction report ASAP.

COACH: Can you be more specific about when?

MARIA: I need the customer satisfaction report tomorrow at 5 p.m.

COACH: How does that differ from, "You need to get that to me ASAP?"

THE TAKEAWAY:

The more specifically your client can qualify expectations, the better. "I need the report error-free and ready by 5 p.m. tomorrow," is preferable to "I need the report ASAP."

Negotiation

Negotiation is called for when one party can't accept a request. Here is how you can help Maria think about it:

COACH: What if your assistant VP can't get that report to you by tomorrow at 5?

MARIAN (LAUGHING): He's fired. Kidding. Um, I don't know. I guess I would ask why.

COACH: What would that do?

MARIA: Help me understand him.

COACH: And then what?

MARIA: If there were some compelling reason, we could look at alternatives. I probably wouldn't get as upset with him.

COACH: Are you going to tell him the alternatives or ask him?

MARIA: I've always just told people what to do.

COACH: How's that working?

MARIA (THINKING): Huh. If he identifies alternatives, it might improve his buy-in.

THE TAKEAWAY:

Support your clients as they develop questions that will offer a better result during their negotiations.

Acceptance

Either the request is accepted or it isn't. How a client closes the commitment conversation contributes enormously to how he or she is perceived.

COACH: Maria, what do you want to be able to say about yourself after this conversation?

MARIA: I want to be assertive, yet kind.

COACH: What can you do to support that?

THE TAKEAWAY:

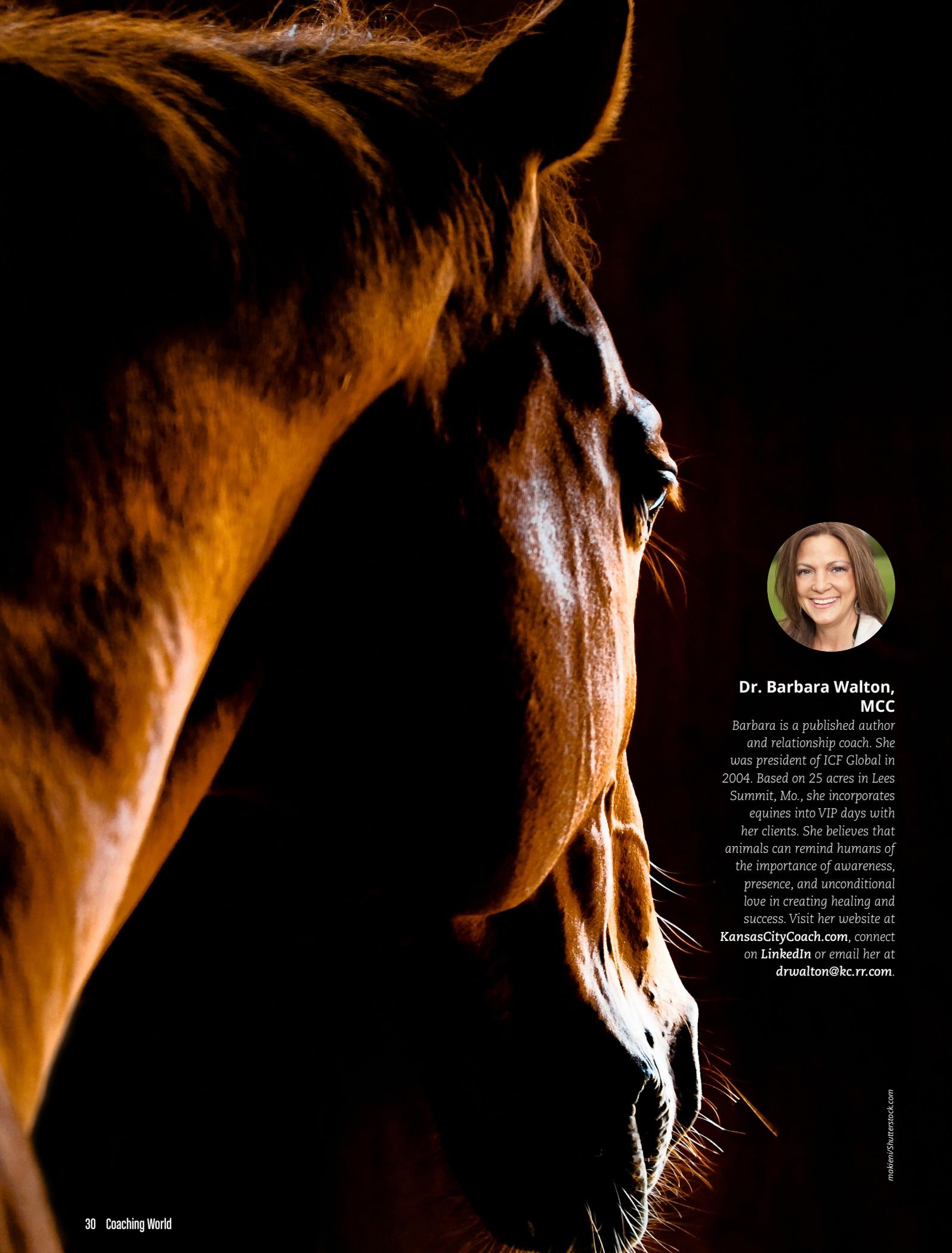
Clients are often surprised when they realize their behavior is at odds with their intentions. Helping to align intent with performance can transform difficult situations into successful interactions.

Maria's Insights

Through coaching, Maria decided that she really didn't want to resign and reaffirmed her commitment to being successful. She realized that she was neither skillful nor effective in coordinating with others, which directly contributed to her failures. Learning how to manage commitments helped her to gain insights about how and why she was failing. Besides learning new behaviors, she became more aware of herself and others.

As the coaching engagement progressed, Maria realized that a fear of failure drove her ineffectiveness. The individuals who recruited Maria had made big promises about her intelligence and experience, and she put a great deal of pressure on her team in order to deliver the desired results. Instead of fueling productivity, however, this approach fueled resentment.

Through coaching, Maria realized that the gift of fear is expecting to lose something valuable and therefore working to prevent or prepare for that loss. Maria learned that her fear, if managed wisely, could propel her to a better result. She saw that she needed others, and that awareness of interdependence inspired her to change how she managed her commitments. Ultimately, by better managing her commitment conversations and opening up to her colleagues, Maria engaged her team on a more personal level and gained their attention as she shared her vision. This enabled the team to work for the sake of the whole. 



**Dr. Barbara Walton,
MCC**

Barbara is a published author and relationship coach. She was president of ICF Global in 2004. Based on 25 acres in Lees Summit, Mo., she incorporates equines into VIP days with her clients. She believes that animals can remind humans of the importance of awareness, presence, and unconditional love in creating healing and success. Visit her website at KansasCityCoach.com, connect on [LinkedIn](#) or email her at drwalton@kc.rr.com.

Taking off the Blinders: A Q & A with Dr. Barbara Walton, MCC

With a full slate of clients, including individuals, couples and teams, ICF Global Past President and Master Certified Coach Dr. Barbara Walton sometimes needs to enlist the assistance of some trusted colleagues. Weighing in at approximately 1,000 pounds, with a taste for carrots, apples and peppermint candies, the coaching pros Barbara partners with aren't likely to make an appearance at the next ICF event. However, as the "workhorses" of **KTD Coaching's** Equine-assisted Coaching services, they play an important role in enhancing clients' capacity for self-awareness, communication and teamwork.

We asked Barbara to join us for a conversation about Equine-assisted Coaching and the unique capacity of horses to help clients take their own blinders off and see themselves more clearly.

Coaching World: What is Equine-assisted Coaching? What does it entail?

Barbara Walton: We take folks through a series of exercises, from simply approaching the horse to getting the horse to go through an obstacle course, and the horse becomes a coach as well.

Horses can give feedback about the participants that might not otherwise surface or be revealed. Horses are very sensitive, and they will pick up thoughts that aren't even being spoken yet, taking the coaching to a whole new level. The exercises allow a different level of awareness and conversation about who the client is being, who the client intends to be and who the client hopes to be, versus how he or she is showing up.

CW: How did your interest in Equine-assisted Coaching begin?

BW: I had my own horse when I was young, and I remember it brought out such joy and such freedom just to be with horses. As an adult, I've found that being around horses brings out the best in me as a leader and as a human being, and the overall emotional experience of being in the presence of a horse can do that in just about any client I work with. I've never worked with anyone who didn't want to be around the horse, who didn't want to approach the horse.

Clients don't come to me expecting to work with horses. The clients who end up taking it to the next level and working with the horses are more or less at the VIP level: It's not their first encounter with my coaching. It really represents the next level of coming into my life, as well as them opening their lives to me. It's been a natural evolution to bring these clients into my environment and incorporate the horse into the coaching relationship.

CW: How does Equine-assisted Coaching enhance clients' learning?

BW: Horses do not have a separation between what they think and what they present as humans do. We have a way of presenting a persona or a mask of what's going on inside us, and horses don't. They actually experience what's behind the mask, and what's not being said.

Horses will pick up on things in the client that I may never pick up on or the client may never reveal. The level of fear is one thing that gets revealed very quickly. Most people can cover their fears very well in their communication, unless they're really anxious, but this is the more subtle fear, the more subtle nuances that an individual may have learned to navigate in their interpersonal interactions. Any significant emotional experience opens us up to learning, and I find that horses do that for most adults. It gives the opportunity to open up, whether it's the heart opening or the mind opening. Clients are able to learn something new from the experience of being in the presence of the horse, and they are learning about themselves and I'm learning about them and learning from the horse in a way that the client may never, ever divulge. It ends up taking the conversation in a whole new direction.

CW: How do you use equines in Team Coaching engagements?

BW: Team-building generally starts in the same way, with exercises where the individuals begin to tune into and receive feedback on who they are and how they're communicating with the equine. We often have subgroups of the team working together to accomplish a task, such as grooming, moving the horse around the round pen or moving the horse around the obstacle course. It elicits a different kind of collaboration and communication, and the ability to align with one another in order to accomplish a task. You see that when the participants are doing these exercises, they're having a lot of fun. Some of the learning doesn't happen until they're done with the exercises and they're reflecting on the experience. Even three to six weeks later, they're

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The next chapter at *Coaching at Work*

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- 20th September 2013
Abodi Shabi
- 23rd October 2013
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- 16th December 2013
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calling back and saying, "You wouldn't believe how my conversations and how my interactions with clients have changed since working with the horses."

Any opportunity that takes place outside of a team's normal atmosphere or environment and asks them to do a task that they're unfamiliar with is going to result in some bonding and some team building. It's an opportunity to be outside and with nature. It's not just being around the horses, but being around the trees and the grass and the pasture that really makes people want to bring out their best. When we can bring out the best in the horses, the horses bring out the best in us.

CW: What can horses themselves teach teams?

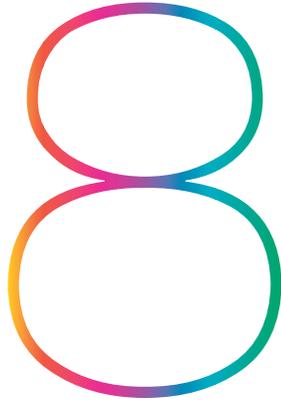
BW: Horses are herd animals, so the team can watch the way the horses interact and watch their natural leadership. No matter what group of horses you bring together, they will herd; there will be a leader; and they will share tasks, they will share responsibilities, and they will collaborate. We point some of that out to them, and some of it they notice on their own in their learning about what's happening, because they're watching their teammates and the horses and watching how the horses respond to the different energies in their teammates. This is a dynamic learning experience.

CW: What impacts have clients experienced as a result of Equine-assisted Coaching?

BW: I think the stories I love the most are when clients come back and say that it's affected their

family, that it's made a difference in how they're able to be present with their families, how they move out of that mind chatter or the knowing of their mind to really be more aware and more conscious. The individual feels a greater alignment with their whole self. Their mind, their soul, their physical body is more present in their interactions with others. Often, parents come back and say that there's a big difference in how they're hearing or guiding their teenager, recognizing they can't control them. They learned that from the horse: that they can't control them with words or expectations and they have to co-create something with them.

Clients have credited Equine-assisted Coaching with helping them get real enough to tell a truth that allowed a deep conversation to happen, whether they say that saved their marriage or whether they say that saved their relationship with their teenager, in addition to the environment at work being improved or being navigated more successfully, and just feeling more successful and having a feeling of more competence and confidence in creating their own success. **CW**



Why a Coach Cannot Create Awareness for the Client

Carly Anderson, MCC

Carly is a trainer of coaches, Mentor Coach, and active member of community of ICF Assessors. She lives in California, is originally from Australia and has an international client base. Carly has a vision of supporting 1,000 new MCCs to be credentialed by 2018 and has created a model of the ICF Core Competencies called “The Target Approach: Demystifying the ICF Core Competencies.” She is the co-director of **Stellar Leadership Performance** and co-leader of **The Mentor Coaching Group**. You can visit her website at www.carlyanderson.com.

In my years as a coach trainer and Mentor Coach, I’ve found that many practitioners struggle with the eighth ICF Core Competency, which calls on them to “create awareness.”

The true purpose of any coaching conversation is to create a safe, supportive environment where clients can explore and uncover what they may not have conscious access to about themselves, their work, or some other aspect of their lives. Usually, there is a gap between where the client is now and where she desires to be. The coach plays an important role in creating the conditions for awareness to emerge, so the client can close that gap and move toward the desired outcome.

If you’ve ever been coached by someone who has drawn wisdom out of you that you never thought you possessed, you know what a joyful high that is. When I have that experience, I find it easy to determine what steps to take next. As a coach and as someone who listens to a lot of coaching sessions, I am always

delighted when I hear clients gain awareness, which increases their energy and most often leads to knowing what to do next. It’s truly the juice that makes coaching so rewarding for me: witnessing unfolding awareness that turns into empowered action.

For coaches who struggle to help their clients create awareness, focusing on another ICF Core Competency—that of coaching presence—may be the key to taking their skills to the next level.

Coaching Presence: The Key Competency

The core competency of coaching presence is the bridge between coach and the client because it’s about being fully present, fully conscious and in spontaneous relationship with the client.

It takes practice to be fully present with your clients; i.e., to listen with your whole self to how they speak about their successes as well as their challenges. You are listening at many levels at once—for the words clients use, what their tone of voice or body language might be conveying, what emotions they might be experiencing, and their self-talk and beliefs about their situation. You must pay attention to patterns of thinking and behaving and listen with your full senses, including your gut or intuition. Then you need to discern if what you are sensing is a bias you have, or whether it’s something you can share with the client. If you do have a bias, and you still feel it would serve the client to hear what you are sensing or observing, then you must own your bias with the client.

Starting With Self-awareness

Self-awareness is crucial to cultivating coaching presence, especially when it comes to identifying our own biases. It’s through self-awareness that we begin to understand how our own thinking can limit our clients and their ability to gain the awareness they desire in order to move forward toward their desired outcomes.

For coaches to be of full service to their clients, they need to pay attention not only to their clients’ ways of

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processing their thoughts and feelings, but also to their own. We are limited in our ability to create the potential for awareness to occur by our own mindsets and biases as human beings. As coaches, we need to become aware of our biases—how we listen, what we listen for, what we include and what we exclude so we can be more purely present as vessels listening for and receiving the whole of our clients.

Emerging Awareness

When the coach is fully present and has highly attuned sensory perception and listening, it's more likely she will ask a powerful question of the client or make a direct observation that prompts deeper thinking.

The coach's role is to provide an environment where there is potential for awareness to emerge. The coach cannot create awareness for the client or have awareness on behalf of the client. Sometimes a coach will say something like, "Wow, that's powerful." Just because the coach thinks it's powerful doesn't mean the client does. In these moments, a coach runs the risk of taking away the client's opportunity to make her own connections and have the joy of awareness come through her.

You will know the client is experiencing emerging

awareness if she is silent after you make an observation or ask a question and then says something like, "Hmmm ... let me think about that." She might even say, "That's a great question." Or she may say nothing at all: Often, you know awareness is emerging when the client becomes quiet or reflective.

As the coach, you want to be present to the signs of emerging awareness and give your client the space to think and reflect more. Be totally present and just listen. Coaches often miss these moments of gold because they're still talking or thinking of what they want to say next. You are missing the very point of coaching when you step on or over emerging awareness, or when you are unconscious to what is occurring for the client.

Allow the client to process her thoughts or feelings. After a while, if the client doesn't say anything, you might want to ask a question, such as, "May I ask what that question is revealing to you?" Or if the client becomes quiet and reflective, you may want to inquire of the client, "May I ask what you are thinking (or feeling) right now?"

From Awareness to Action

Once emerging awareness has been explored, it's often appropriate to ask a question around designing actions, such as, "What would you like to do with that new awareness?" Coaches often miss the opportunity to see if the client wants to create an action—even if the action is simply to take more time to reflect on what has emerged. When you are fully present, you will sense whether it's the right time to ask the client if she's ready to move forward, or if she wants to stay with the emerging awareness. Partner with the client and ask her how she wants to move forward.

The ultimate purpose of coaching is to support our clients as they gain awareness of how to move forward toward their desired outcomes. We serve our clients best when we engage in our own self-discovery work to uncover our own biases in how we listen. We owe it to our clients to be fully present to hearing their unique voice and tapping their greatness. When we listen with our whole selves and with clients as our full focus, we are more likely to call forth a powerful question that leads to emerging awareness. When indicated, be quiet, stay present and allow your clients to wrestle with that awareness and decide what actions to take. This is the joyful dance of coach and client partnering together for the client's increased success. 

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global views

“How do you communicate the value of coaching to prospective clients?”



Philippe Declercq, PCC
Belgium

When a prospective client relationship with a coach develops, a target comes in his mind—a target he will not reach alone or with his team. He expects the coach will help to reach it.

With the coach, he wants to produce results, achieve goals, realize successes, boost performance, improve the quality of life and develop his leadership.

The value of coaching lies in the process. The coach does not

do the client's job for him. The coach's presence creates a safe and intimate environment for the client. The coach sustains the thinking, helps the client make decisions, supports the planning of actions and audits the realizations. During the process, the client finds value in leadership development, personal life quality, long-term developments and realization of the initial target. An extraordinary value of coaching is the learning process that drives the client to the

autonomy necessary to answer similar questions by himself in the future.

During the coaching process, the client changes speed. Down from the jet, he walks through the fields and cities, discovers landscapes and variety, takes the time to meet others, and uses forgotten capacities to come back to his business with new energy, ideas and views.

Most of my coaching work is with organizations, so there are two challenges that I face: First, I need to convince the responsible “buyers” that coaching represents an important value-added intervention for their leadership development programs. Over the past 10 years, here in Singapore, the HR and leadership-development communities have definitely come to understand, appreciate and value good Executive Coaching. The cumulative

impact of good coaching on leadership skills and the positive feedback on coaching from leaders themselves, have established coaching as a proven intervention.

The second challenge remains the individual coachees themselves. Nearly all of the individuals with whom I initiate a coaching engagement have never experienced coaching before. Often, they start off with some healthy skepticism as well as some entrenched

reluctance to talk about their strengths and weaknesses with a total stranger. My strategy is to establish a relaxed atmosphere in order to build rapport. My coachees do like to talk about their jobs and what they are especially proud of or excited about. Once we get to this place, then good coaching questions and good listening can be deployed. This leads inevitably to one or two “aha” moments, and the coachee begins to see how coaching can work and the value that can be attained.



Donald Huse, ACC
Singapore



Sharon Jansen, PCC
South Africa

Leadership presence is a powerful conversation and at the same time not easily articulated. I am often curious with prospective clients as to how they view the impact of this often intangible quality.

I refer to the leader's way of being and we talk about the aspects of language, body and emotion that comprise this package.

Choosing role-model business leaders who display presence and having a conversation about the role of coaching in building leadership presence will often pique the curiosity of the prospective client.

Translating these elements from the admired role model to the prospective client is a creative and right-brained exercise that enters the

world of future possibility and gives the client a taste of the coaching experience.

I aim to bring my coaching skills into all my conversations and trust that my way of being as a coach itself becomes the model and demonstrates the value of the work that I do. **CW**



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