

# 39

## Week 39 Focus: Coaching Part 1 – Questions

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**Focus Question: What questions will open up the space for EXPLORATION, FOCUS, CLARITY, INSIGHT or ACTION?**

### Description

Influence in the remote space can be a more powerful skillset than leadership. Our ability to have great conversations while working with others is critical for success. This entails supporting people to do their best work, when we might not be able to see their context. With that in mind, coaching becomes an essential modality and skillset for remote professionals at all levels. Coaching can take many forms and at its essence it is a partnership between two or more people where the coach helps the person being coached gain clarity, and support action around their key goals.

In the remote space, coaching may take place between a boss and their direct reports, or even two peers.

Questions are the heart of great coaching, and in the original core coaching competency framework of the International Coaching Federation, questions may "evoke discovery, insight, commitment or action".

In any conversation it can be useful to focus on questions that are:

- » Short and to the point- 5-6 words each
- » Focused on the topic at hand
- » Asked one at a time. When we ask more than 1 question people don't know which one to ask first
- » Often start with a WHAT? How questions will point someone to how to do something – process. WHY questions will point to what's important about the topic.

Some of my favorite coaching questions can be found in this short video – link to 20 Coaching Questions on my Youtube channel.

As I wrote in a 2017 article on Questions and Team and Group Coaching it's also important to:

1. Keep them short, concise and to the point. Often the most powerful questions are often only 5-6 words in length
2. Adjust your questions according to the styles and preferences of the person involved
3. Provide an opportunity to focus, identify options and possibilities, to expand awareness, or to facilitate action
4. Notice any biases in our questions. Where are your questions focusing – at the 30,000-foot view OR in the weeds, around action AND awareness?
5. Use the language of the client and watch for "coach-ese" or coaching jargon.

(Reference: Britton, 2017. Questions and the Group and Team Coaching Process)

### Activity

Consider how you can incorporate the key points of today's session. Make a list of 20 different questions you'd like to draw upon in upcoming conversations.

**For more on this topic check out: My 2013 book – From One to Many: Best Practices for Team and Group Coaching. You will find more about the topic of scaling the coaching conversation to more than one person in the book.**

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**"Coaching is a conversation with intent."**  
Jennifer Britton

### Coaching Questions

Take a look at these questions and consider how they might prompt some new ideas:

What's important?

What else?

What's another way of looking at that?

What's the cost (or impact) of doing that?

What's the flipside?

What do you need to take a stand for?

What could accelerate this?

What would magnify that?