

The Coaching Habit

A prime tool for development of people and teams comes from coaching and The Coaching Habit provides an intuitive framework that goes a bit against the grain of traditional thinking. In short, Michael Bungay Stanier posits that a leader can get more done with regard to results and development by doing less. The tagline of the book is "say less, ask more, and change the way you lead forever." In essence, while coaching team members, listen more, and the seven essential questions Stanier provides create an excellent framework to draw out the leader's curiosity, and allow team members to process more and arrive at their own conclusions. Direct advice isn't something to abandon altogether, but the essential questions provide a catalyst to finding the best solutions and development opportunities. It can also prevent a leader from becoming an organizational bottleneck!

The Questions

(not necessarily sequential or appropriate in all contexts, you'll have to use your judgement as your coaching opportunities arise)

The Kickstart Question

What's on your mind?

The AWE Question

And what else?

The Focus Question

What's the real challenge here for you?

The Foundation Question

What do you want?

The Lazy Question

How can I help?

The Strategic Question

If you are saying yes to this, what are you saying no to?

The Learning Question

What was most useful for you?

The design of the questions brings opportunity to draw out more from team members and provides a leader with broader insight as she gleans the thoughts and insights of team members.

While there are many great supplemental and supporting systems presented here, The Three P's is especially helpful in framing a conversation; projects, people, and performance are three overall categories that may help a leader contextualize the essential questions, and develop a coaching strategy.

All in all, this approach will likely result in more effective leadership, less frenetic leadership, and more satisfied and valued team members.

(Credit to Michael Bungay Stanier, The Coaching Habit, Page Two, 2016)