

1-2-3 COACH

Start Coaching in 60 Minutes...

COACHING **4**
Clergy



“Every Pastor, Ministry Staff and Church Leader a Coach: A Practical Guide to Coaching in Ministry”

BY J. VAL HASTINGS, MCC

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What is Coaching?

When people discover that I am a coach, they usually ask me what coaching is. As I start to explain, I usually observe a combination of confusion and intrigue in my listener. Coaching, while powerful and transformational, is hard for many to understand. One person has told me on several occasions that she believes that the real reason that people hire me as their coach is because they like the way my voice sounds on the phone. Others have hired me as their coach saying, "I don't know what coaching is, but whatever you did for ____ (another pastor), I want you to do that for me."

I still chuckle at one pastor's response to my explanation of coaching: "So let me get this straight. You're going to do lots of listening, you're not going to tell me what to do, nor are you going to try to fix me. I'm going to do all the work AND I'm going to pay you. I don't think so!"

Over the years, I've discovered that the best way to help someone understand coaching is to give them a firsthand experience of coaching. That's why I give a LIVE demonstration at the beginning of every coach training event that I facilitate. Then I invite the participants to define what coaching is, based on what they have just witnessed.

And so, in addition to reading this manual, I invite you to experience your own demonstration of coaching by scheduling a complimentary coaching session. Not only is that the best way to understand coaching, you will also benefit from being coached. All of our Coaching 4Clergy coaches offer these complimentary sessions with no strings attached; you'll find them listed on the Find-A-Coach Service on our website: www.Coaching4Clergy.com

Let's define what coaching is and what it is not. The International Coach Federation defines coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential." (www.coachfederation.org)

Here is how I define coaching: As a coach, I help people get the results they want by bringing out the best in them. Coaching isn't about fixing people or solving problems, rather, coaching is a developmental or discovery-based process. Similar to athletic coaches, we further develop the skill and talent already inherent in the people we coach.

Whether you use the International Coach Federation definition of coaching, my definition or develop your own, there are several key components that I want to highlight:

1. Coaching is a partnership

The coach and the coachee are involved in a collaborative process that is 100% about the person being coached. The relationship between the coach and coachee is of utmost importance. Safety and trust in this relationship create an environment in which fresh perspectives and new ways of being can be explored. A coachee is more likely to let you see who they really are if they believe that they can trust you.

This is so important for today's spiritual leaders, many of whom report that they are extremely lonely and feel isolated. In fact, on more than one occasion, I've had pastors report that there is no one they trust, nor anyone they feel close to. If nothing else, the rise of coaching in faith communities will provide today's spiritual leaders with a safe person to talk with. And that's a big win!

2. Coaching accelerates what is already underway or about to begin.

This is a key distinction between coaching and other disciplines. Because our perspective is that the person is already whole and complete, we're not moving immediately into fix-it mode or bringing a scarcity mentality. Instead, we look for clues and dig for treasures in what we see in front of us. Coaches enjoy spending time at the intersection of curiosity and wonder.

So many of the individuals and teams that I coach initially have little or no awareness of what is already underway or about to begin. One of the benefits of the coaching process is that it creates space in the coachee's schedule—even if it's only 30 minutes—to step back and see what is. Through deep listening and powerful questions, the coach helps the other person gain greater clarity about what they really want and also clarity about what God may be up to. Eugene Peterson, in his translation of Proverbs 29:18, captures the essence of this when he writes:

"If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over the place. But, when they attend to the things of God (see what God is doing) they are most blessed..."

Coaches help people see what God is already doing.

3. Coaches maximize potential, moving people from good to great.

Coaches do more than inspire or cheer on. Coaches help people develop and actually make forward progress. Have you ever heard of a masterful athlete who achieved any success without coaching? A coach will develop you further, faster and deeper than you could ever do on your own.

One of the ways that we maximize in coaching is by tapping into the greatness of those we coach. Coaches intentionally look for and develop the strengths and giftedness of the person being coached. I appreciate the way in which Benjamin Zander explains this in his book, *The Art of Possibility*. Zander, a musical conductor and university professor, begins each term by informing his students that they already have an "A". Our coachees also begin with an "A".

One of the best illustrations of beginning with an "A" is the story of young David preparing to fight the giant Goliath. King Saul, who was tall and strong, put his own armor on David for the fight. (King Saul viewed David as lacking his own strength. Definitely not an "A".) Young, small David could barely stand up while wearing King Saul's armor. David took off the armor, picked up five smooth stones and killed Goliath. (1 Samuel 17:38-40)

David already had all he needed to fight the giant; he was already an “A”. He just needed to tap into his strengths, gifts and God-given greatness. Coaches help people tap into what’s already there and use it in their current situations.

Another way that coaches maximize potential is by looking beyond solutions to shifts. Shift work involves internal perspectives, beliefs and assumptions. I like to tell people that as a coach I "shine a flashlight" on their perspectives, beliefs and assumptions and help them see how these support and limit their forward progress. Let me give you an example. Many years ago I had a belief that I was "just a pastor" and that no one would hire a pastor as their coach. There were no external solutions or action plans that could adequately address this internal belief. Instead, my coach helped me create an awareness of how this internal belief was limiting me, plus he helped me gain an entirely new perspective on this belief.

Eventually, one day the shift happened and I saw the same thing completely differently. All of a sudden, I just knew that there were people who would want to hire me as their coach *because* I was a pastor. That was all that was needed. A giant leap forward followed.

Another way that coaches maximize the potential of coachees is to walk beside them, rather than trying to lead them. The coachee remains in the driver's seat, but the coach is invited along for the ride. I really like this expression: A coach is not a sage on the stage, but a guide alongside. How true! We fully help others develop their potential, but not by doing for them or telling them what to do. In this role of "guide alongside," the coach becomes:

- Your partner in achieving professional and personal goals.
- Your sounding board when making decisions.
- Your support in professional and personal development.
- Your guide in communication and life skills.
- Your motivation when strong actions are called for.
- Your unconditional supporter when you take a hit.

How is Coaching Different from Therapy, Consulting and Mentoring?

Let me first say that coaching is not the be all and end all of helping people. While there are tremendous benefits to coaching, the same is true of therapy, consulting and mentoring. All are of value. Taking that a step further, I believe that it is absolutely essential that we, as coaches, appreciate the important contributions that therapists, consultants and mentors make to the ongoing success of those we coach. In fact, about a third of those I coach are also using the services of a therapist, consultant or mentor.

During a break at a training event I was facilitating, there was a consultant in the group—obviously hot under the collar—who stated that because I was training all these people to be coaches, no one would need him anymore. My response to him was that I believed just the opposite. That as the coaching industry grows, more and more individuals and organizations are recognizing that there are times when the expertise of a consultant, therapist or mentor are exactly what is needed. I don't think he believed me.

Second, there is much overlap between coaching and therapy, consulting and mentoring. Consultants identify with the brainstorming, designing the plan and follow-through elements of the coaching process, while mentors relate to our "guide alongside" philosophy. During a recent coach training event for therapists, a participant stated that many of the listening concepts and skills he was learning were very similar to what he learned as a therapist. Another marriage and family therapist defined coaching as "therapy for healthy people" and declared how refreshing it would be to work with people who were basically whole and complete.

Third, many coaches see the benefits of combining coaching with these other treatment modalities. A perfect example is the mentor-coaching that I offer coaches. Those I mentor-coach benefit from the access I have to both mentoring and coaching skills and techniques. Sometimes I blend the two; other times I use one or the other. There are also many consultants and therapists who now blend coaching into their practices. Note that it is very important to clearly understand the similarities and the differences when intentionally overlapping coaching with another discipline or skill set.

Fourth, coaching is still new enough that there are many competing perceptions about what it is. Someone who offers coaching may or may not be adhering to the techniques and approaches you are learning here. I once attended a coach training event where the trainer stated that when he works with his clients, "I just tell them what to do. That's what they are paying me for." That's definitely NOT how we define coaching around here!

Coaching versus therapy

Over the years, I have gathered several key distinctions between coaching and therapy. One distinction is that therapy is about recovery, while coaching is about discovery. For the most part, therapy is about recovering from a pain or dysfunction, often arising from the past. The focus is on recovering overall psychological health.

Coaching, on the other hand, assumes an overall level of health and wellness and therefore isn't focused on recovery, but rather on discovery. The coaching process happens in an environment of curiosity and wonder as we seek peak performance in those we coach. Using a timeline, therapy is usually recovering from the past, bringing the person into a healthy present. Coaches begin in the healthy present and launch out to create and discover the future.

Another helpful distinction is archaeology versus architecture. Therapy, like archaeology, digs into the past to uncover hidden meanings that help us understand both the past and the present. Coaching, similar to architecture, builds on the solid, healthy foundation of the person as they are today, with the primary focus to design, create and support. I often remind new coaches that unless there is forward progress, or signs that forward progress is coming, it's not really coaching.

One more distinction: therapy versus therapeutic. Many individuals and groups report the therapeutic benefits of coaching; they generally feel more positive about themselves, as well as their present and future, as a result of coaching. Yes! It feels good to really make progress and actually accomplish what you set out to accomplish. Coaching is therapeutic, but it's not therapy. Those who coach have an ethical obligation to make referrals for therapy when needed. Indicators may include:

- An increase in overall sadness.
- Difficulty focusing.
- Changes in sleep patterns, appetite and anger.
- Feelings of hopelessness.
- An increase of risk-taking behavior.
- Thoughts of suicide.

Coaching versus consulting

There are two questions that come to my mind when I consider the distinction between coaching and consulting:

- 1 Who is the recognized expert?
- 2 Who is responsible for the outcome?

In consulting, the recognized expert is the consultant. Most people work with a consultant because they believe the consultant's expertise will benefit them or their organization. Usually the consultant helps diagnose problems and prescribes a set of solutions. In coaching, the recognized expert is the person or team being coached. The coaching perspective is that the coachee is capable of generating his or her own solutions. The role of the coach is to provide a discovery-based framework that taps further into the expertise of the person being coached.

In fact, sometimes the biggest contribution I make to another person is three simple words: "I don't know." It is by being open to not knowing that allows a coach to propel the coachee forward.

As far as who is responsible for the outcome, in consulting, the consultant is responsible for the desired outcome. By following the consultant's advice, the client will achieve their desired outcome. Contrast this with coaching. Coaches seek to empower the one being coached. It is the coachee who is doing the work and is responsible for the outcome; they generate their own plans and take their own actions. The coach is responsible for holding the framework of the coaching process, but not for the outcome.

Coaching versus mentoring

Mentoring is a process of guiding another along a path that the mentor has already traveled. The sharing or guidance includes experiences and learning from the mentor's own experience. The underlying premise is that the insight and guidance of the mentor can accelerate the learning curve of the one being mentored. Although in many instances a coach and coachee might share a similar experience, it is not the coach's personal and professional experience that is of greatest value. In the coaching relationship, it is the coachee's experiences that are of most importance.

Does that mean that the coach never shares their experiences or expertise? Not at all. At a recent International Coach Federation conference, I learned one of the things that coachees value most from their coach is when the coach shares advice and experience when asked for and when appropriate. Notice those qualifiers—when asked for and when appropriate.

When coachees come right out and ask me to tell them what to do, I usually preface any reply by saying something like, "Based on those that I have coached in a similar situation, here are a few ideas. What do you think?" In other words, I'm holding my advice lightly—remembering that it's my best-guess opinion and nothing more.

When is it appropriate to share our experiences and expertise? Sometimes the person we are coaching may be genuinely stuck, so offering advice may serve to prime the pump and get them thinking. Another time may be when a bigger goal can be met more quickly and effectively if they can leap over things of lesser importance. In all of these cases though, it is presumed that you have already established a coaching relationship of trust and safety, and you are both clear that this is only your opinion.

Initially, I recommend that new coaches refrain from offering advice. Most people have learned how to offer advice in ways that are not helpful and, in fact, disempowering of others. First, we must learn how not to give advice. Then, we can begin to learn anew the art of advising.

What Do You Mean by a "Coaching Approach" to Ministry?

A growing number of today's spiritual leaders are pursuing coach training as a way of enhancing the mission and ministry of their own local church. Many are viewing coaching as a tangible way to address their role as "equipper." Ephesians 4: 12 highlights the primary role of the spiritual leader as that of "preparing (equipping) God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." Coach training offers practical and proven tools and skills to equip God's people, to build up the body of Christ.

One way to incorporate coaching into ministry is by coaching the groups and teams that we work with, instead of taking a more traditional leadership role. We can help these teams gain clarity about what they really, really want, then get out of their way and let them make that happen. What is the result of this coaching approach to leading a team? You get a more effective team whose members are working from their strengths and greatness, rather than from their weaknesses.

When we supervise and evaluate others, imagine giving them an "A" before they even start. How much more empowering would that ministry setting be? Add to that the powerful questions we ask and the deep listening we offer and we have a recipe for success.

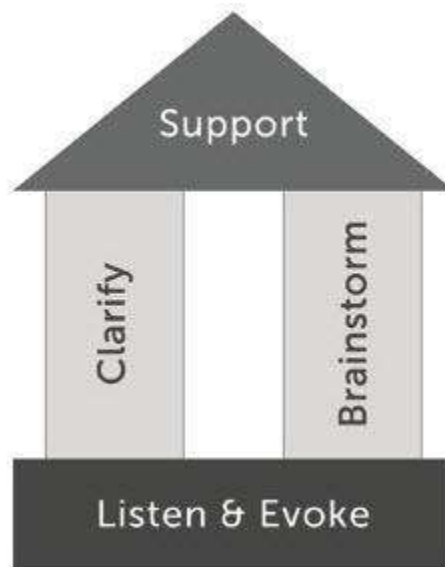
Our churches are filled with people experiencing personal, family, physical and spiritual transition and can greatly benefit from the coaching approach of support, clarity and accountability. Many spiritual leaders run small groups. Imagine if these groups were characterized by an environment of support and trust, led by group leaders who were skilled to bring out the best in others. Personal transformation and life change are bound to follow.

The other day a new coach said to me that he believed that coaching was really a luxury for those in ministry, especially in this economy. My response: Effective leadership is not a luxury, but a necessity. Imagine the difference in you and your church if you partnered with a coach whose sole purpose was to bring out the very best in you and help you to continually perform at that peak level. If our faith communities are going to be all that God intends us to be and if we are going to have the global impact we want to have, then coaching must not be seen as a luxury, but rather as a necessity.

The book, *Ministry 3.0: How today's church leaders are using coaching to transform ministry*, is an additional resource to a "coaching approach" to ministry. This book chronicles the stories of how coaching is being used by today's churches and ministry leaders. This book can be found on the Coaching4Clergy website at: <http://coaching4clergy.com/products/coaching-books/>.

The Five-Step Coaching Model

Years ago, as a new coach, one of the most helpful tools for me was a coaching model. The following coaching model will provide a framework you can come back to over and over again as your skills progress and you coach more diverse and interesting people and situations.



Solid coaching is like a solid house. It has a foundation, a supportive frame and a strong covering.

Foundation (Step 1: Listen and Step 2: Evoke)

Supportive frame (Step 3: Clarify and Step 4: Brainstorm)

Strong covering (Step 5: Support)

Laying the foundation

Step 1: Listen

The goal as a coach is to listen so closely to your client that the answers come out. The ideal ratio is that you are listening 80% of the time and responding 20% of the time. It is absolutely critical that the client feels fully understood. Listen deeply by using these suggestions:

- Listen not just with your ears, but with your eyes and your whole being ("gut-level" listening).
- Listen to the tone, inflection, rate and pitch.
- Listen not just to what's said, but to what's not said.
- Pay particular attention to the last thing that is said.
- Listen without judgment, criticism or agenda.
- Listen without thinking about what you will be saying next.

Step 2: Evoke

Prompt the coachee to say more. Evoking is like opening the tap. You are attempting to get beyond the surface and move to the source of the issue.

Examples of evocative responses:

- Hmmmm.
- What else do you want to say about this?
- Tell me more.
- Is there anything else you want me to know?

Propping up the supports

Step 3: Clarify

Once the coachee has shared and has actively engaged with you, it's important to respond and clarify what is being said. This offers the client an opportunity to hear what they have just verbalized from a slightly different perspective. It also ensures that you and the client are on the same page.

Examples of clarifying techniques:

- I heard you say... (mirroring)
- I sense that... (paraphrasing or reflecting back)
- Is this what you mean? (verifying)
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to this, with 1 being not important and 10 being extremely important? (rating)
- Number these things based on which is most important to you, with 1 being not important and 10 being extremely important. (ranking)

Step 4: Brainstorm

Once there is clarity about the topic at hand, you and the coachee can now begin to go below the surface and further discuss the issue. Questions are central to the coaching process.

A few examples of questions include:

- What are the options/opportunities here? Let's list them all.
- What's the simplest solution? What's the craziest solution?
- What's the payoff of NOT dealing with this?
- What's stopping you?
- What do you want to be able to say about this situation three months from now that you can't say today?
- What do you really, REALLY want?

Providing a cover

Step 5: Support

Action is central to the coaching experience. Supporting the coachee to design an action step helps move the coachee forward, closing the gap between where they currently are and where they want to be.

A typical coaching conversation might end like this:

- Based on our conversation today, what action would you like to take? And when will it be completed?
- What do you want to report back to me at our next coaching session?
- What will bring you closer to your goal?
- What will you need to be able to focus on this next week?
- What will get in the way?
- Who can help you with this?

In subsequent coaching sessions, you'll follow up by asking questions such as:

- What did you accomplish?
- What didn't you accomplish that you said you would?
- What got in the way?
- What's next?

Your Next Step

Congratulations! You Are Dangerous.

Congratulations! Reading this book is a solid first step in your development as a coach, as well as a coach approach to ministry. This first step is something to be proud of and is a milestone to be acknowledged. I want to encourage you to put into daily practice the coaching skills and techniques you've just learned.

You Are Dangerous. Yes, you read that correctly. The danger is that pastors and church leaders will stop after reading this book or after taking this introductory training.

I challenge you not to dabble this way, but to embrace this paradigm shift and embrace it as the DEATH of the pastor-centered (expert-centered) approach to ministry and the RESURRECTION of the next great awakening in Christianity—the empowerment of all of God's people.

Incorporating coaching into ministry is a RADICAL, REAL AND NECESSARY paradigm shift in ministry. It's moving from a pastor-centered (expert-centered) approach to a person-centered approach that empowers the people in the pews of your congregations.

Please go ahead right now and take the next step to [book a free session with a Coaching4Clergy coach](http://coaching4clergy.com/find-a-coach/find-a-coach) at <http://coaching4clergy.com/find-a-coach/find-a-coach>. I guarantee that the live experience of coaching will inspire and excite you even further about the possibilities that have opened up to you by reading this book.

To bring us back full circle to my introduction of this book, it is my vision that every spiritual leader have coach training in their professional toolkit. To learn more about the coach training that we offer, visit our website at <http://coaching4clergy.com/> Thank you for reading this book and helping make my vision a reality!

Enjoy coaching!



J. Val Hastings, MCC

About Val



J. Val Hastings, MCC, is the Founder and President of Coaching4Clergy, which provides specialized training for pastors, church leaders and coaches. Val hired his first coach while he was pastoring at a local United Methodist church. His progress was noticeable by all, and he began to wonder, “What if I adopted a coaching approach to ministry? What if the larger church adopted a coaching approach to ministry?” In that moment a vision began to emerge—a global vision of Every Pastor, Ministry Staff and Church Leader a Coach. Today that serves as the mission of Coaching4Clergy.

Val is the author of the book *The Next Great Awakening: How to Empower God’s People with a Coach Approach to Ministry* and *Change Your Questions, Change Your Church* (March 2012), and the e-book *The E3-Church: Empowered, Effective and Entrepreneurial Leadership That Will Keep Your Church Alive*. He is currently compiling an anthology book, *Ministry 3.0—How today’s church leaders are using coaching to transform ministry*, to be released in October 2012. Val currently holds the designation of Master Certified Coach through the International Coach Federation, the highest coaching designation.

Contact Us

Phone: 610-385-8034

Email: val@coaching4clergy.com

Web Site: www.coaching4clergy.com