ELITE PERFORMANCE COACHING

FRAMEWORK
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Introduction

Why do all elite sports performers have a coach?

Why do so many top C-Suite and senior leaders have a coach?

Why do many companies seek to create a coaching culture?

With around 70% of employees disengaged in many businesses, how much is this costing you? In poor or lower productivity, lack of ownership, new ideas, and poor health?

Many business leaders and owners make the big mistake of not performance coaching their people. Yet it is the fastest way to engage your employees and deliver better results.

Learn from elite performers in business and in sport - become a skilled performance director - don’t let lack of engagement cost you. Improve your results now.

This short book shares our performance coaching framework and suggests the steps you might want to take to improve your results.

They are based on our work with Olympians, Olympic teams and high performing leaders in business and we guarantee that if you put these in to practice you will see immediate benefits.

If you want to replicate the success of Team GB and high performing leaders in business, then implement the framework now.
The 8 Myths of Performance Coaching

1. Coaching is that thing that happens once a year at appraisal time isn’t it?
   Coaching is a method supporting and challenging people's performance every day.

2. Coaching is a methodology I can use to get people to do what I want?
   Coaching is a way of building shared accountability and mutual benefits, recognising
   the importance of the employees own agenda as well as that of the leader and
   organisation.

3. Coaching takes a long time and I don’t have time!
   Coaching can take time depending on the complexity of the issue involved, yet one
   good question that makes someone think for themselves is effective coaching.

4. I’m a leader not a coach!!
   Great leaders empower their people by encouraging them to find their own solutions
   through great coaching questions.

5. Coaching is that soft fluffy stuff not for intellectuals, specialists or technical people!!
   Coaching is built around the skill of asking questions that make people think. You
   don’t need to have a high IQ to ask great questions but having great EQ (Emotional
   Intelligence) really helps.

6. Coaching is for building rapport and great relationships isn't it!
   While building rapport can help, performance coaching is primarily to enhance
   performance, get results and achieve objectives for both the leader (coach) and the
   employee.

7. Coaching is all about the coach telling his team or employee what to do and sharing
   their experience!!
   Coaching is a two way process where the coach asks questions that enable the
   employee and team to find their own way forward.

8. The leader or manager (coach) always has responsibility for achieving goals and
   results.
   Coaching enables leaders and managers to effectively delegate tasks and creates
   joint responsibility for achieving goals and results.

Team GB showed just how effective performance coaching can be and if you are looking
 to build and sustain high performance and better results, and are prepared to invest time
 and energy in delivering it, then this framework is for you.
Step 1 - Right People/Right Jobs and Talent Identification

To understand the power of coaching it was good to hear Dave Brailsford, the performance director of British Cycling say after winning so many medals, “fundamentally it’s all about coaching and very good coaching” Although traditionally we would think of coaching as starting with a conversation, the journey begins with making sure the right people are doing the right things and talent identification.

The first stage of the performance coaching framework and one of the first roles of a performance coach or leader is to make sure they are coaching the right people, as well as in the right way.

For Team GB this starts with a talent identification programme in schools as well as maintaining the development of promising athletes. And if people do not fulfil their promise then they can quickly find themselves off the team and where relevant losing their funding. Performance is everything.

In business, things may not be so simple. As a leader you may inherit your team or feel that you cannot just move someone aside if they don’t have the talent needed to deliver in their role. While there is truth to this, there are some tips below you might want to consider. You may already be doing some or all of these and if so are well on the way to being a highly effective performance coach.

★ Identify what it is you really need to succeed and measure your current team against these competencies.

★ Jim Collins in his book 'Good to Great' talked about having the right people on the bus and in the right seats. Once you are clear on what is needed, sit down with each member of your team and have a coaching conversation to see how they fit and what they might like to contribute to the team (more on how to have great coaching conversations in a later step).

★ If in the short term removing people is not an option then one thing you can do immediately is ensure any additions to your team have the talent needed to deliver high performance.
Plan for the future – Dave Brailsford talks about the need for talent and commitment in his cyclists, so attracting people with the right attitude and behaviours as well as the necessary skills is paramount.

Another option to moving people on is to change their roles or part of their roles so there is a better fit in the team. Team GB rowing moved their best pair into the fours for 2012 as they knew they were not going to beat the New Zealander’s (they consistently lost to them). The Result was a Gold Medal.

Yet, in our experience many leaders rarely think about amending job roles and sharing these differently across the team.

So the role of the performance coach (leader) starts with clarity of what is needed, followed by ensuring the right people are doing the right things and talent identification.

To deliver high performance it is fundamental that leaders and managers make the time to ensure that they have the right people with the right attitude and focus to deliver success.

Make sure you have the right people with the right attitude and focus if you want to deliver top results.
Step 2 - Developing the Right Mindset

The second stage of the performance coaching framework is about developing the right mindset.

Steve Peters, the Team GB cycling psychologist, and who many of the cyclists acknowledge as a great contributor to them achieving their medals, set out mindset as being:

- ★ How you think of yourself (e.g. successful, intelligent, always right, or the reverse of these).
- ★ How you think of others (they are better or worse than you, intelligent or unintelligent or perhaps trying to beat you, etc).
- ★ How you think of the World (friendly, hostile, owes you a living, etc).

![Mindset Diagram]

Be the Best You Can Be
What mindset do you think a performance coach will need to have if they are highly effective?

How they think of themselves = strong self-belief, able to add value to others, fair, confident and able to express themselves.

How they think of others = they are capable of delivering, they have potential and they want to do well.

How they think of the world = it’s not fair, goalposts always move and there are no guarantees and it’s the individual’s responsibility to do the best they can despite the circumstances.

We live in the real world and when leaders can help employees have realistic expectations that goals do sometimes change and life isn’t fair then they are more likely to take responsibility for their own performance and to overcome setbacks.

Believing in yourself and in the potential of others is a mindset that underpins high performance coaching. When this is combined with effective conversations that raise an individual’s awareness of what they need to do and helps them to choose to take personal responsibility we have a recipe for success.

As a first step reflect on your current mindset? Identify it under each of the headings in the diagram above. This is how you currently think and will underpin how you see yourself and others and their performance and capability.

Now think about the mindset you might want to have if you are going to develop high performance in others.

Make a list of what needs to change. Making these changes may be difficult as they will have been with you for some time and become habits. Yet having the right mindset will enable your world and personal view to support not only changes in yourself but also to support your employees and team in achieving personal growth and development.
Step 3 - Building Emotional Intelligence

You are likely to know that significant research has shown the importance of emotional intelligence rather than intellectual intelligence for high performing leaders? For most it is a prerequisite for sustained success.

The same is true for highly effective performance coaching. Ideally to get the best results from coaching you need to find people who want to be coached! Sounds obvious. Trying to help people who are closed-minded and aren’t prepared to change is very challenging and may leave you feeling your time is wasted.

Coaching elite athletes can be highly effective and quick because most of them, if not all, seek improved performance and want to win. Yet, in business, with engagement levels running at best at just one third of employees in most organisations, how many of your team will want to be coached?

As a leader or coach you need to have a view of the world that everybody has potential and with the right support and challenge they can develop this to deliver their personal best. This potential may be greater for some than others, though the starting point is that growth is possible for everyone.

Here are some quick steps you can take to help people become more ready to be coached.

Hold a regular monthly one-to one with team members. Ask genuinely open questions about their wellbeing and anything that is going on for them. Include asking about opportunities they have and challenges they face. Then listen and stay on their agenda by asking follow up questions and support them in solving their own issues and help them to make their own decisions.

Take time out each day to really ask questions of your team – about them as well as what they are doing. And mean it.

If you have to make a decision that affects somebody then include them in the process. Get their point of view and include it where you can. And if this means a big change in behaviour (you may already be doing these things) don’t be surprised if you are viewed with some mistrust to start with – they will want proof that this isn’t just some new ploy. Persevere and results will change.

Individuals with low levels of emotional intelligence think that all people are the same and particularly that they think the same and have similar motivation. Yet great coaches and leaders know that people think and behave differently. They realise this and adapt
their behaviour and questioning to accommodate others and get the best results. The
important thing is to find solutions and to have everyone working together, not to win an
argument.

So identify what might be the best approach for each person – are they cautious and
don’t take risks, do they like detail or prefer discussion and personal contact? For
example, if they are cautious, a confrontational and direct approach is unlikely to get the
best results. Many leaders who think they coach, often see it as an opportunity to ask
leading questions that get the employee to where they want them to be.

This is a directive approach and the downside is the employee never really buys in to
the discussion or the action they will take. We all have an acute antenna that tells us
when we are being imposed upon. Highly effective performance coaches and leaders
understand that the other person also has an agenda and if this can be shared, it will
really empower and enable the employee to take ownership.

The result will be win/win and improved performance.

For many task focused and results driven leaders (who make up the majority of senior
leaders) a coaching style may not come easy. One way to do this is to think of it as a
task that will get results. Book it in your diary and just do it. This will be one behaviour
change that, if done well, will bring results.

So it is time to make a decision. Is it going to be EQ or IQ or EQ + IQ?

Dave Brailsford, the British Cycling Performance director tells a powerful story. In 2004
he decided to adopt this involving style of performance coaching. While nearly all of his
coaching staff embraced the change, his head coach could not and would not move
from his old instructional style. He believed that he knew best and with his experience
and knowledge he should tell others what to do. Dave understood that he needed to
make a big call. Did he keep his head coach or let him go? In the end he decided to let
him go. The performance of the athletes went up and when asked why they said that
with the old coach gone the fear had been taken away and with their newfound personal
responsibility, they improved their own performance.

The moral of the story is not that coaches and leaders shouldn’t share their knowledge
and experience but that their relationship with their athletes and employees is
paramount and to ask and not just tell is the most effective way to increase performance.
Step 4 - Developing Awareness and Responsibility

We are often asked what is performance coaching all about and why does it work? The simple answer is that it is all about performance and enabling people to move forward by taking action and achieving results.

Why does it work? Because a coach asks questions that encourage the person they are coaching to think for themselves. The level of a coachee’s awareness and the degree to which they are prepared to take personal responsibility for themselves is the key to success. The more aware and the more responsible, the more successful they will be.

So how can you develop this awareness and responsibility? Should we ask or should we tell as a performance coach?

Most of our role models have been tellers. Just think about it. Did your parents generally ask what you wanted to do or tell you what to do? Did your teachers at school ask or tell and do your leaders or managers ask or tell? Most people realise that their experience in life has been of being told what to do. This has advantages - people can get their message across directly and it is seen as quick and effective, saving time.

However, the down side is that many people just don’t like being told what to do. As a result it switches people off and while they may outwardly respond to commands, inwardly they may do the minimum they can. It also creates dependency – what happens when the coach or leader isn’t present to tell them what to do?

The antidote is to use an asking approach and by using open questions we can find out the coachee’s needs, interests and concerns and find solutions together. This has a real motivating benefit. Elite athletes and the British cyclists fully contribute to the performance improvements, sharing how they feel and proactively giving their ideas as well as sharing those from their coach.

We are not saying that you only ask – coaching is a balance and great coaches use both asking and telling (to share knowledge and experience and dependent on the situation) but if you want outstanding performance more emphasis needs to be given to asking rather than telling.

If you are going to ask more questions then what makes for a good question? The short answer is any question that makes the other person think.

There are awareness raising questions that can help people be clear about their goals, where they currently are in relation to these and the ideas they have to move forward.
Then there are responsibility raising questions that enable people to make choices and take steps towards achieving their aspirations.

Using open questions in your discussions, with words like what, how, when, where and who will bring the best results. Questions that open up a discussion and force the person being coached to think rather than the coach coming up with all the answers.

If you are going to ask open questions you will also need to actively listen. How well do you listen to people on a scale of 1-10?

Great coaches and leaders would be towards the top of this scale. Yet this isn’t easy. Ask yourself ‘what stops me’? – distractions, my own self-talk, lack of interest, the environment and many more. No wonder it's difficult, but the benefits of listening really well are enormous. The most important being that the person you are coaching feels really valued. You get to understand their ambitions, needs, problems, concerns, ideas and choices to move forward.

A coach can ask insightful questions but if they don’t listen to the answers they can't help to manage the coaching conversation. If there is one area you can improve on quickly, it is listening with 100% of your attention and with empathy. The next time you have a conversation give yourself a check afterwards. On a scale of 1-10 ask how well did you listen. The mere fact that you did this will enhance your skills in this area as you will become more aware of your listening ability.

Following questioning and listening is giving feedback. We are often told that it’s the feedback sandwich that works best. Tell someone something positive, then give them your criticism and finish with something positive. This may sound good, yet which part of the sandwich do you remember most? We are predisposed to forget the positive and only remember the negative. This of course can lead to a loss of self-esteem and ultimately performance. Our experience tells us that principles of effective feedback are

★ Little and often.
★ Ask the person you are coaching to give their opinion first.
★ The coach to give their observations and thoughts based on facts not judgmental comments.
★ Get the person being coached to suggest and agree on the steps to improve and own them.

We have found this to be the most effective way for the person being coached to learn, to enjoy and to improve their performance. These are also three powerful intrinsic motivators, which inspire people to fulfil their potential.
Step 5 - GROW Your Performers and Performance

One of the most widely used coaching models is the GROW model (and its principles underpin many of the other models that have now been introduced).

First introduced by Sir John Whitmore, who also wrote ‘Coaching for Performance’. He was one of the pioneers who introduced coaching from sport into business and is someone who we have had the pleasure of working with. The purpose of the four step process is to enable the person being coached, for example your employee, to achieve their goals. All the questions under GRO are intended to raise awareness while those under W encourage responsibility to take action.

G - Goals

What do you want to achieve?

In developing goals people often start with a vision. This is a long-term objective and in the case of Olympians is usually their dream of winning gold and standing on the podium.

Having a powerful vision is essential to being successful as it gives energy, focus and direction. However the problem with visionary goals is that they are often out of our control. What is within our control is our own performance. Therefore athletes have performance and process goals.

Performance goals are specific targets, for example PBs or personal bests. Each season the coach and athlete discuss and agree what they want to achieve and how they will work towards PBs in order to deliver their golden ambition. Once these have been decided the next step is to look at process goals, for example the types of training required to underpin their performance. We can see this in business, for example a person might want to gain promotion (a visionary goal but outside their control). They will then choose personal targets and training goals that will help them achieve this vision.

R – Reality

What is happening now?

If you want to achieve a goal in the future, the first question asked needs to be around reality or where are you now? It is great to have ambition but also to be grounded in reality. Our minds are often full of distortions and embellishments of the truth so it's important to check out the facts to establish what is real.
So questions such as ‘How big is this issue’?, ‘How important is it’?, ‘What have you done so far to move forward’?, ‘What might other people say about this issue’? are all helpful in establishing the current position.

Knowing this allows you to look at what you might do to move from reality towards achieving your goal.

**O - Options**

What can you do?

Einstein is often quoted as saying that insanity is doing the same thing and expecting a different result. So if you have set new goals and want different results this section is about setting out different options you might want to pursue.

Ask questions such as ‘What ideas do you have’? And ‘What else could you do’? People will often stop after giving one or two ideas and a great coach will keep probing and can ask some ‘what if’ questions. ‘What if you could ask an expert, what might they say ‘?’or ‘What if you had all the resources you need (including money) what might you do’?’. The purpose of this is to create a different mindset and invoke a more creative approach.

It is the coach’s role to push and challenge those they are coaching to see beyond their current performance and help them set themselves stretching targets.

**W - Will**

What will you do?

The Will step is vital in ensuing that action is taken. It’s at this stage that a choice is made of which option(s) to pursue. While all steps are important, without action there can be no result.

Dr David Hemery CBE, Gold Medalist (and a co-founder of Developing Potential) tells the story of his preparation for the Mexico Olympics in 1968. Six weeks before he agreed with his coach that he would undertake a challenging session. He was to run 6 x 400 metres in 52 seconds each time, with ten minutes rest in between. If you are a sprinter you would be aware that this really isn't enough recovery time. Sure enough after the 4th set, David told his coach Billy Smith that he could do no more. Billy reminded him that he had agreed to the session and asked if he was going to take responsibility for completing it, and said “just take the first step.”
So he managed to complete the 5th set. Again he said he couldn’t run the final one and his coach again reminded him of his agreement. He told David to just take the first step. Although the wheels came off during this last run, he did run about 200 metres before tottering to the finishing line.

David still tells this story to signify the importance of taking the first step. It is often the most difficult (going for a walk in an evening, or to the gym or completing that task you have been putting off – yet once you start most things can be achieved). David won the final in a world record time and took the gold medal and his commitment to take the first step is something he believes played a big part in his success.

Imperfect action will beat perfect inaction every time.

**GROW**

Using the GROW model is a great way of having powerful and constructive conversations with those you are coaching. It enables them to think through their issues, set their goals and find new ideas to move forward. It allows them to choose to take personal responsibility for their lives and their performance.

And it doesn’t have to be for big goals (many only deploy it this way) - you can adapt the model for everyday use and start from different areas, e.g. Reality or Will (action), as well as Goal.

What are you working on...and how will that support you in achieving (insert task or goal)?” “What’s currently happening?” “What would you like to achieve today?”

It moves people from dependence to independence to interdependence with their coach or leader and it underpins the delivery of exceptional and sustained results.

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**G - Goal**

**R - CURRENT REALITY**

**O - YOUR OPTIONS**

**W - WHAT WILL YOU DO**
Step 6 - When Should You Performance Coach

In discussions with many business leaders they say that one-to-one discussions they hold with members of their team are often infrequent or part of a more formal management process, such as the annual performance review.

On occasions we see leaders who have also introduced a more formal monthly coaching process with team members who report to them. Is this the best way to get the results needed – for the leader, employee or organisation?

When working with their elite athletes, Team GB coaches are providing challenge and support every day. So if you implement the first 5 steps we have already shared you will already be on your way to developing shared accountability and personal responsibility in your employees. Elite athletes don’t have to be told what they need to do, and if they want to be successful they will already be taking ownership for their performance. Yet to continue to improve their results and personal best they need their coach.

The same is very true in business.

In 1981, Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson published ‘The One Minute Manager’. They introduced the idea of one-minute goals, one-minute praise and one-minute reprimands. It spent over 3 years at the top of the New York Times bestseller list and if you haven’t read it, I would encourage you to take a look.

Performance coaching shares similar principles. To deliver maximum impact it should be undertaken as needed – usually little and often. A formal appraisal is important for both the leader and employee and should preferably be further supported through quarterly reviews of performance. These should take the form of a two-way dialogue covering actual measured performance as well as celebrating success and looking at opportunities for improvement, and planning for the next period. In addition you may want to put in place an informal monthly one to one, which gives the opportunity to continue to build trust, shared accountability and to build performance and results.

Yet to create high performance and deliver the results you want, you have to do much more than this. Be like the Team GB coaches and carry out performance coaching everyday - asking the right questions, showing interest, providing challenge and support. Never pass good or poor performance by without acknowledgement. Use the coaching style to build awareness and responsibility in your employees – don’t just tell them what you see or what you want. Every conversation you have is a coaching opportunity – an opportunity to improve their and your performance and improve results and in a way that really engages them and meets their agenda as well as yours.
The hardest part of this is likely to be making the time to do this in your busy day. It will take effort and practice and get it right and the impact will be significant.

Yet just one good question that makes someone think for themselves is great coaching. Do you and/or your managers have time to ask such a question? In the long run the more you develop your people’s self-responsibility, the more effective they will become and the less dependent on their leader’s time.

Be like the Team GB coaches and carry out performance coaching everyday - asking the right questions, showing interest, providing challenge and support.
Step 7 - The Aggregation of Marginal Gains

The ‘aggregation of marginal gains’ was one of the key reasons British Cycling were so outstandingly successful at the 2012 Olympic Games.

The wheels for the bikes came from France and when Dave Brailsford, the performance director for British Cycling, was asked about these ‘magic’ wheels, he told L’Equipe that they were ‘round’ and this was widely reported – the reason British Cycling was doing so well was that their bikes had round wheels!

While this became the best Olympic joke, Dave explained what the aggregation of marginal gains was really about. “The whole principle came from the idea that if you broke down everything you could think of that goes into riding a bike, and then improved it by 1%, you will get a significant increase when you put them all together. There’s fitness and conditioning, of course, but there are other things that might seem on the periphery, like sleeping in the right position, having the same pillow when you are away and training in different places.”

He even went on to talk about coaching the athletes to wash their hands properly, explaining that if you put die on most people’s hands, after they have washed them, you will still see a lot of bacteria. So if you put this into practice illness is reduced, as is the likelihood of poorer performance.

He finished by saying, "They're tiny things but if you clump them together it makes a big difference."

So what is the big opportunity for performance coaching in business?

It starts with focus.

What is the equivalent in your business of making the bike go faster? What are the small things that you and others in your team can do a little better, that together will drive and sustain big improvements in results?

You can use performance coaching to identify and pursue these gains.

Many leaders and businesses seem to be so busy and have multiple tasks and activities taking place. They appear to be often overwhelmed by e-mails and other communications (despite the lack of communication often being one of the biggest criticisms from employees) and focus on multiple targets and opportunities.
Are you focusing on many different things or clear about what small incremental improvements will allow your bike to go faster?

Or you may multi-task – many people seem to take delight in proclaiming how good they are at it and of course it has been the subject of many discussions between the sexes about who can do it the best.

Yet clear evidence shows that anyone adding a second task to one they are already doing, will see performance in both tasks deteriorate – by around 50% (as our mental capability is now being shared by both tasks rather than one).

So as well as using coaching to identify those opportunities to focus on, it is very important to choose just one area for performance improvement.

As an example, an elite runner, may focus with their coach on their running stride, their head position, arm movement, speed, endurance or the pace they are running (among many other things).

In a particular session they will choose the one that will bring the biggest return – they won’t focus on all of them together, only doing this over time and one at a time.

In your next performance coaching session with a team member, what will they choose to focus on? Through effective questioning, you can help them to raise their awareness of those specific things that will improve their results (particularly if they are not aware already) and choose one.

As example of this can be seen in sales, where choosing one part of the sales process and focusing time and energy on developing this before moving on to the next, will bring benefits. There is no point being great at closing the deal if you haven’t mastered the art of opening the conversation.

Although you may have ideas and your own agenda, the most effective performance coaches and leaders discuss areas of improvement with their employees and then in agreement support them in making the most appropriate choice to continue their development. Over time these single areas of focus will bring marginal gains, that added together make a big difference and lead to outstanding results.

So replicate the success of British Cycling in your business through focus and delivering an ‘aggregation of marginal gains’.

Step 8 - Sustaining Performance and Results

What get’s in the way of implementing and sustaining performance coaching and how can you overcome this?

In our experience this comes down to one or more of the following

★ A real or more usually a perceived lack of time or thinking “I’m too busy.”

★ I’m a leader not a coach mentality or a belief as leader that I know best or others should do as I say (because of my position, status or hard work).

★ Impatience with other people or to get the results.

★ A lack of belief in the ability of others to deliver – it is easier to do it myself!

★ Failure to invest appropriate resources.

★ Little commitment to really change - we are most comfortable doing what we have always done (even when we need different results).

★ A lack of training or practice.

As you can see there are so many reasons that it isn’t surprising that many leaders and organisations seem to find it difficult to implement performance coaching or to create a coaching culture.

If we return to Team GB and elite sports performance we can see how they address these areas and see what lessons there are for business.

Since lottery funding was introduced for those athletes with potential and UK sport have allocated significant funds to specific sports, we have seen a rapidly accelerating performance. Yet so many businesses seem to find it difficult to invest in coaching and other leadership development, particularly in difficult times. If they do invest in coaching, this tends to be through short workshops, rather than creating the culture, framework and support needed to embed it and deliver enhanced results.

So if you want to be an outstanding performance coach or to create a coaching culture in your business this needs to be within a framework that would include values and competencies as well as other processes that impact on motivation and behaviour. This will require resources, including both money and time. Yet the return on investment from coaching has now been established through significant research and business feedback.
Olympic sport works on a four year cycle, with athletes also competing at World championships and other key events in between – so there is a focus on the longer term and on the right priorities. Yet they do set clear goals and plan to manage the short term too, for example the times they want to run.

If business is going to invest in performance coaching it needs to have a real clarity on the value it will add in the long term and the specific goals it will deliver in the short term. If you were able to solve your issues and take your opportunities what would be the financial impact on the business?

Work this out and write it down. If performance coaching can deliver you this value then what should you invest in it? The investment decision should become much easier to make.

Leaders also want and expect immediate results, yet like most things in life that lead to success, performance coaching takes training and practice. So when results don’t change overnight there is a tendency for leaders to revert back to how they usually behave. Elite performers expect to have to work hard to make the changes that will bring them their expected results. They train each day, replicating those things they know will deliver the success needed. Through focus and perseverance they are able to keep improving.

Taking time isn’t something that comes naturally to dynamic leaders – they are in a hurry to get things done. Often they think it is easier to just do the job themselves or to tell others what to do. This is much quicker at the time the action is taken.

Yet as a result a dependency culture exists. Your team may not think for themselves and will wait for you before they take action. This also leads to poorer engagement. If you can get others to think for themselves through using great coaching questions then they will start to take action without you. It will take patience.

For those who think they don’t have or can’t make the time for coaching, they need to balance this against the significant time they will save in the long term. And remember asking one question and generating input from a team member (rather than telling or instructing them) doesn’t take long.

Make a commitment to change and try things – it can be small steps to start. Pick one area to focus on or perhaps one or two team members. Persevere and watch their and your results improve – it will only take a few weeks.

It will take this time for you to get better at coaching and for your team to trust you and respond to this different approach.
Most importantly you need to be open-minded. Look at the success of Team GB and their coaches, as well as high performers you may know in business. Identify what they do and model them. This is the fastest way to achieve high performance and the results you want.

Final Thoughts

We hope you have enjoyed reading about our performance coaching framework and our aim is to support you in taking your business and results forward.

We have worked with many companies, supporting them in developing and embedding a coaching culture. We have also supported many individuals looking to improve their own performance or who want to get more from their team.

If you would like a discussion to find out more about performance coaching and the potential benefits for you and/or your team or organisation then please give us a call or send an e-mail.

You don’t have to talk with us or engage us as coaches - just take some action. A coach would support you (there are plenty to choose from) or you you can just take this framework and implement the 8 steps.

If you want to stop missing out on the performance you could achieve and get better results that will improve your your or your organisations bottom line and fast then start performance coaching. Be patient and practice. If you do this then improvements are guaranteed.

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About Developing Potential

Developing Potential was co-founded by Olympic Gold Medalist Dr David Hemery, CBE, who working together with Sir John Whitmore was a pioneer of developing high performance in business.

Co-founder Les Duggan and Mark Solomons who have been senior leaders in large corporate organisations are the current managing partners, providing the knowledge, experience and practical know how to make a real difference to your results.

Les and Mark co-wrote 10 Steps to Gold Medal Winning Performance with Olympic Gold Medalist Darren Campbell and have both worked with Olympians and with business, transferring high performance skills into the workplace.

Les, had a long career with Cadbury, encompassing roles as Sales Director, Operations Director, where he built Cadbury’s first ever team in Russia, and Head of Sales and Management Training, before he co-founded Developing Potential in 1997. Les was also capped by Wales rugby at under 18 level (see below).

Mark, spent many years within retail banks and as well as senior roles within the HBOS network, he was a member of the operating board and Retail Director for Sainsbury’s Bank, having accountability for financial services across all 800 Sainsbury’s stores and a large and geographically dispersed team. Mark would have loved an England rugby cap, and the best he achieved was watching England in the 2007 World cup (the picture is after beating France in the semi-final).

Their differing rugby allegiance makes for great banter and lots of fun and they bring this same passion and enjoyment to everything they do.

Les Duggan

Mark Solomons