

The Coach Approach

Directions: Read the four sections of the coach approach below. Work in your learning community to discuss ways in which this approach is similar to or different from your own experiences and ideas.

1. A unique way of thinking about our clients.

- Clients are fully functioning individuals.
- Clients are worthy of respect and are not broken but are capable and resourceful.
- Clients have goals but also larger motivations that can help sustain any change effort.
- Clients are the drivers of the professional relationship. Clients make the final decisions and initiate the appropriate actions.
- Client agree to follow a system of accountability, with the goals of being self-responsible and true to their words.
- Clients are autonomous and have their own inner genius to move forward.

2. A unique way of thinking about ourselves.

- We are experts in the coaching process.
- We are professionals who act in the best interest of our clients.
- We provide the structure and process for clients to explore, learn, choose, and grow.
- We are not experts in our clients' lives.
- We do not assume to understand our clients and their perspectives.

3. A unique set of behaviors based on those beliefs.

- We facilitate, partner, and guide versus tell, lead, or direct.
- We empower clients to call forth what is already there instead of implanting ideas.
- We respect individuals instead of assuming things about them.
- We emphasize client autonomy and inner genius to sort through, explore, and choose new ways forward.
- We use relational components of respect, empathy, and compassion to empower clients to choose what and how to change.
- We ask questions and offer reflections to understand clients and to raise clients' self-awareness and choices.
- We provide information only in a way that maintains client autonomy and choice.

4. A unique approach to coaching as a personal and professional growth process.

- Coaching is a personal or professional growth development profession.
- Coaches support clients to fully empower themselves.
- Coaching is purposeful and goal-oriented based on client-initiated change.
- Coaching focuses on the ability and willingness of clients to move forward and take action.
- Coaching encompasses focusing on larger life issues and who the person *is* versus only on what the person *does* (transformational vs. transactional).
- Coaching departs from the teaching, directing, or counseling model.
- Coaching evokes client learning, discovery, and growth.
- Coaching is professional versus casual.
- Coaching is goal-oriented without being too prescriptive and directive.