

The Five Stages of Coaching: Going from Beginner to the Best Coach You can Be

By Wayne Goldsmith

There are coaching **courses**, coaching **workshops**, coaching **programs**, coaching **presentations** and coaching **seminars**.

There are **mentoring programs** for coaches, **professional development programs** for coaches, **training programs** for coaches and a million and one **degrees, certificates and accreditation programs** for coaches.



But ... *what is coaching and what does it take to get really good at it?*

What is great coaching? And, would you even recognise it even if you met it over a nice red wine and dinner?

Forget all this Coaching Accreditation Level 1-10 rubbish. Ignore this Diamond Coaching License stuff.

All coaches – sport coaches, life coaches, business coaches and even those who coach the coaches (and those who coach the coaches who coach the coaches) go through five stages of coaching from beginning to brilliance.

Stage One (zero to one year of coaching): Basic Coaching - Your first stage of coaching is about the basics – learning the first, simple coaching concepts. Not only do you know nothing about coaching at this stage but you don't know what you don't know and you probably don't even know that you don't know that don't know.

Stage Two (one year to five years of coaching): OSFA – One Size Fits All Coaching – At Stage two you have developed one coaching solution to every problem. For sports coaches, this usually means to do **more** - i.e. to add volume to the training program in the belief that **if some is good then more must be better**. With Life coaches and Business coaches, their one size fits all approach is usually applying Neuro-Linguistic Programming (or one of the many similar coaching ideologies that were the basis of their initial training) to all people and all situations. You are convinced that your way is the only way and the only way that your athletes (or clients) will succeed is to follow your OSFA philosophy. **To a coach with a hammer, every problem is a nail!**

Stage Three (five years to ten years of coaching): Many Solutions to Every Problem Coaching – You begin to realise that people are unique and as such you need different “tools” to help them realise their potential. NLP might work for some people on some occasions but not for other people on other occasions. More endurance training might help with fitness but it does nothing for skills, decision making, speed, attitude, technique, tactical development or leadership. So you develop a wide range of knowledge, skills, techniques and abilities to help your athletes (clients) achieve success.

Stage Four (ten years to twenty years of coaching): No Surprises Coaching – When you get to this stage in your coaching, you have very few problems or challenges because you have the experience and the skills to see them coming well in advance and have proactively taken steps to avoid them. You may even deliberately create problems so that your athletes (clients) have to find solutions and learn by doing.

Stage Five (over twenty years of coaching): Collaborative Coaching - and at stage five, you don't even need to coach....you guide, you mentor, you teach and work collaboratively with your athletes to help them solve their performance problems. You form a coaching and learning team with your athletes (clients). You share, you learn and collaborate for mutual benefit and aim to help each other accelerate learning (and progress).

Now here's the most exciting part of this post.....you can go from **Stage One to Stage Five in twenty minutes ... not twenty years** and bypass all the hard work, trial and error, heartbreak, tears, tragedies, turmoil, freak-outs and frustrations. **How????**

See my next post: The Future of Coaching: Creativity, Collaboration and Coaching

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