'We will use this book for all of our coaching sessions.'

John Curtis, CEO, Peer Support Programme

THE LITTLE **BOOK OF**

76 ways to help managers get the best out of people

Bob Bates

PRAISE FOR BOB BATES AND THE LITTLE BOOK OF BIG COACHING MODELS

'All of our managers were given copies of *The Little Book of Big Management Theories*. It has become our workplace bible. We have over 100 full-time and volunteer coaches, mentors and support workers working for YSS who we will recommend this book to.'

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'Like Bob's first book, this should be essential reading for all busy managers who want to get the best out of their workforce.'

Alan Shaw - Managing Director, Regent Engineering

'I have a bookshelf of management and coaching books. Bob's first book has pride of place. I look forward to the next one.'

Jo Morgan - Managing Director, Charlie's Training Academy

'Just a joy to read: Funny in parts, sad in others but always thought-provoking.'

Manny Sandhu - Director, Ubique

'We will use this book for all of our coaching sessions.'

John Curtis - CEO, Peer Support Programme

'It has been a pleasure to work with Bob. His work in coaching the village management team in the Gambia has been wonderful. I have recommended his book to colleagues at Banjul University as essential reading.'

Ibrahim Jallow - Chair, The Wonder Years Centre of Excellence (Gambia)

'Bob has been inspirational in helping us to provide a quality coaching and peer support service to ex-servicemen. I can't wait for his book to come out.'

Len Hardy - Director, The Veterans Contact Point

'I would strongly recommend that anybody completing either a CMI or ILM Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management should have this book.'

Chris Hooper – Training and Development Director, Eurosource Solutions

INTRODUCTION

ccepting that you are not in total control of the coaching process and that other people have a valuable contribution to make is a key principle in *humanism*. This is based on the belief that the individual is self-determining and free to make their own choices. It is a person-centred activity in which the individual plays an active role in deciding what role they should play in determining what they should be allowed to learn.

The basic premise of humanism is that people have a natural potential for learning and that significant learning takes place when the individual can see that the subject matter is relevant to them. In this situation, the coach acts as a facilitator; encouraging learning rather than identifying specific methods or techniques of instruction.

Although roots of the humanist movement can be traced back into religion and philosophy, it was the work of Montessori and Neill at the beginning of the twentieth century, that popularised the movement in education. The theory wasn't further developed until the early 1940s. It was popularised throughout the 1960s and 1970s as a result of a group of psychologists questioning the virtue of the behaviourist approach, which they felt portrayed a negative view of the person's capacity for self-determination, and the cognitivist approach which they argued was too obsessed with meaning and understanding.

As the movement grew to empower more people in making decisions about issues that affect their lives, so the emphasis switched from coach-centred to person-centred learning. Supporters of the humanistic approach argue that people appreciate not being evaluated or judged and relish the opportunity for their thoughts to be understood. Critics claim that not everyone seeks empowerment or feels comfortable when empowered, arguing that some people clearly want to be instructed in what to do.

I've chosen three theories in this section that include arguably the two most influential humanists (Maslow and Rogers) and a more contemporary addition to the humanist movement (Mezirow). The coach's role in all three respects is about releasing control and supporting the person being coached to take some ownership of the process.

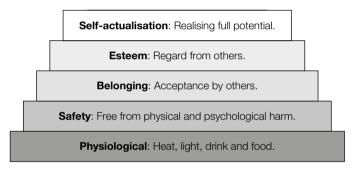
THEORY 17

ABRAHAM MASLOW: HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Use this when you want to understand the needs of the people that you are working with.

Maslow is best known for his studies into motivation. His most famous work was the 'hierarchy of needs' in which an individual's response to learning is dominated at any given moment by whichever need has priority.

The hierarchy of needs is divided into two phases. The two lower order needs relate to the physiological and safety aspects of learning (physical and psychological safety). Progression to the higher level is not possible unless lower level needs have been met. This is usually represented as a pyramid or series of steps:



Source: Maslow, A.H. (1943) 'A theory of human motivation', Psychological Review 50(4), pp. 370–96.

Maslow suggests that few people experience self-actualisation in its full sense but many enjoy periods of 'peak experience' where they derive a great sense of achievement at mastering a skill or analysing a piece of information.

Maslow argues that although the motivation to progress through each level can be driven through either extrinsic or intrinsic forces, it is the inner desire to want to achieve (intrinsic motivation) that is important in the humanistic approach.

HOW TO USE IT

Don't feel that it is down to you as their coach to ensure that everyone's needs must be fully met. People can, and do, function in various states of contentedness. They also have expectations from you as their coach that,

although conditions may not always be perfect, they should at the very minimum be tolerable. The following is an attempt to demonstrate how a person's needs can be met, partially if not fully:

- People will want to feel comfortable in the session, so make sure lighting, heating and ventilating systems are functioning properly. Build in drink and toilet breaks. Arrange seating according to the needs of the person/people who you are coaching.
- They will want to feel safe from physical and psychological harm, so make sure that you deal with threatening behaviour from any members of the group in an appropriate manner (see Theories 26–28) and if you are coaching a group, treat all members of the group fairly in a positive non-threatening manner.
- People will want to feel accepted by both the coach and their peers, so show them that you care for them and promote group interaction. Take time out to find out about their interests and mix members of the group up in practical activities.
- They will also want to feel a sense of pride in their achievements, so encourage them to come up with new ideas and original solutions to problems. Praise from you is good but praise from their peers is even better so get them to share their ideas with the rest of the group.
- Finally, people will want to feel that they have been coached to reach their full potential. You may have to be realistic, as their coach, about what you can achieve here. Don't be skimpy when it comes to celebrating success but make sure that you celebrate effort as well.

Understanding people's needs and having the right approaches to dealing with these needs will say a great deal about you, not just as a coach but as a person.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Am I creating the right conditions for coaching to be effective?
- How well am I making the people I am coaching feel about themselves?

THEORY 18 CARL ROGERS: FACILITATION

Use this to develop your skills as a facilitator coach.

Rogers was a driving force in the humanist movement, advocating a shift in emphasis in the learning process away from the teacher/coach towards the individual. This shift entailed the coach's role changing from one of authority, expertise and providing solutions, to one of facilitating the process of individuals arriving at their own solutions.

Rogers identified three elements which he felt were an important part of effective facilitation:



He described the main characteristics of these elements as:

- **Congruence**: having a sense of genuineness and honesty.
- **Empathy**: being able to understand the other person's emotions.
- **Respect**: demonstrating positive regard towards the other person.

Rogers's belief in his inability to teach anyone anything, merely to provide an environment conducive to effective learning, is the guiding principle of his theory.

HOW TO USE IT

Using facilitation as a coaching method is more about how you practise, than what you practise. It's about making the process of learning easier for people. In order to use this approach you must have a firm belief in your role as the facilitator, not the controller or director. Do this half-heartedly and you will not be adopting a humanistic approach. It's important therefore to look at the behaviours and actions necessary for good facilitation:

Behaviours

- Be true to yourself and don't be afraid to express your feelings.
- Be willing to consider issues from the other person's standpoint.
- Accept others for what they are in a non-critical and non-judgemental manner.

Actions

- Start by setting the mood and climate for the coaching session. How you come over to others in the opening stanza of the session will have a significant impact on how they perform during the session.
- Find out what the people you are coaching are expecting from the session. Get full agreement on what the learning outcomes will be. Write these down (this will be useful to refer to during the session).
- Have a range of learning resources available (exercises, tasks etc.).
- Act as a flexible resource to be utilised by the others and don't be afraid to become a learning participant.
- Find out what others gained from the session.
- Be willing to share your own feelings about the learning experience.
- Be receptive to criticism and never be afraid to recognise and accept your own limitations.

The behaviours and actions you display during a session will often stimulate other people's desire to want to learn more about the subject than the actual content of the session.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Am I being too reluctant in expressing my feelings about the performance of the people I am coaching?
- Am I considering issues from their standpoint?
- Am I being too judgemental about their values and beliefs?

THEORY 19 JACK MEZIROW: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

Use this when you want to induce more far-reaching change in people.

Mezirow suggested that transformational learning would induce more far-reaching behavioural change in the person and produce a more significant impact, or paradigm shift, than other kinds of learning.

He developed the concepts of *meaning perspectives*; an individual's overall view of the world and *meaning schemes*; smaller bits of knowledge and values relating to the individual's experiences. He argued that meaning perspectives change as a result of responses to life experiences, and provide the raw material for the changes that occur in transformational learning. Mezirow's theory of transformational learning is based on three main themes that can be represented as follows:



THE THREE THEMES CAN BE SUMMARISED AS:

Experience of life: provides the essential starting point in any coaching event.

Critical reflection: is the distinguishing feature of adult learning and the mechanism by which the person being coached questions the validity of their beliefs and values.

Rational discourse: induces the person being coached to explore the depth and meaning of their beliefs and values and to share these with their coach and peers.

Mezirow felt that the combination of reflection and discourse encouraged the person being coached to transform their views on life to be more inclusive which would in turn lead to greater interdependency and compassion for others.