

ROLE OF THE COACH

1. Most importantly: Take your job seriously. Coaching is a sacred role. Bring your best to each session.
2. Be present. This can be more challenging over the phone. It's much easier to get distracted. And much harder to pick up the non-verbal cues we use to tune into people. A few tips:
 - **Review this handout prior to the call and have it handy during.**
 - Consider sometimes using Skype so you actually can see each other.
 - When you're phone coaching, it can be helpful to close your eyes. This helps focus all your attention on the person's voice . . . and even the feeling and energy behind their words.
3. Your most important job is deep listening. This is the time to practice everything you have been learning about deep listening . . . and even deeper listening.
4. Do some reflecting back of what you hear. If you remember from our training in coaching, the seemingly simple act of paraphrasing and summarizing really helps people sort out their own thinking.
5. Remember that you're not supposed to be the expert that fixes people with your brilliant advice.
6. Your job is to help your clients access their inner wisdom and capacity, so that they not only solve a particular problem, but grow in confidence and ability to meet their own challenges.
7. Make sure you're not taking more responsibility for the session than the client and that you're not more invested in solving things than they are.

Here are some tips:

- Make sure the client is talking significantly more than you are.
 - Support your client in keeping focused on getting the outcomes they wanted for this session. You can ask them a number questions like:
 - o Are we on track for getting what you need?
 - o What else do you need to feel complete?
 - o What else would be helpful?
 - Keep the focus on the client. Avoid talking about yourself, similar experiences you have had, etc.
 - Avoid the shoot and reload pattern, where you ask a question, they give a short answer, you ask another question...a short answer...and so on
8. Even though your most important job is to be present and deeply listen, your role can also be active. **Be courageous** in offering feedback to your client. Be willing to challenge their assumptions or the way they're going about things.

9. Do help the client find useful and new frames to think about their situations. Offer reframes lightly, to see if they're helpful:
"Might it be useful to think of it this way?"
10. Do ask transformational questions that invite new perspectives and beliefs. Some examples:
 - What else could this mean?
 - What potential positive value might there be in this?
 - What is the opportunity here?
 - How *could* you make this work?
 - What if you *had* to do this, how would you make it work?
11. Do actively help the client stay focused on meeting their goals.
12. Do have your client actively practice courageous conversations, using the format we did in the LIO training where they practice delivering key lines from a place of power and authentic voice.
13. Be careful in offering advice.
 - Do you really want the responsibility of telling someone what to do? (We don't have to live the consequences of another's choices. They do!)
 - Building commitment to live out choices may be as important as making the decision. Taking someone's advice usually generates less commitment than struggling through to one's own decision.
 - Giving advice invites dependency on the advice-giver, rather than empowering the client
 - Aside from all this, are you *really* wise enough to know what's best?
14. Having said this, there are times where it's fine to offer an opinion:
 - When the client asks for your opinion. Just be clear that's only your opinion.
 - When you have specific knowledge or information that the other does not.
For example: knowledge about funder priorities, options for structuring meetings, tools for organizing, etc. – i.e. When someone asks you, "*How do I use this new software?*" don't respond with, "*I hear you saying you want me to help you use the software.*" :)
15. Do help keep your client focused on the outcomes they want for the session.
 - Help refocus them when they go too far or too long off on tangents.
 - Track time for them and see where they need to focus in order to achieve their outcome.
16. Be a reality test for your client. Make sure you believe they're setting themselves up for success rather than failure. Small steps and successes is a good road to follow versus unrealistically high goals that erode the client's confidence.

For further tips & tools on coaching, visit:
<http://www.stproject.org/resources/tools-for-transformaton/coaching/>