



## Challenging Coaching – Going beyond traditional coaching to face the FACTS

*Live Session Date June 13, 2014*

*Co-presenters: Ian Day, Changing The World One Conversation At A Time Through Executive Coaching; John Blakey - Helping CEOs step up to a bigger, braver role in the world to transform the triple bottom line*

### Quotable Quotes/Tweets:

FACTS [#coaching](#) model for [@coach\\_challenge](#): [#Feedback](#), [#Accountability](#), [#Courageous Goals](#), Tension, [#Systems Thinking](#) [#wbecs2014](#)

[#courageous goals](#) lead to business unusual rather than business as usual.  
[@coach\\_challenge](#) <http://wbecs.com/portal>

[#systems thinking](#) in [#coaching](#): It's the relationship between things not the things themselves that drive [#performance](#). [#wbecs2014](#)

[#coaching](#): you need support AND challenge to create sustained change in individual or organization. <http://wbecs.com/portal>

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**Overview:**

Traditional coaching has a tendency towards support but in an organizational context you need more than just a strong relationship - you also need challenge to create sustained change in the individual and the organization.

FACTS model

- F** Feedback  
high performers like feedback to make progress (learners need more support) when trust and rapport are in place it's possible to challenge harder
- A** Accountability  
At 3 levels: Personal / Coach/Client relationship / Systems/Organization  
Accountability is not only punitive, also relied upon/trusted.
- C** Courageous Goals  
Courageous goals invoke: excitement, adventure, inspiration, imagination, pride, wonder, risk and fear. Business unusual rather than business as usual.  
3 steps: Dream, share, start
- T** Tension  
Yerkes-Dodson model created over 100 years ago and also confirmed by modern neurologists using dopamine levels. Optimal tension between comfort and anxiety
- S** Systems Thinking  
It's the relationship between things rather than the things themselves that are key to driving performance.  
Use coaching questions to bring absent stakeholders into the room

FACTS model helps coaches to use more courage in their coaching relationships, ultimately courage is an act of faith we will each make our own decisions.

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*Notes submitted by Angela Armstrong*

## Challenging Coaching – Going beyond traditional coaching to face the FACTS



Ian Day– Read more: <http://wbecs.com/ianday/>

John Blakey– Read more: <http://wbecs.com/johnblakey/>

### Quick background for those that did not attend the pre-summit session

There's a balance to be struck between supporting individuals and challenging people

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Support   | trust, rapport, building relationship                                 |
| Challenge | questioning, accountability, feedback, meeting needs of stakeholders. |

Traditional coaching has a tendency towards support but in an organizational context you need more than just a strong relationship - you also need challenge to create sustained change in the individual and the organization.

Other authors and influencers in this area: Daloz and Sanford

Traditional coaching has 3 main principles

- The non directive approach - **collusion**
- Holding to the individual's agenda – **self-obsession**
- Building rapport – **irrelevance** (to organizational context)

And 3 potential risks (shown in red)

2 x 2 matrix

- Low support, low challenge = inertia / apathy
- Low support, high challenge = stress
- High support, low challenge = cosy club
- High support, high challenge = “loving boot” / high performance

not “confrontation” it’s “care-frontation”

With client need to get out of the “zone of comfortable debate” and enter the “Zone of Uncomfortable Debate” which allows us to address the “heart of the matter – the elephant in the room”, which is where the real breakthrough’s happen.

In response to attendee questions:

- This model is suitable for individuals and organizations
- Use model during contracting stage to avoid push-back on style in practice
- Challenge is not aggression

**Today’s webinar, how to develop a challenging style of coaching**

FACTS model

- F Feedback
- A Accountability
- C Courageous Goals
- T Tension
- S Systems Thinking

Case Study – Tony Haywood, deep water horizon oil spill

Imagine that it’s after the initial contracting session and you’re about to start your second session and client says that they haven’t done any of the actions they set as they’ve been too busy. Your response might be one of the four in the diagram below depending on the level of support and challenge you deliver.

## The Support / Challenge Matrix

|         |      |  |   |
|---------|------|--|---|
| Support | High | 2. It sounds like you've had a difficult few weeks. How does that make you feel? | 3. This is awkward, I don't want to let you off the hook. How committed are you to this coaching process? |
|         | Low  | 1. Ok What do you want to talk about today?                                      | 4. That's just not good enough. Who's time are we wasting?  |
|         |      | Low  | High  |

### **(F) - Feedback is the Breakfast of Champions**

- Question on pre-coaching questionnaire: Knowing yourself as you do what advice would you give me as your coach with regards helping to get the best out of yourself.
  - UK sports champion reply was: be honest with your feedback and trust that I will take it the right way.
- Treat your client as a champion who is robust enough to challenge back if the feedback doesn't chime with them.
- Feedback is like a heating thermostat, it's just data not a personal attack. Encourage your client to view it this way with the role of the coach is providing feedback.

When setting goals we ask ourselves two questions:

- a) am I committed to the goal?
- b) am I making progress towards the goal?

Fishback and Finkelstein Research shows that students learning a new language, given the choice, chose a more supporting teacher to build commitment to their goal, students looking to advance their language skills chose a more challenging teacher i.e. a focus on making progress.

Over a period of time working with either teacher the students started to ask for more challenging feedback, the basis of trust is important in allowing challenge to be well received.

## A - Accountability

Accountability at 3 levels

1. Personal
2. Coach/Client relationship
3. Systems/Organization

Coach as proxy for the voice of organization and raise awareness of client's impact on organization through good questions.

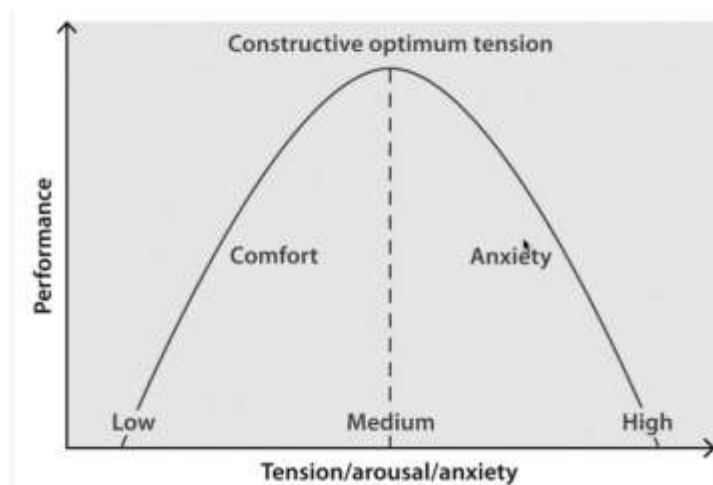
Accountability is not only punitive for non-delivery of actions, but can also consider it to be counted on, trusted and reliable – care with client's understanding of the word, especially as they start taking on responsibilities of higher roles.

In seminar presenting content from “Five Dysfunctions of a Team” (book) – a recent show of hands from a senior audience indicated that lack of accountability was the primary dysfunction (common to other times this question has been asked over the past 4 years with international audiences).

## T – Tension

Yerkes-Dodson model created over 100 years ago and also confirmed by modern neurologists using dopamine levels.

## The Yerkes-Dodson Curve



Use questioning to move clients into different zones so that they are operating optimally.

Two people in a coaching relationship therefore two curves. Coaches who practice their own tension can better hold their clients to spend time out of their comfort zone.

Ian Day & John Blakey Challenging Coaching - Going beyond traditional coaching to face the FACTS

<http://www.wbecs.com/wbecs2014>

## S – Systems thinking

It's the relationship between things rather than the things themselves that are key to driving performance.

Three elements of systems thinking in the book, only time to cover “suboptimisation” here. Avoid the risk to the larger system by only concentrating on a subset of the system, e.g. individual financial traders looking to maximize their personal earnings multiplied by many financial traders brought down the financial markets.

In coaching ensure that client also looks at the wider environment. Questions to bring absent stakeholders into the room:

- How do you think your customers will react to that?
- If your action was reported on the front page of a daily newspaper how would you feel?
- In years to come what would your grandchildren think about it?
- Who are the absent stakeholders in this situations?

Missing information and missing feedback is the root cause of many organizational dysfunctions.

You might have the opportunity to check out understanding with others in the organization, formally (360) or informally (within agreed/contracted understanding).

Suggested book: Thinking in Systems: A Primer, Donella Meadows + Diana Wright

## C – Courageous Goals

Go beyond traditional or smart goals

SMART – improve efficiency by 10% in next 6 months (incremental, evolutionary)  
 Courageous – improve efficiency by 10 times in next 6 months (transformational)

Courageous goals invoke: excitement, adventure, inspiration, imagination, pride, wonder, risk and fear.

Business unusual rather than business as usual.

SMART goals keep us in our comfort zone  
 Only 15% agreed in a survey that SMART goals helped achieve great things.  
 (SMART = DIM! Dysfunctional Interventions by Managers)

There are dangers of playing it safe, and of being too risky.

*“All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds, wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act on their dreams with open eyes, to make them possible” T.E. Lawrence*

Three steps to helping clients formulate and achieve a courageous goal

- DREAM, see quote
- SHARE, tell others who can help you and hold you to account
- START!

#### Some useful coaching questions

- What’s your equivalent of the moon shot? (JFK aspiration to land a man on the moon)
- What’s your equivalent of an Olympic gold medal?
- How far into the future do you need to set the goal to not worry about how it will all be achieved?

Anecdote: Students start a course, tutor awards an A grade to all students on the proviso that they write a letter within 2 weeks that says what they did to achieve the A grade and who they became to achieve it. How can we do this as coaches?

FACTS model helps coaches to use more courage in their coaching relationships, ultimately courage is an act of faith we will each make our own decisions.

Poem: Christopher Logue

Come to the edge  
 We can't. We're afraid  
 Come to the edge  
 We can't we will fail  
 Come to the edge  
 And they came  
 And he pushed them  
 And they flew

[www.challengingcoaching.co.uk](http://www.challengingcoaching.co.uk)

@coach\_challenge