

# Leadership Development Program

## Module 3 – Doing and Coaching



In this module, we will focus on how to help people to “do” their lives and leadership to a higher level by helping them to do specific tasks. In module 4 we will focus on helping others to “become” (which we will call “Mentoring”)

**Matthew 28:19-20** *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

In the “great commission” declared by Jesus in the preceding passage of Scripture, “teaching” has the aim for the person to “observe” or “obey”. Today, we call this word “coaching”. Coaching is not simply about giving people information. Coaching is concerned with helping a person to change their behaviour. It is a process of assisting a person to achieve their potential, delivering fulfilment to the person and growth to the kingdom.

A coach doesn’t need to be the expert, know the “right” answer, be in control or fix the person’s problems for them. An effective coach, however, should be developing their coaching skills.

**Romans 15:1-2 (The Message)** *“Those of us who are strong and able in the faith need to step in and lend a hand to those who falter, and not just do what is most convenient for us. Strength is for service, not status. Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, “How can I help?””*

The preceding Scripture tells us that the “strong” and “able” (in this case the coach) should “lend a hand” to those that “falter” (in this case the person being coached). As we discovered in module 1, “doing and coaching” is the starting place for leadership development.

### The process of coaching

The elements of coaching can be described as “assign, do, coach, encourage and celebrate”. We give them tasks, they go and do their best, and then we coach into what they lacked in their efforts.

#### Assign

We should give people a task with as little direction as is needed. Ask people to achieve a result, but do not give them too much instruction on the process. This allows them to be free to be creative. If we tell people exactly what to do, then we are not allowing them to use their creativity, gifts, perspective or their ability to hear from God. Micro-managing people also results in reduced motivation because people are less likely to be motivated to do something that they have had not a say in determining.

When we release ministry to other people, we should make sure that we give them three things - *authority, responsibility and accountability*. Authority is the power to make decisions on how the work is done.

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Responsibility is the statement of exactly what needs to be done and when. Accountability is the agreement on when and what will be discussed afterwards.

When a person is *not given authority* to make decisions that relate to their role, they generally do not take ownership for their role. They tend to just do what is asked of them. They generally do not release their creativity into their role.

When a person is *not given responsibility*, they do not know exactly what results are expected in the area that they are working. Consequently, they lack direction. Often people without the responsibility for an outcome will set their own agenda for the outcomes.

When a person is *not accountable* in what they are doing, they find it difficult to know whether they have achieved what they set out to. This means that encouragement and further training will be difficult because nobody knows what has been done well or poorly.

### **Action Points**

*Discuss a current task with your coach and/or a person that you are coaching*

- *Has there been a clear communication of the responsibility, authority and accountability?*
- *What else could you assign/ be assigned to do?*

### **Do**

Ministry is a privilege and sharing ministry with people helps them to serve God. So asking people to do things should be done with a sense of honour towards God. When you assign tasks with little instruction, you run the risk of people doing things in an unusual way. WE should allow people to do things differently without reacting on the spot (As long as it isn't biblically or culturally inappropriate). Don't instantly feedback, even with body language. Wait for the feedback until you are alone together.

A good way to hand over responsibility popularised by John Maxwell is to follow the sequence:

- *I do, you watch* – we ask specific people to watch us with intent and get them to ask you questions afterwards
- *I do, you assist* – we ask them to do some of the simpler, less risky tasks that we have been doing and we feedback to them later. We gradually give them more important tasks as they develop more ability and confidence
- *You do, I assist* – we ask them to do more and more of the more significant tasks until they are doing more than we are
- *You do, I watch* – we hand over all the tasks fully and we feedback to the person
- *You do, another watches* – We and they find someone else to start the process over again

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### Action Points

*Discuss the following with your coach or someone you are coaching*

- *Think about your process for handing over tasks. Do you need to more gradual in the process or move quicker to give away tasks?*
- *Is there a clear understanding of the authority given to make decisions?*

### Coach

When people do ministry with little instruction, follow up coaching is always needed. We need to *hear the feelings* of the person, and they need to hear yours. You need to understand their progress, and give feedback. Coaching here is different to a lecture. It is a “fill in the gaps” instruction. You are helping that person to be more effective in what they are doing, without imposing your specific preferences on them.

There are a number of factors that will help you determine the *type of follow up* that you should do with the tasks you have assigned to people.

- *The importance of the task – More important tasks need more frequent follow up*
- *The demands of the work – More demanding work needs more encouragement and clear communication channels*
- *The newness of the leader – Newer people need more frequent time*
- *The responsibility of the person – The more responsible the person, the less frequent we need to follow up*

The process of coaching may require a shift of the coach from:

- *Teller to Trainer*
- *Director to Encourager*
- *Rescuing to Equipping*
- *Delegating to Empowering*

### Giving feedback

**Proverbs 13:18** *“Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction, but he who regards a rebuke will be honored.”*

The preceding Scripture tells us the importance of being corrected ourselves and bringing correction to others. If a person listens to and acts on correction, they will benefit greatly. Whether we are giving feedback

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in a coaching session or during day to day interactions with our team, there are several aspects that are important to feeding back effectively that we should consider.

**Be considerate:** - Make sure that the conversation focuses on their actions not on your perception of their intentions or character. During feedback, we should aim to allow people to save face and protect their self-esteem. Remember the goal is for them to change their actions and not for you to win the conversation. Make sure to choose the time and place carefully. Ensure that you are not angry and the conversation is private.

**Be non-threatening:** - We should be motivated by a desire to help. We can “lessen the blow” by introducing the topic indirectly and by using “I” and “we” instead of “you”. When we say “you”, we are inferring blame which tends to make people defend themselves. The person will feel less threatened when you direct your criticism at the action and not at them as a person.

**Offer to help:** - Keep the talk short and show empathy for their situation. Help to resolve the problem by offering or organizing some form of assistance.

**Be specific:** - Give concrete suggestions and focus on definite behaviours and timeframes for actions. Make sure that their behaviour was in their control and not forced on them by outside influences.

## Receiving feedback

**Proverbs 15:31-32 (NLT)** *“If you listen to constructive criticism, you will be at home among the wise. If you reject criticism, you only harm yourself; but if you listen to correction, you grow in understanding.”*

This Scripture encourages us to also remember the benefits of receiving constructive criticism. Very few people actually enjoy hearing how their behaviour isn’t meeting expectations so we shouldn’t be surprised if we also find it hard to receive it ourselves. However, we should remind ourselves that receiving and acting on feedback is a key to success.

When preparing to receive feedback, we should be pre-disposed to the possibility that the person giving the feedback may have a valid point. We all have blind spots, so just because we don’t immediately agree with them, this does not necessarily mean that they are incorrect. We should resist the urge to defend ourselves. If necessary defend yourself later after you have calmly processed the information.

Not everyone can deliver feedback to you in a way that is unbiased and emotionally centred. For this reason we should attempt to separate their emotions and their bias from any truth they may be trying to communicate. Just because they may be poor at giving feedback, we shouldn’t let their lack of communication ability stop us from understanding potential areas of growth for us. We should ask the person to give us advice on the specific actions we need to take in order to improve. We will cover other aspects of coaching in greater detail later in this module.

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### Action Points

- *Consider how you have been giving feedback. Discuss the points relating to giving feedback with someone you are coaching and ask them to feedback to you about it*
- *Consider how you are receiving feedback. Discuss the points relating to receiving feedback with your coach and ask them how well you receive feedback*

### Encourage

**1 Thessalonians 3:2** *“(we) sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith”*

Taking more leadership responsibility is a daunting thought for many people, and most people have more potential than they think they have. This means that we should encourage people we are developing every time we are with them. Encouragement puts courage into people, and people need courage to lead. Encouragement is not a validation of everything a person is and does, it should be specific to things they have done. Whenever God appeared to people of God in the Bible he always encouraged them, so should we.

### Celebrate and rest

**Mark 6:31-32** *“And He said to them, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.”*

Jesus did not just have a “business” relationship with those he was developing. He ate and took breaks with them. It is an important principle in the kingdom of God to value the person over the task, so we ought to also have a focus on rest and relaxation. If you are not relationally oriented, you need to remind yourself to do things that are not related to tasks with the people you are developing.

### Coaching skills

**1 Thessalonians 5:15 (The Message)** *“Be patient with each person, attentive to individual needs. And be careful that when you get on each other’s nerves you don’t snap at each other. Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out.”*

This Scripture is particularly applicable to coaching. Successful coaching relies on a variety of skills referred to in this Scripture including patience, attentiveness, being mindful of other’s emotions, looking for personal strengths as well as doing our best to bring these strengths out. Perhaps the best way to approach all of these skills is by learning how to ask good questions.

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### What is a good question?

- It is easily understood
- It requires a brief answer 2-3 minutes
- It requires thought from the person you are coaching
- It enables self-disclosure
- It encourages reflection and refocusing

### Types of questions

**Luke 11:9-10** *“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”*

The preceding Scripture talks about three types of enquiry with three types of results from these enquiries. These three types of enquiries reflect the three types of questions that are important in coaching people.

#### 1. Ask and “be given” (open ended) questions.

The word used for “ask” in the preceding Scripture is a general word used for inquiring. It refers to open-ended questions. “Open-ended” questions are designed to search for information that the inquirer thinks may be relevant. They include questions that begin with “what”, “where”, “who”, “how” and “why”. They are useful to introduce a subject, to encourage continued discussion and to keep the other person talking. Open questions can also bring unexpected issues into the conversation. This is part of their purpose, to help you to uncover important aspects of the person’s experience that you were not previously aware of.

The word “receives” used in the preceding Scripture means *“to get hold of”*. When we ask open-ended questions, we start to get hold of the person’s situation as we explore areas that we were previously unaware of. The main drawback in open ended questions is that they potentially encourage discussion of irrelevant information and may unnecessarily extend conversations which can be a problem when you do not have the required time.

“Reflective” questions are a form of open-ended questions. They “mirror” the information back, including your perception of the person’s emotions. Questions like “You thought the acting was poor?” show concern and interest, as well as encourage disclosure of emotions and feelings. “Hypothetical” question are also a form of open-ended question. For example, questions like “What would happen if?” can encourage creative thinking.

#### 2. “Seek” and “find” (probe) questions

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The word “seek” used in the preceding passage of Scripture from the book of Luke means “to endeavour” or “plot” and communicates a purposeful seeking. This represents “probe” type questions. “Probe” questions are designed to further explore a relevant answer to an open-ended question. We should realise that when a person answers one of our open-ended questions, they often give a small amount of information that indicates a more significant area of conversation that is worth pursuing. Probing questions help us to more fully understand a person’s motivations and problems. When we use probing questions to seek out more information about a particular situation, the preceding Scripture promises that we will find out more about them. We should ask probing questions as there is almost always more information that the person has which is relevant to our discussion with them.

Probing questions are more palatable to a person when they have first volunteered that particular topic for conversation as a result of an open-ended question. Probing questions include questions like “Can you tell me more about?” and get more information as well as show an interest in the person’s answers. A skilled coach will continue to ask probing questions until the person gives information that the coach considers relevant. Probing questions take four major forms.

**Clarifying questions** - are designed to get more information and clear up ambiguities. Examples of clarifying questions include “Could you explain that again?”, “I don’t understand what you mean”, “I’m confused. Would you run through that again?” and “I’m not sure how ...”

**Paraphrasing questions** - are designed to check for your understanding of the person’s communication. In this type of question, we restate the speaker’s comments in our own words. Examples are “What you’re really saying is ...”, “If I understand you correctly ...”, “So your perspective is that ...”, “In other words ...” and “Tell me if I’m wrong, but what you’re saying is...”

**Summarising questions** - are designed to bring a conclusion to one line of questioning and to review the main points of discussion. Examples of this type of question are “Let me summarise ...”, “Okay, your main concerns are ...”, “Thus far, you’ve discussed ...”, “To recap what you’ve said ...”

### 3. “Knock” and “be opened” questions

The third level of enquiry contained in the preceding passage of Scripture from Luke chapter eleven is to “knock”. When we knock, we get one of two responses, either the person answers the door or they don’t answer. In questioning, this represents “closed” questions that require a “Yes” or “No” answer only. For example, the question “Did you enjoy the meeting?” is a closed question. This type of question keeps control of the conversation with the inquirer. In coaching, we should use closed questions to complete the conversation on particular issues and gain agreed action. For example, a closed question to contract action may look like “My perspective is that you will clean your office by this afternoon, is that your perspective?”

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We should commence a coaching conversation with closed questions if only factual information is required. “Leading” questions are a form of closed questions and are designed to get the answer that you expect to hear. These are best used when our open ended questions have not been fruitful. Questions like “You didn’t make that call, so what should you have done?” only has one answer, that they should have made the call!

### The questioning sequence

**Proverbs 25:8-10 (The Message)** *“Don’t jump to conclusions - there may be a perfectly good explanation for what you just saw. In the heat of an argument, don’t betray confidences; Word is sure to get around, and no one will trust you.”*

The preceding Scripture warns us of the dangers of drawing quick conclusions. The person may have a valid explanation for their actions. Not acting quickly also slows you down from acting in the “heat of an argument” and in doing so destroy other the person’s confidence or trust in you. Using a “questioning sequence” helps you to ensure that you are not jumping to conclusions and are exploring the situation more fully.

Except in the case of unskilled and unmotivated people, it is important when we are coaching people not to simply tell them what to do. It is also important that we do not simply let the person decide for themselves what the best course of action is. To avoid both of these, we should find ways for the person being coached to explore their **own solutions** and our role should be to help them to decide on their **own course of action**. One way of doing this is through a “questioning sequence”. A questioning sequence uses the “ask, seek and knock” questions we covered earlier, performed in that order.

In coaching, the first questions we ask in the “questioning sequence” are “open-ended” questions. These are questions that start with “what”, “where”, “why” and “who”. We use them to explore topics without any predetermined outcomes in mind. We are gathering information as well as helping the person to become more self-aware. We start with open-ended questions because we must always assume that there is important information that we do not have. These questions help to prevent our wrong assumptions and quick judgements from governing the conversation.

The second questions we ask in the “questioning sequence” are the “probing” questions. When we ask open ended questions, some of the answers are more relevant than others. Either because the person has shown an emotional reaction, the Holy Spirit has witnessed something to us or they have said something that we agree is important. At these moments, we explore more about these issues with more directed questions that probe that issue. Questions like “tell me more about what that was like”, “how did you feel when?” or “what were they doing when?” give you more information about more relevant topics that you have uncovered.

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The third type of questions we ask in a “questioning sequence” are “understanding” questions that include clarifying, paraphrasing and summarising questions that we have previously discussed. The purpose of these questions is to ensure that both you and the person you are coaching have fully understood each other in the conversation.

The final type of questions we ask in the “questioning sequence” are the “closed” questions which only have a “yes” or “no” answer. This is because we need to finish all coaching conversations with closed questions that the person contracts to take a course of action. An example of this is “Now I think that you will be having a conversation with this particular colleague in the next week to resolve this situation, is that what you think?” Coaching should not just be a talk-fest so there should always be action points that come out of it.

You can use the questioning sequence to explore and agree on the problem and then use it again to explore and agree on the solution. Using a questioning sequence helps you to achieve a commitment to action on a particular issue that the person being coached has first introduced as a result of your initial open-ended questions. Because they have first verbalised the issue, they have a greater ownership of the problem and greater follow through with the solution.

### **Action Point: Think about turning these statements into questions:**

- *That won't work.*
- *You're not following through.*
- *You did a great job leading the meeting.*

### **Consider some better open ended questions to these:**

- *Is it okay if we change topics?*
- *Did you do all your actions steps from last time?*
- *Did you team respond well?*
- *Are you being realistic?*

## Empathetic listening

**1 Corinthians 10:33 (The Message)** *“I try my best to be considerate of everyone’s feelings in all these matters; I hope you will be, too.”*

The preceding Scripture reminds us that every person has emotions and we ought to be considerate of that fact. To that end, we should learn to listen empathetically. People experience, amongst other emotions, happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, terror, disgust, pleasure and pain. Recognizing and understanding a person’s emotions is important to having an open conversation with them. To listen empathetically, we should express our desire to understand their feelings and then talk about what’s important emotionally to the other person. You can see triggers in emotions by changes in body language, facial expressions and tone

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of voice. We can then reflect the person's feelings back to them. For example, a statement such as "I see that this is upsetting to you" encourages the person to explore why the topic is upsetting to them. In listening empathetically, we focus on the emotional part of the message. This is more than just restating their words, but includes reflecting back to the person those things that provoke reaction, change in body language and differences in speech patterns.

### **Action Point**

- *Use the questioning sequence in your next coaching session, whether it is a formal session or simply when you are attempting to help someone improve. Make sure you start with open ended questions, use probe questions and make sure to finish with closed questions to contract a course of action.*

### The COACH Coaching Model

There are several models or tools for the process of coaching you can use. In this module we will explore COACH. This is a simple model that can be used in various contexts; with volunteers, work places and in the home. This works well when parenting teenagers and young adults and it's a great place to practise your coaching skills.

- **C = Connect**

This is the first and critical foundation to have a heartfelt and genuine connection between the coach and person. This will be a growing and deepening aspect as the relationship that happens over time. The things the person shares may or may not be topics for coaching but helps you to understand each other.

- **O = Outcome**

In agreement decide the goal/purpose for the coaching session. This can happen by: either by asking the person their expectations or needs for conversation. Example questions: "What's on the top of your list to talk about?" What would be most helpful for what you are currently facing? Alternatively you can suggest a topic, but ask permission of the person to talk about it.

- **A = Awareness/reflective talk**

A coach's aim is to lead the person into a discovery and some self-awareness about the topic. The coach is mostly asking good questions of the person and an active listener. Listen beyond the words of the person shares and consider emotions, body language and thinking patterns. Encourage them to share and give genuine heartfelt feedback. Reflect back to them and use follow up questions if needed.

- **C = Course of Action**

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The aim of this part of the process is to focus on taking a course of action. The ideal result is 3-5 actions steps that the person agrees to take (not the coach). Suggested questions like: What are you planning to do about that? What steps can you take?

- **H = Highlights/helpful**

The aim of this part of the process is to review the learning, insights of what the person found helpful from the coaching session. This will help them deepen their learning and helps you as a coach to know what they found valuable. You can ask them to review their steps they will take. Suggested questions like: What was particularly helpful? What have you gained from this time together? What is your take away?

It will take practise to use this model of coaching. To change from your natural default style as a teller, director or rescuer will take focused attention. It is possible to add these skills and develop as a coach to become an outstanding trainer, encourager, equipper and empowering leader. Be patient, give yourself time to use the model and work with it. If it helps, write notes down the COACH clues and some question before you start an intentional coaching session.

***Action Point: Try asking good open questions in your household around the dinner table. Ask at work with colleagues and people you meet every day. If you have teenager or young adult in your life, ask if you can practise coaching with them.***