



Coaching the Uncoachable

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A Word About Hogan Assessment Systems

- In the 1980s, we demonstrated that personality predicts occupational performance.
- In the early 1990s, we demonstrated that leadership is real and consequential.
- In the late 1990s, we demonstrated that personality predicts leadership performance.
- In the early 2000s, we demonstrated that 65% to 75% of existing managers are incompetent.





Defining Personality

- Personality should be defined from two perspectives:
(a) the actor's and (b) the observer's.
- The actor's perspective is the person you think you are.
- The observer's perspective is the person we know you are.
- One perspective is more important than the other when talking about careers.



The Bright Side and the Dark Side of Personality

- The bright side of personality concerns how you behave when you are paying attention and behaving yourself.
- The dark side of personality concerns how you behave when you are just being yourself.
- The “real you” is often something you should be ashamed of.
- Authenticity is a myth.

THE BRIGHT SIDE AND THE DARK SIDE

The bright side of personality
concerns *filtered behavior*.



The dark side of personality
concerns *unfiltered behavior*.

Managers' dark side behavior erodes employee engagement.



Where the Problems Lie

- Bright side behavior is not always good and dark side behavior is not always bad.
- Context matters and determines whether the bright side or dark side helps or hinders performance.
- The dimensions of the bright side become maladaptive when taken to extreme: HPI Sociability (Extraversion).
- The dimensions of the dark side concern positive behaviors that become maladaptive when taken to the extreme: HDS Excitable.
- Coaching mostly focuses on these extreme behaviors



Freud Was Right

- Sigmund Freud had a number of important things to say, and we forget them at our peril.
- Two Freudian insights are important for this discussion:

First, most social behavior is unconsciously motivated (we rarely understand why we do what we do).

Second, most people need help understanding their own behavior—that is what unconscious motivation means.



What Does Coaching Do?

- Conventional wisdom is that coaching involves changing self-perceptions and increasing ***self-awareness***.
- The theory is, after successful coaching, clients see themselves differently.
- That is, coaching involves changing the actor's view of personality.



What is Self-Awareness?

- Learning about one's hidden secrets?
- Learning about one's unconscious biases?
- Does this learning depend on introspection and self-examination?
- The capacity for introspection is normally distributed.
- Who does introspection? Neurotics and psychologists.
- What is gained by introspection?



What is Self-Awareness?

- Many highly successful people can't introspect: Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Donald Trump, etc.
- Becoming aware of one's inner secrets doesn't improve performance.
- Being able to introspect doesn't make a person coachable.
- Being unable to introspect doesn't make a person uncoachable.
- Extraspection (my word) concerns becoming aware of how others perceive you.
- Coaching should focus on changing how others perceive the client—and why.



Coaching for Behavior Change

- Peoples' behavior creates their reputations.
- Their reputations drive their careers.
- Coaching should focus on targeted behavior change, which will change problematic aspects of reputation.
- Reputation change is real change.
- Coaching for behavior change should start with a valid assessment; if you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.



Why is Coaching Necessary?

- People seek coaching to improve their career performance.
- Some people seek coaching on their own.
- Some people are sent to coaches.
- Most managers should be sent to coaching.
- Few managers ever receive valid feedback on their performance.
- The base rate of managerial incompetence is 65% to 75%.
- Bad managers ruin their careers and other peoples' lives.



What Should be Coached in General?

Two aspects of performance should be coached.

1. Understanding one's strengths and one's limitations: learn to play to your strengths and understand your limitations.

2. Behaviors that are self-stigmatizing: learn to avoid self-handicapping behavior.



What Managerial Behaviors Should Be Coached?

Four elements of reputation are essential for managerial effectiveness:

1. Integrity
2. Competence
3. Judgment
4. Vision

Coaching should focus on the behaviors that impact these evaluations of reputation—any behavior that destroys trust.



The Content of Coaching

- Freud would say that positive psychology sends the wrong message.
- From a coaching perspective, there is no news in good news.
- To improve performance, people need to know what they are doing wrong.
- Uncoachable people don't want to face the realities of their behavior.



Who is Uncoachable?

Two categories of people seem particularly hard to coach.

1. People who are unable to stick with a coaching plan.
2. People who won't listen to feedback.



Coaching Low Self-confidence

- People who are insecure and lack self-confidence usually want feedback.
- They listen eagerly and try to change their behavior, but often ruminate excessively about negative feedback.
- Under stress, they resort to their old behaviors.
- The paradox of insecure people: they want feedback but it makes them defensive and upset.



Coaching High Self-confidence

- People who are arrogant won't listen to feedback on their performance.
- They seem unable to admit faults and flaws.
- If they are arrogant and successful, they won't see the point of changing their behavior.
- Giving an arrogant person feedback is like trying to feed a duck through the wrong end...



Who is Coachable: The Coachability Cluster

Two dimensions of personality are related to coachability:

1. Humility: Understanding that “others” know things that you don’t know—things that are important. These others are often your subordinates or people who are younger than you.
2. Curiosity: Being curious about what others know that you don’t know.
3. We (HAS) can assess these aspects of personality.



Levels of Coachability

- People with low scores on Humility and Curiosity are potentially uncoachable.
- People with low scores on Humility and high scores on Curiosity are somewhat coachable.
- People with high scores on Humility and low scores on Curiosity are moderately coachable.
- People with high scores on Humility and Curiosity are very coachable.



Coaching Coachability

- This model suggests that coaching coachability should come first in the coaching process.
- First help clients understand that people who can be coached always do better in their careers.
- Second, help clients understand that if they don't change, they will not achieve their career goals.
- We suggest working through the coachability issue before dealing with problem behaviors.



Successful Coaching

- We suggest that objective of successful coaching is not to create greater self-sight—it may happen but that is a by-product.
- We suggest that successful coaching involves identifying and changing critical behaviors, and that will lead to a changed reputation.
- It is necessary to deal with the coachability issue before dealing with the reputational problems.
- In managers, these changes will create better employee engagement.
- Successful coaching is not about making clients happy, it is about making the world a better place to work.



Thank you

