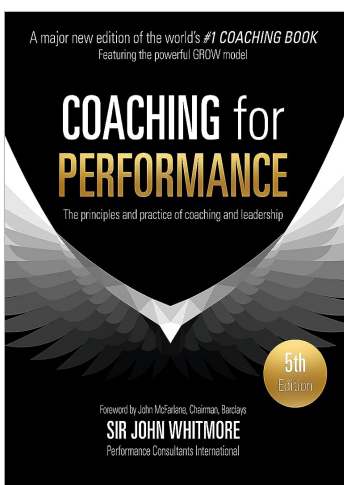


# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### Sir John Whitmore

*Sir John Whitmore was a founder of Performance Consultants International, the market leader in coaching globally.*

## Coaching for Performance

### THE SUMMARY

Sir John Whitmore

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#### Introduction

In this passage, I emphasize the importance of embracing a new approach in business practices, with coaching playing a central role. “Coaching for Performance,” has become the definitive book on coaching methodology, contributing to the growth and maturation of the coaching profession. The book reflects the evolution of human attitudes and behaviors, aiming to provide a clear understanding of coaching and its ability to enhance leadership.

### PART I: COACHING IS BIGGER THAN COACHING

#### 1. What Is Coaching?

*Coaching focuses on future possibilities, not past mistakes*

Coaching is a journey-focused approach that aims to unlock people’s potential and maximize their performance by helping them learn and develop from within. It creates a powerful working relationship and utilizes effective communication to stimulate self-discovery and growth. Coaching traces its roots back to the Inner Game method introduced by Timothy Gallwey, which emphasizes addressing internal obstacles to performance and unleashing natural learning abilities. The objective of coaching is to improve performance by growing potential and reducing interference.

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In the business context, coaching has evolved as a response to organizational challenges. It goes beyond traditional instruction and empowers individuals to reach their full potential. Coaching enables individuals to learn, grow, and find meaning and purpose in their work. It is a leadership style that fosters employee development, engagement, and a focus on people, profit, and the planet.

Coaching is a mechanism for transformation that aligns with the changing needs and values of modern society. Coaching principles, such as powerful questioning, active listening, and the GROW model, lay the groundwork for coaching and high performance.

## 2. Creating High-Performance Cultures

*Enabling a coaching culture generates high performance*

Attracting and retaining top talent and developing future leaders are pressing concerns in today's business landscape, as evidenced by The Conference Board CEO Challenge® 2016 survey. Human capital is now a crucial contributor to sustainable performance and growth, and it is our responsibility as business leaders to shape the lives of our employees and our relationship with the planet.

To embark on a transformative journey, I advocate for a whole-system approach that encompasses personal development and a shift from fear to trust. It is important to go beyond clichés and actively make fundamental changes in attitudes, leadership behaviors, and organizational structures to truly embrace coaching for performance.

In today's rapidly changing business environment, the definition of performance has broadened to include stability, sustainability, and collaboration alongside traditional values of competition and growth. To tap into the potential of our employees and foster high performance, I firmly believe in cultivating a coaching mindset that drives real change rather than relying on empty words.

The urgency for change is further emphasized by the demands for legal and social responsibility in the face of climate change. As businesses, we must find ways to succeed in harmony with the planet and navigate the increasing scrutiny and pressure from consumers.

## PART II: THE PRINCIPLES OF COACHING

### 3. Coaching Is Emotional Intelligence in Practice

*Emotional intelligence (EQ) is twice as important as cognitive ability (IQ) in predicting outstanding performance.*

Daniel Goleman

I believe that coaching is not just a technique, but a way of leading, managing, and relating to others that should become the natural way of interaction in all aspects of life. Coaching skills have a significant impact because they are rooted in emotional intelligence, which is essential for transformational coaching.

Emotional intelligence allows individuals to relate to others from a place of trust, leading to high performance and positive outcomes. Research has shown that emotional intelligence is twice as important as academic or technical knowledge for success at work, and it contributes to over 85% of "star performance" in top leaders. Unfortunately,

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schools often overlook teaching emotional intelligence, but it should be taught as a life skill. 1:1 or group coaching can help leaders develop emotional intelligence and foster high performance.

Awareness is crucial in developing emotional intelligence, and it involves understanding our actions, biases, and tendencies, as well as recognizing the strengths and motivations of others. Building emotional intelligence as a leader or coach requires fundamental skills such as asking powerful questions and active listening. Exploring the next level of coaching effectiveness and embracing concepts like spiritual intelligence can take leadership to an advanced level.

## 4. The Leader as Coach

*Leaders must be experienced as a support by their team, not as a threat*

The paradox of coaching leadership arises from the conflict between traditional leaders who hold power over rewards and punishments, and the need for a coaching relationship based on partnership, trust, and minimal pressure. This dynamic undermines the core principles of coaching. However, it is possible for a leader to be a coach by embodying qualities like empathy, integrity, and a different approach to leading. Coaching leaders may face challenges and resistance from employees, but these can be overcome through coaching skills.

Traditional management often falls into autocratic or laissez-faire approaches, which have drawbacks. Autocratic leadership demotivates employees and stifles creativity, while laissez-faire leadership can lead to poor performance and lack of awareness. Coaching, however, combines the benefits of both approaches without the downsides.

In coaching, leaders engage in a dialogue with employees, asking powerful questions that raise awareness and responsibility. This creates an environment where employees understand tasks, take ownership, and sustain behavior change. Coaching allows leaders to achieve both job completion and employee development simultaneously. By dedicating time to coaching, leaders can free themselves from firefighting and focus on long-term planning, vision creation, and employee development.

## 5. A Coaching Style: Partnership and Collaboration

Partnership and collaboration create self-confidence and self-governing teams

A coaching style is all about partnership and collaboration, where conversations occur between equals. According to the International Coach Federation (ICF), coaching involves thought-provoking and creative processes that aim to maximize personal and professional potential. By embracing this coaching mindset, leaders can create a culture of interdependence rather than dependence, relieving the pressure to have all the answers and allowing employees to tap into their full potential and wisdom.

**Coaching Ethos:** Coaching is based on a belief in the capability, resourcefulness, and potential of oneself and others. It focuses on strengths, solutions, and future success rather than weaknesses, problems, or past performance. It creates a culture of trust, non-judgment, and collaboration.

**Belief in Potential:** Successful coaching requires leaders to believe in the untapped potential of their employees. By viewing people in terms of their potential rather than their past performance, leaders can help individuals express and maximize their capabilities.

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Creating a Culture of Trust: Building trust and creating a safe environment is crucial for coaching. Leaders should trust their team members and allow them to make their own choices and decisions. Treating individuals as equals, providing encouragement, and avoiding negative behaviors like blame or denigration contribute to a culture of trust.

## 6. Awareness and Responsibility: Activating Learning

*Building awareness and responsibility is the essence of good coaching and enables the activation of natural learning*

Awareness and responsibility are two qualities that I believe are crucial for performance in any activity. In his book *Sporting Excellence*, my colleague David Hemery, a 400-meter hurdler and Olympic gold medalist, conducted research on top performers from various sports and found that awareness and responsibility were consistently the two most important factors across all disciplines.

Awareness is the first key element of coaching. It involves focused attention, concentration, and clarity. By being aware, individuals can respond to what they observe and experience. The act of becoming aware activates our natural learning capability. It allows us to perceive things more clearly and empowers us to take control of our actions.

Responsibility is the other crucial concept in coaching. When individuals fully accept, choose, or take responsibility for their thoughts and actions, their commitment and performance improve. However, responsibility cannot be imposed or forced upon someone; it must be embraced willingly.

## PART III: THE PRACTICE OF COACHING

### 7. Powerful Questions

Telling or asking closed questions saves people from having to think; asking open questions causes them to think for themselves. The answer lies in the art of asking powerful questions. By posing the right inquiries, we can engage individuals in proactive and focused thinking. These powerful questions serve multiple purposes:

- They compel individuals to truly watch the ball, as the answer cannot be provided without active observation.
- They demand a higher quality of thought and input, elevating the level of focus and precision.
- They seek descriptive answers, avoiding judgment and preserving self-esteem.
- They create a feedback loop for coaches, enabling them to gauge the accuracy of the answers and the individual's concentration.

Whether it is in sports or the workplace, the power of questions remains consistent. The primary form of verbal interaction from a skilled coach should be in the form of well-crafted inquiries. In summary, powerful questions:

- Create awareness and responsibility
- Follow the coachee's interests and agenda
- Inspire creativity and resourcefulness
- Increase possibilities and vision

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- Are goal-oriented and solution-focused
- Are non-judgmental

## 8. Active Listening

Listening to others with genuine attentiveness and understanding is a precious luxury. Unfortunately, many people lack the skill of active listening. We were taught to listen at school, but not trained or coached to truly listen.

As coaches, it is essential to cultivate the ability to listen attentively to the coachee's answers and fully absorb what is being said, both in words and emotions. Failure to do so erodes trust and hinders the coach's ability to ask relevant and impactful questions.

Active listening skills, such as reflecting/mirroring, paraphrasing, summarizing, clarifying, and encouraging self-expression, are invaluable tools for effective communication. They demonstrate to the speaker that you are fully engaged, checking for understanding, and validating their thoughts and feelings.

## 9. The GROW Model

*Goals, Reality, Options, and Will*

The framework I propose for coaching follows four distinct stages: Goal setting, Reality checking, exploring Options, and determining the Will to take action. Conveniently, these stages form the mnemonic GROW. The sequence is as follows:

**Goal setting:** This involves defining the goals for the coaching session, as well as short-term and long-term objectives.

**Reality checking:** Here, the current situation is examined and evaluated. It involves exploring the results of previous actions and identifying any internal obstacles or limitations.

**Options:** This stage focuses on generating possibilities and alternative strategies for progress. Various options are explored and questioned.

**Will:** The final stage encompasses determining the specific actions to be taken, when they will be executed, by whom, and most importantly, the commitment and motivation to follow through.

While GROW is an effective framework, it should be understood that it holds little value without the context of awareness and responsibility. GROW alone is not coaching.

## 10. G: Goal Setting

*When I want to, I perform better than when I have to; I want to for me, I have to for you. Self-motivation is a matter of choice*

In the coaching process, goal setting plays a crucial role. The coach begins by helping the coachee determine the goal for the session. Once the goal for the session is established, the coach and coachee move on to identify the goals related to the specific issue at hand. It is important to distinguish between end goals and performance goals:

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**End Goal:** This refers to the final objective that may not be entirely within one's control. End goals are often influenced by external factors that cannot be fully predicted or controlled.

**Performance Goal:** These goals focus on the performance level that can be achieved and measured. They are within one's control and provide a means of tracking progress. Performance goals are easier to commit to and take responsibility for compared to end goals.

It is important to support end goals with performance goals whenever possible. The end goal provides inspiration and long-term thinking, while the performance goal defines measurable results. Having both types of goals helps to align motivation and progress.

## 11. R: What Is Reality?

*When the reality is clear, it brings the goals into sharper focus*

In coaching, it is important to clarify the current situation before establishing goals. While some argue that goals should only be defined after understanding the reality, I believe that having a purpose and direction is crucial for meaningful discussions. Although goals may be loosely defined initially, examining the situation in detail should be done first. Once the reality becomes clear, goals can be refined or adjusted based on the actual circumstances.

Objectivity is key when exploring reality. However, it is essential to acknowledge that complete objectivity is difficult to achieve due to personal biases, judgments, and expectations. Self-awareness plays a role in recognizing these internal factors that can distort our perception of reality. By striving for a higher degree of objectivity, coaches can ask factual questions that demand specific answers from the coachee, avoiding biased or defensive responses.

The reality phase of coaching should cover both the external reality (organizational dynamics, culture, and norms) and the coachee's internal reality (thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values). Understanding the external and internal factors that influence the coachee's goal can provide valuable insights and inform the coaching process.

## 12. O: What Options Do You Have?

*When you are sure that you have no more ideas, just come up with one more*

The options stage in the GROW model is aimed at generating as many alternative courses of action as possible, without focusing on finding the "right" answer. The quantity of options is more important than the quality or feasibility of each option at this stage. The goal is to stimulate creativity and explore a broad range of possibilities.

During this stage, it is important for coaches to create a safe and non-judgmental environment where participants feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas freely. All contributions, even seemingly silly or unconventional ones, should be noted down, as they may contain valuable insights or spark new ideas later on.

Once a comprehensive list of options has been generated, coaches may assist coachees in examining the benefits and costs of each option. It can be helpful to assess each option's feasibility and desirability, and to consider the potential impact on the desired outcome. In more complex situations, further exploration and refinement of the options may be necessary.

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## 13. W: What Will You Do?

*Creating the conditions for continuous learning is the key to performance improvement*

### Stage 1: Accountability Set-up

Accountability goes beyond responsibility and involves setting clear expectations and commitments for specific actions. By holding the coachee accountable, the coach ensures that the coaching conversation translates into concrete decisions and action steps. To set up accountability, the coach asks a series of key questions: What will you do? When? How will I know?

### Stage 2: Follow-up and Feedback

Feedback and coaching play a crucial role in the learning and development process. It's not just about pointing out mistakes; it's about creating an environment where feedback becomes a valuable learning opportunity.

When following up on actions and checking in with someone, it's important to maintain a non-judgmental approach. Instead of checking up on the person, focus on checking in about what has happened and how things are progressing. By doing so, you keep the lines of communication open and maintain alignment.

## 14. Coaching for Meaning and Purpose

*The point is not to become a leader. The point is to become yourself, and to use yourself completely – all your gifts and skills and energies – to make your vision manifest. You must withhold nothing. Warren Bennis*

Finding meaning and purpose in life and in the workplace is becoming increasingly important for individuals and organizations. People are seeking more than just financial rewards and are looking for opportunities to contribute to something greater than themselves. The changing role of business and the global challenges we face are driving this shift towards a greater focus on meaning and purpose.

Coaching can play a significant role in helping individuals uncover their meaning and purpose. Through coaching conversations and activities, individuals can explore their dreams, desires, and the difference they want to make in the world. By connecting with their purpose, individuals can align their actions and decisions with what truly matters to them.

Similarly, coaching can support individuals in finding meaning and purpose in the workplace. By asking powerful questions and exploring the impact of their actions, individuals can discover how their work aligns with their values and contributes to their personal growth.

## PART IV: SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS OF COACHING

### 15. Formal 1:1 Coaching Sessions

*87% of employers surveyed offer one-to-one coaching*

In formal 1:1 coaching sessions, it is important to establish a structure and guidelines to ensure the best outcomes.

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Here are some considerations for conducting successful coaching sessions:

**Time periods:** Formal coaching sessions are typically conducted over a period of six months. This duration allows for ample practice of new habits and behaviors and promotes sustainable change.

**Confidentiality:** Establish clear boundaries regarding confidentiality at the beginning of the coaching relationship. Confidentiality is essential for creating a safe space for the coachee to discuss personal and sensitive issues.

**Communication with stakeholders:** Clarify who has engaged the coach and their relationship to the coachee. Determine who the coach is accountable to regarding the coaching. Ensure that communication about the coaching goals, objectives, and results goes through the coachee, empowering their relationship with the organization.

**Foundation session:** Conduct a thorough foundation session to establish the basis of the coaching relationship. Discuss logistics, set agreements, explain the coaching process, and define inspiring goals. Explore the coachee's history, values, strengths, and limiting beliefs.

## 16. Coaching for Team Performance

*Coaching develops the identity and creativity of teams to reach their potential*

In order to establish a coaching culture within a team, it is important for the team leader to take on the role of a coach. The team leader should foster a mindset of openness and curiosity and develop coaching skills to promote team development and high performance. Here are some key points for team leaders to understand when taking on the role of a coach:

**Recognize the team's intelligence:** A team is its own entity with its own intelligence and potential. As a coach, it's important to tap into the team's collective intelligence and leverage its potential.

**Create collective awareness:** The goal of coaching is to create collective awareness within the team. This involves fostering a sense of co-responsibility and alignment towards shared objectives, values, purpose, and responsibility.

By embracing the role of a coach and implementing these strategies, team leaders can promote a coaching culture, enhance team development, and unlock the full potential of their teams.

## 17. Coaching for Lean Performance

*Together, Lean and coaching create a virtuous circle of unparalleled performance improvement*

The Lean manufacturing system, with its focus on eliminating waste and improving processes, can be significantly enhanced by adopting a coaching style of leadership.

Coaching ensures continuous improvement and creating a learning culture, requiring individuals to step out of their comfort zones and embrace their learning zones. By challenging and supporting individuals in their learning and development, coaching empowers them to create new behaviors and standards, rather than simply going through the motions of the Lean process.

Lean practices alone may not be enough to sustain long-term benefits if the human element is overlooked. It is crucial to engage and involve people in the process, and this is where coaching truly shines. By bringing empathy, heart,



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and purpose to the forefront, a coaching approach complements Lean methodologies and empowers both Lean practitioners and their teams.

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, a fundamental aspect of Lean, aligns seamlessly with a coaching approach. Coaching naturally supports each stage of the cycle, creating a continuous focus on performance improvement. Through effective coaching, individuals can identify goals, implement changes, evaluate results, and standardize new processes, ensuring a cycle of ongoing improvement.

## 18. Coaching for Safety Performance

Coaching creates a culture of interdependence and high safety performance

Studies have shown remarkable improvements in safety performance, with organizations experiencing up to a 73 percent increase in performance after implementing a coaching approach.

The key to this success lies in creating a culture of interdependence, which has been proven to have the highest safety performance. Coaching provides leaders and supervisors with the tools to foster such a culture by directly engaging and empowering all team members in safety performance.

Coaching approaches create an interdependent culture, where individuals recognize the value of collaborative work and set ambitious safety goals. In such a culture, activities are more focused, and there is a greater emphasis on feedback, trust, openness, and mutual accountability. Team members are more likely to engage in challenging conversations, support each other's growth, and continuously review and learn from their experiences.

In practice, coaching conversations and techniques can be applied to various safety situations, such as workplace inspections, safety dialogues, incident investigations, toolbox talks, and risk assessments. By integrating coaching principles into safety practices, leaders can maximize the potential of their teams and create a culture of interdependence, ultimately leading to improved safety performance.

## PART V: REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF COACHING

### 19. Measuring the Benefits and ROI of Coaching

*Measuring the financial impacts justifies future investment. Once you can demonstrate the tangible impacts, it's a different ball-game.* Alan Barton, Director, Arup

Coaching offers numerous benefits to leaders, the individuals being coached (coachees), and the organization as a whole. Here are some of the key benefits:

Benefits to Leaders:

- Improved Performance and Productivity
- More Time for Strategic Thinking
- Enhanced Leadership Skills

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- Increased Job Satisfaction
- Benefits to Coachees:
  - Improved Career Development
  - Personal Growth and Self-Awareness
  - Enhanced Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
  - Increased Confidence and Motivation
- Benefits to the Organization:
  - Improved Relationships and Engagement
  - Higher Retention Rates
  - Increased Innovation and Creativity
  - Greater Agility and Adaptability
  - High-Performance Culture

Measuring the Return on Investment (ROI) of Coaching is crucial to demonstrate its impact on the organization. The Coaching for Performance ROI methodology developed by Performance Consultants provides a structured approach to measuring the benefits of coaching engagements. It involves tracking goals and objectives, ongoing actions, and progress made by coachees. By recording qualitative and quantitative impacts, it becomes possible to estimate the ROI of coaching initiatives.

The benefits of coaching can be measured in various ways, including:

- Performance Metrics
- Employee Surveys
- Retention Rates
- Employee Feedback
- Organizational Culture Assessments

## **20. How to Effect Cultural Change**

*Could the only thing limiting you be the size of your vision and your own self-limiting beliefs?*

Bringing about cultural change within an organization requires a balanced approach that considers both the people and the organization as a whole. Here are some guidelines to navigate this process effectively:

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*Balance Structure and People:* Rapid and radical changes can create resistance and hinder progress. Redesigning the company structure should be done in a way that aligns with the capabilities and readiness of the people.

*Lead by Example:* Executives and senior leaders must set an example by authentically modeling the desired attitudes and behaviors.

*Foster Choice and Development:* Change cannot be forced upon people. Instead, create opportunities for individuals to choose their own path of change and development. Coaching can play a vital role in helping individuals experiment with new attitudes and behaviors while providing support and guidance.

*Engage with a Collective Vision:* Cultural change requires a collective vision that engages and inspires people. Leaders must articulate a clear vision that aligns with the desired culture and actively involve employees in shaping and contributing to that vision.

## 21. The Qualities of Leadership

*Leaders for the future need to have values and vision and to be authentic and agile, aligned and on purpose*

Leaders of the future should undergo a personal development journey to earn the title of leader. Leadership qualities cannot be developed overnight or obtained easily. Here are the essential qualities that I believe are crucial for responsible leaders, particularly in the current times:

*Values:* Personal values, distinct from company values, play a significant role in leadership as they come from within individuals and are not solely derived from religion or external sources. Values-driven leaders prioritize social and environmental responsibility over solely pursuing financial gains.

*Vision:* Leaders must possess a broad and deep vision that extends beyond immediate financial goals. Long-term vision is essential for navigating uncertainty and making decisions that consider the impact on future generations.

*Authenticity:* Authenticity is about being true to oneself and being unafraid to show it to others. Leaders need to shed parental, social, and cultural conditioning and eliminate fear to embrace authenticity. It involves discovering one's authentic self, which lies beyond external influences, and embodying personal humility and responsibility.

## 22. The Ladder to Mastery

*You do not have to know how to do something to be able to do it. You learned to walk, run, ride a bike, and catch a ball without instructions*

This book emphasizes the importance of understanding how people truly learn. Many instructors, teachers, and leaders prioritize short-term gains and immediate results over genuine learning and performance quality. This mindset needs to change, as current results are often insufficient to meet our needs and outpace competition. To address this, a better approach to learning is required.

A helpful way of looking at acceptable learning is through a learning ladder, with four stages of learning:

*Unconscious incompetence:* Low performance with little understanding or differentiation.

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*Conscious incompetence:* Low performance but with recognition of flaws and weak areas.

*Conscious competence:* Improved performance achieved through conscious effort.

*Unconscious competence:* Natural, integrated, and automatic high performance.

The learning ladder takes you through these stages as you acquire new skills or knowledge. While these stages are generally followed, there are exceptions and possibilities for acceleration. Learning can be accelerated by consciously revisiting the learning ladder. This can be achieved through advanced coaching or self-coaching.

## 23. Advanced Coaching

*Much of the psychological dysfunction in the world stems from frustration about the lack of meaning and purpose in our lives*

In advanced coaching, I employ techniques such as structured daydreaming or visualization to tap into the subconscious mind. By engaging in these exercises, individuals can access deeper layers of their being and uncover valuable insights. Through guided imagery and visualization, we explore symbolic representations, encounter obstacles and gifts, and engage in conversations with archetypal figures. These experiences offer rich material for coaching conversations and further self-exploration.

Formal training in advanced coaching skills is essential for coaches and leaders. It provides a safe environment for practice, feedback, and personal development. As coaching continues to evolve, advanced coaching skills will become increasingly valuable in helping individuals unlock their potential and navigate the complexities of their personal and professional lives. I encourage aspiring coaches and leaders to embrace these approaches and embark on a journey of growth and transformation.

## CONCLUSION

*Coaching for Performance* emphasizes the need for a new approach in business practices, with coaching playing a central role in unlocking potential and enhancing leadership. The book explores the principles of coaching, the qualities of effective leaders, and specific applications of coaching in various contexts. Measuring the benefits and ROI of coaching is crucial, and cultural change within organizations requires a balanced approach. Additionally, advanced coaching techniques, such as structured daydreaming and visualization, offer deeper insights and personal development opportunities.

By embracing these approaches, individuals can unlock their potential and navigate the complexities of personal and professional life. Formal training in advanced coaching skills is essential for coaches and leaders to enhance their effectiveness and facilitate growth and transformation.