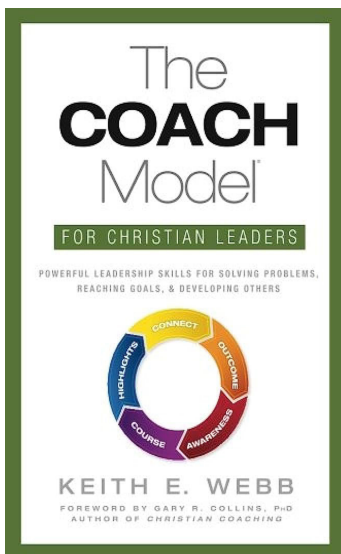


# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### Dr. Keith E. Webb

*Dr. Webb is a Professional Certified Coach, a consultant, and a speaker specializing in leadership development. He is the founder of [Creative Results Management](#), a global training team of Church Resource Ministries, focused on equipping ministry pioneers.*

## The COACH Model For Christian Leaders

### THE NUTSHELL

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How you define coaching reveals much about the values, mindset, and approach you bring to working with other people. I define coaching this way: Coaching is an ongoing intentional conversation that empowers a person or group to fully live out God's calling. Coaching is an application of the Action-Reflection Cycle. If we can understand the effects of our actions (or inaction), we can use that greater clarity and understanding to further adjust our thinking and behavior and produce further improvements. If we fail to learn from our experiences, we can end up repeating avoidable and costly mistakes.

Coaching enhances the Action-Reflection Cycle by encouraging a person to reflect beyond incremental improvements to the current actions. Coaching around the coachee's assumptions, goals, and meaning can provide a new perspective and lead to breakthroughs. The coachee acts and observes the results. Then rather than simply adjusting the original action to improve it, he steps back and reflects on the broader assumptions that led him to that action in the first place. Changes at the assumptions level can produce significant differences and will automatically produce ideas for new actions, producing different and hopefully better results. These results can then be used to review and perfect the strategy, or reexamine the assumptions further.

The COACH model follows a pattern that has proven to reproduce successful, holistic, and empowering conversations. As you will see, the five steps of the model spell out the word "coach."

# The COACH Model For Christian Leaders

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## Step 1: Connect

The first step of the COACH Model is to Connect. The purpose of connecting is to begin the coaching conversation on an informal and personal note that helps to reestablish rapport since the previous conversation, catch up a bit, and leave space for the person being coached to share whatever is on his or her mind. The Connect stage of the COACH Model has two parts. First, engaging with the person you are talking with to build rapport; and secondly, following-up on action steps from the previous coaching conversation.

## Step 2: Outcome

A clear understanding of the desired outcome near the beginning of the conversation helps in several ways. First, clarifying the outcome of the conversation allows the coachee and coach to be clear on the intended result of the conversation. Second, a clear outcome helps guide the conversation and keep it focused on what the coachee wants to achieve or explore. Third, the results of the conversation can be measured against the intended outcome. It is critical to find out what the coachee considers to be the most valuable topic for that particular coaching conversation. The coach doesn't decide this. Nor does the coach assume that the coaching topic will be a continuation of the previous conversation. It's the coach's job to draw the topic out of the coachee and then clarify it. Through dialogue, the coach and coachee determine how to best use the coaching appointment. Use questions to explore, clarify, and focus the coachee's topic, problem, or goal. As the coachee defines his intended results through a dialogue, he increases his own awareness and gains clarity on the issue even before thoroughly discussing the topic. Just defining an outcome is often welcome relief for an overwhelmed coachee.

## Step 3: Awareness

Discoveries – insights both large and small – are a fundamental part of the coaching experience, and are the ultimate goal of the Awareness step. It is commonly believed that the key to finding answers and getting unstuck is through more information or knowledge. Coaching takes a different approach. The focus is not on new information or knowledge,

but rather on a new perspective. Powerful questions are the tools that help coachees to discover new roads and to find answers. Many people are not naturally reflective, and we all have a limited perspective. Coaches stimulate or even provoke reflection with questions that cause coachees to think more deeply than they could on their own. The technique of creating open questions involves taking an idea and broadening it to its root topic or category. By asking about

the broader category, you encourage the coachee to reflect and find their own answer. So, rather than asking, "Could Susan help you?" Ask, "Who can help you?" Immediately the coachee goes from one possibility (Susan) to a multitude of possibilities (anyone).

## Step 4: Course

Reflection and discussion are not ends in themselves. Reflection must move beyond warm thoughts and clever insights to application. Action steps put feet to insights and discoveries, and helping people move into action is one of the key roles of a coach. Without action steps, discoveries and insights are just good ideas. Action steps are the transitions from thoughts and insights to action and application. Action steps should be simple enough to complete, yet significant

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enough to build momentum, move the coachee toward their goal, and be doable before the next coaching conversation.

### **Step 5: Highlights**

The coaching conversation is now at the final stage. Take a few moments at the end of your conversation to give the coachee an opportunity to summarize what he or she has learned and state it succinctly. This will cement the learning in the coachee's mind and give the coach valuable feedback at the same time. It is also good to get the next appointment into the calendar at this time.

Just coach people! In normal conversations, listen well. Be curious, even if you think you already "know." Ask questions. Ask about the other person's ideas before jumping in to share your own. Finish conversations or meetings by asking, "What could you do to move forward with this?" Meeting regularly will help people, regardless of how proficient you are in your new coaching skills. Don't worry about using the whole COACH Model for each conversation. Use whatever part is helpful to that person and that conversation.