



The Big Blue Box Ltd

Our Coaching Process

This is an overview of our unique coaching process, developed through more than 20 years of coaching experience, it is founded upon trial and error, research and learning, reflection and feedback, and evaluation with continuing client relationships. The result is a highly effective, flexible process that delivers at pace against our values: 'to leave it better'.

1. Project Briefing

Perhaps before the coach is engaged the first step is likely to be the agreement of a **coaching project briefing**. This is an overview of the issues and opportunities for which the coachee is seeking support. This is prepared by the organisation, represented by the project sponsor, the coachee's line manager, and the coachee, and would be shared with the coach during the contracting, briefing and set-up of the project.

2. Contracting

A **coaching contract** is a 3-way understanding of the project. It is created, agreed, and shared in stages between the organisation, represented by the sponsor and the line manager, and specifically, between the coach and the coachee, finalised in the first coaching session.

The contract will consider the project briefing and the coach's proposals for the **coaching series and session structures**. Importantly, the boundaries around reporting and confidentiality will be discussed.

3. Coaching Series Structure

Typically, our first engagement with the coachee is for a **series of four sessions**. Condensing the series into four sessions sets up an 'imperative' and a focus on delivering results for the coachee – quickly. Clients are busy people with significant responsibilities and prompt results are important.

There is a requirement for **diary planning and prioritisation**. Each session in the series is of **indeterminate duration** – the conversation is as long or short as it needs to be to reach a conclusion. Sessions are not time - limited, we don't 'start the clock' or run to a fixed duration. It requires the coachee to make time away from their 'tasks' to work on 'themselves'.

The usual interval between sessions is approximately 3 – 4 weeks. This balances pace, with keeping a focus and awareness of the coaching subject matter, allowing time to reflect and explore changes whilst minimising interruption to business and role priorities.

4. Coachee introduction

The contracting process introduces the coachee and coach with a first conversation to cover initial questions, the contract, assessing the likely 'fit' and arranging the first coaching session.

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5. Coaching Session Structure

The flow through the coaching sessions broadly follows the stages outlined below. Some stages are 'once only', others are repeated, some will be very brief, others more extensive, the order may change, and some stages may be revisited. The coach will not report on these confidential conversations except in specific circumstances.

Chemistry Test

Engagement in the coaching series is subject to a 2-way chemistry test in the first coaching session. This is an informal but decisive step to check that the 'chemistry' works. It allows the coachee or the coach to freely enter – or decline the coaching series if, for whatever reason, the 'chemistry' is not right. If the chemistry test is failed by either party in the first session, then no commitments or costs are incurred.

Contracting

The coaching process formally begins by sharing and agreeing the contract between the coachee and the coach. This may be an informal discussion having already been covered in the earlier introduction.

Chronology

In this early phase, the coachee's 'timeline' of their life is created, bringing all the versions of the story together, often for the first time.

Current Situation

The coachee is encouraged to review their current situation: 'Where are you now?'

These early diagnostic stages of in-depth curiosity, listening, reflecting, and challenging are **cathartic** and **catalytic**, creating significant '**Ah Ha!**' moments. The process enhances self-awareness as insights are revealed. Significant outcomes can be achieved in the first session.

This stage will be revisited at the start of each session to assess progress, stalling or even regression before re-assessing the plan for the session.

Clarity and Choices

Where do we want to be, what options are there? What are the real goals? Is the coachee's purpose clear? What are their ambitions?

These types of questions can now be addressed using the insights from the earlier diagnostic stages.

Commitment

Coachees must be ready to change – and other people around the coachee might also have to be prepared to change. Motivation and direction are clarified.

Change

Change begins as soon as the coaching starts, and sometimes even before the first meeting. Meaningful change happens outside the coaching sessions, in the intervals between sessions. Actions will be agreed to support any commitment to change. The degree to which other people might be involved in supporting any change should be considered.

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Conclusions

At the end of each session, the coachee notes what actions they will take as a result and the outcomes. These would be reviewed as part of the next session. Each session should review and assess its 'start point', the agenda and priorities as change occurs. Checking in and seeking feedback at the end of each session allows the coach and coachee to assess progress and contribute to the evaluation process.

Evaluation

Coaching is a significant investment in any key individual within the organisation. each investment should be evaluated to assess the return on the investment.

Coaching outcomes occur over varied timescales, diverse dimensions and domains and in unexpected areas. They may or may not coincide with the project briefing, outcomes might exceed and be highly effective and yet lie outside the project briefing's specification.

Any evaluation process should reflect these potential variables.

Our evaluation invites the coachee to begin the evaluation before the series ends by completing a questionnaire. This helps the coachee reflect upon and record the process, milestones, and outcomes. We also look to 'catch up' with the coachee perhaps two to three months later to assess the longstanding impact and revise the learnings.