

# Transformissional Coaching

Steve Ogne & Tim Roehl

Notes by Dave Kraft

Rather than telling leaders what to do or how to do it, they strongly advocate the art of listening and asking great questions as an effective vehicle to engage and empower the leader. Steve and Tim suggest that coaches transform leaders by helping leaders clarify calling, cultivate character, create community, and connect with culture. (xiii)

Coaching may be the primary vehicle that makes the transition from modern to missional paradigms. Transformissional coaching is an effective process for empowering postmodern leaders to engage in missional expressions of church. Listening and good questions effectively anchor the coaching conversation in the life and experience of the leader more than that of the coach. (xiv) As leaders, we may have a good idea of where we want to go, but often we find ourselves feeling uncertain, stuck, overwhelmed (3) Younger Evangelicals seek to engage the culture by caring and relating to individuals on their own turf. (12) Today's culture wants to experience relationships and evangelism in the context of spiritual community.

In short, a transformissional approach to evangelism encourages people to belong to a community of faith before they believe and then to come to faith as they experience God through authentic relationships in the life of that community. (13) Members of the emerging transformissional church will find authentic spiritual community and develop spiritual friendships with lost people while engaging the culture and serving the community rather than creating programs to serve only the converted and attract the unconverted. (14) Sometimes the traditional pastor is not a preacher but a priest who represents God to them and them to God, demonstrating a life of prayer and devotion. (15) This readily available diversity of seminars has increased knowledge of ministry but has not necessarily increased ministry effectiveness. The problem is that most of these materials are never truly implemented in ministry. (18) Neither seminary nor seminar will prepare us to do ministry in the postmodern future. We believe that ministry equipping for transformissional church leaders will be just in time, on the job, on the Internet, in the church, and in the trenches. Equipping will be *on the job*; skill formation and spiritual formation will take place in the midst of ministry.

Equipping in Bible and theology will take place *on the Internet*, where knowledge is easily and immediately accessible. Most of that training, however, will take place *in the trenches* of culture. Ministry that exists within the culture—to engage the culture on its terms and to meet needs and transform communities—cannot be learned in a seminar or classroom, or even in the church. It must be learned in the trenches. A whole new transformissional approach for equipping leaders will be needed. That approach will be personal ministry coaching—coaching that will pull together training and experience with context and reality. (19) Coaching provides guidance and accountability to help leaders successfully implement new learning (20) A great **C.O.A.C.H.**:

**Comes alongside**—as one who wants the best for both the person and the project.

**Observes carefully**—with the objective view of a specialist.

**Asks questions wisely**—and resists being a “teller.”

**Communicates options and resources**—helping think beyond first “visible” impressions to other viable options.

**Holds accountable (and cares for the Heart)**—so that leaders can grow personally, improve performance, and solve problems for maximum ministry effectiveness. “Coaches help people develop their God-given potential so that they grow personally and make a valuable contribution to the kingdom of God.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Steve Ogne and Thomas Nebel, *Empowering Leaders Through Coaching* (Saint Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1995)

(26) Coaching is the preferred approach for equipping leaders in the emerging culture and the transformist church for the following reasons:

1. Coaching is relational, which is consistent with the postmodern value for relationship and community. This relationship provides acceptance, safety, and trust for emerging leaders, especially those who are seeking to relate to a modern church or denomination.

2. Coaching is incarnational because it is hands-on, person-to-person, face-to-face, and it functions in the realm of shared experience beyond knowledge.

3. Coaching is practical because it deals with the real and immediate issues in the life and ministry of the leader.

4. Coaching is holistic because it touches on the calling and character of the leader as well as the life of the faith community and its place in the culture. (27)

5. Coaching is contextual because every coaching conversation starts and ends in the life and ministry context of the leader rather than starting from a specific model, or even from the coach's external point of reference.

6. Coaching is missional to the degree that the coach helps the leader understand and engage the culture through missional activity and significant personal relationships with secular people.

7. Coaching is flexible and is an especially useful approach to ministry during this time of changing paradigms. It is "just in time" and can keep pace with rapid change.

8. Coaching is cross-cultural because it is centered in the context of the leader and not the coach. It empowers the leader to contextualize ministry principles to his or her culture. (28)

This new coaching paradigm focuses on a leader who is personally transformed through what we call the "4Cs":

Clarifying his or her call to ministry and cultivating personal character so that he or she can transform his or her surroundings by creating authentic community and connecting with the secular culture in a redemptive way. (29)

Many modern Christian leaders have no one holding them accountable for their own spiritual formation. From the perspective of the emerging church leader, a coach who is not concerned with the individual leader's spiritual formation is no coach at all. (31) New leaders or young leaders may be struggling to find their calling whether it is volunteer or professional ministry. They need help to identify their gifts and passion, to understand their personality and leadership style. (32) Second, coaches help leaders cultivate Christlike character. Ministry is often hindered or forfeited by character issues in the lives of leaders. The pressures of life and ministry often reveal character issues and flaws.

Coaching is sensitive to and intentional about helping leaders acknowledge character issues and cultivate character growth. The modern church has often overlooked the minor character issues of leaders in favor of their strong leadership or teaching gifts or personality. (33) The third focus for coaches is to come alongside the leader to help prioritize, create, and experience authentic community, both inside and outside the formal church fellowship. During the years we have spent coaching leaders for ministry effectiveness, it has become evident that many of the strategic issues leaders—both young and old—face in the church rise or fall on the quality and authenticity of relationships. (38) Coaching young and transformist leaders in the new paradigm will be significantly focused on creating and maintaining healthy Christian community. (43) A circle of influence is anywhere a person connects regularly with the same group of people over a shared interest. (45)

### Calling Questions

- How is your calling influencing your character?
- How are you called to serve your faith community?
- How are you called to influence your culture?

### Character Questions

- How is your character influencing your calling?
- How is your character influencing your faith community?
- How is your character influencing your culture?

### Community Questions

- How is your faith community influencing your calling?
- How is your faith community influencing your character?
- How is your faith community engaging the culture?

### Culture Questions

- How is your understanding of the culture shaping your call?
- How is the culture affecting your character?
- How is the culture affecting your faith community? (49)

It is significant that the word *person* (*persona* in Latin) comes from the Greek word *prosopon*, which can be translated “face-to-face.” (54) Effective coaches are able to “get below the surface” so that leaders can get better clarity about their motivation and actions. (57) Another well-known passage related to companionship and partnership is Ecclesiastes 4:9-12:...

Both Proverbs and this passage from Ecclesiastes remind us that a companion with a listening ear, a timely word, or the ability to bring thoughts and intentions to the surface embodies relational empowerment. (58) “The great leader is not the one in the spotlight. He’s the one leading the applause.”<sup>10</sup> (63)

### Seven Benefits of Coaching

1. A coach points out what we can’t, don’t, or won’t see.
2. A coach provides a safe, compassionate, confidential environment... (69)
3. A coach helps give perspective.
4. A coach improves performance.
5. A coach aids with problem solving and processing conflict.
6. A coach is a paraklete
7. A coach empowers leaders to plan their work and then work their plan effectively in proper sequence. (70)

Dr. Ed Stetzer of Life Way Christian Resources studied church planters from his denomination and found that church planters who met regularly with a “mentor” or “supervisor” (terms they used for “coaches”) showed greater increases in church attendance than church planters who didn’t utilize coaching.<sup>16</sup> (79)

### The role of the coach:

- To point out what the leader can’t, won’t or doesn’t see
- To have a compassionate, secure and confidential outlet to vent problems and frustrations
- To provide a clear line of communication between the leader and the sponsoring agency
- To conduct reality checks on the leader’s vision, values, and strategies
- To walk with the leader through conflict when it arises
- To help the leader implement the master plan in proper sequence
- To ask the questions no one else is asking (93)
- To assist the leader to develop strategies for recruiting, launching, and fund-raising
- To help the leader balance the demands and stress of ministry while maintaining a healthy family life<sup>2</sup> (94)

<sup>10</sup> Tim Roehl and Steve Ogne, *Keys to Great Coaching* (self-published, 2003), 4.

<sup>16</sup> Ed Stetzer, 2003 Study of Southern Baptist Church Planters.

<sup>2</sup> Tim Roehl and Steve Ogne, *Keys to Great Coaching* (self-published), 25

To be intentional yet flexible allows you to adapt your game plan to best suit the person you're coaching. (103)

#### Seven Habits of Great Coaches (103)

1. Listen
2. Care (104)
3. Celebrate
4. Strategize (106)
5. Train
6. Disciple (107)
7. Challenge (108)

To truly coach someone to fit, flourish, and make their ultimate contribution for the Kingdom, we must constructively challenge them to be and do their best. We get them to confirm "next steps" so that they know they'll be accountable for what they do between coaching appointments.

#### G.R.O.W. (A Strategic Planning Approach) (108)

G: What Is the GOAL of Your Appointment?

R: What Is REALITY in This Situation? (109)

O: What Are Your OPTIONS? (112)

W: What WILL You Do? (113)

#### Our "4D Flow" Approach (A Spiritual Discernment Approach) (115)

Discern—Where is God Working? (116)

Discover—How Does He Want Me to Participate?

Develop—What Are the Next Steps? (117)

Depend—Whom Do I Need? (118)

Words like *teach*, *preach*, and *proclaim* are more commonly connected to ministry than are *listen*, *reflect*, and *ask*. (123) Of the seven habits, your top priority is to become a great listener. Empathetic listening makes a major contribution to a person's emotional bank account. People want to be heard. (124) As a coach, if I've listened to you but wound up taking the ball from your hands when it came to making choices, I haven't served you well. (128)

*Telling saves people from having to think. Asking questions causes them to think for themselves. —John Whitmore* (143)

#### What Questions Do for the Leader:

They value the leader.

They engage and involve the leader.

They center the discussion on the leader's world.

They release the leader's best reflections and insights. (144)

#### What Questions Do for the Coach:

They help the coach shut up and listen.

They empower the coach with information. (144)

They take the pressure off the coach.

Our goal as coaches is not to assume and provide answers anyway—it is to put healthy pressure on the leaders to think and discover the solutions in their situations.

They focus the appointment in a significant direction. (145)

*Doing ignores being. Developing skills becomes more important than shaping character.* (171)

The Arrow Leadership Program, founded by Leighton Ford, has a powerful vision statement for its Arrow leader” that beautifully expresses a transformist view of leadership.

“God calls us as Kingdom leaders to be led more **BY** Jesus, knowing Him and understanding His will; to lead more **LIKE** Jesus, enabling His people to be reconciling community; to lead more **TO** Jesus, serving His redemptive purposes in our generation.”<sup>4</sup>

As we coach leaders, one of the major issues we need to discern, describe, and develop with them is their motivation for ministry. (173)

Ministry failure most often results from character and inner-life deficiency, not a lack of ministry skills... (180)

**Self-Awareness** The issue of self-awareness is a major factor in a leader’s journey. Helping leaders get a sharper sense of clarity about both their “natural wiring” and their “supernatural empowering” will allow them to work with others much more effectively and also have a much better chance to fit and flourish in the ministry. (195)

**The Challenge of Empowering Postmodern Leaders** (215) A coach who is interested only in ministry effectiveness will not relate well to young and postmodern leaders. (216) “Postmoderns will work their heads off, but they need certain assurances: (1) that you care, (2) that there’s something in it for them, and (3) that they can make work, play”<sup>4</sup> “There’s too much information for people to know. So what you really know is your experience and who you relate to.”<sup>5</sup> (217) “Evidence is mounting that learning requires active participation...”<sup>6</sup> (218)

### Observations Regarding Young and Postmodern Leaders

1. **Values are more important than vision.** One of the first things good coaches can do is to help leaders clearly articulate their life and ministry values that form the foundation of their *call* to ministry and help them live out these values in an authentic Christian *community*. (219)
2. **Authenticity is more important than quality.** So...our coaching effectiveness is based on our ability to establish an authentic relationship. (220)
3. **Ministry is personal and relational, not programmatic or institutional.** (221)
4. **Ministry is more missional than attractional.**
5. **Success is measured by the experience, not the result.** (222) New-paradigm coaches will ask about how the values are being expressed rather than whether their vision was accomplished (223)
6. **Accountability is found in a community of leaders.** (224) “Postmoderns discover truth most effectively in highly interactive group settings in which there are real relationships.”<sup>8</sup>
7. **Bible story is more powerful than management theory.** They often respond better to narrative story than to a list of principles,... (225) It is better to use whole stories to instruct and guide than to use individual Scriptures as proof-texts to solve problems.<sup>9</sup>
8. **Young and postmodern leaders need holistic support.** (226) Young and postmodern leaders respect honest and direct communication. Remember, speak the truth in love. The coach’s answers are not their answers. Young and postmodern leaders learn best through their experience. If we do not let them experiment, we will disrupt their learning. Even failure is a learning experience. They often do ministry that is more right-brained and artistic than left-brained and logical, so creative expression is important to them. (227)

<sup>4</sup> Leighton Ford, Arrow Leadership Program lecture, January 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Leonard Sweet, *Soul Tsunami* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 125. .

<sup>5</sup> “Resuscitating Spiritual Passion,” *The Washington Times*, July 6, 2001, [www.elibrary.com](http://www.elibrary.com) (accessed January 23, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Dennis R. and Jan Rader, “The Three Little Pigs in a Postmodern World,” [www.mtsu.edu/~itconf/procedd98/drader.html](http://www.mtsu.edu/~itconf/procedd98/drader.html) (accessed January 23, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Earl Creps, “Disciplemaking in a Postmodern World,” *Enrichment Journal*, [www.ag.org/enrichmentjournal/200204/200204\\_052\\_discipling.cfm](http://www.ag.org/enrichmentjournal/200204/200204_052_discipling.cfm) (accessed January 23, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Tenny-Brittian, “Coaching the Postmodern Leader” 35

The most important thing a leader or coach can do to create a high-performance team is to provide a significant, aggressive challenge. (239) The primary coaching challenge for ministry teams is to maintain a shared vision and a high-performance challenge that will motivate team members. (242)

The “Seven Habits” for transformational Teams:

1. The number-one coaching skill is to listen.
2. The second coaching skill we learned is the ability to care. (251)
3. The third coaching skill is the ability to celebrate.
4. The fourth coaching skill is to strategize.
5. The fifth coaching skill is to train individuals to increase their personal mastery or skills. (252)
6. The sixth basic coaching skill is to develop character.
7. The seventh coaching skill is to challenge. (253)

Character Qualities That Earn You the Right to coach others: (261)

1. A coach with strong character is active spiritually.
2. A coach with strong character is personally secure.
3. A coach with strong character is growing both personally and professionally.
4. A coach with strong character has integrity in relationships. (262)