

The Blueprint For High-Performing Leaders

Self Study Course



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HELPING
GOOD LEADERS
BECOME GREAT

Session 14: Preview Best & Worst Case Scenarios

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 14, you will be able to:

- Effectively Preview Scenarios during Stage 4 of **C.O.R.E Performance Coaching**
- Lead conversations of best-case and worst-case outcomes
- Skillfully apply techniques that uncover game stopping beliefs and set people on a path of breakthrough performance

Reality Check

1. What stood out for you from **Session 13: Developing Plans & Action Steps?** Also note any successes, updates, or challenges you've encountered from the previous session. Jot down any improvements you'd like to make.

2. What plans/action steps have you made or adjusted since going through **Session 13: Developing Plans & Action Steps?**

3. Are you inspired by the plans that are being identified by your team? If not, where do they need your help in expanding their ability to think differently, bigger and/or more strategically?

Session 14 Lesson – Preview Best & Worst Case Scenarios

- Watch the video

This is probably the most overlooked step - with potentially disastrous consequences in planning and coaching. Not doing this step can set you back for months and is often linked to WHY people don't execute on a plan they seemed super excited about when they left your office!

Previewing scenarios gives people an opportunity to walk through the plan in all its potential glory (and gore!) in a safe haven. During this stage you have them imagine the ideal outcome of their plan, expressing out loud, how it would go if it played out perfectly. Doing this can reveal things they may not have thought of before, and create ideas for making the plan better. But for the most part it's a pre-celebration of an ideal outcome from solid planning!

Next — and immensely important — is to have them describe *what could go wrong* — or even *terribly wrong*! This stimulates thinking about how they would gracefully exit the situation, which allows them time to recover and plan to come back and achieve success on the next attempt. If our client is harboring a fear of disaster and does not have a safe place to work through it with a thought partner, we often see them either create a self-fulfilling train wreck that may be difficult to recover from, or, more commonly, do nothing at all.

Similar to discussing competing commitments, talking through possible outcomes is like taking out insurance against disaster. Other names for this stage are visioning, role-play rehearsals and scenario planning.

Key Principles Associated with Previewing Scenarios

Previewing involves looking at the outcomes from all perspectives: personal, business, systems and from the viewpoint of important stakeholders. We are looking to uncover blind spots, other opportunities and possible unintended effects of the plan. Keeping these perspectives in mind

will help prevent problems from occurring, or if they do, they are handled with emotional and social intelligence.

This is a very powerful way to increase the intensity of their commitment and ultimately, right action. When done effectively, people go through the scenario in their mind, so it's as if they've done it already. (In the brain, we have mirror neurons that, when triggered, don't distinguish between seeing an actual event, a picture of an event, or imagining an event.

It's why top athletes spend a lot of time going through their upcoming competition in their mind, envisioning every part of the course they're competing on, imagining a successful outcome on every aspect of their race.

Previewing worst-case scenarios helps people manage or even dissolve the fears of taking a risk, especially when there is potential for conflict.

An important element of this phase is to review assumptions and meaning-making. Remaining neutral helps you see where the person's beliefs are not in line with their actions. During the preview phase, assumptions and competing commitments may be revealed that were previously not discussed. This would be a good time to loop back to stage 3 and **Explore Assumptions and Possibilities**. You should not move forward until all assumptions and competing commitments are on the table.

This stage also allows you to determine whether the person you are working with is *ready, willing, able and fit*. Asking, "Where could this go terribly wrong?" or, "What's the worst case scenario?" helps you gauge if the person is indeed ready, willing, able and fit. It helps them get what they need to improve in the areas they are lacking. The key here is to explore all the ways it could go, both ideal and awful, and give them a forum to meaningfully discuss both.

In essence, when dealing with worst-case scenarios, you're helping the person develop their flexibility and footwork – plus their contingency plan! The more nimble they are at navigating land mines – especially in conflict – the better equipped they will be to come back and succeed another day, week, year and career.

Questions for Previewing Scenarios

Here are a couple of my "go to" questions:

- Imagine this as wildly successful: what would it look, feel and sound like?
- What is the ideal outcome?
- What is a best-case situation?
- What is the biggest concern you have?
- What could go wrong?
- If "X" or "Y" happens, what is the impact on you? Your team? For the organization?
- What will you do if it doesn't go as planned?
- What are you taking for granted (good and bad)?
- What will you do if it all falls apart?
- How will you gracefully exit?

Techniques and Tools for Previewing Scenarios

You want the person you are working with to be engaged and committed to their plans and action steps, so talking about the "best-case" scenario is very important in terms of eliciting fierce commitment. This also gets the person aligned and clear about the right actions needed to make it happen, i.e., following through with the plan.

Don't forget, you can unleash breakthrough behavior by taking time to discuss the worst-case scenario. The unexpressed fear of something not working out is oftentimes what stops someone from taking action, even if it's a seemingly ridiculous fear. If the person is prepared for the "worst-case" scenario, he will be more confident and better able to work through and conquer the misgivings which have stopped him cold in the past.

How Will you Know It's Successful?

- The person's energy and enthusiasm level will visibly increase.
- The person's clarity about exactly *what*, *how*, *who*, *why* and *by when* will increase.
- Capability increases because the person will feel well prepared.
- Confidence will get stronger.
- Adaptability and flexibility increases.

Outcomes of Previewing Scenarios

Previewing scenarios truly creates magic. This step exponentially increases the odds that the plan will be successful.

It gives the person the agility to handle quick shifts and gracefully accommodate unforeseen occurrences. It also provides them with courage to do things they normally wouldn't do.

Consequences of Skipping This Stage

All of the work that went into creating a successful plan will be threatened by an unidentified worst-case fear. You see it all the time: the most beautifully designed plans that never get followed through to success.

Another consequence of not previewing outcomes is that you lose the excitement that gets created in imaging the best-case scenario. That excitement can be all that is needed for someone to take the leap they haven't been brave enough to take in the past.

Mentally walking through the scenarios allows unforeseen things to surface. If you want to create a place where people can take chances and risks, it is very critical to preview possible outcomes.

What's ahead for Session 15

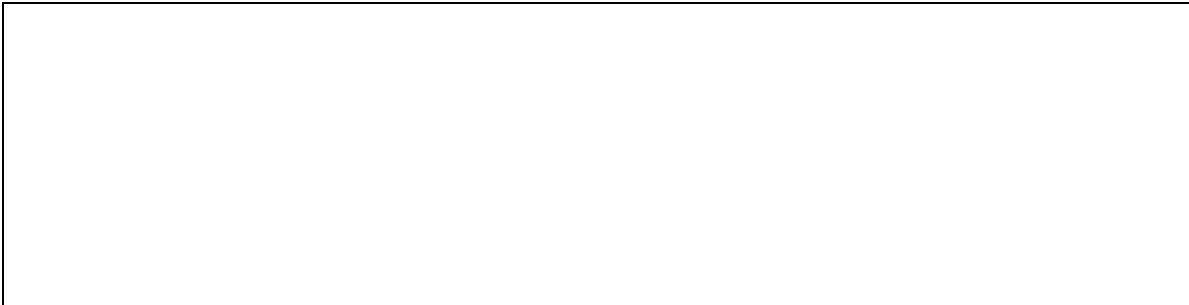
Get ready to learn about **Take Right Action**. In the next session, we'll show you how easy it is to get fierce commitment from your team to achieve right results.

Exercises:

1. Go to your personal Board of Directors and ask them to give you targeted feedback on your plans to lead your team to success. Show them the S.W.O.T. analysis (in the Bonus Section) for you, your team and your organization. Ask them to brainstorm with you to anticipate potential opportunities and pitfalls and how to gracefully navigate both.



2. Practice asking the following questions during the preview scenarios phase of your coaching or planning meetings:
 - a. What's the best-case outcome for this situation, meeting, challenge, or opportunity?



- b. What is the worst-case outcome? How will you gracefully manage the worst-case so you can return to win another day?



- c. What have you not thought of that could positively impact the outcome you are looking to achieve? What could surprise you?



Session 14: Preview Best & Worst Case Scenarios - Notes

The three most important things I learned from Session 14 are:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Here's how I plan to apply what I have learned:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Key Terms (See Glossary)

- **Preview Scenarios**

Extra Notes

