

The Blueprint For High-Performing Leaders

Self Study Course



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HELPING
GOOD LEADERS
BECOME GREAT

Session 4: C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching for Optimal Results & Effectiveness

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of Session 4, you will be able to:

- Identify your “go to” **Leadership Styles** and preferences
- Boost your effectiveness with the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**
- Improve your self-awareness, and initiate **self-coaching**

Reality Check

1. What did you notice or learn from doing the exercises in **Session 3: Lead Your Team through Right Action?**

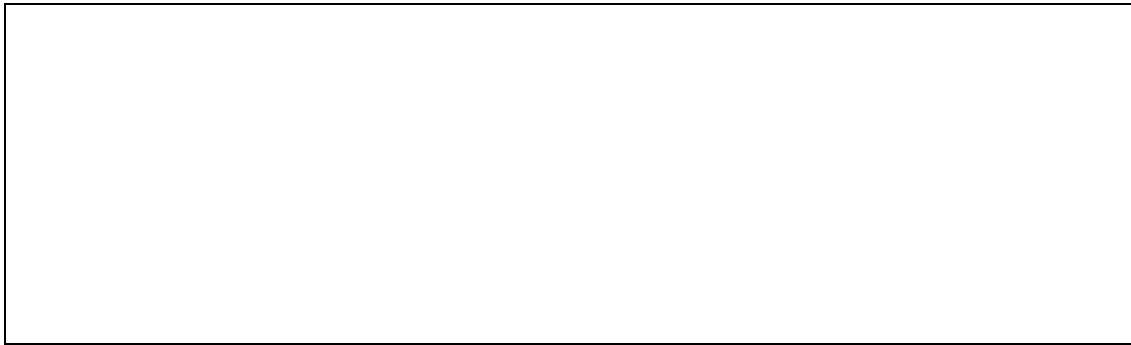
2. What changes have you made that will improve and align right action?

3. Now that you've asked yourself "Where do I spend most of my time?"

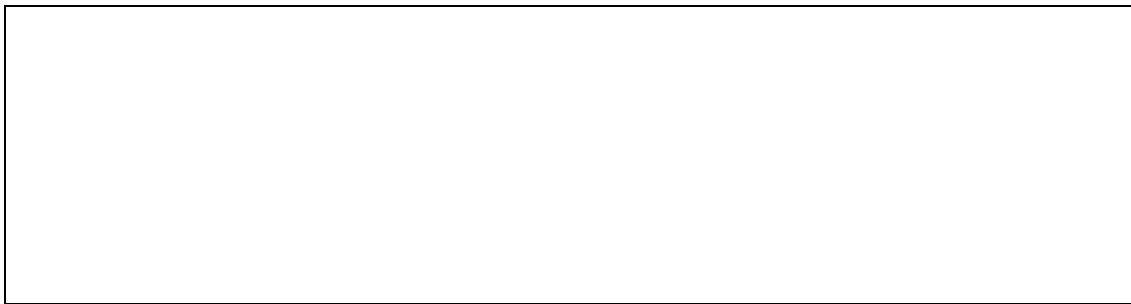
Take a look at your priorities...what should get more time? Be honest, if I were to look at your calendar today, what would it tell me about your priorities (what matters most to you)? Hint: what has the most calendar entries?

4. What would it be like if everyone on your team was 'showing up' engaged every day?

5. How big is the gap between your ideal vision of yourself as a leader vs. where you are now? Make a note of an area to focus and improve on by using your strengths.



6. Write down 1 – 3 things you are doing differently since beginning this course, that are positively impacting your effectiveness and the performance of your team.



Session 4 Lesson: C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching for Optimal Results & Effectiveness

- Watch the video

Think of a time you've been in the company of a leader who brought out the best in people – what did they do that created such fierce commitment to the right results? How fun and rewarding was it to be in their company?

It's really a combination of who they are, how they lead, who they attract on the team, and the way they coach people to be highly competent at creating smart solutions that work for all stakeholders. And, when it's impossible to have wins all the way around, the best leaders coach their team on how to gracefully manage the situation, communicate it well, take their hits with dignity, dust themselves off and move towards the ideal vision and results that everyone signed up for.

Your Leadership Style

How are you leading your people? We all have our “go to” leadership style that likely hasn’t been well thought out – especially in a crisis! Top leaders figure out which style will be most effective given the situation and what they are trying to accomplish or evoke from the team.

According to Daniel Goleman, Richard E. Boyatzis and Annie McKee, authors of *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*, there are six distinct styles of Leadership:

- **Directive:** Immediate compliance. Giving orders, or telling someone what to do. (Jeff Bezos)
- **Visionary:** Providing long-term direction and vision for employees. Inspiring action through personal and professional vision. (Steve Jobs – Apple)
- **Affiliative:** Creating harmony among employees and between the manager and employees. Fostering a harmonious environment. (Tony Hsieh – Zappos)

- **Participative:** Building active involvement among employees that results in generating new ideas and solutions. Collaborating to achieve a goal. (Eileen McDonnell – Penn Mutual)
- **Pace-setting:** Accomplishing tasks to high standards of excellence. Setting high standards that challenge the team to keep up. (Richard Branson – Virgin Airlines)
- **Coaching:** Long-term professional development of employees. Determining how to help people address their strengths and challenges and create a development plan to help them achieve their potential. (Christine Lagarde)

Depending on the situation, you likely use each of these leadership styles. But for the most part, you probably have a couple of favorites that you lean on and possibly...overuse. Do note, under certain business conditions, every leadership style has its place. But anything in extreme or overused becomes a liability.

Of course, people respond differently to these six types of leadership styles. And different situations (urgency, risk, employee experience, expertise and talent) will require a different style or blend of leadership styles. The more nimble you are at using each style at just the right time, for the right situation, the more compelling and effective you will be as a leader.

If you would like to know your leadership style, go to our website; www.McCauleyandco.com and get your custom report.

The leadership styles that this book will help you develop are **visionary, participative** and **coaching**, with more emphasis on coaching vs. the other two. As a leader who also coaches your team, you want to help people develop self-generating behavior, giving them the ability to self-motivate, self-correct and self-coach.

This is why coaching is the preferred method of leaders with high-performing teams. It is the best way to evoke self-initiated, high quality performance behaviors and results from your people.

The 3 C's of Coaching

There are three core competencies you need to master in order to effectively coach your team. They are easy to remember because we call them the "**3 C's:**"

1. Connect

It's important to set up an environment where people know they matter - no phone calls during your meetings, no checking e-mails or allowing interruptions (unless they are urgent). Giving your full attention will allow your team to connect with and trust you, which allows you to challenge them to be their best. When you're not fully present, don't care about, or are not focusing on the other person, you are not able to make an effective connection.

Connection is the required foundation for building trust and credibility. Without it, your efforts to coach someone will be wasted. Hint: find something you can connect with for every person on your team!

2. Clarity

This is about asking specific questions to help the person get clear on what they really want, what's in the way, or what they are trying to accomplish. Without clarity, you have no traction for your leadership purpose or for coaching your team to do their best.

Some examples of clarity questions are:

- What needs to happen in the next 3 months so you can look back and say "This was a really great 3 months?"
- What would accomplishing this mean to you?
- What could get in the way of having your best quarter ever?
- What is the biggest challenge facing you now?

It is essential to take the time to ask these questions, and have the people you're coaching say exactly what is important to them. Nailing this process will have a huge impact on the effectiveness of your people. Once a person is clear on what matters to them, everything else magically seems to fall into place. Most people spin their wheels working on the wrong things because no one took the time to get clear on what matters most and why.

3. Commit

Commitment is about making a promise to take next steps, but it's more than just saying, "I'll do X." They need to get specific and have the "I'm in!" attitude. Do get clear on exactly what

the person is saying they will do and when it will be done, but also make sure their heart is in the promise. Remember to ask "What's important about this?"

Being aware of and practicing these three C's will help you bring out the best in your team.

Keep these in mind as you start using the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**. For now, don't worry about getting these "right." You have three more sessions coming up where you'll get a deeper understanding of each of the 3 C's.

Five Stages of the C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model

Make note: When I am hired to coach someone, there is implied consent for me to dig in and get personal, for example, to inquire about the situation, rattle their cage, offer advice, challenge them, give feedback and explore controversial possibilities and outcomes. Everyone on our team, myself included, is committed to airtight confidentiality (unless someone could be at risk physically or involved in a crime).

But as a leader, there are certainly times when coaching is not appropriate. Be sure to ask... sometimes you'll find a person could be venting and just in need of an ear!

I recommend that you ask for permission before diving into coaching. If you suspect they are venting, ask, "Is this what you'd like to spend the next 15 minutes on?" Or, "Would you like coaching on this matter?"

Once you have permission, start using these five phases of the **C.O.R.E. Performance Model**. This powerful process is designed to get results and will create long-term self-sufficiency for whomever you are coaching. Never mind that your job will get much easier!

Two things about this model – start wherever you need to; you don't need to go through every stage, every time. If you make a mistake, don't worry, the person you are working with will correct you and tell you the right way to do it (without even knowing they're helping you get better)!

The C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model

C.O.R.E. represents Coaching for Optimal Results & Effectiveness. It includes five stages as illustrated in the following diagram.



- Initiate Discovery
- Explore Assumptions & Possibilities
- Develop Plans and Action Steps
- Preview Best and Worst Case Scenarios
- Take Right Action

**Adapted from Mike Jay “Coach 2 The Bottom Line”*

1. *Initiate Discovery*

As with most things in life, how you start something will dramatically influence how it turns out! In the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**, you need a good starting point for a productive conversation. Let the person being coached decide what to work on, you can help guide them in several ways by having them share the following;

- What are you hoping to accomplish through our coaching over the next 6 months?
- What would you like to focus on?
- What is the most pressing, or challenging issue you are facing right now?

In the first phase of coaching, you initiate discovery of key issues. The person you are coaching determines the topic of their coaching conversation and your job is to dig deeper to help them gain clarity on the issue.

For example, once you've confirmed or had them create goals you could ask, "What will you need to achieve during the next 3-6 months that would indicate you are on track with your goals?"

Another strong coaching opening is, "What would you like to focus on during this time for it to be a successful meeting for you?"

Don't be surprised if they respond with "I have no idea!" 99% of our coaching meetings go exactly that way; it is our job to ask questions that get them to laser in on what matters most, is most pressing, or is most distracting.

During the Initiate Discovery phase of a recent coaching session with Jeff, a key issue was revealed. Jeff's boss gave him feedback that he was being "too emotional." So, his coach gave him an assignment to write down the things that sent him into orbit. As Jim began using this tool, he found that if he wrote things down, instead of expressing his frustration in the moment, he not only gained perspective, but also became better at appropriately working through issues, challenges and surprises for positive outcomes with his team. He immediately became

We recommend asking your people to fill out our ***Coach Prep Form*** in the Bonus Section, before coming to a coaching meeting with you. Another potent option is to ask them to regularly review each day and jot down an event that stands out to them as remarkable, either in a positive or negative light. You will also find a ***Daily Progress Checklist*** in the Bonus Section.

When you meet for coaching, you can ask, "Which one or two events this week indicated a small win, a possible breakthrough, or a setback? Give me a brief description."

In any case, you need to put the person being coached in charge. Putting the focus on them and allowing them to set their own agenda will have a powerful impact right from the start.

A note of caution: Be wary, the day-to-day supervisory types of conversations can quickly sneak in and take over your coaching conversations. It's much less risky to discuss "How many sales appointments do you need next week to hit your goal?" vs. "What is the biggest challenge facing you now?" Or, "What stopped you from getting the 10 referrals you committed to during our last meeting?"

For more questions, refer to the **C.O.R.E Performance Coaching Questions** in the Bonus Section.

2. Explore Assumptions and Possibilities

Many times we jump to conclusions about situations and events without examining our assumptions. The danger of this is spending time, energy and resources working on the wrong things! (See the ***Ladder of Inference*** in the Bonus Section). Before getting to solutions, your job

is to help them look at what they want to accomplish, their beliefs about it (positive and negative) and the different ways it could be realized - especially ways they haven't already thought of. Have them confirm it's worth their precious attention, energy and time.

As best you can, do this from a neutral perspective, without judgment or opinion. This can be very tricky, especially if you are an expert and have a lot of experience in the area they have asked for coaching on! This requires true discipline, active listening and curious questioning. The biggest challenge our clients report when first using this model is giving the person they are coaching enough time to answer the questions vs. jumping in, answering and directing.

We recommend the 90/10 rule (90% listening, 10% talking)! It is a tremendous show of respect to really listen to a person. The best leaders are vigilant listeners to their stakeholders, the themes of their team, spoken and unspoken attitudes, plus the world at large.

The single most powerful question you can ask someone after they state what they want to focus on is, "What's important about this?" This question brings out the things that matter most and gets people to reflect on what's worth their attention.

Here are more strong questions for this stage of the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model:**

- What would be ideal?
- What have you tried so far?
- What options have you thought of?
- What could get in the way?

Let them begin to identify the assumptions and possibilities for making a change or creating a solution. Your coaching objective is to stir them up and explore a number of different options, especially those not yet considered.

3. Develop Plans and Action Steps

In this next phase, it is time to narrow it down to "what is the plan" and take action on it. Ask them which idea they would like to move forward on after Exploring Assumptions & Possibilities. What can be done to execute and move forward on the possibilities they came up with? For example, imagine you are coaching someone whose team has been given a 50% increase in their sales objectives for the next quarter. Here are some of the plans they have

come up with:

- Brainstorm with the entire team and ask, "How will we do this together?" Get their ideas and recommendations
- Meet with select high producing team members and ask for their ideas and commitments
- Prepare and deliver communications that inspire and focus vs. deflate and distract
- Create an accountability checklist that involves what will be done, by whom and by when. Each team member will keep track of their project/task and issue a report every two weeks

Have your team list possible action steps: what are we going to do and why, who might get in the way, who will be an advocate, and how they will handle both situations. Now they can begin to formulate the plan – who will do what, by when and why? The power of this stage is having the person or people you are coaching come up with the solutions. This creates more ownership and engagement versus if they are told what to do. If the plan stinks, they are less likely to blame you and will go back to the drawing board to adjust the plan so it will work.

One of my partners was frustrated by a group we were leading, feeling they were being disrespectful to each other by glancing at and responding to smartphone messages. This had never happened before and my colleague went on a bit of a rant, reprimanding the group.

*We got together to use the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model** with ourselves. After going through the model and discussing what had happened, he realized that in fact, we had set the group up for that kind of behavior: we hadn't given them long enough breaks and this is a group that needs to be in regular contact with their people. So in essence, we caused the behavior we didn't want to see!*

We developed a plan and took action. Once we gave long enough breaks, we never saw the behavior again.

4. Preview Best and Worst-Case Scenarios

This is probably the most overlooked step (with significant consequences) in planning and coaching. This step is what all successful professional athletes do – they visualize the best-case scenario, practicing in their mind the exact steps they will take to secure their world title. Invite

the person you are coaching to take one of their plans from ***Develop Plans and Actions Steps*** and have them walk you through that scenario, expressing their vision of ideal success.

- What needs to happen in order for you to consider it wildly successful?
- What will you and others be saying, thinking and doing when this gets accomplished?

Next, have them describe the worst-case scenario, their worst fears (even a disaster), and carry it through until they see themselves gracefully exiting the situation to come back and fight the good fight another day.

- What is the worst that can happen here?
- What is your plan should that happen?

You will be amazed at what occurs from a worst-case scenario conversation. Many times people laugh about the preposterous scenarios that have been stopping them from taking the right next steps. Speaking about fears or concerns in a safe environment often makes them disappear. Even more importantly, being prepared for the worst allows you to handle it gracefully should it pop up.

The purpose here is to determine what needs to be put in place to help ensure that great outcomes occur. And, also to consider what needs to happen so that the worst-case scenario can be tactfully avoided or even salvaged. Previewing scenarios is like taking out insurance for disasters.

The number one reason people do not do what they promise is because they have a worst-case scenario locked in their brain, which causes them to flake on their commitments – it's called survival of the species. Make no mistake; an ego threat can be just as show-stopping as a physical threat. This stage allows you to help them gracefully manage an ego threat.

5. Take Right Action

Now's the time for you and/or whoever you are coaching to execute the plan. What do they promise to do and by when? How will they keep track of their commitments and their team's commitments?

Be sure to keep the idea of right action in mind as you go through this process. What is the right action for the organization and the people involved in the situation? Are the right people doing the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, for the right reason? What's out of alignment that if corrected could be a game changer for the person you are coaching?

The beauty of this **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model** is that even if you deliver it completely wrong, the person you are coaching will correct you (without even realizing it). Based on your questions, they will identify the right opportunity, possibility and assumptions, ideal plan, next steps, best- and worst-case scenarios and promise of what they'll do next! You just have to focus on asking the questions that will reveal what matters most and needs their attention. Remember, you can dive in at any stage, depending on where you are starting with someone. The person who comes to you may already have identified events and explored possibilities, so you can jump right into the planning stage.

The more you coach with this **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**, the more your team will learn to coach themselves. It takes practice to get good at it, so start now! For those who are reluctant to try new things and are waiting until they can be perfect at it, consider that the faster you fail (or do it less than perfectly), the faster you will be able to learn from your failures or lack of perfection and quickly move on to success.

This is such a powerful mindset; it deserves to be repeated, so here it is again:

The faster you fail, the faster you'll learn from your failures and move on to success.
~ Mike Jay, Business Coach

Five Critical Coaching Abilities

1. Listening

Most people say they're good listeners, but truth be told, they are awful. Most of us do not practice listening in its purest form. Rather than being present and focused, we are often forming our responses and simply waiting for our turn to speak (or worse: checking a smart phone, looking at the computer, or taking calls during meetings). Sound like anyone you know?

Just as bad, we sometimes hear only what we want to hear! True listening is a discipline worth practicing. Work on being present and focused, try to quiet the noise in your mind and tune into what the other person is saying. This isn't easy! Keep practicing.

2. Observing

An objective observer can detect where a person's "walk and talk" don't match. They notice what is happening far sooner than most and realize early on when trouble or opportunity is brewing. This is very important, because if there is a discrepancy with someone you are working with, chances are the person is not aware of it. As an observer, what could you bring to your team's attention that would have a huge impact on their effectiveness? What could you help each person discover about their own actions and the positive/negative impact and subsequent consequences?

3. Discerning

There may be something going on that is not visible or obvious, but careful questioning will bring it to light. It's about detecting the undercurrent of what a person is saying. Think about this in terms of right action – what are you doing or not doing that undermines your objective?

During one of our leadership programs one of our participants, Sarah, got feedback that she had a discounting attitude when dealing with situations where she didn't agree with what was being said. In my dealings with Sarah, she seemed deeply devoted to excellence, cared immensely about the success of her team and was eager to be connected with like-minded people. Because she had spent several days with our team and her peers at a leadership program for handpicked successors, I was able to see her in situations where she didn't agree and observe her behavior.

Unbeknownst to her, whenever she didn't agree, she would get a look on her face that read like the person talking couldn't have been more of an idiot if they tried. Once I pointed that out to her, she was able to catch herself and correct the behavior so as not to insult the people she was trying to positively influence!

4. Modeling

As a leader, you need to do the things you are asking people to do! Be the model of what you and your organization expect from top talent and high performers. Are you following through on the things that you say matter? For example, if you say it is important to be on time, are you always on time? Are you modeling the standards that you hold your team accountable to? Have you set clear standards for yourself and your organization?

One of the ways a leader creates high-performing teams is by modeling non-judgmental language. The way you say things will get picked up by others and they will begin using similar expressions. In the same way that your moods and emotions are contagious, so is your language.

As you practice the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**, you'll become more proficient at being a neutral observer and curious questioner. Don't be surprised when your team starts using similar behaviors and language!

5. Delivery

This refers to how and when you communicate the news. Our responsibility as leaders is to deliver information at a time and in a way that people can process it. Don't be too harsh, nor too light. Be appropriate to the timing and situation.

Giving people tough feedback is like throwing a cactus and saying, "Catch!" The catcher is in so much pain, they are unable to think about anything else. In contrast, throwing something less prickly allows the person to catch it with less threat, and to think more consciously about what they just heard. Unintentional as it may be, sometimes the feedback you give can make people feel like a cactus was just thrown at their head! You also may have delivered it well, but at the wrong time, which could send people into a tailspin.

Begin working on these five skills and practicing the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model** (see Appendix) with your team today.

Self-Coaching

The moment you start using the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model** with your team, you'll start catching yourself going through similar stages with your own thinking! To that end, here are some self-coaching questions to help you sort out right action for yourself as you go through your week.

Questions for **self-coaching** using the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**

1. What needs your attention?
2. What's most important for you to focus on?
3. What have you tried so far?
4. What's distracting you?
5. What are your assumptions?
6. What are some alternative possibilities?
7. What can you do now?
8. Walk yourself through a best-case scenario – what will an ideal outcome look, sound and feel like?
9. Now take the opposite stance and walk yourself through a worst-case scenario.
10. How will you exit the situation gracefully if it should fail?
11. Take a look at elements of right action: What's in alignment? What's out of alignment?
12. What action will you take now? Then what?
13. How will you measure results and what evidence will indicate success?

Coaching Tips

In our complex world, it's almost impossible for you to be effective without a system. Coaching is no different.

As you practice the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**, try to be relaxed in your approach, and expect to feel awkward at first. Focus on being present, natural and allowing the person's responses to guide your questions. The beauty of our model is that your questions will have people so deeply engaged in self-discovery, they will not even notice you!

Please note, when you first start you may need to be somewhat formal and formulaic because this is such a new process. With time and experience, it will come more naturally.

Insider secret: I have successfully used the same first question with hundreds of clients on every meeting for over a decade – “What would you like to focus on during this meeting?” When I ask people who have worked with me for years to share with a group, what’s the first question I always ask...they don’t ever remember. Why? Because they are so deeply engaged in the question when it is asked, they are not focused on me, they are focused on responding to the question.

What's Ahead for Session 5

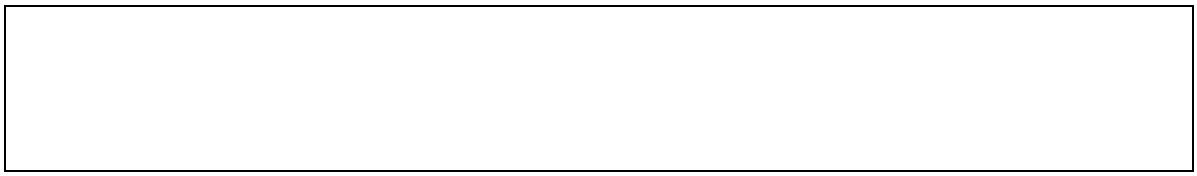
Get ready to learn about **Influencing People to Change**. We will show you how to break through the most challenging coaching situations and get to high-performance!

Exercises:

1. Consider which of the six styles of leadership you are drawn to most naturally. Which ones take more of a conscious effort?

Six Leadership Styles	Natural or Takes Effort?
• Directive: Immediate compliance. Giving orders, or telling someone what to do.	
• Visionary: Providing long-term direction and vision for employees. Inspiring action through personal and professional vision.	
• Affiliative: Creating harmony among employees and between the manager and employees. Fostering an amiable environment.	
• Participative: Building commitment among employees and generating new ideas. Collaborating to achieve a goal.	
• Pace-setting: Accomplishing tasks to high standards of excellence. Setting high standards to challenge the team to keep up.	
• Coaching: Long-term professional development of employees. Determining how to help people address their strengths and challenges and create a development plan to help them achieve their potential.	

Which of these 6 leadership styles do you need to add to your current “go to” style to have the greatest impact on your team's performance?



2. Review where you are now against your **year-to-date goals** – be honest – are you ahead, behind, or on pace? What needs to be adjusted, if anything?

3. Who will you begin practicing the coaching model with? Please see Bonus Section for **coaching questions** for each stage of the C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model.

4. Review and complete the **Coaching Prep Form** in the Bonus Section. This will help you keep track of what matters to you and your progress. Please also use this form when coaching your team, as it will make the discussion more robust and meaningful, and generate powerful outcomes.

Session 4: C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching for Optimal Results & Effectiveness - Notes

The three most important things I learned from Session 4 are:

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

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

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

Key Terms (See Glossary)

- **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**
- **The 3 C's of Coaching**
- **5 Key Abilities of High-Performance Coaching**

Extra Notes...

