

# The Blueprint For High-Performing Leaders

Self Study Course



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HELPING  
GOOD LEADERS  
BECOME GREAT

## Session 5: Influence People to Change

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of Session 5, you will be able to:

- Coach your team where their **walk is out of sync with their talk**
- Uncover **competing commitments** to create breakthrough performance
- Leverage **three stages of learning**
- Distinguish **behavior vs. belief challenges** to get lasting results

### Reality Check

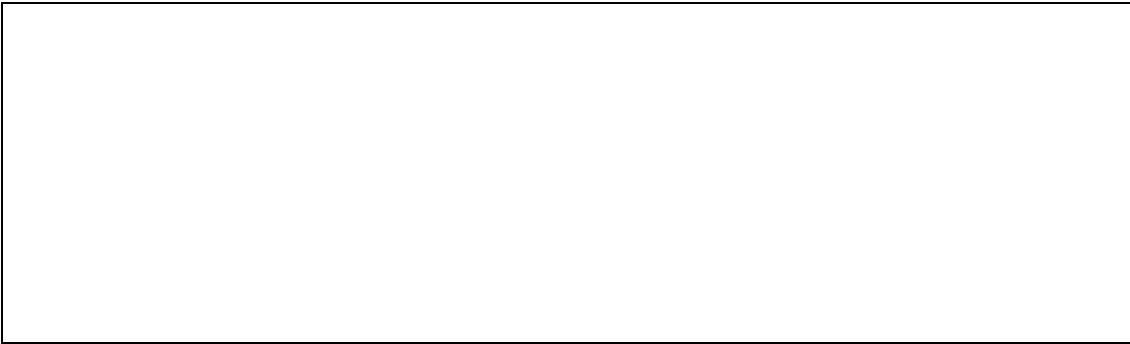
1. What did you learn from **Session 4: C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching** about yourself and/or your team? Also note any successes, changes, updates or challenges you've encountered from the previous Session.

2. How did people react to you when you used the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model** with them? What about the model worked out well? Where do you need to do some fine tuning?

3. What impact did the coaching prep form have on the efficiency and effectiveness of your meetings?

4. What feedback have you gotten from your Board of Advisors?

5. Are you noticing where right action is missing anywhere within your team or organization? If so, what do you need to manage, change or shift to get it in place?



## Session 5 Lesson: Influence People to Change

- Watch the video

### What You Say vs. What You Do

Have you ever heard someone complaining that they really want something, saying they work really hard on achieving it, and yet you see them doing the opposite of what's required to make it happen? I used to scratch my head and wonder...

*In sales, people talk about how they're really committed to getting more clients and help more people, yet they don't do nearly enough prospecting. Others say nothing is more important than their family, and then constantly check their smart phones at home, even during meal times.*

*I once worked for a company that sold a referral-based prospecting system. As part of the process, a salesperson would ask their clients to sign personal note cards making a recommendation and introduction to their friends or associates. The next step was for our client to mail the cards to the potential prospect and call to get an appointment. I was visiting a client who was not having success with the system, he opened his desk to get a pen and there in his drawer were 20 referral cards all signed and ready to go... but he never mailed them out! I was stunned, and he couldn't explain why he was holding onto them.*

Our lives are full of examples of people not walking their talk. We do it ourselves, only we don't easily see it. This session will change that for you, so be prepared to open your eyes!

*Espoused Theory*, created by Chris Argyris and Donald Schon <sup>1</sup> refers to what people say they believe or what they are committed to in their lives. *Theory in Use* is how they act based on that belief. When these two are out of alignment, a person is not "walking their talk."

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<sup>1</sup> *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*, Josse Bass, 1992

An example would be when someone says they want to lose weight and then makes unhealthy food choices like regularly eating burgers and fries. Another example would be someone who says they want more sales, but fails to ask good clients to recommend them to friends or colleagues.

What's most confusing is that people don't recognize when *what they say* and *what they do* are out of alignment! They simply don't realize that what they *say* they believe is dramatically different from what they *do*.

It's important to be aware of this in both yourself and your team members. Don't let yourself off the hook! Are there things you say you believe in that you don't act on? If you really want to know where this may be happening in your world, ask other people to point it out to you. (I dare you! It can be upsetting at first, but wonderfully liberating!)

Can you identify where what you say and what you do are out of alignment with your team? With your own goals? How about in your organization?

Let's say a salesperson talks about the importance of prospecting, yet one look at his calendar shows there is zero time booked for this activity. Amazingly something always comes up that destroys any time set for prospecting. The fear of prospecting is not uncommon in the world of sales, and you can see how the beliefs and actions in this case would not match.

In a coaching situation, if someone's behaviors and beliefs are out of alignment, you can gently bring it to the person's attention. You could say something like, "I notice you said X, but you actually did Y – what are your thoughts about that?" Your job when coaching is to be curious, not to accuse someone of doing something wrong. ***Be a neutral observer, not a judge.*** There are plenty of judges in the world, what people need are success partners, not another person telling them what's wrong about them.

If someone feels accused or threatened, their defenses will go up. Our human brains do not distinguish the difference between a physical threat and an ego threat. Both elicit the same "fight or flight" response, which of course will impact and impair a person's actions.

Faced with questions from a genuinely curious person, however, people are less inclined to have a defensive reaction. This connects them to you and allows you to lay the groundwork for them to self-coach.



## Competing Commitments

This begs the question... why would any intelligent human being say they are committed to doing one thing, and then go do the opposite? For that matter, why do we set goals and then let them slide? Why is it so hard to "walk our talk"? After all, none of us feels good when this happens; we don't set out to fail or be disingenuous.

The answer lies in a concept called *competing commitments*. This idea comes from Harvard professors Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, and you can learn about it in their book, *Immunity to Change*.

Once we understand and accept that we quite often have conflicting desires, it's easier to find work-arounds and to be successful with our goals. For more on how to use this concept when formulating your goals, refer to the Bonus Section.

A typical example happens every year when many people set New Year's resolutions to lose weight and go to the gym. They may do fine for the first month. Then things go back to the way they were before the New Year. Why? Because as much as we want to lose weight and get fit, we also want to have fun, go out, spend time with family and friends and enjoy life.

Is there a way to have both? We say, "Why not?" with the caveat that you need to go through the **C.O.R.E Performance Coaching Model** to figure it out! We have extensive experience witnessing people doing just that – having their cake and eating it too.

*I am embarrassed to admit this, but when I first started my leadership consulting firm I came face-to-face with a competing commitment that stopped me in my tracks. One of the things I was committed to was being the best coach I could possibly be for my clients. I was enrolled in my second year of a great coaching program through B-Coach.com. As part of the program we were asked to coach every week in front of our peers. At the time I was considered a super star in the world of coaches because I had quickly built a 6-figure practice and had made it look easy.*

*When I took myself through the competing commitments model, I realized I was letting my peers volunteer to coach each other and get feedback, while I watched and gave feedback from the shadows. It turned out that my ego wanted me to let my peers think I was a great coach, vs. proving them wrong by goofing up in front of them.*

*Before going through the competing commitments model, I was more committed to looking good in front of my peers than risking looking like a fool in order to get better for my clients. Once I discovered that my walk was out of synch with my talk, I immediately began volunteering. No, it wasn't easy, but I was more committed to my clients than to my vanity!*

It's human nature to take the path of least resistance. Then we fool ourselves into believing we're working hard, but perhaps not on the right things. When we try to change those routines, we're not prepared to face the powerful magnet of our previous habits.

When we're aware of how strong this force is, and when we face our competing commitments, we can *inoculate* ourselves. We are able to push on in spite of it. When you acknowledge competing commitments, you can create a foolproof plan for keeping your new goals *and* changing your old habits and routines.

When coaching someone on your team who says he wants to accomplish a goal, yet misses the mark by doing behaviors that don't match the goal, ask him to look at the competing commitments that might be getting in the way. Observe without judgment, and coach him to greater self-awareness and goal accomplishment.

For some examples of how competing commitments impede progress on goals, see the Bonus Section. You can use the grid to discover your own hidden commitments.

### **3 Stages of Learning**

Have you ever wondered why you remember some things well, others only vaguely, and still others not at all? Some of our most important life lessons are learned well after we've left school, after our formal training is finished. When we're on the job in real life, things seem to matter a whole lot more. So we remember better.

People learn at different levels, all the way from superficial (memorization), to profound personal transformation.

Here are some examples to think about when you're trying to adopt new behaviors. We'll start with Stage 3 learning, because this is what we want to occur in coaching.



*Stage 3 learning* occurs when a person has completely transformed their way of thinking about a certain situation. An example would be a salesperson falling in love with prospecting, rather than fearing and avoiding it. Instead of merely acting differently, they hold a new set of beliefs about getting new clients.

With *Stage 2 learning*, there is a shift in what they do and how they think, but not a shift in their values and the way they see the world. So, while they wouldn't have gone from 'fearing' to 'loving' prospecting, our salesperson would have started to examine what's getting in the way of accomplishing his sales goals or what's the best way to accomplish them, i.e., "My best sources for prospecting come from speaking engagements, so I will book three speaking engagements per month." This type of learning is more about examining *how* people think about something and becoming aware of what else is possible. It's working smarter vs. harder.

*Stage 1 learning* is more about what's on the surface, or the practical solutions to a problem. For instance, if a company needs more sales, they may simply direct their sales team to do more prospecting, regardless of any resistance or difficulties an individual salesperson may have. There is a shift in behavior (usually short lived), but not in thinking.

### **Behavior vs. Belief Challenges**

Another way of looking at stages of learning when leading people, is the idea of *behavior vs. belief challenges*. Einstein said that formulating a problem (being able to describe it) is just as important as finding the solution. He said "If I have an hour to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions."

When you formulate a problem, ask, "Is this a behavior problem, solved by changing *what* someone *does*? Or a belief challenge, solved by *changing the mindset* of the *person with the problem*?"

A problem is behavioral when it is solved by learning a new way of *doing* something. A problem is more complicated when it requires *thinking* in a new way. Thinking in a new way puts attention on the person and opens up an entire world of possibilities. This is where transformation occurs before your very eyes!

Ronald A. Heifetz, who researches and writes about adaptive leadership, says the biggest error leaders make is when they try behavioral solutions to solve belief challenges.

If a person isn't meeting performance measures, is it a problem of *doing*, such as not making enough prospecting calls? Perhaps they're not saying the right things when they *do* get a potential prospect on the line? Or is it because there are competing commitments, for example, a desire to protect themselves from experiencing rejection? Do they need to change their behavior or their beliefs, or both?

When you're working with your team, remember to keep their motives and needs at the forefront. Do not ignore any discrepancies between *what they say* and *what they do*, or keep trying to make someone do something they are not truly engaged with, capable of, or committed to.

Always ask yourself, are you more committed to their success than they are? If yes, you will work too hard and get very little return on investment for your time and effort. Your efforts are better spent elsewhere!

### **What's Ahead for Session 6**

Get ready to learn about **Connect to Encourage Shifts & Success**. We will show you ways to continually transform your team's performance.

## Exercises:

1. Be looking for situations where what someone says and what they do is out of alignment within your team. Write down a couple of examples from your team.

2. Take note of where what you say and what you do is out of alignment in your own life.

3. How will formulating a problem as a behavior vs. belief challenge impact how you coach?

4. What are some of the competing commitments that you and your team encounter that pull people back to unsuccessful routines and habits?

## Session 5: Influence People to Change - Notes

The three most important things I learned from Session 5 are:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

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

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Terms** (See Glossary)

- **3 Stages of Learning**
- **Behavior vs. Belief Challenges**
- **Competing Commitments**

Extra Notes...

