

The Blueprint For High-Performing Leaders

Self Study Course



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HELPING
GOOD LEADERS
BECOME GREAT

Session 6: Connect to Encourage Shifts & Success

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of Session 6, you'll be able to:

- Create **connection to unleash performance and results**
- Shift relationships through **connecting**
- Identify the best ways to connect
- Recognize the indicators of connection

Reality Check

1. What did you learn from **Session 5: Influence People to Change?** Note any changes, updates, and challenges you've encountered from the previous Session. Jot down any improvements you'd like to make.



2. What type of person do you work best with? Is that because of you or them? (Hint: There is a *stage 3 learning opportunity* in this question!) If it is them, how can you attract more people who are right for your team?

3. Did you discover a discrepancy between what people say and what they do that is keeping you or someone on your team from achieving goals? What is your plan to manage that?

4. Think about the best boss you've ever had – what made this person such a good boss? What kind of environment did this boss create? What kind of behaviors did he or she model? What were you like when you worked for them? How was your level of energy, enthusiasm and engagement?

Write down what you would consider to be the top five qualities of your best boss:

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

5. Now think back to the worst boss you ever had. What were you like when you worked for them? Write down the five worst qualities this person had:

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

(The Best Boss/Worst boss exercise is also included in the Bonus Section).

Session 6 Lesson – Connect to Encourage Shifts & Success

- Watch the video

The Purpose of Connection

What one thing will spark the kind of deep self-reflection that is necessary to transform a person's way of thinking and thus, their behaviors? Trust me on this: you won't get very far with influencing others to change unless you connect with them in a truly authentic and meaningful way.

Connection is the key to coaching for the kinds of results that are transformational. And it is only through this transformation that you'll evoke the behaviors that lead to a high performing and happy team.

In relation to coaching, the **definition of connection** is this:

A true coaching connection means linking with another person on a series of levels to create the opportunity for understanding, discovery, exploration, and forwarding of actions.

As a leader, you have three key roles:

1. To create and **communicate a compelling vision** and mission for the organization, division or team.
2. To ethically and profitably usher the organization, division or team towards **accomplishing the vision and mission**.
3. To create an environment that allows people to **engage their personal and professional best**, every day.

True connection creates an environment where you can trust the talents of your team, and your own wisdom. Your team can trust you to coach them to achieve their best, while telling them the truth in a way that leaves them feeling served, rather than offended.

Connection Creates:

- **A sense of safety:** Innovation cannot occur without taking risks, and a person cannot take risks if they do not feel safe.
- **Deep learning:** Connection is needed to cultivate stage 2 and stage 3 learning.
- **Lowered resistance and defensiveness:** Remember, the body has the same fight or flight reaction to both physical and ego-based threats. If someone feels threatened, nothing good can happen. Connection lowers the other person's defenses about what you are telling them, especially if you are giving them feedback that is difficult to hear.
- **A deepened level of discovery and exploration:** Connection allows you to engage people on a variety of levels, such as emotional, intellectual and even spiritual, which significantly improves your ability to help them achieve their personal and professional best. Without connection, the door to many of these different areas will be closed.
- **A sense of clarity:** Connection helps surface what really matters to the person and gets to the heart of his purpose in life and work. Did you know that clarity is the number one driver of success in a high performance environment?
- **Greater awareness:** Behaviors can only be changed if the person is aware of what they are doing. When you are connected to what the person says they care most about, you can point out where their walk is out of alignment with their talk.
- **Action rather than reaction:** Connection allows a person to go from stressed-out to calm, allowing them to consciously make a choice, instead of reacting on basic instinct and self-protection. It also helps people feel like they have a partner vs. "I've got to go it alone and prove I'm not a loser."
- **Shifts in "meaning-making."** In Session 3 of Your Leadership Blueprint, we learned about the ladder of inference and the way people assign meanings to what they see, hear and experience. Once a trusting coaching relationship is established through connection, the long-held assumptions at work in this process can be revealed and challenged in coaching conversations.

- **A greater sense of purpose:** Without connection, you will not get to the bottom of what truly motivates a person, what they absolutely care the most about.

Techniques and Tools for Connection

Over the past 15 plus years of working with high potential and high performing leaders, I am convinced that being a leader is a calling; it is neither a right nor a title. You have to *earn* the right to impact people so they can achieve their best. You have to work hard and be deliberate about creating a place where people can show up and do their best every day.

With this in mind, the following qualities and techniques will help establish a strong connection.

- **Understanding and empathy** – Fine tune your ability to walk a mile in their shoes.
- **Sharing common experiences** – Focus on what really matters to them, and if you can relate to their experience, give them your personal perspective to enhance your connection.
- **Shared vision** – Point out and reinforce how the person's personal vision and goals match yours and the company's.
- **Genuine curiosity** – Ask what's important to them, what really matters, what they want to achieve and why.
- **Respect and compassion** – Offer constructive feedback in a way that inspires them to do better.

The Power of Connection

A study called the *Hawthorne Effect* has shown that just paying attention to someone will increase that person's level of performance. Whenever people sense that they matter, they will improve their performance, especially if they know they are being watched or noticed.

Taking the time to establish a connection is the most direct way of demonstrating that you notice each person on your team, are interested in them, and are dedicated to helping each of them bring their performance to the next level. When you help someone transform how they think about something, there is a huge increase in energy. Your commitment to them will lead to increased connection, which in turn leads to increased performance.


(If you want to learn more about the famous study that revealed the Hawthorne Effect, read *Manufacturing Knowledge: A History of the Hawthorne Experiments*, by Richard Gillespie, 1993)

What's Ahead for Session 7

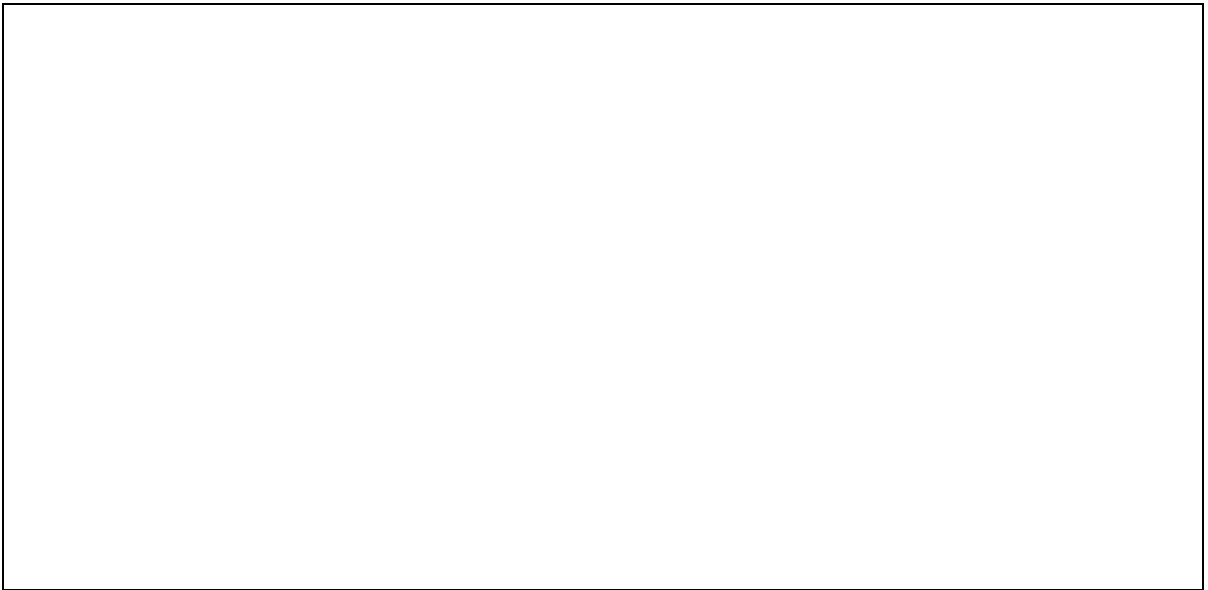
Get ready to **Get Clear** and watch your team sprint to the finish line! Find out how clarity can help people embrace personal accountability.

Exercises

1. Make an effort to note how often you are using the **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**. How effective are you being? (Hint: You'll know by the results your people are having and if they are taking themselves through the model prior to meeting with you.) If you haven't started, begin using the model now! Who will you practice on first?



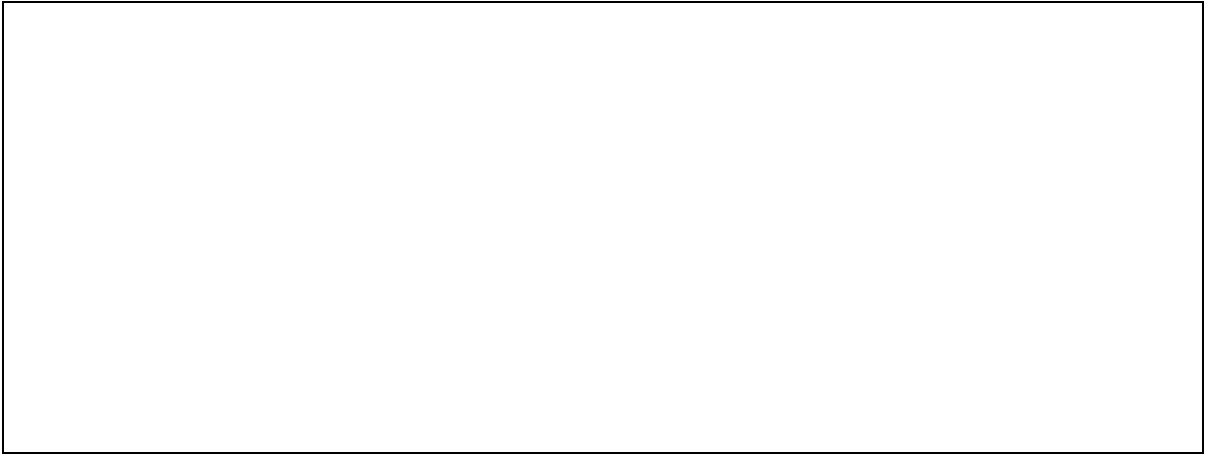
2. Think about the 'best boss/worst boss' exercise we did at the beginning of this session, how do you think your people would rate you?
(See the Best Boss/Worst Boss Worksheet in the Bonus Section)



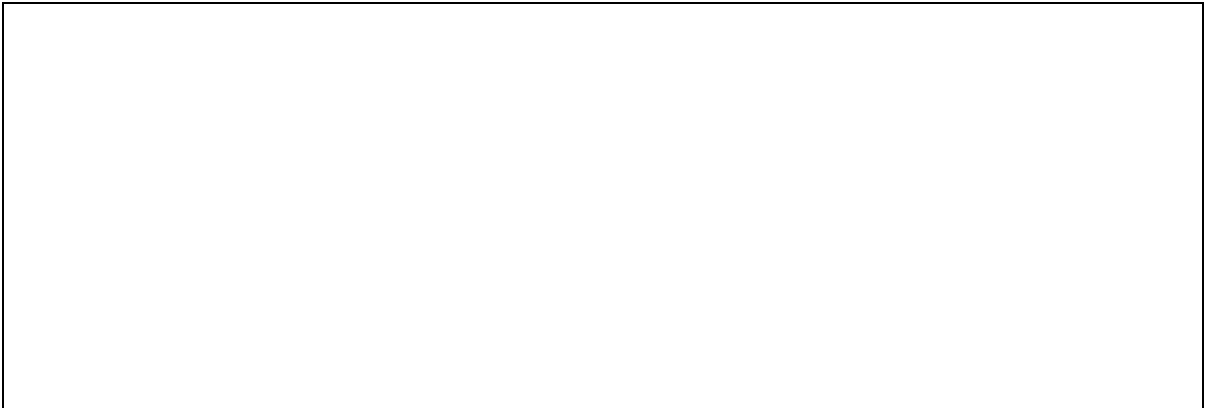
3. What can you immediately change so you lead more along the style of your best boss example?



4. What needs to change about your communication style to truly get connected with each person on your team?



5. Why bother doing any of this? What will these changes mean to you?



Session 6: Connect to Encourage Shifts & Success - Notes

The three most important things I learned from Session 6 are:

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

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

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

Key Terms (See Glossary)

- **Connection**

Extra Notes...

