



# spare change

*My two-cents toward sparking transformation*

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## A Coach Approach to Change

*“Coaching is the universal language of change and learning.”*

~CNN

“What is this **coaching** all about?”

“Who is your typical coaching client and what draws them to coaching?”

Great questions and a couple that I get asked all the time. So in case you’re someone who’s also not quite sure what coaching is and how it can facilitate sustained change, I’ve answered those questions below.

### “What is coaching all about?”

- Coaching is a **process** that facilitates CHANGE: whether it’s change in behaviors, change in circumstance or change in performance, to name a few. An effective coaching **process** includes assessment and discovery, (Where are you today?) creating clarity around a desired future or outcome, (Where do you want to be?) goal development (How will you get there?) and most importantly, execution of the coaching client’s desired actions to achieve results.
- Regular coaching sessions (e.g. over 3, 6, 9 or 12 mos) with a **trained** coach provides clients with dedicated time to focus on what they truly want and what must happen in order to create it. Skilled coaches are trained in provocative and perceptive questioning, active listening, action planning and creating accountability. Skilled coaches understand how adults learn and develop. Skilled coaches empower their clients to achieve more than they believed was possible.



- The real power in coaching for change lies in the **sense of partnership, collaboration** and **support** the client feels in achieving their personal and professional goals. Creating that partnership requires a coach to be able to build **trust** in a relationship that enables effective feedback and encouragement, yet challenging for growth and results.
- Clients benefit from **targeted** development rather than spending valuable time on a broad variety of skills where they may already excel. Further, deeper and sustained learning occurs over time when the client can **practice** the new skills and work with the coach to hone what works and learn what doesn't work.

## **“Who is your typical coaching client and what draws them to coaching?”**

While each client is unique, below are a few profiles of my typical clients and engagements:

### **Profile #1—Leadership and Transition Coaching**

Call from a coachee's Boss or HR leader:

Susan\* (proposed coachee) needs **leadership and transition coaching**. She is a high potential who just received a promotion into a new and expanded role. Based on both her (and our) input, as well as the results of your assessment process, please work with her on developing the additional leadership skills she requires and assistance with her transition challenges. She is looking forward to working with a coach.”

### **Profile #2—Career Coaching**

Call from Kevin\* (proposed coachee):

“I need **career coaching**. I'm miserable in my job. It's a dead end position and I know I have so much more to contribute. Please work with me to understand my strengths and weaknesses and help me take my skills, experience and passions into a more effective role or career.”

Having been through career transition myself, I'm acutely aware of how career coaching can help Kevin change his circumstance.



### Profile #3—Targeted Skills Coaching

Call from a coachee's Boss or HR leader:

"We have invested many years in John\* (proposed coachee). But there are a few behaviors that are holding him back." John requires **targeted skills coaching**. Some examples of John's limiting behaviors might be that he's defensive with feedback, or brash with direct reports, or inflexible with clients, requires a stronger executive presence, or needs to develop his strategic thinking. You get the idea. Employees who have years of institutional knowledge and key skills can take their performance to the next level with the focused assistance of a coach.

### Profile #4—Business Coaching

Call from Margaret\* (proposed coachee):

"I'm a Partner in a professional services firm. I have strong technical skills but I need **business coaching**. I must improve on my business metrics by increasing my business development skills as well as my time and organization management."

As a former Partner in a CPA firm responsible for not only "doing" the work but "selling" the work, I have a unique perspective on pressures that Margaret faces and the skills necessary to building a book of business as well as effective time and organization management to get it all done.

### Key Factors for Coaching Success

Susan, Kevin, John and Margaret are profiles of bright, results oriented business leaders and professionals who can benefit from the **process** of coaching, in partnership and collaboration with [me](#) as their **trained** coach. However, there are some key factors that must be in place in order for a successful coaching engagement to take place.

Each of them must:

- Be **open** to the process of assessment and discovery
- Be willing to **learn** new skills and embrace new possibilities
- Be willing to **do the work** that change and development requires



And as their coach, I must:

- Build their **trust** and work in **collaboration** with them, completely committed to their success
- Help them **focus on the future**, moving them from what “was” and “is” to what’s possible
- Work with them, listening, questioning and facilitating their **awareness** of what it takes to achieve their desired change
- Be their **strategic partner**, helping them think clearly about what’s next

One on one coaching is a tremendous tool for change. I’ve been fortunate to work with great clients who have experienced success through the coaching process. Whether it’s coaching to improve targeted skills, leadership effectiveness, career or business development, the process of coaching is a fantastic catalyst for your success.

**About the Author:** **Mary C. Werner, CPA, MOD** is the founder of *Werner Coaching and Consulting, Inc.*, a firm that builds on her more than 25 years of accounting, business and financial consulting experience. Mary is a certified executive coach and provides coaching to individuals and teams as well as organizational development consulting to facilitate individual and organizational change efforts. For more information, visit [www.wernercoaching.com](http://www.wernercoaching.com) or contact Mary directly at [Mary@wernercoaching.com](mailto:Mary@wernercoaching.com)