

Influencing strategy: stepping into the other person's shoes

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Purpose

This is useful when your coachee is having difficulty persuading someone to do something for them, getting agreement or acknowledgement of their point of view.

Description

In this exercise you are helping the client to influence others by seeing things from the other person's perspective.

Process

Ask the coachee to describe the person who is causing them difficulty. Ask them to describe the person's behaviours. Use the following questions as a prompt for their thinking:

- What is important to this person right now?
- What is happening in their work/life right now?
- How might this be influencing their thinking/viewpoint?
- How do they make decisions?
- How do they like to receive information?
- How does it benefit the person to agree with you/acknowledge your view?

Getting the coachee to think about the person enables them to start thinking about things from that person's perspective. If the coachee is willing it is helpful to have the coachee move to a different seat to talk about the person. The

physical movement helps to create the sense of looking at things differently.

Once the coachee has explored these questions, bring them back to the issue they have, and ask them to think about how the person may see the issue and what view they may hold. Ask a question such as: 'If Jack were here now, what would he say about the issue?'. This helps the coachee see how the person might be viewing the situation, and gives them information to work with on how to approach the issue differently.

Pitfalls

Some people find it difficult to imagine what the other person is thinking. Some people don't want to think like the other person because their negative feelings are too strong. The coach may need to spend time helping the person think through the positive outcomes that he/she can achieve by being willing to think like the other person, before they will move to the specific action of doing so.

Bibliography

O'Connor, J. (2001) *NLP Workbook*, London: Thorsons.