

## ARTICLE REPRINT

### **Step Two To Extraordinary Coaching (3<sup>rd</sup> in a 4 part series)**

If it's true that there are too few sales leaders who are good coaches, there are far fewer sales leaders who are also great coaches. That makes sense, given the characteristics all great coaches share in common.

The good coach, as I said last month, is adept at teaching the fundamentals of his or her discipline. In sales, the great coach, like the good coach, is an effective teacher who teaches and reinforces the fundamentals of selling. What makes them great coaches is their knack for recognizing talent and potential in their team members that many others simply don't see, their ability to motivate their sales teams, and their communication skills.

#### **Managing Strengths**

A sales leader who is also a great coach, for example, may see that while a team member is reluctant to prospect for new business, she exhibits great ability to capitalize on any opportunity she encounters.

Great coaches know that it is folly to manage to a person's weaknesses. They know the words of Sun Tzu, who wrote in *The Art of War*: “Do not charge people to do what they cannot do. Select them and give them responsibilities commensurate with their abilities.”

The sales leader who is a great coach will zero in on the strengths of each team member and help them develop these strengths to improve their performance. These leaders refuse to allow a team member to fail. When a team member falters, and is obviously unable to execute the duties of his position, the sales leader who is also a great coach will place the team member in a new position – a position better suited to the individual's talents and desires.

#### **Master Motivator**

The sales leader who is a great coach is also a master motivator. He knows that uncovering the personal drivers of each team member provides the key to motivation. He is a master at using that information to inspire the team members toward great performance. He knows that when people sense a clear, personal benefit in any activity, and when they begin to excel in their performance, they are likely to continue that activity with vigor, enthusiasm and determination.

## **Master Communicator**

Finally, like all great coaches, the sales leader who is a great coach is a master communicator. He is always brutally honest with the members of his team. His assessments of individual performances, and his evaluation of a team member's potential, are direct, honest and emphatic.

Recognizing the paramount importance of the team, and respectful of individual needs, he clearly communicates what contributions are needed from each team member. He also clearly delineates the consequences of failure to deliver those contributions.

Next month we will examine the ultimate in coaching – the *extraordinary* coach. What characteristics and talents do extraordinary coaches share in common, and what can sales leaders do to develop themselves into extraordinary coaches of their sales teams?

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