



LE TUE NOTE KINDLE PER:

The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More & Change the Way You Lead Forever (English Edition)

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45 evidenziazioni

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My guess is that there are at least three reasons why your first go at developing a coaching habit didn't stick. The first reason is that the coaching training you got was probably overly theoretical, too complicated, a little boring and divorced from the reality of your busy work life. One of those training sessions, perhaps, where you caught up on your email backlog. Even if the training was engaging—here's reason number two—you likely didn't spend much time figuring out how to translate the new insights into action so you'd do things differently. When you got back to the office, the status quo flexed its impressive muscles, got you in a headlock and soon had you doing things exactly the way you'd done them before. The third reason is that the seemingly simple behaviour change of giving a little less advice and asking a few more questions is surprisingly difficult. You've spent years delivering advice and getting promoted and praised for it.

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So let's look at why coaching others helps you. It lets you work less hard and have more impact. When you build a coaching habit, you can more easily break out of three vicious circles that plague our workplaces: creating overdependence, getting overwhelmed and becoming disconnected.

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To build an effective new habit, you need five essential components: a reason, a trigger, a micro-habit, effective practice, and a plan.

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if you don't know what triggers the old behaviour, you'll never change it because you'll already be doing it before you know it. The more specific you can be when defining your trigger moment, the more useful a piece of data it is.

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Resilient systems build in fail-safes so that when something breaks down, the next step to recover is obvious. Make your habit a resilient system.

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the New Habit Formula: a simple, straightforward and effective way of articulating and kickstarting the new behaviour you want. There are three parts to the formula: identifying the trigger, identifying the old habit and defining the new behaviour.

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We live within our habits. So shape the way you want to lead, and build the right coaching habits. And these new habits can start with the very first thing you ask someone—which

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Ask one question at a time. Just one question at a time.

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Small talk might be a useful way to warm up, but it's rarely the bridge that leads to a conversation that matters.

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An almost fail-safe way to start a chat that quickly turns into a real conversation is the question, "What's on your mind?"

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ANSWERS ARE CLOSED ROOMS; AND QUESTIONS ARE OPEN DOORS THAT INVITE US IN. Nancy Willard

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When you're talking about people, though, you're not really talking about them. You're talking about a relationship and, specifically, about what your role is in this relationship that might currently be less than ideal.

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what you're holding in your mind will unconsciously influence what you can notice and focus on. When you're thinking of buying a red Mazda, you suddenly start noticing all the red Mazdas on the road. Whatever you're thinking about can also influence the choices you make, so you might not, in fact, make the optimal choice.

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Cut the preliminary flim-flam. You don't need a runway to pick up speed—you can just take off. If you know what question to ask, get to the point and ask it. (And if you must have a lead-in phrase, try "Out of curiosity." It lessens the "heaviness" of any question and makes it easier to ask and answer.)

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Here's Your New Habit WHEN THIS HAPPENS... When I've got a question to ask... INSTEAD OF... Setting it up, framing it, explaining it, warming up to it and generally taking forever to get to the moment... I WILL... Ask the question. (And then shut up to listen to the answer.)

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The AWE Question: "And What Else?" I know they seem innocuous. Three little words. But "And What Else?"—the AWE Question—has magical properties. With seemingly no effort, it creates more—more wisdom, more insights, more self-awareness, more possibilities—out of thin air. There are three reasons it has the impact that it does: more options can lead to better decisions; you rein yourself in; and you buy yourself time.

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An intriguing (albeit difficult) exercise is to watch yourself and see how quickly you get triggered into wanting to give advice. Give yourself a day (or half a day, or an hour) and see how many times you are ready and willing to provide the answer.

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it's generally assumed that four is actually the ideal number at which we can chunk information. In some ways, it's as if our unconscious brain counts like this: one, two, three, four... lots. That probably explains why we can remember the names of people in four-person bands, but not of those in bands of five or more. So as you ask, "And what else?" the goal isn't to generate a bazillion options. It's to see what ideas that person already has (while effectively stopping you from leaping in with your own ideas). If you get three to five answers, then you've made great progress indeed.

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Stop offering up advice with a question mark attached. That doesn't count as asking a question. If you've got an idea, wait. Ask, "And what else?" and you'll often find that the person comes up with that very idea that's burning a hole in your brain. And if she doesn't, then offer your idea—as an idea, not disguised as a fake question.

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Here's Your New Habit WHEN THIS HAPPENS... I've got the answer, which I want to suggest... INSTEAD OF... Asking a fake question such as "Have you thought of...?" or "What about...?" which is just advice with a question mark attached... I WILL... Ask one of the Seven Essential Questions. And if I want to present an idea, I'll offer it up as an option rather than a question.

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The Focus Question: What's the Real Challenge Here for You? This is the question that will help slow down the rush to action, so you spend time solving the real problem, not just the first problem.

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As tempting as it is to talk about a "third point" (most commonly another person, but it can also be a project or a situation), you need to uncover the challenge for the person to whom you're talking. So in the example above, it becomes a coaching conversation when it's a conversation about how this person is managing John, not a conversation about John. And asking the Focus Question—"So what's the real challenge here for you?"—will get you there.

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The simple act of adding "for you" to the end of as many questions as possible is an everyday technique for making conversations more development- than performance-oriented. Yes, the problems still get sorted out. But with "for you" there's often additional personal insight, and with personal insight comes increased growth and capability.

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Yes, there's a place for asking "Why?" in organizational life. And no, it's not while you're in a focused conversation with the people you're managing. Here are two good reasons: You put them on the defensive. Get the tone even slightly wrong and suddenly your "Why...?" come across as "What the hell were you thinking?" It's only downhill from there. You're trying to solve the problem. You ask why because you want more detail. You want more detail because you want to fix the problem. And suddenly you're back in the vicious circles of overdependence and overwhelm.

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Stick to questions starting with "What" and avoid questions starting with "Why." It's no accident that six of the Seven Essential Questions are What questions.

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The first three questions can combine to become a robust script for your coaching conversation. You'll be surprised and delighted at just how often these are exactly the right questions to ask. Open with: What's on your mind? The perfect way to start; the question is open but focused. Check in: Is there anything else on your mind? Give the person an option to share additional concerns. Then begin to focus: So what's the real challenge here for you? Already the conversation will deepen. Your job now is to find what's most useful to look at. Ask: And what else (is the real challenge here for you)? Trust me, the person will have something. And there may be more. Probe again: Is there anything else? You'll have most of what matters in front of you now. So get to the heart of it and ask: So . . . what's the real challenge here for you?

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The illusion that both parties to the conversation know what the other party wants is pervasive, and it sets the stage for plenty of frustrating exchanges.

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Drawing on the work of economist Manfred Max-Neef, Rosenberg says that there are nine self-explanatory universal needs. When you ask someone, “What do you want?” listen to see if you can guess the need that likely lies behind the person’s request.

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Five times a second, at an unconscious level, your brain is scanning the environment around you and asking itself: Is it safe here? Or is it dangerous? When the brain senses danger, there’s a very different response. Here it moves into the familiar fight-or-flight response, what some call the “amygdala hijack.” Things get black and white. Your assumption is that “they” are against you, not with you.

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You want your people to feel that working with you is a place of reward, not risk. And you also realize that you want to feel like you’re safe so that you can stay at your smartest, rather than in fight-or-flight mode. So how do you influence others’ brains and your own so that situations are read as rewarding, not risky? There are four primary drivers—they spell out the acronym TERA—that influence how the brain reads any situation.

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T is for tribe. The brain is asking, “Are you with me, or are you against me?” If it believes that you’re on its side, it increases the TERA Quotient. If you’re seen as the opposition, the TERA Quotient goes down. E is for expectation. The brain is figuring out, “Do I know the future or don’t I?” If what’s going to happen next is clear, the situation feels safe. If not, it feels dangerous. R is for rank. It’s a relative thing, and it depends not on your formal title but on how power is being played out in the moment. “Are you more important or less important than I am?” is the question the brain is asking, and if you’ve diminished my status, the situation feels less secure. A is for autonomy. Dan Pink talks about the importance of this in his excellent book *Drive*. “Do I get a say or don’t I?” That’s the question the brain is asking as it gauges the degree of autonomy you have in any situation. If you believe you do have a choice, then this environment is more likely to be a place of reward and therefore engagement. If you believe you don’t have a choice so much, then it becomes less safe for you. Your job is to increase the TERA Quotient whenever you can. That’s good for the person you’re speaking with, and it’s good for you.

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The question “What do you want?” strongly affects the drivers of rank and autonomy. Expectation, the other factor, may be a little depressing (a question contains more ambiguity than an answer), but that’s OK. Your goal is to raise the overall TERA Quotient, and by asking questions you do just that.

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when you offer to help someone, you “one up” yourself: you raise your status and you lower hers, whether you mean to or not. This idea seems counterintuitive, I know, because so often our desire to help comes from genuine caring. But the insight rings true when you put yourself in the shoes of the person who is being offered help.

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THE MINUTE WE BEGIN TO THINK WE HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, WE FORGET THE QUESTIONS.
Madeleine L'Engle

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The bad news is that you are in fact destined to keep falling into the Drama Triangle for the rest of your life. The good news is that you'll get better and better at recognizing it and breaking the pattern, faster and more often. Samuel Beckett put it best: “Go on failing. Go on. Only next time, try to fail better.” You'll fail better by recognizing more quickly that you're in the Drama Triangle and by asking the Lazy Question—“How can I help?”—to pull yourself out of the triangle faster.

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The biggest worry people have about asking, “How can I help?” is the range of potential answers: “I need you to do this horrible/unreasonable/impossible task.” “I'd like you to have the difficult conversation I'm avoiding.” “Can you please give me all of your budget?” “Here's one extra thing for your already towering pile of responsibilities.” What's essential to realize is that regardless of the answer you receive, you have a range of responses available to you. “Yes” is one, of course. You can always say Yes. But you don't have to say Yes, and your sense of obligation to say Yes is the source of your anxiety.

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The Strategic Question: If You're Saying Yes to This, What Are You Saying No To? This question is more complex than it sounds, which accounts for its potential. To begin with, you're asking people to be clear and committed to their Yes. Too often, we kinda sorta half-heartedly agree to something, or more likely, there's a complete misunderstanding in the room as to what's been agreed to. (Have you ever heard or uttered the phrase, “I never said I was going to do that!”? Me too.) So to ask, “Let's be clear: What exactly are you saying Yes to?” brings the commitment out of the shadows. If you then ask, “What could being fully committed to this idea look like?” it brings things into even sharper, bolder focus.

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For most of us, there are two groups of people to whom it is easiest to say No. Those closest to us—spouses and kids—and those distant from us—hello, evening telemarketers. It's much harder to say No to everyone else. Which, unfortunately, tends to be everyone we work with.

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loss and gain are not measured equally. Losing \$100, say, feels worse than gaining \$100 feels good. One result of the bias is that once we've got something, not only do we not want to let it go, but we also tend to overvalue its worth. Asking the Strategy Question shines a light on what we're holding on to, so we might better weigh up what's worth keeping and what might need to be set free.

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Here's Your New Habit WHEN THIS HAPPENS... The person gives an answer to a question I've asked... INSTEAD OF... Rushing on to the next question... I WILL... Acknowledge the reply by saying, "Yes, that's good."

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People don't really learn when you tell them something. They don't even really learn when they do something. They start learning, start creating new neural pathways, only when they have a chance to recall and reflect on what just happened.

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The Learning Question: "What Was Most Useful for You?" Academic Chris Argyris coined the term for this "double-loop learning" more than forty years ago. If the first loop is trying to fix a problem, the second loop is creating a learning moment about the issue at hand. It's in the second loop where people pull back and find the insight. New connections get made. Aha moments happen.

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advice is overrated. I can tell you something, and it's got a limited chance of making its way into your brain's hippocampus, the region that encodes memory. If I can ask you a question and you generate the answer yourself, the odds increase substantially.

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"What was most useful here for you?" is a strong and positive way to finish a conversation. Not only do you help people to see and then embed the learning from the conversation, but by your finishing on a "this was useful" note, people are going to remember the experience more favourably than they otherwise might.

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the real secret sauce here is building a habit of curiosity. The change of behaviour that's going to serve you most powerfully is simply this: a little less advice, a little more curiosity. Find your own questions, find your own voice. And above all, build your own coaching habit.