

Vision

The E-Newsletter of Vision for Learning Ltd

October 2007 © Vision for Learning Ltd 2007



Welcome to the Autumn edition of Vision. In this magazine you will find:

- Our latest training programmes
- Information about the new Coach Accreditation Programme
- An introduction to The Institute of Educational Coaching
- Our two regular columns from coaching teachers
- A creativity and learning update
- The last article in the 4 part series on **managing your workload**
- Our Courses schedule for 07/08
- Exciting charity news



New newsletter database:

If you haven't had an opportunity to sign in for your newsletter following our database upgrade, you won't be able to get any more newsletters after this issue, as the old database is being decommissioned! If you have not yet had a chance to go to www.visionforlearning.co.uk and sign up for the newsletter, we urge you to do it now. It takes less than a minute to enter your name and email address and it will ensure you continue to receive Vision into the future.

Introductory and Advanced Coach Training

5th-7th Dec 2007—West Midlands
with Will Thomas

Take your coaching to advanced levels

the secrets of building great rapport
how to use the right question at precisely the right time
how people create problem states of mind and how to help them
unlock them conversationally
strategies for dealing with challenging people
part of the certification as Accredited Coach Practitioner

Why not refresh your coaching skills— 20% discount for returners

"Truly moving and awesome. This has been the most effective piece of training I have ever done"
Richard Woodfin, Headteacher, London

BOOKING NOW
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Accreditation and The Institute of Educational Coaching



THE TIME HAS COME TO GET ACCREDITED!

We have just launched our comprehensive Coach Accreditation Package and we are very proud of it. We are delighted to announce that as of today you can work towards the award of Accredited Coach Practitioner in association with University of Worcester, Vision for Learning and The Institute of Educational Coaching. There are a whole range of starting points depending upon your background and experience. Whether you've already done some training with us in coaching, or you're just starting out, there's a path for you. The great news is that prior coach training done with Will Thomas in 2004 or later counts as part of your accreditation.

The Accreditation is a three in one outcome, as upon successful completion of the award criteria you will receive:

- A Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development from the University of Worcester which certifies your theoretical knowledge and application of coaching to your work
- Certification of your practical coaching skills through The Institute of Educational Coaching
- An over-arching Award of Accredited Coach Practitioner through The IEC

The University of Worcester in addition will award you 20 credits towards a Masters or other post-graduate qualification which you can cash in at any University. You must have a first degree to qualify for this. There are routes also for non-graduates—see below for details of the accreditation.

Why get accredited?

- Become an even higher performing coach, teacher and leader
- Gain credibility in the theory and the practice of coaching
- Be recognised for accredited skills and knowledge
- Enhance your coaching practice and confidently lead other coaches
- Utilise past coach training to gain the accreditation or begin afresh
- Have access to, and support in developing another full or part-time career in coaching within a sector you know and understand.

For full details of the accreditation process, routes through and fees visit:

www.instituteofeducationalcoaching.co.uk

and sign up as a free member and request your accreditation info pack

Once you've registered you will be able to request an info pack, for your protection you'll just need to confirm your details by responding to an email which will come out to you.

WE NEVER SHARE YOUR DATA OUTSIDE OF V4L and THE IEC

You'll also be able to check out the membership opportunities the institute offers, including a free coaching newsletter, access to a growing bank of resources for coaching, developing yourself and ways to turn your coaching to have fee-earning potential, if you wish.

A Day in the Life of a Primary Coaching Teacher...

June Whittle, 'Leading Teacher' and literacy consultant in Surrey, talks about her approaches to coaching with young children and colleagues in the third of her four articles on coaching in school.

Article 4



It might seem strange to talk of reflection early in the new school year, and I know the summer holiday seems a long way away now, but August was an important time for review for me. The end of term had arrived and it was time for relaxation, fun and reflection! On the 'reflection' front, I'd like to share some thoughts on how I've seen a coaching approach add value to school communities I've worked with over the course of the last year.

Coaching fosters a positive, forward-looking, solutions-orientated way of thinking that can lead to an uplifting shift in individual and attitudes. Add to this the non-critical and non-judgmental stance we adopt as coaches and confidence begins to soar, teams bond and trust deepens. A common question which arises in schools where coaching is being used is: "How do we analyse the impact of coaching?" With individuals it can be measured through goal achievement. We start with a goal which we measure against. How do we measure the impact of coaching from a whole school perspective? We also start with a goal in mind. However, the goal may be a little more nebulous to pin down on paper. The changes brought about by coaching are much more to do with attitudes, approaches and 'feelings'. Each school will find its own way with this. The need for specific 'measures' may even fall away as the value of coaching emerges and convinces us.

I have found a retrospective questionnaire useful in terms of evaluating the impact coaching has had on communication, attitudes and practice over a term. The questions relate to successes and challenges. The following is a selection of recently received comments highlighting successes:

'I feel I have gained valuable skills when dealing with parents and staff and I now feel more confident within professional discussions.'

'One of the successes has been using coaching techniques to ensure that the person comes up with their own answers,

An introduction to NLP

"Excellent two days, interesting, proactive and very enjoyable" SW, Herts

Open Course with Will Thomas

14th and 15th March 2008

LONDON VENUE

A course specifically designed for education professionals to give you the best in NLP change strategies, without having to attend a one month NLP course!

NLP is a cutting edge communication and change approach ideal for classrooms, leadership and one-to-one coaching situations.

Take your coaching, teaching and leadership to the next level

For info: info@visionforlearning.co.uk

"Empowering, unlocking creativity and moving my self-awareness forward..so experiential"
Lesley Smith W. Sussex, Feb 07

ideas and solutions.'

'I have had positive comments as we have changed the way we give feedback.'

"It was fantastic to use coaching skills with my TA during her appraisal, and I feel that this has been the most professional and beneficial appraisal that I have carried out, probably due to the coaching techniques used!"

Challenges encountered seem to be few and far between and revolve around coaching with children, eg:

'Time is a restraint, as there is not really enough time in the day to carry out coaching with children.'

Feedback from children is always interesting! Some children find it hard to articulate any changes they have noticed. However, their attitudes and newly found confidence, speaks volumes. I sought insight from a group of Y2 children regarding the merits of the coaching club they had attended. One girl, Naomi, told me that she thought the club was about kindness and fun. She wished that everyone she knew could join. I was interested to hear what she felt she had learnt:

'...that I'm definitely more kind than I was.'

I asked: 'Have you become kinder or have you realized that you are kind?'

Naomi: *'I've realized ... and I'm happier!'*

The aim of the club was to work on building self-esteem. Naomi initially held her head and eyes downwards when spoken to by her peers. She took a lot of criticism from one boy, in particular. The boy's perception was that it was 'only teasing'. Bit by bit she became sure of herself and more assertive. Her head lifted up and she smiled frequently. She was able to list received compliments with confidence. She became aware of her own strengths as perceived by others and herself. The boy became aware of the negative nature of his teasing. Naturally, in the way that happens with young children, they now talk of getting married and pay each other plentiful, valid compliments!

Each coaching club session began with a circle time offering evidence-based compliments to one another around the circle. The exchanges rapidly changed from awkward and difficult to thoughtful and glowing! Everyone looked forward to this opening of the session which, by request, became extended to complimenting around the circle in the opposite direction too (multiple compliments were showered on one another!)

One of the boys in the club had a particular problem with anger linked to very low self-esteem. We used visualization as a tool to assist in dissipating the anger. A breakthrough comment he gave was:

'It makes me stop being angry at home and in class.'

From my point of view I witnessed a clear growth in confidence in the children attending the coaching club. Certainly, it fostered a sense of belonging, camaraderie and improved, positive communication amongst each other. How did this help them outside the confines of the club? I was able to find this out by observation and conversation. Verbal feedback from peers, teachers and parents was positive.

With parents, coaching strategies are valuable for supporting parenting issues and dealing with complaints. Some conversations with parents can be very challenging. Two questions which serve to re-direct thinking to a more positive and resourceful level are:

'What would you like to see happen?'

And,

'How would you prefer it to be?'

These questions can help to halt negativity and mark the beginning of a fruitful, solutions-orientated conversation. Where there has been a complaint, both parties feel they have a voice. Since coaching helps others to enhance their performance and set their own direction, parents too, find it empowering.

Coaching works on so many different levels; direct and subtle, brief and extended, informal and formal, with individuals and teams, with children and adults. It takes us to higher levels of personal growth, development, behaviour and action.

As I reflect on the last year I smile at the successes, achievements, triumphs, challenges, obstacles, passion, learning, enthusiasm, depth and enjoyment that coaching has brought both into my practice at school and my rich life outside school. I look forward with excitement to what lies ahead and wish the same for you too.

June Whittle

Readers interested in further approaches to measuring the impact of coaching on their work may be interested to know that a booklet of resources and ideas on impact measurement both for measuring the impact of coaching and also refining the quality of coaching is available in December from the Vision for Learning online shop. Many of the ideas are equally useful in measuring the impact of other teaching, learning and leadership developments.



High Quality Membership Site for all your coaching needs in school

Basic membership is free and you can sign up for this now

Unlimited access to a growing bank of downloadable coaching tools and resources

Essential tips, guidance and support for teachers, mentors, teaching assistants and leaders who coach

Access to the Coach Accreditation Programme*

Certificates of membership for your Portfolio*

Membership special offers*

Free and pay membership options

Support for in school and professional coaches

For more information register as a free member at:

www.instituteofeducationalcoaching.co.uk

* these are available to full members. Full membership is launched in November 2007



A day in the life of a coaching secondary teacher

Official School Coach
.....and Business-woman!

Jean Ramsey catches us up with the latest in her school's coaching development programme in Oxfordshire and her private coaching work.

Well, it's finally happened, my school has appointed the first official School Coach, and it's me! But what a lot else coaching has brought me. I have reduced my drama teaching to four days a week, whilst still retained my position as Head of Creative Arts. Of the four days I am in school, for the equivalent of one day, I am coaching students on a one-to-one basis for half hour slots using the STRIDE model.

Monday, is my 'free' day and is now my favourite day of the week. At the time of writing I have just returned from having Bicester Village having spent time with a client helping them to develop confidence. So, as you can see I also developing my coaching business too.

Coaching in school is great and I have been able to regularise my coaching of students and I no longer have to fit it into **my** lunch hour or **theirs**. Neither do I do micro sessions on the hoof between lessons or in the corridor. In consultation with the head teacher, the year heads and the head of the upper school i.e. years 10 and 11, a group of 18 young people have been selected. Those young people, some of whom who I used to see in the lunch hour or after school, are delighted to be given permission to excuse themselves from a lesson for 30 minutes once a fortnight to receive coaching. It demonstrates that the school really is trying to make their learning as effective as possible for them. Some have challenging behaviour patterns, some just lack organisational skills, some lack confidence and others need support because of difficulties at home.

In combination with our Counsellor; two student welfare officers and countless mentors in the learning Support Department, we are currently working on devising a system to centralise the information so that we do not overlap or confuse the young people by targeting the same group. As it is all confidential this is proving quite a challenge. But we are getting there! Now my teaching day is interspersed with delightfully positive conversations with up-beat young people who are begin-

ning to see that changing how they think can produce totally different and sustainable outcomes. I only wish someone had shared this magic with me when I was still at school. Hey ho! I guess that's what we call progress. This is a WIN-WIN for everyone.

Interested in a coaching career?

Visit *The Institute of Educational Coaching website*



Vision for Learning Course Listings for

2007/ 2008 Academic Year

Coaching (part of accreditation)

Introduction to coaching one day programme
With Will Thomas

5th Dec 07— West Midlands
27th Feb 08— London
10th June— Nottingham
25th Sept 08— Leeds

Advanced coaching two day programme
With Will Thomas

6th and 7th December 07— West Midlands
28th and 29th February 08— London
11th and 12th June 08— Nottingham
26th and 27th September 08— Leeds

Coaching Accreditation Seminars
With Will Thomas and Shaun Hughes

5th January 08— Nottingham
1st March 08— London

Neuro-linguistic Programming

Introduction to NLP for teachers
With Will Thomas

14th and 15th March 08— London

Creativity

The Creative Classroom
Brin Best and Will Thomas

15th April 08— London

Email us for details:

info@visionforlearning.co.uk

Feature article: Managing Workload and the Challenge of People

The last article in the series on managing workload focuses attention on some top tips for managing difficult people. What do we mean by “difficult people”. In this article we don’t really see people as difficult, but instead as displaying challenging behaviours. That is behaviour that challenges us in a way which leaves us feeling unresourceful.

There are some golden rules for dealing with this kind of challenging behaviour:

1. All behaviour is a choice, consciously or unconsciously (including your response to their behaviour)
2. There is no such thing as resistance, just a lack of rapport
3. Always look for win-win, or at worst “no deal”
4. Know your bottom line and stick to it
5. Assertiveness is a record-breaking pastime
6. Questions are more powerful than statements

We’ll now take each golden rule and expand a little on it.

Golden rule number 1:

All behaviour is a choice, consciously or unconsciously (including your response to their behaviour). All behaviour is a truly a choice, the trouble is most people don’t realise this and so they believe their unconscious behaviour to be automatic. When you choose this misguided belief you give away the power to change the behaviour. Now this may apply to the person you are challenged by, but it also applies to you. If up until now you have found this person’s behaviour tricky, chances are you have an unconscious response you are using each time they threaten you. So what is that response that you are using? They say that if you do what you’ve always done you’ll get what you’ve always got, so the first step towards change is to notice the responses you have automatically. You can then begin to experiment with alternatives, the first of which is to put in a pause. In coaching conversations I have with clients about the challenging behaviour of others, a high percentage of them find that simply putting in a pause to think at times of contact with the person, brings about positive changes in their response. Remember that you can never control another person completely (would you want to?) But you can always change yourself and in so doing influence them.

Golden rule number 2:

There is no such thing as resistance, just a lack of rapport. We’ve borrowed this rule directly from Neuro-linguistic Programming. It’s an ideal way to express that when people get along they put their differences aside. So if you want to reduce challenging behaviour then look for common ground and build on this. Only move to the more difficult areas when you have a stronger rapport. One very subtle way you can build more rapport is by mirroring the other person’s body language. This has been shown to stimulate a positive rapport between people. It’s what happens naturally when you are getting along with someone, and it seems that imitating this natural process creates greater respect and confluence. Only move to more challenging discussions as quickly as you have rapport to do so.

Golden rule number 3:

Always look for win-win, or at worst “no deal”

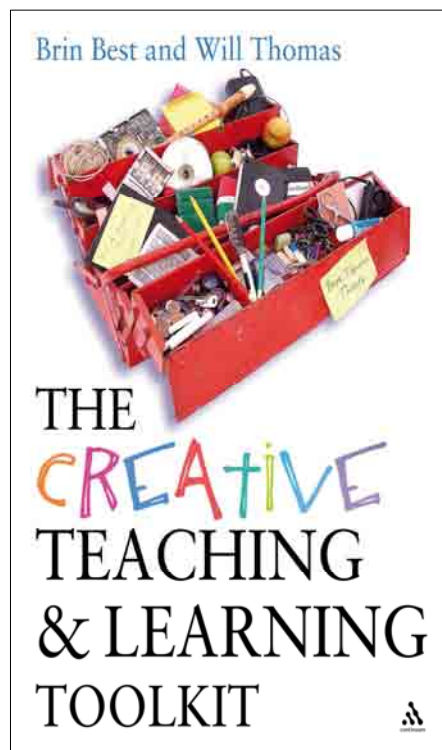
When you are working with others if you look for a win-win you get results. In other words you look for ways in which both parties can benefit from the decisions you make. Sometimes this is as simple as getting the job done because you need it to be done, but letting the other person choose their approach.

If you always explore a win-win first then you find people drop their resistance more readily and with it the challenging behaviours. In a very few cases a win-win is not possible, but that doesn’t mean you have to lose! Going for a no deal can be a useful fallback position. “OK, I can’t agree to this request you’ve made, because you are not able to let me do it this particular way, so we don’t have a deal yet”. This kind of language can leave the person with a positive, yet thought provoking end to a conversation. They’ll usually come back with another option! Try it. You have to be brave enough to say no, but you are not really saying no, merely “not just yet”

Golden rule number 4:

Know your bottom line and stick to it

It is so important to have your boundaries clear when you are working with an individual with challenging behaviour. So go into any conversation knowing what your bottom line is. If you are caught off guard and feel you need more time to think through your position, ask for the time and do so assertively. Never agree to anything that you feel uncomfortable about until you have had a proper amount of time to think it through.



The Creative Teaching and Learning Toolkit is available now from the online shop.

The long awaited *Creative Teaching and Learning Toolkit* is available to order now.

The book offers an holistic view of **learning and teaching with creativity in mind**

plus over 200 strategies of creative activities and approaches to encourage learner creativity

including a **CD ROM** of printable resources for only £16.99

Visit: www.visionforlearning.co.uk and click on the online shop

Course date: 15th April 2008

Golden rule number 5

Assertiveness is a record-breaking pastime

When I first bring this rule to the table in trainings on workload management I usually get some quizzical looks, however the so-called "broken record technique" is a really simple and highly effective approach to standing your ground. In short you state your position, clearly, firmly, but politely and repeat until understood by the other party. We call it the broken record technique because you repeat your position over and over again in the same way, rather like a stuck record. Put all concerns about how silly you might sound aside as this is just the most simple and exquisite approach to stating your position. Always own your statement by using "I". Eg "I am not able to agree to this amendment", then repeat. Most people will get the message after 3 repeats, some need 5! Any questions about your reasons why you can't can simply be met with a further repeat. Works a treat.

Golden rule number 6

Questions are more powerful than statements

Anyone who has attended our advanced coaching course will know just how powerful questions can be, especially the open style questions that demand so much of the recipient. Our 6th golden rule is to ask questions of the person, and wherever possible make these the most powerful questions of all—open ones.

Our top 5 questions are:

- Who says?
- What is the purpose of this course of action?
- How do you know that x is true?
- What will be the benefits of not taking this action?
- What will be the problems associated with this course of action?

And finally.....

There is a seventh unofficial golden rule.....the rule of YOU. The rule of YOU is about your guilty feelings. It's kind of linked to the first golden rule, about choice. You have a choice to feel guilty about standing up for your needs and rights, or a choice to feel empowered. Which will you choose?

We very much hope you have enjoyed reading this series of articles on managing your workload. If you would like more tips and approaches, why not consult the Managing Workload Pocketbook (in our online shop) or email us about courses, or one to one coaching on issues relating to these articles. www.visionforlearning.co.uk

Will Thomas

Charity news



Introducing The Manisha Child Welfare Foundation Nepal
Our adopted charity for 2007/8.

We have just agreed to support the MCWFN in their quest to develop schools and educational opportunities for children and young people in Nepal. I had a heart-warming and inspiring meeting with Mahendra Shakya, the founder of the charity as he told me the details of life in his native Nepal. I met Mahendra at the British Library in London and listened for two hours to the deeply-moving struggle that the people of Nepal are facing to provide education and support to their children. Things we take for granted in the West are simply not available. He told me of young people who walk for two and a half hours to school and then walk back again in the afternoon and in many of the schools there is no water and so children have to carry water to school for their use during the



day. Mahendra is a former Ghurka and has served in a number of conflict zones. His integrity and passion for making a difference in his home country is huge and the foundation has built 12 schools in the region. So it is with great pleasure that we commit to support them through fundraising. We are currently identifying the ways in which we

support them in the coming year in their school building and education programmes. Will Thomas hopes to run the Great North Run in September 2007 to raise funds. Any support, ideas or publicity readers might be able to offer are gratefully received.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF VISION:

Start of 1 of 4 articles on creativity in the classroom
Shopping for Christmas
Environment and schools
Update on Nepal

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