

## Chapter Two

### Coaching Described

The conversation in the previous chapter is a good example of effective coaching. The questions and objections listed reflect a general confusion about what coaching is, what its function is and how it fits in the workplace.

In this chapter I want to bring some clarity to the 'territory' and to make a case for a particular approach. In doing this I will give a brief overview of the field, and bring particular attention to two congruent approaches, The Inner Game and Non-Directive Coaching (the latter being the off-spring of the former) and thus establish a foundation for the rest of the book. The question about how coaching fits in the workplace is addressed in Chapter Six.

### The Territory and the Confusion

Coaching is for failures

Coaching is a mark of my status (the company pays for my executive coach)

Coaching is an emerging profession

Coaching is a line-management competency

Coaching is a fad

Coaching can save the world

Coaching is a second career (soon to retire HR manager)

Coaching is... not my job (line-manager, coaching workshop)

Coaching means different things to different people depending on who they are, what they are doing and what their experience of coaching is. A Human Resource Manager taking early retirement and thinking about how he might use the next stage of his life productively will have a very different perspective to the line-manager in an IT business who has just been told to attend a workshop on coaching skills – when what she really wants to do is to continue developing the software. There is no commonly held definition of coaching.....

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.....These ends, Achievement, Fulfilment and Joy cannot be delivered through an approach to coaching in which the line-manager or coach instructs others as a function of their expertise, knowledge or, worse, status. This approach, as I will explain in greater depth in the next chapter is known as 'Directive'. A wholly Directive approach reduces the opportunity for the player to think or be creative, limits the possibility of their taking responsibility and takes any satisfaction or joy out of what limited achievement there might be. Effective coaching, as described above, requires a predominantly 'Non-Directive' approach, an approach that evokes excellence, in which learning is intrinsic and satisfaction derives from the pursuit and achievement of meaningful goals. This is what effective coaching can be.