



# TEAM CoachVille

Together in pursuit of  
humanity playing better

## 005: Thomas And Dave Buck Define Coaching

(Audio Archive from 2002)

**CoachVille.com**



A **POWER UP** is an activity where you listen to an audio, read something or do an exercise and then share your insights.



**005: Thomas and Dave Define Coaching 2002.**

Thomas Leonard and Dave Buck hosted a conversation with CoachVille members in 2002 to discuss what coaching is! At that time, we had a lot of metaphors.



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## Transcript from the conversation

February 26, 2002 - 3:00 p.m. EST  
Thomas J. Leonard, Session Leader

**TJL:** Welcome; this is Thomas Leonard. And with me...

**DB:** Dave Buck

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**TJL:** We're going to be doing our best to sound intelligent about this topic, but we'll do our best. On the printed version of this worksheet, you'll see some examples. Susan, you have a story to begin.

**Susan:** Last year I was at a coaching conference and someone came up and asked who we were, and he asked what coaching was. Here we were, a group of experienced coaches, and we couldn't articulate on any level; the person walked away more confused. I've been trying to get my arms around it ever since.

**TJL:** Well, you're not alone. We're going to work through a bit of that - there isn't currently a single definition of coaching. We're just not there in terms of the scope. In the meantime, we'll be talking about our best attempts today. Also, another truth about coaching is that trying to define coaching may not be the best approach. Maybe it's more important to help your clients define what they want in life.

We are going to start by going through a list of things that a coach is. We'll describe a bit about the role of a coach and in step 2 we're going to make a list of some of the benefits of coaching and step 3 we're going to make a list that combines elements from step 1 and step 2. Some of these will be included in the worksheet that comes with this.

**DB:** This doesn't come with a caveat! You can actually try this at home.

**TJL:** Yes! Again, we did some polling of the R&D team and some others and have some pretty cool stuff. First, I'm going to read from something I put together a couple of years ago.



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***“A Professional Coach is...***

*Your partner in achieving business and personal goals.*

*Your champion during a turnaround.*

*Your trainer in communication and life skills.*

*Your sounding board in making life choices.*

*Your unconditional support when you take a hit.*

*Your mentor in personal development.*

*Your co-designer in creating an extra project.*

*Your beacon during stormy times.*

*Your wake-up call when you can't hear your own alarm.*

***– Thomas Leonard***



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**DB:** Good stuff!

**TJL:** That's how we're going to approach step 1. Dave, will you talk about step 2?

**DB:** Some of the obvious benefits of coaching - your goals can be reached more quickly by using a coach.

**TJL:** That's an important one - people are in a hurry today. In certain cultures coaching is a competitive advantage. It's really an edge, especially in Asia.

**DB:** And it's great to be perceived that way. Another thing with your goals, you can also help people make sure their goals are in line with their values and dreams.

**TJL:** So, also the level of fitting is important.

**DB:** That's exactly right.

**TJL:** A lot of my clients have come to me with 3-4 goals and within an hour they've either abandoned them or moved them to a place that's become self-inspiring.

**Susan:** Another benefit is that you can help people think bolder than themselves. A coach can help you think bigger and give you the encouragement to go for it.

**DB:** Another side is that a coach can help with prioritization or re-prioritization. A coach helps you think about what your values are, versus the values of others.

**TJL:** A lot of times their priorities are based on urgency, and if they are, you'll never get ahead of yourself.

**DB:** Then, another element is that once you have that goal and have priorities, then there's the whole thing about the sounding board nature, someone who understands and can think bigger with you.

**TJL:** There are plenty of intelligent people out there who can help you tease out an idea, but how many of them have your best interests at stake?

**DB:** Yes, and then also when you're taking on a big project, you can get stuck. A coach can help you get unstuck and be more resourceful and creative.



**Susan:** For me, one thing I've gotten from working with my coach is that she can see my strengths way better than I ever could.

**DB:** Yes, people have blind spots and a coach can help you see the obvious. Sometimes that's all you need to get past the block. We all take our strengths and some of our talents for granted.

**TJL:** Another thing is that coaches help us become more creative. Creativity itself is something we don't really have developed in our lives; we've been trained to conform.

*“If creativity equals future profitability, then a coach can make a real difference in your life.”*

*- Thomas Leonard*

**DB:** Really good point. That's great. As a culture, it's been about trying to fit in, and that's where the security was. As we evolve further, it's actually the ones who find a way to be distinct that will survive, and where are you going to find it? That's what coaches do.

**TJL:** And that's the first 2 steps. The 3rd step is to try and identify what coaching is. I've gone through some of the things from step 1 and 2 and tried to connect them.

Coaching is a proven support system for success.

Here's another example. A coach is your mentor in personal development.

Another one is - coaching is an accelerant for personal development.

Coaching is a professional service.

Coaching is a collaborative partnership where the focus is on the client's goals.

Coaching is a structure or support for problem-solving.



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Coaching is an insurance policy for mediocrity.

Those are a couple we came up with. Dave, anything to add?

**DB:** I was thinking about coaching is a confidential relationship to support bold expression.

**TJL:** Good. The trick is to start putting something together and we can then fine-tune it.

**Susan:** If someone would stop you on the street, what would you say?

**TJL:** Coaching is a collaborative partnership where the client sets the goal and the coach helps them reach it. Also, sometimes I use the word 'faster' to emphasize the relationship and give it more edge. Great. Any final comments, Dave?

**DB:** I usually say that a coach is someone who brings out the best parts of you that you haven't even recognized. It's more goal-oriented.

**TJL:** A coach is someone who helps you have it all without having to pay the price everyone has to pay. Thank you Dave. This ends the first part of our taping.



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