

Understanding the 15 Stylepoints

Description: How you come across and interact/relate with your client can accelerate or slow down the coaching process. We've identified 15 aspects of communication that we call the StylePoints. Each of these 15 StylePoints can help you become a more effective coach by tweaking your coaching communication style. They are the underpinning of all the coaching you do, since they color every aspect of how you interact with your client.

Introduction

Understanding the 15 Stylepoints

How you come across and interact/relate with your client can accelerate or slow down the coaching process. We've identified 15 aspects of communication that we call the StylePoints. Each of these 15 StylePoints can help you become a more effective coach by tweaking your coaching communication style. They are the underpinning of all the coaching you do, since they color every aspect of how you interact with your client.

During the two-hour overview TeleClass, the instructor will cover the following...

1. Explain the concept of "Stylepoints".
2. Clarify how the Stylepoints fit into the Coachville coaching framework.
3. Discuss the benefits of honing your communication style.
4. Explain and discuss each of the 15 Stylepoints.
5. Do a coaching demo to illustrate the use of the Stylepoints.
6. Point out some of the common mistakes coaches make with communication style.

What is meant by "Stylepoints"?

Stylepoints are how you come across when you communicate. Some examples would be hearing what is actually said, taking the client seriously, and using commonly understood words.

How do Stylepoints fit into the Coachville coaching framework?

The Coachville coaching framework has 5 sets of 15. They are...

- 1) the 15 Proficiencies
- 2) the 15 Stylepoints
- 3) the 15 Clarifiers
- 4) the 15 Frameworks

5) the 15 Deliverables

The 15 Proficiencies are the “what” you do when you are coaching. Things like asks curious questions, reveals the client to themselves, designs supportive environments and so on. The Stylepoints are the “how you come across” when you are coaching. So stylepoints are always running in the background while you are using the Proficiencies.

What are the benefits of honing your communication style?

1. It helps you become a more effective coach.

Just as some animals can hear 10 times better than we humans can, a trained coach has learned to recognize the clues, subtleties and nuances of what the client is saying, even when the client doesn't recognize it themselves. It is this high degree of discernment that turns a conversation into coaching.

2. You will have less drama and misunderstandings in your life.

When we communicate effectively with others, we have less drama and misunderstandings in our lives. Having the skills to say what we want and listen respectfully brings us clearer emotions, increased intimacy, and greater social influence.

3. You will get your message across more effectively.

A concise comment delivered in simple words conveys something that people will remember. Enough said.

4. You will model effective communication for your clients.

Modeling good communication style in our interactions with clients empowers them to improve their own skills and move beyond any communication-related limitations.

What are the 15 Stylepoints?

The 15 Style Points	
1. Hears what is actually said.	Points off for misinterpreting, filtering, reframing.
2. Responds cleanly.	Points off for adding positive spin, responding to something that wasn't said, irrelevant comments, pouncing with a solution, talking too hard.

	solution, trying too hard.
3. Takes client's concerns seriously.	Points off for being dismissive, not getting seriousness of situation, invalidating.
4. Speaks simply.	Points off for being long winded, long stories, convolution, repeating self.
5. Is light and neutral.	Points off for being heavy, significant, charged, flat.
6. Is collaborative.	Points off for lecturing, pushes for change, being 'on,' peppering with questions, pushes point of view/agenda.
7. Communicates in full-duplex mode.	Points off for not being able to speak and listen at the same time.
8. Fully expresses.	Points off for holding back, not being themselves, tries to coach 'correctly.'
9. Keeps up.	Points off for falling behind, backtracking, missing a shift the client has just made.
10. Hears between the lines.	Points off for missing dissonance, subtleties, hints.
11. Uses commonly understood words.	Points off for jargon or technical terms unfamiliar to the client.
12. Is self-assured.	Points off for meekness, timidity, bravado, arrogance.
13. Is client-centric.	Points off for self-referencing, competing for attention.
14. Is comfortable with problems.	Points off for rushing to fix, pointing mostly to the bright side, trying to make the client feel better, positive spinning, providing medicants.
15. Is "with" the client.	Points off for being distracted, preparing for response, thinking too hard.

What do these Stylepoints mean?

1. Hears what is actually said.

This is more difficult than it sounds. Hearing what is actually said requires listening with sensitivity, discernment and empathy. Listening is an ability that each of us has to varying degrees, and it can be trained and developed to a high level of proficiency. To listen well, the coach needs be attentive to both the content of the client's words, and the feelings behind the words. In addition, the coach needs to be totally focused on the client, and not thinking about what to say next.

2. Responds cleanly.

The cleaner the communication, the less that gets in the way of great coaching. Clean communicators are straightforward, comfortable with silence, and don't feel the need to prove themselves. They work to eliminate things like biases, judgments, unmet needs, agendas, trying too hard, irrelevant comments, and arrogance from their communication. Being clean in your communication doesn't mean you can't have opinions or judgments, but that you are clear and forthright about what they are.

3. Takes client's concerns seriously

The determination of what is important is individual to each client. Something that is very challenging for one person, might be easy for another. A fundamental coaching premise is to respect the client's concerns, their way of doing things, and what their reality is. This helps the client feel understood, which makes it easier to get into action.

4. Speaks simply

Coaches don't need to say a lot, if what they say is pertinent and succinct. The client should be the one talking most of the time. If the client has told you a story involving lots of twists and turns, there's no need to refer to all the details in your response. Other things to avoid are being long winded, convoluted or repetitious.

5. Is light and neutral

Light refers to the coach's tone. The tone in which some coaches speak is just plain heavy or overly "significant", which can bring down the client energy. Neutral refers to the coach's emotional state and how that affects their response. Neutral can be thought of as "without charge", which is not the same as showing no emotion. Neutral means the coach isn't taking a side, pushing an agenda, or reacting in an emotional way. Masterful coaches demonstrate through tone and response that they care about the client, but are not attached to the outcomes.

6. Is collaborative

Collaboration occurs most easily when the coach works as a partner with the client to address the client's problems, ideas or needs. Coaches who think they have all the answers are not collaborative. Neither are coaches who rush in to fix or solve client problems. Masterful coaches have let go of a need to convince or prove anything to their clients.

7. Communicates in full-duplex mode.

New term? Think of a walkie-talkie. A walkie-talkie is half-duplex, meaning that only one person can talk at one time, so there is lots of stop and start. It works, but it's choppy and doesn't lend itself to fluid conversations. Your telephone, however, is full duplex. The copper wire can handle two-way conversations simultaneously. Which is a metaphor for how quickly the coach can recognize when the client has heard their point. (A coach is half duplex when they keep talking long after the client has "gotten" it). Being in full-duplex mode allows you to be fully present with the client in the moment. For some coaches, taking notes interferes with their ability to communicate in full-duplex mode.

8. Fully expresses

Clients rely on our observations, intuition and perspective to help move them forward in life. This doesn't mean that the coach tells the client what to do. Masterful coaches share their observations and ideas as options, not as absolutes.

9. Keeps up

During a coaching conversation the client can make leaps of awareness or develop solutions to problems, all within minutes. Masterful coaches are able to keep up and dance with these changes and new areas of priority instead of holding on to what the client was saying or feeling just moments ago. Points off for holding the client back, missing a shift the client has just made, not noticing when the client's tone of voice or energy level has changed.

10. Hears between the lines

Masterful coaches listen at many levels to keep up with where the client is in their process, what is most important to them, what they may be afraid to say. For

example, when there is a disconnect between the tone of a client's voice and the words that they are saying.

11. Uses commonly understood words

Plain language is most effective. Points off for jargon or technical terms unfamiliar to the client.

12. Is self-assured

Clients generally feel more secure with a coach who has self-confidence. Not the loud noise of arrogance or ego, but rather the calmness that comes from knowing that you add value just by being who you are.

13. Is client centric

Being client-centric means that the coach is able to "get out of their own way", and be fully present for the benefit of the client.

14. Is comfortable with problems

This is the ability to be comfortable in the presence of the client's discomfort without jumping in to help out with questions, comfort or solutions. It calls for heightened self-awareness and a growing appreciation for the phases people go through as they work things out in the world. With experience you are able to offer the love and empathy of a person who cares without being driven by a reactive need to "be helpful."

15. Is "with" the client

Everyone has a preferred pace of listening, speaking and processing information. Masterful coaches match the client's preferred pace so that the client can focus their attention on what is most important to them.

What are common mistakes coaches make with communication style?

1. Using too many words.

The client should be the one talking most of the time. Good coaching is concise and to the point.

2. Being too heavy in their tone.

The tone in which some coaches speak is just plain heavy. It's weighted down by concerns (often wrapped in caring) about consequences, risks, potential problems, and more. These are all valid, but the heaviness or "significance" of the coach's tone can bring down the client energy and freedom to easily create.

3. Pushing their own agenda.

If you've ever experienced someone selling you hard on their point of view or on how you should or could do something differently or "better", then you know exactly what we're talking about here. Good coaches have let go of a need to convince or prove anything to their clients. Rather, they focus on sharing what they know and respecting what the client knows.

4. Excessive self-referencing.

Coaching should be client-centric. Coaches who self-reference (talk about their own experiences) run the risk of making the coaching about themselves instead of about the client. Self-referencing should be kept to a minimum.