



PETRA PEOPLE

LEADING LIKE A BUSINESS COACH





LEADING LIKE A BUSINESS COACH

LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

When I meet with a team for a coaching session, I often find that everyone looks to me for all the answers. While I am there to help them get their priorities together and align their business and company culture, I'm NOT there to hold their hand through every decision that needs to be made. That's where the team leaders come in.

I look at my job as the "teach a man to fish" principle: I teach them how to think like I do, so they can continue to have insightful and productive conversations when I'm not there. I want the leaders in my member companies to leave their coaching sessions feeling comfortable about pushing their employees to be better, like I push them in the session. That is the ultimate measure of success for any business coach.

Here are a few key characteristics of a business coach that all leaders can and should adopt.

LISTENING

There's a big difference between hearing and listening. Hearing is the physical act of sound going into your ears, but listening is actually comprehending those sounds. A big part of my job is listening to my member companies – the good stuff and the bad. The only way I can help people and groups improve is by knowing what works well and what their pain points are. They may not always say things you want to hear, but it's important that you not only hear them, but truly listen. Don't immediately start problem-solving your way out of the conversation or you'll miss what's truly important.

LOOKING FOR WEAKNESSES

Once I've heard about the issues a company is having, I can start to figure out where they are stemming from. Then I help them to go back to basics and work through those problems. As leaders, we sometimes want to ignore weaknesses and problems because, frankly, it can be tough to admit they exist and that you may hold some or all responsibility for them. But that's how a leader can push his or her company forward – by taking a high-level view and objectively finding the areas that need to be improved.

Finding solutions

The next step after pinpointing those shortcomings is to figure out how to repair and strengthen them. It's not enough just to acknowledge them, you also need to find solutions to them. Push your company or leadership team to sit down and brainstorm altogether. It's the best way to get everyone talking and to get others' perspectives on what will best address each issue. These sessions shouldn't just happen when I'm there coaching, they should be a regular part of the business' proceedings.

LEARNING CONTINUOUSLY

Channel your inner student and be ready to learn. When you take the time to comb through the weeds, talk through problems and find solutions, those remedies can be applied to more situations down the road. It's also helpful to know what leaders are doing in other companies – read various books and articles to see how others have improved their companies. Their solutions may work for you too, or they may spawn a brand new idea you can implement. Even business coaches don't have all the answers, so take advantage of the world of resources at your fingertips to find a way around any roadblocks.

The underlying theme through each of these steps is that leaders should never stop pushing and growing. And that mentality will transfer to your team – after all, they are the ones who help keep your business going. Think "What would Andy do?" and apply these principles not only in company quarterly planning meetings with a business coach, but in all meetings and company get-togethers. That's how the student can become the master.

This article originally appeared in Small Biz Daily.

THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it "sticks" then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE**.

Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at www.petracoach.com for more business and leadership insight.

PETRA COACH

342 Cool Springs Blvd., Suite 203, Franklin, TN 37067 | 888.330.1020
www.petracoach.com | www.facebook.com/petracoach

