



Coaching for Christian Leaders

A Practical Guide

By Linda Miller and Chad Hall

★★★★☆ (4-1/2 stars)

Buy this book if:

- *You want an excellent, brief introduction to how to coach*
- *You want lots of examples of coaching questions and coaching dialogs to learn from*

Coaching for Christian Leaders is the best how-to-coach book in the Christian genre I've read in some time. I like it because it presents a systematic look at the ins and outs of the coaching approach: the focus is on models, tools, sample dialogues and lots of examples of coaching questions instead of just stories of how coaching worked for the author. My only beef is that the book is too short.

As the introduction states, "This book aims at helping you learn how to coach as part of Christ's activity in the world..." Written in partnership with a well-known corporate coach and a pastor and church consultant, the book works to both explain basic coaching concepts and place them within a biblical value system.

The book is organized around an interesting model of three layers of coaching skills. First are core skills: listening and asking precise questions, which according to the authors make up 50% of the coaching conversation. These are followed by a look at two essential skills: identifying action and delivering direct messages (challenging the client). Finally, the four supporting skills or acknowledging, sharing self, synthesizing and being silent are treated. Each skill is illustrated with sample coaching dialogs, which are especially helpful when they include parenthetical comments about what the coach is thinking at different points in the conversation. Probably the best teaching tool in the book is that each technique includes a section of sample coaching questions you'd use when implementing that skill. Each chapter also includes a several exercises and end-of-chapter questions that encourage you to apply the concepts you are learning.

If you've read other coaching books, this covers some of the same basic skills content. However, the author's extensive experience in both the corporate and ministry world gives the book a unique slant. It also brings together some interesting tools such as

conversation models (often drawn from other authors), and includes a section on the application of coaching to ministry leadership.

I have a few minor beefs with the book. One is the seeming view of the ICF as the only valid standard for certification: the author states that one should not be “misled to think a coach is competent because of other professional credentials.” There are a number of reputable, long-standing Christian coaching schools are not ICF accredited (partly because the ICF has been cool toward certifying distinctively Christian programs).

The book is also a bit short for the price— it has about half the page count many \$20 books do.

Summary

This book is an excellent addition to any aspiring Christian coaches library. The sample questions and coaching dialogs are especially helpful. If you want a quick overview of how to coach that you can go back and reference repeatedly, this book is a great choice.

Reviewed by:

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