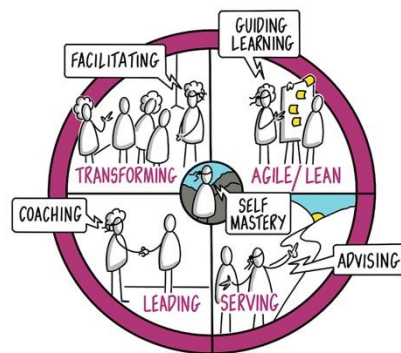


A Leader's Guide to Agile Coaching

EXTRAORDINARILY **BADASS** AGILE COACHING

THE JOURNEY FROM BEGINNER TO MASTERY AND BEYOND



ROBERT L. GALEN



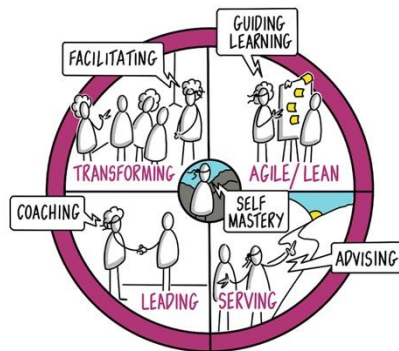
Bob Galen
Agile Coach



Coaching Your Way to Leadership

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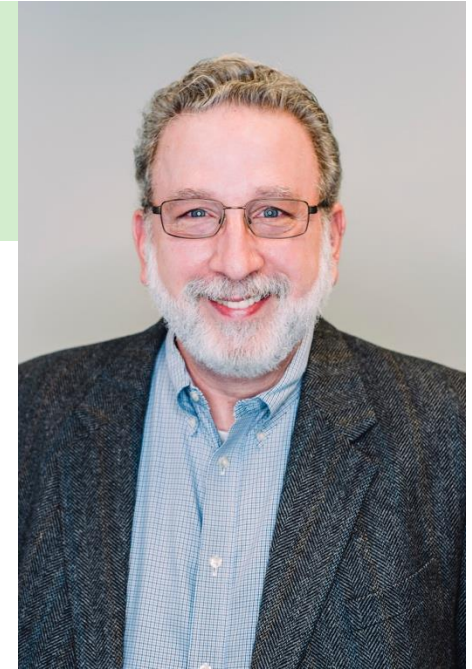
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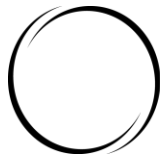
Bob Galen
Agile Coach



Bob Galen



- Independent Agile Trainer & Coach at [RGCG, LLC](#)
- Somewhere “north” of 30 years overall experience ☺
- Wide variety of technical stacks and business domains
- Roots of a software developer
- Senior/Executive software development leadership for 20+ years
- Agile “Coach of Coaches” and Leaders
- Deep XP, Lean, Scrum, and Kanban experience since 2000
- From Cary, North Carolina, dog lover, grandfather, husband



The Leadership Circle®
CERTIFIED PRACTITIONER



Introduction

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Agile Coaching Growth Wheel
3. Coaching Mindset
4. Coaching Conversations
5. A bit of Practice
6. Close

Introduction

Coach & Coaching: A Broad Definition

- When we say coach, we're implying, you could be in one of these roles:
 - Scrum Master, RTE, Project Manager
 - **Manager / Team Leader**
 - **Director, VP, or CxO**
- Virtually anyone who:
 - Leading agile teams, or
 - is guiding an Agile Transformation or other change initiative.
- Coaching – something we all should become more adept and skilled at doing. I.e., we're ALL agile coaches whether we know it or not!

Manager's Don't Know How to Coach (but they think they do...)

9 Coaching Activities

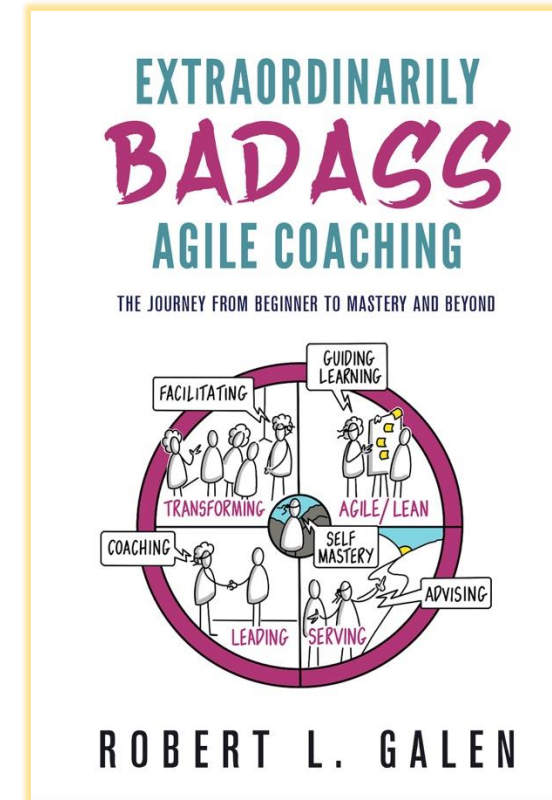
1. Listening
2. Questioning
3. Giving feedback
4. Assisting with goal setting
5. Showing empathy
6. Letting the coachee arrive at their own solution
7. Recognizing and pointing out strengths
8. Providing structure
9. Encouraging a solution-focused approach

<https://hbr.org/2018/08/most-managers-dont-know-how-to-coach-people-but-they-can-learn>

Extraordinarily Badass Agile Coaching

The journey from Beginner to Mastery and Beyond...

- Published January 27th, 2022
- Contributions by Mark Summers, Jennifer Fields, Rhiannon Personick, and Stuart Young
- Forwards by Don MacIntyre and Paddy Cory
- Uses Agile Coaching Growth Wheel as central model.
- Heavy focus on coaching conversational Arcs.
- Special focus on: self-mastery, reflection, ethics, and continuous learning.
- Connected to Comparative Agility – Agile Coaching PI.



Discounted copies of the book -
<https://leanpub.com/extraordinarilybadassagilecoaching/c/eODcJ1jS0Wu3>

Agile Coaching Growth Wheel

Agile Coaching Stances

Agile Coaching Competencies

Includes Professional Coaching

Developed by practicing agile coaches

Focused towards becoming more well-rounded coaches in service to our clients.

<http://whatisagilecoaching.org/>

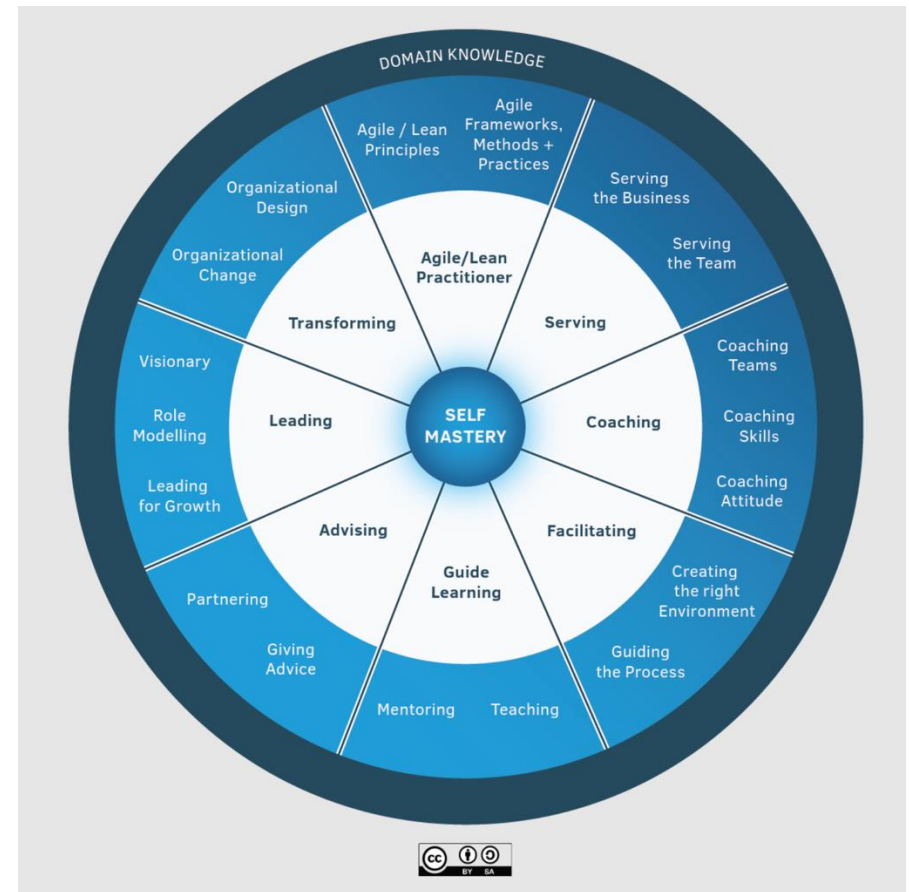


Agile Coaching Growth Wheel by Joel Bancroft-Connors; John Barratt; Shannon Carter; Rickard Jones; Martin Lambert; Stacey Louie; Helen Meek; Tom Reynolds; Rohit Ratan; Andre Rubin; Kubair Shirazee; Mark Spitzer; Mark Summers; Josh Tasker; Maria Thompson is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Walking the Wheel

Center: Self-Mastery

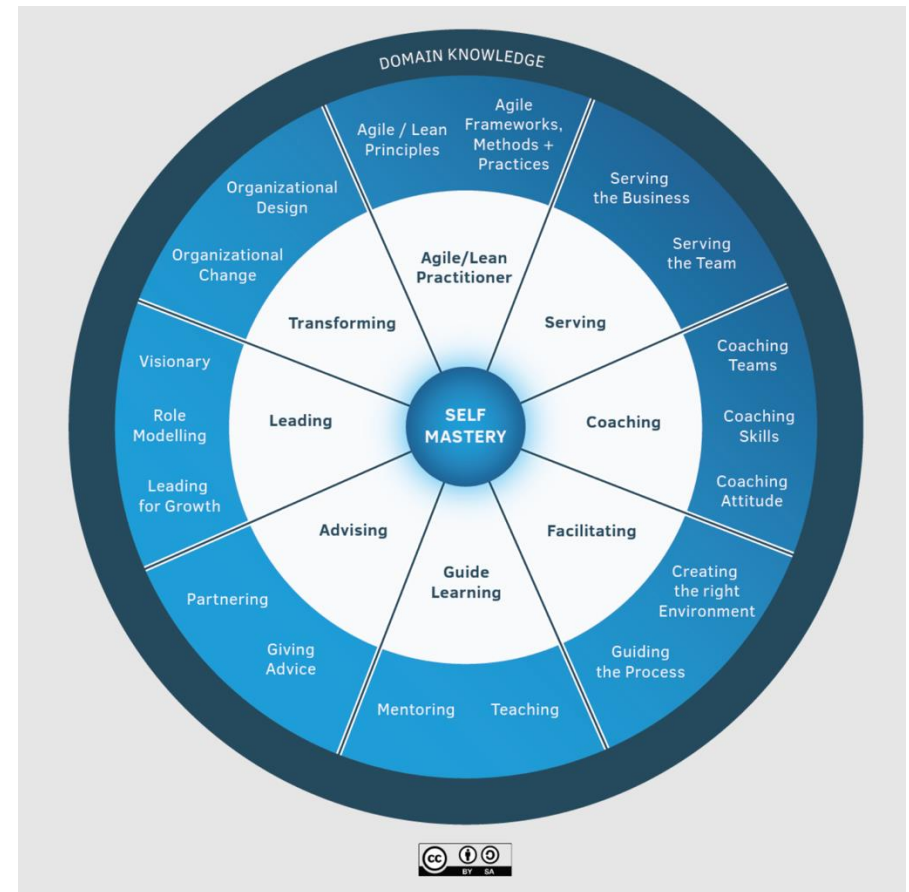
- **Ethics**
- Self-awareness
- **Emotional Intelligence**
- Systems-awareness
- **Continuous Learning & Growth**
- Self-care
- **Mindfulness**
- Strengths-based
- **Service-oriented**
- Humility
- **Coachable**
- Presence



Walking the Wheel

Primary Competencies

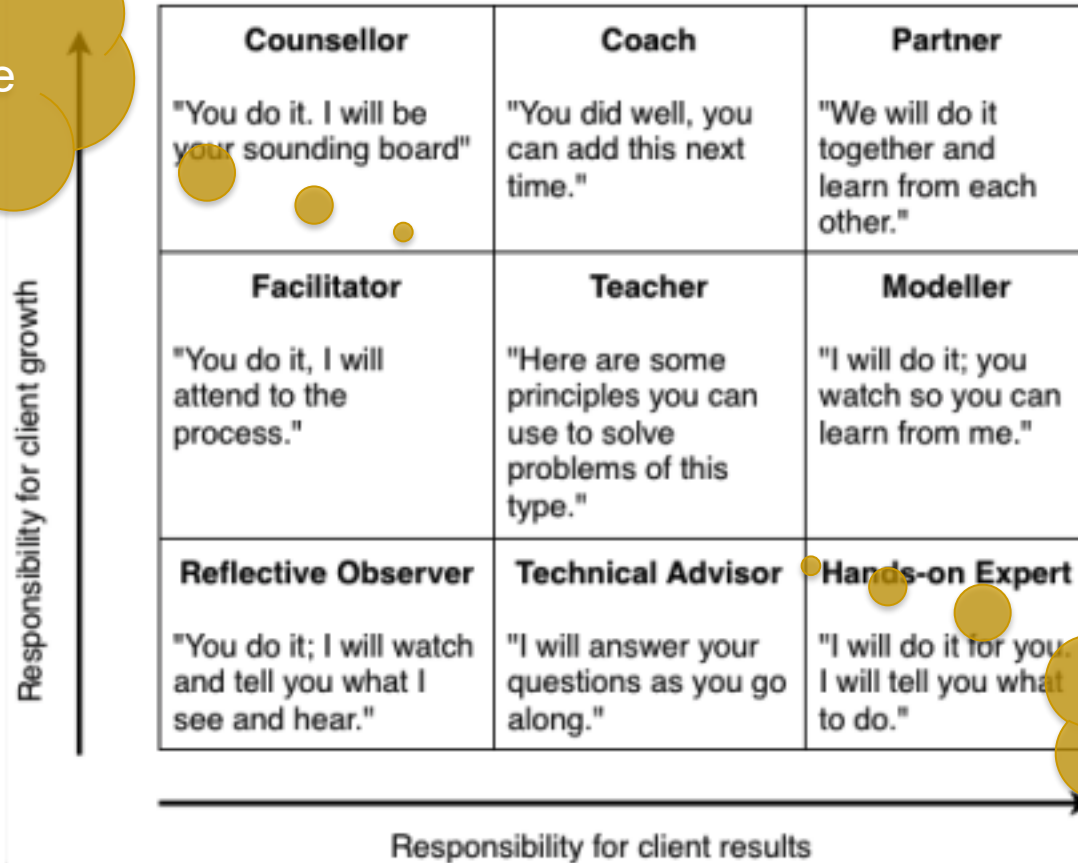
1. **Advising:** I bring my expertise and consult with you. Provide counsel.
2. **Coaching:** I help you explore the problem space to identify your solution.
3. **Facilitating:** I make it easier for you to achieve your goals.
4. **Guiding Learning:** I impart knowledge and I share my experience.
5. **Leading:** lead in a service of others, serve and set an example, role model.



9 Coaching Roles

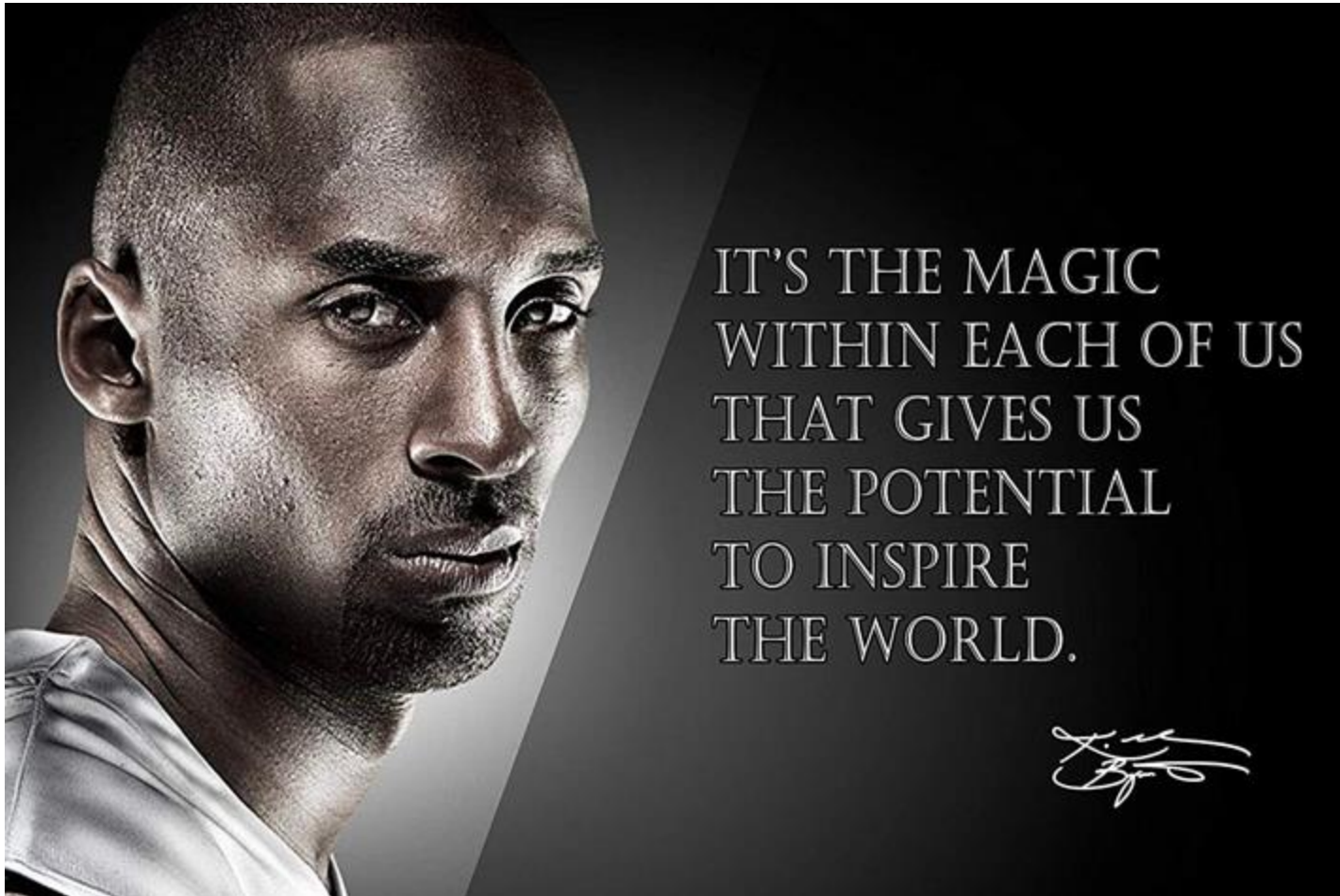
Derby & Gray, (Douglas Champion, Davie Kiel, and Jean McLendon)

Less
prescriptive
...



More
prescriptive
...

Coaching Mindset



Prime Directives

- **Do no harm**
- **API** – Assume Positive Intent
- Hold your coaching clients as **capable**, smart, and having all the information they need (i.e. your client isn't broken!)
 - Establish and **hold** the clients agenda
 - Help them **discover** their way
- Have **courage**, be patient, actively listen, and show respect
 - Help your clients **focus** on outcomes

Self-Mastery

Mindset starts within; Inside-Out

- Ethics
- Self-awareness
- Emotional Intelligence
- Systems-awareness
- Continuous Learning & Growth
- Self-care
- Mindfulness
- Strengths-based
- Service-oriented
- Humility
- Coachable
- Presence



Meet them where they are

- Try not to coach too “far away” from their current context
- Empathy for the current landscape
 - Agile transformation, culture, skills, leadership dynamics, business dynamics
- Give them the “Truth” they can “Handle”



It helps if you have walked in their shoes...

*When you judge someone
it says more about you...*

*...unless you really
HAVE walked a mile
in their shoes!*



~~ Edward Mills | The Abundant Mystic

<https://rgalen.com/agile-training-news/2014/11/23/agile-coaches-trainers-have-you-walked-in-the-shoes-of-technical-management>

Drop your Baggage and your Biases

- Leave behind your own baggage, biases
 - ❑ The more experienced you are, the harder it is
 - ❑ It will influence your behavior and body language
- No marginalization of management or leadership; stop referencing Dilbert
 - ❑ Stop stereotyping
 - ❑ All "managers" are not the same
 - ❑ Be patient!



Walk your talk--

Principles & Behavior trumps everything!

- Agile principles
- Scrum values
- Be transparent
- Appreciative
- Be courageous
- Risk taking
- Truth telling
- Radical candor
- Empathy
- Service
- Coaching ethics



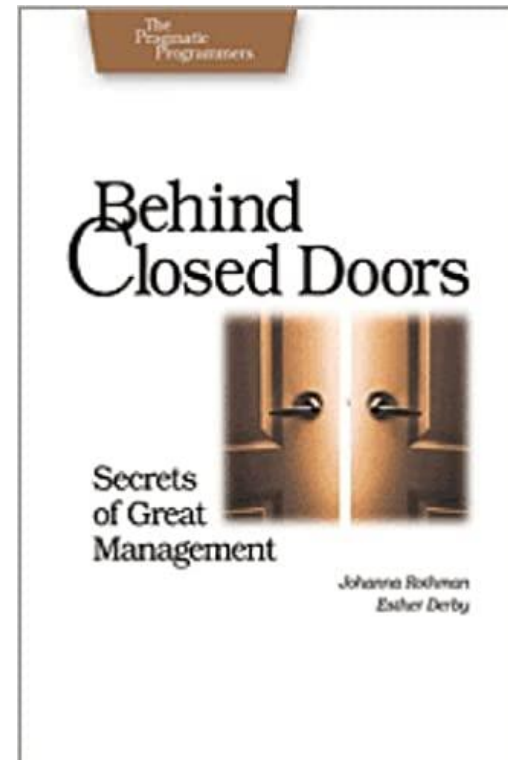
Coaching Conversations



Power of the 1:1

Behind closed doors

- *What is the “essence” of an effective 1:1?*
- *Who’s it for? What’s the focus?*
- Coaching towards Agility
- Feedback
 - ❑ Crucial Conversations
 - ❑ Radical Candor
 - ❑ 30% / 70% speaking
 - ❑ Deep listening



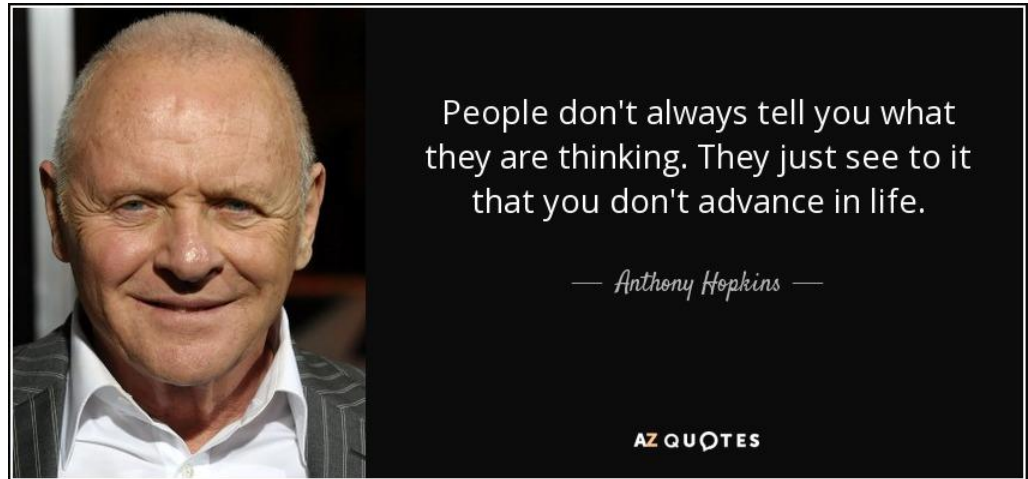
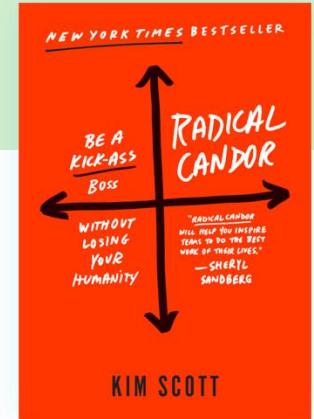
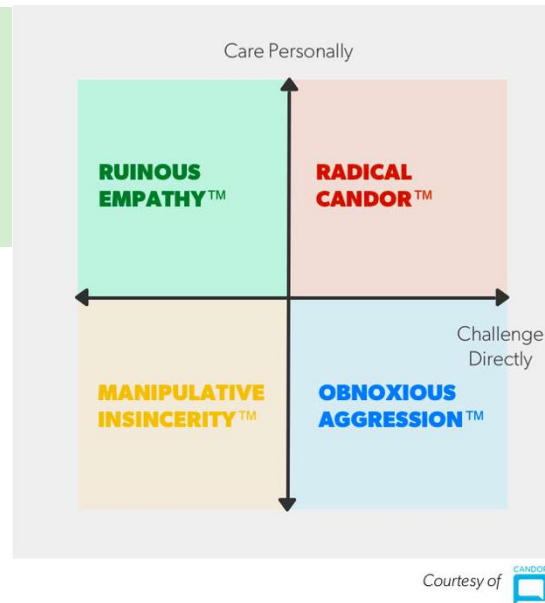
Radical Candor

A Moral Obligation

Starting from a position of relationship and caring personally,

You tell people what you,
really think
So that either...

Your thinking can change
Or their thinking can change



Coaching Conversations

A Simple Model



Opening Moves

- *Ask permission*
- *Establish goal(s)*
- *Set the stage*
- *Open-ended questions*
- *Listening – emotional field*
- *Direction finding*

Middle Game

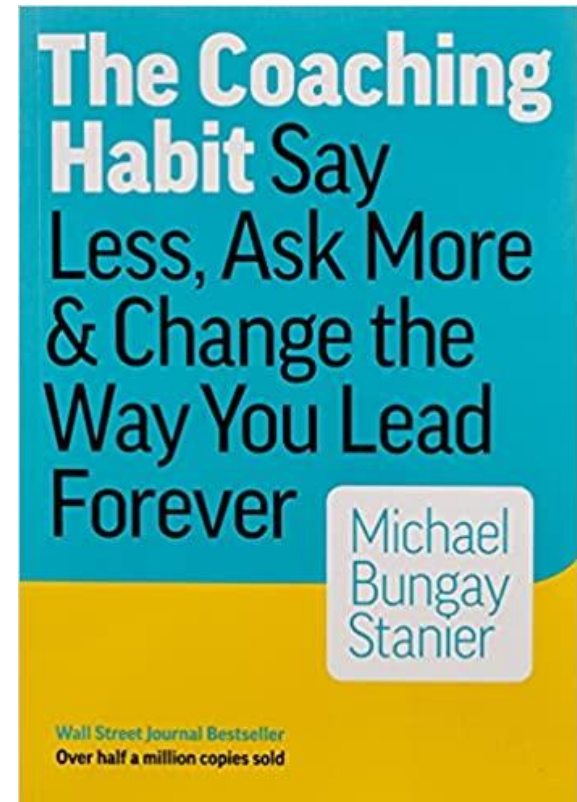
- *Widening / brainstorming*
- *Options*
- *Strategies*
- *Narrowing & planning*
- *Exploration*
- *Clarification*

End Game

- *Closure*
- *Ownership – who does what?*
- *Action plans and next steps*
- *Repeat, confirmation*
- *Schedule*

7 Essential Coaching Questions

1. What's on your mind?
2. And what else?
3. What's the real challenge here for you?
4. What do you want?
5. How can I help?
6. If you're saying "yes" to this, what are you saying "no" to?
7. What was most useful to you?



Effective Listening

Center for Creative Leadership

CCL 7-Steps

1. Be attentive
2. Ask open-ended questions
3. Ask probing questions
4. Request clarification
5. Paraphrase
6. Be attuned to and reflect feelings
7. Summarize

Other Considerations

- Empathy and perspective
- Body language, tone, what wasn't said
- Emotional field
- Create/allow for space (silence)
- Seek to understand
- No judgment
- Appreciate and normalize
- Connect & relationship

Coaching Dojo

practice, practice, practice...

<https://rgalen.com/agile-training-news/2016/6/12/coaching-dojo-with-a-twist>



- Break into groups of 3 (Triads) or 4 --
 - ❑ **Coachee:** engages/responds to the conversation.
 - ❑ **Coach:** initiates/enters the conversation.
 - ❑ **Observer – Facilitator/Scribe:** notes, debrief learnings, conductor.
- Decide on **roles**, select a **scenario**, and **Arc**.
- Run a 10-minute DOJO conversation then 5-minute Retro
- *KEY is to Role Play! Have FUN with it. Improvisation!*

Example/Possible Coaching Conversations

*You're the **VP of Development** coaching a peer (**VP Product**) about managing client/business commitments to the capacity at hand, not the capacity dreamed up by the CEO and the Board. Oh, and some commitments have to be unwound...right now.*

*You're the **Director of Agile Delivery** (PMO) coaching your boss's boss (**CTO**) to engage more in the scrum events and in providing constructive and positive feedback to the teams. There are instances where/when they were too harsh in their critiques, and it has reduced psychological safety for your teams.*

*You're a **Manager** of a 20-person software development team coaching a **Team lead/SME** about their failure to effectively work with, grow, and delegate to other team members. In fact, there have been 3 resignations from the team over the past month where "stagnation and a lack of safety" were the primary reasons.*

Example/Possible Coaching Conversations

*You're the **VP of Development** coaching an engineer on your team who you've been wanting to (1) get to know better, (2) ask them for personal feedback, and (3) give them some positive feedback on the results/outcomes they (and their team) have delivered lately.*

*You're a **Manager** of a 20-person software development team coaching a **Team lead/SME** about how well they've been mentoring, guiding, and leading their team. You want to provide encouragement, but also discover if they're feeling good about their role **AND** how they'd like to grow in the future?*

*You're the **Director of Enterprise Architecture** coaching your **Director of DevOps partner** in how well they've been embracing (and doing) the agile mindset in their day-to-day role. You also want to ask them to mentor you a bit as you've been struggling in how to "extend lots of trust" within your own team.*

Example/Possible Coaching Conversations

*You're the **Director of Enterprise Architecture** coaching your **Lead Architect** about doing less BDUF and more Emergent / Experiment-driven architecture themselves and teams. The key problem to explore is the (time) it is taking for all of the up-front work versus the value (rework is STILL occurring).*

You are a **Senior Engineering Leader** meeting with a **New Client** for the very first time. They give you a litany of current challenges that they believe “going Agile” will address for them. The biggest is getting more products to market 10x faster. Their understanding actually shows an incredibly superficial and naïve understanding of agile methods and principles. You feel the need to reset their understanding and expectations...without losing the potential contract.

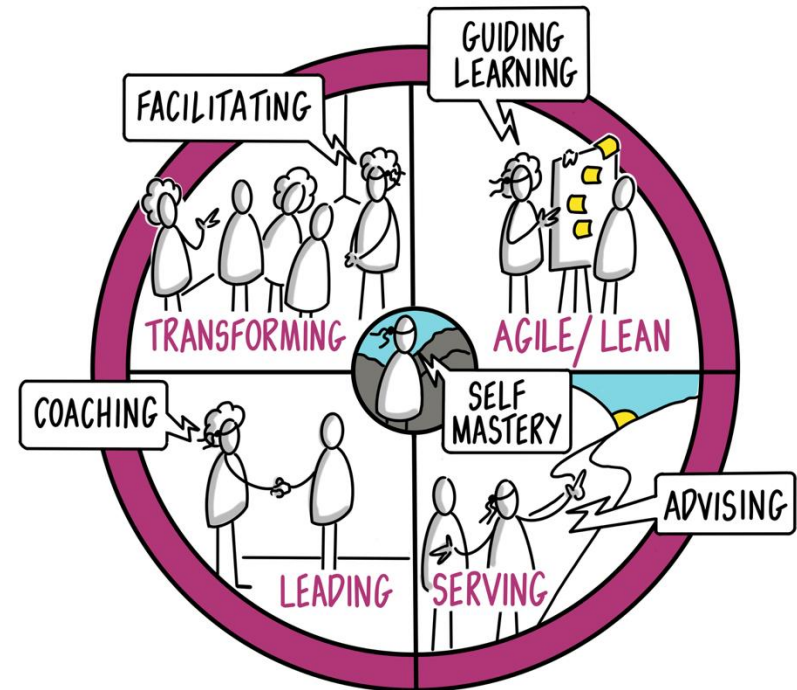
Wrapping up...



Thank you!

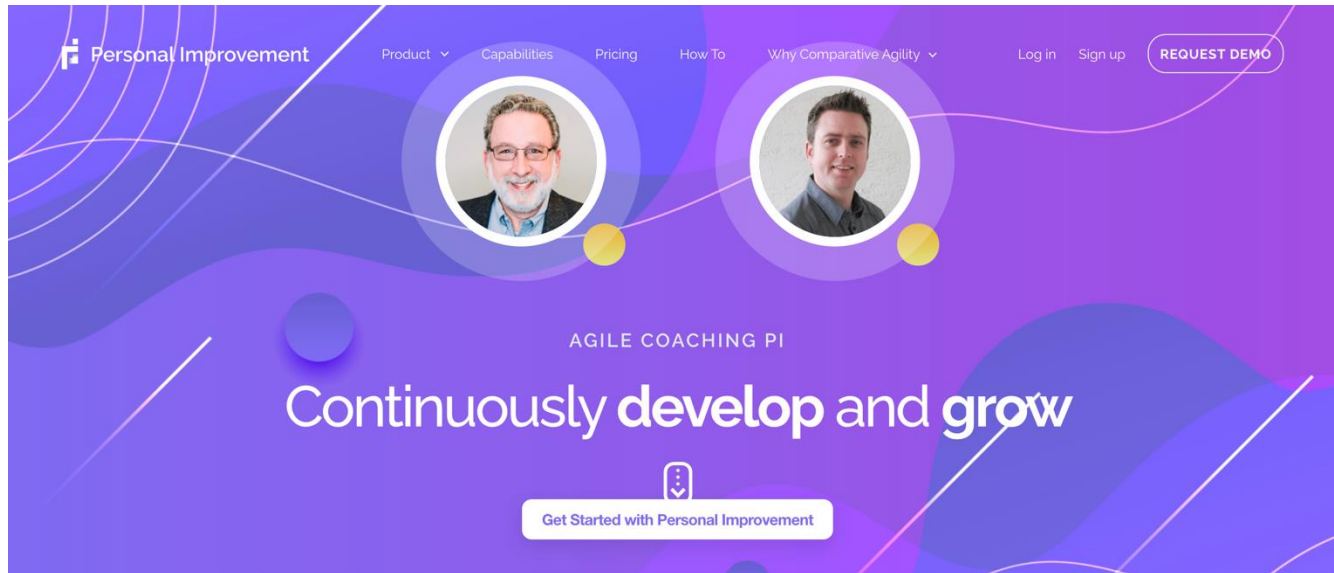
And please aspire to
become more...

*of a Well-rounded
Coach...in whatever your
role is.*



Comparative Agility

Agile Coaching – PI assessment



- Co-created with Mark Summers
- Aligned with the Agile Coaching Growth Wheel, 8 competency areas of focus
- Deep learning recommendation library for personal development
- Free ongoing assessments
- Wonderful (PI) continuous improvement dashboard to guide your growth & learning

<https://www.comparativeagility.com/personal-capabilities/agile-coaching-pi>

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Podcast on all things 'agile' -

<http://www.meta-cast.com/>

