

Capstone Essay

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Module One

Module One opens with discussing the importance of finding the right fit for the coach to be effective and successful. This module emphasizes the importance of using the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the coach's life story and her experiences to find the best fit for her area of coaching. The coach's life story is to be used to help others. A coach must develop her toolbox, and in this toolbox is the Bible, the most important tool for a Christian Life Coach. Other tools include showing the client her strengths, helping her to see what may be blocking her success, accountability, creativity, and guiding her so that she can change what she wants to change in order to be successful and achieve greatness.

This module explains that the coach cannot be all things to all people. The coach should determine her niche, her area of specialty. There are two types of coaches, personal development coaches and professional development coaches, and the coach uses her life story and experience to determine the type of coach that best fits her. The new coach is encouraged to find her fit by exploring key areas of her life and blending key elements to determine the type of coaching that is compatible with her talents, abilities and gifts. It is essential that the coach discover her area of excellence, or she is likely to fail.

Module Two

One area of emphasis in Module Two is the use of Positive Psychology in the field of coaching. Positive Psychology focuses on helping individuals see and focus on what is positive in life and within themselves. It is about achieving a state of well being, happiness, appreciation, contentment, and living a life of purpose with meaning that is fulfilling. The focus is not on client weaknesses. The client's strengths, positive character traits and attributes are targeted and the attention is on discovering what is right in the client's life and how to best build upon the positive emotions and strengths. It is about enhancing the client's life and embracing the

positives of life; it is about being engaged and connected. The concept gives gratitude for the past, thankfulness for the present, and hope for the future. Positive Psychology is easily integrated into Christian coaching.

There are numerous exercises the coach can utilize to direct the client. One of these is the Three Blessings Exercise. This exercise draws the client's attention toward what is right in her life and the positives around her so that she is able to see God working in her life. This involves writing down three positive blessings that occurred during the day. They can be of small significance or a large blessing. The goal is for the client to see what is good around her and teach her to focus on these positive things.

A second exercise is Positive Thinking, Optimism, Hope. Optimism and Hope give the client a positive view for the future. Since optimism can be learned, it is a skill that is good for a lifetime. These two exercises can be used with other tools of Positive Psychology. Determining which exercises or tools fit the client best will help the coach move the client forward toward her goals and a fulfilling, abundant life of enjoyment.

Module Three

The differences in coaching men and women are examined in Module Three. It is important for the coach to understand that men are often passive creatures. They have a tendency to not want to engage with family dynamics or acknowledge important life issues. Men need a coach whom they can trust. They fear exposure and will receive direction and guidance more readily from an authentic, trustworthy coach. Men desire success. The coach who can help them understand that God placed the desire to succeed within them will be most effective. Helping a man focus on his purpose and mission, what God desires for his life, and who he is will empower him to move forward and become involved in the areas necessary for him to achieve his goals.

As different creatures created by God, women have different coaching issues. They tend to hold on to the different seasons of life longer and have more difficulty moving forward than men. Women are more open than their male counterparts and seek support more naturally. Women are harder on themselves and have a tendency to neglect self-care. They may focus on the wrong information. While men seek success, women may fear it. A coach can help a client be more realistic about life, address her fears, provide hope, encourage self-esteem, and help her to see herself the way God sees her.

It is important for the coach to understand gender roles and personalities. Coaches coach, they are not responsible for the client or his or her journey. Because there can be so many underlying issues and hurt, a coach must be able to recognize when it is appropriate to refer a client for therapy.

Module Four

The five elements of Laser Coaching are explored in Module Four. They are 1) establish your Biblical framework 2) clarify and validate assumptions, 3) develop specific questions and illustrations, 4) identify homework, and 5) create accountability.

Laser Coaching is a method of coaching that is generally brief and intentional in nature. The coach prepares ahead of time to address specific, targeted issues directly with purpose. In the coaching session, the coach incorporates appropriate Biblical principles that directly correlate with the topic or issue to be discussed during the session. This encourages and helps the client who needs direction, guidance and wisdom, and God's Word is the best place to find this guidance. The coach also uses this time to clear up or recognize any assumptions about the client and/or the topic to be addressed in the session-to hone in on what is most important or pressing to the client. The coach incorporates the use of direct and specific questions, listening skills and may also use illustrations or tell stories. At the end of the session, the coach assigns homework to be done between sessions. This is a great tool that is beneficial to keep the client thinking about,

reflecting on and working through the issues and obstacles on her own time. It is also a great way to keep the client motivated, focused and accountable. In the end, it is essential for the coach to use accountability methods that are specific, realistic, and measurable to keep the client on target to pursuing and achieving her goals and plan for the future.

Module Five

Module Five discusses the five keys to developing a strategic plan of action. The number one strategy discussed is “Listen before you lead.” This strategy is the most effective in helping the client develop her best strategic plan to meet her goals, and the coach must actively listen to her client before she attempts to lead her client. If the coach does not listen, she will not know the appropriate tools to use to best serve her client. Clients seek coaching to help guide, direct and lead them through uncharted waters or those they have not been successful at breaking through. The coach must be attentive and listen as the client gives details and shares her challenges, struggles, and what she is seeking to achieve or accomplish. Active listening enables the coach to determine the appropriate tools and methods to use with her client. It is most important for the coach to be prepared to take notes either with a legal pad and pen or some other method to keep a record of conversations and progress. As a Christian Coach, it is always wise to first listen to the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Praying with the client before the start of the session, intermittently and at the end of the session are very beneficial to all involved as we come together in partnership to seek wisdom, guidance and direction from God.

References

Light University Online. (2011). *LFCH 201 Principles of Professional Life Coaching Course Text*.