



## Episode 33: 4 Ways to Know that Coaching is Successful

Welcome to In the Right Direction podcast, where we believe you get to choose what's on your plate, you can manage the overwhelm, and that change is possible. I'm your host, Deb Elbaum, and I'm here to share insights and strategies to increase your happiness, one baby step at a time. Let's dive in.

Hi everyone, it's Deb. Here's today's question: as you think about your current job, how do you know if you are successful? What are the measures of success that you and your supervisor point to?

We all want to know that the things we choose to put our time, energy, and personal resources toward matter. We want to know that we're doing them well and that we're being successful, as defined by us and those we work for. When we are clear about how we measure success in our job or life, we then can create a clear roadmap to guide our actions. We can also then more easily celebrate the well-won successes and achievements we have along the way.

And just like you want to be successful in your job, I want to make sure my client's personal and professional growth is successful. I want my clients to see that they've transformed and grown, worked toward their goals and achieved new ways of thinking and communicating.

Whether you are currently working with a coach or curious about coaching, I'm guessing you are drawn to coaching because there are goals that are important to you. You're thinking about how you can become a better leader, family member, and human being.

In addition, your coach also likely has goals for your growth. After all, coaching is ultimately about personal growth and transformation, and your coach is your guide on your journey.

When I meet with potential clients for a coaching consult, they ask me questions. They ask about logistics of a coaching engagement and about my approach, and many also ask how I measure success with coaching. Because they want assurance that they're investing their time and resources in a way that will benefit them.

In this podcast, I want to share how I measure success when working with a client. As I share my metrics, please think about your personal development, and how these ideas might apply to you.

There are 4 measures of coaching success that I look for. They focus on how my client thinks, how they feel, how they see the world, and how they share the insights they've gained through coaching with others. When I work with someone, my goal is for them to feel empowered and equipped with a toolbox of strategies to think, lead, and communicate more effectively, and to feel happier, purposeful, and more balanced.

The first measure of coaching success is about learning to think more effectively. When we think about anything in life – whether our job, our health, a relationship – we can be in 1 of 2 brain modes. We can be in a negative thinking mode, meaning stressed, worried, or overwhelmed. Or we can be in a positive thinking mode, meaning engaged, productive, and curious.

Recognizing when your brain is in a negative thinking mode, pausing, and using a strategy to shift to a more positive way of thinking is a critical life and leadership skill. When our brain is thinking negatively, we are less likely to see choices, less likely to listen to any other points of view, and more likely to spread negativity. In contrast, when we think from a more positive thinking mode, it's much easier to be creative, problem solve, collaborate, and have more peace of mind.

Thinking effectively and having tools to shift from negative to positive thinking is success measure #1.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> way of measuring coaching success is related to achieving the tangible goals that are important for the individual, given the context of their life and work.

People come to coaching because they want to achieve something. Maybe they want to build executive presence, become a better coach to their team, or simply have better processes to feel more organized. My job is to help them connect these goals to their values and purpose, to break them down into baby steps and sort through their learning along the way.

Success in this area happens with each baby step and big step achieved. Success is recognizing how they are moving forward. This might look like asking more questions in a meeting with confident body language; empowering team members through coaching and asking more open-ended questions; or creating ways to feel more in control of their calendar and email.

Coaching success measure #2 is celebrating all the progress along the way toward a client's personal and professional goals.

If success measure #2 is about the tactical, the third way I measure success in coaching addresses the big picture life perspective. One big outcome I am wanting for my clients is to help them feel more empowered, to see that they have more agency and choice than they thought, even when life is chaotic, and even when so many aspects of life and work are not in their control.

We are the creators of our life. We are always writing the narrative of our life, and casting ourselves as the victim or hero. One of the biggest ideas I share with my clients is this: that in every situation, there's always something in our control, and there's always more in our control than we think. Our thoughts, our conversations, our consumption of news and social media – these are all things we choose that shape how we think and feel.

I know personally how transformative a mindset shift this can be. When I was much younger, I would often see myself as the victim of circumstances, believing that things happened to me rather than by me. Quick to blame others, I didn't always recognize the role and choices I might have had in a situation.

When I did my coaching training and was introduced to the idea that we create our life, it was a huge revelation. Because once you see yourself as someone with agency, it then allows you to recognize your choices and choose intentionally. It allows you to decide how you want to show up to others, who you want to be, and how you want to be seen.

This coaching measure is a success when clients feel empowered and more in control of their life, and when they make decisions and choices with purpose, confidence, and clarity.

These first 3 measures of success in coaching focus on the individual. The fourth measure of success encourages my client to be a multiplier and have a ripple effect as they share their new learning more

broadly. This measure is an opportunity to share and role model learnings with others. It's about using the coaching questions we talk through in coaching sessions with colleagues. It's about sharing powerful concepts, like the idea that our perspective is a choice. It's when they help those around them move toward their goals, by helping them create an action plan.

The concepts and tools we discuss in coaching are relevant for all aspects of work and life, and can help anyone think differently, feel more in control, and more easily create new habits.

When my clients tell me how they've used and shared their favorite tools and ideas with others, I know they have achieved success with measure #4.

Now that I've shared my thoughts, let's bring this to you. If you haven't thought about how you measure your personal growth and development, I invite you to think about it now. What are you working toward as a leader, thinker, and communicator? How will you know when you've improved?

You might start by asking yourself these questions: As I grow as a leader, how do I want to think differently? How do I want to feel? What am I working toward?

Take some time to reflect, journal, and answer these questions.

Thank you so much for listening and being part of my community. I'm excited for your leadership journey. The world needs people like you, who are purposeful, intentional, and know how to use their brain for its best thinking.

And if you want to get clear about what's next for you personally or professionally, please email me at [deb@debelbaum.com](mailto:deb@debelbaum.com) for a complimentary coaching conversation. I'm here to help you create your best self at home and at work, so that you know you're moving in the right direction for you.

Until next time!