

Are You Ready, Willing, and Able to Be Coached?

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Have you noticed the change in my ad that appears below my article? Take a look down the page. The ad now changes every week. If you are a routine reader of my articles, I hope you'll look each week for the "You might be coachworthy" ad.

I was certified as a coach eight years ago. My, how time flies! I recently searched for some particular information in my training notes from back then. As often happens, I found something else interesting along the way. I saw a reference to Laura Fortgang's 1999 book entitled *Take Yourself to the Top*.

In the book, she identifies a self-evaluation for healthy individuals to determine if professional coaching might be an appropriate intervention for achieving personal or career growth. Her assessment questions have been adopted by several organizations that train and certify coaches.

Are you investing in your growth? Are you investing in the future of your organization by developing the individuals under your authority? Are you ready, willing, and able to expand your efforts?

For individuals willing to invest in themselves and their organizations, coaching can make a huge difference. For my revised ad, I wanted a light, thought-provoking way to communicate that coaching might be worth contemplating.

The fun part of the new ad comes from Jeff Foxworthy's successful book from 1989 entitled *You Might Be a Redneck If....* It was an easy springboard to the tag line of "You might be coachworthy if...."

Of course, not everyone knows what "coaching" is all about. The word "coach" at this time of year may cause you to think about football. You might have an image of a determined, focused individual pacing the sidelines, barking directions to the players and other coaches. That's not quite what I do.

Think instead of a stagecoach you might see in a western movie. To get from one town to another in those days, you could walk, ride a horse, or catch a stagecoach. Either of the first two would get you there, but you'd be dirty and hot when you arrived. Taking a coach, however, got you there faster and you weren't as fatigued or filthy when you arrived.

That's the kind of coaching I provide. We go where you want to go. I help you get there faster and more elegantly. Not only do you enhance your leadership skills, your organization and all those individuals under your influence benefit.

Are you thinking about hiring a coach to help with your growth? Consider the following.

Are you ready? Do you have time available for developing yourself? Can you recognize gaps between where you are currently and where you want to be? Will you allocate an average of thirty minutes a day to work on personal development? Does now seem the appropriate time for you to invite thought-provoking questions from an outside professional who genuinely wants you to succeed?

Are you willing? Are you committed to working in new ways to achieve your goals? Are you open to exploring the self-defeating behaviors that currently limit your success? Can you tolerate experimenting with new approaches? Will you commit to telling the truth as you see it to your coach? Are you open to receiving feedback from the people around you who will observe and experience the effects of your changed behaviors?

Are you able? Are you physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy? Do you have the patience to take consistent action toward your goals, realizing that results may not be immediate? Do you have support (from your boss, your family, and your friends) to make significant changes without them putting up a lot of resistance? Does your schedule allow you to make and reliably keep appointments for dialogue with your coach? Do you have adequate funds to pay for coaching without regretting the fee? Do you see coaching as a beneficial investment in improving your life?

Before you agree to spend money with a professional coach, you'll want to check out that person's skills, motives, and reliability. But don't be surprised if your potential coach spends some time investigating you, too. He or she doesn't want to waste time or energy with someone who isn't serious about personal growth.

If you are considering engaging a coach, you should talk with several individuals who have experienced such a relationship. The work you will accomplish with the guidance of a coach is probably more demanding than you will experience if you attempt the improvement effort alone. But that's what enables you to get from where you are to where you want to go more quickly and elegantly!

If you want to talk to someone who has successfully used a coach, Dennis Hooper will provide names. Contact him at dhooper2@juno.com or 478-988-0237. His website is www.buildingfutureleaders.com.