

RealTime Coaching

How to make the minute by minute decisions
that unleash the power in your people.



by Ron Ernst

What Others are Saying About

RealTime Coaching

How to Make the Minute by Minute Decisions
That Unleash the Power in Your People

“The approach fills a gap in published business theory by tackling, in a practical way, the ‘last three feet’ of management. It embraces the all important emotional underpinnings of ‘doing’ rather than just the intellectual basis of ‘planning to do.’”

Charles A. Dowd, President
Delta Faucet Co.

“RealTime Coaching provides a very common sense approach to coaching that does a much better job of encouraging employee accountability for their performance than other books I’ve read. I will encourage my management team to use this book as a resource.”

Donald W. Hecht, Director of Sales and Marketing
Elanco Animal Health, Division of Eli Lilly & Company

“Ron Ernst’s RealTime Coaching is a breakthrough how-to book! The theory and practice of coaching are laid out in a pragmatic, easy-to-learn fashion. Excellent real life examples and scenarios. If you learn one new skill this business year, learn coaching via RealTime Coaching!”

Terry Reilly, Partner
J.D. Powers and Associates

“I would highly recommend this book to any mid-level manager or executive as a concise, cohesive presentation of coaching. It is structured for quick reading, and it is formatted the way reality presents itself—directly and rapidly. I would also give it to my direct reports to read, and then we’d cut the time needed for excellent coaching outcomes in half.”

Dale Mowr y, Vice President Broadcast Systems Division
Harris Corporation

“Every manager who wants to improve his/her relationship with persons reporting to them should read this book to become a more effective coach - the only style of management that produces quality. Send me a case of books - they will make great reading prior to next planning session.”

Larry J. Hannah, President, U.S. Operations
Harlan Sprague Dowley, Inc.

“Finally, a book with more than theory. A book that demonstrates the implementation process. A book that should be in the hands of every manager, boss, supervisor, and leader.”

Connie Dillman, Chief Operating Officer
Noble of Indiana, Inc.

“Okay, so we now know that we should all be coaches. But what exactly does that mean and how do we go about it? Ron Ernst’s gem of a book is the next best thing to having your own personal executive coach in the learning process.”

Ed Engledow, President
Engledow Group

“Very good book. It really shows the need to ask employees to self-evaluate rather than the boss always doing the evaluation. I’m sure I’ll refer back to the planning guide often.”

Rich Westlake, Managing Member
Hansen & Horn Group II, LLC.

“Too often ‘management’ books are long on theory and short on application. Thanks for writing a book that can be used as a “field manual” to more effective leadership. Every new supervisor should be issued a copy of your book!”

Frank Pianki, Assistant Professor of Business
Anderson University

“Wow! A refreshing look at leadership for the new millennium. Ron has done a superb job of creating a practical guide for leadership development. A must read for anyone who wishes to become an ‘effective’ leader.”

Steven P. Osborn, President
C E Solutions, Inc.

“This is truly the first book that doesn’t just tell me I have to fix my problems but gets to the practical how to fix them. It’s time for RealTime Coaching! We must change our approach to leading and not herding or forcing employees to follow us. Leading by listening and coaching is the only way to take on the challenge of quality and growth.”

Mike Bursaw, President
Crown Point Graphics, Inc.

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To My Coaches

- To my wife and personal coach for support, encouragement, and unconditional love. Thank you, Carol.
- To my boys, Boyd and Blake, who always have a way of testing my coaching abilities and in the process making me a better coach. Thanks, guys.
- To Dr. William Glasser for his brilliance in helping us all better understand “why we do what we do.”
- To Dr. Robert Wubbolding for his clarity of thought, creativity and passion for his profession.
- To Bill Bonstetter for pioneering practical ways to use the knowledge of values and behavior in creating more effective and enjoyable personal and professional relationships.
- To Marlene Elliott a true coach’s coach for her inspiration and unwavering commitment to my success.
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- To Ken Honeywell, my editor, for helping me organize my thoughts into a coherent message.
- To all my clients and friends who reviewed my manuscript, gave me their thoughts and helped me better understand the coaching process.

Forward

Scan the Business section of any library or bookstore today (or attend a management seminar), and you'll find literally hundreds of books designed to motivate you, teach you better management skills, and make you a more effective boss. Scan the Self-Help section (or hire a consultant or psychologist), and you'll find all sorts of "personality profiles" that arrange people into categories according to what they believe or the way they behave.

What you'll find is, most management books are long on hyperbole and short on practical methods for really improving the quality of communications in your place of business. At the same time, most methods of personality profiling paint a nice picture of the "type of person" you are and leave it at that, which can lead to a mentality that says, "this is just who I am, and you have to deal with me."

Ron Ernst's RealTime Coaching is different. Truly different. It's not just a list of platitudes or suggestions, but a well-developed system for bringing out the best in your employees, every minute of every day.

Why does RealTime Coaching work? It works because Ron based his approach to coaching on a scientific, accepted model of what motivates people and why different people behave in different ways. Once you experience RealTime Coaching, you'll never again be stuck for a way to resolve difficult situations in your organization.

Even more important, RealTime Coaching doesn't merely place people in categories you have to react to. It uses the DISC language as a basis for adapting your own behavior to the situations you encounter at work...and influencing employees to adapt their own behavior to align their personal desires with the goals and

objectives of the organization.

In truth, I suspect you'll find RealTime Coaching to be of benefit to you not only in your workplace, but in your communications with your spouse, your friends, your family, and everyone else in your life. It's a powerful tool for smarter, better communication that really gets results. I encourage you to put RealTime Coaching to work for you now!

Bill J. Bonnstetter
President and Founder
TTI Performance Systems, Ltd.

Preface

In retrospect, I began using the coaching dialogue you're about to learn in the mid 1970s. At the time, I had just received an MBA from The Ohio State University and was employed as a management consultant. My duties included research and analysis, strategic planning, report writing, client presentations, and conducting a fair amount of stand-up management training. It was this last responsibility that challenged what I knew about people. It wasn't the presentations that concerned me—I was a far better than average presenter—it was the person who worked for me. I was, you see, a boss for the first time in my life! Judy (not her real name) was assigned to me. It was my responsibility to develop Judy in the art and science of management training. And I wasn't making much progress.

After several months of practice, Judy just wasn't getting it—and she knew it. Her presentation style was stilted, she'd get lost in her presentation, and the audience groaned at her attempts at humor. As a result, her self-confidence was falling sharply. My attempts at advice—"Here try this." or "Present it this way."—were to no avail. I had to try something different.

After a particularly trying presentation we had a brief break. We walked to the lobby of the hotel where we were presenting and sat down. I knew another pep talk would seem laughably superficial. After a rather long silence I turned to Judy. Her face showed all the frustration and pain of months of agonizing trials. "Judy," I began, "Do you want to be a trainer?" She thought for a brief moment, then stated, very firmly, "Yes, I really do." I replied to her what in retrospect was a gridlock-breaking question, "Then what do you need from me? How can I help?"

The ensuing conversation was a turning point for both of us.

Judy began to ask questions about how I presented, how I prepared, what I thought about during a presentation, and how I gauged time so we ended on schedule. I began to understand more about myself—that I was critiquing her presentations and offering my advice from the perspective of what I thought she needed to know, not what she wanted to learn.

I also realized that people have a natural tendency to discount the unique gifts and talents they bring to their jobs. In our conversation, Judy began relating personal stories that were rich in illustrating the concepts she was presenting but she was afraid to use them because she thought they were “self-promoting” and “inappropriate.” I encouraged her to bring more of her personal self to her presentation and to take off the artificial mask she felt she needed to hide behind. The result was instantaneous. Her comfort level increased, her presentations flowed, and the audience was now fully engaged with her.

This experience revealed to me the power that lies within people if we only know how to unleash it. RealTime Coaching is my contribution to all bosses who want to make the minute-by-minute decisions that unleash the power in the people they manage. Encourage them to take off their masks and share with you what they really want from their jobs and from you. Value the unique gifts and contributions each person brings to the job. And then watch as people naturally take your organization to new heights.

Enjoy!

Ron Ernst
January 1, 1999
Tee Lake
Lewiston, Michigan

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Introduction

Why RealTime Coaching?

The “last three feet” between two people is the most overlooked part of leadership training. What is said, or left unsaid, determines the effectiveness of the leader and the commitment of the follower.

Knowledge, in the absence of theory, is useless. Knowledge is prediction, and knowledge comes from theory. Experience teaches nothing without theory. Do not try to copy someone else’s success. Unless you understand the theory behind it, trying to copy it can lead to complete chaos.

—W. Edwards Deming

RealTime Coaching is written for practitioners: managers, executives, and leaders who day-to-day, minute-by-minute, are trying to accomplish their organizational goals with and through people.

Coaching is a new way of relating with those you work with and can pay extraordinary dividends in improved performance, increased productivity, and loyalty to you and your organization. As a manager of people, the more you are viewed as someone interested in helping other people get what they want, the more your position as a leader will be assured. But, you may be asking, “Why coaching and why now?”

Technology Up, Employee Productivity Flat

Organizations today have access to more technology than ever before in the history of American business. Businesses, even the smallest ones, have opportunities to market their products and services around the world; in fact, the Internet can expose a company to a worldwide audience literally at the touch of a button.

And the Internet, of course, is just the latest in a long line of technological breakthroughs that have radically changed the way we do business. Remember when cellular phones were such a luxury that some enterprising entrepreneurs were marketing fake phones? In 1983, there were no cellular phone users at all. In 1990, there were about 5.3 million cellular phone users. By 1995, there were nearly 33.8 million and many of the phones they used were given to them free of charge!

Other technologies have grown in similarly dramatic fashion. In 1985, there were just over 12 million PCs in use. In 1993, there were more than 14.8 million PCs sold. In 1982, there were only 32,000 industrial robots in use; by 1995, that number had jumped to more than 20 million!

Put it this way: if automotive technology advanced at the same rate as computer technology, you'd be able to buy a Lexus today for \$2.00. Your new luxury car would travel at the speed of sound and get about 600 miles to the thimbleful of gas!

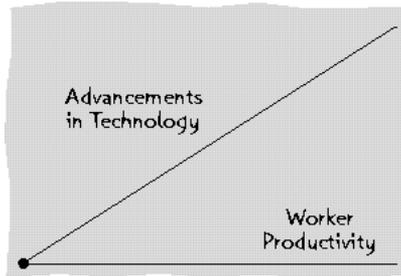
Desktop and laptop computers, fax machines, wireless voice and now wireless data services, voice mail, and robots all have come to prominence in the last 15 years. All have added new opportunities to work faster, smarter, and more productively. The question is, has business taken advantage of these opportunities?

The answer, perhaps surprisingly, is no. Quite the contrary: studies have suggested that technology has not resulted in an increase in productivity.

American worker productivity (output per worker hour) has risen just 1.2% per year between 1979 and 1994. Compare this with the average 3.4% per year productivity gain in the postwar years. Is it a coincidence that the fall off in productivity coincides with the rise of technology in the workplace?

Figure 1

Advancements in Technology Compared to Increases in Worker Productivity



This point is graphically illustrated in Figure 1. While technology—by any measure—has advanced along an extraordinarily steep incline in the past 25 years, worker productivity has barely moved at all. The fact is, advancements in technology have not resulted in improvements in productivity. Why?

I think there are several reasons:

- Over reliance on analyzing and planning “what to do” at the expense of implementing (or coaching) “how to do it.”
- Hierarchically based relationships between managers and employees that breed fear and resentment not creativity and empowerment.
- Hiring practices and management promotion decisions that mismatch people with jobs.

Not coincidentally, these are exactly the challenges RealTime Coaching addresses. RealTime Coaching is the missing link between setting corporate goals and achieving them with and through other people. It’s a proven way to influence, manage, and motivate people to perform at their absolute best.

How This Book Is Different

I started my career in traditional management consulting, spending eleven years honing my “hard side” skills of analysis, problem solving, and planning. I soon realized that corporate performance requires leaders to blend their “hard side” business skills with their “soft side” skills of building effective human relations. I also noticed an imbalance—that most managers were far better trained and more experienced in using their hard side analytical skills than in their softer “people” skills. The need, I concluded, to develop coaching skills was great. So I began investigating to find a process that would help managers become better coaches.

But most books I found on coaching fell short in several ways. Few provided a theory of how the mind works. Most did not even demonstrate the coaching dialogue, and none effectively bridged the gap between theory and application. It was not until I discovered a practical theory of how the human mind works that the pieces started falling into place. The result is *RealTime Coaching*, a pragmatic and actionable integration of hard nosed management planning and the psychology of human behavior. You’ll find *RealTime Coaching* a practical, theory-based, and richly illustrated book that helps you become a better coach.

RealTime Coaching is unique for three very important reasons:

1. It’s based on a theory of human behavior. As Deming states in the quote at the start of this introduction, “Knowledge in the absence of theory is useless.” Many books on coaching and leadership are chock full of sports analogies and interesting anecdotes and present memorable acronyms, but none are based on a theory of how the human mind works.

In *RealTime Coaching* we’ve drawn on the concepts of Choice Theory developed by Dr. William Glasser. The result is an approach based on a solid, jargon-free, and easy-to-understand theory of human behavior.

We’ll use these concepts so you can better understand human behavior: what motivates people and why they

do what they do. That's why RealTime Coaching starts not with application but with theory. In Chapters 3–6, we'll be developing a model of human behavior that will serve as your road map. It goes like this:

- All people (including you) go to work because they want something. We'll find that these wants, while unique to each of us, are rooted in six basic values. We'll also discover that people see the world around them through their basic values. In other words, the results they achieve from their behaviors are perceived through personal and unique filters that assign a meaning or value to the results.
- The motivation for all behavior is the energy created within people when they become aware that what they perceive they're getting does not match what they really want. The greater the mismatch (and the greater the pain), the higher the motivation. And, while people are essentially in control of motivating themselves, managers can influence employees by understanding the values that motivate them.
- During the work day, we use specific behaviors to obtain what we want. In RealTime Coaching you'll learn about the four basic behavioral styles and how people use them to try to satisfy their desires. You'll see how these core behavior styles differ greatly from one another, and how you can adjust your own communication style to more effectively help your employees satisfy their own needs and the needs of the organization.
- If you want something other than what you're getting, you have to change either your behavior or your goal. Too often, an employee who is frustrated in getting his or her needs met is stuck in a

cycle of doing the same thing over and over again. Through RealTime Coaching you'll be able to help employees realize why they're stuck and help them come up with solid strategies for change that get them where they want to go.

2. The coaching process is demonstrated. An effective way for you to learn the coaching process is to observe the skill in use. Nearly forty percent of this book is devoted to dialogues between coaches and employees. Demonstrations present a variety of situations and illustrate the RealTime Coaching model in action.

The Four Principles of RealTime Coaching (which you will learn in Chapters 3–6) are the foundation for our coaching model. The process is then demonstrated in Chapters 8–11. The actual coaching process is a dialogue, based on a cluster of questions the coach asks, all rooted in these principles. The goal of the process is to:

- Encourage employees to critically self-evaluate whether their chosen behaviors are getting them what they want.
 - Explore what employees want from their jobs, their co-workers, you, and others, and the human relationships necessary to get what they want.
 - Ask employees to precisely identify the behavior they are using to get what they want, and the effect of that behavior on others.
 - Help employees, collaboratively with the coach, develop a specific plan of action that will get them more of what they and the organization want.
3. Commentary within each coaching demonstration links theory and application. A unique addition called Coach's Thoughts is written into each dialogue. You can "eavesdrop" on the real-time thinking process of the coach to

better understand how the theory is linked to application.

Chapters 8–11, the Coaching Dialogues, provide several coaching demonstrations. These demonstrations allow you to study RealTime Coaching in action. Finally, Chapter 12 will help you get started on your own program to develop your coaching skills.

RealTime Coaching works. I've seen it applied successfully in literally hundreds of cases. On the following pages you'll learn the difference between planning and implementation, why people behave the way they do, and how to make the minute-by-minute—real time—decisions that unleash the power of your people.

RealTime Coaching

RealTime Coaching by Ron Ernst \$24.95 _____

Personal Values and Behavioral Style Profile \$99.00 _____

Includes two self-administered profiles, Personal Interests, Attitudes and Values™ and Managing for Success™. Requires IBM compatible PC, 3.5" disc drive and Windows 95 or later

The Universal Language DISC: A Reference Manual \$99.00 _____

by Bill J. Bonnstetter, Judy I. Suiter and Randy J. Widrick. The definitive reference manual on the DISC profile. Includes research validation studies. More than 300 pages.

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