



Alberta Home Visitation  
Network Association

Vol. 12 Issue 2

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## Message from the Provincial Director

# The Value of Coaching

By Lavonne Roloff

In this issue, we continue the theme of coaching and supervision of staff. Vince Gowmon provides examples of questions to use in your practise. Kathy Archer suggests reflecting on how to treat and serve employees as contributing members of our organization.

Recently the AHVNA board met with the staff from Policy Wise (formerly Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research) regarding the grant project on parent coaching in home visitation. Their findings in the interim report indicated “the parent coaching training was applicable to, and effective for, both home visitors and supervisors. As a result of attending the training, many home visitors reported change and improvement in their engagement with clients. While a paradigm shift from advising to coaching takes commitment from staff and families, parent coaching was generally seen as an approach that could be tailored to different needs. Respondents made the following changes to their practice as a result of the coaching training:

- helped others come to their own conclusions
- changed the style of asking questions
- changed supervisory relationships between staff and supervisor”

Furthermore, “to sustain and support parent coaching, it is important for home visitors to have opportunities to practise and become confident in the approach, including skills to understand when and how it is best used. Staff expressed a desire for continuous training.”

Coaching has great value when working with staff or parents, and training is beneficial in the long and short term. It is helpful for an agency to ask how they are supporting home visitors in maintaining the skills and providing opportunities to practise them. With the benefits expressed by respondents in the survey, there is potential for both staff and parents to grow and fulfill their dreams and the things they hope to accomplish in their lives, which can have a ripple effect for children and society in the long run.

As you read the articles, ask yourself, how might this help me be more effective in my work and life? ■

*Lavonne Roloff is the provincial director of the Alberta Home Visitation Network Association (AHVNA).*

# Becoming a Leader as Coach: One Hundred Questions to Motivate and Inspire Your Team

By Vince Gowman, with permission



It is quite tempting to manage employees by chasing them down and telling them (perhaps repeatedly) what they should be doing. In fact, that is what the word “manager” implies—being on top of staff, making sure they do what they said they would do, when they said they would and in a proper manner. But an imbalance towards hounding, telling, advising, and admonishing can be incredibly exhausting for both the manager and the employee. In the long run, it does not serve to empower anyone. What is needed is a win-win situation rooted in a coach approach.

The coach-approach model of engagement and leadership takes into account the fact that people are naturally creative, resourceful and capable—they have the answers within them and are capable of acting on them. When you lead from this operating assumption, you may find that you chase, nag, figure out for others and impose agendas and expectations with less frequency, and instead, support others to define their working parameters for themselves. You may notice that you hold people to a much higher standard of capacity and personal responsibility, and hold yourself with greater integrity, care and ease.

By being a Leader as Coach, you empower others and yourself at the same time. You do this by helping them

1. Be aware of **what** they are choosing or not choosing (the decisions they are currently making that are causing them to underperform, or feel unmotivated or uninspired)
2. Be aware of **why** they make those choices (the professional or personal reasons)
3. Be aware of the **impact or consequences** of their choices (on themselves, others, the team and organization)
4. Be **responsible and accountable** for their choices and current situation or performance (take ownership for what is and is not happening)
5. Expand their **range of choices** (open to more possibilities or options, new ways of doing things)
6. Move towards **new choices** (create plans, clarify support structures and take clear empowered action)
7. Be more **self-directed or self-sufficient** (take greater initiative in the future to reflect upon points 1-6 on their own and learn from their challenges)

By being a Leader as Coach and supporting your employees through these seven steps, you take the heat off yourself to manage others and support others to self-manage. When this happens, everyone becomes a leader.

I recommend considering these seven points as a map to follow. To travel through them as a Leader as Coach, you will need a vital and simple tool: curiosity. Here are 100 questions to help you stay curious and out of the solving and fixing mode; to keep you seeing and treating others as resourceful and capable; and to help your team begin the process of looking within for their own solutions and taking responsibility for what is happening and what can happen.

*Extra tips and reminders follow on page 4.*

# 100 Questions to Motivate and Inspire Your Team

## Assessment ~ What is happening and why

1. What challenges are you struggling with at the moment?
2. What is your assessment?
3. What is causing you to \_\_\_\_\_ ?
4. What's in the way?
5. What is stopping you from \_\_\_\_\_ ?
6. What are you avoiding?
7. What are you afraid of?
8. What's holding you back?
9. What's blocking you here?
10. What caused it?
11. What led up to it?
12. What part is not clear?
13. What are you tolerating/putting up with?
14. What are you taking responsibility for that isn't your responsibility/that is beyond your control?
15. What are you doing that doesn't support your goals?
16. Where are you sabotaging yourself?
17. Are you procrastinating or is there a reason to delay?
18. How is what you are doing aligning with our agreed expectations?
19. How might you be overestimating what you can do?
20. How might you be standing in your own way?
21. Is this an assumption or have you checked it to be sure?
22. What part of what you just said could be an assumption?
23. What data is that claim based on?
24. What rules/ideas do you have that are getting in the way?
25. What are you not telling me that I need to know?
26. How do you feel about what's going on?

## Impact, consequences, personal responsibility

27. Have you considered the impact you are having on yourself/others/the team/the organization?
28. What are the consequences of your actions/inaction?
29. What are the implications of your choices on your productivity/well-being/health/finances?
30. What price are you paying by not taking action/following through?
31. If you don't change this, what might happen down the road?

## Exploring options and new choices

32. Are you willing to explore some possible solutions?
33. Would you like to brainstorm some ideas?
34. What do you really want?
35. What do you need?
36. What needs to change?
37. What does your gut/heart/intuition tell you to do?
38. What do you think you should do?
39. What do you want to believe about this?
40. What are your options?
41. What is your desired outcome?
42. What does that look like to you? Say more
43. What other angles can you think of?
44. What really matters here?
45. What will make the biggest difference here?
46. How can you make this easier/simpler?
47. How can you make this more enjoyable?
48. How else might you view this situation?
49. What would you do if you weren't afraid?
50. Have you dealt with this in the past? If so, how?
51. What have you tried so far?
52. What would be the best way for you to handle this situation?
53. What needs to be made a priority?
54. What are you making a priority that doesn't need to be prioritized?
55. What can wait until later?
56. What might work?
57. What is the risk you need to take?
58. Will this choice move you forward or keep you stuck?

## Planning

59. What is your plan from here?
60. What do you want to accomplish today/in 1 week/1 month/3 months/1 year?
61. What is your strategy for this?
62. How can you break down that goal into bite-sized pieces?
63. How could you make this goal more specific or measurable?
64. How will you know you are where you want to be?
65. How will you know you have reached it?
66. What will take you from here to there?

## Support

67. How able are you to follow through (on your plan)?

68. How can you ensure that you stay on track?
69. What will help you to follow through?
70. What will help you to focus?
71. What support do you need to accomplish it?
72. What do you need in order to succeed?
73. What resources are available to you?
74. What training/resources might you need?
75. How can you get the knowledge/information you need?
76. How can you find out?
77. Where do you need to ask for help/delegate?
78. What do you need to give up so that you can make that a priority?
79. What distractions do you need to be aware of that may take you away from what you want to accomplish?
80. What boundaries do you need to set for yourself?
81. What do you need to change in your physical workspace so that you can more easily focus/be inspired?
82. How can I best support you?
83. How will I know you have completed your task?

## Action

84. Now what?
85. What's next for you?
86. What will you do? And after that?
87. What are you willing to do to improve this situation?
88. When will you do it?
89. What are you committed to doing?
90. What is one step you can take right now?
91. What do you think you should do first?
92. What would be the most helpful thing that you could do now?
93. What's the best use of your time at the moment?

## Reflection

94. How willing are you to follow through?
95. How much do you really want to do this?
96. What is the worst thing that could happen?
97. How can you learn from this problem so it never happens again?
98. What can you learn from this?
99. If the same thing comes up again, what will you do?
100. Is there anything else that you need to consider before starting?

## Extra tips and reminders

- **Awareness and ownership:** You ask the questions first and foremost so that they hear the answer, not you. By answering the question out loud, they become more conscious of their situation, the choices they are making and the consequences. In other words, you help them take ownership of their actions through greater awareness.
- **Don't accept ignorance:** If they say, "I don't know" to any question, tell them that you believe they in fact do know the answer. Encourage them to believe that they know more than they think. And then ask the question again. Be persistent. You can even say, "I don't believe you don't know. I actually believe you do know the answer. Try again. Don't worry about getting it right or wrong. There's no right or wrong answer. We're just exploring." Or you can simply ask, "If you did know the answer, what would it be?"
- **Share best practices:** Share with them what has worked for you or others. Offer insight from your own personal experience, but do so only *after* you get the answers from them. You want to ensure your answers do not influence theirs.
- **Create an Agreement:** Co-design an Agreement with your employee that outlines *specific* goals or targets, *detailed* ways those goals will be reached and by when. The goals should align with the needs/objectives of the organization, as well as the capacity and desires of the employee.
  - Ask how you can best support your employee to reach personal goals, and make sure the answer is listed on the Agreement. It is then vital that you follow through on your commitment to support.
  - The Agreement should be revisited regularly to assess progress. If the employee is struggling to meet certain agreed-upon expectations, then ask, "I'm noticing that you are not meeting this goal. What's going on there?" Again, stay in curiosity!
  - The Agreement acts as an accountability structure to hold the employee responsible to his commitments. When goals are not being met, your job is to point your employee back to the Agreement, not keep your finger pointed at your employee—you make the employee accountable to it, not you!
  - Achievements/milestones should also be acknowledged to praise the employee for work well done.
  - Both parties should date and sign the Agreement, likening it to a contract.
- **Pause. Resist the temptation to fix:** After each question, pause. Notice the impulse to fill the space in for the employee. That may be you wanting to fix or solve the problem for them. Resist this impulse. Stay firm in curiosity. Ask, trusting they are resourceful, and wait for the answer.
- **Champion them:** Be sure to let them know that you believe in them. Find one thing that you know is true about their strengths and work ethic and acknowledge that. For instance you may say, "Bob, you are very talented. I wouldn't have hired you if you weren't. I know you can do this." Or, "Jean, I really believe you have the fortitude and intelligence to make this happen." Or you may simply say, "Ken, I know you have what it takes."

## A new leadership paradigm, not for the faint of heart

Clearly, coaching is a new paradigm for organizations and relationships. More and more organizations, such as IBM, are creating a coaching culture that promotes collaborative-based, other-centered leadership models. This coach-approach style is not for the faint of heart, as you can imagine. It requires you to refrain from leaning too much into (managing) other people's worlds, and standing pat in your own. It necessitates that you hold people incredibly capable, perhaps more capable than they see themselves. It asks that you grant more power to the question than the answer. And it demands that you surrender a degree of control so that you can empower others to gain greater control of their work and life.

Enjoy playing with curiosity and being a Leader as Coach!

### Related training

Leader as Coach ~ *Communication Skills for Empowering Individuals and Teams*

### Related personalized support

Life, Relationship and Team In-Person or Telephone Coaching

### Related reading

Empowered Leadership free mini e-book ~ *20 Attributes and Practices for Leading in the New World*

*"Up Until Now..." ~ Redesigning Needs and Expectations in Relationships*

*Hold the Agenda of Others ~ A Practice of the Heart*

*2 Questions to Transform Conflict into Empowerment*

*4 Reasons Not to Fix or Solve People's Problems*

*The Gift of Curiosity* ■

*"Becoming a Leader as Coach ~ 100 Questions to Motivate and Inspire Your Team"*

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Vince Gowmon is the founder of Remembering to Play Events, and the author of *Let the Fire Burn ~ Nurturing the Creative Spirit of Children*. He leads keynotes, playshops and webinars for organizations, conferences and communities on topics such as leadership, communication, creativity, community engagement and play.

# Coaching Is...

By Tammy McLennan  
and Walt Stevenson

From the coaching workshops that were conducted with AHVNA that included managers, supervisors and home visitors, we took away an experience that will remain with us forever. The genuine care for those you assist and support is admirable and to be commended. Since connecting with about 100 of you, we are still talking about the energy that we created in those 24 hours we spent together.

Reflecting on your feedback, we found six key themes about the role of coaching.

## Coaching is ...

... applicable anywhere! We heard you talk about how you could integrate this approach in your one-hour home visits, in your growth and development plans, in your performance planning process and many other opportunities in your workplace. We also heard you talk about how you could apply it at home with your children, your friends and your family.

## Coaching is ...

... a pathway to feeling empowered from two perspectives: as the coach and coachee. We heard you share the powerful impact you experienced as the one being coached in the workshop and how it was a beautiful reminder that coaching is hard work – for the one being coached! It is an opportunity to really talk about something that matters to you, to seek clarity, identify barriers and strategies, and say an action out loud. We also heard you say how empowering it was as a home visitor, that it was not all on your shoulders to ‘find’ the answers and the power you could see in building capacity within each of your clients.

## Coaching is ...

... a process that ebbs and flows through the four phases in the model – engage, enlighten, empower and excel – and it can also happen in one question! We heard your powerful story that often the ‘real’ conversation—the one that needs to occur—happens as you are leaving the client’s house and your hand is on the door handle. And it was shared that a coaching conversation



couldn't happen here as your time was over. However, it could be an incredible opportunity to ask one question.

## Coaching is ...

... a mindset. Where our thoughts go, our energy flows. And what power we have in just realizing that! If we are thinking we are ‘stuck in the mud’ and in a negative place, then our thinking is narrowed. If on the other hand we are thinking positive and see possibility and change in our lives, then our energy expands and goes toward making that happen. This was about the powerful exercise around Intention Setting -- “My intention is...” and how by saying it out loud and writing it down makes it real. Watch with amazement what happens!

## Coaching is ...

... about closing the gap between where you are and where you want to be. We know that setting the goal is the start. However, goal setting aside, we still need to be willing to start. Then it is all about willingness and attitude.

## Coaching is ...

... heart work. And in the world we are living in, it is the opportunity for us as coaches to work with those around us in a non-directive manner. To support them along the way to become unstuck, take a step forward to help them find a way to realize their dreams. It is about creating and holding that safe space for that person in front of us. We collectively believe we are our own best subject matter expert. We all have the answers deep within us to our toughest questions. The coaching process and those

curious coaching conversations are what gets those questions answered.

We would like to thank you for having us join in your learning journey. You embraced the coaching approach and did some excellent work talking about the how/when to integrate this with the other great tools you have in your kit. Many of you expressed through our closing circle and personal emails that this is one of the best experiences ever from a workshop. To a facilitator, this is some of the best feedback we can get. We feel blessed to have been a part of the journey you are all on. We, at Essential Impact, have that same passion for learning and coaching that you have for the people you support.

We would love to hear about your wins, your ‘door handle’ moments, your insights, your growth ... reach us anytime at [tammy.mclennan@essentialimpact.com](mailto:tammy.mclennan@essentialimpact.com) and [walt.stevenson@essentialimpact.com](mailto:walt.stevenson@essentialimpact.com) to share your story.

Until then, go out there and create and hold space for that curious coaching conversation, hold others capable because they can do it and ask that one question that can be transformational. ■

*Tammy McLennan and Walt Stevenson are facilitators with Essential Impact and coaches accredited by the International Coaching Federation.*

# Integrating Coaching and Reflective Practices Into Home Visitation

By Beth Broad

Have you wondered whether you are using self-reflective techniques within coaching principles or coaching techniques within a self-reflective framework? In all likelihood, you are using both perspectives, choosing the techniques and values of each to fit the needs of the individual or the situation. Opportunities exist for coachable moments, formal detailed self-reflection sessions or something in between.

How did we come to use both coaching and self-reflective approaches? Combining these two practices is invaluable, particularly to those of us entrusted to use a model that promotes trust and empowerment and ideally models the relationship and interactions between clients and home visitors. Let's look at what each of these elements brings to our best practices.

*“Coaching is not about teaching the caterpillar to fly; it is about creating an opening for it to see the possibility.”*

- Paul Lefebvre

## Coaching

Coaching is not simply coaching a sports team, consulting, mentoring psychotherapy, facilitating, counselling or advising. In 2008, the International Coach Federation stated, “Coaches are trained to listen, to observe and to customize their approach to individual client needs. They seek to elicit solutions and strategies from the client, and they believe the client is naturally creative and resourceful. The coach's job is to provide support and enhance the skills, resources and creativity that the client already has.”

## Coaching principles

**Engage** – Start here with coachees who are new to the process.

**Enlighten** - Develop a deeper self-understanding of, and be curious about, possible solutions.

**Empower** – Make adjustments based on understanding internal and external obstacles.

**Excel** – Use processes and techniques, such as role-playing, visualization or mind mapping, to solidify solutions.

## Reflective supervision

Reflective supervision provides support to home visitation professionals who are exposed to intense emotional context related to their work with families. It provides those individuals a way to reach greater understanding about themselves and the families involved.

Families come in all shapes and sizes and present a diversity of issues. These challenges make home visitation work both rewarding and overwhelming. Over time, the work can become emotionally draining. One of the big reasons for staff turnover is the absence of adequate supervisory support. The research of Dr. Shank, an internationally recognized expert on reflective supervision, shows reflective practice reduces burnout.

Reflective supervision is a way to help home visitation professionals understand and integrate the multiple dimensions of their work. It involves stepping back from the issues, reflecting on contributing factors and brainstorming possible solutions. This allows individuals to pay particular attention to the emotional and relational aspects of their work.

Further, when we become more culturally aware, we understand that similar situations may be interpreted differently by individuals.

These and other extenuating factors deserve to be considered in a reflective practice setting within a safe, non-judgemental and trusting relationship, where the coach uses gentle inquiry and open-ended questions.

Something that I have discovered in my own practice is we ultimately change our perception of the world because of our experiences. This in turn changes the questions we ask. And, the current neuroscience research has proven that brain plasticity continues throughout our life. This means we are constantly growing, changing and adjusting to new circumstances. Coaching and reflective practices are tools that contribute to our ability, strength, hope and determination to carry out the work we love. ■

*Beth Broad is a program manager with Children's Cottage Society in Calgary, Alberta.*



# There for Your Employees

By Kathy Archer

We hire staff because we need them. We then proceed to use them. And, even if you don't mean to, many of us abuse our employees.

- We ask more than they can offer.
- We overburden them with too many responsibilities.
- We put them in situations they are not skilled or ready to handle.

Sadly, we may be more focused on getting the job done than on the person we are asking to do the job.

You may disagree with me. After all, we are in the helping profession, right? These are trained, educated and good people. You would never abuse them.

Then tell me why you want to pull your hair out some days when this happens:

- Your employee screws up.
- She forgets to do things.
- He averts his gaze, avoiding eye contact when you need a volunteer. Why is it that you get the bare minimum out of many of your staff, and some days, even that is a stretch?

It may be because you are taking advantage of them and they feel used.

When you use someone, they feel as though they don't matter. They know they are just a number or a warm body. Your people sense that you only care about the shifts you need them to fill, the paperwork that's late, the contract and the almighty dollar. Ouch.

But think about it. What do you do when you feel used? You get annoyed. You check out. You do what you need to do to get by and then you withdraw. When you feel used, you act just like many of your staff currently act. You make stupid mistakes and forget to do things because you really don't care.


My guess is that you want engagement from your team. You are looking to have staff who are invested in the work they are doing. Your desire is to have employees willing to work hard because they care about making a difference

with the clients and customers. You want people who are devoted.

To get that level of engagement from your people requires you to see your employees through a different lens. It isn't, "What can I get out of them?" Rather, it is, "What can I do for them?" Your job becomes growing and developing your employees.

Staff are not there for us to put to work and serve our needs. We are there to serve them. When you make this mindset shift, you will find your staff give back to you tenfold. This leadership style is often called servant leadership.

See, here is the thing. Most staff members are here for only a part of their career journey. Granted, some stay longer than others. But, as



Oh, I'm sorry.  
I forgot.  
I only exist when  
you need something.

supervisors, we are only here as guides on this part of their journey. Your job then is to help them grow. You need to focus on developing their skills and talents. It is your job to help them pull out their best in their personality and use it to their full advantage at work. You are there to serve them. When you do, they will gladly serve you and the cause.

## 15 ways to serve your employees

1. Put your employees' needs first.
2. Acknowledge the value they bring.
3. Use their strengths.
4. Ask their opinion.
5. Train them.
6. Commit to their growth.
7. Give them autonomy.
8. Allow them to make decisions.
9. Allow them to make mistakes.
10. Get your staff the tools and resources they need to do their job.
11. Share successes with them and give credit where credit is due.

12. Ask about their personal life.
13. Make caring comments about them as a person
14. Notice milestones, events and achievements, such as their anniversary date of hire and their completion of training
15. Fight for them, stick up for them and advocate for your team with upper management, with contractors, in the community and with clients.

Moreover, celebrate employees' advancements in your company and programs. Not only advancements within, but beyond. When someone comes to you and says they have a new job, don't groan and moan. Don't blame them for leaving you short of staff and struggling.

Don't make them feel bad for leaving. Be excited that they have grown to that point of being able to move on to something "bigger and better."

When you support employee advancements, that means you have done your job to develop them. Even though they may be leaving your organization, word gets around fast about how you treated them when they presented you with the news. When you support their move, others realize you really do care about the team members as individuals.

- They see that you really do want to see people grow.
- You become more trustworthy.
- You are seen as more supportive and caring.
- Employees will bring their precious dreams to you and ask for your help in guiding their journey.
- You will get the opportunity to serve them.

Look for opportunities to serve your staff members. See your job as giving them tools, resources and support. Notice how helping them helps you. Become a servant leader today and you'll find you will tend to like your job even more. ■

*Kathy Archer is a leadership coach for women who want to strengthen their leadership and find balance in life. She mentors females as they rediscover their purpose, passion and persistence for life while dealing with office politics, jerk bosses and the challenges of family life. Kathy is known for giving her clients the hope and inspiration they need along with a kick in the pants to make positive change in their lives. Learn more in Kathy's new book [Mastering Confidence: Discover Your Leadership Potential by Awakening Your Inner Guidance System](#).*

# connections

## Coming up

The next issue of *Connections* will focus on nutrition for staff and families. If you would like to submit an article or resource for this topic, please contact the AHVNA office by January 15, 2017.

## Hearing from you

*Connections* is published two times per year by the Alberta Home Visitation Network Association. We welcome comments, questions and feedback on this newsletter. Please direct any comments to Lavonne Roloff, AHVNA provincial director, by phone at 780.429.4787 or by email to [info@ahvna.org](mailto:info@ahvna.org).

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# Being Present is a Gift

By Dave Busse

Our presence is one of the simplest and most powerful tools we have as coaches. Some refer to this as a gift. Nothing communicates our care and genuine interest like being present. The tragedy in all this is how easily we become mentally absent in today's hyper-busy, hyper-connected world.

As a grandparent, I feel somewhat hypocritical criticizing anyone for not being present. Ever since my grandchildren showed up, it became much easier to be present, specifically with my grandkids, but also in life. In some part, it is because of the time in my life. The career pressures, the burden of mortgage payments and new car payments have lessened or disappeared or at least found their proper place in my life. Maybe (and my wife might disagree with this) I have learned something as the years have gone by and understand the value, pleasure and importance of being present.

What my grandkids have taught me is that being present sends the most sincere, honest and undeniable message that they are important to me. I am willing to give up time in my life to simply be with them. It calms them (some days), it encourages them and gives them confidence to

- have tough conversations with friends
- break up with a thoughtless boyfriend
- tell someone he or she is important to them and that they care

The adversaries of presence are everywhere. Some of them are very clever and well armed. They steal some of my greatest joys and encourage me to trade golden moments for an experience of lesser value. These thieves of presence often have a screen. They fit in my pocket, they are bolted to many of the walls in my home and they dwell in the malls, restaurants or pubs I visit. Their ability to steal presence



Dave Busse with three home visitation staff that attended a recent coaching workshop in Edmonton.

is built on years of marketing research, which has enabled these designers to create incredibly effective time thieves that trick me into paying attention to a message often of little value in my life. They know how to shape a meaningless sound bite from a distant politician on a slow news night and compel me to listen and watch.

The structure of coaching forces me to put away my big and little screens (and all the other distractors I allow to rob me of the moment) and truly experience what is going on with my client. This is what I love about coaching. It is a joyful and powerful feeling to sense that a client has truly experienced me being present.

Are you struggling to stay present in the moment? If so, reflect further on these questions.

- What keeps you from being present?
- What helps keep you be present with your clients?
- What coaching practices can you call on to maintain your presence?
- Who could help you develop strategies to stay present? ■

*Dave Busse is a founding partner of Essential Impact and is a coach accredited by the International Coaching Federation. Dave also facilitates coaching workshops with the Royal Roads University in Victoria. He can be reached at [dave.busse@essentialimpact.com](mailto:dave.busse@essentialimpact.com)*



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