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Mindfulness in coaching: STOP

Article

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Mindfulness in Coaching: Techniques: STOP

Abstract

This short article focuses on a specific technique, STOP, which is part of a wider series of papers on Mindfulness Coaching. The paper offers a short description of the process and when this technique may be most helpful in a coaching conversation.

Keywords: Mindfulness coaching, meditation, coaching psychology.

Introduction

This paper is one of a series of papers focusing on mindfulness techniques that can be used by coaches with their clients (Passmore, 2017). In this paper, the focus is on helping clients to STOP. The paper offers a short mindfulness intervention to encourage clients to be aware of their actions and refocus towards the most productive actions to complete the task in hand.

Catching the wandering mind

We live in turbulent times with immense change at both an individual level, as we need to respond to learn and adapt to new technologies and processes, and at an organizational level, resulting from the forces of globalization.

Technological advances have created a new challenge for most managers working in organizations. While enhanced communication and access to information offers huge opportunities for efficiency, the flood of such information can become a drain on our time and mental resources. How do achieve the balance we need to remain productive?

The exercise in this short paper described a technique to help us manage this balancing act.

Exercise: STOP

This exercise is a suggestion to help us become more proactive by stopping and choosing mindfully how we want to continue with our day. It's something we can do that does not require much time.

This exercise is useful because it:

- Slows us down
- Can stop us from being on autopilot and doing stuff that may not be the right thing
- Can help us to make changes accordingly
- Helps us be mindful of our present moment
- Assists us in being more organized
- Supports us in holding the mindset we need to achieve the best results.

Here is what you do:

- Set a trigger to STOP. This can be any time of day. You may choose to do this at any time during the day, but we often know when our performance declines, and this can be a good time to select.
- **S**top and be Still
- **T**ake a few conscious breaths; watch your in-breath and out-breath.
- Notice: What are you doing? How are you feeling? Are you doing what you need to be doing?
- **O**ptions: What options do you have to make a change? What do you need to change to achieve myour goal for this task?
- **P**roceed: Continue with your day. Perhaps this will involve making some changes to your schedule or your attitude?

Learning:
Can we be more productive by "stopping" and checking how we want to proceed? We can sometimes lose focus or become distracted by less important tasks. By refocusing we can enhance our own personal productivity.

Conclusion

This technique is short and simple. It helps us to be ore aware of our wandering mind. To focus on what is really important, right now. The STOP technique, encourages us to stop, be still, to take a few conscious breaths, notice what we are doing or how we feeling, and choose how we move forward in the coming minutes of our day.

References

Passmore, J. (In Press). Mindfulness coaching – A model for coaching practice. The Coaching Psychologist.

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