

COACHING

STORY

Coach Training Alliance
*sits down with Human
Capital Coaching grads to
hear their stories.*





COACHING

STORY WITH JEFF ORR

Pilot Instructor, Author, Coach



What was it that got you thinking about enrolling?

Enrolling in the Coach Training Alliance Human Capital Coach course was a natural extension of what I had been doing over a long Air Force career. After graduating from the US Air Force Academy and Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training, I started flying F-16s in 1994 and I became an instructor pilot in that airplane in 1998. After 23 years of service, I decided to explore post-military options and I was lucky enough to stumble onto CTA. In addition to my many years as an instructor pilot (which is a highly specialized form of coaching), I co-owned a triathlon coaching company. I had a passion for helping clients and students achieve their goals and I decided that Coach Training Alliance was the perfect vehicle for teaching me the skills to continue following that passion in the business world.

What are you doing now with this coaching?

I'm in discussions with a business about creating a position within the company in which I would act as a Human Capital Coach in addition to some other duties. The CEO is very interested in rooting out inefficiencies, and he was intrigued by the studies highlighted on CTA's website that show that coaching is a vehicle for doing just that.

In the meantime, as I wind down my Air Force career, I've found that the listening skills I honed in my coaching class make me a better flight instructor. The nature of the fighter aviation business still requires a platform instructor approach, but being a better listener facilitates learning by allowing me to better see where my student is coming from.

Finally, I find myself acting as a sounding board/accountability partner for my wife in her business. She appreciates the non-judgmental listening. It allows her to verbalize the issues in her head which often times allows her to see her own solutions.

How has this changed your life?

The listening skills have paid dividends in my professional and personal life as well. Being genuinely present during personal interactions with friends and family is a skill that can be taught and practiced. Although I'm still far from perfect at it, I try to be mindful of techniques I learned from CTA to be 100% in the moment during conversations with friends and family.

What were some of the unexpected surprises that you experienced during the coaching course?

Several surprises! The first surprise was how difficult it was! Based on my decades of experience as a sports coach and an instructor pilot, I expected to breeze through the curriculum. Not the case.

The second surprise was the discovery of WHY it was difficult for me. I realized very quickly that the co-creative process as taught by CTA differs substantially from the command-directed, teacher-student style of coaching that I had practiced my whole life. I had always been the "giver" of information to the "receiver" who was a student pilot or an athlete. On the other hand, the coach in the co-creative process enters into a coach-client relationship potentially with ZERO knowledge of that client's industry or personal situation. Rather than performing as an all-knowing teacher, the coach acts as a mirror for the client to see his situation from the perspective of an outsider which in turn allows the client to mine his own wisdom to produce solutions. The paradigm shift from one style to the other was challenging.

The final surprise was quite a pleasant one. This stuff works! Coming into the class as a career military man, even the term "co-creative process" seemed very fluffy. By the end, I was a true believer. Rather than using a read-the-book, take-the-test methodology, CTA requires students to actually perform the techniques from the curriculum hands-on with a fellow student live in front of all the other students using real-world issues that the student "client" wants to discuss with the student "coach." Additionally, students practice with each other in between class sessions. I was TERRIBLE at it at first. Near the end, after all of that practical experience, another member of the class and I had a practice session over the phone which resulted in an epiphany for my "client" in his search for a solution to a nagging problem in his personal life. We were both stunned at the ease at which he was able to see his solution based on our co-creative process. It was at that point that I realized my first impression--that this stuff is "fluffy"--was totally off base. It works.

What has been your greatest takeaway?

I wish people knew that it works! There are plenty of studies that highlight the efficacy of business and life coaching. That said, I'm a perfect example of the notion that one need not open a coaching business or create a position in an existing company in order to reap the benefits of the curriculum. Active listening skills and the ability to be totally present in the moment are things that CTA teaches and that are useful in all areas of life.



COACHING STORY

WITH JEFFREY CHAPMAN, MD
Chief Medical Officer, UC Health



What impact did Human Capital Coaching have on your leadership skills?

HCC has been a great tool to add to my leadership tool belt. This has significantly changed the way I approach discussions with my colleagues and direct reports. Rather than telling them what I think they should do I now “coach” them to help them make decisions on difficult issues. I also utilize a coaching approach when I have discussions with my reports regarding opportunities for improvement in performance and behavior. Coupled with a “Crucial Conversations” style it has turned many of these discussions into extremely positive encounters.

How often do you use what you learned and in what context?

I utilize the skills from my HCC experience every day in both my professional and personal life.

What has been the biggest professional impact of your coach training?

Having recently transitioned from a full time practice as a surgeon to a full time executive position with a health care system my HCC training has been an invaluable tool to make the transition. Part of the training was doing “coach the coach” sessions with my cohort. As one might guess it is a little uncomfortable to do with total strangers. After the sessions the instructor and the others would critique our session. I still often find that I critique myself in the middle of conversations for not utilizing the coaching principles I learned.

What has been the personal impact of your coach training?

The skills I gained from my HCC experience have been a great tool to have “fatherly advice” discussions with my kids. I also utilize the coaching approach with friends when they seek my advice.

Has being a certified coach impacted your career progression? If so, how?

I recently made a career shift from practicing as a surgeon to a Chief Medical Officer. When I was applying and interviewing for these positions on multiple occasions comments were made that being a coach was a real plus and was one of the things that separated me from other candidates.

For others in your role or similar roles, what about coaching makes it powerful?

As a physician making the transition to an administrative role where I am required to have discussions with other physicians, the skills I learned in my HCC sessions provide a sound framework to have conversations in multiple scenarios with an entirely different approach. Using a coaching approach makes these conversations much more productive for all parties involved. I often utilize what I refer to as group coaching sessions when discussing issues with multiple parties.

Anything else you want to share?

I often talk to colleagues about an article by Atul Garawande on coaching surgeons. Garawande notes “No matter how well trained people are, few can sustain their best performance on their own. That’s where coaching comes in.” Professional athletes and performing artists recognize the benefit of coaching no matter what level they are performing at. Physicians and health care leaders rarely have the benefit of coaching at any point in time after completion of their training. I strongly agree with Dr. Garawande that there would be great benefit to making regular coaching a part of the culture of health care delivery.



COACHING STORY

WITH SHANE BROWN, CPA, CCIFP



What expectations did you have going into the Human Capital Coaching program?

I recently completed the CTA's Human Capital Coaching program and left the program with skills far beyond my expectations. I expected to learn coaching strategies to help people get better and grow. I already viewed myself as a decent coach and thought the program would simply help me refine my current abilities and offer a credential. Basically I thought I would refine the science of coaching. However, I ended up leaving the program with a much higher learning into the art of coaching that has changed how I coach my coachees and in how I perform many aspects of my professional work.

What was your view on coaching before you got your certification with CTA?

I viewed coaching as a mean of helping my coachees grow within the firm along the traditional lines of progression. I would listen to my employees, apply relevant stories of experience and offer matching advice that had worked for me. From the early lessons in the Coaching Certification training I learned that the type of coaching I was doing was really only developing rather than coaching. I was developing employees along set company paths, but I likely was not addressing what the coachee really needed because I was typically driving the agenda.

What was your "aha" moment during training?

The higher learning for me occurred when I let the coachee set the agenda. I learned that the coachee is the only one who really knows what they need to develop or address. I also learned that by trusting the coachee to set the agenda, we would then be working on the highest priority for the coachee and by doing so the coachee excelled better in all aspects of their careers/lives. I learned that progress is solely linked to the individual's priorities. When the coachee's needs

were addressed, all aspects in their lives seemed to grow. In focusing only on development, I would often address a symptom that was an apparent problem, but rarely the root cause. By using the skills provided in the Coaching Training, I know that I am always helping the coachee on their #1 priority and that all aspects of their life will likely improve.

What is an unexpected benefit of your coach training?

How my skills as a professional advisor have evolved after training. One of the early lessons related to not having all the answers to be a coach. Again, by trusting that the coachee likely has the answer and simply needs help searching it out, the best answers are found. This has changed the way I approach my career as a professional advisor. Many of the advisory situations I engage in are not solely technical in nature. Many times my clients simply need a coach to help through the process of addressing their #1 priority and to have a Coach help them uncover the answer they already have. I now find myself in coaching meetings with my clients on a regular basis and it has greatly elevated the relationship we have on all matters both technical and advisory.

Anything else you want to share?

If you are currently considering becoming a coach or are in the process of completing the program, know that you are obtaining the skills necessary to help people improve their lives. Through CTA's program you will learn to trust your coachees. You will learn skills to help guide your coachees to answers they likely have. You will learn that you as the coach do not need to have all the answers, you simply have to bring your coaching and guidance skills to help the coachees. You will also likely find the skills you obtain improving your professional life outside of formal coaching session and may also help you with your personal interactions. I fully endorse the Coaching Training Alliance Program!