

Are You Coachable?

by Sam Parker

You don't know everything. You do know that, don't you?

Other people have gone before you and can help you get to better places faster. But only if you're coachable.

To be coachable is to be...

Approachable [Attentive](#) Receptive Curious Objective Trusting Grateful Humble

It means you **listen with the intent to learn** rather than to show what you know.

To be coachable is to lack arrogance and defensiveness ... [to minimize pride and ego](#) ... to let go of the need to be the smartest person in the room.

To be above coaching (development help) is to stagnate or atrophy (waste away) ... and in many cases, to be dismissed. To know everything is to be un ... believable.

(Many people at the top of their game understand and embrace the value of a coach.)

Leaders: How much development attention are you giving to your team? 20% of your week would be a full day of nothing but development time. 40% would be two full days from beginning to end.

Individuals: Don't have [a coaching manager](#)? Consider finding a development or accountability partner. At a minimum, invest [10 minutes a day reading something](#) that can help you in your effort to keep getting better professionally.

Check your coachability with the 6 thoughts below.

A quick 6-point check on your coachability...

(Which of the following are true and to what extent? No cute rating scale. Just 6 reflections to help you raise your self-awareness so you can improve things ... now. And keep in mind, each of these points work on a personal level too ... not just at work.)

1. **I regularly ask others for thoughts on my work and for ideas on how to improve.** (A good thing.)

2. **When I'm given feedback/criticism, rather than immediately defending my position, I pause and think for a few moments about the observation shared.** (If you don't, how can you be giving it real consideration?)
3. **When I'm given feedback/criticism, I try to better understand it by asking questions on how I can improve.** (A good thing.)
4. **In the last year, I've changed/revised my position or approach to something because of the advice of someone else.** (Is it reasonable to go through an entire year without changing a position or approach to something and still feel you're open to personal development?)
5. **I know my work is ultimately about [making good things happen for other people](#).** (When you understand that, you're more likely to invite coaching.)
6. **My manager invests time in my professional development.** (If s/he doesn't, it might be due to a perception that you're not interested in your professional development and over time, you've been labeled uncoachable ... not a good label).

A quick habit to improve your coachability...

After you're given thoughts on your work and/ or ideas to make it better, ask a question.

1. How do you mean?
 2. Can you tell me more about that?
 3. Can we talk that through so I understand it better?
- Then, do your best to listen objectively ([with less emotion](#)).

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