

# Coaching for Continuous Improvement

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**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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Office of the State HR Director, OFM

Material courtesy of:

- Mike Rother, Toyota Kata
  - <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mrother/Homepage.html>
- The Coraggio Group

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## Purpose of this Presentation

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- Awareness – knowledge, tool, practice
- Learn about the routines for improvement and coaching
- Shift in how you approach leading/managing to focus on developing others' thinking capability

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# Why Does Change Fail?

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## From culture where:

- Leaders 'don't mean it'
- Unclear why change matters
- No incentive to change
  
- When the going gets tough, help disappears

## To culture where:

- Leaders model the way
- Problems are embraced as path to improvement
- Change creates learning; solutions come from staff
  
- Process is not personal – everyone helps

Courtesy of Coraggio Group

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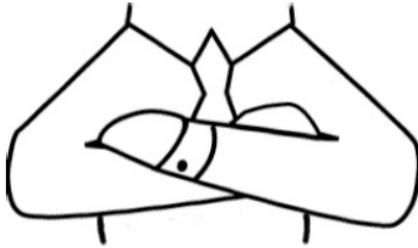
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What leaders Do (how they behave) and how leaders Are (how they think or approach things) greatly impact the success of change

## A QUICK EXPERIMENT

Take a moment... please cross your arms.  
Then re-cross them the other way.



*How did it feel the second time compared to the first?*



For most of us the second time feels odd. You have to consciously think about it and be more deliberate.

*What would happen if you practiced folding your arms the other way every day?*



It would become normal; something you can do without thinking about it.

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## MUCH OF WHAT WE DO IS HABITUAL

Like crossing our arms, performed almost without thinking

Habits are behaviors that have been repeated regularly and occur unconsciously. The repeated behavior develops neural pathways in the brain, making the behavior easier to complete.

Our brain creates habits for efficiency; to free up capacity for when deliberate decision making is necessary. Unconscious thinking enables you to get through the day by taking care of routine decisions with minimum fuss.



*However, a pitfall of many habits is that the past experiences that created them do not necessarily represent future situations*

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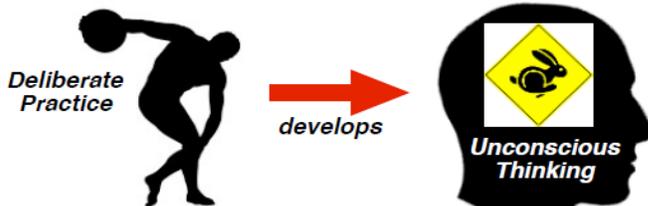
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## WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHANGE OUR AUTOPILOT

Humans have the power to develop new habits

You can rewire your thinking and habits by deliberately practicing a different pattern.



*You can change the culture of an organization, and even an entire society, this way.*

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# What is a kata?

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- Routine
- Pattern of thinking or behaving
- Practiced repeatedly until it is a habit



## 2 types of KATA in Lean:

- Improvement kata
- Coaching kata

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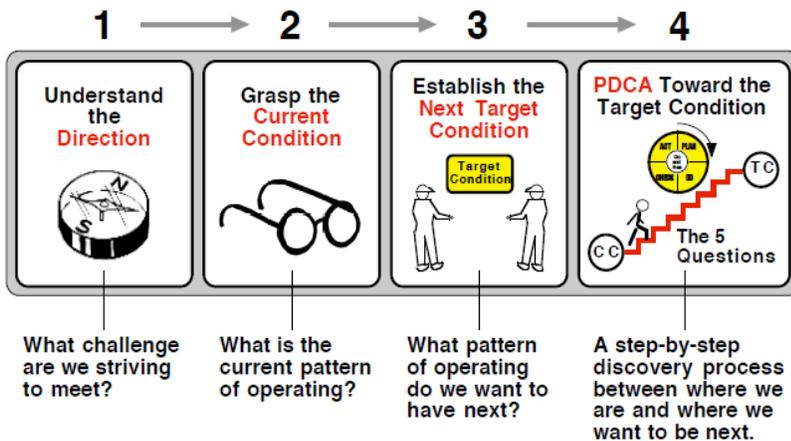
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# What is the Improvement Kata?

The Improvement Kata is a 4-step routine that you practice daily in order to make striving and scientific working a habit



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Target conditions should include information about:

- Process steps, their sequence, and timing
- Process characteristics like batch size, number of operators, regulatory requirements, equipment and materials, etc.
- Process and outcome metrics

# WHAT PRACTICING THE IMPROVEMENT KATA GIVES YOU

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The patterns in the Improvement Kata are used by teams to:

- ▶ Set and achieve objectives that lie beyond their current capabilities
- ▶ Overcome obstacles and meet challenges
- ▶ Commonize how they improve, adapt and innovate
- ▶ Generate true continuous improvement
- ▶ Face evolution and change with a positive sense of *we can do it*

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The Improvement Kata provides a common protocol; a teachable routine for commonizing how members of an organization work together.

The improvement routine provides a roadmap that gives staff confidence to enter unclear territory

Staff say “I’ve never done that before, but I know how to figure it out”

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Continuous Improvement	
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Problem-solving	Leading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Goal is to <i>learn</i>; to deeply understand the process so you can improve it</li><li>• Change one thing at a time, and check results against expectations before making another change</li><li>• Rapid, short cycles of improvement toward a goal</li><li>• Everyone can conduct single-factor experiments often</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Leaders are learners</i> who’ve practiced if not mastered continuous improvement and problem-solving</li><li>• <i>Leaders are coaches</i> with responsibility for achieving results through others<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Agree to target conditions</li><li>○ Develop others’ capabilities to continuously improve</li></ul></li></ul>

Courtesy of Coraggio Group

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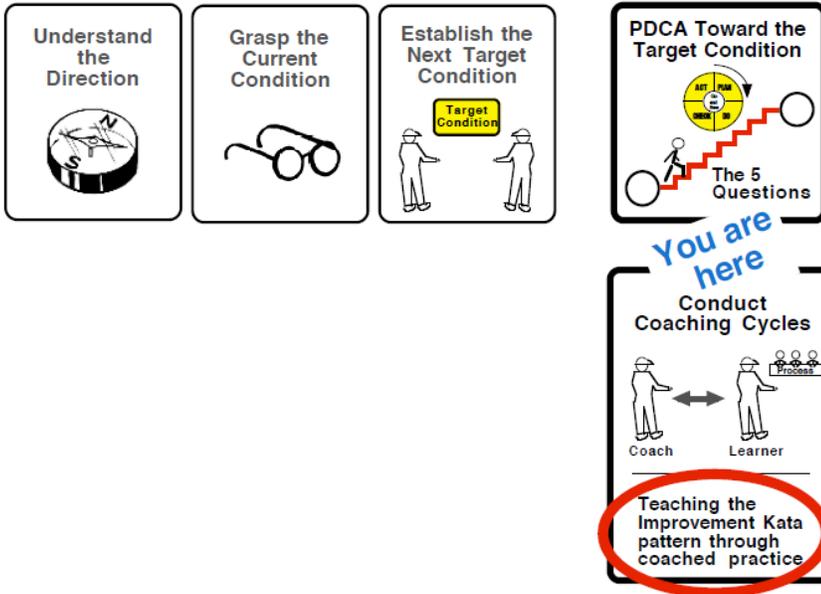
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The better you understand the process, the better your basis for improvement – you must know how you’re achieving your results.

## ORIENTATION



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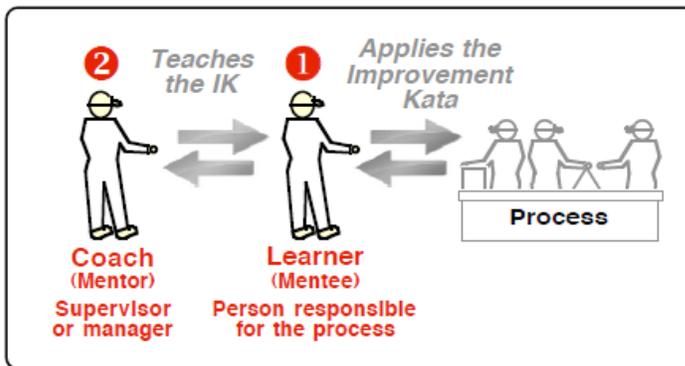
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## THE TWO CORE ROLES ARE *COACH & LEARNER*

- SETUP** ▶
- These roles typically mirror a reporting relationship, though there are exceptions.
  - Coaching is done one-on-one; one learner, one coach.
  - Learner applies the Improvement Kata to a real process.

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## KEY POINT ABOUT THE LEARNER AND THE COACH

There is a special overlap of responsibility between the coach and the learner. They're in it together.



The **Learner** is responsible for the doing.

The **Coach** is responsible for the results, but cannot give content solutions to the learner. Why? Because the solutions aren't known yet, and because giving solutions short-circuits the learner's learning.

This overlap creates interdependency between the coach and learner, like two runners in a three-legged race. The learner is working on the steps to the target condition (the *what*), while the coach is working on *how* the learner is approaching it.

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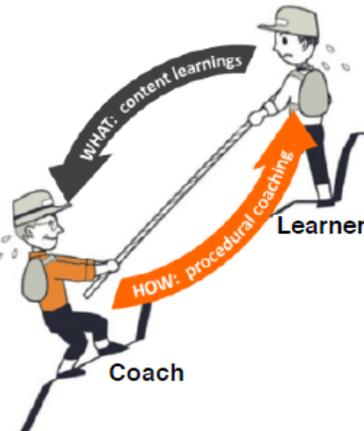
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## THE INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN COACH & LEARNER

The coach guides the learner on *procedure*, but is dependent on the learner to take steps toward the target condition along an unknown path. The learner pulls the coach and the team forward on the learning path to the target condition.

The coach guides primarily the process, not the content, of the learners actions. The coach asks procedural questions and gives procedural guidance...



...the learner works toward the target condition and shares learnings from the last step on the path. The learner will often be ahead of the coach on the content of what's being worked on.

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Coaching is about developing people, not solving the problem.

# THESE ARE THE TWO FUNDAMENTAL ROUTINES AT THE CORE OF THE COACHING KATA

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## The 5-Question Coaching Dialog

COACHING KATA

### The Five Questions

- 1) What is the **Target Condition**?
- 2) What is the **Actual Condition now**?  
-----*(Turn Card Over)*----->
- 3) What **Obstacles** do you think are preventing you from reaching the target condition?  
Which **"one"** are you addressing now?
- 4) What is your **Next Step**? (next PDCA / experiment) What do you expect?
- 5) When can we go and see what we **Have Learned** from taking that step?

\*You'll often work on the same obstacle for several PDCA cycles

**Five-Question Card Used by the COACH**

## Rapid PDCA Cycles

PDCA CYCLES RECORD				
Date:		Process Metric:		
Step	What do you expect?	Result	Observe closely	What We Learned
<div style="border-left: 2px solid yellow; border-right: 2px solid yellow; padding: 0 5px;">                     Coaching Cycle EXPERIMENT                 </div>				

**PDCA Cycles Record Used by the LEARNER**

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## Coaching Dialogue

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Question	Listen For
What is the target condition?	Understanding of what supposed to achieve (and value to customer)
What is the actual condition now?	Data-driven reflection & learning
What obstacles do you think are preventing you from reaching the target condition? Which one are you addressing now?	Ideas discarded & selected, and why Areas of resistance identified Use of data
What is your next step? What do you expect?	Clear hypothesis, action & reasoning Use of data
When can we go and see what we have learned from taking that step?	Short timeframe

Courtesy of Coraggio Group

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When the learner moves from facts and data to guessing (“I don’t know,” “maybe,” “on average”), it indicates you’ve found the learner’s knowledge threshold. Coach and learner should “go and see” the process to learn more.

## USE THE “SEE-COMPARE-INSTRUCT” PATTERN OF COACHING

- 1** SEE - Try to understand how the learner is thinking  
(Coach is in an observing / questioning mode)
- 2** COMPARE - Compare this to the desired pattern -- “the corridor” -- specified by the Improvement Kata  
(Coach is in a judging mode)
- 3** INSTRUCT - Introduce a course adjustment if necessary  
(Coach is in an instructing or guiding mode)

*Please expect and allow the learner to make small mistakes in applying the Improvement Kata!*

*These are important moments, from which the learner learns how to correctly apply the Improvement Kata pattern.*



*This 1-2-3 pattern can be repeated several times within one coaching cycle*

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At times, the coach must be directive about next steps, such as “go and collect more data” if the learner is jumping to conclusions.

## THINK 1-2-3 AS YOU COACH



- 1** What *thinking* pattern do I want to see at this point?  
Think about the improvement-kata pattern from your own experience applying it.
- 2** How does the learner now seem to be thinking?  
Observe, ask and listen.
- 3** Is a course adjustment necessary? What Improvement-Kata *behavior* pattern do I want the learner to practice next?  
Correct at this point, or let the learner fail and then instruct.

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## BE CAREFUL ASKING WHY?

The Lean community promotes “asking why five times” as a means to help get to the root cause of a problem. This is fine if you are asking those “whys” to yourself.

However, when a coach asks a learner “why” it can easily seem confrontational rather than constructive, especially if “why” is asked repeatedly.

You’re asking questions to help you see the learner’s current thinking pattern, and for that purpose it may be better to say, “Tell me more about...”.



In the spirit of the Improvement Kata, think of it as *Five Experiments* rather than *Five Whys*

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## Coaching Tips

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### Do

- Tell the learner what you are doing (practicing a skill)
- Try to help others discover their own best solutions via PDCA
- Actively work to remain open about what you are hearing
- Encourage the learner to continue speaking to show you’re listening
- Wait for the learner to pause to ask clarifying questions

### Don't

- Try to fix, rescue, or solve
- Direct or judge the learner’s actions, or ask leading questions
- Offer your preconceived ideas about the situation or solutions
- Allow yourself to be preoccupied with what you’re going to say or ask
- Allow the learner to believe that “I don’t know” is an acceptable answer

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## QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING AN IMPROVEMENT KATA COACH

- Since you need to be able to judge if the learner is following the Improvement Kata pattern correctly, you must have experience carrying out the Improvement Kata yourself. To coach the Improvement Kata you need knowledge of the Improvement Kata.



- You must also become knowledgeable about the focus work process that's being improved. However, you can do that in parallel as you coach the learner.
- You must be willing to practice and learn a different approach to managing people (the Coaching Kata) which involves guiding and teaching a *procedure* rather than directing the content of the learner's actions.

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## Practice Coaching

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### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Get into groups of three
- **Learner** – select a problem
- **Coach** –ask open-ended questions to gather information
- **Observer** – listen
- After 5 minutes, Coach gets Observer & Learner feedback:
  - What did I do that was effective and why?
  - What might have been better and why?

### GROUND RULES:

- Use real information
- Share only what is comfortable or necessary
- Refer to your coaching card and tips
- Take notes
- Learner answers honestly, including “I don’t know,” “please rephrase,” & “I’m not ready to go there”
- Debrief focus is on the Coach, not the Learner or the situation

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## Debrief

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- What do you think makes this type of coaching effective? Challenging?
- How might this kind of interaction differ from others between managers and direct reports?
- What questions do you have about this kind of interaction?

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## Closing

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- **Challenge: Practice coaching**
  - Seek informal, real-time feedback from learners:
    - ✦ What was helpful to you in what we just talked about?
    - ✦ What else would be more helpful for next time?
    - ✦ Is there anything you have questions or concerns about at this stage?
- Questions?

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