

Vision



The E-Newsletter of Vision for Learning Ltd

Spring 2008 © Vision for Learning Ltd 2008

Welcome to the Spring edition of Vision.

Easter was early this year, and it's thrown us all about, with holidays, and body clocks and clock changes. Spring in Worcestershire has come early with many plants surfacing from the ground in February and there is a general feeling of optimism as buds unfold and lambs appear in the fields. Spring is a great time to make plans and I very much hope that our Spring edition of Vision will help you to plan your priorities and development for the coming few months. We hope that we will work with you this year and look forward to hearing about the projects and developments you are involved with.

In this magazine you will find:

- A feature article on creativity and its links to coaching in education (Part two of our four part series on creativity in the classroom)
- Coach Accreditation News
- Free "Lesson Starters and Reviews" bookmark resource for teachers
- Exciting news about "The Development Centre"
- A cracking deal on books which also helps support schools in Nepal
- Our current course schedule for Spring, Summer and Autumn 2008
- Charity News from Nepal



Will Thomas, Director, Vision for Learning

If you know someone else who might like to read this newsletter why not get them to sign up at www.visionforlearning.co.uk

CoachTraining Courses

10th-12th June 2008 - Nottingham
30th Sept-2nd October 2008 - London
with Will Thomas

Take your coaching to advanced levels

the secrets of building great rapport
how to use the right question at precisely the right time
how people create problems and how to unlock them
strategies for dealing with challenging people
part of the certification as an Accredited Coach

"Truly moving and awesome. This has been the most effective piece of training I have ever done"
Richard Woodfin, Headteacher, London

FOR INFORMATION and TO BOOK
info@visionforlearning.co.uk



OUR FIRST ACCREDITATION STUDENTS HAVE BEGUN



On 1st March 2008, our first would-be Accredited Coaches travelled to London for their accreditation seminar and to begin the journey to becoming Accredited Coach Practitioners.

An inspiring day was had by all, as colleagues were introduced to the accreditation process, and set inspirational goals for themselves, through a range of activities run by Will Thomas of Vision for Learning and Shaun Hughes of The University of Worcester.

Students on the programme have a coaching log to complete, take part in a series of coaching conversations with one of our approved coaches, and report on their practice in school through a short reflective practice essay.

The prize at the end of this is the coveted title of **Accredited Coach Practitioner** and certification of both their theoretical and practical skills, alongside a range of possibilities for working within their current post and also to use their skills elsewhere as source of income from coaching.

The Accreditation is a three in one outcome, as upon successful completion of the award criteria they will receive:

- A Postgraduate Certificate of Professional Development from the University of Worcester which certifies your theoretical knowledge and application of coaching to your work
- Certification of your practical coaching skills through The Institute of Educational Coaching
- An over-arching Award of Accredited Coach Practitioner through The IEC

When you successfully complete a negotiated learning module through The University of Worcester, in addition you are awarded 20 credits towards a Masters or other postgraduate qualification which you can cash in at any University.

Why get accredited?

- Become an even higher performing coach, teacher and leader
- Gain credibility in the theory and the practice of coaching
- Be recognised for accredited skills and knowledge
- Enhance your coaching practice and confidently lead other coaches
- Utilise past coach training to gain the accreditation or begin afresh
- Have access to, and support in developing another full or part-time career in coaching within a sector you know and understand.

There can be funding for part of the course fees for teachers with QTS who are in post. We run three accreditation seminars each year and the next one is in September.

For full details of the accreditation process, the routes available to you and fees visit: www.instituteofeducationalcoaching.co.uk or email us at: info@visionforlearning.co.uk

Free resource for teachers

From "The Creative Teaching and Learning Toolkit" - shortlisted for the Education Resources Award 2008



Print this sheet, cut it out then fold and laminate it to make a bookmark of starter and review activities for your classroom.

BOOKMARK
22 GREAT LESSON STARTER AND REVIEW ACTIVITIES

This resource can be printed, cut out and folded to make a handy bookmark for reference in your planner

Designed for use at the start of the lesson and at the end of the lesson, the activities here are useful for review of key words, ideas, understanding of those ideas and connections with other lessons and topics.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group discussion• Students invent questions, and try them out on partner• Teacher gives answers, students make up questions• Make a flowchart for the content/process• List three–five words/phrases related to a topic – discuss which is the odd one out and why• Make a five question quiz for later revision use• Slip tests – slip 10 question quizzes into the lesson• Sketch a cartoon strip to summarize your learning• Make or use a word search – key words from lesson, then explain what you understand by the word once partner has guessed it• Hangman game with key words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use mime to summarize the lesson• Cloze procedure• Monastic chant• Charades• Use plasticine and build your learning• Match questions to statements on cards• Summarize in the style of your favourite celebrity• Make a rap• Write a poem• Draft a radio script• Draw it• Mnemonics• Record your learning in text message format• Students ask teacher questions about the topic
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© Will Thomas 2003

From :
Best B. and Thomas W. (2007) The Creative Teaching and Learning Toolkit Continuum

OPENING IN THE AUTUMN!



The Development Centre, Malvern

Vision for Learning is opening The Development Centre in September 2008. This is a personalised learning and meeting space for professionals and will be set up to run courses, coaching, training and meetings in the idyllic setting of the Malvern Hills. An intimate centre with access to some of the most stunning countryside in the UK. A wide range of courses will be run from the centre and it will be open for colleagues to book for meetings, trainings, leadership team development and other team events, during weekdays, evenings and weekends.

The offer will include:

- Training and meeting rooms with projectors, screens, and plasma tv screens*
- Refreshment facilities*
- WiFi*
- Facilitation days for teams on vision and values*
- Coach training*
- Work-life balance and stress management workshops*
- NLP training*
- Self hypnosis and relaxation workshops*
- Eco-sustainability and well-being courses*
- Summer and Easter Schools for teachers and other professionals*
- Highly competitive rates for both facility hire and courses*

Stunning outlooks to the Malvern Hills, and just 7 minutes walk from common land. Close to the award-winning Great Malvern Railway Station and a range of hotels, B&B and restaurant facilities, as well as leisure and relaxation at one of Malvern's many alternative therapy centres.

**To book a team day or weekend, or find out more about
The Development Centre, email us:**

info@visionforlearning.co.uk

Or call:

01684 578754



Vision for Learning
Course Listings
for
2008

Coaching (part of ACP Accreditation)

Introduction to Coaching (one day programme)

With Will Thomas

10th June 08 - Nottingham

30th Sept 08 - London

Advanced Coaching (two day programme)

With Will Thomas

11th-12th June 08 - Nottingham

1st-2nd Oct 08 - London

Coaching Accreditation Seminars

With Will Thomas and Shaun Hughes

Sept 08 - exact date tbc - London

Creativity

The Creative Classroom

With Brin Best and Will Thomas

8th Oct 08 - Sheffield

26th Nov 08 - London

NLP Diploma

The NLP Diploma - accredited

With Chris Matson

5th-8th Dec 08 - London

Managing Workload

Managing Workload

With Will Thomas

9th Oct 08 - West Midlands

Email or call us for details:

info@visionforlearning.co.uk

01684 578754

FEATURE ARTICLE

Creativity in the Classroom

In this edition of Vision we present the second of four articles on creativity in education.

Creativity and Coaching

This series of articles draws on four years of research by Brin Best and Will Thomas that culminated in the writing of the book "The Creative Teaching and Learning Toolkit."

In this article we

- Link creativity to coaching
- Show how coaching can generate creativity in the classroom
- Offer strategies and linguistic tips for generating more creativity through coaching

Coaching and Creativity

In recent years both creativity and coaching have received considerable press in the education sector. A lack of creativity in classrooms is a frequent lament and the flag is being flown for the process of coaching in many schools and colleges. Coaching is being steadily embedded in many aspects of school and college life.

A helpful starting point in considering links between coaching and creativity might be to define each process:

Creativity can be defined as "the intentional and purposeful search for innovation in problem solving"

Coaching can be defined as "facilitating the learning and development of another"

On the surface of it, one might argue that these two processes have little more in common than them being in vogue in education at present. Yet there are subtle ways in which coaching supports creative thinking.

To explore this further it is necessary to understand a little more about the process of coaching.

Coaching is not only used within a development or learning context but also to solve problems. It considers problem-solving to be a learning process and encourages transfer of problem-solving skills from one context to another. Coaching as distinct from mentoring, is a process of drawing out solutions from another person or group of people, through questioning. It is characterised by a non-judgmental and non-critical approach and by the recipient of coaching coming up with their own solutions. Mentoring on the other hand is more about offering ideas, strategies and approaches usually from the personal experience of the mentor. By its very nature mentoring involves the mentor making judgements about what is needed and what is offered.

There is much academic discourse about the meanings of these processes and for a more in depth account you could look to one of the books recommended at the end of this article. Suffice to say the meanings are unsettled and have some overlapping facets. What **is** key here is that coaching is a non-judgmental, non-critical and is a process whereby the recipient of coaching does all the intellectual processing. The coach provides a framework of questioning that does a number of important things:

- Seeks to generate and maintain people in a positive and resourceful state of mind
- Uses linguistic patterns which support people to think around limitations to achieving their outcomes
- Holds a view that there is always a way of achieving a given goal
- Challenges beliefs that limit innovative thought
- Is purposeful and direct

These factors help to both directly and indirectly challenge the mindsets that prevent creativity happening and encourage states of mind that generate innovative thoughts.

Coaching has the potential to encourage people to re-evaluate personal constructs (beliefs) that may obstruct creativity for example:

- Some people are creative and some people are not - the coach might respond "Who says this is true?"
- Creative people are outside normality and might be regarded as weird - the coach might respond "So how could you contradict that statement?"
- Creativity is frivolous and undisciplined - to which the coaching might respond " what is your evidence for this, specifically?"
- I am not creative, never have been, never will be - to which the coach might respond " So you've never solved a problem by yourself before then?"

Such personal constructs can diminish a person's ability to think in innovative ways in response to a challenge. What coaching can provide is the linguistic patterns and the processes to enable individuals to respond in innovative ways.

There are many coaching models available. We like the STRIDE model which seems to be the most complete model for education settings.

CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM COURSE
8th October and 26th November 2008

Brin Best and Will Thomas are running a course to accompany
The Creative Teaching and Learning Toolkit to be run in
Sheffield and London in the Autumn.

For details email/call us:

info@visionforlearning.co.uk
01684 578754

The stages in the STRIDE model consist of:

Strengths

Paying attention to strengths and maintaining people in a resourceful mindset which is important for creative thinking

Target

Identifying the target to be achieved and exploring motivation to achieve it. This step has people focus away from problems towards a desired positive outcome and encourages creative thinking

Real situation

Exploring the current situation in relation to the target and identifying limiting beliefs. This part of the model seeks to surface the personal constructs which prevent creativity and challenge them directly.

Ideas

Seeking ideas that might succeed in achieving the desired target and overcoming limiting beliefs. This part of the model is where creativity is directly called upon.

Decision

Selecting the most appropriate option from the ideas generated. This part of the model encourages convergent thinking as a person reviews the creative options generated in the Ideas stage.

Evaluation

There are two parts to the evaluation phase:

Evaluating the solution now: exploring commitment to agreed decision

Evaluating later: Agreeing a time to follow up on the actions taken arising from the decision

STRIDE key questions with their creative potential in brackets

Strengths: What strengths do you have that can support you here? (*generates a **resourceful state** of mind*)

Target: What would you prefer? (*focuses people on **positive future** outcomes*)

Real situation: What's stopping you from achieving the target? Who says you can't? How do you know that this is true? (*identifies potential blocks and **challenges** the thinking around them*)

Ideas: What might be some possible ways forward? If there were no barriers to achieving this, what would you do? (*encourages **possibility thinking** rather than final solution thinking and seeks to lift barriers out of the way to allow innovative thoughts to occur*)

Decision: What will you do? When will you do it? How do you know this is worthwhile doing? (*encourages reflection on the **suitability** of creative ideas*)

Evaluation: How committed are you right now? Later: How did you get on? (*reviews progress to encourage reflection upon the **effectiveness of creative outcomes***)

The STRIDE model contains question-based language patterns which impact on the resourcefulness and thinking style of the recipient. Coaching can therefore be a core tool in promoting innovative approaches to problem-solving. In this sense it has a place in leadership, classrooms and in our lives away from work.

Central to coaching is an understanding of the impact of questions upon those receiving them and in essence, respect for the power of language.

If you would like further information on coaching and questioning for creativity courses e-mail us at info@visionforlearning.co.uk

Further reading:

McLeod A. (2004) *Performance Coaching* Crown-House

Thomas W. and Smith A. (2004) *Coaching Solutions* Network Educational Press

Whitworth L. et al (1998) *Co-active Coaching* Davies-Black

BOOKS FOR NEPAL

Unbeatable Value and help give kids a chance in Nepal

We are offering Coaching Solutions and The Coaching Solutions Resource Book for an unbeatable combined price of £33.50 + P&P - that's even better than Amazon! Normal Retail Price: £44.94

Every order of these books donates £1 to The Manisha Child Welfare Fund of Nepal for school building projects.



A scene from one of the community school building projects in Western Nepal

Order online now:

www.visionforlearning.co.uk and go to our online shop in books section

For bulk or invoiced orders email us: info@visionforlearning.co.uk

Offer available for one month, whilst stocks last

Charity News



The Manisha Child Welfare Foundation Nepal Our adopted charity for 2008

The MCWFN has gone from strength to strength and with support from Vision for Learning we have raised funds for the employment of two new teachers. They are Miss Sapana Nepal at Basantapur School and Miss B.K. Manju in Dharmpani School, West Nepal.

The appointment of these teachers will make a huge difference to the children at the schools who will now have qualified support for their learning.

As you can see the condition of the school is extremely basic by UK standards, but it provides much needed shelter for students from sun and monsoon rain. In many schools in Nepal, children carry their own water to school, sometimes with a journey of two and a half hours on foot; that's five hours walking per day just to get an education!



Miss Sapana Nepal, the new teacher at Basantapur School. With some of the children from the school in January of this year. Inset photo is of the school



How you can support MCWFN:

- Buy copies of Coaching Solutions and the Coaching Solutions Resource Book and we'll donate to Nepalese schools
- Sponsor Will Thomas' half marathon run on 22nd June 2008
- Make a donation by cheque
- Get some fund-raising going in your school or office

For more information and support contact us at Vision for Learning
Thank you.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF VISION

The third of the articles on creativity in the classroom - Creativity Cycles and Models in Classrooms (apologies for those readers expecting this article in the Spring issue— it is coming in the summer!)

More free teaching resources

The return of June and Jean writing on their experiences of using coaching in schools