

Introduction to the 15 Listening Clarifiers

Complete Learning Guide Content

Introduction to the 15 Clarifiers

A coach needs a way to hear and organize 'all' that a client is saying. These 15 Clarifiers do just that, freeing you up to be with the client vs. trying to figure out what they are saying or where to jump in.

What is the purpose of this Learning Guide?

1. To introduce you to the 15 Clarifiers.
2. To explain what a clarifier is.
3. Why focusing on these clarifiers can make you a better coach.

Overview

Key Points about the 15 Clarifiers...

Clarifiers are "things" you are listening for.

It's not so much the words as what's behind the words.

The 15 Clarifier approach stretches you.

By listening deeper, you will intuitively pick up on a wider array of things the client is talking about.

Distinctions are helpful.

Using distinctions, or comparisons, as you listen can help you understand what you are hearing.

Hearing accurately is essential.

Knowing what you are hearing is important because it will dictate what you focus on and which of the proficiencies you will use. It's not just about the words, but also the nature of what they are saying.

The Clarifiers prevent red herrings.

Without discernment and discrimination you'll be chasing the client down tunnels, or not hearing what really needs to be addressed. The clarifiers help you identify the real issue faster.

Clarifiers bring out the truth.

When you hear what is "true", the client can let go of what isn't true. It helps them frame the situation or the problem accurately, which makes it much easier to solve.

Clarifiers are an essential coaching skill.

Knowing what you hear is fundamental to being a Certified Coach. If the client is saying X, but you hear Y, your coaching won't be properly calibrated.

Inklings, in time.

Eventually you'll get to where you get an inkling on what's going on. In the beginning, until you know them better, you may want to ask. This can serve to verify your inkling.

Why should I consider learning and using the 15 Clarifiers?

You want to be a better coach.

You want to help clients achieve their goals more quickly.

You will become more clear with yourself as well.

It is one of the 5 components of the Certified Coach Process

What are the 15 Clarifiers, and how do you use them?

1. Urgent or Important?

Is the matter urgent or "merely" important? When a client is sharing a problem, goal or situation, what we might think is important, really isn't. Important means that it could be important, but it isn't necessarily urgent.

2. Addressed or Avoiding?

Is the client addressing the problem/situation, or avoiding it? Just because they are talking about it doesn't mean they are addressing it.

3. Accurate or Interpretation?

Is the client being accurate or are they interpreting? In other words, is it factual, or is the client guessing, exaggerating, or adding a spin to it that isn't there? A lot of times they won't want to give it to you because they're so into what's going on.

4. Open or Resistant?

Does the client sound open or resistant about what they are sharing? Again, just because they are broaching the topic doesn't necessarily mean they are open to talking about it. Some times they just want to share something, but not get into it.

5. Internal or External Reference Point?

Is what the client is saying coming from them or an external reference point? If you're doing something just for yourself the result is less important. But if you're doing something in order for something else to happen, it's a reference point. It's externally motivated.

6. Want or Could/Should/Need?

Is it a want or a something very different? Is the client talking about solving a problem that's what they really want to do, or as something they think they should or could do? Make sure it is accurately described and understood.

7. Opportunity or Possibility?

Is it a real opportunity or just a possibility? If you're working with entrepreneurs, this is the critical one. Is the timing right? Can you market it properly? Is it truly an opportunity, or a possibility that may take time to come to fruition? A lot of people enter markets too soon.

8. Source or Symptom?

Is it the source of the problem or a symptom? Obviously clients come to us with problems, and they want us to help them. Figure out the nature of the problem, what's behind this, even if it's not solvable at that moment.

9. Opening or Share?

Is what the client is saying an opening for change or just an fyi/share? Are they sharing something about their life that's an opening for further conversation, or is it just a share? Many times we just assume that it's an opening, when all they are doing is sharing. Also, just because they are sharing something doesn't mean they even need to talk about it.

10. Response or Reaction?

Is the client responding to a situation or reacting to it? Reaction is when somebody has a physical or emotional reaction - the Pavlovian response, if you will. Response means the person can actually be with the event that just occurred without being affected by those events. Some people may be naturally reactive.

11. Create or Eliminate?

Is the client creating something or reducing/eliminating something? For example, for some clients to be affected is for them to get rid of something in the way of their natural success. Eliminate is a good thing for them, but make sure you know which way the client is going.

12. Problem or Concern?

Is the client presenting a problem or just a concern? Again, the only purpose of this is to calibrate your own reality to what the client is saying.

13. Present or Past?

Is the client coming from the present or the past? Sometimes a client is setting a goal from the past - it's a current goal, but the motivation for it comes from the past. It is valuable to talk to the client about where it's coming from.

14. Acceptance or Resistance?

Is the client accepting a change/new reality or resisting it? As the world changes, as events or reality change, if you're still trying to resist the changes, you're going to get left behind. If you're justifying your way out of a new reality, how long will it take you to get that new reality?

15. Toward or Away From?

Is the client moving toward something or away from something? One of the ways that people describe other people's behavior is, are they moving toward something they want, or away from something they don't want. The source of the motivation is always important to us as coaches, and it's important for the client to recognize what they are doing.

What mistakes do coaches make with the 15 Clarifiers?

1. Being afraid to clarify.

Your job as the coach is to help clarify what the client wants/needs. If you are unclear based on what they are saying, chances are they are a little unclear, too. So, by asking, you not only help yourself coach more effectively, the act of asking is, in fact, coaching.

2. Jumping to conclusions.

There might be a tendency to jump in and decide which end of the spectrum they are being influenced by (ex. urgent vs. important, present vs. past). You still want to take the time to ask THEM. Remember, they are the expert, not you.

3. Peppering the client with questions.

Actually, having the 15 Clarifiers in your back pocket is a way to help you NOT pepper the client with questions. It provides a framework for you to listen with and items to listen for. Then, as appropriate, you will ask questions to elicit what is really going on.

4. Not listening between the lines.

For example, just because a client is talking about a problem doesn't mean they are really addressing it. The talking about it might actually be their way of avoiding it. You have to listen deeper, including the nature of the words not just the words themselves.

What should the coach know in order to be able to use the 15 Clarifiers effectively?

Your own perspective - your natural tendency with each of the clarifiers, and what you do under stress.

How to ask questions without judgment to help you clarify.

The 15 coaching proficiencies. [Here](#).

What are the key shifts to make in thinking and behavior?

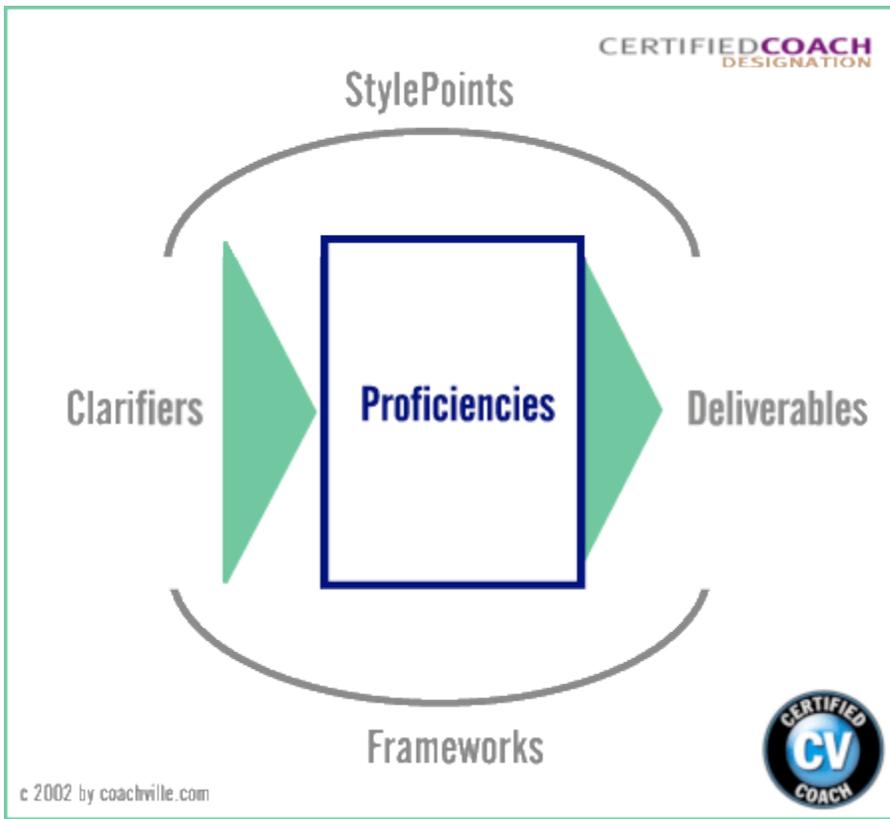
Clients are not always aware of their own motivations.

You don't have to come up with the answers.

Just the process of using the Clarifiers IS coaching.

You will get inklings - trust and verify.

Visual Display



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