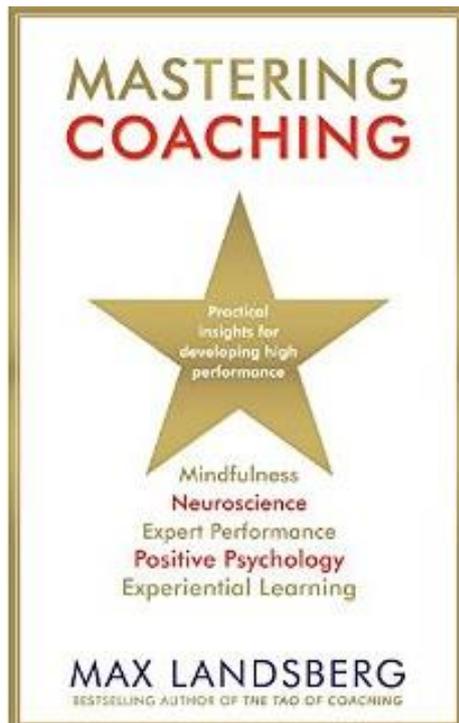


Mastering Coaching

by Max Landsberg



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“an entirely new approach to coaching ... Landsberg has identified the most important coaching tools available!”

Marshall Goldsmith, #1 NYT bestselling author

“a must-read for any coach committed to their craft.”
Andy Grant, Senior Coach Education Advisor at sports coach UK

“delves into the eclectic knowledge that underpins a coach’s journey towards mastery.”

Professor David Clutterbuck, Co-founder, European Mentoring & Coaching Council

“Thought-provoking survey of the field – some new ideas for me and, I suspect, for many”

Douglas Gurr, President of Amazon, China

“an invaluable guide to keep leaders current and effective in our roles.”

Alistair Cox, Chief Executive, Hays plc

Author interview with Max Landsberg

The best techniques, from neuroscience and beyond, to help you become a master coach and greater leader.

Mastering Coaching will help you become a more effective leader, manager or coach – by broadening your knowledge of the vital skills of coaching, and deepening your mastery of them.

High performing coaches use a wide variety of tools, borrowed from many different disciplines. This book distils the most important techniques from areas such as neuroscience, sports psychology, positive psychology, mindfulness and even the arts.

Mastering Coaching starts by asking what skills an effective coach must now possess to boost the performance of their coachees.

In response, it summarises the most important research in areas such as neuroscience, sports psychology and mindfulness, positive psychology, mastery and goal-setting and offers a clear, simple and practical guide to how this new thinking can help coaches and managers to develop their own coaching practices.

Written by Max Landsberg, expert in executive coaching and professional development – and author of the perennial bestseller *The Tao of Coaching – Mastering*

Coaching provides clear insights and highly applicable techniques to take your coaching to the next level.

[The following is approximately 1,100 words]

Q. What is the tweet-sized summary of the book?

The best techniques, from neuroscience and beyond, to help you become a master coach and greater leader

Q. Okay, so what is the 1 minute version?

This is a book for managers and coaches who want to get really good at developing other people. Such people typically coach either for purely philanthropic reasons - or more often so that they themselves can benefit from having a better team around them.

This book tries to address the nagging concern that most managers / coaches have: although being comfortable with the core of curriculum of coaching, wondering what lessons and techniques we should be applying that come from the many, many advances in the “off-piste” areas that are related to coaching but are sometimes overlooked.

An obvious example of such an area is the rapidly developing field of neuroscience. But there are other aspects of science, old and new, that can help to turbocharged your skills of coaching. And there are also other areas to inspire the coaches mastery – for example, it turns out that techniques that help a company to develop its strategy also work really well for helping an individual to develop a strategy or more purposefulness in their own life.

Q. Why did you write this book?

I started writing pieces of this book as a tool-kit to use in my own coaching practice.

Then I started shared a few of these tools with colleagues and collected further ideas from them.

Gradually, over the course of about five years, the book took shape as there seemed to be a demand for it.

Q. So is this a new curriculum / textbook?

Yes and no! “Yes”, in the sense that if I had to coach a coach towards mastery, this is 80 to 90% of what I would probably cover. It is based on my own accumulated experience of what is most useful, and the experience of other experts.

But “no”, in the sense that no curriculum can be definitive. Everyone has their own favourite approaches, and there are always more “off-piste” ideas emerging from the parallel or disciplines.

Q. Do you have a favourite technique from this book?

In a sense, all of the chapters reflect my favourite techniques – it’s just that some are more applicable in some circumstances than others. You can have a favourite hammer and a favourite screwdriver, but you would not bang the nail with the screwdriver!

However, my favourite chapter is probably Chapter 7 “the six steps to mastery” – which is why it is one of the chapters we are making available as a free download.

It follows the lives of the most successful Old Master painters, and distils the six steps for what made them great. (They all begin with P): Places – visiting lots of them during your career with an attentive eye and learning agenda. Prior art – making sure you know what are the best practices so far in your chosen field. Patrons – not just customers but mentors too. And so on. I have found that people find these kind of themes very helpful as they develop their own career strategies.

Q. You have had a lot of experience in personal development over the recent decades: what do you see as the main trends currently?

I see three types of trend.

The first series of trends is to do with the nature of the demand for coaching and professional development. These are mainly societal trends.

- More frequent job switching means that manager-coaches may have less incentive to coach their itinerants teams, while at the same time that very frequency of switching jobs and roles actually means coaching is becoming ever more important.
- Secondly, these days we all increasingly reject dogma. People have less appetite for learning by rote. They are more interested in just in time learning – and coaching is one example of that.
- Thirdly, in our more connected world of social media and communities, both your coach and your coachees can pop up from anywhere – and you have to be ready for that. (In the past, your coach or coachee at work was more likely to have a line that relationship with you).
- Line finally, we have Generation-Y. The jury is still out as to whether they are radically different in terms of their coaching needs and appetite compared with previous generations – but there are certainly some differences.

Then there are a series of changes on the supply side of coaching and development, as new techniques evolve in coaching and related disciplines, and become more available (moving from latent to patent).

- In the early days, much of coaching was to do with intuition, applied Freud, and the special dogmas and techniques of certain gurus.
- Then in the late nineties a core curriculum for coaching began to emerge, including the GROW model and other accepted techniques.
- Now, however, many advances in related fields such as neuroscience create the opportunities for coaches to be more effective, and the greater accessibility of our web resources means that coaches can have much more informed access even to older techniques and models.

Finally, and in response to both of these types of trends, coaches and enlightened managers are becoming more purposeful in broadening their repertoires of skills.

Q. Do you need to be an expert coach to use this book?

I hope that even the non-coach will find something useful in this book. For example, the first chapter – on neuroscience – tries to pick out just those aspects of that complicated discipline that is relevant for everyday life, and explains them in simple, non-scientific terms.

However, for anyone who has already acquired the core skills of coaching, then using and applying from this book the techniques you find most appealing will

certainly help you towards mastery. Chapter 5 on Experiential Learning helps to make this journey explicit (encouraging “conscious competence”!).

Q. Do you have any final thoughts to offer on how to mastering the skill of coaching?

I have three favourite quotes that I carry around with me, and I think they are all relevant to being an excellent coach.

The first is Napoleon: “A leader is a dealer in Hope”. Even if the coach is a servant, he or she is also a guide and leader. Despite all the techniques and skills, it is important to retain sight of the fact that we are simply trying to encourage our client, to help them draw a picture of where they want to go, and to help them get there.

The second is Basho: “Every day is a journey and the journey itself is home”. Remain vital, alert, and agile by spotting new techniques while on your journey, and trying them out and refining them.

Thirdly, artist Paul Klee: “One eye sees. The other eye feels.” Perhaps this is even more important in the world of coaching than in Klee’s world of painting!

Author bio

Max has been an executive coach, focusing on leadership coaching, for approximately 25 years – in parallel with his career as a senior adviser on strategy and latterly as a leadership consultant at Board level. His goal is to help people and organisations to grow productively. His books have sold more than 250,000 copies in 15 languages.

- Max has been coaching leaders since the early 1990s. At McKinsey & Company he was a strategy consultant and then Partner and Director of Professional Development for the UK, he developed and launched some of the earliest corporate initiatives in leadership coaching.
- Building on that experience he wrote *The Tao of Coaching* in 1996 to help leaders become better coaches. The book remains a classic in its field and its companion volumes *The Tao of Motivation* and *The Tools of Leadership* are still in print in large volumes and twenty languages. For several years thereafter he ran his own executive coaching practice.
- In 2003 he was head-hunted to help build and run search firm Heidrick & Struggles’ Leadership Consulting practice in the UK. As a Partner there he worked primarily at Board level to profile and develop teams and individuals.

- In 2014 Max moved to Korn Ferry as a Senior Partner to focus on CEO Succession specifically and leadership consulting more generally.
- Over the years he has coached a wide range of clients. These include CEOs and CEO designates, Group HR Director of one of the top luxury goods companies worldwide, Partners at a Big 4 accountancy firm, a senior executive in the British Security Service, etc.
- His approach to coaching is informed by continuing interest in the theories relevant to personal growth (as well as by contributing to them), and by the wide range of senior executives with whom he works.
- (Other experience)
 - Max graduated from Cambridge University in Natural Sciences and from Stanford University as an MBA.
 - He is Level A and B qualified by the British Psychological Society, and is qualified to use profiling tools such as NEO and FIRO-B.
 - He was a non-executive director of the University of Roehampton.
 - Max enjoys outdoor challenges and on a sabbatical several years ago travelled to the Arctic and skied 100 km of Sweden’s Kungleden, crossed the USA from Canada to Mexico through 21 National Parks, trekked to Everest Base Camp and to the summits of those Munros (the 282 Scottish mountains over 3,000 feet high) that he had not yet climbed. In 2013 he completed 1,000 km of wild-camping across Scotland, Corsica and Switzerland, and 2014 saw the publication of his travels in Scotland, in *The Call of the Mountains*.