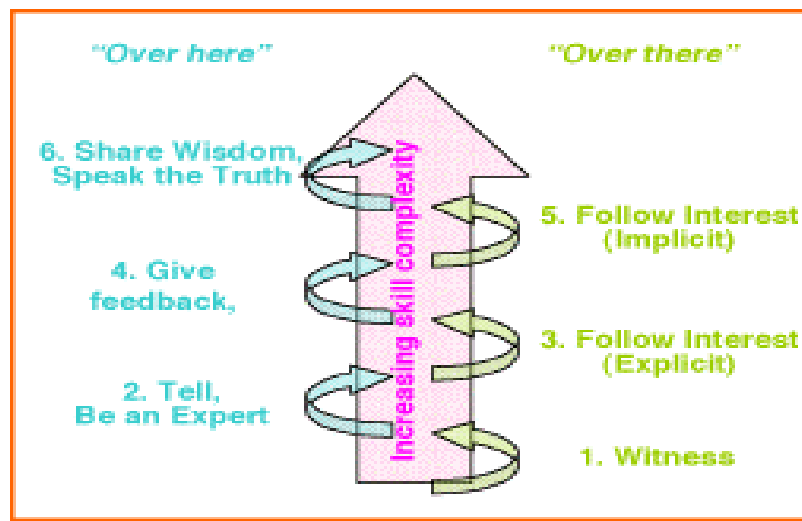


## Classic Models - The 6 Levels of Coaching

One way of looking at different types of coaching intervention is to classify them as "Over here" or "Over there":

- **Over there** interventions are those in which the Coach uses what is going on for the Coachee to help the Coachee move forward - i.e. following the Coachee's interest by using what is "over there"
- **Over here** interventions are those in which the Coach uses what is going on for them (the Coach) to help the Coachee pursue their agenda or achieve their goals - i.e., using what is "over here", for example by sharing knowledge or giving feedback.



We can arrange these as interventions along an ascending path of increasingly complexity (see diagram above).

On the Coach training programmes I run at the School of Coaching ([www.theschoolofcoaching.com](http://www.theschoolofcoaching.com)), most of the participants come on the programmes already very comfortable with the Telling and Being Expert style of coaching (2).

They are very familiar with using their own expertise and experience to tell others how to solve a problem or approach a task. This is an important skill, but one that has clear limits. For example, it can be de-motivating and disempowering. But its most fundamental limitation is that it means that the Coach can never coach someone who knows more than they do - to do this the Coach has to learn to help the Coachee use their own resources, for example by following the Coachee's interest (3).

One way we do this at the School is by taking participants onto the tennis court for a day where they have the powerful, and often transformative, experience of successfully coaching a fellow participant to improve their tennis despite not only knowing nothing about tennis coaching, but in some cases despite having never played tennis before!

Only when an aspiring Coach has mastered the ability to use the Coachee's experience to inform the coaching can they really start to use their own "over here" experience effectively.

The next level of complexity is when the Coach is able to use what they are observing and thinking to give feedback, to challenge, and to create and apply hypotheses (4).

This ability starts to sensitise the Coach to the interests the Coachee has which they are not expressing and which they may be unaware of. Following this implicit interest (5) requires a higher level of skill and sensitivity since it is easier to get this wrong than when following the Coachee's explicitly stated interest.

The ability to discern the Coachee's implicit intent provides the basis for the next more complex level of intervention where there is scope for powerfully sharing our wisdom and insights (6). And there is the danger that, if we misjudge our intervention, we may deny the Coachee the benefit of having the insight themselves.

And sometimes the most powerful thing we can do for our Coachees - and the simplest - is to witness them and see them as they are (1).

As is usually the case with these multi-level models there is no one best intervention - that depends on what the moment calls for. But the more flexibility we can have in using the different interventions the more effective we can be as Coaches.