



## Get a Grip #10: Tips for Effective Grip-Birkman Coaching



*"The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out."*  
(Proverbs 20:5, ESV)

### The Coaching Progression

- Unconscious and not competent...
- Conscious but uncomfortable...
  - Conscious and competent...
  - *Supernaturally natural!*

The value of the Grip-Birkman is in the ability for us to gain clarity of ourselves in the context of relationships through two different lenses: who you are naturally (Birkman) and in the supernatural gifting of the Spirit in you (Your Leadership Grip)

This is done through:

1. The "Pull-apart" process — to separate the natural behaviors in you (Birkman Method) from the supernatural empowerment of your Spiritual Gifts (Your Leadership Grip). We then explore how the Spirit combines these two parts of your life into an integrated whole! It is the Holy Spirit empowerment.
2. Making an "honest evaluation" – to "see yourself just as you are" (Romans 12:3). Each element of the Grip-Birkman helps you fully understand your own Spiritual Gifts and personality through the context of your team or community.
3. The coaching pathway -- to come alongside coachees to help them discover more of their design. We depend less on our expertise to "diagnose and prescribe," and more to "dialog and discover" together.

### Two Approaches to GB Coaching

There is more than one way to coach a person through their Grip-Birkman report. Some coaches prefer to start in the natural (their Birkman report) and then move to the supernatural discussion of Gifts (using Your Leadership Grip findings). Other coaches prefer to start with the Leadership Grip summary (supernatural) and then move into the Birkman report (the natural). Outlines for both approaches are given below for you to consider and adapt. You may want to try it both ways to determine which approach seems to work best for you. You may also want to adapt your approach according to the profile and needs of the person with whom you are working as revealed in their Grip Birkman report.

#### First Approach:

1. **Natural** - Birkman Map and Areas of Interest
2. **Supernatural** - Three angles: Where are you powerful? Where are you weak? Who do you need?
3. **Integrated Insights**: - Dotted Diamond, other insights, coaching questions, affirmations, action steps, and prayer.

Second Approach:

1. **Supernatural** - Three angles: Where are you powerful? Where are you weak? Who do you need?
2. **Natural** - Birkman Map and Areas of Interest
3. **Integrated Insights**: - Dotted Diamond, other insights, coaching questions, affirmations, action steps, and prayer.

**Coaching Pointers for Walking People through their GB Profile**

1. **Prayer**: Saturate the process with prayer! Come with a listening posture. Listen to the Holy Spirit and let Him lead through this process. We are listening to the Spirit, the GB report and the person we are coaching.
2. **Posture**: Remember the “hats” you could wear and choose which is most appropriate.
  - a. **Counselor**: assumes a level of unhealthiness or need, tends to look to the past, wants to do more problem solving. NOTE: GB assumes a measure of health and has a forward-looking proactive viewpoint. We are not counselors! If counseling is needed, make a referral.
  - b. **Mentor**: “pour in.” Share your story and experiences in a limited way in order to establish connection and show healthy transparency. However, this is not about you! It’s about the person you are coaching.
  - c. **Consultant**: “expert.” We don’t want to come across as the expert, but as a “servant/specialist” there to walk with a person in a discovery/discernment process.
  - d. **Facilitator**: guide or “discussion leader,” providing leadership without taking the reigns. As facilitator your job is to help others assume responsibility for their own learning process.
  - e. **Coach**: “pull out.” *We are to wear our coach hat as much as possible.* Our role is to draw out what God is doing in the person’s life through the GB profile. We are to bless and affirm people for who God has made them to be!
3. **Philosophy**: our basic approach is “LESS diagnose and prescribe...and MORE dialog and discovery.”
 

Key: *ask open-ended questions.* A closed question is one that can be answered “yes” or “no”. Open questions invite descriptions and discovery and the fullest picture of the person as possible. (Example – In what ways could you... in what ways have you...)
4. **Pathway**: A simple coaching pathway based on “make an honest evaluation...” from Romans 12:3

**Four Coaching Passes****Pass #1: Review the Report: *Let the report speak...***

- “Your report suggests...”

- “Birkman would describe that as...”
- “Our definition (Birkman or YLG) of that issue is...”

**Pass #2: Reflect on Your Experiences:** *Personalize what’s on paper...*

- “What does that look like in your life?”
- “What words might you use to describe this?”
- “What story or experience from your life illustrates this?”
- “What are some ways you...”
- “How well does this fit or describe you?”

**Pass #3: Receive Feedback...** *Get insights from others...*

What have others said to you or about you that helps give us more insight?

**Pass #4: Respond to the Spirit...** *move from insights to action steps...*

What is the Lord saying to you? What do you think He wants you to do with these insights?

- Coach for the “light bulb”...moments of insight and discovery (“aha” or “uh-oh”)
- “What insights does this bring?”
- “What options do you have to address this?”
- “What action steps could you take?”

## LEVELS OF LISTENING

### Level One – Internal Listening

At level one we hear the words of the other person through the filter of what it means to us personally. At this level there is one question – What does this mean to me? The spotlight is on my thoughts, my judgments, my feelings, my conclusions about myself and others. It is appropriate for clients to operate at level one as they learn about themselves and others in their environment, but as a coach you should not be listening at this level. If your attention is on trying to come up with what to say next – what brilliant question to pose to the client – that is a clue that you are listening at level one.

### Level Two – Focused Listening

At level two the focus is on the other person without much awareness of the outside world. At this level you are unattached to self, your agenda, your thoughts or your opinions. You listen for their words, their expressions, their emotions, everything they bring. You notice what they say and don’t say. You notice vision, passion, values and the unique way they look at the world. As a coach, you are no longer trying to figure out the next move or coming up with creative solutions, because you are pursuing the client’s agenda and not your own.

### Level Three – Incarnational Listening

Level three is when you listen as though you and the client were at the center of the universe, receiving information from everywhere at once. At this level, people are sensitive to where and how God’s Spirit is at work. As a coach, you are listening to the person and the work of the Spirit, observing with all five senses and engaging your intuition and insights to include information that is not directly observable.

### General Coaching Tips:

1. Pray! Ask the Lord for wisdom and revelation to serve well the person you coach.
2. Make sure you have a good setting for your visit where there will be no distractions. If coaching in person, be sure to sit face to face. If coaching by phone or VOIP, it is preferable for you to use a headset. Speaker phones and built-in computer microphones often cause issues such as echo, cancellation, or distortion.
3. Let the report talk to you...note what "rises to the surface" consistently.
4. Make your visit conversational. Let the report speak to both of you... ..let them talk about their insights. Ask: "What stands out to you from the report?" Remember to use our "Four Coaching Passes."
5. Don't go into deep detail...stick to the main points...this is new to them. If they get one or two good "ahas" that can lead to action, then the session will be successful.
6. Keep your language and attitude positive and supportive. ("You may...you might...be on the lookout for...")
7. Ask open-ended coaching questions, such as..."How does that fit for you?" "What does this look like in your life?" "Give me an example or story of this in your life..." "What are some ways you..."  
Summarizing what you hear can help clarify things for both of you.
8. After you have allowed the report to speak...allowed them to talk about what stood out for them in the report...after you have asked some good questions to invite further discovery...THEN you can make your observations.
9. Coach to action.  
"What have you learned about yourself?"  
"What have you learned about how you interact with others?"  
"What action do you need to take as a result of what you have learned?"  
"When do you plan to do it?"  
"Will you do it?"
10. Encourage them to follow up with further reflection and use of the resources we provide.
11. Finish with affirmations...blessings...prayer.

## How Do I Grow as a Grip-Birkman Coach?

### Coaching Triads



We have all been to great trainings that were very helpful to us. We have left those trainings intent on applying our learning. Yet, what often happens is that we return to a busy schedule and put the training notebook on our bookshelf with every intention of picking it back up again. But time passes, and we might not follow through as we intended. How do we leave this training and continue to grow in our understanding and use of this valuable tool? We have often heard the old saying, "If you don't use it, you'll lose it." One of the most significant steps you can make after this training is to coach other people through their Grip-Birkman Profile. However, that may be easier said than done. One way to utilize your new coaching skills is to form a triad with other newly trained coaches and practice together for at least the next six months. This process might look something like this:

- **Form a Coaching Triad:** *Agree with two other newly trained coaches to meet regularly.*
  - You might live close enough to meet together. If not, you can meet virtually through tools such as Skype, Zoom, Google Hangout or Audio Conference Calls.
  - We suggest meeting at least one time each month for one hour. Every other week would be even better if possible and you can extend the time to 1½ hour.
  
- **Coach, Be Coached, and Observe each time you are together.** Each person in the triad will coach, be coached and observe a coaching conversation during each session.
  - **Coach** – the coach will coach the coachee for 15 minutes focusing on one area of their Grip-Birkman Profile, chosen by the coachee.
  - **Observer** – the observer will listen to the coaching conversation without interrupting. At the close of the 15-minute session. The observer takes 5 minutes to lead the coach through the following three self-evaluation questions and receive feedback from the observer and the coachee:
    - ✓ ***What did you do well?***
    - ✓ ***What could you improve?***
    - ✓ ***How might you do that differently Next time?***
    - ✓ ***The Observer shares three things they learned from observing this coaching conversation.***
    - ✓ ***The Coachee shares what the coach did that was most helpful.***
  - *This is not a time for the observer or the coachee to evaluate the coach.* The coach is evaluating their own coaching. The observer or the coachee can provide helpful observations which affirm or expand upon the coach's own evaluation of themselves.
  - Participants will change roles following this model until they have served in each role. Coaching for 15 minutes each plus self-evaluation for 5 minutes each will take one hour. Of course, the time can be extended as the triad chooses.
  
- **Identify One Area of Desired Growth.** *Each coach can identify one or more areas of desired growth to work on for the next triad meeting.*

**The GROW Model**  
from *Coaching for Performance*  
James Whitmore

**Goal** – what are we going to focus on today?

**Reality** – what's really going on? Where is God at work? What's working? What's not?

**Options** – what are our possibilities? What else?

**Will** – what action steps will we take?

- What do you choose to do?
- When will you begin?
- When will you complete this?
- Who else needs to know?
- Who else will you need?
- What resources will be required?

**Wrapping Up ...** What was most helpful to you from our visit today?

**The COACH Model**  
Creative Results Management  
Keith Webb

**Connect** - Engagement

- How have you been?
- What insights have you had since our last conversation?
- What progress did you make on your action steps?

**Outcome** - Conversation Goal

- What would be most helpful for us to work on?
- What would make today's conversation meaningful for you?
- What result would you like to take away from our conversation?

**Awareness** - Reflective Dialogue

- What are key points in understanding the situation?
- What other factors are influencing this situation?
- Let's look at this from a different perspective ...

**Course** - Action Steps

- What action will you take to move forward?
- How confident are you that you can do this?
- What support do you need?

**Highlights** – Review the Conversation

- What parts of this conversation were most meaningful to you?
- What insights did you gain?
- How will this be helpful to you as you move forward?

**The Transformational Formula**

$$T = (D + A + R)^{HS}$$

**Transformation= (Discovery+ Action+ Reinforcement)** Empowered by the Holy Spirit



## Specific GB Coaching Tips

### Preparation Time

Take 30 minutes to one hour to review your partner's full *Grip Birkman* report set (including *Your Leadership Grip* and the Birkman Basics reports). The key is to make note of any insights, patterns or questions you want to share.

1. Consider the “**Integrity of the Corners**”—do the Gifts “fit” the Team Styles with the Body-Building Roles? (Refer to the diagrams in Grips #5 and #6).
  - Do the Gifts “fit” with the suggested Team Styles? If not, dialogue on why not.
  - Does their Team Style “fit” with their Body-Building Roles?
  - Do their Body-Building Roles “fit” with their Spiritual Gifts?
  
2. **The “Pull-Apart” Principle:** Ask, “Where can you discern clear differences between your Baseline Personality and your Spiritual Gifts, between your natural skills and your supernatural gifts?”
  - For example. a person is thought to have a gift of administration when it is really a natural ability depicted by a diamond in the yellow on the Birkman Map.
  
3. **The Dotted Diamond:** Ask, “How does your Usual style change when the power of God rises up through your Spiritual Gifts?”
  - In what direction does the Dotted Diamond move and why?
  - How far does the Dotted Diamond move (related to the *distance* and *intensity* of the Gift blending)?
  
4. As you read through the Report, you might observe items or dynamics that surprise you or seem contradictory or paradoxical to you. Turn your observations into questions to ask the person being coached.

*Always finish with affirmations, blessing and prayer.*

*Point them to further resources such as the Gifts definitions and descriptions and “Here’s What I Think of You/ 360 Feedback” too*



