



Welcoming and building a connection are crucial steps in conducting a coaching session with an LGBTQ+ individual. The goal is to lay the foundations for a trusting, benevolent, and safe relationship, enabling the person to feel confident enough to open up and work on themselves.

To create this environment of trust, the coach must demonstrate active and empathetic listening from the very beginning. This involves adopting an open stance, a benevolent gaze, and a warm, reassuring tone of voice. The coach must convey their full availability and attentive disposition, without any judgements or preconceptions.

It is important to pay attention to the setting of the session, by choosing a quiet, confidential, and comfortable place conducive to conversation. The coach may offer a drink for comfort and to establish a convivial atmosphere.

The initial exchanges serve to get to know each other and to initiate a dialogue. The coach may briefly introduce themselves, reiterate the framework and objectives of the coaching, and invite the individual to talk about themselves, their journey, and their expectations. The goal is to demonstrate genuine interest in the person, beyond their request for coaching.

The coach should pay attention to verbal and non-verbal language, in order to align as closely as possible with the person. They can paraphrase the individual's words to show understanding, and encourage further elaboration through gentle prompts.

It is essential for the coach to adopt a humble and respectful posture, without posing as an expert or a know-it-all. They should recognize the individual as an expert of their own life, with their own resources and skills.

For LGBTQ+ individuals, building a connection involves feeling welcomed in their entirety, including their sexual orientation and gender identity. The coach should demonstrate openness and knowledge of LGBTQ+ topics, avoid making hasty assumptions, use inclusive language, gender-neutral terms, and appear comfortable with identity-related questions.

Here is an example of an inclusive and benevolent welcome statement: "I am delighted to meet you and begin this work with you. I am here to listen to you with respect and without judgement, and walk alongside you towards the goals you set for yourself. Please, feel free to share what you wish, I am here for you."

In summary, welcoming and building a rapport aim to establish an environment of safety and trust, fundamental to the coaching relationship. This is achieved through an empathetic posture, active listening, a nurturing setting, and openness to the specificities of the journeys of LGBTQ+ individuals. It's by feeling fully welcomed that the coachee will be able to unleash their full potential in the rest of the coaching work.

#### Key Takeaways:

- Welcoming and establishing connection are crucial for a trusting, benevolent, and secure relationship, enabling the LGBTQ+ individual to open up and work on themselves.
- The coach must display active and empathetic listening, adopt an open posture, free from judgement or preconception, and show genuine interest in the individual.
- The setting of the coaching session must be conducive: a quiet, confidential, and comfortable place suitable for conversation.
- The initial exchanges aim to get to know each other, reiterate the framework and the objectives of the coaching, and invite the individual to talk about themselves.
- The coach must bear in mind the verbal and non-verbal language, paraphrase the words, and encourage the individual to go further with gentle prompts.
- The coach needs to adopt a humble and respectful posture, recognizing the individual as an expert in their own life.
- For LGBTQ+ individuals, the coach should demonstrate openness and knowledge of LGBTQ+ matters, use inclusive language, and feel comfortable with identity-related questions.
- The objective is to establish an environment of safety and trust, which is fundamental to the coaching relationship, enabling the coachee to unleash their potential.