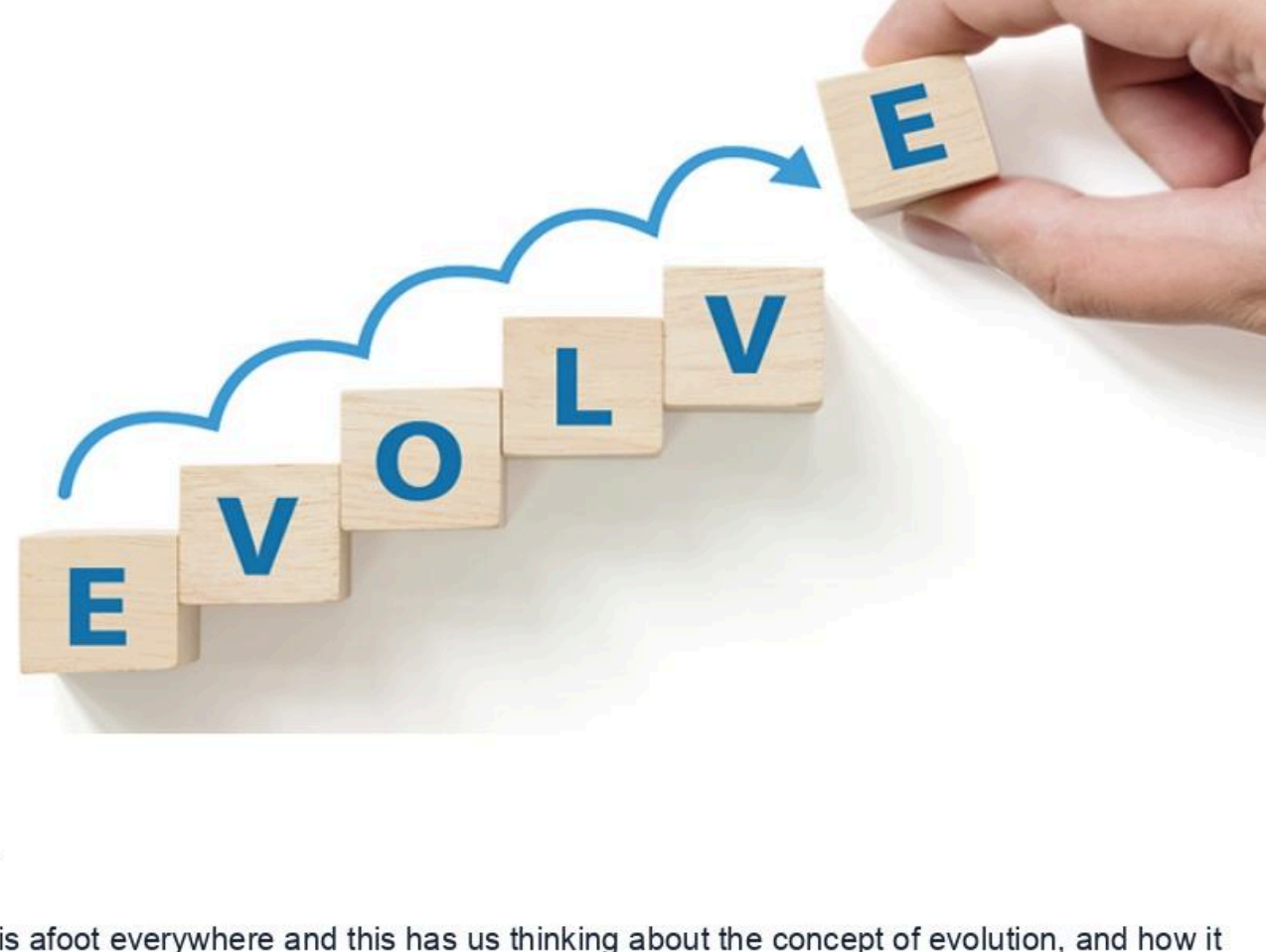




THE ICC ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

THE NEWSLETTER FOR GROWING GREAT COACHES

October 2025



Hi there,

Change is afoot everywhere and this has us thinking about the concept of evolution, and how it applies to the world of coaching.

How we evolve

Scientists think about evolution in two distinct ways – ‘gradualism’ theory suggests that evolution occurs gradually, with species evolving in a slow and steady march. In contrast, ‘punctuated equilibrium’ theory suggests that species remain in a steady state most of the time, and then changes in the external environment trigger an explosive period of change, and an increase in the complexity of species. The fossil record supports punctuated equilibrium, because we see sudden leaps of progress, and few intermediary creatures.

This aligns closely with coaching, as clients seek support during periods of flux and change. The change trigger may be external – for instance, a desire for executive coaching after a promotion into leadership, or career coaching after a painful restructure. Triggers can also be closer to home or internal, with many people re-evaluating their priorities and choices after major birthdays, health scares, or when kids leave the nest.

In other words, coaching occurs during ‘disequilibrium,’ when people are more open to changing their ways of doing and being in the world. At the ICC Academy, we equip coaches with the tools and capabilities they need, to support people through the process of change. We use frameworks like the ‘wheel of life’ to help clients step back and evaluate what matters, and where to focus their efforts. We help people to identify and unpack their limiting beliefs, we ask [powerful questions](#) and we use [sense-making processes](#) to help clients forge a pathway forward.

But how can we know that growth has occurred?

How to identify and celebrate growth

It’s useful to identify and celebrate the growth or evolution that our clients enjoy, for two key reasons.

First off, humans are future-oriented, and we get used to positive changes, in a process called hedonic adaptation. As a result, we may forget to pause and celebrate our own growth. But the moment of pause is vital as it *provides fuel for future growth* – because we notice our own progress, update our identity to ‘someone who can change and grow,’ and we enjoy a greater sense of agency.

Second, pausing to mark growth helps to highlight the value of the coaching process, building goodwill and a sense of loyalty amongst your clients, and building your confidence as a coach.

Here are some tips to help you identify and mark progress.

Create time to reflect

Most coaches offer their services in a package (eg of 6 coaching sessions), which means you can plan for the end, in advance. Carve out some time in your final session to reflect on the coaching journey, and ask prompting questions like:

- How have you grown, during this coaching journey?
- What changes have you observed, in terms of how you think, feel and act?
- What stands out for you?
- What are you most proud of, in this journey?

You could also encourage clients to keep a journal, so they can look back on their progress and evolution.

Consider a habit tracker

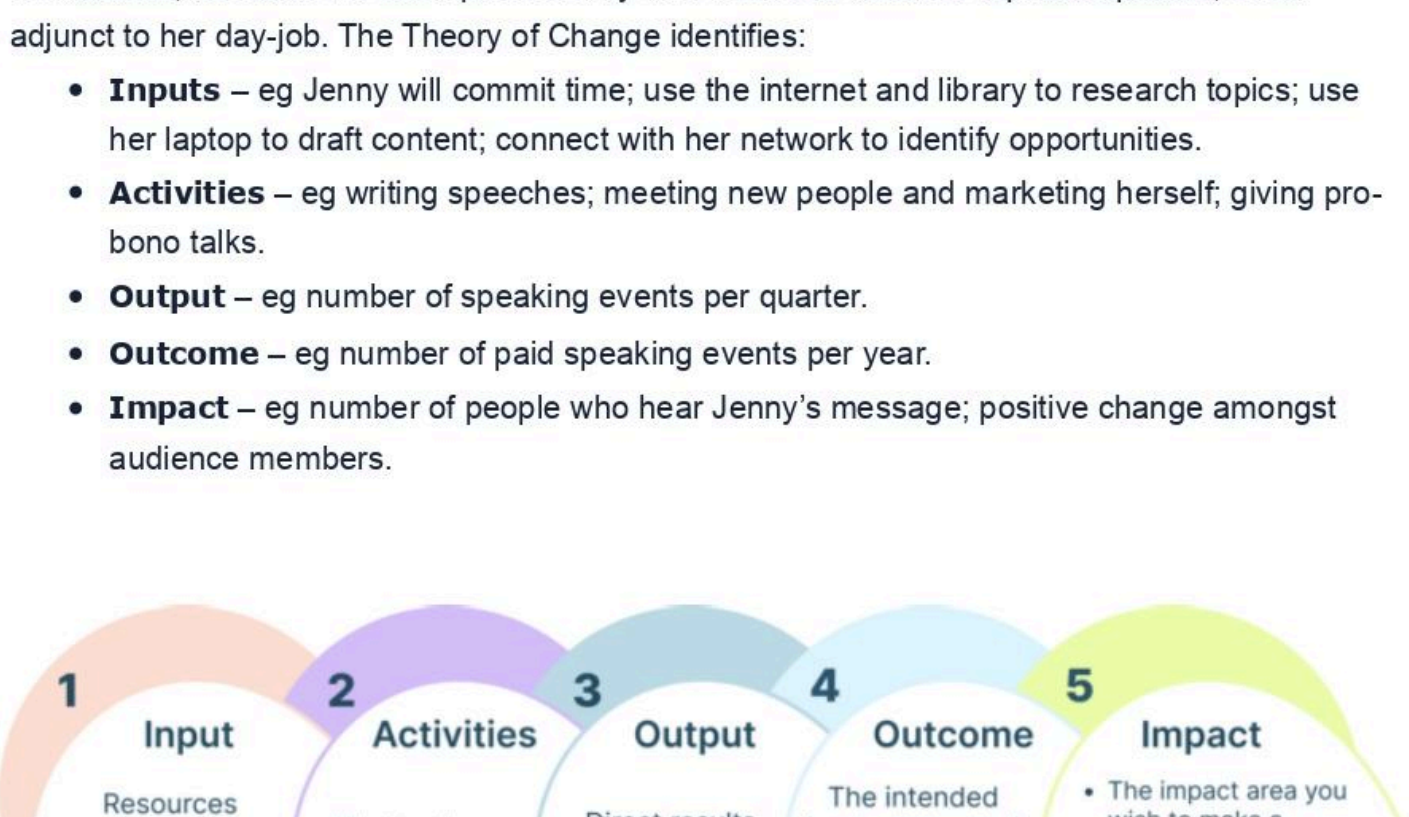
If your client wishes to change a habitual behaviour – for instance, going to the gym three times a week, or regularly engaging in professional development – they could use a habit tracking app to visualise and celebrate progress. There are many free apps available online.

Map the Theory of Change

A ‘Theory of Change’ is often used in organisations to draw the links between short-term activities and longer-term goals. But the tool can be co-opted and used in coaching, to map personal progress towards meaningful goals.

To illustrate, let’s take the example of Jenny who wishes to become a public speaker, as an adjunct to her day-job. The Theory of Change identifies:

- **Inputs** – eg Jenny will commit time; use the internet and library to research topics; use her laptop to draft content; connect with her network to identify opportunities.
- **Activities** – eg writing speeches; meeting new people and marketing herself; giving pro-bono talks.
- **Output** – eg number of speaking events per quarter.
- **Outcome** – eg number of paid speaking events per year.
- **Impact** – eg number of people who hear Jenny’s message; positive change amongst audience members.



Use creative techniques

Some clients may prefer more expressive techniques, to identify their own progress and change. You could ask clients to develop metaphors, or to draw / paint answers to questions like:

- What state were you in before? How did you see yourself and the situation?
- What state are you in now? How do you see yourself and the situation?
- Which change has been most important for you? Why is that?

Get a second opinion

Finally, you could ask external observers for feedback about how your client has grown. This is more appropriate when the coaching has been commissioned, for instance by a manager, and when the expected changes are obvious and behavioural, rather than internal and attitudinal.

How to sustain change

In the fossil record, creatures become more evolved and then remain that way, until their next evolution. Human development is more complex, in that we can grow and change, but then find ourselves falling back into our old ways.

As such, it’s useful to ask clients how they will *embed* any positive change. You may find value in:

- **A systemic approach** – James Clear, the author of Atomic Habits, famously said “You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.” Ask your clients how can they can support their new way of being, by changing their surrounding context or systems. In other words, how can they set themselves up to succeed – *even if* their motivation, willpower or energy falters?
- **A premortem** – Daniel Pink describes a [premortem](#) as a useful form of time travel, where you zoom to the future and imagine that your project or endeavour has failed, and identify why it failed. Then you zoom back to the present and put in place measures to *prevent those issues arising*. In short, premortems help clients to keep things on track.

As we talk about change, it feels right to share that we’re also rethinking the way we stay connected with you. Newsletters have served us well, but we believe there are even better ways to stay in touch and keep the sense of community alive. Keep an eye out over the next few weeks — we’ll be in touch with what’s next. Take care until then!

The team at ICC Academy

Coaching for
diversity, equity
inclusion & belonging

DOWNLOAD YOUR **FREE** RESOURCE

2026 DATES FOR COACH TRAINING

FOUNDATION COACHING CERTIFICATE

February/March 2026

Module 1:
11th and 12th February

Module 2:
25th and 26th February

Module 3:
11th and 12th March

Module 4:
25th and 26th March

EXECUTIVE COACH TRAINING

April/May 2026

Module 1:
21st & 22nd of April

Module 2:
28th & 29th of April

Module 3:
5th & 6th of May



ICC Academy
545 Parnell Road, 1052, Auckland

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