



The Performance Coaching Process

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Good coaching is a finely-tuned process. To improve a team member's performance, a coach must first collaborate to establish the goal, and then help them adopt the right attitude to achieve that goal. Set the bar high! By doing so you show your confidence in their ability and help them recognize their own potential — maybe for the first time!

By setting a clear target and keeping their eyes on the prize, team members can shoot for the sky with a coach's encouraging, sideline support. And by holding team members accountable and providing necessary tools and training, a great coach keeps them motivated. Once the goal is met, a worthy coach showers them with praise and sends them on an all-expenses-paid vacation to Paris.

OK, maybe just the praise.



“We all have possibilities we don't know about. We can do things we don't even dream we can do.”

- Dale Carnegie



Step 1

Identify the Opportunity

There are six ways to identify opportunities:

1. You identify an opportunity for another person
 2. The person identifies an opportunity for themselves
 3. A customer, vendor, or other outsider identifies an opportunity
 4. You identify new skills needed within your team
 5. A situation creates an opportunity
 6. An assessment tool uncovers a need for a person's development
- These different opportunities may arise due to a new need, taking on a new job that requires a new skill, taking a project that requires a new skill, or comes out of a performance review, is identified after a mistake occurs, etc.
 - Multiple opportunities arise for people on your team. Prioritizing becomes essential in order not to overwhelm people.
 - Jot down some opportunities that you see for yourself or others in your workplace. Are you the right person to point out these needs? What is the best way to do so?

Step 2

Picture the Desired Outcome

Once the opportunity is identified, it is important to take the time and pinpoint what the situation will look like when the gap is filled. This is the step that many people skip or don't develop fully, which can lead to confusion, misunderstanding and frustration for all involved.

One of the most important concepts in coaching is having a vision or end goal in mind. Without that, people often lose sight of the importance of making the needed changes. How we create this picture of what is possible is the central component of this step in the coaching process.

People with a clear vision of what the end result of coaching is, tend to move in that direction more quickly than those without. But, it is critical the goal be owned by both the coach and the trainee. Without that sense of ownership, motivation may be lost. We focus on motivation and buy-in even more in the next step of the process, but this is where direction and motivation really begin.

Step 3

Establish the Right Attitudes

How well we really know our people may determine how quickly we know that we have the right trainee for the job and how they are motivated. This step is a critical part of the process of effective coaching. Without it we spend a great deal of our time just overcoming resistance.

We often hear that people resist change. It isn't true. People resist being changed when they 1) don't see the need, 2) don't want to do it, or 3) believe that the change is not possible for them. Whenever people are asked to change without their buy-in, we create resistance. In Session Four we will be looking at proven techniques that will help us better create an atmosphere where people are consistently motivated at high - performance levels.

In this step we focus on some of the skills required to cut resistance and move through the Coaching process with less friction. These skills are:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Building trust
- Getting commitment vs. compliance

Step 4

Provide the Resources

- In order for a Coaching process to be successful, it is important the appropriate resources be available. This includes time and most importantly, a personal commitment to succeed by all involved.
- Other resources may include money, equipment, training, information, and upper level buy-in and support.
- Ensure that the appropriate resources are in place and available. Nothing is as frustrating as being promised something and then not getting it. It can make everyone feel like they have been set up to fail.

Step 5

Practice & Skill Development

Once the resources are in place and the correct skill set has been identified, explained and demonstrated, it is now time for the trainee to practice and apply what has been learned. In order for knowledge to evolve into a skill we practice it and perfect the skill with the help of a coach, ensuring that we are practicing the new skill and not the old habit. Practice also allows the coach to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. Some of the points to consider here are:

- How to encourage others to success
- How closely to monitor and when to let go
- How to hold others accountable for progress

Step 6

Reinforce progress

Making progress is one thing, but without a way to reinforce it and keep it in place people may quickly go back to the way they did things before. One of the biggest fallacies managers hold to is the assumption that if people know something, they will do it. People don't do what they know; they do what they have always done.

Some of the skills we must look for in reinforcement of coaching are:

- Empowering people to get results after they have learned new skills
- Giving the right kind of feedback
- Following up
- Handling nonperformance issues
- Handling mistakes and people who get off track

“Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.”

- Dale Carnegie

Step 7

Reward

One of the best ways to cement growth and progress is to reward it. What we reward gets repeated. What gets repeated becomes habit. There are many ideas on the best ways to do this, and we discuss throughout this program some of the most effective ones. Change is uncomfortable. That is why people often revert back to their former ways quickly if reinforcement and reward are not there. Habit is stronger than knowledge. To ensure change happens quickly and is kept in place as long as needed, celebration and reward are important.

Some of the skills we put into coaching in this step of the process are:

- Praise and recognition
- Positive feedback techniques
- Recognizing people's strengths as well as accomplishments
- Having the right credibility and impact in the delivery

