

COACHING

Definition: Coaching is “the art of encouraging others to experience their power”
(*Developing High Performance People*, Mink, Owens and Mink)

Learning in the workplace is more critical than ever before. Leaders who wish to be successful in today's ever changing environment must constantly challenge staff to acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitudes; to be competent in both process and content. Coaching is increasingly important as a process to enhance learning in organizations. In today's organizations, those who survive and prosper will be those who learn how to learn at the individual, team, and organizational level. The ability to transfer skills effectively becomes critical to remaining viable as an organization. In today's environment of comparatively rapid change, good coaching provides a foundation for continuous improvement.

COACHING: A ROLE WHOSE TIME HAS COME

Four things are happening today that make the art of coaching so important.

1. Staff knowledge and skills frequently become obsolete in the course of a calendar year. Technology changes so fast that many people find themselves incompetent. This seems to be especially true for the middle-level person who has been in a managerial role for some time.
2. Diversity and complexity increase daily in the workplace. People with different cultural backgrounds and different leaning backgrounds are entering the workforce in increasing numbers. As the difference among workers grows larger, greater competence at working with individual differences will be required.
3. There appears to be a skilled labor shortage. The number of skilled people entering the job market is actually decreasing relative to the number of new technical and professional jobs that are being created.
4. There is a decline in the competence level (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) of people who are entering the workplace for the first time. New staff often do not have the necessary competencies to succeed in today's jobs.

To deal with these changes, we must become experts at transferring the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values so essential to success. We need to do so with greater speed than ever before. Developing people in a short time frame will be what separates the successful organization from the unsuccessful organization. People need training

and development in a variety of areas. To meet the challenge, each person must become an expert coach and support the learning of others in the workplace.

What Is Coaching?

Coaching is the process by which one individual, the coach, creates enabling relationships with others that make it easier for them to learn. The coach helps other people set and achieve performance goals at levels higher than those at which they are currently performing. This process occurs in such a way that it creates stronger people who have a greater appreciation for themselves and their capacity to couple their personal competence with effort and produce good results.

The coaching process is an empowering process.

There are a number of key words and concepts in this definition. For one thing, coaching is a *process*, not an event. Learning is a process that requires practice and:

1. Repetition and time. Likewise, the process of people empowering themselves takes time because people acquire skills and knowledge incrementally and through different media at different rates. Application and reflection need to occur after each step.
2. A second key word in the definition is that of empowerment itself. In essence, coaching is the transfer of knowledge, skills, and/or values and attitudes from the coach to the learners. Through the coaching relationship, learners are enabled (empowered) to perform new tasks, to do more than they were doing, or to do something entirely different, or even to perform at a higher level of complexity.

For example, when a programmer coaches a manager suffering from technical obsolescence by teaching him or her how to program in a new language, then the manager is empowered--capable of directing an entirely new set of work activities, that is, programming in a new language.

The programming example depicts a coach enabling a learner to improve job performance. The coach may do this by helping learners acquire new skills knowledge, and/or values and attitudes. These changes help learners experience themselves differently and help them change the way they view themselves from a self-limiting view to a more self-enhancing view. When people combine knowledge and a set of related skills with personal effort and then succeed at appropriate tasks, they increase their belief in their own ability to achieve and enhance their sense of exercising control over their own lives, which is empowerment.

3. A third key concept of the definition is *relationship*. Coaching is a relationship that occurs between people, the coaches and the learners. If the context of coaching is a team or group setting, the essential transformation still takes

place at the individual level. Each relationship between individuals becomes the essential component of coaching. Successful coaching is based on mutual trust, acceptance, and respect, and focuses first and foremost on individuals, and second on the behavior change or new learning.

4. A fourth key concept implied in the definition is the concept of *transformation*. One outcome of coaching relationships is that the learner is able to perform at increasingly higher and more complex levels. This involves freeing oneself from the repetitive patterns of old learnings, which may be firmly imbedded in the unconscious, and adopting new mental operations-- new mental models or structures that- guide performance at work. In fact, one way the coaching relationship can be judged is by evidence of the learner's transformation. This mental transformation may be quantitative, as in when the learner is able to do more of what she was doing in the past. It may also be qualitative, as in when the learner is enabled to do something different, or when the learner leaps from one level of performance to an entirely different level using a new mental model.

A direct outcome of great coaching is learners who take charge of their own learning. They can self-organize their learning around increasingly more difficult and complex arenas of performance. We say they operate at a level of metalearning. They have mastered the art and science of recognizing which of their values, goals, or contextual influences are governing their learning and performance. When required to do so, they manage those influences in ways that produce the desired or intended outcomes.

THE BOSS VS. THE COACH

THE BOSS	THE COACH
Prescribes	Empowers
Gives goals	Develops consensus about goals
Defines roles	Lets roles evolve
Write procedures	Lets procedures evolve
Controls behavior	Encourages risk taking/discovery
Focuses on outcome/ results	Focuses on process/ progress
Evaluates performance	Focuses on ways to improve
Directs/trains	Collaborates/develops
Relies on external motivation and fear	Increases initiative, and internal motivation and rewards
Discourages open discussion of critical aspects of the organization	Encourages open discussion of all policy issues
Restricts expression of feeling	Encourages expression of feeling

PRESCRIPTION VERSUS EMPOWERMENT A SHIFT IN PARADIGM

This is an age of transition, a time during which we are moving from one economic era to another, from one way of viewing management to another, a more productive manner. If coaching is the transfer of skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes from the coach to the learner, then how is this relationship best conceptualized?

In the past, the coach/manager was viewed as the person who established goals, developed work plans and schedules, devised control systems, and monitored performance to ensure that goals were met. Work roles were prescribed in order to increase the likelihood that a person's behavior conformed to what was expected or required from that role in a particular business. This was a prescriptive mode of thinking about coaching. Philosophically, it was deterministic, control-oriented, and specific. It sacrificed the holistic endeavor and ignored variation in process and influencing conditions in the workplace. As a result, poor quality in services was produced by those who blindly pursued their work as though they were extensions of a machine.

Now, to be effective leaders must change their practices, and the work environment must change to enable continuous improvement or experience-based learning. The prescription model, by definition, is ineffective. Performance tends to conform to expectations, and people tend to do just what's prescribed. As work requirements change, the prescriptive model makes it difficult to respond. Appropriate responses require change. To continue to produce quality services, a whole new set of procedures and rules must surface. The prescription model makes this difficult, if not impossible, because it:

1. Reduces individual initiative
2. Lessens the likelihood of a person finding errors in the process
3. Constrains the staff from initiating needed corrections

Can one person prescribe excellence in achievement from another person and achieve sustained continuous improvement? Apparently not. Excellence prescribed will not produce excellence in performance. Goals prescribed by one person are not necessarily powerful drivers for another.

Typically, little positive change comes from imposed demands for excellence. A new view is necessary for us to keep pace with the incredible rate of change in the technical and socioeconomic environments of today. In this new view, responsiveness or adaptability to the changing world is required. How do we best transfer skills from one person to the next? How do we get people up to speed in a variety of roles with a variety of demands? The solution lies in the ongoing enhancement of every staff

member's mastery of his or her own work and in each person learning how to acquire new skills.

The empowerment viewpoint is growing in acceptance. People need to experience, at the personal level, an organizational climate that allows each person to discuss *openly* and without fear of reprisal any aspect of organizational life that mitigates against their individual performance or the performance of their work team or unit. Equally critical is having permission to *express feelings* related to job experiences.

When managers see their role as one of facilitating empowerment in others, their behaviors should change from prescribing behaviors to releasing behaviors that support every individual's potential to achieve at the highest possible level. To do this, managers must help employees see opportunities for improving performance and create the means by which improved performance can occur. This includes providing the psychological climate and appropriate tools. The following chart depicts some of the differences between the two views.

From the empowerment point of view, coaching is a special kind of relationship between the coach and the coached. It is a relationship in which the learner permits and encourages the coach to influence his or her performance. A coach cannot make a player excel--a coach can only encourage or release the player's potential to excel. Whether the coach succeeds depends on his or her ability to create the conditions under which a sense of personal control of results produced may occur.

We can delineate the elements of an effective coaching relationship. We can define coaching as a relationship between two people in which one person finds ways to enable and empower the other person to perform at increasingly higher levels or in a different role. So what does this require?

- What *qualities* are inherent in a relationship that lead to a belief that each person can influence the results produced through timely combinations of personal skill and effort?
- What *values* do effective coaches bring to their relationships that enable others to empower themselves?
- What *skills* do effective coaches bring to their relationships that enable them to succeed in the empowerment process?
- What are the *characteristics* of these special relationships?

Answers to these questions may help us gain insight into coaching as a process. What general qualities can be observed in effective coaching? There are three qualities of this special coaching relationship:

- **Clarity.** A coach creates a context in which achievement and excellence are seen as real possibilities. Everything the coach does clearly communicates the possibility of accomplishment.
- **Coherence.** A Coach demonstrates by example what she hopes the learner will learn. Everything the coach does or says reflects commitment to excellence and goal achievement.
- **Openness.** There can be no coaching without listening and observing, without sharing and giving, without an attitude of flexibility and willingness to experiment, without valuing free and informed choice, valid information, and collaboration.

Good coaching requires the coach to create a context that enables and facilitates learning. It becomes necessary to create and live a clearly developed, understandable value system that is coherent and observable by the learner. The learner must share this value system.

Coaching Is Value Laden. Coaches value growth in other people. Coaches value winning and being the best through hard work, self-discipline, and personal responsibility. In order to nurture growth, the coach must know the learner; must be willing to concentrate on what the learner is doing and needing; must be willing to be committed to the relationship; and finally, must have the courage and discipline to do the right thing at the right time.

Coaching Is the Ability to Care. This caring must be genuine. Caring is demonstrated through the proper application of a range of skills, qualities, and values, including patience, persuasion, dedication, hard work, preparation, and spending whatever time it takes to find the uniqueness in another person. Finally, a good coach reflects outwardly an inner world in which he or she clearly values the unconditional worth of another human being.

Good Coaching Involves Team Work and Shared Effort. The essential elements of successful coaching are observable in good learning environments. Coaching is a partnership. Both the coach and the learner must work at the task with persistence. There must be a level of trust in the relationship that enables team effort. This trust centers on competence, personal disclosure, and keeping simple social agreements to meet, study, prepare, experiment, and learn.

Good Coaching Involves Leadership. A leader influences others. Coaching requires patience, friendly persuasion, and unfeigned love. One role of the coach is to empower the learner to go beyond current beliefs about personal limitations. This means that the coach is often in the position of encouraging others to try something new. Even when producing poor results or unintended outcomes, people are often reluctant to change. The complexity of changes varies, and the more complex the change, the more effort required by the learner. And the more risk perceived, the more

the learner's fear increases. The effective coach understands how to encourage the learner to try despite self-doubt and fear.

Good Coaching Requires Structure. You can't help a person feel empowered in an arbitrary or highly random environment. Rather, the situation must be such that the coach and the learner have quality interactions and a reliable process for experimenting with new learning. The learner and the coach must be able to identify the relationship(s) among the newly acquired knowledge and skills, the learner's personal efforts, and the improvements or variations in results produced.

Good Coaching Also Involves Management. By this we mean that effective coaching is no accident. It is built on an unflinching commitment to preparation. This preparation involves such things as analyzing the tasks to be mastered, designing effective means of teaching these tasks, getting the resources needed to teach them, and anticipating future learning needs. The emphasis falls on learning how to learn. This involves the use of skills (meta-skills): self-directed learning, resources for obtaining information, and study skills within an organizational environment-- observing others, effective use of technical manuals, and goal-setting and problem-solving processes.

Coaching is a complex process. One goal of coaching is helping others learn how to do something they can't yet do. The best coaching helps people determine why something should be done, what is to be done, how to do it right, when to do it, where to do it, and how much it should be done. This process may involve providing verbal, behavioral, and attitudinal (value) information as a means of dealing with temperament in skill acquisition, as well as procedures for ensuring that learning has indeed taken place and can continue to take place. The essence of helping another person acquire new competencies requires that you as a coach recognize that valid information includes the feelings that are associated with the facts. These findings, when accurately expressed, often reflect the values, attitudes, and beliefs that are critical to the behavior changes required by the knowledge and skill being taught.

THE COACH RELATIONSHIP

In many organizations, work takes place in a team setting. In an effective team, members share the responsibility for accomplishing a shared goal or purpose. In the context of the work team, the manager, as well as team members, plays many roles. One role is that of coach. Good coaching produces a process by which one individual enables another individual to:

- (1) perform at a higher level some task or process, or
- (2) to perform well in some new role or job.

Coaching implies personal commitment to a quality learning process.

Good coaching requires good working relationships. The role of coach becomes effective when the participants relate to each other as equals. Typical superior-

subordinate relationships, where power, dominance, and control are issues, disallow good coaching. The essence of coaching demands a relationship between one who wants to share expertise and one who wants to learn. This is most possible when people:

1. Are willing participants in a relationship
2. Put trust in one another's competence
3. Deal with value issues
4. Access feelings as a part of valid information

MODELING COACHING BEHAVIOR

You can use the acronym COACH as a handy way to remember some of the most important coaching behaviors.

In addition to characteristics and skills, effective coaches need to demonstrate certain behaviors. You can use the acronym COACH as a handy way to remember some of the most important behaviors: Collaborate, Own, Acknowledge, Communicate, and Help. As we review the behaviors in detail, try to relate each one to yourself and your own situation.

Collaborate—The coaching relationship is a collaborative one. Work with the employee to identify the performance problem, set standards and performance objectives, and develop a performance-improvement plan.

Own—Examine your own behavior and accept some ownership for the problem. Along with the employee, ask yourself: "Did I make my expectations clear?" "Did I provide the proper training?" "Does the employee have the appropriate tools to do the job?"

Acknowledge—Acknowledge employee achievements as well as problems, feelings, and concerns. The last point can be a challenge. Acknowledging problems and concerns is not the same as overlooking them or excusing unacceptable behavior or performance.

Communicate—This is probably the most important behavior and the one many supervisors seem to find the most difficult. Communication skills, including listening, questioning, and giving and receiving feedback, are critical for success. Coaches need to practice two-way communication on a daily basis and clarify expectations regularly.

Help—As a supervisor you are not only a coach but also an advisor, serving as a resource person and a guide to other resources, both inside and outside the organization.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD COACHES

Identify one situation in which you received effective coaching from someone. These situations can be taken from any time in your life and from any type of situation.

SITUATION:

Based on this example, list below three qualities, characteristics, and skills of an effective coach.

QUALITIES/CHARACTERISTICS	SKILLS
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

Good coaches share several characteristics. They are usually respectful of their team members or employees, direct, and dedicated to the project, organization, and to its employees. They are task oriented-- they focus on what it takes to achieve the best results rather than what went wrong with the last. Most importantly, although they expect the best from their staff, good coaches do not punish employees for their errors.

These coaches also shared some common practices:

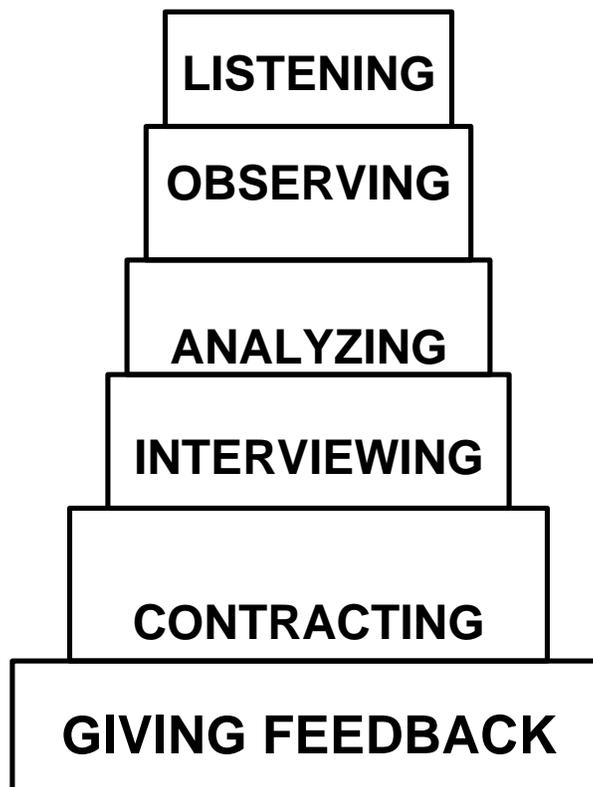
- They are clear about the purpose of the activity. To produce the best work, the coach deals with the full spectrum of human concerns, issues, and possibilities.
- They are ethical. They respect rules and procedures, but do not limit their thinking to what's allowed by the rules or procedures. Although all processes are governed by rules and procedures, those rules and procedures evolved over time.
- They are committed not just to the activity but to their employees and maintain a personal stake in the success and well being of each worker.
- They are committed to preparation and practice.

- They do not recognize that there are limits to the performance of either an individual or an team.
- They are in continuous communication with their employees and other constituents-owners, the public, their competition.
- They are personally responsible for the outcome of their activity, without robbing the workers or team members of their responsibility.
- They are honest, direct, and model the qualities they demand of their workers.
- They are aware of the overall team picture and what is occurring in all aspects of the activity that has an impact on the team.
- They are uncompromising in their attention to detail.
- They are teachers.
- They are learners as well as teachers and coaches. Coaches recognize that they can learn from their players.
- They do not dwell on past failures.
- They do what they say they'll do.

SIX TOOLS FOR COACHES

- Coaching is a way to discover and encourage the potential of employees.
- It involves a continuous flow of instruction, demonstration, dialog, practice, support and feedback.
- It requires creating a partnership based on mutual respect and trust.
- It requires that supervisors continually build their skills and polish their tools.

Effective coaching requires knowing when and how to use six key tools:



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LISTENING

A coach must physically attend to the employee by minimizing distractions, using eye contact, and demonstrating an open body posture. One way to demonstrate listening is to paraphrase what employees say and show empathy for what they might be feeling. Another way is to ask open-ended questions to show interest and probe for important information. Pay attention to their body posture and other nonverbal signals. Summarize at the end each discussion.

OBSERVING

Coaches must be skilled in looking and listening, watching and waiting for cues that their employees need help or can take more responsibility and, autonomy. They must watch for changes in performance. They should observe employees in a wide variety of situations and see how they react to stress. They must look for opportunities to expand competencies, reinforce effective performance and remove barriers.

ANALYZING

Coaches must know how to determine the root cause if there is a downward trend or change in performance. Is the problem caused by personal issues, a skill deficit or a lack of motivation? Has the employee been doing the job too long? Is the work highly repetitive? Coaches also must be able to assess what causes upward trends so they can be aware of the employee's learning style and what types of reinforcement tend to motivate each person.

INTERVIEWING

A coach must be able to formulate useful questions to probe for the employee's skills, values, interests and accomplishments. Coaches must know how to get important information in a way that does not make the employee feel interrogated or defensive.

Open-ended questions encourage employee reflection, for example, How are you feeling, about your current job? Closed-ended questions probe for specifics-for example, When do you hope to attend that class? Reflective questions clarify and ensure understanding-for example, Are you saying you're not sure you want that *promotion*?

CONTRACTING

Coaching involves creating a partnership, and encouraging employees to take responsibility for their careers. As a result, both parties must build a contract around the expectations and commitments of who will do what. Questions that must be answered include: Who will do what? When? How? What responsibility and authority does each party have? What information will be reported back? When will review meetings take place?

GIVING FEEDBACK

Feedback can dramatically improve the performance of an employee. When giving corrective feedback, coaches must focus on specific observable behaviors, describe what was witnessed, rather than judging it. In addition, the desired behavior must be stated and understood. Simply identifying the negative behavior is not enough. Giving recommendations or suggestions for future behavior can reduce the likelihood of defensive behavior from the employees and leave them with some new approaches to try out.

Coaches must tailor the feedback to the skill and knowledge level of employees receiving it and must be careful not to overload them with too much negative feedback. It is important to preserve self-esteem by concentrating on only two or three areas for change even if there are numerous areas for improvement. Remember to watch for positive behaviors and to praise frequently. For more specific tips, read the following chart that describes four types of feedback and the consequences of each. Then review the examples that are given on how to give effective feedback.

BENEFITS OF COACHING

- ◆ Coaching helps to achieve both performance improvement and employee development. The organization is getting a better standard of performance from its employees, while maintaining a level of investment in their future potential. That investment is short-term because it is specific and episodic, relying on manager employee contact--but the gains to the organization are long-term with regard to performance standards and quality of staff.
 - ◆ Delegation becomes more effective because those to whom the work is delegated have the competence necessary to carry out that work. They also have confidence in their ability to perform the work, and that they will be supported by their manager. Trust between manager and employee is increased: the manager trusts the employee's capabilities; the employee trusts the manager's intentions and support.
 - ◆ By increasing the competence of those within his or her team, the manager frees up time to concentrate on his or her managerial role.
 - ◆ Decision-making and responsiveness are speeded up as employees at lower levels have the competence to take on more responsibility and accountability.
 - ◆ Work becomes more challenging and meaningful for both the coach and the employee. Retention is improved, and better quality staff can be recruited.
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CASE STUDY: THE NEW TELEPHONE OPERATOR

When Wilma finished her training as a telephone operator for the Filmore County DSS, her supervisor immediately rushed her into action. That was on a Monday morning. The next few days were hectic, with several minor problems creating difficulties for Wilma. For two hours, the newly installed automated phone system functioned erratically and the volume of calls directed to the operators was enormous. When Wilma questioned Denise, another operator, on how to direct several calls, she was told that the information was in the procedural manual.

To make matters worse, Wilma's supervisor stopped by to give her feedback regarding caller complaints. The supervisor said he was dismayed to have received a call from an irate client whom Wilma tried to help direct to the appropriate unit. Apparently, after Wilma made several false leads, she had directed a client to "not to call again until he had the correct information". "Never do that again!" said the supervisor. "Your job is to direct calls to the appropriate person or unit in a courteous and efficient manner."

"I tried to help him, but he didn't know who he was calling and wasn't clear as to what he wanted", said Wilma. " We were really busy that day. How can I be expected to help a caller who doesn't know what he wants?"

Discussion Question:

If you were Wilma's supervisor, how would you approach this problem?

THE PERFORMANCE COACHING PROCESS:

▼ Fundamental Rule

The fundamental rule in performance coaching is that the standards must be specific, clear, and agreed upon. Once the standards are established you have the playing field and rules defined. To support you we have developed the process presented below. Use this step-by-step approach as a guide in dealing with performance issues.

STEP #1: Identify the Need

The first step is to identify the need. What is the motivation to discuss performance? Is there a performance problem? Is it more appropriate to handle this in a career coaching session? Be specific in assessing the need.

STEP #2: Map Your Strategy

The second step involves your approach. Your strategy might include formal training, co-worker instruction, job restructuring, reassignment, etc.

STEP #3: Plan Your Coaching

Plan for your participation and for a meeting with the employee. How much time will you spend? How will progress be observed by you? What measures will you use for showing improvement?

STEP #4: Recommend the Actions

Meet with the employee. Present the situation and the facts. Allow the full expression of views, feelings, and concerns. Describe the strategy, plan, and recommended actions.

THE PERFORMANCE COACHING PROCESS CONT...

STEP #5: Obtain Agreement

Gain the employee's agreement on the strategy, plan, and recommended actions. Make sure any consequences are understood. Agreement is crucial.

STEP #6: View Their Performance

You must observe the employee's performance personally in order to be able to evaluate and coach appropriate to the plan and actions.

STEP #7: Evaluate

Using the agreed upon measures, evaluate progress.

STEP #8: Revise or Reward

Acknowledge the employee for all progress as soon as possible. Make revisions in your strategy or plan where necessary and implement with the employee's agreement.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____	
Basic Responsibilities:	
Obvious Weaknesses:	
Obvious Strengths:	
Overall Assessment of Past Work:	
Performance During Last Year:	
Action Taken:	

HOW TO GIVE EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

- **Be specific when referring to behavior.**

Bad: "Henry, you are lazy and have a poor attitude toward your job."

Good: "Henry, you have been 15 minutes late for the last three mornings. Please explain, why."

- **Consider your timing. Before the event, give feedback in the form of advice; immediately after the event, give positive feedback.**

Bad: (*Criticism*) "Sally, because you've done such a poor job in the past, I need to preview the speech you plan on giving next week."

Good: (*Advice*) "Sally, I'd like to review the content of your presentation before your speech next week so you can really do a good job in front of the group."

Bad: (*Positive but not specific*) "Sally, good speech last week. Keep up the good work!"

Good: (*Positive*) "Sally, you did an outstanding job in organizing your presentation for the meeting. The speech was well researched and logical."

- **Consider the needs of the person receiving the feedback as well as your own. Ask yourself what he or she will get out of the information. Are you 'dumping' or genuinely attempting to improve performance or the relationship?**

Bad: "Sue, you always need help with the newsletter. It's not my responsibility. Don't you think it's about time you learned how to edit the newsletter?"

Good: "Sue, I know how important it is to you to get the newsletter just right, and I recognize that you're under a lot of pressure right now. I will help you edit it this time, but I want you to take that editing class so you can handle it solo in the future."

- **Focus on behavior the receiver can do something about.**

Bad: "Sam, why are you so introverted that you don't like, to talk to other people?"

Good: "Sam, we would appreciate your keeping the team informed about the status of the project."

- **Avoid labels and judgments by describing rather than evaluating behavior.**

Bad: "Steve, you are very lazy about improving your skills and don't seem to care about your career here."

Good: "Steve, I have given you five chances to attend training programs in the last year and you haven't enrolled yet. Is there a problem?"

- **Define the impact on you, the unit, the team and the company.**

Bad: "Sarah can't you ever get your reports to me on time?"

Good: "Sarah, when you don't get your report to me on time, I can't get my report to my boss on time. This slows up decisions about how resources are allocated to our team for the next month and how fast our company can service our customers."

- **Use "I" statements as opposed to "You" statements to reduce defensiveness.**

Bad: "Tim, you are so inconsiderate of other people when you leave your radio on."

Good: "Tim, when you play your radio in the work area, I lose my concentration. Would you mind turning it off during regular work hours?"

- **Check to be sure your message has been clearly received.**

Bad: "Mary, I'm sure you got it all, huh?"

Good: "Mary, I need you to record all my phone messages? Can you explain it to me so I know you understand?"

- Give the feedback in calm, unemotional words, tone and body language.

Bad: "Joe, you blew it again! Isn't it about time you improved your production with this machine!"

Good: "Joe, I think there might be some ways you can improve your production with this machine."

FEEDBACK POINTERS:

- Reinforcement is the most effective form of feedback.
 - Criticism is the most ineffective form of feedback.
 - The difference between criticism and advice is a difference in timing. Most criticism can be given as advice.
 - When feedback is mixed, the impact is diluted. The employee becomes confused and doesn't know what to do.
 - Criticism overpowers all other feedback.
 - Silence is not always "golden." It can be interpreted in a variety of ways.
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COACHING DISCUSSION PLAN

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

PROBLEM

DESCRIPTION: _____

IMPACT OF THE PROBLEM:

POSSIBLE SUGGESTIONS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT CORRECTING:

1. _____
2. _____

FOLLOW-UP DATE: _____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	EXPLANATION
1. Job Enrichment	Delegate more authority, autonomy, etc., in the employee's current role.
2. Job Enlargement	Assign additional responsibilities in current role.
3. On-the-Job Coaching	Impart skills, knowledge, and direction to develop employee.
4. Special Assignment	Provide for comprehensive research of a problem to enhance technical skills.
5. Job rotation or Transfer	Move the employee to another job to broaden experience and perspective.
6. Substitute Assignment	Let the employee temporarily assume responsibilities for others who are on vacation, traveling, on a leave of absence, etc.
7. Understudy	Have the employee work directly with another to eventually be a replacement.
8. Mentorship	Allow the employee to periodically "interview" specialists to enhance aptitude.
9. Leadership Opportunity	Let the employee lead meetings, presentations, task forces, etc.
10. Training	Arrange for cross-training to build credibility and assignment confidence.
11. Study Materials	Provide manuals, videos, cassettes and other self-study reference materials, and follow-up to reinforce learning.
12. Professional Development	Let the employee attend workshops to develop specific skills.

ROLE PLAY #1: THE INEFFECTIVE COACHING INTERVIEW

BACKGROUND

Vivian has worked at the Filmore DSS for 3 years. She has always submitted her work in a timely and efficient manner. However, the past month her supervisor, Betty, has noticed a change in the quality of Vivian's work. She has missed several deadlines and there has been an increase in the number of errors. After assessing Vivian's performance, Betty decided to schedule a face-to-face coaching session.

B:	Do you know why I've called you in?
V:	No
B:	It is about your performance.
V:	My performance?
B:	It has to do with your not submitting your weekly reports on time.
V:	Oh, that. I've just been so busy this week. Sorry about that.
B:	Vivian, do you know how many times you have submitted your report past the deadline? Also your reports contain numerous errors.
V:	I know, I know. This whole new electronic submission process is confusing. The information I have to include in the electronic report is different than when I did it the old way. It is difficult to check my work on the monitor screen. I'll take care of it. To tell you the truth Betty, I've been feeling rather overwhelmed lately and...
B:	I'm glad you are willing to take care of this situation, Vivian. Now here is the procedural manual that details how to electronically submit the weekly reports. I'm sure you won't have any problems understanding it. It's very simple.
V:	I'm sure it may seem that way to you but...
B: <i>(Thumbs through a large manual, stuffed with loose papers)</i>	See here on page 149 it explains how to print your report before you submit it. This will allow you to proof read your report and eliminate some of your errors. First you click on the tool bar icon to the left; then double click on the properties; then move the cursor to the lower window... Oh wait the tech department created a short cut. Where is that new insert sheet? I believe I have that information here... Vivian, you look a little confused. Do you understand?

V: <i>(confused expression)</i>	Not really. You lost me at the first double click.
B:	Tell you what. Why don't you read the manual first and then get back to me.
V:	Sure Betty.

THE END

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A COACHING SESSION

1. Put the staff member at ease by being warm and friendly.
2. Define the reason for the discussion.
3. Express your concern about the area of performance you feel needs to be improved.
4. Describe the performance problem or area that needs improvement and define its impact on you, the staff member, the unit, and the organization.
5. Acknowledge and listen to staff member's feelings.
6. Seek the staff member's opinion on ways to improve performance.
7. Ask open-ended questions to encourage analysis and draw out specific suggestions.
8. Let the staff member know that you respect his/her ability to solve problems and develop solutions.
9. Offer suggestions when appropriate, but build on staff member's ideas when possible.
10. Agree upon appropriate actions.
11. Schedule a follow-up meeting to ensure accountability and provide feedback on progress (within ten days.)

COACHING SITUATION GUIDELINES

DO's	DON'T's
<p>Careful preparation so that coaching is based on facts.</p>	<p>Heated discussions caused by vague/inaccurate information</p>
<p>Take action early so the situation can be rescued.</p>	<p>Waiting until the situation is at its worse.</p>
<p>Focus on past and future work, relating the two.</p>	<p>Focusing solely on past work.</p>
<p>Be direct about your view of the situation.</p>	<p>Being evasive/indirect about the problem situation.</p>
<p>Involve staff in making suggestions, decisions about solutions.</p>	<p>Making one-sided decisions about solutions.</p>
<p>Supply useful information/suggestions for improving.</p>	<p>Taking responsibility for the staff's work.</p>
<p>Show courtesy, patience, attention, sincerity.</p>	<p>Showing condescension, impatience, inattention, insincerity.</p>
<p>Hold discussion in privacy, avoid interruptions.</p>	<p>Allowing interruptions.</p>
<p>Attempt to define problem by asking appropriate questions.</p>	<p>Assuming or making own interpretations.</p>
<p>Focus on gaining agreement and understanding.</p>	<p>Forcing own ideas, plans on staff.</p>

ROLE PLAY #2: THE EFFECTIVE COACHING INTERVIEW

BACKGROUND

Vivian has worked at the Filmore DSS for 3 years. She has always submitted her work in a timely and efficient manner. However, in the past month her supervisor, Betty, has noticed a change in the quality of Vivian's work. She has missed several deadlines and there has been an increase in the number of errors. After assessing Vivian's performance, Betty decided to schedule a face-to-face coaching session.

B:	Good morning Vivian. I called this meeting because I am very concerned about the change in the quality of your work performance.
V:	I know that I have not been on top of things lately. I really don't know what to say. Other than I'll try to do better.
B:	Vivian, I have observed that in the past month you have submitted three weekly reports past the deadline. In addition the reports contain numerous errors. This is unacceptable. And is certainly not the quality of work I've come to expect from you. Can you give me an idea about what accounts for this change in the quality of your work?
V:	Nothing really. I said I'd try to do better.
B:	The weekly reports are a team effort. When one member of the team submits their data late it holds up the unit report. The data from the unit report is used by the Commissioner to justify staffing, fiscal, and program needs.
V:	I know, I know. This whole new electronic submission process is confusing. The information I have to include in the electronic report is different than when I did it the old way. It is difficult to check my work on the monitor screen. I'll take care of it. To tell you the truth Betty, I've been feeling rather overwhelmed lately.
B:	I'm glad you are willing to take care of this situation, Vivian. Let me see if I am clear about what you are struggling with. You said that you were not comfortable with the using the new electronic process. What information is required and how to proof your work on screen. In addition, you said that you were feeling overwhelmed. Tell me more.
V:	Because I'm not sure about the new submission process it takes me a lot longer to input data in the required fields. I'm trying to

	read the manual and do the work at the same time. In the meantime, everything is getting backed up. I don't think I'll ever catch up without some kind of help.
B:	What kind of help do you feel you need?
V:	For one thing I need someone to go over how to use the electronic submission system again. I thought I understood it... But obviously not. I thought I could figure it out on my own.
B:	There is no need to struggle with this alone Vivian. I believe there is an in-service scheduled later this month. Let me check with staff development. Perhaps attending the class again will help you. Do you have any other ideas?
V:	Well, Scott seems to have a handle on the new process. Perhaps I can sit with him the next time he uses it.
B:	Good idea. Let me discuss this with Scott and I'll get back to you tomorrow. At that time we can also create a plan to get you up to speed. In the meantime, let's review the report you submitted last week.
V:	Sure Betty.

THE END

PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Assess how the employee is currently performing
- Determine standard/goal for acceptable performance
- Evaluate By Measuring the Results
- Create a coaching action plan
- Provide Follow-up

MEASURING THE RESULTS

Every organization should have a way to tell whether or not its employees are performing in an effective and efficient way. For some organizations, it may be how many units are produced per hour, or how many guests are served per day. For others it may be the number of telephone calls completed, or forms processed. Think about your own work unit for a moment. Define how you measure successful performance within your work group?

Use the list below to give you ideas for goals you might want to meet as a way to measure success.

Impact	Goal	How Much/When?
Decrease	_____	by _____
Increase	_____	by _____
Reduce	_____	by _____
Eliminate	_____	by _____
Slow Down	_____	by _____
Speed Up	_____	by _____
Create	_____	by _____
Stop	_____	by _____

COACHING ACTION PLAN

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

I. Selected Improvement Goals:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

II. Methods for achieving each goal:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

III. Deadline for each improvement and evidence that it has been reached:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WHEN

HOW MEASURED

IV. Support and resources needed to accomplish the improvements:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

V. Next review to check progress: _____

EIGHT OBSTACLES TO PERFORMING THE TEAM COACHING ROLE

You can't be a good coach without also knowing the attitudes and actions that can sabotage the best-laid supervisory plans. Certain approaches to coaching can be disastrous, as many well-intentioned -managers have discovered.

Here are the eight common errors in coaching that undermine the performance of any work team :

1. Detached leadership

Detached leaders isolate themselves from people. They tend to spend a lot of time alone in their offices. They communicate an attitude that says it's not organizationally healthy to rub shoulders with the "common" people. Nothing is more important than involvement and communication with the people with whom we work.

Management expert Tom Peters. Summed it up this way: *most successful supervisors spend 75 per cent of their time with their people.* " If it's true that you as a coach exist to get results not from yourself but from the people who work for you, where should you be spending most of your time? Remember also that everything starts at the top. Your attitude affects the people who work for you. That's why detached leadership can be such a problem. If you show no interest in or concern for your people, why should they give your goals or your standards a place of importance in their minds.

2. Lack of goals

If you lack goals, sooner or later you'll have serious coaching problems. You'll be like a ship without a rudder going anywhere the wind and waves take you. What are your goals ... short-range and long-range? To win, every coach needs to have goals that are consistent with the organization's direction. Such goals help a work group to understand what is important. These goals are most useful when they are defined with input from the work group.

3. Failure to provide perspective

People who don't know why they do what they do are people who don't give their best. That's because they don't see their job as important. When you give them the 'why' of their task, they can see its relevance-- and real job satisfaction can take place.

4. Failure to be specific

Give your people goals, some ideas about how to accomplish them, a vote of confidence, and a deadline. This approach increases your chances of getting the desired result.

5. Failure to secure commitment

If no mutual commitment exists between the coach and the team members, there isn't much of a team at all. You must have mutual commitment to goals. How do you get it? By spending time together. You must spend time sharing goals, problems, and victories. Mutual commitment develops only through time and effort.

6. Taking the course of least resistance

If you settle for what you know is less than the best you or your people can deliver, you may avoid confrontation-- you may even think you're "cutting your team some slack." But the reality is that you undermine not only your coaching credibility but also your team's long-term potential and viability.

7. Failure to identify results

The seventh block to coaching success is having no clear sense of results. If the people on your team don't feel like they're getting results, they all gradually lose motivation. When you accomplish a task or a goal, let your people know.

8. Impatience

To succeed as a coach, you must develop patience. When you have explained something to someone 10 times and the person asks you to repeat it just one more time, you must learn to smile and repeat it once again. When your team suffers setbacks or doesn't reach goals as quickly as you would like, you must learn to smile, help your people pick themselves up and go at it again. You must learn to tell your team members that you believe in them ... that you know they can do it.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: HOW DO I RATE AS A COACH?

This self-assessment will help you identify those areas where you can improve as a coach. Remember that your goal is to enhance your existing coaching skills so that you can help your employees be more effective in their jobs.

To what degree do I . . .

	Small Degree			Large Degree		
1. Set specific performance standards and expectations for my employees?	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Help employees set their own goals?	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Carefully plan for a coaching session by determining what I want to say and what I want the outcome to be?	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Address specific behavior rather than attitude or evaluative judgments?	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Begin a coaching session by expressing empathy and understanding?	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Use active listening techniques, such as paraphrase or restatement, to ensure clear understanding between myself and my employee?	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Give the employee opportunities to offer suggestions?	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Use open-ended questions to encourage employees to open up and express themselves?	1	2	3	4	5	6

HOW DO I RATE AS A COACH CONT...

	Small Degree			Large Degree		
9. Demonstrate support by using praise and agreement to reinforce what the employee says?	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Create an open environment that encourages collaborative, two-way communication?	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Guide employees in a problem-solving process rather than tell them what to do?	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Help employees develop a performance improvement plan?	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Meet regularly with employees to monitor their performance improvement efforts?	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Reward employees for achieving the desired results?	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Explain how what they do fits into the "big picture"?	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Communicate to my employees that I have confidence in them and their abilities?	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Prioritize areas for improvement rather than address everything at once?	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. View coaching as one of my most important managerial responsibilities?	1	2	3	4	5	6

HOW DO I RATE AS A COACH CONT...

	Small Degree			Large Degree		
19. Show a genuine interest in the employees during a coaching session through positive, nonverbal behavior?	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Give positive reinforcement to an employee for improving performance, even if the employee has not yet met my expectations?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Use the following scale to determine your success as a coach:

101-120	You are a top-notch, supportive performance coach.
81-100	Your coaching skills need some fine-tuning.
61-80	You need to focus on a few areas for improvement.
41-60	Coaching skills improvement needs to be a top priority.
0-40	You need to closely examine your basic management practices.

