COACHING ESSENTIALS:
Coach Like YOUR Job Depends On It

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Why Do We Withhold Feedback?

There is no such thing as Failure, only FEEDBACK!

Why don’t managers provide feedback more often?

- Don’t want to hurt feelings or don’t want to lose control of their own emotions
- Too busy
- Fear of failure – true coaching is not taught to lower managers
- Fast-paced and wireless nature of work makes feedback impractical
- Work culture does not encourage it / lack of support
- Subordinates don’t respect or listen to the leader
- Want to avoid conflict situations when subordinates push back or resist coaching
- Manager doesn’t respect or like the employee who needs coaching

Recognize the Signs of not giving enough feedback:

- The last time you gave feedback was during performance evaluation
- Have not spent at least an hour in the last month giving feedback to direct reports
- Only give feedback when employee requests it
- Avoid the employee except when performance warrants negative feedback
- Coaching or feedback conversations are often confrontational or defensive
- Procrastinate so long that too much time passes
- Canceled or postponed feedback meetings
- After feedback, things fail to improve or get worse
- Employee doesn’t trust you
- Employee claims “unfairness” when feedback is finally given or deflects responsibility
Give Feedback, Get RESULTS

Experience the magic of meaningful interactions, constructive dialog and SHARED VISION

SETTING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND BOUNDARIES

✓ Lead by example

✓ Be an active managers who pay attention (Follow through; Be present)

✓ Implement and enforce company policies consistently and uniformly -- you will earn more respect if you hold the line.

✓ Coach and discipline through meaningful interactions, constructive dialog and shared visions of the path to exceptional performance.

TRANSITION FROM PEER TO SUPERVISOR OR BUDDY TO BOSS

✓ TITLE ISN’T EVERYTHING! You have to earn their respect.

✓ Be confident in your role and position as managers.

✓ *Set boundaries and communicate your expectations to friends and former peers.

Your peers and friends expect managers and leaders to set boundaries with them and to provide clear expectations of what is expected – they expect and need the same thing from you!

✓ You are still the “manager” when you choose to socialize outside of work with the employees.

✓ NO FAVORITISM! Be consistent and fair when implementing and enforcing policies and distributing work assignments.

✓ Do NOT tolerate insubordination by your friends or former peers.

✓ Tolerating or participating in gossip and rumors destroys your credibility.
Channel Your Inner COACH

A COACH WEARS MANY HATS

✓ Teacher – you have expertise and knowledge you can impart to the employee.
✓ Listener – you are a sounding board or advisor
✓ Supporter – a combination of the Teacher and Listener
✓ Parent – need to coach with a firmer hand b/c employee is resistant to coaching
✓ Taskmaster – The Teacher combined with the Parent when the employee needs extremely firm guidance or redirection.

QUALITIES OF A GREAT AND EFFECTIVE COACH (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO YOU!)

☐ Positive
☐ Supportive
☐ Goal-Oriented (SMART goals)
☐ Focused
☐ Observant
☐ Follows Through
☐ Unbiased
☐ Empowers
☐ Able to build rapport & show empathy
☐ Listens well
☐ Understands human behavior
☐ Communicates well
☐ Problem-solver and negotiator
☐ Forward-thinking and proactive
☐ Flexible, yet consistent
☐ Committed to helping your team succeed
COACHING Recipe for Success

Focus on a **CONSTRUCTIVE, POSITIVE** approach with the goal of developing employee potential. This will be just one of many **CONVERSATIONS** you will have with this employee.

**Why We Care**

- Poor performance continues in the absence of feedback
- Employees can’t give you what you want if you don’t ask for it
- Employees disengage when they feel unappreciated, disrespected and invisible
- More consistent feedback = less babysitting and drama management
- Earn and maintain respect of the team
- **Legal implications** for failure to set and enforce clear expectations

**Plan for the Coaching Session**

- What is the problem behavior? Is it critical to the job?
- Are there any obstacles beyond the employee’s control?
- Does the employee know how to do the task?

**Establish the “Gap”**

- Outline performance standards
- Outline actual performance
- Agree on the difference.
EXPLORE REASONS FOR THE “GAP”

✔ Ask the employee for input.
✔ Listen / Don’t jump to conclusions.

ELIMINATE THE “GAP”

✔ Focus on the future.
✔ Ask the employee for suggestions for improvement.
✔ Develop an action plan with timelines and consequences.
✔ Monitor, follow up and provide additional feedback.

COACHING SHOULD BE A DIALOG, SO PUT DOWN THE FORM...

➢ LISTEN more than you talk.
➢ Avoid distractions and stay focused
➢ Brainstorm strategies and suggestions for improvement with the employee
➢ Encourage employee to respond to your comments
➢ Discuss goals for the upcoming period, if applicable
➢ Be prepared to give specific examples supported by documentation
➢ Don’t make promises – preserve at-will status.
➢ Develop a path forward TOGETHER

SAY WHAT YOU MEAN, AND MEAN WHAT YOU SAY

➢ Be direct, honest and forthright and do not avoid the negatives
➢ Do not make comments regarding the employee that are not directly related to the employee’s performance of the essential functions of the job
➢ Avoid making personal comments about the employee, particularly with regard to protected class status – focus on behaviors, NOT personality.
➢ Don’t forget the KUDOS
COMMON COACHING MISTAKES

✓ Taking on the other person’s responsibilities
✓ Too much talking and not enough listening
✓ Empathizing too much
✓ Coaching for the wrong reasons
✓ Setting unrealistic expectations
✓ Underestimating people’s ability to change
✓ Giving up too quickly when results are not immediate or employee resists

KNOW WHEN TO ESCALATE COACHING TO “DISCIPLINE”

✓ A serious violation
✓ More than one violation
✓ CBA requires it as the next performance management step
✓ Not seeing the improvement you expected or required
✓ Additional policy violations or poor performance
✓ Ultimatum given during the last coaching or performance management conversation
✓ HR or upper management directs you to escalate
✓ Past practice of imposing more serious consequences for similar behavior or infractions

KNOW WHEN TO LET GO

You can’t save every employee. A great leader / coach commits to ensuring employees have the tools and resources to be successful, and that includes giving sufficient time and attention to help the employee grow and develop in the position. Unfortunately, some employees do not show the necessary improvement or do not respond to coaching for a variety of reasons, and the time comes to consider transitioning the employee out of the company.
S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting

SPECIFIC goals answer the 6 W questions – who, what, where, when, which and why. When you reach specific milestones, you know you have achieved your goals.

- Who is involved (or needs to be)?
- What do you want to accomplish?
- Where will you complete the goal?
- When do you want to do it?
- *Why are you doing it?
- *Which requirements, obstacles or barriers may get in the way?

MEASURABLE goals are defined by their units of measurements. Being able to quantify a goal helps the goal setter and the goal pursuer evaluate progress. Measurable goals usually answer the How question – how much, how many, how often, how fast, etc. Without a way to measure outcomes, results become too subjective to be meaningful.

ATTAINABLE goals stretch the limit of what a person can achieve. These goals are not impossible but usually provide a challenge and obstacles to overcome. Worthwhile goals are never easy. Be realistic and optimistic when setting goals that appear slightly beyond the employee’s reach but still within the realm of possibility, and beware of the “why bother” mentality when employees believe failure is inevitable.

RELEVANT goals focus on real time priorities and what really matters to the organization. Because what matters most to some may not matter at all to others, uniformity and harmony between individual and corporate goals is critical. Goals, like people, need a clear purpose to be meaningful.

TIME-BOUND goals have beginning and end dates or specific deadlines. The key is to set a deadline that has sufficient room to allow for the formation of better habits or more focused efforts. If deadlines are too tight, people are more likely to give up early rather than contributing their full effort only to fail at the end.
Written WORDS Matter!

✓ Record the date, time and detailed information while being objective, simple and specific - make a record of what you did.

  *Use the 5 Ws: Who, What, When, Where, Why*

✓ Be complete but don’t write a book

✓ Avoid vague language; use FACTS, not conclusions or emotions

  *Use your senses and consider the affects of the employee’s actions?*

✓ Avoid specific threats – e.g., you will be terminated in 30 days

✓ Be consistent, fair and honest

✓ **Record exact quotations**

  *NOT: “She used profanity and left.”*
  
  *NOT: She said, “This is f*@!ing bulls#*%!”*

✓ **Focus on performance, not personality**

✓ Keep comments appropriate

  *He raised retirement as an option saying, “I was planning to retire at age 65”*
  
  *NOT: We talked about how he’s probably getting too old to work.*

✓ Listen with real interest; be open-minded

✓ Record reference to and reissuance of the rule in question and record any ultimatums given

✓ Allow opportunity for employee participation

✓ Stay on track – do not negotiate and do NOT make promises!

✓ Ask the employee to sign or make some other comment on the form

✓ **Avoid the PERILS OF EMAIL** – tone, one-sided conversations, potential for misunderstandings, and some employees’ need for a personal connection.