

Coaching *Towards* Performance



At the beginning of a new [stretch] assignment. Year round and during performance reviews. At the beginning of a new staff/employee relationship.

To improve overall performance and long-term development



Anyone who has direct reports



Use as a guide to coach with enthusiasm and sincerity



“The Heart of Coaching: Using Transformational Coaching to Create a High-performance Culture”

By Thomas G. Crane

Other useful E-tools that compliment this topic:

- Am I ready for coaching?
- Explore your future
- The strengths interview
- Setting expectations



Cautions:

- Follow-up & follow through is key
- Must have on-going commitment
- Avoid close-ended questions



“A manager’s task is simple - to get the job done and grow his staff. Time and cost pressures limit the latter. Coaching is one process which accomplishes both.”

John Whitmore

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How to create a coaching atmosphere

Ask yourself... *Am I ready to coach? Do I have the...*

- Ability to listen to others?
- Awareness of what is happening around me?
- Control to withhold judgment?
- Ability to ask open-ended questions?
- Ability to give and receive feedback?
- Interest in helping others grow?



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How to coach

1. Getting started

- a. Schedule time for one on one meeting
- b. Review the person's current assignments (what he/she is currently working on)
- c. Agree which project/area to focus on

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

"As your manager, I want to make sure I help you be as successful as you can be. How about if we find a time to sit down to discuss your current projects to see how I can best be of help to you."

"Which projects are you currently working on?"

"Which project would it be most helpful to discuss?"

2. Understand your employee's project:

- Review the project/assignment
- Discuss the end product/goal
- Review timeline and progress

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

"If this project was successful, what would the end product look like?"

"What is your goal?"

"What steps do you see necessary to meet your goal?"

"When is this due?"

"What action have you taken so far?"

"What were the effects of that action?"

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3. Understand potential barriers & the business context:

- Understand the current pressures that may be at work on this project (tight timeline, limited resources, lack of skill to complete project, etc.)
- Understand the current business reality

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

“What are the major constraints to moving forward?”

“What barriers do you see?”

“What obstacles might you meet?”

“Who is affected by the outcome?”

“How do others see the issue?”

“Who has a stake in the outcome (within and outside this department)?”

“Who/what may affect your decision making?” (Understanding the political forces)

4. Identify options

- Explore potential options

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

“Let’s list the options you see at this point”

“What might the pros and cons be of (fill in the blank) approach?”

“What solutions have you attempted in the past?”

“If this was someone else’s project, what would you recommend they do?”

“What can you do differently?”

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“What should you start doing/ stop doing/ continue doing?”

“What new assignments, skills, or competencies are needed?”

“What IF: budget is not a factor, you had more staff, you could do anything you wanted?”

“How would you solve this?”

5. Encourage action

- Empower to take action

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

“What are you willing to do?”

“What is the benefit to you? To your team? To others?”

“What resources do you have or need?”

“What input do you want from me?”

“How can I best be of help as you are taking action on this?”

6. Taking action

- Examine commitment

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

“What will you do?”

“When will you do it?”

“Would it be helpful if we walked through your plan?”

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“How will you do it?”

“How can you ensure success?”

7. Offer explicit support

- Follow-up demonstrates your investment in their success
- Prepare for the next coaching session

Sample questions - what it may sound like:

“How/When will you know you are making progress?”

“What support do you need?”

“Who, within your team/peers etc. can you utilize for support, sounding board, confidant?”

“What can I do to help?”

“What resources will you need from me in order to be successful?”

“What have you learned from today's session?”

“When would it be helpful for us to meet again?”

“What would you like to review in our next coaching session?”



- Be clear on/ inquire about what the person found helpful
- Schedule your next follow up meeting
- Practice, Practice, Practice - and don't forget to ask for feedback!