



EVERYDAY COACHING FOR RESULTS EVERY DAY

Coaching staff is one of a manager's most important tasks—the best way to higher performance and better results. All too often, however, the amount of actual coaching falls short of the goal because it's seen as involving too much extra work to assess someone's coaching needs, discuss the issues, agree on formal plans, monitor progress, hold more meetings and re-evaluations, and so on in a process that can take weeks or months to achieve anything..

It doesn't have to be that way. With a little planning you can easily incorporate good coaching into your daily management routines, and start seeing results right away.

EMBEDDED COACHING

The key to everyday coaching is not to consider coaching a special tool to be used for special circumstances, but to make it part of your regular interactions with all your staff. Remember that everyone has performance strengths and weaknesses.

- **Coach your people whenever you get the chance**, in addition to scheduled training.
- Try **"instant" coaching immediately after someone has performed a task** to directly address the strengths and weaknesses of their performance. For instance, if someone has been on a sales call, speak with them right after it's over. Ask for their reactions to it, if they accomplished their objectives,

what they think went well, what problems they had, what they would do differently.

- Even if an activity went badly, **start with a sincere compliment**—tell them everything they did well, even small things. Did they establish rapport? Keep their composure with an angry client?
- Try to **limit your recommendations to one or two**, so they don't feel overwhelmed, and keep your language constructive. Make sure to explain why making the changes you recommend will benefit them. Ask them for their own thoughts too.
- **Give continuous feedback** as part of routine conversation with staff.. Whenever you feel someone is doing something well, say so. When their performance is not up to expectations, remind them what the expectations are, give them a chance to talk about any problems they are having, and offer practical suggestions.

MODEL YOUR ADVICE

- **Demonstrate how to put your ideas into practice**, either in a real situation or in a role-playing session.
- **Consider modeling suggested techniques at a meeting** so the entire team benefits. This is particularly helpful for interactive skills (e.g. sales calls, interviews, customer relations, etc.).

- In role play, first explain the technique you will demonstrate. Base your role play on a recent experience of the person you are role-playing with. After it's over, debrief to discuss it.

KEEP ON COACHING

- **People can always learn new skills and polish existing ones.** Schedule time for training at least once a month. Let inexperienced staff learn new skills by practicing in a safe role-play environment. Monitor the experienced ones to make sure they have the new knowledge to stay out front.
- **Keep people motivated to learn** by always reinforcing and praising what's right before you correct what's wrong.
- **Be aware that you are a role model**—keep your own performance polished. Make sure you are doing yours.
- **Regularly conduct a self-assessment.** Ask: what did I do today to help my people? What did I do today to improve their performance? What did I do today to lead my people by example?

