

Coaching and Developing Employees

Coaching is a proactive dialogue between you and your team members intended to foster high performance and long-term development. Coaching can be described as the practice of “asking questions that help people discover the answers that are right for them.” Asking questions instead of offering solutions pushes your employees to develop critical thinking skills and the confidence to act on their own. It also puts the onus on them to solve problems and own the results. Ultimately, your aim is to help employees become more adaptive and self-sufficient.

Coaching requires time, effort, and an emotional openness from both participants; it’s a true partnership. When you and your employee approach this relationship with enthusiasm and mutual respect, it’s one of the powerful strategies you have for developing talent.

GROW Model for Coaching

GOAL: What do you want to achieve? What is the bigger picture?

Reality: Where are you now? What qualities/resources do you have? What is your current situation?

Options: What options do you have? What obstacles could there be?

Will/Way Forward: Which choices will you make? What will you do as next step?

How To Hold A Coaching Session

Step 1: Prepare before the meeting. Identify specific performance issues you’d like to address or skill gaps you’d like to fill.

Step 2: Begin by inviting your employees to take the lead. Initiate by asking “What do you want to achieve during these sessions?”

Step 3: Build a shared understanding of the issues. Use active listening techniques and ask open-ended questions.

Step 4: Reframe the issue. Once your employee has laid out their point of view, it’s time to start working on solutions and next steps together. Instead of offering advice (“Try X. Here’s how I do it . . .”), help them think more critically about the assumptions and choices that are already driving their behavior.

Step 5: Close with an action plan. End with a clear action plan for your employees, something that will help them make meaningful progress and hold them accountable going forward. Ask them to articulate their main takeaways orally or write up their to-do list in an email after the session.

Step 6: Follow up. After the session ends, check up on your direct reports to make sure that they continue to improve. Schedule more coaching sessions, if they’re needed.