

Coaching Guide

Coaching Process

Coaching is the process of observing a person doing something then providing feedback on how closely the execution matches the prescribed way to achieve the desired outcomes. This includes providing feedback on areas that were done well, as well as, feedback in areas that need improvement. Coaching also means providing guidance on the correct methods of execution.

The Triad of Performance

Before coaching, there are three questions that must be answered:

- Does the person know what to do? If not, do work planning.
- Does the person know how to do it? If not, train.
- Does the person do it at the targeted level of competence? If not, coach.

Step by step

Coaching that works best focuses in specific areas and follows a basic stepped process or set of guides. Be specific.

1. **Describe the behavior**, belief, attitude, etc. **to be changed.**
2. **Describe** in detail **the desired behavior**, etc. including frequency, time frame, proficiency levels, and other relevant information.
3. **Establish or confirm +/- consequences.** Ask, "What are the benefits you get for doing _____ at this _____ level of proficiency?" and, "What happens if you don't?" Fear motivation is short lived and when over used loses its power.
4. Empower and get commitment for the change by **asking the person for their input about what needs to be done**, how it could be done, then provide guidance, supervised practice, feedback, guidance, practice, and more feedback. The more the solution is generated by the person with the challenge, the more they will be motivated to make the solution ideas work. Repeat as often as necessary to achieve desired results.

Providing Feedback

Obviously, this is a critical skill set needed by the coach. Picking up on the finer subtleties of the skill being coached and delivering feedback to the person must be done in a way that it will be accepted. Constructive criticism hurts. It stings. Particularly when rapport is shallow and credibility is weak.

Everyone has heard the saying; "You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." It has some bearing on coaching as well. It is often easiest to spot the things that are being done wrong, and those will need to be addressed in a positive way. Unfortunately, if that is where the focus always is, the person can begin to view coaching as a negative and sometimes embarrassing experience – something to be dreaded and avoided if at all possible.

So the question becomes, how do we give attention to the areas that need to be improved while keeping the focus on the positive? One option is called the Sandwich Technique.

Sandwich Technique

This technique involves three steps:

1. Point out what they did well.
2. Discuss a specific area that could be improved, and how to improve it.
3. Point out specific things they did well.

Notice that nothing they did wrong was addressed as being done wrong. Rather it was addressed as an area to be improved using what's right about the current behavior as the starting point. Remember that if a person knows what to do and has been trained to do it, then the starting point is some approximation of doing it at the targeted level of excellence.

There are those occasions where it is challenging to find many things the person did well. Keep in mind though, everything is relative. So what they did well can be compared to other times they have done it.

The fact that the effort was made can be commented on, the

1. _____ (name) way to go. You made the effort...
2. ... And now we can see a couple areas to work on ...
3. ... And you did an excellent job pushing through the entire experience.

Example: So, let's start by looking at _____. When you said your opening remarks, you really came out strong and right on target (positive), then it seemed to need more energy for the finish (positive). Tell me how you see your energy levels playing a role? What might be some ways to strengthen that toward the end? (Positive).

Discuss, practice, more positive feedback, and then conclude with a positive statement to summarize this specific coaching event. Remember that you might have several coaching events within a single coaching session.