**Coaching**

Coaching is a key component of the manager’s toolkit. The ability to get the most out of others is a sure way to achieve great results. Coaching is not something to be confined to reviews or performance discussions, but as great managers we should constantly be looking for coaching opportunities.

This module will help you to-

• Structure your coaching

• Identify steps to create a coaching culture

• Create a range of useful coaching questions

**Structure**

An effective coaching conversation is helped by a structure. We do not need to be slaves to the structure but it can provide a useful guide and keep conversations on track. G.R.O.W is perhaps the best known and certainly one of the easiest to remember.

**Goal-** This phase explores what the coachee would like to achieve and set guidelines for the discussion.

**Reality-** This phase examines the current situation with performance, results and feelings discussed.

**Options –** This phase is to agree the next steps. How will the performance be reviewed, how can the coach support etc.

**Way forward-** This phase is to agree the next steps. How will the performance be reviewed, how can the coach support etc.

**Push & Pull**

One of the biggest temptations in coaching is to share our expertise. This limits the opportunity and can inhibit the coachee. A coach who pushes their ideas and recommendations will not achieve the same level of commitment as a coach who pulls ideas and suggestions from the coachee.

**Questions**

A great coach will stimulate thinking in their coachee and one of the most effective ways of achieving this is through great questioning. Here are three useful types of questions to spark ideas.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Chunk up** | These are great to make a coachee consider the bigger picture. They will understand the broader impact. E.g. - How does that help the team? |
| **Chunk down** | These help to pull focus to the details and avoid generalisation. E.g.-What exactly will you do differently? |
| **Solutions focus** | These focus on how we can fix the problem and have a positive flavour. E.g.-What is the first thing you can do to improve this? |

Below is a list of useful questions for the various stages of Grow.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Goal** | **Reality** |
| What do you wish to discussWhat is it you would like to achieve?How will you measure your success?How soon do you want to achieve this?How could you break that goal down into smaller chunks? | What are you currently doing?What have you tried up to now?What do you do well?What could you do better?What is stopping you achieving this?Who do you know who dies this successfully?What have you learnt from that?And what else..? |
| **Options** | **Way Forward** |
| What could help you achieve this?If time or money was not a factor what could you do?If you do nothing what will happen?Who could offer you advice?How could you do what they do?What could be the first thing you do to achieve this?..And then what?What else?Which options do you think will be most effective? | How will this help you in your job?Where are you going to start?What barriers are there?How will you overcome these?How will it feel when you have achieved this?How can I support you?What is your commitment from 1-10? |

**Focus on the solution**

We are conditioned to focus on the negative, and often this limits free thinking and can create a very negative mindset that is unlikely to create a solution. Below we compare solution focussed questions, with problem focussed questions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Problem focus** | **Solutions focus** |
| How has it got this bad? | How soon do you think we can see an improvement?  |
| Why have we never managed to fix this?  | What is the first step we can take to sorting this? |
| How does this problem make you feel? | How will you feel when this is sorted? |

**G.I.G.O**

Of course we agree that most of the talking should come from the coachee. This shows their commitment and generates deeper thinking, but there are occasions when it is appropriate for coaches to interject. We must always do this with tact and permission.

G.I.G.O -Give information Give Opinion

These are fine....

”Would you mind if I made an observation?”

“Can I make a suggestion?”

 These are too prescriptive!

“What you need to do is...”

“What I always did was...”

**A.B.C = Always be coaching.**

It will help to create a culture of coaching if you look out for opportunities to coach. This spontaneous coaching is very relevant and will get immediate results. As you observe a member of your team doing something be comfortable to mention it and use A.I.D to explore it...

**Action**

Kev, how did you respond to that customer’s complaint?

**Impact**

What impact do you think that had?

**Development**

What would you do differently next time?

**Key Learnings**

• Be structured in your approach, but open minded

• Hold your coachee in positive regard and expect them to succeed

• Remember that answers need to come from the coachee

• Be attentive to your coachees and listen not just to what they’re saying, but how they are saying it to check engagement

• Be imaginative in your questioning

• Look out for the quick interventions that could make a big difference

• Work hard to get your coachee’s commitment.

This has kindly been supplied by Rob Wilkinson

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