



The Leader/Coach: 6 Steps to Begin

Executives face enormous pressure to perform, compete in the marketplace and endlessly innovate. Constrained by time, overwhelmed by competing priorities and challenged by relationships, executives need every employee, team member and associate to help drive results.

Research shows that executives hunger for more developmental relationships such as learning from bosses, and superiors, leadership communities and executive coaches.

Employees aren't much different. They want to learn, grow and become more valuable in their current roles and grow into greater roles.

Coaching Skills give executives the ability to innovate. Meeting the needs of employees and improving the organization. Coaching sets the stage for a higher contribution. It is the fastest, most effective way to grow future leaders, reduce absenteeism and increase productivity.

Athletes are intimately familiar with coaching. They know that coaches can see what they can't. A coach will challenge you to improve while offering support—coaches have your back.

Leaders who use coaching skills are known to be more effective overall. They unleash potential, improve morale and increase engagement—as high as 40 percent. Coaching also fosters increased independence in your associates, freeing you up to spend more time thinking big and strategizing.

Here are some immediate reasons to begin coaching.

Benefits of coaching employees:

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| • Reduce Workplace Litigation | Increase Professionalism |
| • Reduce Absenteeism | Increase Productivity |
| • Reduce Performance Issues | Increase Retention |
| • Reduce Costly Training | Increase Motivation |
| • Reduce Complaints | Increase Success |

Command-control leadership is not what coaching is about. We cannot command performance. We pay employees for their work but they volunteer their hearts, their minds, their creativity and their innovative ideas.

Success in the hypercompetitive marketplace is directly linked to idea generation and innovation. People use their talent to generate ideas and create innovation and the leader/coach creates the environment for team members, associates and employees to bring their talents to work.

One of the biggest secrets of competitive advantage is that once you create a workforce of “ambassadors” it is very difficult for your competitors to duplicate that asset.

A “culture of coaching” takes employment to the next level by cultivating a work force of “brand ambassadors.” Ambassador employees create evangelical customers.

Evangelical customers go out of their way to use your product or service. Experience and satisfaction outweigh price. Think of Apple products. Even though the iPhone is the most expensive smartphone, Apple has the number 1 spot in market share.

Below are steps on how to begin:

1. Coaching is not simply a “pep talk.” Coaching is a set of skills meant to get beyond inefficient performance evaluations and counter productive conversations.

Develop the skills that ensure you are efficient and effective. Be a model of positive influence.

2. Listen: The leader/coach must have a grasp on what motivates the employee. Use conversations to align desires and expectations on all ends and craft a way forward. That’s what coaching does it moves you forward.

3. Agreement on direction. Leader and employee must have a clear idea of accomplishment desired, direction to take and the outcome you both want. Where you are must be assessed and where you want to go must be attainable.

4. Agreement on success indicators: Mutual understanding on what indicates success as the coaching relationship unfolds is critically important. For example, a common request the leader/coach hears is to prepare one for higher responsibility but the agreement on how one demonstrates readiness for higher responsibility is a better indicator. So

we would agree on indicators such as: professionalism demonstrated during meetings, tact and diplomacy demonstrated during a potentially conflicting engagement.

5. Agree on value: The leader and employee must mutually agree on the value of the coaching relationship. Value is the impact of the results on the individual and the organization. Value can be (quantitative) numbers—productivity increases or qualitative such as increased accountability.

6. Agree on improvement: The leader and employee must mutually agree on what discernable improvement looks like. These are changes that both the leader/coach and employee agree on at the start and agree that they are sufficiently present during milestones of the coaching relationship.

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