

Coaching: A Valuable Developmental Tool

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Coaching is often associated with correcting behavior, but it can be much more. Coaching can help correct performance, improve skills, develop new skills, and reinforce and promote positive behaviors. In short, it can help you achieve the strongest results possible from your employees!

Some Coaching Skills:

- Listening, questioning, observing, building rapport, offering constructive feedback, providing supportive encouragement, recognizing improvement, motivating, praising, and holding others accountable.

Some Tips:

- Use coaching meetings to listen, ask questions, work collaboratively, and empower the employee, rather than stating what's wrong and instructing the employee on how a task should be done.
- Give coaching feedback as close to the behavior as possible; the more immediate the feedback, the more effective it is. If an employee loses a sense of connection to the event, the coaching loses its power.
- Motivate by reinforcing positive behavior! Acknowledge improvement, commend extra effort, and praise a job well-done.
- Whether the feedback is constructive or positive, it should be clear and specific to insure the employee understands the reason(s) for the discussion or commendation.
- Coaching for improvement should always be done privately. Coaching for praise can be effective in public as well as private settings. Avoid allegations of favoritism by not reserving public praise for select employees only.
- Once coaching has been conducted, follow up with the employee after an agreed upon interval. At that time, give positive feedback based on changes the employee has made, or deliver further assistance to continue the employee's development.
- Coach consistently and document it when utilized. Approach coaching the same way with high potential employees as well as those facing challenges. Remember, you will rely on this documentation at performance appraisal time, and potentially in other situations.

If you would like to discuss how to coach or coaching that you are considering, please do not hesitate to contact the Labor and Faculty/Employee Relations group:

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