CREATING COACHING CONVERSATIONS

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UC DAVIS HR SYMPOSIUM
Welcome and Introductions

- Why create coaching conversations?!
- Introductions in pairs
  - Name
  - Department
  - Role
Agenda

- Setting the Context for a “Coach Approach” and Coaching Conversations
- Activity: “My Coaching Story”
- What Coaching IS and IS NOT
- Self-Assessment: Building Trusted Relationships
- Enhancing “Coachability” for Coaching Conversations
- Ways to Offer Coaching
- Coaching Conversations and Powerful Questions
- Activity: Coaching Conversation Practice
- Making Coaching Conversations a Habit
“ONE OF THE REASONS MANAGERS DON’T COACH MORE OFTEN THAN THEY DO IS THAT THEY DON’T KNOW HOW TO START.”

– Michael Bungay Stanier, author, The Coaching Habit
Setting the Context for a Coach Approach and Coaching Conversations

- Research – Corporate Executive Board (CEB), HCI
- UC Performance Management Model
- UC Davis Performance Management Model
- International Coach Federation (ICF) Core Competencies
Corporate Executive Board (CEB) Research

L&D must actively engage managers, direct reports, and peers in coaching to support employee performance in the new work environment.

COACHING IMPERATIVES FOR L&D IN THE NEW WORK ENVIRONMENT

**L&D Imperative 1: Support Managers**

- Key Action Steps
  1. Enable managers to coach employees on soft skills, not just job tasks.
  2. Assist managers in connecting employees to additional sources of support.
  3. Help managers deliver coaching content that aligns with employees’ daily work.

**L&D Imperative 2: Facilitate Peer Connections**

- Key Action Steps
  1. Encourage learners to take more active ownership of peer coaching meetings.
  2. Enable employees to learn from the success of their peers.
  3. Provide peers with simple tools to facilitate impromptu coaching interactions.

**L&D Imperative 3: Engage Direct Reports**

- Key Action Steps
  2. Embed formal, regular opportunities for upward coaching in business processes.

Source: CEB analysis.
Corporate Executive Board (CEB) Research

**ENABLE MANAGERS TO COACH EMPLOYEES ON SOFT SKILLS, NOT JUST JOB TASKS**

**Key Competencies for New Work Environment**

1. Teamwork
2. Organizational Awareness
3. Influence
4. Managing Others
5. Creativity
6. Systems Thinking
7. Collaboration
8. Adaptability
9. Cross-Functional Expertise
10. Networking Ability

**Manager Checklist for Relevant Competencies**

- Clearly communicate the necessity of soft skills in the new work environment to employees.
- Emphasize the development of soft skills in employees’ development plans.
- Focus on not just the experiences needed to develop skills but also the coworkers that can provide support and coaching to employees.
- Explicitly note opportunities for employees to practice soft skills while completing daily job tasks.
- During performance discussions, devote time to employee improvement on soft skills in addition to project outcomes.

**Tips for Coaching Remote Workers**

- Supplement written correspondence with regular development check-ins via phone or video conferencing to build rapport with employees.
- Seek employee input about his or her skill gaps to encourage employee ownership of development.
- Involve qualified peers at the direct report’s site to offer support and facilitate more hands-on development initiatives.
- Regularly solicit input from the employee on development progress to ensure current efforts are worthwhile.
What skills are needed to be an effective coach?

Although most use coaching for performance management, performance appraisal is ranked lowest in importance as a skill needed to be an effective coach.

Table 7. How important are each of the following skills or competencies for those delivering coaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills or competencies</th>
<th>Percentage Rated “Very Important” “or “Important”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening for understanding</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing trust</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing feedback</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct communication</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics and integrity</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating self-awareness</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and goal setting</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining relationships</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing progress and accountability</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking powerful questions</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing actions for results</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reframing ideas/concepts</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisal</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HR (74%), L&D (48%) and senior executives (48%) are responsible for identifying and selecting coach practitioners.*

*Multiple response question
University of California Performance Management Model
UC Davis Performance Management Model
International Coach Federation Core Competencies

A. Setting the Foundation
   1. Meeting Ethical Guidelines and Professional Standards
   2. Establishing the Coaching Agreement

B. Co-creating the Relationship
   3. Establishing Trust and Intimacy with the Client
   4. Coaching Presence
International Coach Federation Core Competencies

C. Communicating Effectively
   5. Active Listening
   6. Powerful Questioning
   7. Direct Communication

D. Facilitating Learning and Results
   8. Creating Awareness
   9. Designing Actions
  10. Planning and Goal Setting
  11. Managing Progress and Accountability
Activity: “My Coaching Story”

Independently: Self-reflection and Writing

• What is your experience giving and receiving coaching?
• What is the best coaching you have ever received or observed? What made it successful?
• When you want to ask for coaching, who do you go to and why (focus on characteristics, not names)?

In Pairs:

• Share your “coaching story.” What were characteristics of the effective coaches in your stories?
How are coaching, counseling, and advising different?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching</th>
<th>Advising</th>
<th>Counseling (not therapy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To help</td>
<td>To help</td>
<td>To help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on goals</td>
<td>May be welcome</td>
<td>May not be welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performer leads</td>
<td>Advice-giver leads</td>
<td>Focus on expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td>Extrinsic or intrinsic – depends</td>
<td>Counselor leads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivation</td>
<td>“Here’s how I handle this situation...”</td>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What are you</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I’d like to talk with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>struggling with?</td>
<td></td>
<td>you about...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s your goal?”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To help</td>
<td>To help develop</td>
<td>To help develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on goals</td>
<td>Should be welcome</td>
<td>May be welcomed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performer leads</td>
<td>Focus on the expert</td>
<td>Focus on job needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>“Sage one” leads</td>
<td>Trainer leads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What are you struggling with?</td>
<td>Extrinsic or intrinsic</td>
<td>Extrinsic or intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s your goal?”</td>
<td>“Here’s an example of how I have done</td>
<td>“Today you will learn how to give</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this...”</td>
<td>feedback.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Many types of conversations aim at helping the performer. Coaching is the most performer-focused.
International Coach Federation (ICF) Definition of Coaching

ICF defines coaching as:

• “Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.”
Self-Assessment: Building Trusted Relationships

Independent Activity

- Take the Trust-Building Behaviors Self-Assessment

- Consider how often you exhibit these behaviors. Score yourself on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always).

- What do your scores tell you?
“THE SINGLE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH COMMUNICATION IS THE ILLUSION THAT IT HAS TAKEN PLACE.”

– George Bernard Shaw
Enhancing “Coachability” for Coaching Conversations

1. Plan a good setting
   • Time, place, environment

2. Appeal to a need
   • Acknowledge performer, show empathy, don’t fix

3. Say it so they hear it
   • Match words and phrases, be direct

4. Make things simpler
   • Express belief that change is possible; Ask, “What would help?”
Ways to Offer Coaching

- Be direct and caring
- Let the performer pull the conversation forward
- Don’t worry if your delivery is not perfect; your intent will shine through
“ANSWERS ARE CLOSED ROOMS; AND QUESTIONS ARE OPEN DOORS THAT INVITE US IN.”

– Nancy Willard
Coaching Conversations

Qualities of a Powerful Question

• Stirs creative thinking
• Shifts energy away from a problem-focus to a possibility-focus
• Creates a climate of exploration
• Reveals underlying assumptions
• Invites reflection on a deeper level
Coaching Questions

Powerful Questioning – Do

- Pay attention
- Ask questions that reflect active listening
- Listen deeply (perhaps intuitively)
- Ask open-ended questions that create greater clarity (e.g., “What would the ideal outcome look like?” “How do you want to start?”) rather than closed-ended questions that require “yes,” “no,” or a number
Coaching Questions

Powerful Questioning – Don’t

• Don’t layer questions (follow a question with more questions)
• Don’t answer for the person
• Don’t ask “why” questions; ask questions that move people toward what they desire, not questions that ask them to justify what they’ve already done
• Don’t judge
Coaching Conversation Model

- Topic
- Outcome
- Check-in
- Wrap-up
Coaching Questions

Starting the coaching conversation (Topic) – sample questions

• What would you like to talk about?
• What can I help you with today?
• What’s on your mind?
• What’s the latest update?
• Where are you right now?
• What are your burning questions about this idea?
• How did it go when you tried it?
Coaching Questions

Outcome/Goal – sample questions
- Where do you want to head with the plan/idea/goal?
- What do you want?
- What would success look like?
- What is your desired outcome/goal?
- What would you gain?
- How will you know you have reached it?
- What would it look like?
- What if you did know?
Coaching Questions

Check-In – sample questions

• Where do things stand?
• What is holding you back?
• How are we doing?
• How is this working?
• Where would you like to go?
• What do you want to explore further?
Coaching Questions

Wrap-up/Summary – sample questions

- What action will you take? And after that?
- What is your conclusion?
- How would you summarize your effort so far?
- What are you telling yourself?
**Activity: Coaching Conversation Practice – Asking Powerful Questions**

**In Pairs**

- Coach - Practice asking powerful questions
- Performer – Pick a meaningful topic, perhaps related to your professional development
- Both - Keep track of great questions

**Process**

- Three rounds, 7 minutes as performer or coach, then 3 minutes of discussion of themes, and what it felt like. Switch performer or coach roles. Repeat, 7 minute round and 3 minutes of discussion. Total exercise is 20 minutes.
Difficult Coaching Conversations

Sample questions

• What’s the next step?
• What’s the first action for this step? When?
• What is stopping you?
• What suggestions do you have for making X work?
• What requests could you make to move things forward?
• What conversations could you have? With whom?
• If the same thing came up again, what would you do?
Make Coaching Conversations a Habit with Powerful Questions

1. What’s on your mind?
2. And what else?
3. What’s the real challenge here for you?
4. What do you want?
5. How can I help?
6. If you’re saying YES to this, what are you saying NO to?
7. What was most useful for you?

(based on The Coaching Habit by Michael Bungay Stanier)
“TRUE LEADERSHIP OCCURS WHEN YOU REALIZE ‘POWER’ COMES FROM ENLIVENING THE POSSIBILITY IN OTHERS.”

– Benjamin Zander, author of The Art of Possibility