



What is Coaching?

The following pages are taken from our Introduction To Coaching course. Contact us if you would like to introduce coaching into your organisation.

The Manager's Dilemma

Do you recognise this?

You have too much to do – meetings, conversations, e-mail, etc. You really do not have the time to train others up, so you find it difficult to delegate as much as you would like. So you have too much to do and so on. It's a vicious cycle that can leave you stressed and operating at a level lower than you ought to be.

How do you break this cycle?

The solution has to lie in maximising the potential and ability of your people; but if you are too busy, how do you find the time to do this?

Coaching is a management behaviour and attitude that allows you to break this cycle and develop your people on the job. It is rooted in practical reality and although it has a strong theoretical basis, involves almost no theory in day-to-day use. We call it an attitude because to use coaching effectively, you may have to reconsider your approach to other people and their skills, strengths, ideas and ability.

The benefits of coaching

More time for yourself. Expert coaches find that investing 10 minutes with someone now saves them an hour next week, and the week after, and so on.

Improved interpersonal skills. Managers who coach find they have acquired a useful life skill that they can use anywhere.

Stronger reputation. As you become a better coach people will seek you out and want to work with you.

Helps you to know yourself. Coaching acts by raising awareness and this can help your own personal development.

Can be done in small doses. Although we recommend setting time aside for coaching others, you'll find that even five minutes will yield results.

Improved self-esteem. People perform better when they feel good about themselves. Being coached well is a very positive experience.

What is coaching – definitions and descriptions

Coaching is about:

- ***Unlocking a person's potential to improve their own performance***

Note the emphasis on helping people to take responsibility for their own performance.

- ***Using a style of communication based on asking not telling***

Being an expert coach means being skilled at using effective questions.

- ***Helping a person to learn rather than teaching***

Many of our team members are only using a fraction of their potential. Coaching is a way of raising their awareness of hidden strengths, abilities and ideas.

- ***Creating relationships of partnership, equality and trust***

Great coaches create workplaces that are great places to work.

The manager who becomes an expert coach is someone who operates at the opposite end from command and control. Coaching is based on the principle that you can never really teach a person something; they must learn it for themselves. By using effective questions, giving positive feedback and choosing the appropriate communication style a manager can create a team who are more aware of how they do things and willing to take responsibility for their own performance.

Expert coaches believe that...

- People have far more potential than they use or are aware of.
- People already have everything they need to create solutions.
- People are always doing their best based on what they know.
- Every person is unique.
- People should be seen in terms of their potential, not their current behaviour.
- Autocratic management no longer works.
- You have to pull learning from people not push it at them.
- The best way to get promoted is to grow your people.
- A blend of approaches is needed – hands on or hands off as appropriate.
- Asking a well-placed question can get better results than just telling someone.
- 10 minutes invested now will save time in the future.
- Coaching is a lot more fun than other approaches.