



How to Properly Coach Your Team to Success

by Brad Worthley

Most leaders believe they know how to coach their team members, however, many of those people are doing it incorrectly. Coaching is a true process and much more complex than people believe. Do not get the word “coaching” confused with athletic coaches, because the process could not be more different. When it comes to coaching team members in your casino, the word “coach” refers to the old English version (such as a horse and buggy type coach), meaning transporting people from where they are, to where they need to be in the fastest way possible.

Coaching vs. Training: Training is a one-time event that tells people what to do (monologue). Coaching is continuous and consistent, and we ask people questions so they self-discover what they need to do and how they are going to execute it (dialogue). Coaching is a journey and not a destination – it never ends.

Coaching vs. Counseling: Counseling is about going into people’s past to help them resolve issues that impede upon their present life (a person in need of emotional healing). Coaching has very little to do with the past and focuses primarily on the future (helping emotionally healthy people perform at a higher level). Coaching helps people set future goals and specific plans on how to achieve them.

What Coaching Is: It is an ongoing partnership that accelerates learning, performance, and progress, in a person’s personal or professional life. It is also an opportunity to deepen learning by facilitating clarity and self-discovery, then most importantly, turning it into action.

What Coaching is Not: A coach will not provide you with all of the right answers; instead, they will ask all of the right questions in order for you to discover the answers yourself. A coach will not solve your problems for you; instead, they will provide you with the tools or resources to help you find your own solutions. People who discover their own answers or solve their own problems are far more likely to follow through with the action.

Defining the Coaching Process: Coaching is a collaborative process that amplifies and accelerates self-discovery; promotes clarity, creativity and choice. It can also help people achieve and often exceed their goals more quickly and efficiently than they would without the partnership of coaching. The unique part of the process is the agenda normally comes from the person being coached and not the coach. Coaching is the methodology for shifting from a culture of “power over” people, to one in which “power within” people is unleashed. The coaching process is like walking through a park with a person, and when you come to a fork in the path, you ask the person you are coaching enough questions to help them determine which direction is best for them. Coaching is concerned with facilitation and not necessarily giving advice.

The Truth: A coach’s duty is the truth, no matter how painful or embarrassing. It is a disservice to mask a person’s challenges or struggles. The truth is your responsibility; how they accept it is theirs (assuming it’s delivered properly).

Confidentiality: A coach’s duty is also complete confidentiality with each person they coach. You would rarely share anything discussed in a coaching call or conversation with others unless the person gives you permission to do so (or if there is an HR issue). Coaching is a sacred place where people should be able to share what they have done (or not done) without worrying about the fear of retribution or retaliation. If this trust is broken, the coaching process could be damaged, because the person may not feel they can communicate openly with you again.

Three Primary Coaching Steps for a Typical 15 Minute Coaching Session

STEP 1: Five minutes discussing the previous period’s plan (sample questions below)

- What happened since our last session?
- What worked?
- What didn’t work?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What did you learn about yourself this week?

STEP 2: Ten minutes discussing the coming period’s plan (sample questions below)

- What is your goal for the next week?
- What will be your challenges?
- What obstacles might be standing in your way?
- When will you have it done?
- How will I know you have done it?
- Is there anything you need from me?

STEP 3: Confirmation

- Repeat their plan back to them
- Ask for confirmation: Is that accurate?
- Acknowledge them for their achievements (or for their successes or strategic thinking)

Coaching can be done spontaneously and can sometimes take as little as a couple of minutes, however, for best results, it is recommended you schedule weekly sessions with each person on your team (assuming you have less than 10 people on your team). ♣

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