

# The Best Principles of Coaching

Paul Newton



PAUL NEWTON

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# THE BEST PRINCIPLES OF COACHING

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1<sup>st</sup> edition

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# PREFACE

This eBook will give you an understanding of coaching principles, as well as the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that you will need to run a successful coaching session. It discusses the use of external coaches and the issues that confront managers who act as coaches to their own team.

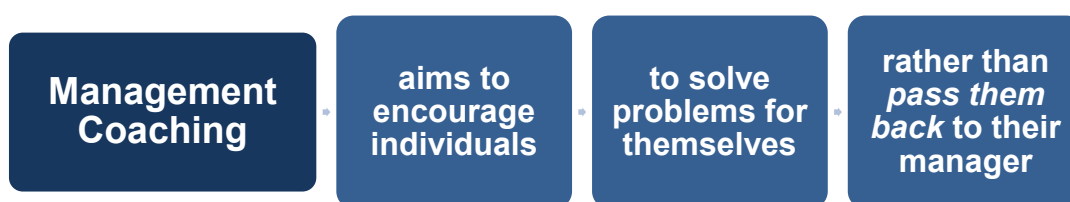
You will learn:

- What coaching can achieve for your team
- The differences between coaching, mentoring, and counseling
- To establish the right mindset for effective coaching
- The advantages and disadvantages of internal, external, formal, and informal coaching
- The key principles of successful coaching

# INTRODUCTION

Coaching can be used in many areas of life; it includes life coaching, sports coaching, health coaching, financial coaching, and career coaching. This eBook is concerned with how the principles of coaching are used in management.

From a management perspective, coaching can be approached as either a discrete activity or as a management style. In other words, it can be done in designated ‘coaching sessions,’ which the manager and the team member recognize as such, or it can be integrated into the day-to-day management of a team or department.



In either case, the objective is to encourage people to solve problems for themselves rather than referring them back up to their manager. In fact, managers who coach tend to place a lot of emphasis on developing the people reporting to them, and on creating an environment where people can perform as independently as possible.

So how do you define coaching? There is no universally accepted definition of coaching, but if you look at the definition used by the Association for Coaching® (AC) it states that coaching is:

*‘A collaborative, solution focused, result-orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of work performance, life experience, self-directed learning and person growth of the coachee’ (Association for Coaching 2005).*

This statement supports the AC’s main purpose of wanting ‘to inspire and champion coaching excellence’ in individuals and organizations. For a more concise definition you can look at those supplied by Sir John Whitmore, a well-known exponent of business coaching, and Myles Downey, the author of *Effective Coaching: Lessons from the Coach’s Coach*. For them, coaching is:

*‘Unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them’ (Whitmore 2002).*

*‘The art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another’ (Downey 2003).*

The sentiments of these two definitions form the foundations of why senior management within organizations willingly spend time and money on maximizing the contribution and productivity of their employees.

Eric Parsloe, author of *The Manager as Coach and Mentor* and founder of The OCM (Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring), takes the definition of coaching further by describing the qualities of a successful coach:

*‘[Coaching is a] process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be a successful a Coach requires a knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place’ (Parsloe 1999)*

A common theme for all these definitions is their focus on the individual and how improving their skills and knowledge helps them to perform more efficiently. This aspect of ‘improving skills’ is key to coaching because the learning of a new skill has a specific goal and occurs over a certain time period.

The end results of coaching benefit organizations because they improve the speed of decision-making, free up management time for higher-level activities, and increase job satisfaction among team members. Whilst all of these things are obviously desirable, coaching has associated costs that must be justified.



For commercial organizations, the question is whether that cost can be justified in terms of improved profitability. In the case of non-profit organizations, the question is whether the cost can be justified in terms of improved service, or whether the time and effort be better spent elsewhere.

The answer to these questions will depend on many things, but the fact is that commercial organizations are moving from an era in which value lay in plant and machinery into one where it is increasingly found in ideas, imagination, knowledge, and customer satisfaction.

Similarly, many non-profit organizations can no longer take their funding for granted. Governments and other financial contributors are increasingly looking for value for money and for more to be done with fewer resources. As a result organizations are seeking ways to make their existing resources more productive, and coaching is seen as one of the ways they can achieve this.

As a manager you need to ensure that your coaching skills are effective and efficient so that the benefits you bring to your team maximize their productivity. Your role is to demonstrate to your seniors that the benefits attained from coaching your team members significantly outweigh the costs in terms of the time and effort you need to put in. The complexity of such a task will depend on how many people you have working for you and their coaching needs.



To summarize, coaching can improve productivity, morale, and job satisfaction and make team members less dependent on you to solve their problems. Whilst you may be able to cope with everyone on your team taking up 15 minutes of your time each day, this is only sustainable with a relatively small team. Coaching can help you to disengage from the ‘doing’ part of the job and concentrate on the ‘management’ part.

This will give you more time to manage strategically, rather than becoming bogged down in day-to-day operational tasks, which is essential if you want to be promoted to senior management. In addition, the effects of coaching can make your job less stressful as your team become less dependent on you. This becomes more important the further you progress in your management career and the more people you have reporting to you.

#### **Key Points**

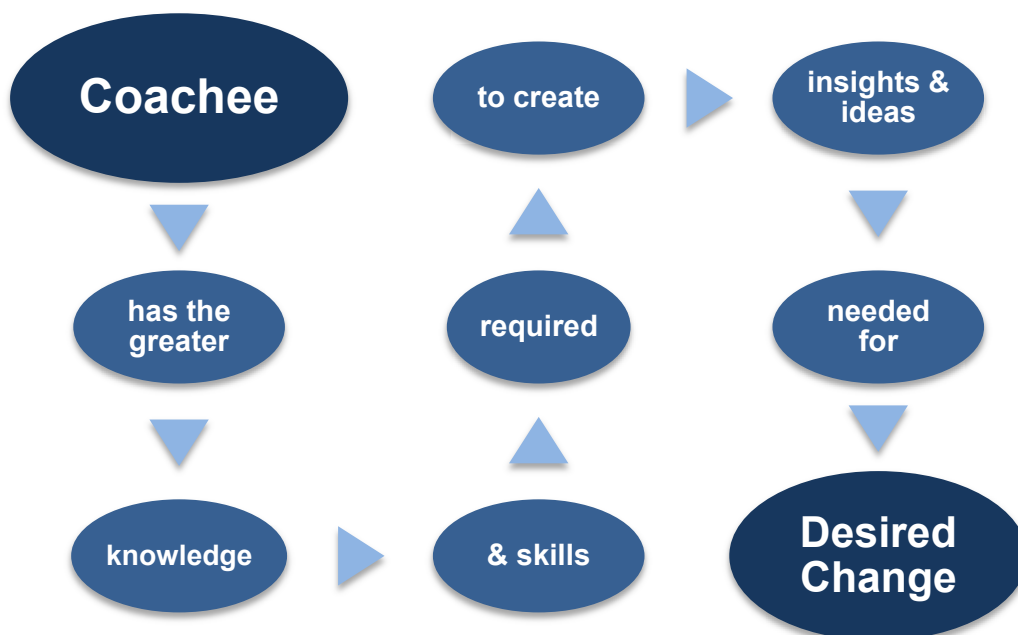
- Coaching can be approached as either a discrete activity or as a management style.
- Managers who coach create an environment where people can perform as independently as possible.
- Coaching benefits organizations because it improves the speed of decision-making, it frees up management time for higher-level activities, and it increases job satisfaction among team members.
- Successful coaching will give you more time to manage strategically, rather than becoming bogged down in day-to-day operational tasks.

# 1 WHAT DOES COACHING INVOLVE?

Arguably, the most important thing to understand about coaching is that it is a collaborative process. This means that the coach and the person being coached (referred to as the ‘coachee’ or the ‘client’) are working on creating changes together.



The coach does not explicitly provide direction from a position of superiority. A good coach assumes that the coachee knows more about their own situation than they do, placing the coachee in a better position to develop the insights and ideas needed to create the desired changes.



This type of relationship makes the responsibilities of both parties easier to understand:

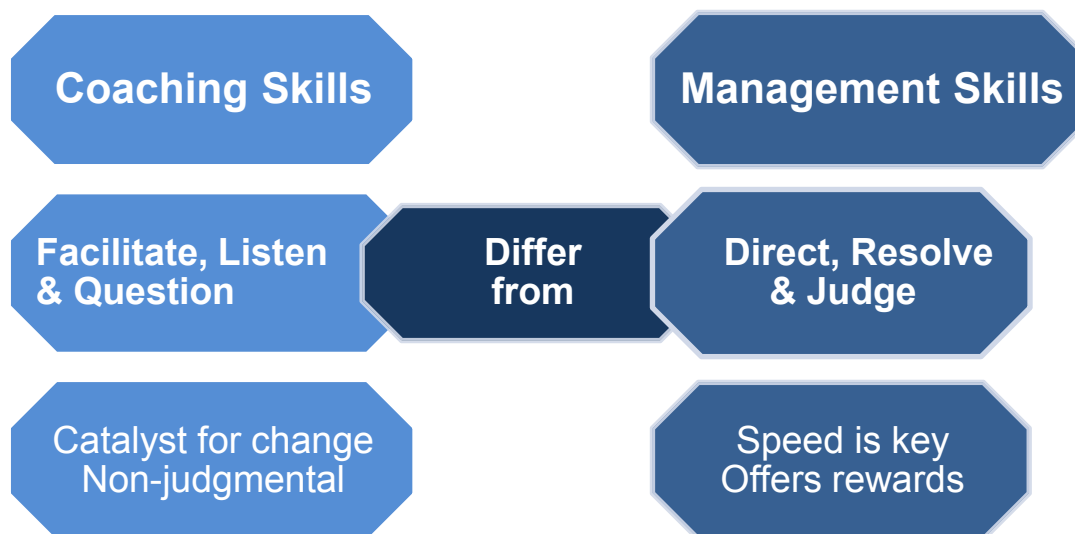
- The coach is responsible for keeping the focus on a clearly defined goal, facilitating the coachee's thinking and delivering constructive feedback.
- The coachee is responsible for generating ideas and options, taking action to achieve the goal, and reporting progress.



This is usually more difficult than it sounds and when these responsibilities are confused the coaching system tends to break down and the parties become frustrated and annoyed with one another.

The main skills required by the coach involve focusing on goals, listening, asking non-leading questions, and giving non-judgmental feedback. All of these things require conscious effort and practice if they are to be done properly because they are to some extent the opposite of a manager's first instincts, which are:

- To fix problems as quickly as possible
- To identify the root cause of the problem as quickly as possible
- To take charge and give direction
- To make a judgment in order to 'reward or correct' behavior.



One description of coaching is that it is a ‘goal-focused conversation.’ This means that even when the conversation begins with the coachee talking about a particular problem, the focus of the discussion should be quickly moved on to what a solution would look like and how it could be achieved. The coach will need to make a conscious effort not to assign blame for the problem and not to simply stipulate their preferred solution to it.

As a manager, restricting your actions to that of purely a facilitator can be difficult. This is especially true if you have a lot of expertise in the area being discussed because your overriding temptation is to simply tell someone how to do it.

However, the whole point of the exercise is to get the coachee to use their own creativity and initiative. If you tell them what to do, you not only take away a learning opportunity, you also reinforce the idea that they should come to you for guidance rather than working things out for themselves.

One of the functions of management is to reward good performance and correct poor performance. However, coaching often means avoiding pronouncing judgment in favor of giving specific, observational feedback that helps people examine their own performance and come up with a better approach in the future. The challenge is to avoid putting the coachee on the defensive whilst drawing attention to the fact that they ought to think about how things could have been done differently, perhaps with a better outcome.

**Key Points**

- Coaching involves the coach and the coachee working together to create changes.
- The main skills required by the coach involve focusing on goals, listening, asking non-leading questions, and giving non-judgmental feedback.

**1.1 IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS**

One of your prime functions as a manager is to develop those reporting to you so that they attain their maximum potential and productivity for the organization and themselves. There are many different ways individuals learn:

- Skills can be developed through coaching
- Skills can be taught
- Skills can be learned from an expert
- Skills can be reviewed by looking at past behaviors



Organizations may use all four methods to assist the development of their employees. Managers are increasingly expected to be able to competently perform each of the four 'learning' roles – trainer, coach, mentor, and counselor – for their team as the need arises.

Expecting every manager to be able to perform each role to the same level of competency is in many ways unreasonable. Organizations often poorly equip managers to perform these roles and offer little guidance as to how best to perform the role. You need to understand how each form of learning operates, and the differences between them, and ensure your behaviors match the role you need to perform in order to meet your objectives.

The role of ‘manager as coach’ is becoming more widespread, especially in organizations that have a culture of empowerment. This creates more and more situations where managers find themselves in a coaching role rather than that of trainer, mentor, or counselor. The rest of this section is dedicated to explaining how the coaching role differs from that used when training, mentoring, or counseling people.

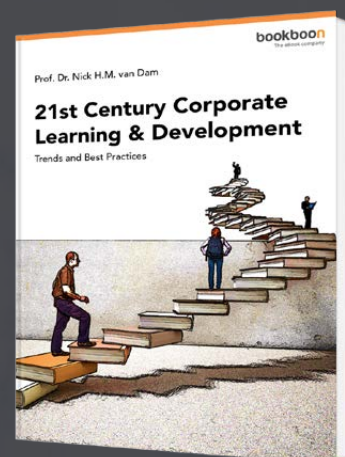
### 1.1.1 COACHING AND TRAINING

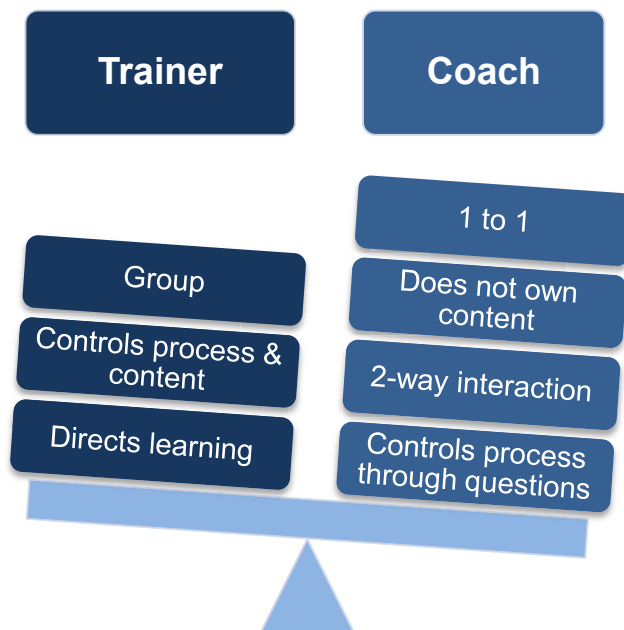
The ways in which the coaching and training roles approach learning are quite different. Training is principally directive: it is driven by the trainer, who will control most of both, the process and the content, in order to transfer knowledge or develop a new skill as efficiently as possible. The effectiveness of training depends on the competence of the trainer and the aptitude of the trainee for the subject being taught.

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Coaching on the other hand is driven by questions addressed to the coachee, who then explores what they already know, but in a way that would probably not occur to them without the guidance of a coach. The coach controls the process, but for it to be really effective, the coachee has to own the content.

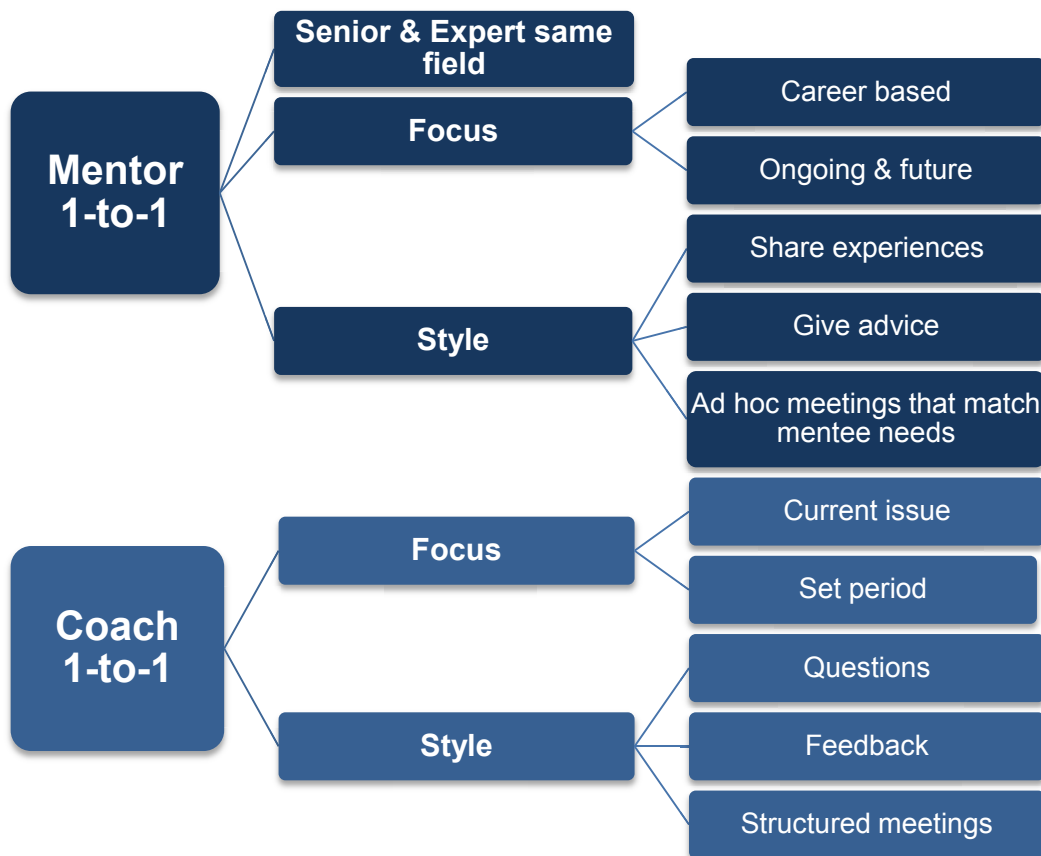
Another difference is that people are often trained in groups and this does not reduce the quality of the training received in any appreciable way. However, coaching must always be done on a one-to-one basis.

Although they are distinct activities, training and coaching can work well when used together. One obstacle encountered in business education is the difficulty of transferring skills and enthusiasm from a training course to the workplace. Coaching can be an excellent way of helping people to apply what they learn from a training course and incorporate it into their day-to-day work.

### 1.1.2 COACHING AND MENTORING

Managers need to have a clear distinction between the role of a coach and that of a mentor. This is because the nuances are subtly different in terms of the behaviors required by the manager to be successful in each role.

They are both one-to-one conversations aimed at facilitating professional development, but a mentor is usually a more senior person working in the same field as the person being mentored and this enables them to share experience and dispense advice.



The mentee will be seeking to develop their career through the mentoring process on an ongoing basis. The advice and expertise they seek from the mentor will be broad based, with the objective of developing the individual for future roles both on a career and personal level. By its very nature the relationship will be a long-term one and meetings or discussions will be convened on an ad hoc basis to meet the needs of the mentee.

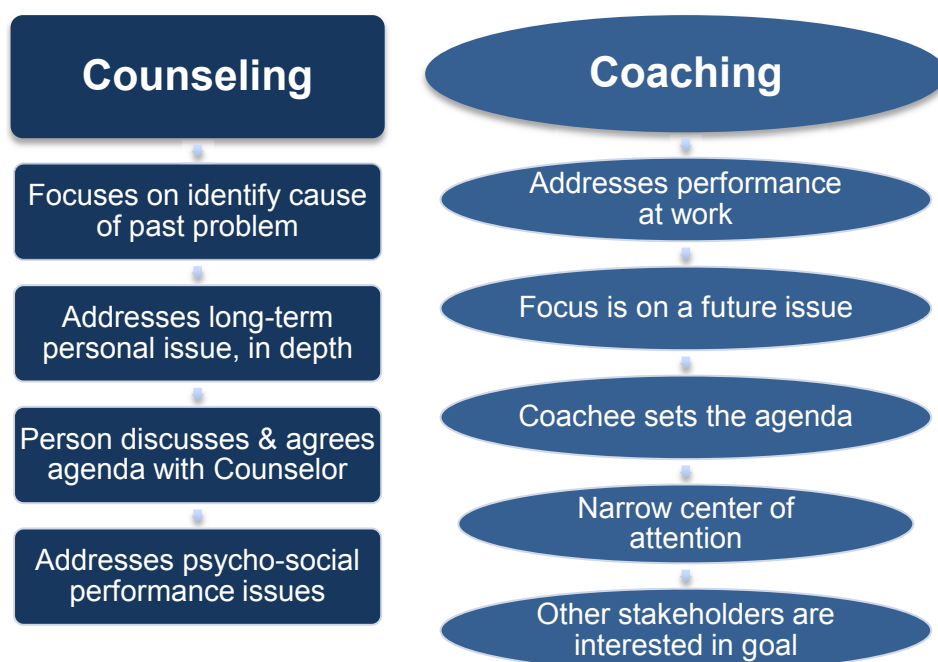
In contrast, a coach does not typically pass on experience or give advice, but rather uses questions and feedback to facilitate the coachee’s thinking and practical learning. Even though coaches are often senior to the coachee, this does not have to be the case and nor do they have to be an expert in the coachee’s field.

The coaching will be focused on a current issue or development area in the workplace that must be addressed within a defined period. Whilst an individual’s personal development may occur during the coaching this is not its main aim. The focus is work-based not personal. The meetings will be structured and scheduled to fit into the required timeframe.

### 1.1.3 COACHING AND COUNSELING

Whilst it is rare for a manager to offer long-term counseling to a member of their team, there are often situations that occur in the short term that they can address. So it is important that you appreciate the different behaviors you need to portray when you need to assume the role of counselor.

Such situations usually relate to a fundamental or drastic change in an individual's personal circumstances – for example, divorce, death, or serious illness.

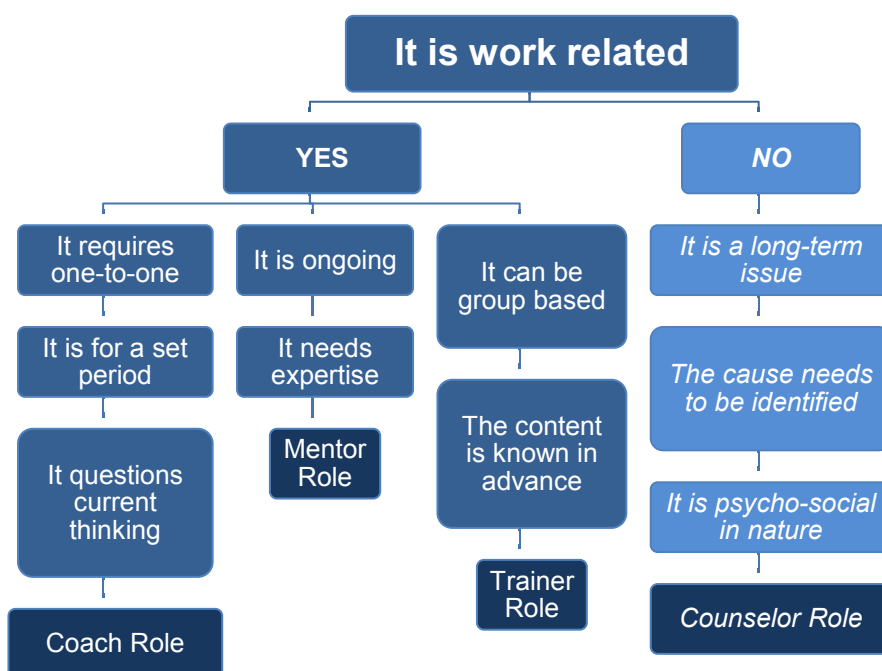


Coaching and counseling share many core skills and both of these activities are one-to-one conversations; however, their tone and purpose are very different:

1. Coaching addresses workplace performance, whereas counseling usually addresses personal issues.
2. Coaching invariably focuses on a specific future issue, whereas most forms of counseling focus on the past and are in depth.
3. Coaching and counseling are both usually short term in nature. But counseling often becomes long term by virtue of the fact that it focuses on personal issues.
4. The coachee sets their own agenda, but an individual receiving counseling will discuss and agree the agenda with the counselor.
5. The goal for coaching is targeted at improving an individual's performance at work, whereas with counseling the aim is to help the person understand and identify the root cause of their long-term performance problem or work issue.

In addition to these points there are some things that only relate to either coaching or counseling alone. Firstly, when coaching an individual there will be other stakeholders who are interested and who need that person to develop the required skill or competency. These stakeholders may be co-workers, customers or suppliers. There are rarely any stakeholders involved when someone is undergoing counseling. Secondly, only counseling can address psychological and social issues that are affecting a person’s performance.

By asking a few simple questions you can quickly identify the role required to address the situation presented to you. In some instances you may decide that the best way to help an individual is to call on an expert, for example a qualified counselor.



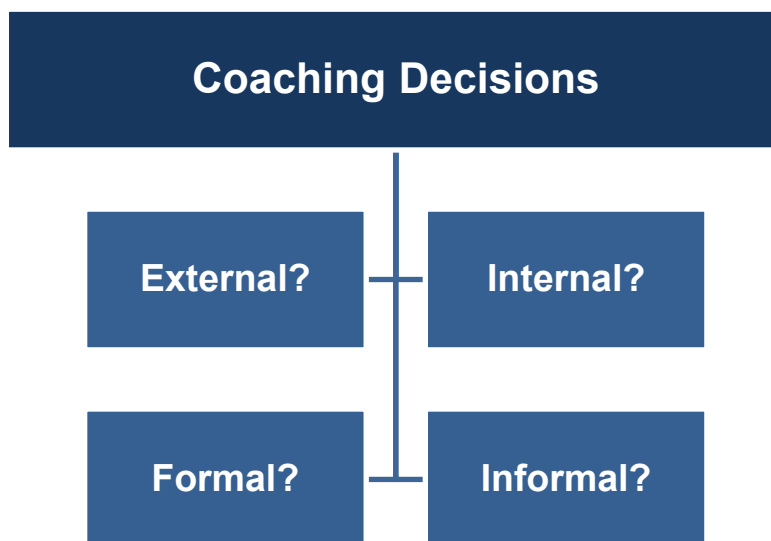
Now that you appreciate the different circumstances and behaviors of the four learning roles you will be able to develop your coaching skills so that you can become a competent coach for your team.

**Key Points**

- The role of ‘manager as coach’ is becoming more widespread especially in organizations that have a culture of empowerment.
- Coaching is distinct from training, mentoring, and counseling.

## 2 TYPES OF COACHES

Suppose you have identified that a member of your team would benefit from being coached to improve their knowledge, skills, and performance for an activity due to be completed in the next quarter. You need to ask yourself, 'Is this something you as their manager have the time and skill to do?' Or is this a situation where the use of a professional coach will be the most effective way to get results?



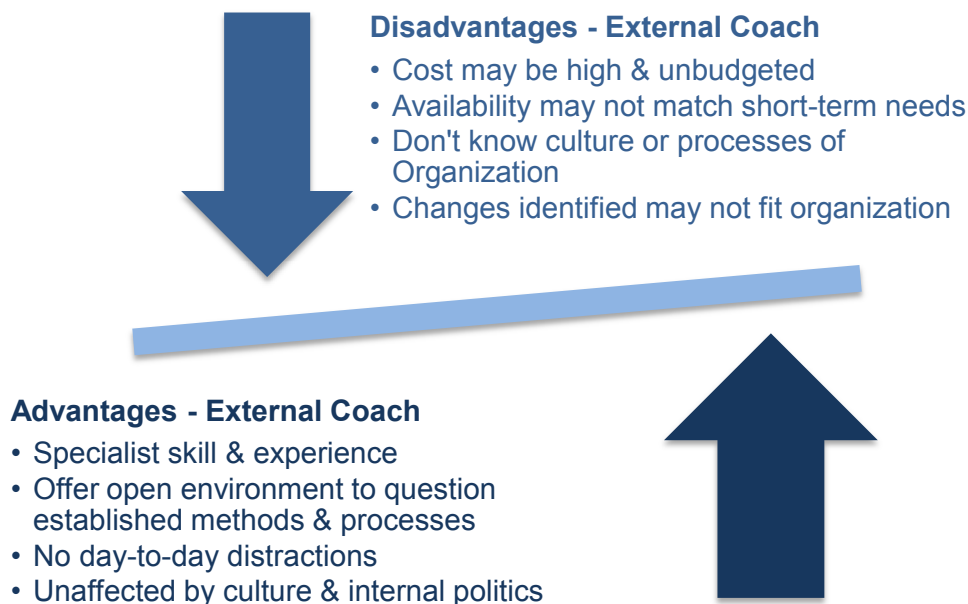
Once you know who is performing the role of coach you then need to decide whether or not the coaching should be conducted in a formal or informal manner. Coaching can be done using professional coaching services supplied by an independent firm or consultancy, or it can be done by the manager themselves or by someone else within the organization.

As part of your decision-making process you will have to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each of these approaches.

### 2.1 EXTERNAL COACHES

External coaches have typically received a more extensive coaching training than managers, and have spent more time coaching people. In addition to their core coaching skills, external coaches with specialist expertise can be matched to the coachee's requirements. For example, a coach specializing in sales skills could be brought in to support a sales team.

Team members may feel able to discuss issues with an external coach that they would not discuss with their line manager, and these hidden issues may be critical to improving performance. Because they are not affected by the organization's internal politics, external coaches are more adept at providing sensitive feedback, as well as maintaining objectivity and confidentiality.



People are more likely to cooperate and discuss issues freely with external coaches as they are not directly involved in the day-to-day business of the organization. An external coach is not burdened with preconceptions about either the coachee or the organization. This means that they can often see things that are not obvious to the coachee's manager or to people embedded in the organization's culture and processes.

Also, because the external coach does not have the additional responsibilities of a manager, they can focus exclusively on the coachee's needs before, during, and after the coaching session. This can lead to an intensive, high-energy form of coaching that can produce significant results in a short time.

The disadvantages of external coaching include its cost, since it is always going to be more expensive than using existing resources. Also, it might be felt that the coach's lack of intimate knowledge of the organization's culture and processes could be a problem.

The interaction between the coach and coachee needs to create improved skills and knowledge that can be incorporated into the culture and processes of the organization. For example, for the coachee's ideas to be adopted the organization might have to make significant and costly changes to one of their systems.

This sort of issue can be avoided if the coachee's manager has regular communications with the coach and ensures that ideas that are outside of the scope of the particular development are brought to the attention of the business development team who are able to explore them further.

## **2.2 INTERNAL COACHES**

For many reasons, such as pressures of time or budget, you may not have the luxury of using a professional coach. This means that you have to resource the coaching needs of your team member internally.

However, since very few organizations employ professional coaches, if an external coach is not going to be used then the task usually falls to the team member's own manager – that's you! Or if not you then it could involve you having to select a colleague, another manager, or human resource specialist to perform the coaching role.

The main advantage to the organization of using internal coaches is that they do not have the direct costs that hiring an external coach would. Also, as the coachee's direct manager you already spend time with them and the coaching role provides you with the opportunity to get to know them well, whilst you build and demonstrate a foundation of mutual trust and respect.

In addition, because you are constantly interacting with your team you will have many more opportunities to influence them than an external consultant would have. This may not be so applicable if the internal coach is someone outside of the team or department, unless the coach is already in frequent contact because of the nature of the activity itself.



It is essential that whoever performs the role of internal coach remembers that the traditional corporate ‘command and control’ approach is inappropriate in these circumstances. Instead, coaching emphasizes:

- Collaborating instead of controlling
- Delegating more responsibility
- Talking less and listening more
- Giving fewer orders and asking more questions
- Giving specific feedback instead of making judgments

It is important to say that this style of management is not necessarily applicable all of the time and there will be occasions when a manager needs to use a more autocratic leadership style to get things done quickly or to break a deadlock situation.

There is good evidence though that using a predominantly coaching style brings medium- to long-term benefits to the team, and to the organization as a whole. This approach works best in an environment where there is a learning culture that is fully supported by senior management.

It is probably fairly obvious that coaching benefits the people being coached – but what about the manager? If you are a busy manager, can you afford the time and effort required, when you already have plenty of other demands to cope with?

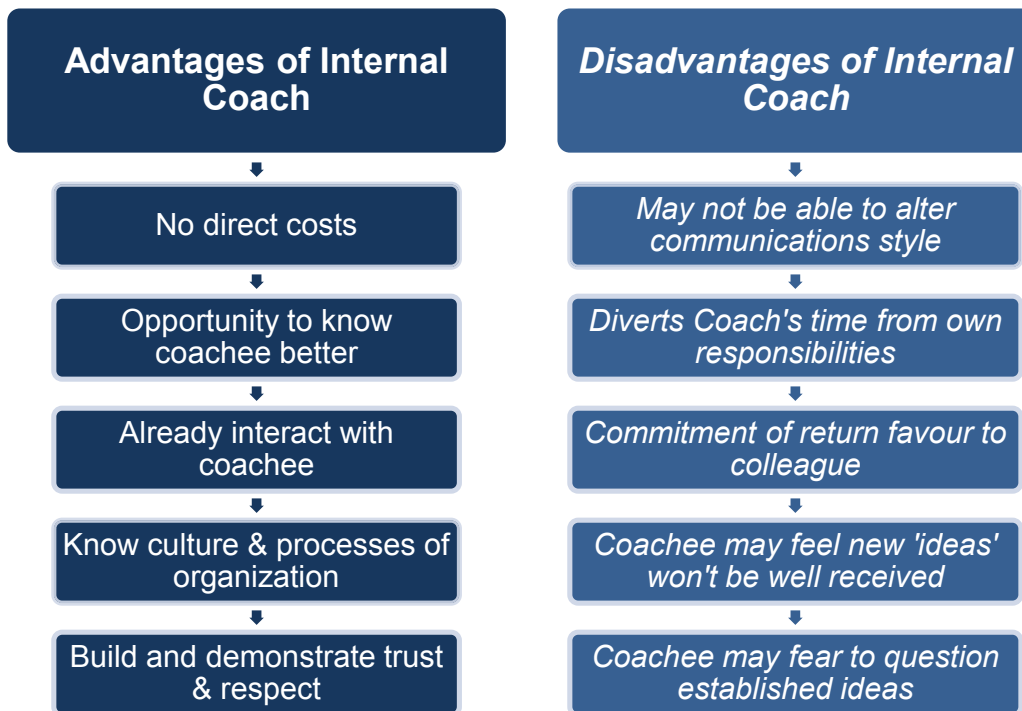
Coaching is not a case of ‘giving up’ your time and energy to help others achieve their goals and solve their problems. It can also bring you and the organization significant benefits. One of the most significant is the effect coaching can have on the morale of your team. Showing that you value your team enough to spend time coaching them to develop their own skills and potential will gain their respect and confidence.

Individuals are often just waiting for someone to show that they have confidence in them, before they open up with their own ideas and feel that their contribution is valued. The more genuine control people have over their own goals and decisions the more commitment they will display to attaining those goals or following through decisions.

This openness and acceptance of others’ ideas and thinking helps to improve the working relationships within your team and organization. The collaborative nature of these relationships makes people feel empowered and creates an atmosphere of trust and honesty. Such attributes will have a direct impact on the performance of the individual as well as the team.

The long-term benefits of investing your own time in developing and coaching your team members can be considerable. Your team will become more self-sufficient, enabling you to delegate tasks with confidence and focus your skills and time on the higher-level tasks that only you can perform.

The environment of empowerment allows individuals to be creative and intuitive when solving problems and issues. It also allows the circulation of more accurate and informative data, because no one feels they will be penalized for making suggestions.



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But making use of internal coaches does have some disadvantages and it is important to be aware of these. If these issues are present in your own organization they will have an impact on how effective internal coaching will be. In the short term your coaching activity can have a detrimental impact on your time and possibly your productivity. With careful planning these impositions are short lived and are far out-weighted by the long-term benefits.

Any internal coach must have the ability to adapt their communications style to that most suited to this activity. The coach must be able to relinquish control for collaboration and, through careful and well thought-out questioning, to draw out a solution from the coachee.

Another issue that can cause problems for internal coaches is the interference of their own task pressures, which may prevent them from having the time they want (and know they need) in order to conduct coaching properly. These pressures may force the coach to take control back, or mean that they don't have the time to explore the issue or problem facing the coachee and guide the coachee to think of a resolution.

The attitude of the coachee and the culture of the organization also play a significant role in how effective coaching will be. If the culture of the organization is such that employees see that to express ideas and question things is harmful to their prospects they will be guarded in their approach to coaching.

This occurs in organizations where individuals can see that questioning established processes or ideas is poorly received by senior management. Such news always travels widely and quickly along an organization's grapevine and is extremely detrimental to the level of trust and openness required in order for coaching to be successful.

It could be argued that it is impossible for a manager to act as a coach, given their position of authority over his or her team. This is not necessarily an obstacle, provided that there is genuine trust and respect in the working relationship.

Finally, the decision regarding whether to use an internal or external coach will depend on the money available, the needs of the people involved, and the ethos of your organization.

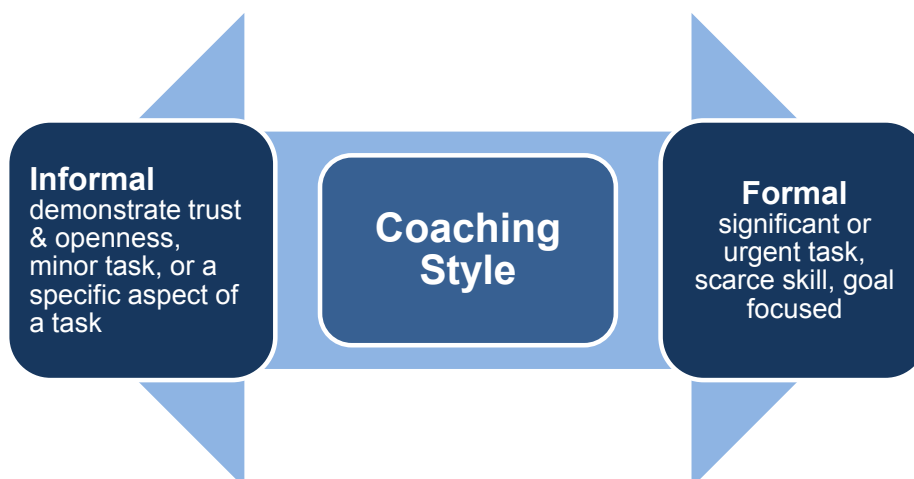
### Key Points

- Coaching can be done internally or externally.
- The advantages of an external coach include: They bring specialist skills and experience; they can more easily question established methods and processes; and they are unaffected by organizational culture and politics.
- The disadvantages of an external coach include: The cost may be high and unbudgeted for; their availability may not match short-term needs; and they will probably be unaware of the organizational culture.
- The advantages of an internal coach include: there are no direct costs, they have the opportunity to know coachee better, they already interact with coachee, they know culture & processes of organization, and they can build and demonstrate trust & respect by their day-to-day interactions with the coachee.
- The disadvantages of an internal coach include: they may not be able to alter their communications style from manager to coach, they may not be able to take the necessary time to act as a coach, the coachee may feel new 'ideas' won't be well received and they may be afraid to question established procedures.

## 2.3 FORMAL OR INFORMAL?

Once you have decided on whether your coaching will be internal or external you then need to define how it will be delivered. This means deciding whether or not the coaching will be formal or informal. This decision will be largely based on the importance and urgency of the task an individual requires coaching for.

Where formal coaching is being used, both the manager and the team member will be clear that they are engaged in 'coaching' and will be explicitly committed to the process. Each coaching session will be timetabled and both parties will spend their time in coaching mode – that is, with the manager engaged in listening, asking questions, and giving feedback while the coachee does most of the talking.



Formal coaching sends a powerful signal to individual team members that their development and success is important, and that the manager is there to provide support. In addition, because both parties are focusing their efforts on the process it tends to work well.

The task in question is usually a significant one and there is an urgent need for the team, division, or organization to have additional people capable of performing this task or in possession of a scarce skill. This style of coaching is usually focused on goal-oriented tasks rather than everyday ones.

Informal coaching can happen as part of the everyday conversation between the manager and a team member if the manager is using a collaborative leadership style. In this case, neither party would describe the process as ‘coaching’ even though that is actually what is happening.

This style of coaching is often used to develop a particular aspect of a task. Managers also use more informal coaching to help demonstrate that they want to promote a team atmosphere of trust, collaboration, and willingness to discuss and promote new ideas.

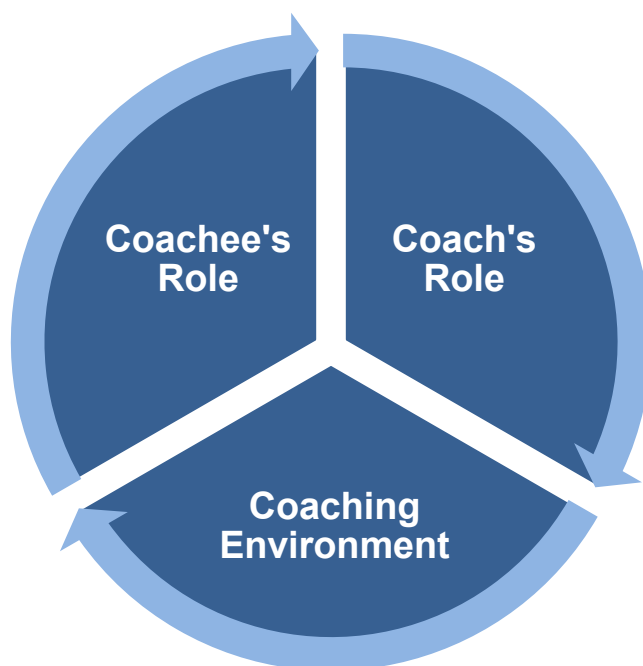
Many managers use both formal and informal styles depending on their own preference, the coachee’s preference, the organizational culture, and the goals of the team at that point in time.

#### **Key Points**

- Coaching can be formal or informal.
- Where formal coaching is being used, both the manager and the team member will be clear that they are engaged in ‘coaching’ and will be explicitly committed to the process.
- Informal coaching can happen as part of the everyday conversation between the manager and a team member if the manager is using a collaborative leadership style.

### 3 COACHING PRINCIPLES

Successful managers adopt key principles when developing and exhibiting key competencies, such as accounting, team building, leadership, and performance management. If you want to excel as a coach then you need to understand and adopt the principles and beliefs that are central to collaborative coaching.



All of these principles have been proven and refined over many years and can be broken down into three equally important areas. Before beginning the coaching process you must ensure that you understand what your role as coach is, that your coachee is aware of their responsibilities, and that the environment in which the coaching takes place is conducive to this activity.

The principles in each of these three areas are explored in the following sections.

### 3.1 RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENT

There are three key principles to observe in this area:

- **Both parties are equals** – You and your coachee must work together in a partnership as equals. It is not your role to pass judgment on past events or to give explicit direction for the future. It is not your role to direct or control.

Your key role is to facilitate the thinking of the coachee so that they use their own knowledge to question how they conduct an activity.



- **The relationship is based on truth, openness, and trust** – the dialogue and discussions you have with your coachee must be open and honest. As coach you are not required to give your opinion; you want to encourage your coachee to express their own considered opinion.

If there are issues that either of you is not prepared to discuss then it should be obvious that the whole exercise is pretty much doomed to failure.

- **Coaching must address the whole person** – this may appear over the top, but if ignored it will have a significant impact on the success of the coaching process. Time and experience have proven that when a coachee has issues going on elsewhere in their life these will impact their attitude or ability to perform at work. So make sure that you ask questions as you prepare for the coaching process so that you are aware of any such issues involving the coachee.

In many instances your coachee may be unwilling or reluctant to discuss their personal circumstances with you. In such cases you need to find a way to address such private issues before commencing the coaching because they are adversely affecting their performance at work.

This would require you to perform the role of counselor (not coach) and this role is likely to be better performed by someone outside of the organization who has this expertise and experience of addressing personal issues.

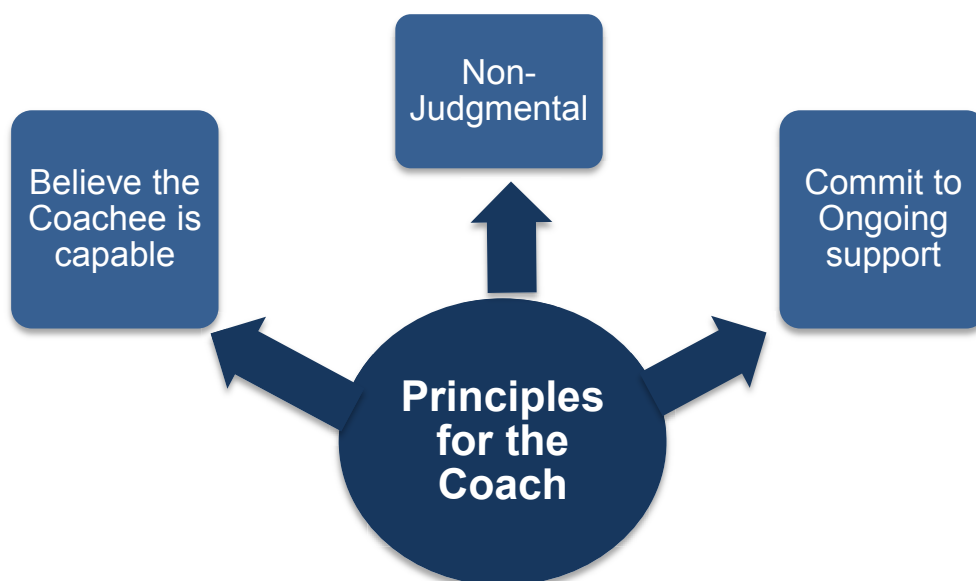
### 3.2 FOR THE COACH

As the coach in this process you need to ensure that your behavior and actions reflect the following principles.

- **The coach is not judgmental** – As coach, your role is to be a catalyst for change. You achieve this by coaxing the coachee through questioning to devise their ‘own’ solution. Your role is not to judge them.

This is a two-fold process: firstly, you help the individual understand how their behavior is impacting their goal attainment. Then, you ask the coachee to come up with a resolution to any problems or issues in their performance using their own knowledge and skills.

In this way you are not judging the coachee’s behavior or performance; you are assisting them in resolving it for themselves. This approach prevents the individual feeling they are being unfairly criticized, thus avoiding confrontation and rejection of your communication.



- **You must believe that the coachee is capable** – an essential aspect to successful coaching is that the coach displays his or her belief that the individual is capable of changing and improving their performance.

You can contribute information to help the coachee address their opportunities, issues, and problems. But it is ultimately the coachee's choice and decision that defines what action should be taken.

- **Commitment to ongoing support** – from the outset your behaviors and actions must clearly demonstrate your commitment to providing the necessary support to the coachee throughout the complete process.

Your challenge as coach is to maintain these behaviors even when the progress is slower than you'd like. Focus on how you are contributing towards helping the individual develop their approach to goal attainment, instead of directing or guiding them as a trainer or mentor would do.

One way to ensure this is to prepare for each coaching session by reviewing current progress and reaffirming the objective of the coaching.

If you really feel as though the process is not producing any results you need to ensure that all coaching principles are being adhered to and rectify any deficiencies. This should include whether or not to continue as their coach rather than continuing with something that you are not fully committed to.

### 3.3 FOR THE COACHEE

Now you need to address the final area of coaching principles, that of the coachee. You must make sure that your coachee is properly prepared for this process and understands their role and responsibilities.



- **The coachee must set the agenda** – by getting the coachee to set their own objective for the coaching, as per their goal priorities, you demonstrate the equality within this relationship. This also applies to the setting of each coaching meeting agenda.

Your job is to help the individual identify their true talents and strengths and how they can use these to achieve their goals.

- **Commitment to action** – within each coaching session the coachee is responsible for defining the actions required as a result of the meeting. This includes the commitment to conduct each action within the set timescale.

The coachee demonstrates their accountability for these actions by reporting in the next session on the progress they have made.

If you find that your attempts at coaching are not as successful as you expected then you should re-visit each area. You can then assess how well your behavior as coach and that of the coachee match the required principles. There are several coaching tools that help you to assess and develop the necessary skills and behaviors you require to make your coaching effective. These tools are described in detail in the eBook ‘Coaching Tools and Models’, which you can download from [www.free-management-ebooks.com](http://www.free-management-ebooks.com).

#### Key Points

- You and your coachee must work together in a partnership as equals. The coaching relationship must be based on truth, openness and trust. Coaching must address the whole person.
- The coach must not be judgmental, must believe that the coachee is capable of improving their performance, and be committed to ongoing support.
- The coachee must be allowed to set the agenda, define the actions required as a result of the coaching session, and demonstrate their accountability for these actions by reporting the progress they have made in the subsequent session.

## 4 SUMMARY

Any coaching opportunities require certain factors to be present in order to be successful.

- The coachee must need to achieve a goal
- They are prevented from doing so by an obstacle or obstacles
- The solution takes account of the current obstacles and situation

Coaching can be defined simply as skilful questioning to bring out the best in people, helping them achieve their goals. It is concerned with helping them to realize their potential and ensuring that they have the skills, understanding, knowledge, and motivation to succeed. It is directly linked to change in that it is about helping someone shift their perspective, level of confidence, skill, motivation, or attitude.

There are seven key skills you need for successful coaching: active listening, building rapport, asking questions, demonstrating empathy, using intuition, goal setting, and giving feedback. Another key part of being a successful coach is the use of a coaching model that aids this learning process. These key skills and coaching models such as GROW, TGROW, and OSKAR are described in our eBook 'Skills and Models.'

Coaching offers certain advantages to the individual coachee, your team, and to yourself as a manager. For you as a manager the benefits include:

- Taking time to understand an issue that is affecting the performance of a team member.
- Demonstrating commitment to supporting and developing the skills, knowledge, and abilities of a team member.
- Developing skills that are valued and transferable across many roles.
- Developing effective working relationships with staff, making the responsibility of managing them more constructive and rewarding.
- Developing reciprocity in the working relationship leading to opportunities for effective delegation.
- Promoting effective change management and leadership of problem resolution.

For your individual team members the benefits include:

- Learning to solve their own problems.
- Improving work-related skills and performance.
- Addressing personal issues that might otherwise affect their performance at work.
- Learning how to identify and act on development needs.
- Having greater confidence and accepting responsibility.
- Becoming more effective and assertive in dealing with people.
- Developing greater self-awareness and gaining new perspectives on ability.
- Acquiring new skills and abilities.
- Developing greater adaptability to change.

Finally, your team benefits from your coaching activities in two ways. Firstly, it encourages communication and feedback between team members. Secondly, it helps to develop openness and an atmosphere of trust and honesty within your team, which encourages new ways of working.



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