

COACHING EFFECTIVENESS



FEEDBACK REPORT

ActionCOACH
business coaching

Sample Report
7/28/2010



INTRODUCTION

This Coaching Effectiveness Feedback Report consists of six components, which are described below.

1. Overall Summary

The summary results chart provides a quick visual representation of your scores in the seven competencies that make up the Coaching Effectiveness profile. The areas to concentrate on are those scores above 3.5 (strong) and below 2.75 (need further development). Please note that these competency scores are averages; individual question scores can be viewed by clicking on the individual competency link.

2. Category Descriptions

There are three sections for each of the seven competencies. The first of these three sections explains the competency, lists average scores, and then provides high and low score interpretation notes. The second section provides a graphical representation of individual question scores. The third section provides broadly-based improvement actions for those individuals wanting to develop their competencies.

3. 10/10 Report

The "10/10" Report page provides the raw scores for the 10 highest scoring questions and the 10 lowest scoring questions out of the 84. It also identifies which competency each question is from.

4. Course and Reading Suggestions

Development suggestions for the two lowest scoring competencies, including specific recommendations regarding training courses and books that will provide useful information on the topic are included.

5. Development Plan

The development plan lists questions with the five lowest scores from the assessment and puts them into a one-page template. Individuals can use this template to record the specific actions they plan to take over the next twelve months based on the general guidance offered in their feedback report and the coaching tips.

6. Coaching Tips

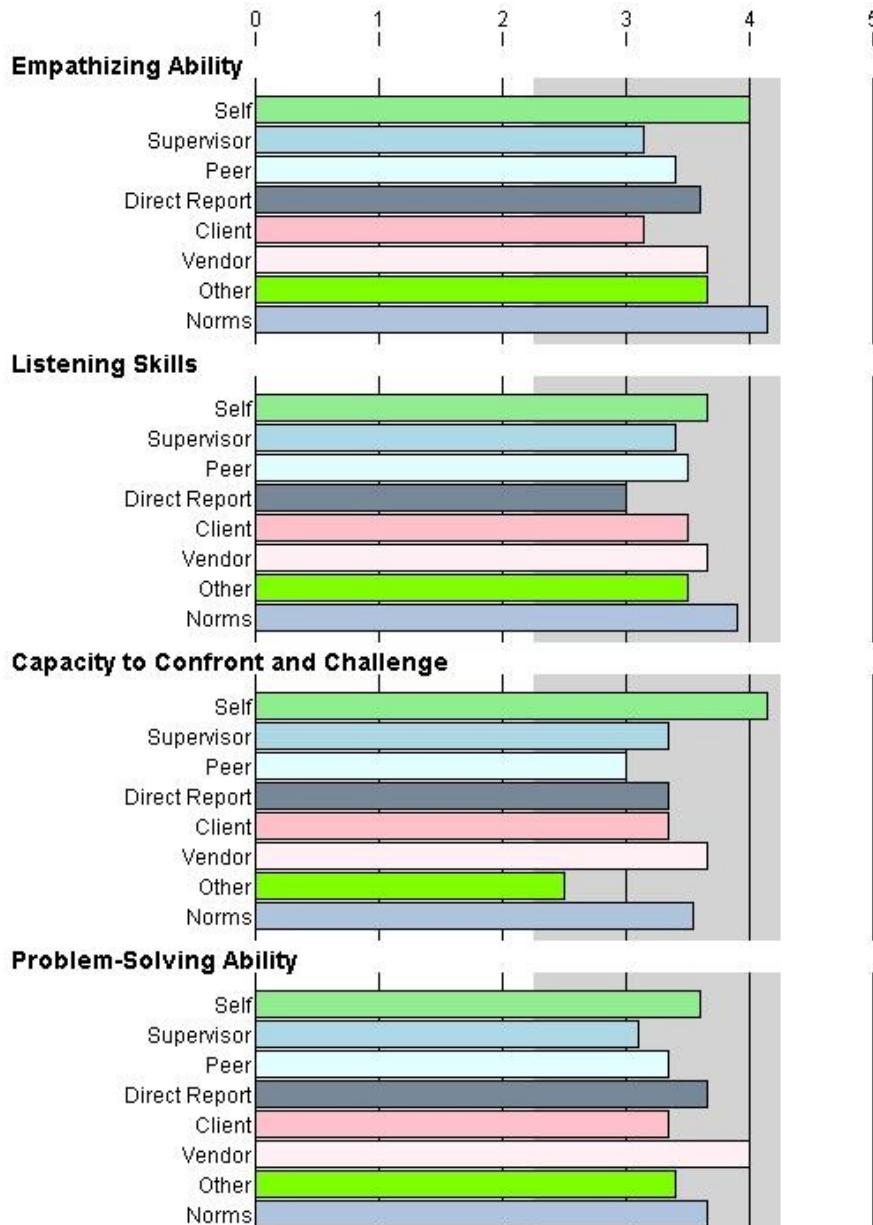
Detailed coaching tips for the five lowest scoring questions are provided in this section. They offer specific advice on what individuals might do to improve their skills in this competency and learn new behaviors.

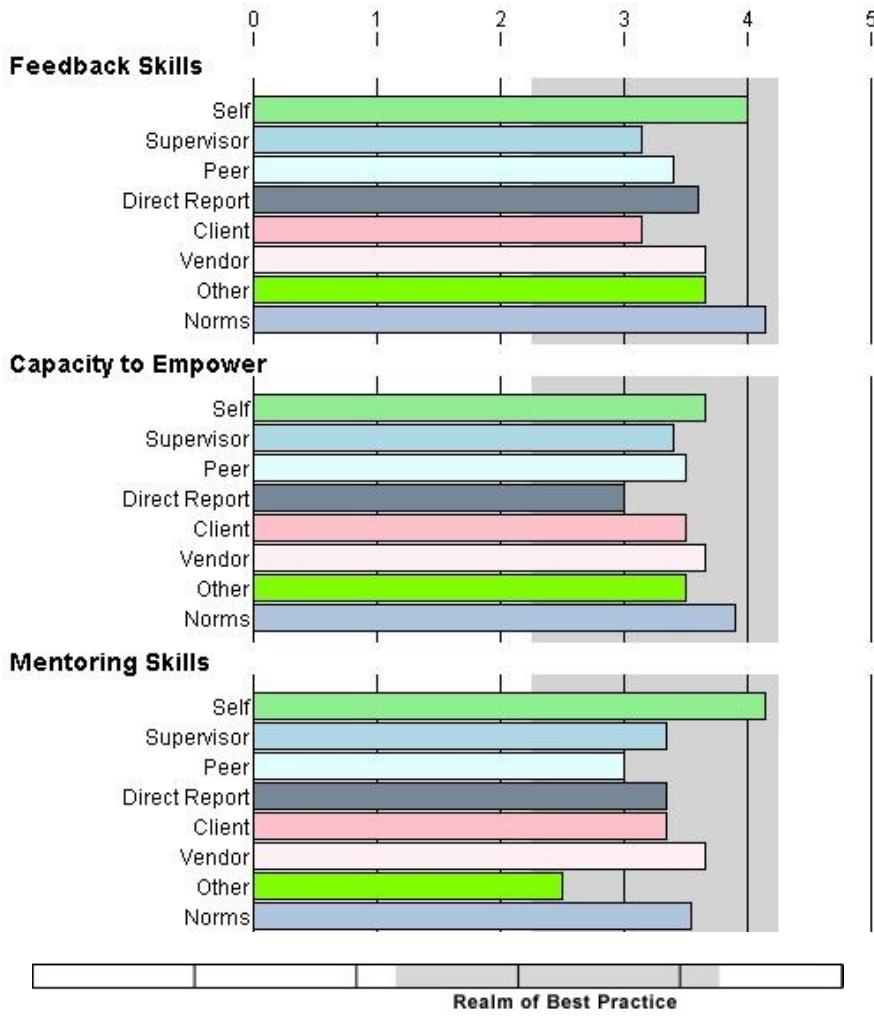
Note on 360 Degree Feedback

If you received feedback from your supervisor, direct reports or peers using this assessment, please note the following: Ratings responses from all persons who completed the assessment are averaged to produce the results in the 10/10 Report, Course and Reading Suggestions, Development Plan, and Coaching Tips.



OVERALL SUMMARY





Norm bars shown on all graphs in this report are the progressive average scores of all individuals rating themselves on this questionnaire.



EMPATHIZING ABILITY

This section on Empathizing Ability looks at the extent to which you create a positive climate for coaching communication, and demonstrate an understanding of the other person's viewpoint and feelings. It asks the question: "How well do you build a spirit of trust and sincerity so that people will feel that you identify with them and their feelings and concerns?"



Interpretation

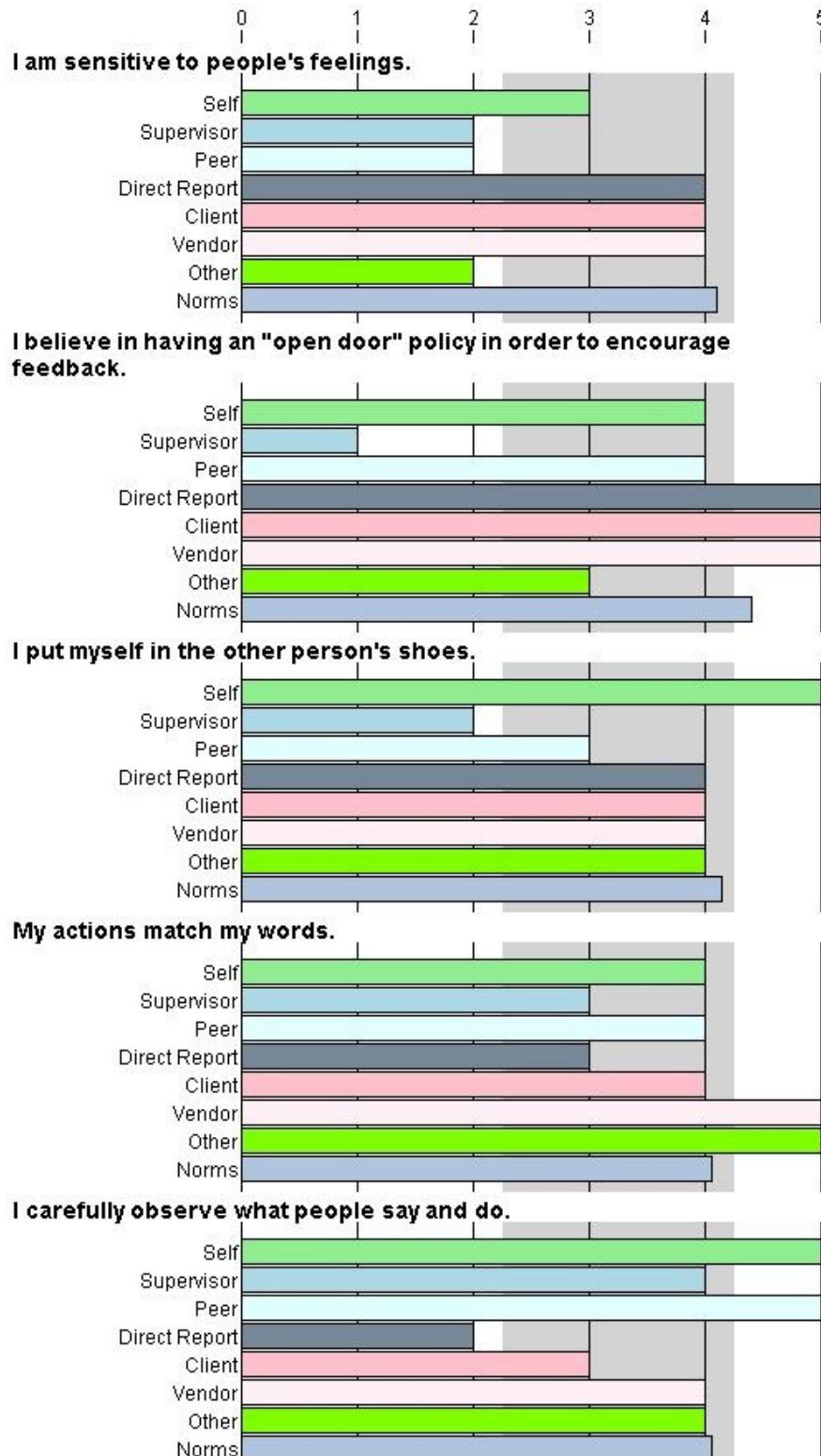
LOW (less than 2.75)

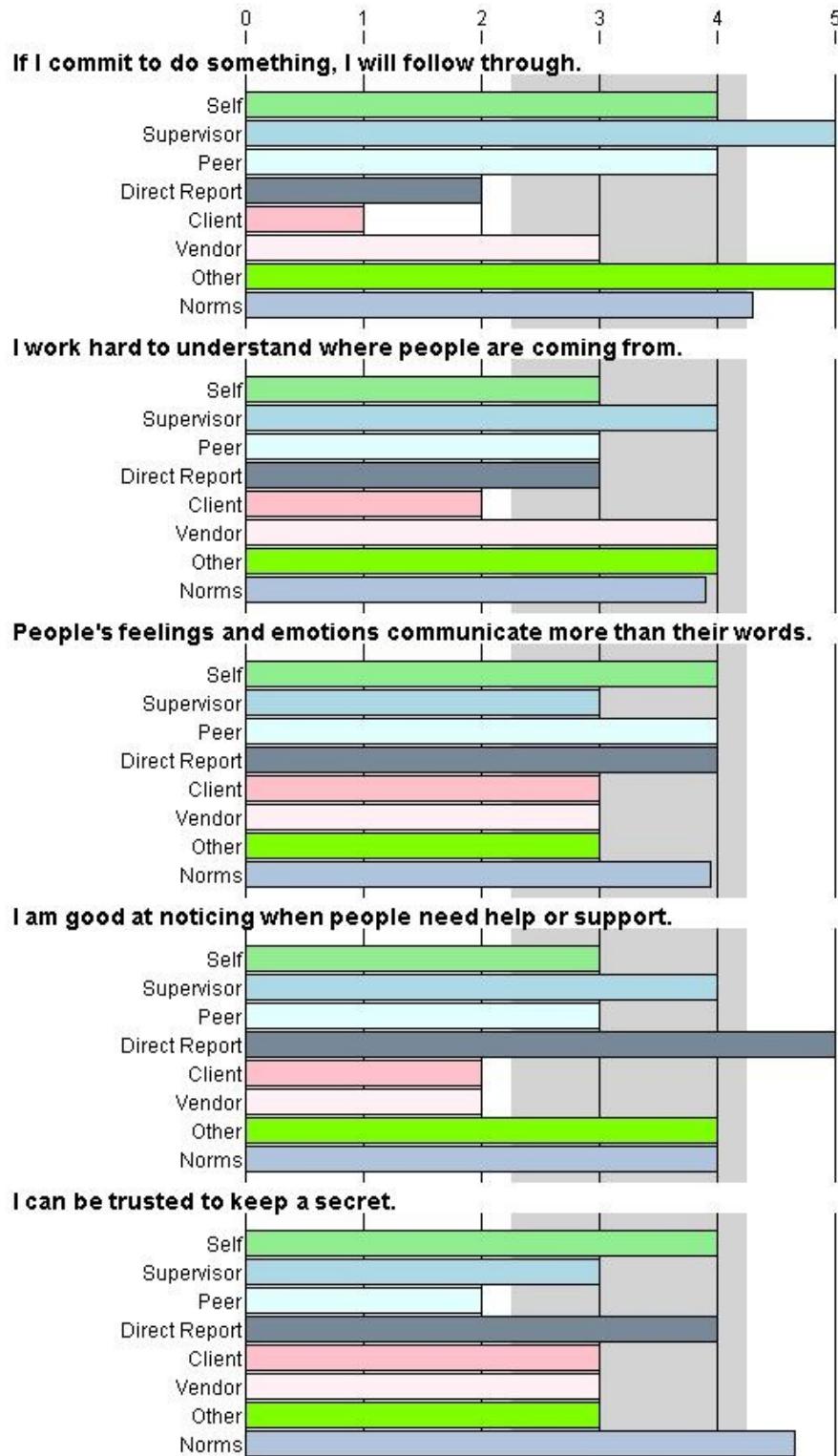
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you are more "cool" or aloof about other people's concerns (and perhaps even deliberately distance yourself from them). You might not be aware of times when people need your sincere advice or support. Even when you find yourself in a "deeper" conversation, you might be oblivious to the depth of someone's feelings or emotions. An individual who scores low is generally not counted on as a useful "sounding board" for other people's problems or concerns. People will seek out others who appear to be warmer and more accommodating. Low scorers send mixed or confused signals, arising from differences in what they say and what they do. People who know you are likely to prefer to keep their relationship with you superficial, or restrict it to mainly analytical issues.

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you generally like people and enjoy building strong and rewarding relationships through your conversations with them. You are likely to make a sincere effort to understand other people's concerns and challenges, and therefore quickly tune in to their underlying feelings about a problem or concern. A high scorer in this area quickly gains a reputation as someone to whom people can freely talk in confidence and turn to for helpful and patient guidance. High scorers are likely to be seen as balanced, non-critical, and highly reliable. They are also good listeners.







This section on Empathizing Ability looks at the extent to which you create a positive climate for coaching communication, and demonstrate an understanding of the other person's viewpoint and feelings. It asks the question: "How well do you build a spirit of trust and sincerity so that people will feel that you identify with them and their feelings and concerns?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to develop their attentive listening skills and try not to judge what people say in terms of what they themselves would do. Although it is extremely difficult to do in the short-term, low scorers need to first think more deeply about how other people might be feeling and why before they offer any comment or response.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Empathizing Ability

- Try to be as positive, sincere, and open as possible in all your conversations with people you meet.
- Be sensitive to people's feelings or emotions, as well as to their words.
- Try to develop mutual trust in your coaching relationships by being as genuine and honest as you can.
- Make sure that you always meet any commitments you make.
- Make sure that your deeds match your words, even if it means putting yourself out.



LISTENING SKILLS

This section on Listening Skills looks at your ability to hear as well as understand other people, and to quickly discover their full communication or overall message. It asks the question: "How attentively do you listen so as to understand other people and help them to successfully share what they are thinking and feeling?"



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

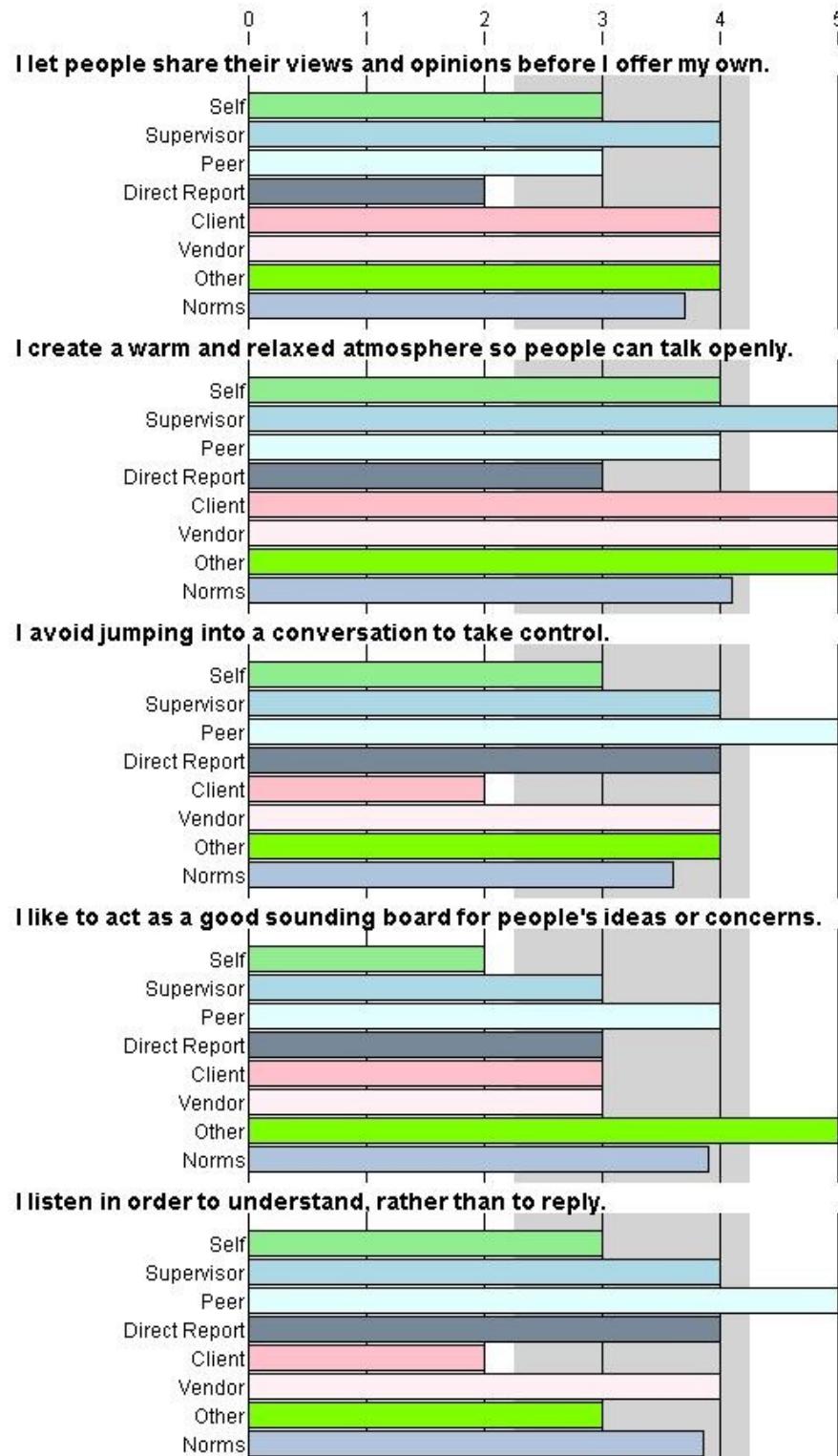
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you do not give your full attention to people when they express their ideas or concerns to you, and most likely don't listen attentively, nor select the right listening environment. You tend to interrupt people before they finish speaking, and even let your mind wander off track. An individual who scores low in this area is not generally sought out as a coach because people fear that what they have to say will not be fully valued or given the attention needed for coaching guidance or advice. Low scorers tend also to be impatient and distracted, and are not likely to devote much time to careful coaching or support.

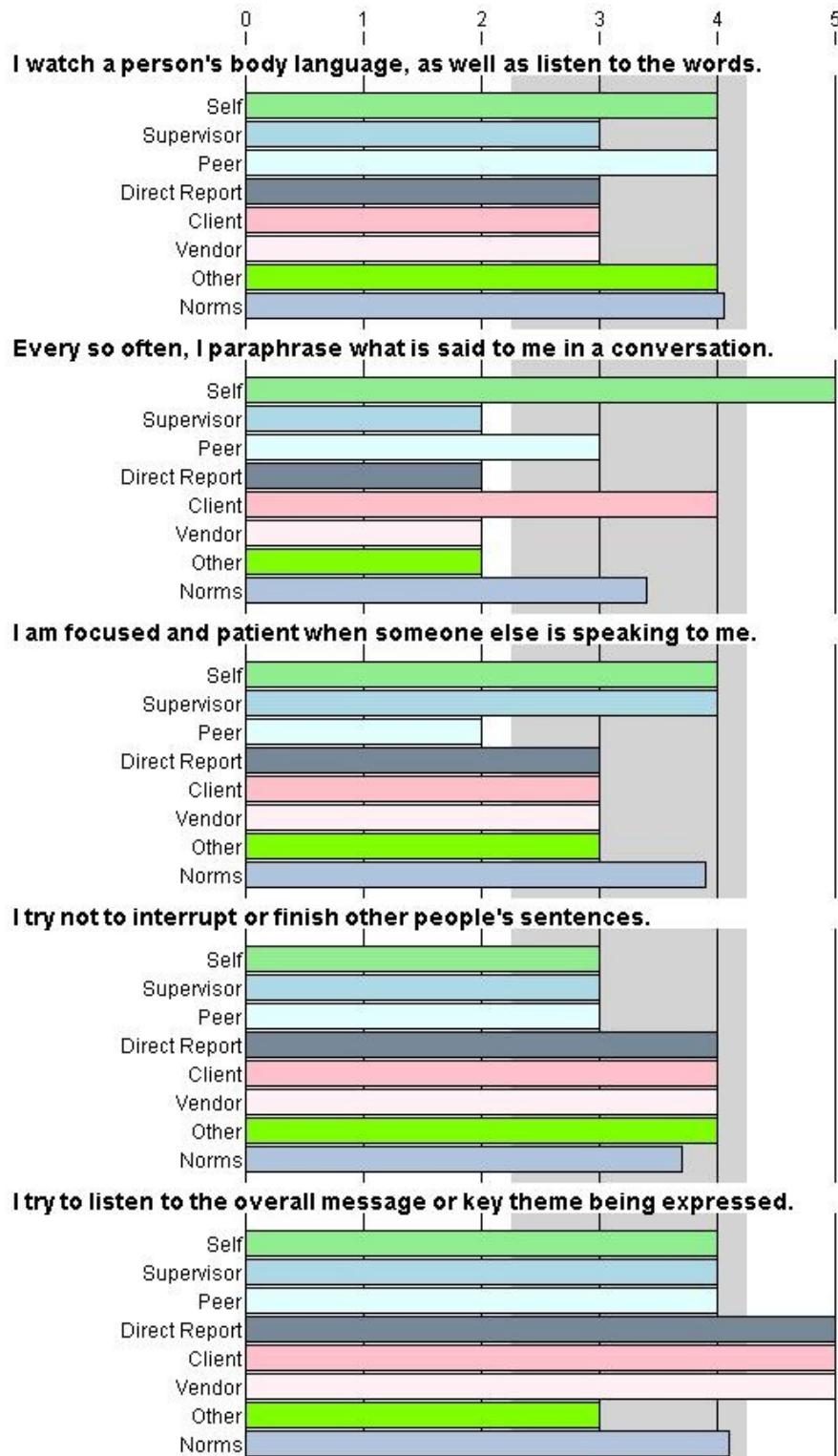
HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you recognize the value of focusing attentively and concentrating on what people are communicating when you are trying to help them improve. You tend to look for the best possible climate for people to talk, allow them to speak without interruption, and carefully assess what they are saying.

A high scorer will quickly demonstrate interest and appreciation for what an individual has to say and has the patience and temperament necessary to guide and offer ideas or concerns. These kinds of people create a quiet, comfortable atmosphere for conversation, and deserve their reputation as reliable sources of support and encouragement.







This section on Listening Skills looks at your ability to hear as well as understand other people, and to quickly discover their full communication or overall message. It asks the question: "How attentively do you listen so as to understand other people and help them to successfully share what they are thinking and feeling?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to become more empathetic listeners. They should take more time and pay more attention to people when they are talking with them. They can start to do this by maintaining good eye contact, not interrupting, paraphrasing and summarizing what they hear, and trying to discover all of what the speaker is seeking to convey.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Listening Skills

- Find the right kind of climate to listen properly without distraction.
- Give every individual that you are seeking to coach your full time, attention, and concentration.
- Focus on their needs and listen for as long as possible, with minimal interruption.
- summarize what you think you heard from time to time to be sure that you have heard them properly and reassure them that you did.
- Learn how to read body language (your own and other people's) to enhance your listening skills.



CAPACITY TO CONFRONT AND CHALLENGE

This section focuses on your Capacity to Confront and Challenge. It looks at the extent to which you help people face up to their personal responsibilities and/or problems in order to deal with them successfully. It asks the question: "How successfully do you work with people to perform an honest appraisal of their shortfalls and encourage new thinking and strategies to overcome them?"



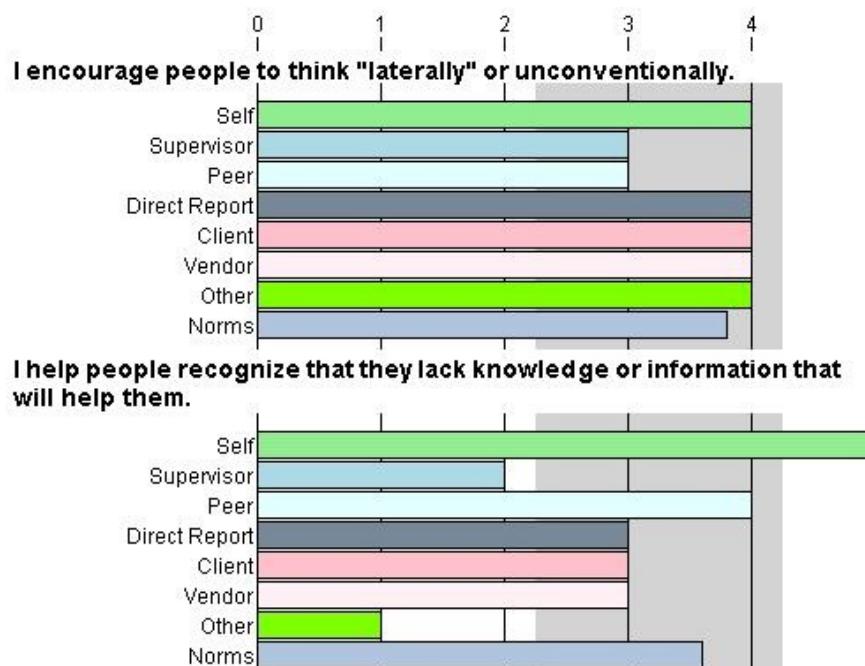
Interpretation

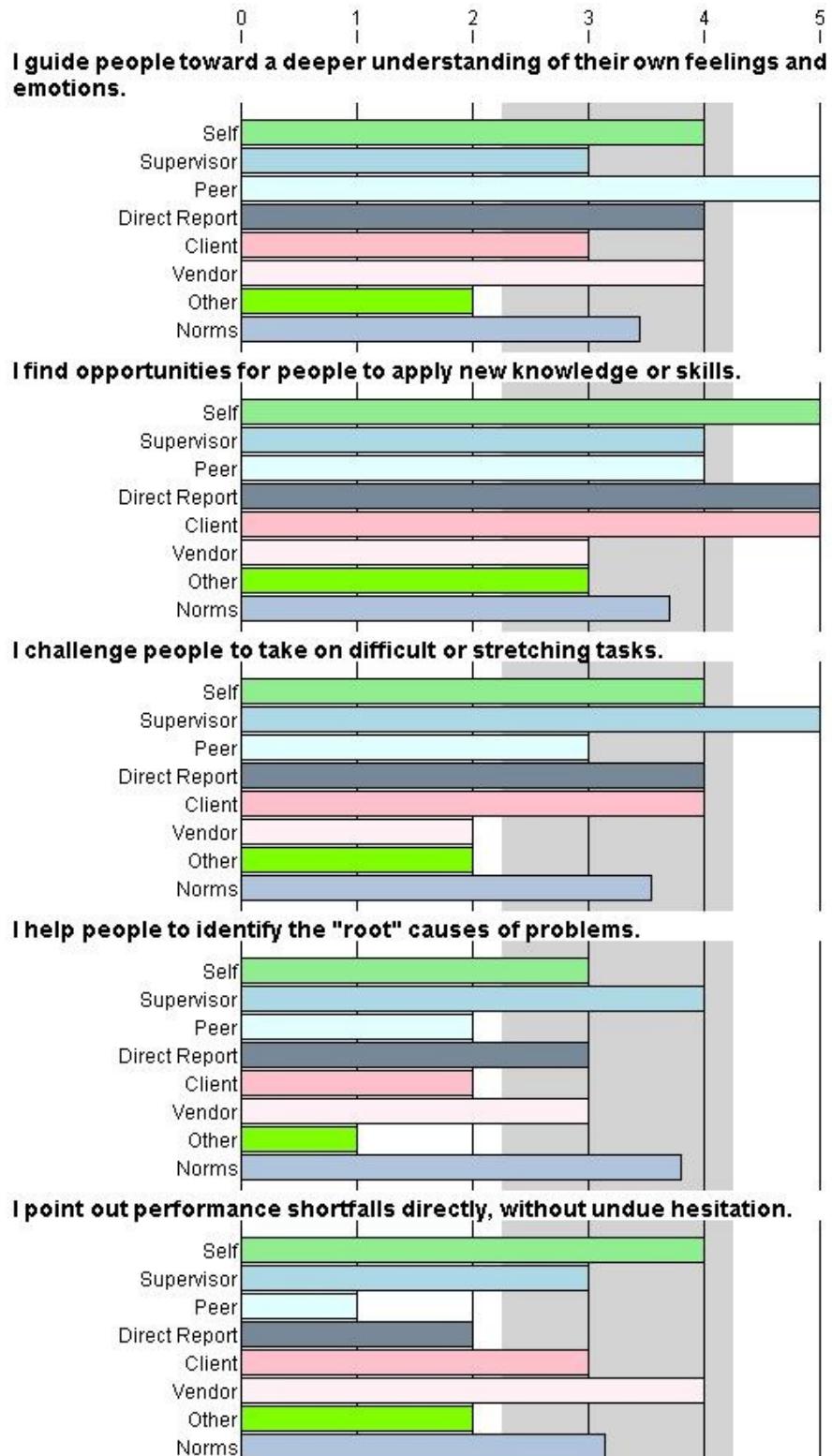
LOW (less than 2.75)

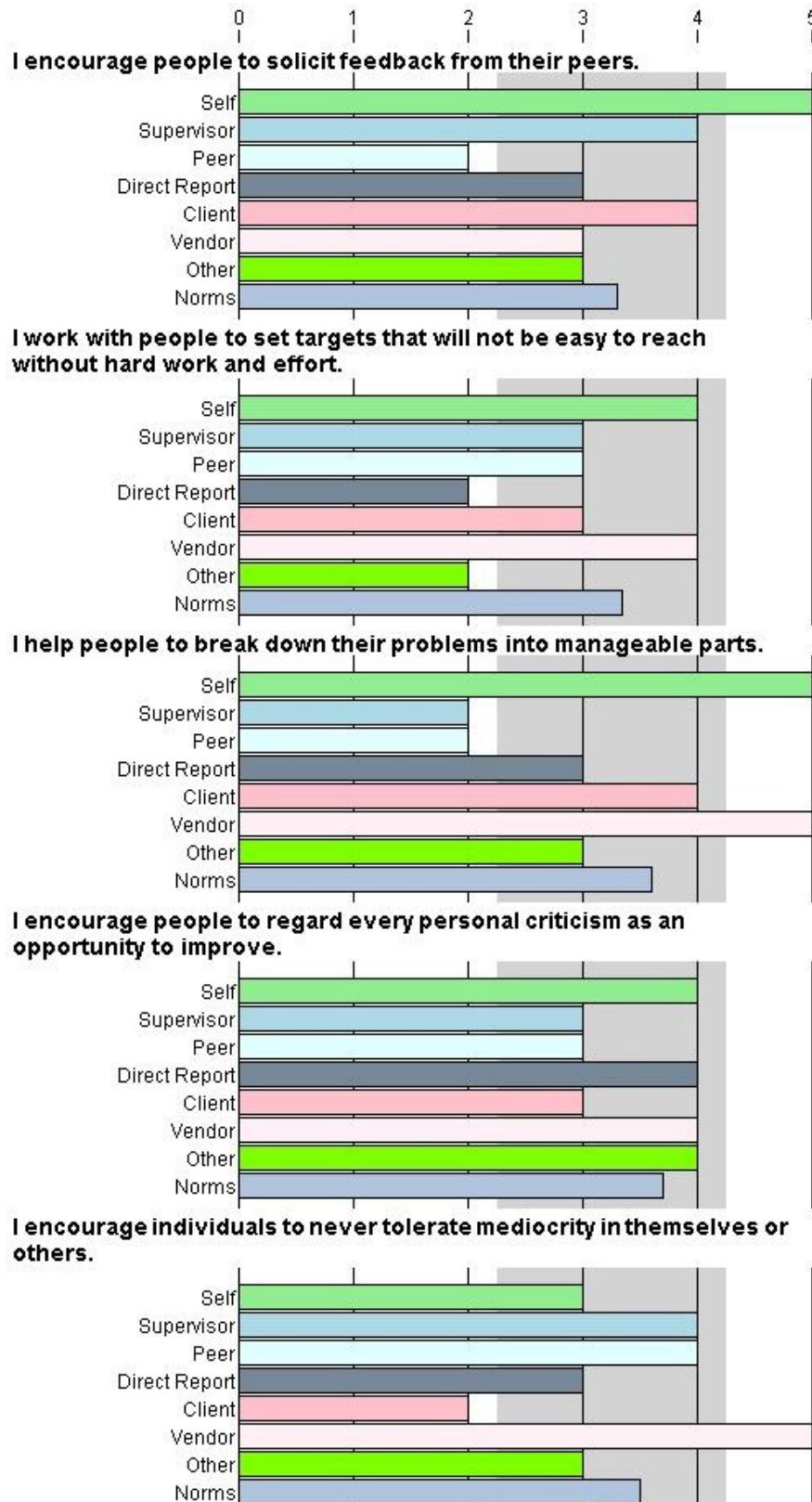
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you rarely challenge people to think about their responsibilities and problems in new or different ways nor encourage them to reflect more deeply about performance shortfalls. You are likely to tolerate mediocrity, and thus do not help others improve or confront their "average" performance. An individual who scores low in this area is likely to find performance coaching more difficult because he or she is not willing to get people to reflect on their poor or average performance or strive to reach higher or better goals. This type hesitates to offer full and candid feedback, and might even fear the negative impact that criticism has on individuals when it is offered.

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you are effective at playing "devil's advocate" in a balanced and constructive way. You help individuals understand that they can and must do something about their difficulties and concerns, and you help create in them a healthy intolerance of average or mediocre performance or outcomes. A high scorer uses a variety of different ways and means to help people critically focus on their performance as a basis for improvement. He or she is perceived as firm but fair when dealing with others and tends to be solution-focused in terms of future courses of action in coaching situations.







This section focuses on your Capacity to Confront and Challenge. It looks at the extent to which you help people face up to their personal responsibilities and/or problems in order to deal with them successfully. It asks the question: "How successfully do you work with people to perform an honest appraisal of their shortfalls and encourage new thinking and strategies to overcome them?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to become more comfortable providing direct and candid feedback to others about performance, and encourage them to "stretch" to overcome poor or average performance. To do this, they should practice asking probing questions, and challenge themselves and others to think deeply and creatively about new or different approaches they can take as alternatives to the current situation.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Capacity to Confront and Challenge

- Develop a set of useful questions that you can ask individuals to help them assess whether or not their current approach and actions represent the best they can achieve.
- Use your questions to encourage people to solicit performance feedback from others as a healthy part of personal growth and learning.
- Challenge people to focus on their true development needs and on what they plan to do to address them.
- Encourage individuals you coach to look at the deeper root causes of their problems and challenges.
- Identify specific tasks or projects that can challenge and stretch people's skills and get them thinking in new directions.



PROBLEM SOLVING

This section on Problem-Solving Ability assesses your ability to find appropriate methods and means to identify/analyze an individual's problems or concerns and then explore avenues that might lead to solutions. It asks the question: "How well do you provide people with a contextual framework that helps them think about their problems and possible solutions?"



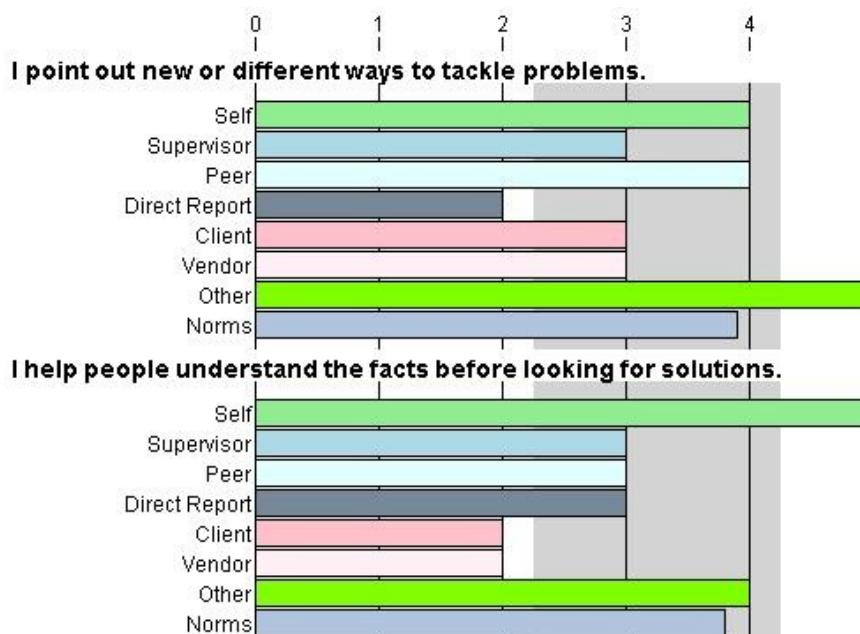
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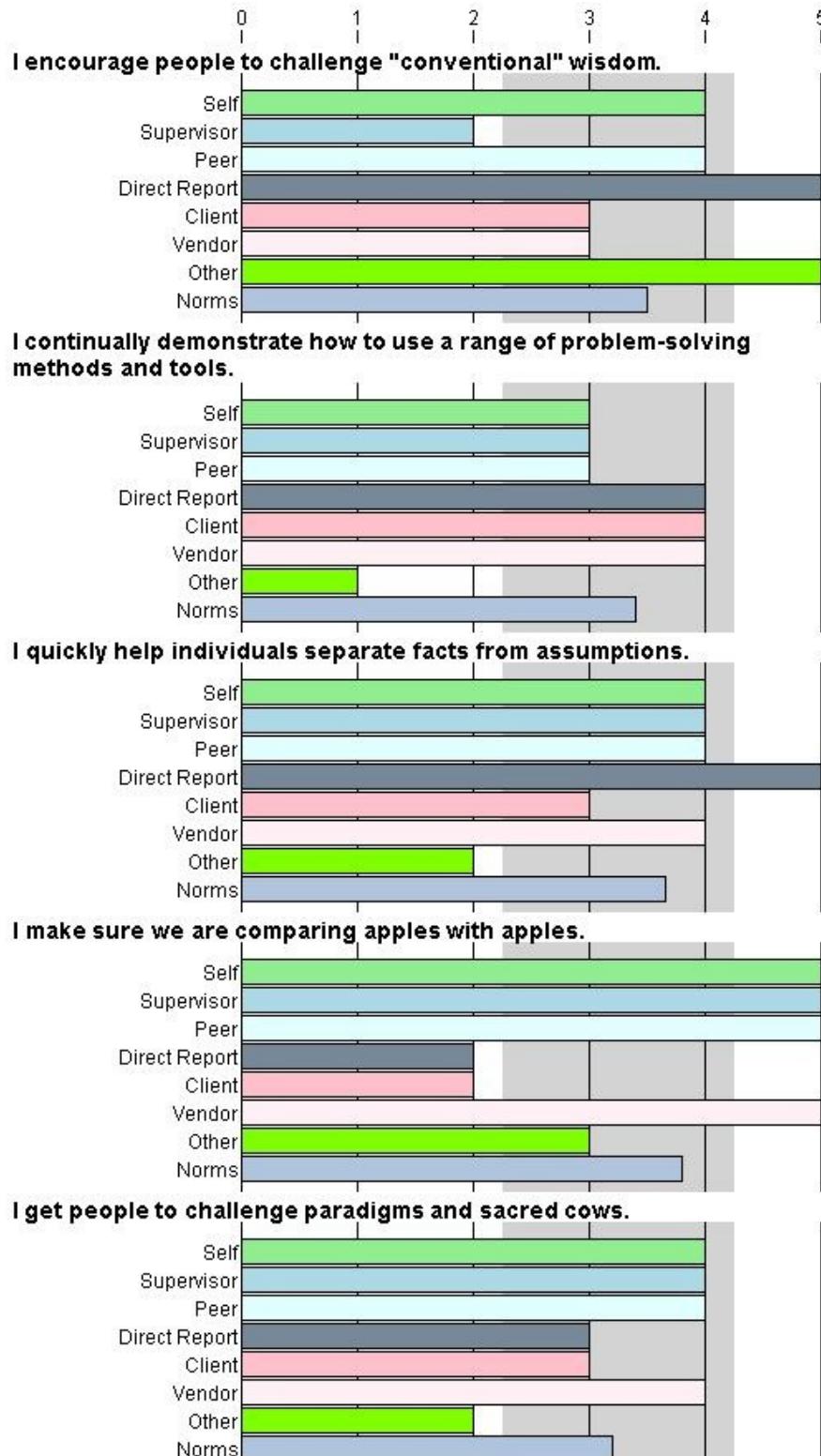
LOW (less than 2.75)

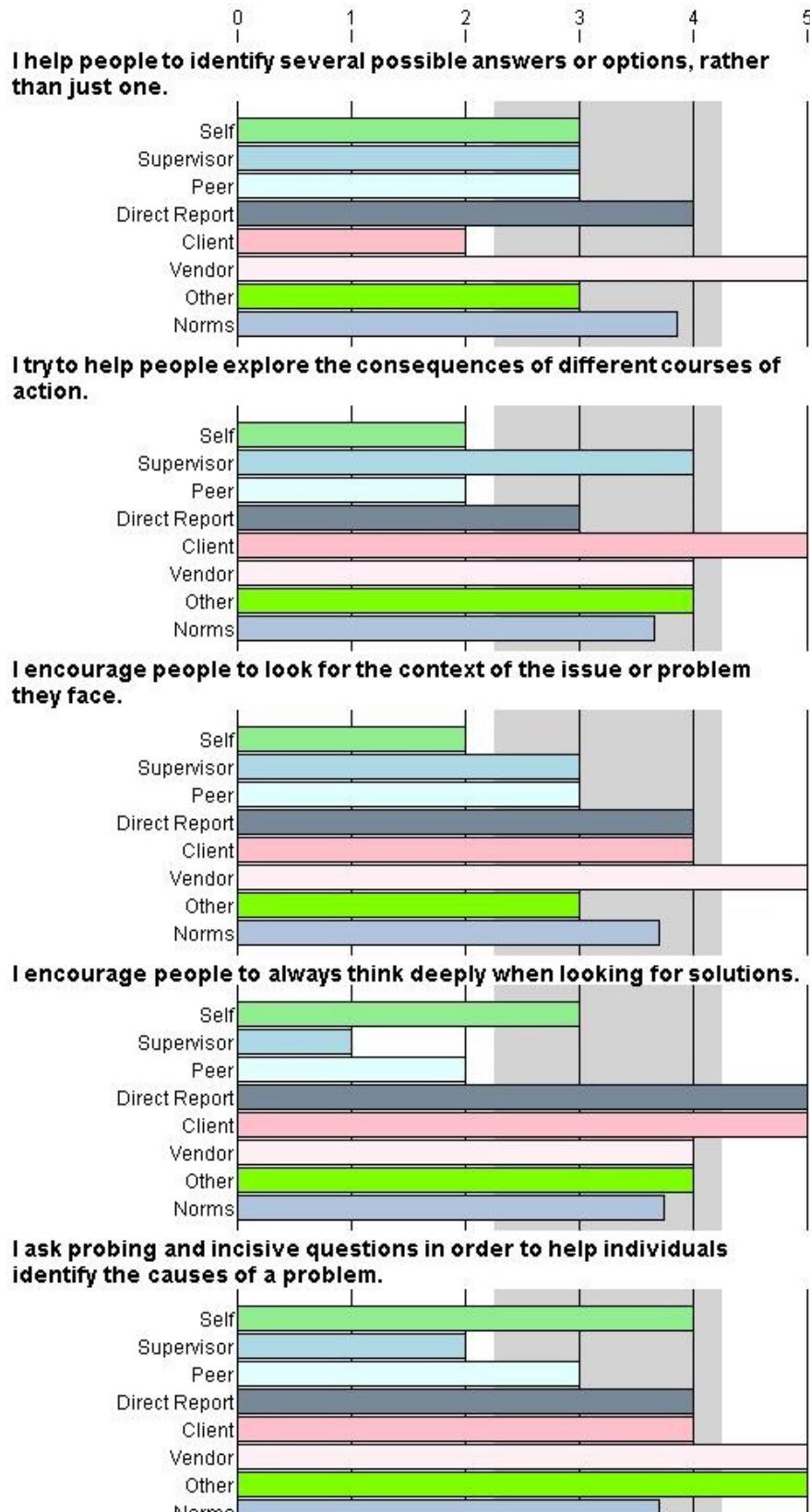
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you rarely offer creative problem-solving or problem-analysis tools, techniques, and methods when coaching individuals. You might not be helping them "think outside the box" to find a better solution or positive way forward. An individual who scores low in this area is probably ill-prepared to help people to look rigorously at the situations or circumstances they face and use careful sifting and analysis to come up with solutions. Such people generally lack the knowledge and understanding needed to introduce useful problem-solving tools or approaches that provide new insights or create a different contextual framework for a problem to be dealt with.

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you encourage individuals to use different ways of looking at problems or issues and are able to draw on a range of different analytical tools. You also encourage them to generate several possible solutions and then carefully evaluate the best one, based on the evidence, that will provide the best possible course of future action. An individual who scores high in this area is perceived to be appropriately knowledgeable and understanding regarding a range of problem-solving approaches, and is capable of suggesting the most appropriate of these when the circumstances are right to do so.







This section on Problem-Solving Ability assesses your ability to find appropriate methods and means to identify/analyze an individual's problems or concerns and then explore avenues that might lead to solutions. It asks the question: "How well do you provide people with a contextual framework that helps them think about their problems and possible solutions?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to learn how to use a range of problem-solving so they can suggest appropriate ones when they are coaching others. They should also adopt a more incisive questioning approach and teach individual's they are coaching how to look at a problem in a new context or from a different angle in order to identify a range of solutions.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Problem Solving Ability

- Find ways to focus individuals on facts that they might have missed.
- Suggest tools and methods that might help them identify or fully understand and analyze the problem.
- Encourage individuals to challenge their assumptions, even the supposed inevitability of some of the outcomes they foresee.
- Encourage people to challenge fixed thinking paradigms and conventional wisdom.
- Help individuals to broaden their horizons when looking to solve complex problems by getting them to think outside their most immediate or familiar experience and widen their usual array of reading material.



FEEDBACK GIVING SKILLS

This section on Feedback Giving Skills looks at the extent to which you offer useful and constructive performance feedback that is accepted and acted upon. It asks the question: "How well do you make use of a range of counseling, coaching, and instructional methods and activities to help people perform at their best?"



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

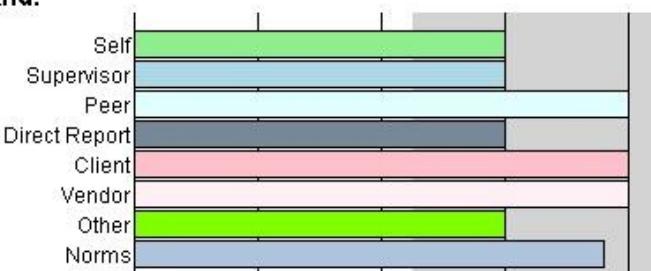
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you are less communicative than you might be in coaching others and use feedback in a limited and less-interesting way. You are more likely to occasionally offer inappropriate feedback or criticize performance or individuals before you have all the facts or a better suggestion. An individual who scores low in this area fails to offer feedback frequently enough. Individuals do not accept their counseling or instructional approach possibly because they are not getting effective feedback and their improved or good performance is not recognized or rewarded.

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you use positive two-way feedback as a primary means by which to offer instruction, training support, or general coaching. You use open and flexible communication and listening styles that allow you to watch what people do and describe ways in which they might improve or be more successful.

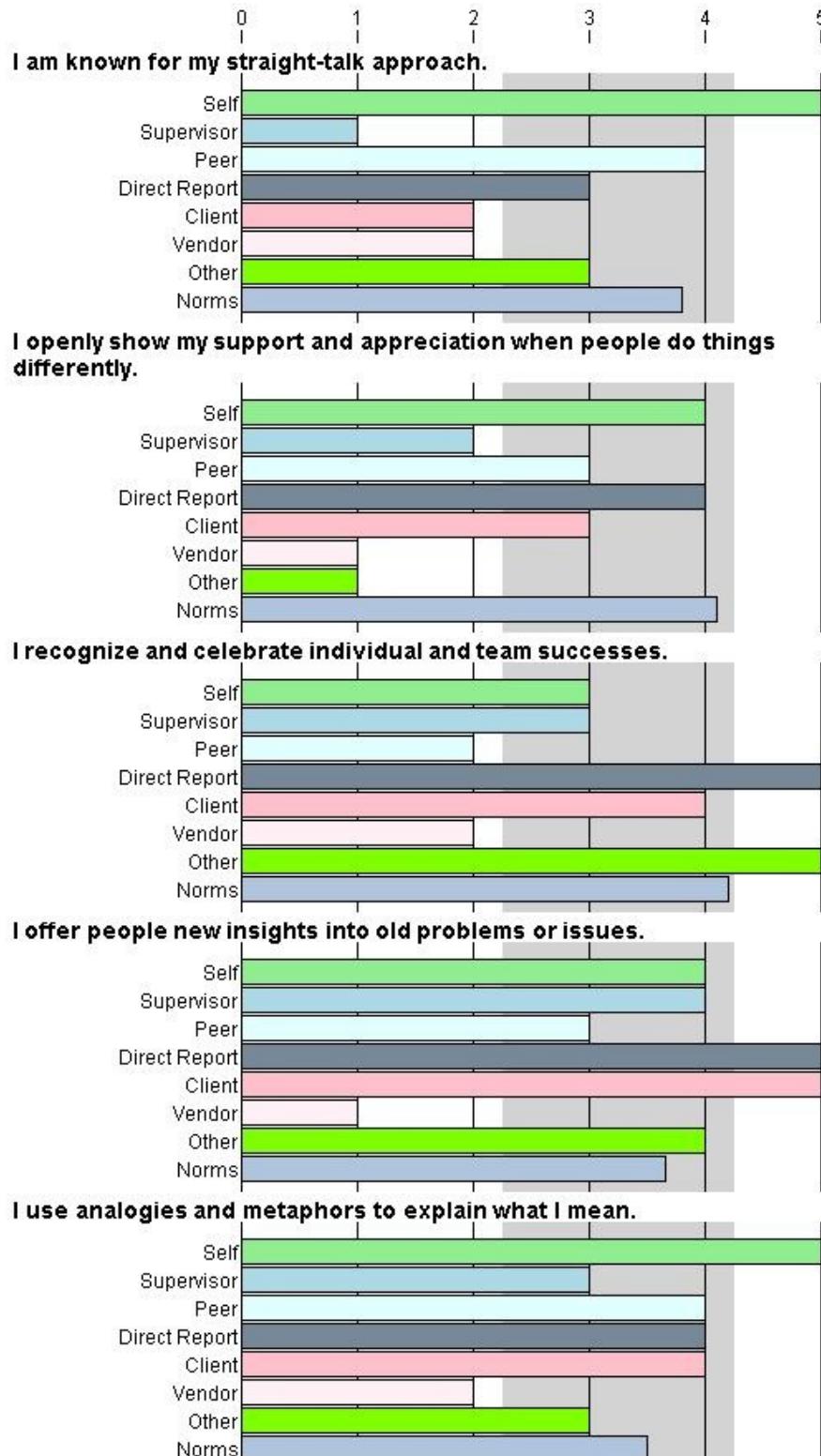
A high scorer is likely to offer people "positive strokes" for their successes and improvements, while at the same time offering insights into how they can build on or improve their efforts still further. The effective coach does this by pointing to specific areas that can be improved and helping individuals to identify appropriate strategies.

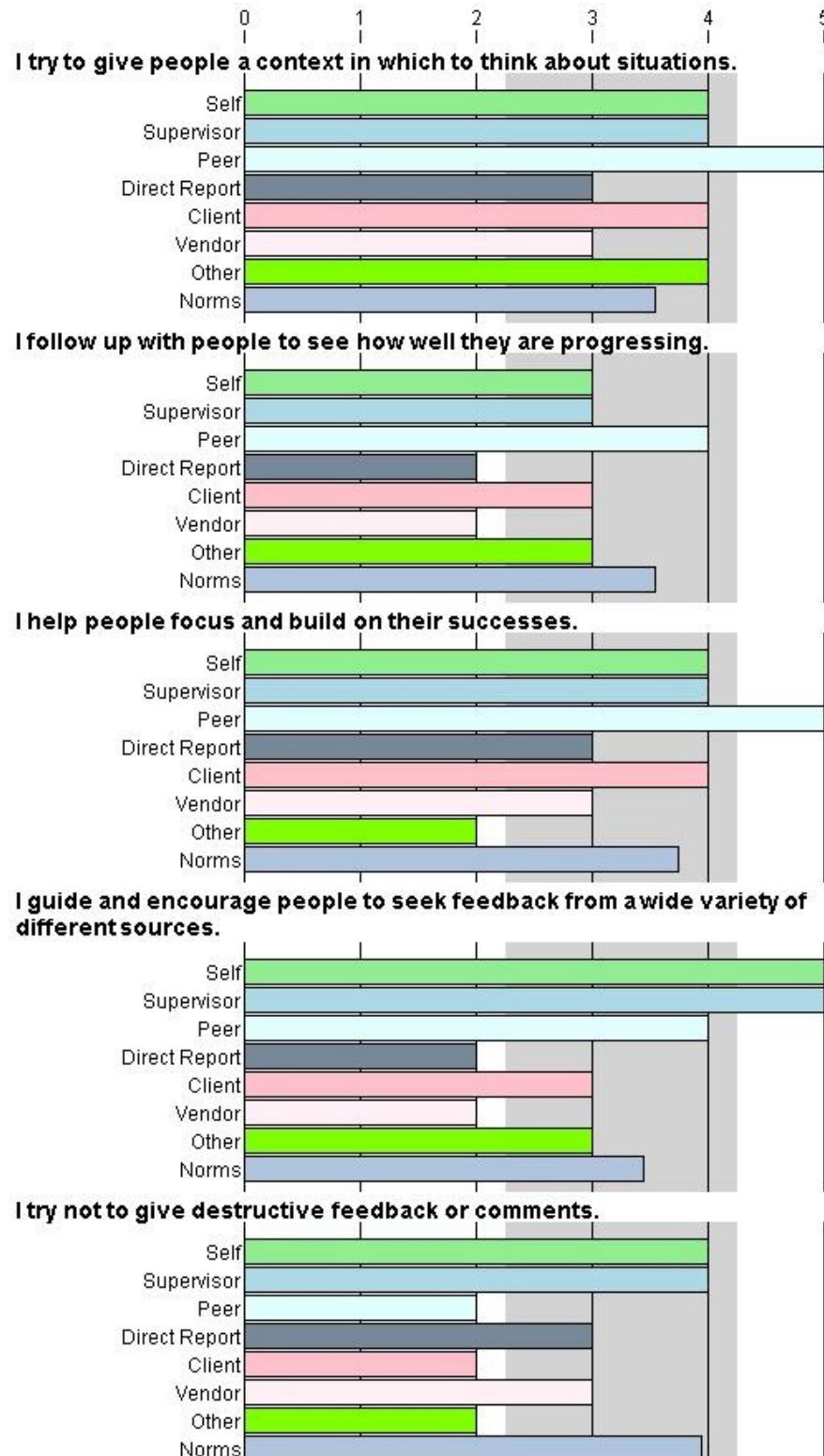
0 1 2 3 4 5
I provide concrete and specific examples in order to help people understand.



I actively demonstrate how things can be done in alternative ways.







This section on Feedback Giving Skills looks at the extent to which you offer useful and constructive performance feedback that is accepted and acted upon. It asks the question: "How well do you make use of a range of guidance counseling, coaching, and instructional materials, methods and activities to help people perform at their best?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to take the time to carefully observe the individual before offering feedback and practical suggestions for improvement. They should praise others for their achievements and find opportunities and creative ways to inspire and share insights regarding improvements.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Feedback Giving Skills

- Develop logical, clear, and concise appraisals of people's performance after careful observation.
- Find suitable times and places to offer feedback genuinely, without unduly "softening" it.
- Use analogies, metaphors, and examples to illustrate what you mean, but be clear about how you want the individual to perform.
- Follow up to make sure the individual understands.
- Take people's feelings into account when offering feedback, and only offer it if the individual is ready and willing to listen properly.



CAPACITY TO EMPOWER

This section on Capacity to Empower looks at the extent to which you give people the freedom or the "space" to determine how they will achieve personal goals or challenges. It asks the question: "To what extent do you create a climate of trust in which people feel that they can take risks and make mistakes in order to learn to do things in a better or different way?"



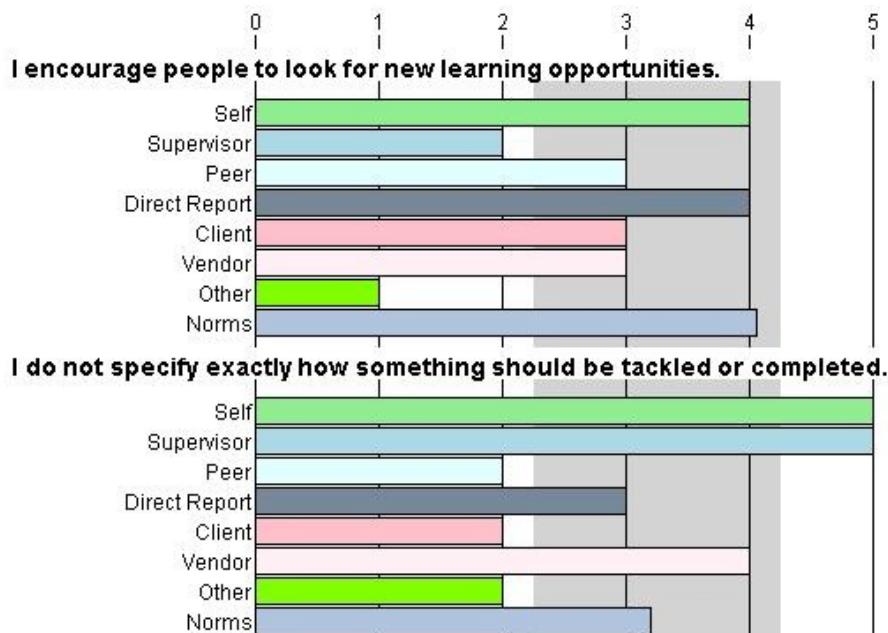
Interpretation

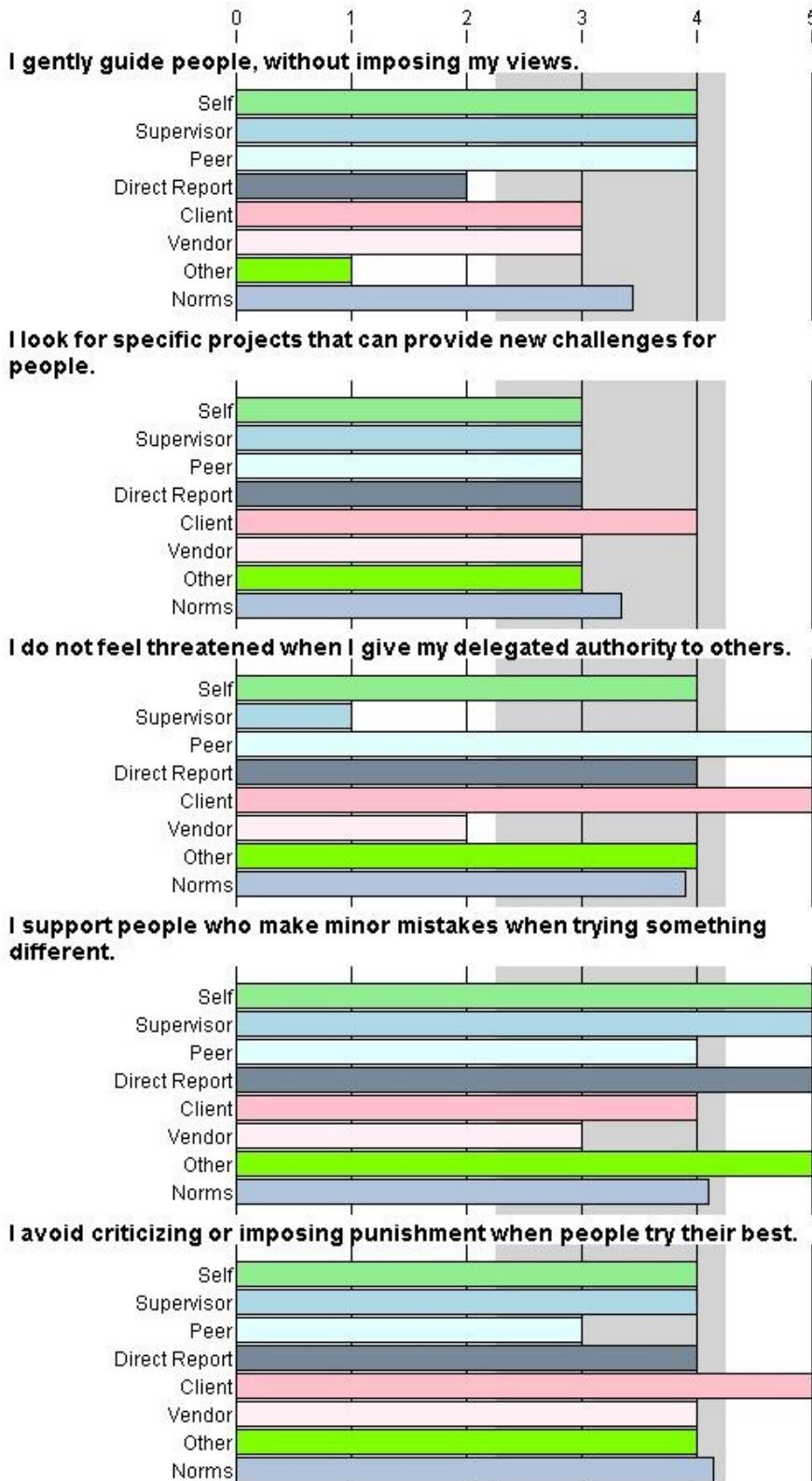
LOW (less than 2.75)

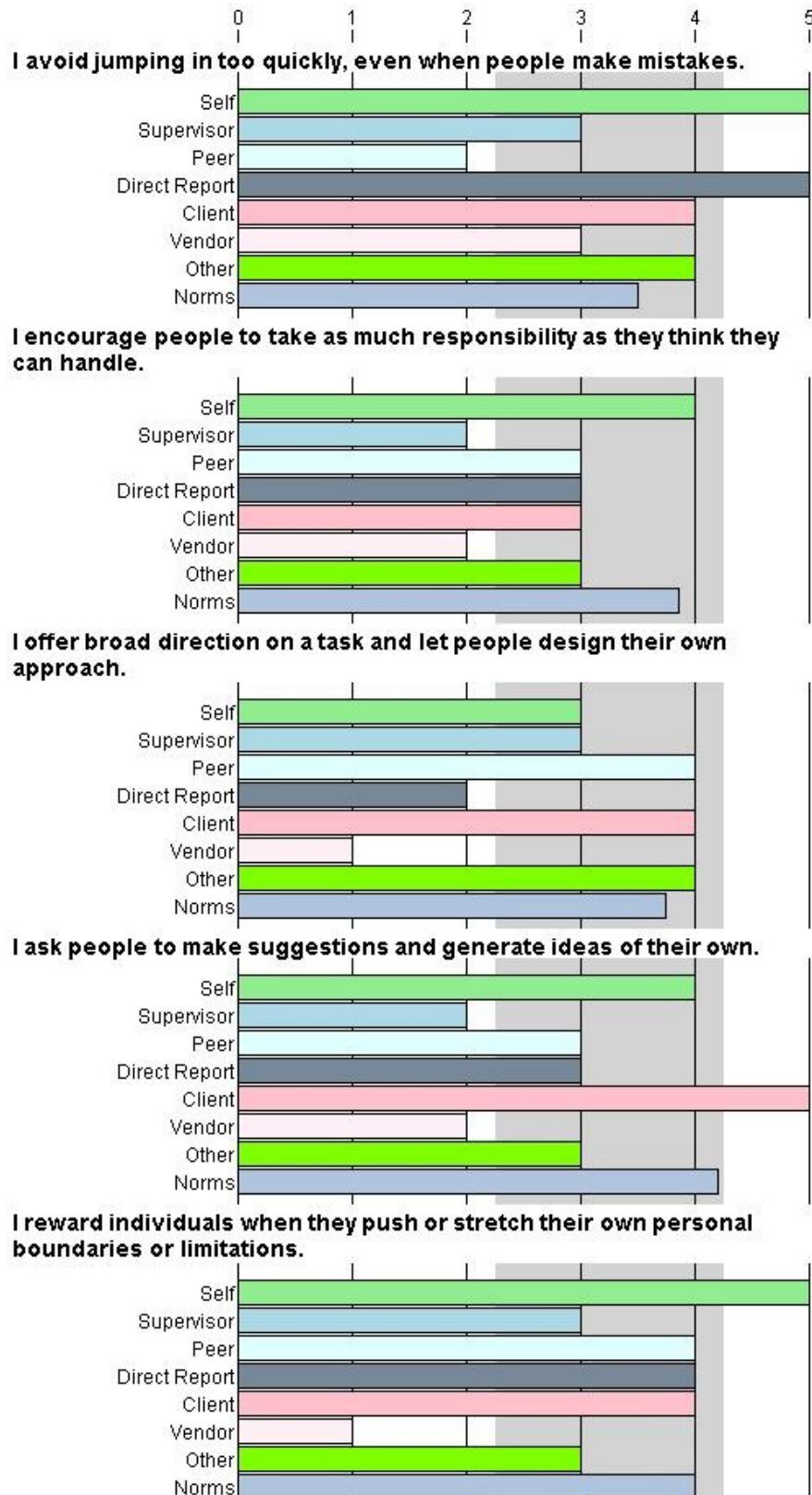
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you rarely give people enough "space" or authority to take on tasks or projects that are at the limits of their capability. You tend to over-specify how things are to be done and might even intervene personally when you feel that an individual has made a mistake or is going to fail. An individual who scores low in this area tends to take on too much by themselves or only offer low-level or "safe" tasks to others (that can be supervised) or delegate tasks that come with consequences if things go wrong. You tend to give your opinions too regularly, and even take tasks and projects back from people who are not performing to your exacting standards.

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you enjoy seeing people take on new, challenging tasks and personally grow by being given the "space" to take reasonable risks and different approaches. You delegate a lot of responsibility to people whom you believe are capable, and you encourage people to take on personal challenges and goals. A high scorer is likely to actively look for ways to empower individuals to take on responsibility and move the limits of their "comfort zone" when performing new or different tasks. You will rarely feel uncomfortable about delegating your authority to others, and you give people as much support as they need, even when mistakes or less-than-optimal paths are chosen.







This section on Capacity to Empower looks at the extent to which you give people the freedom or the "space" to determine how they will go about achieving personal goals or challenges. It asks the question: "To what extent do you create a climate of trust in which people feel that they can take risks and make mistakes in order to learn to do things in a better or different way?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to become less prescriptive or structured and more trusting of those around them if they want people to achieve results at least as good as the standards they could achieve themselves. As such, they should offer only broad directional guidance when delegating or assigning a task, and should avoid intervening unless it is absolutely critical or the individual asks for help.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Capacity to Empower

- Look for a variety of new learning opportunities for people around you, and make them easily available.
- Describe possible courses of action, but do not specify the exact approach and outcomes that you expect the individual to take or achieve. Let him or her discover a path.
- Support people when they make minor or understandable mistakes, and encourage them to assess what they can do differently.
- Reward hard work, innovation, and efforts to stretch personal boundaries.



MENTORING SKILLS

This section on Mentoring Skills looks at the extent to which you provide coaching and assistance to people who will benefit from long-term guidance, and whether or not you have the skills and experience to assist them. It asks the question: "How well do you identify people who would benefit from mentoring, and then select the right way or the right people to establish such a strong and mutually-beneficial relationship?"



Interpretation

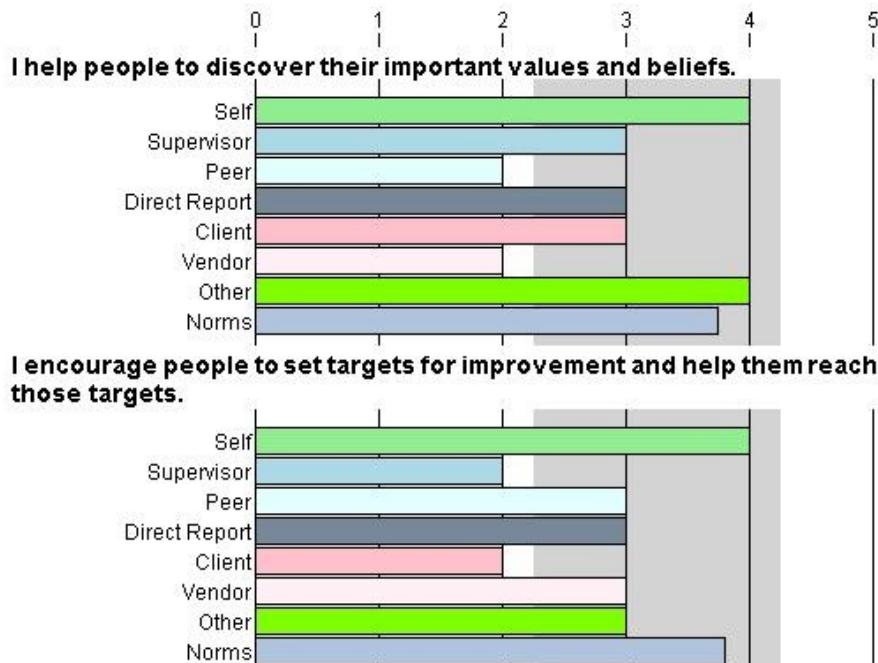
LOW (less than 2.75)

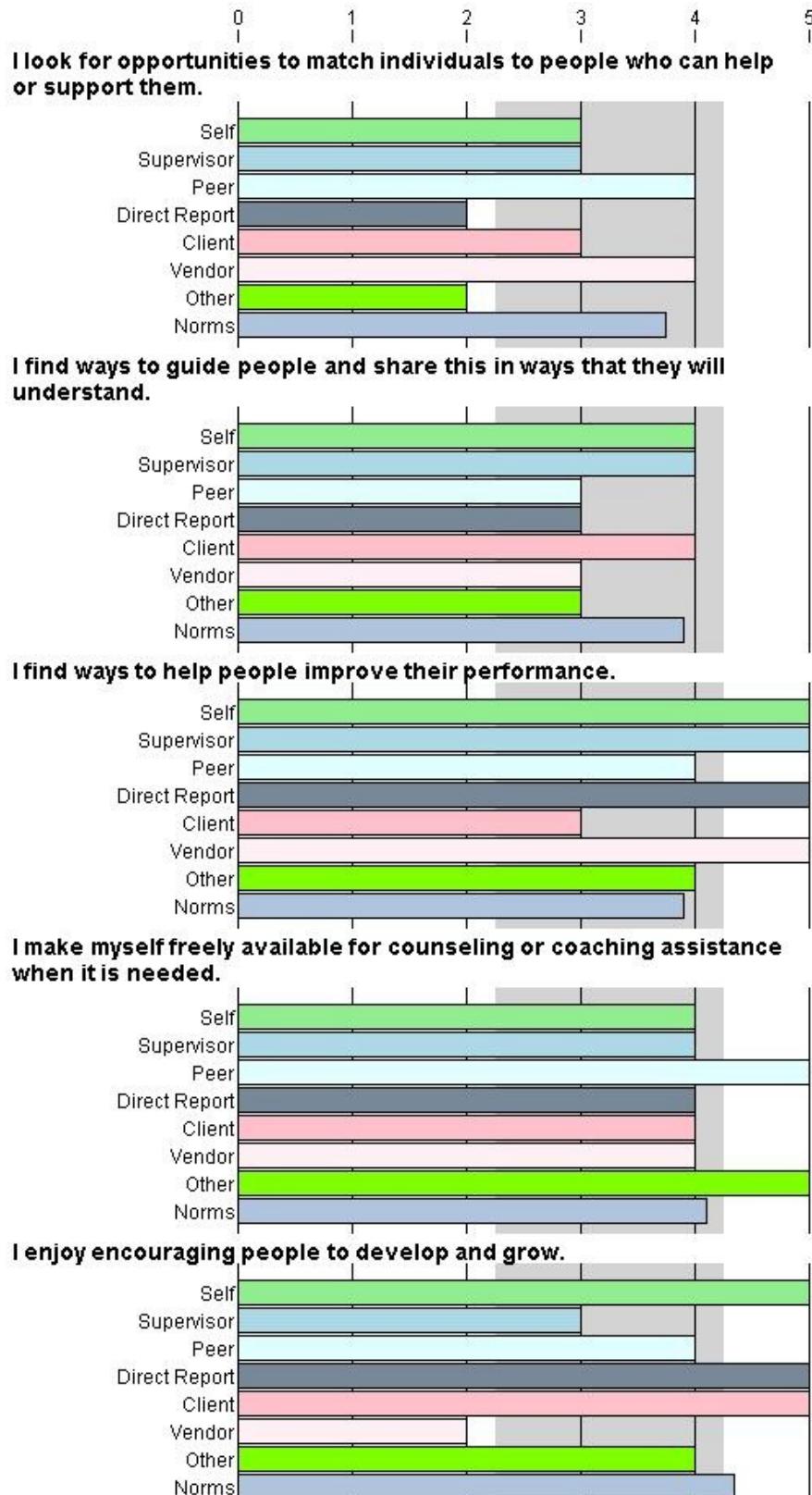
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you miss or fail to take advantage of opportunities to mentor others or find other suitable people to mentor individuals who can benefit from a long-term one-to-one relationship. At the most extreme end of the scale, you offer little or no counseling support to people, and leave them entirely to their own devices.

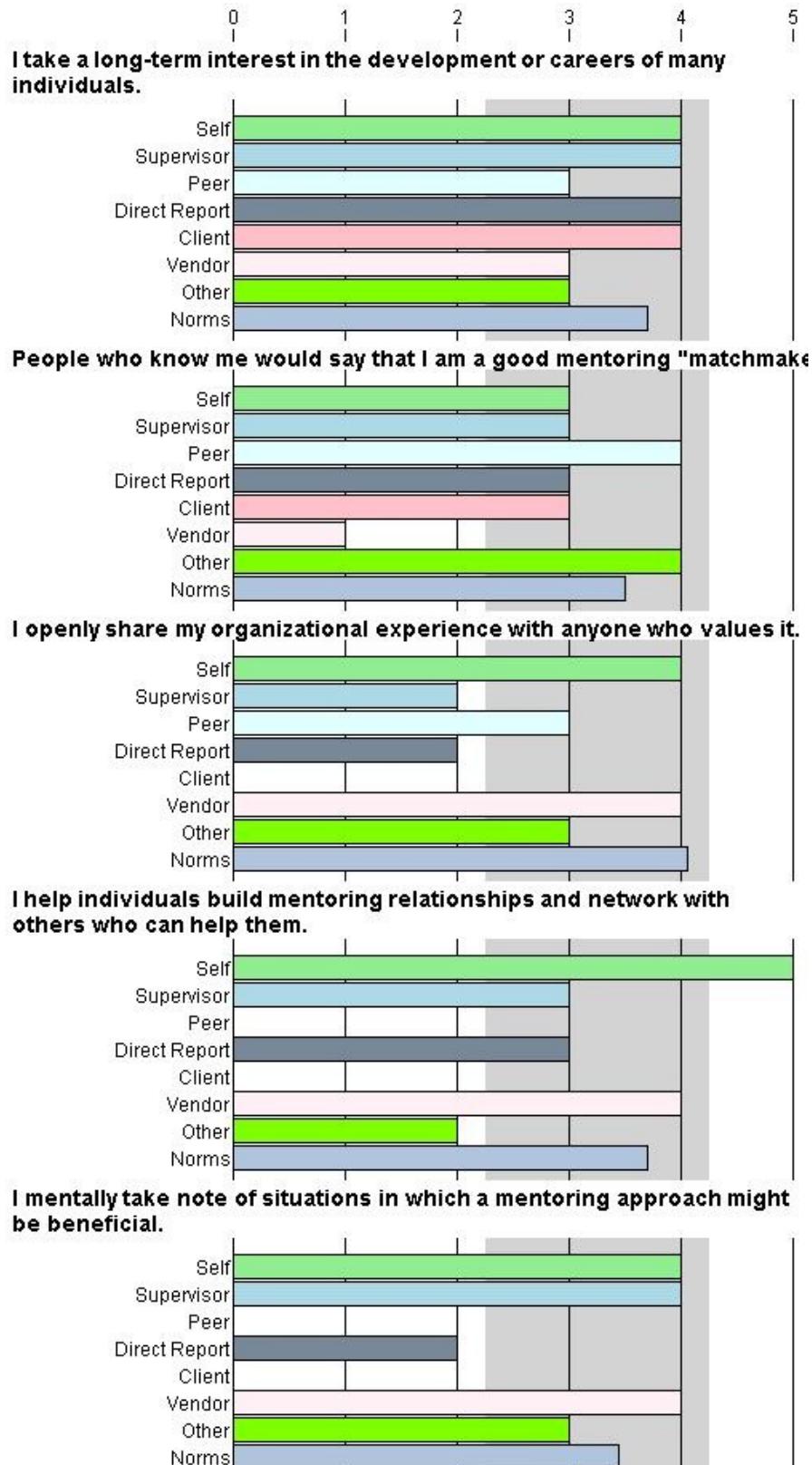
An individual who scores low in this area is likely to only offer or promote mentoring (if it is available) as part of a structured program. Low scorers tend not to identify people who would value a mentor, and do not look for opportunities to match up people with needs to people with the skills or experience to help.

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you by nature are aware of those who would benefit from mentoring, and are able to identify individuals (including yourself) who are or would be highly effective mentors to others. You are adept at matching individuals to their most useful and helpful mentors, taking into account individual styles and personality. A high scorer seeks out inexperienced individuals or people who could benefit from some longer-term one-to-one coaching or guidance, and will even intervene directly in order to find the most appropriate match, even if it's them.







This section on Mentoring Skills looks at the extent to which you provide coaching and assistance to people who will benefit from long-term guidance, and assess whether or not you have the skills and experience to assist them. It asks the question: "How well do you identify people who would benefit from mentoring, and then select the right way or the right people to establish such a strong and mutually-beneficial relationship?"

Recommendations for Overall Improvement

Low scorers need to take a serious interest in people who are new to a team or an organization; people in new jobs; and people who seem to be facing special or difficult challenges. They should actively try to learn what needs these people have and who in the organization can provide long-term assistance or guidance.

Ways to Strengthen or Improve Mentoring Skills

- Learn as much as you can about individuals in the organization including their beliefs, prejudices, opinions, and values.
- Gently determine whether or not they would be open to mentoring.
- Try to create well-matched mentoring relationships by drawing on your own experience and the experience of others who are willing to provide good guidance and support for the individual in question.
- Follow up with the mentor and mentee on a regular basis to ensure that individual is being given quality personal time and appropriate guidance, and is stretching and growing.



THE 10/10 REPORT

Top 10 Strengths

Mentoring Skills

77 .I find ways to help people improve their performance. 4.43

Capacity to Empower

66 .I support people who make minor mistakes when trying something different. 4.43

Listening Skills

16 .I create a warm and relaxed atmosphere so people can talk openly. 4.43

Mentoring Skills

78 .I make myself freely available for counseling or coaching assistance when it is needed. 4.29

Listening Skills

24 .I try to listen to the overall message or key theme being expressed. 4.29

Capacity to Confront and Challenge

28 .I find opportunities for people to apply new knowledge or skills. 4.14

Empathizing Ability

1 .I make myself available and accessible so people can talk to me. 4.14

Mentoring Skills

79 .I enjoy encouraging people to develop and grow. 4.00

Capacity to Empower

67 .I avoid criticizing or imposing punishment when people try their best. 4.00

Empathizing Ability

6 .My actions match my words. 4.00

Top 10 Development Needs

Capacity to Confront and Challenge

30 .I help people to identify the "root" causes of problems. 2.57

Feedback Skills

52 .I openly show my support and appreciation when people do things differently. 2.57

Listening Skills

14 .I create a positive climate so people will be candid with me. 2.71

Capacity to Confront and Challenge

31 .I point out performance shortfalls directly, without undue hesitation. 2.71

Listening Skills

21 .Every so often, I paraphrase what is said to me in a conversation. 2.86

Feedback Skills

51 .I am known for my straight-talk approach. 2.86

57 .I follow up with people to see how well they are progressing. 2.86

60 .I try not to give destructive feedback or comments. 2.86

Capacity to Empower

61 .I encourage people to look for new learning opportunities. 2.86

69 .I encourage people to take as much responsibility as they think they can handle. 2.86



COURSE AND READING SUGGESTIONS

Here is a link to a 12 page workbook that can help you further

<http://assessments24x7.com/rsb/RSBco.pdf>

The following are general reading and course suggestions that may help you to better understand the two categories in which your scores were the lowest and to assist you in writing your development plan.

Feedback Skills

Feedback Skills looks at the extent to which you offer useful and constructive performance feedback that is accepted and acted upon. It asks the question: "How well do you make use of a range of guidance counseling, coaching, and instructional methods and activities to help people perform at their best?"

Course Suggestion

- Feedback Giving and Receiving
- Appraising Performance
- Communications Skills
- Mentoring Others
- Coaching Skills

Other Suggestion

- If you feel comfortable doing so, talk to your direct supervisor/manager or a training and development specialist about personal training, coaching, and specific projects, and other possible support they may be able to offer to improve your skills.

Reading Suggestion

- Coaching for Performance (People Skills for Professionals). John Whitmore
- Coaching for Improved Work Performance. Ferdinand F. Fournies
- Leader As Coach: Strategies for Coaching and Developing Others. D.B Peterson and M.D Hicks
- The Management Mirror : How to Create a Behavioral Feedback System That Improves Performance. Robert S. Sobel, and Patricia M. McNally
- Effective Coaching (Orion Business Toolkit). Myles Downey
- Co-Active Coaching : New Skills for Coaching People Toward Success in Work and Life. Laura Whitworth, Henry House, Phil Sandahl, and Henry Kimsey-House
- The Agile Manager's Guide to Coaching to Maximize Performance (The Agile Manager Series). Jack Cullen, and Len DiInnocenzo
- The Dos and Don'ts of Work Team Coaching : A Comprehensive Study of the Worker/Coach Interpersonal Relationship: Steve Herbelin (Editor), Pat Guiney (Editor), and Randy Glasbergen

Capacity to Confront and Challenge

Capacity to Confront and Challenge looks at the extent to which you help people face up to their personal issues and/or problems in order to deal with them successfully. It asks the question: "How successfully do you work with people to perform an honest appraisal of their shortfalls and encourage new thinking and strategies to overcome them?"

Course Suggestion

- Effective Coaching Skills
- Feedback Giving and Receiving
- Creativity and Innovation
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Assertiveness
- Conflict Resolution

Other Suggestion

- If you feel comfortable doing so, talk to your direct supervisor/manager or a training and development specialist about personal training, coaching, and specific projects, and other possible support they may be able to offer to improve your skills.

Reading Suggestion

- The Official Criticism Manual. Deborah Bright
- Catalytic Coaching : The End of the Performance Review. Garold L. Markle
- Coaching: Realising the Potential. P. Kallnaukas and H. King
- Effective Coaching (Briefcase Books Series). Marshall J. Cook
- Leader As Coach : Strategies for Coaching & Developing Others. David B. Peterson and Mary Dee Hicks



DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Use the space below to write out your personal development plan for the next 12 months based on your results. Draw upon the general improvement actions in relevant areas of the report, and ideas that are suggested in the attached coaching tips.

I help people to identify the "root" causes of problems.
Action to Take:

Score: 2.57

I openly show my support and appreciation when people do things differently.
Action to Take:

Score: 2.57

I create a positive climate so people will be candid with me.
Action to Take:

Score: 2.71

I point out performance shortfalls directly, without undue hesitation.
Action to Take:

Score: 2.71

Every so often, I paraphrase what is said to me in a conversation.
Action to Take:

Score: 2.86

Capacity to Confront and Challenge

Help people identify the root causes of problems or issues.

All individuals and teams experience success and failure. We can look superficially for the cause of each success or failure, or we can dig deeper to find out what really happened. That deeper digging can be most enlightening, not only for what it reveals about what we have done, but for what it reveals about ourselves as well. Effective coaches encourage people to look for the root causes of team success and failure. Here's how to do that:

1. Separate causes from symptoms. None of us would be particularly happy if our doctor is content to treat only the symptoms of an illness, rather than look for the causes underlying the symptoms.

2. The best way to find underlying causes and not be distracted by symptoms is to put some time into the process. If we do a rush job, then we can't expect good results. Sometimes we have to mull things over for a long time before we begin to see patterns emerge. Patience is a bitter plant, but it has a sweet fruit: If we succumb to time pressure and only give our mistakes (and successes) the once-over, the little time we have saved will probably turn out to be a lot of time lost when the root causes surface in the most dramatic (and expensive and destructive) manner. At that point, we might find ourselves chanting one of the saddest mantras of time management: "Isn't it amazing how there's never time to do it right, but there's always time to do it over?"

3. Point out that discovering the underlying causes of our mistakes will create opportunities for learning that will prevent bigger mistakes. As the old adage goes, a stumble might prevent a fall.

Point out also that mistakes are not always what they seem. They can be solutions, as well as problems. Penicillin cultures grew "by mistake" in a laboratory until someone worked out what they were; Post-it notes were the by-product of a "failed" glue; Columbus discovered America by mistake. Any research laboratory worth its salt will automatically presume that there will be 100, 1,000, or 10,000 "mistakes" before they have a success, but researchers believe strongly that success is built on what has been learned from the "mistakes." Two more proverbs help us understand this:

- You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.
- He who makes no mistakes does not usually make anything.

4. Just as failure can have an upside, so, too, can success have a downside. Just because we have been successful does not mean that we should not subject our successes to the same scrutiny we apply to our mistakes and failures. What were the flaws in our project or our thinking? Do they still exist, obscured by our relief and momentary euphoria? What we sometimes attribute to our superior skill and foresight is really only dumb luck. Sometimes our victories are Pyrrhic and illusory.

Feedback Skills

Openly show support and appreciation when people do things differently.

Management textbooks are filled with advice and explicit guidance on how to achieve outstanding personal performance, but in most organizations, outstanding performance is elusive. Getting people to work co-operatively, keeping problems to a minimum, and just getting the job done are challenges enough—let alone worrying about how we are going to get people to go the extra mile or achieve a step-change improvement in their overall performance. Most coaches know that a prescriptive textbook solution cannot be applied slavishly anyway; the efforts and the results must come from within.

Yes, the effective coach can start people on their journey toward outstanding performance by first defining what this might look like for the individual. A better and more productive approach, however, is to use simple rewards and recognition when the individual does almost anything above and beyond what is expected of them. You can avoid elaborate reward systems (at least in the early stages) and substitute a basic informal, “fast-response” recognition system in its place.

There are many ways to quickly reward or recognize outstanding performance or celebrate the achievement of an individual who did new and different things. Here are a few ways to recognize such performance more readily:

- 1.** Take time to talk to people at their place of work. When they have done something that deserves recognition, genuinely praise their efforts and make it known that you appreciate the effort and the results.
- 2.** Spend five minutes in your regular business meetings to recognize the positive achievements of individuals, and applaud people who do things differently to achieve a better result. This creates a higher profile for these individuals, but also points them out as role models for others.
- 3.** Hold informal formal-recognition meetings to show your appreciation for anyone who has put in a little bit extra.
- 4.** Take excellent performers whom you are coaching to lunch once a month as an informal reward.
- 5.** Send notes of congratulations to deserving individuals on a regular basis.

Listening Skills

Create a positive climate so people can be candid with you.

You can create rapport and show empathy by demonstrating that you are sincere and you want to help other people. Let others know that they can be entirely open and candid. Be up-front about this, so that the other person sees that there are very few barriers between you and them. Here's how to do that:

1. Many times the solution to a speaker's situation is obvious to the listener. Other people's problems tend to look simpler than our own (primarily because we can be more objective about other people's problems). We can prompt them to find the solutions that we can see: Gently nudge the speaker down a particular pathway—suggest associations, linkages, precedents, and similarities. Let them discover the solution themselves.

2. Sometimes people will have a hard time finding their own solutions (or at least discover them in time). Situations like this call for probability judgments: If you think that it is not likely that the other person will discover the truth or discover it in time, you will need to speak up about what solutions you see. Use phrases such as:

- “Do you think perhaps … might work, instead?”
- “As an outsider, I might not understand everything that's going on here, but would it be possible to …?”
- “Have you considered that … might be the problem, instead?”

3. Be compassionate, and be powerful. Be known as someone who will always hear another person out, but also someone who doesn't like to have their time wasted. To be known as a resource who is willing to listen is a very good thing! This kind of reputation will help you become a good problem-solver and someone who is willing to help other people solve their own problems. A person who is better informed than anyone else—with an unmatched database of opinions, facts, and general knowledge—is indeed someone who can achieve many good things. Knowledge is power.

4. Use encouraging body language when a person is talking.

- Give the other person good eye contact.
- Maintain an alert but relaxed posture. Don't look like you are about to jump in and interrupt.
- Use hand gestures that signify non-judgmental thought (such as hand on cheek, with finger or fingers on temple). Suppress any urge to interrupt (cover your mouth).

Capacity to Confront and Challenge

Point out performance shortfalls directly and without hesitation.

Coaching is relatively easy when there are only minor performance shortfalls and the individual's performance is generally strong. In these situations, the coach might only need to take a casual, encouraging approach ("Try this and you are likely to get an even better result" or "Eliminate that small error and you'll exceed the target easily"). Coaching at the other end of the scale becomes more difficult because the performance shortfalls are major; feedback is likely to cause the individual some feelings of disappointment or even distress. The coach is sorely tempted to water down the feedback comments or be less than honest.

Unfortunately, performance that falls short of a basic threshold calls for more-direct and candid feedback. The high-performing individual is relatively confident about what he/she is doing, and is hungry for suggestions to get better; conversely, the low performer lacks ideas about what to do and needs fast and direct feedback on what should be addressed first. Don't equivocate when you're dealing with the latter.

Consider the following ways to be more effective in providing feedback:

- 1.** Establish a clear "contract" with the person whom you are coaching, in which you agree that you will offer direct and targeted feedback on performance shortfalls so constructive improvements can be made.
- 2.** Keep a notebook to record your thoughts and reflections on people's actions or behaviors, so you can provide direct and factual feedback as soon as the opportunity arises.
- 3.** Make your coaching interventions as frequent as necessary: Offer feedback on small issues or points so that you don't have to provide a lot of negative feedback all at once.
- 4.** Resist the temptation to hold back, but be sensitive with your comments. In other words, try to be constructive, not destructive.
- 5.** Always assume that people can take more criticism than you think. Direct feedback, however hard-hitting, is usually welcome rather than resented. It's all in how you deliver it and the degree of trust you have established.

Listening Skills

Paraphrase what is said in conversations.

One of the best ways of testing to see whether you have fully understood the speaker is to paraphrase what has been said. The speaker can correct you on something you misunderstood, so let them know whether or not they have properly conveyed what they intended.

Consider doing the following things to improve your paraphrasing:

1. Begin a paraphrase with statements like:

- “Now, let me see if I’ve got this right. Your main worry at the moment is ...”
- “Can I just check with you to see if I have the gist of this? The major factor ...”
- “Before you go on to that aspect—and I realize that it’s vital—can we just pause a second while I see if I’ve understood you correctly? I think that you’re saying ...”

2. If it’s difficult to stop the other person, try non-verbal ways to get their attention.

- Hold up an open palm.
- Gesture into the middle of the space between you, using one or two hands.
- Touch the person on the arm.
- Break eye contact momentarily.
- Hand them a cup of coffee or a soda.

3. Try to edit what you have been told. Summarize, generalize, and try to link related concepts together. The other person will often quickly tell you if you’ve got it wrong.

4. Pay particular attention to facts and figures, dates, and the pronunciation of people’s names. While you are paraphrasing, check with the other person as to whether or not you got these things right.

5. Don’t wait until the speaker doesn’t want to speak any more; that could be five minutes down the track, or five hours. Gently and tactfully interrupt the flow of their narrative every now and then (for example, every 1–3 minutes), and paraphrase the particular “block” of talk that has just taken place.