Foundations of Fashion Retail Management

This module equips fashion retail managers with the essential skills to lead their stores effectively. It covers core areas such as visual merchandising, customer service excellence, inventory control, team management, and sales performance strategies. The goal is to build confident, knowledgeable leaders who drive brand success at the store level.

A Manager's Role

INTRODUCTION

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LEADING DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES

Setting and Communicating Team Goals

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CREATING A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Fostering Positive Relationships

A Manager's Role

The Big Picture

As a store manager, you are the face of the brand. Your role is to lead by example, ensure operational excellence, and create a customer-centric culture. From daily team huddles to handling customer complaints, your leadership sets the tone for the entire store.

A High-Level Summary of Responsibilities

So, what activities are involved in managing people?

- Support, guide, develop, coach, and motivate employees.

- Establish team roles and delegate tasks.

- Create goals, set performance standards, and measure progress —providing both corrective and reinforcing feedback.

- Coordinate projects, resources, and timelines.

- Create team systems, tools, and processes.

- Remove roadblocks or bottlenecks for your team.

- Create a respectful, safe, and inspiring work environment that empowers employees to do their best work.

While individual contributors focus on **their own** development and performance, managers support the development and performance of **their entire team.**

Managers	Individual Contributors
- Deliver impact by developing and supporting **people** - Oversee the **broader vision** and team performance - Demonstrate strong **interpersonal skills**	- Deliver impact by building mastery and contributing **expertise** - Oversee the **day-to-day details** and self-performance - Demonstrate strong **technical skills**

- Focus on **strategy, planning,** and **facilitation**

- Focus on task and project **execution**

In the next lesson, learn how to adopt a managerial presence that inspires the confidence, respect, and commitment of your team.

Adopting a Managerial Presence

What Is a Managerial Presence?

Define what it means to adopt a **managerial presence,** or to show up at work in a way that inspires the trust, confidence, commitment, and respect of employees. Clarify that a new manager's success partly depends on how well they project a managerial presence.

Expand this row and reflect. ⎯

Consider this. You might use this space to give learners an analogy. One idea is to ask learners to imagine they have an appointment with a new doctor. As a patient, how does the learner expect a competent and professional doctor to look and act?

- For example: Do they expect their new doctor to wear a white lab coat or other professional attire—as opposed to a casual T-shirt and sweatpants? Or, perhaps they anticipate their doctor to listen attentively, react respectfully to personal health details, and maintain doctor-patient confidentiality.

- By contrast: How would they feel if their doctor took a personal phone call in the middle of their appointment? Or what if a medical professional dismissed their health concerns?

This analogy demonstrates the importance of **adopting a workplace demeanor that reflects your professional role and ambitions.**

The Big Idea

If you want others to follow your lead, then you need to act like a leader.

CONTINUE

How to Act Like a Leader

Team Management & Coaching

Step 2

Dress the Part

You might use this space to provide guidance based on your company's dress code.

Be a Boss, Not a Buddy

Describe how managers should treat team members and former co-workers. For example, you might advise:

- Be fair and friendly with everyone on your team. Don't play favorites.

- Exhibit appropriate workplace conduct. Avoid discussing topics or behaving in a way that might make others feel uncomfortable.

- Conduct honest and evidence-based performance reviews.

- Don't drink to excess at company parties, conferences, or social events.

Project Confidence

Outline a few ways that managers can project confidence. For example:

- Communicate goals, expectations, and feedback clearly, compellingly, and assertively.

- Express positivity and confidence in your vision, decisions, and team's abilities.

- Avoid engaging in workplace gossip or speaking poorly of the company or colleagues.

- Be transparent when you make a mistake or do not know the answer. Ask for team input to determine the best course of action.
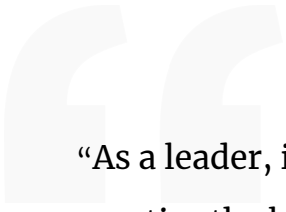
Demonstrate Competence and Good Character

Explain how teams want to follow leaders who demonstrate competence and good character. Summarize what that entails below. For example:

- Treat others with empathy, kindness, and respect.

- Celebrate differences and recognize each team member's unique ambitions, experiences, knowledge, and strengths.

- Model transparent and effective communication.

- Behave ethically and according to company values.

- Hold yourself accountable to the same standards, work ethic, and code of conduct as your team.

Summary

Summarize the main takeaways from this process interaction. Remember that you can edit, delete, or add new content to any step.

"

"As a leader, it's a major responsibility on your shoulders to practice the behavior you want others to follow."

- Himanshu Bhatia

CONTINUE

This course is designed to help you be more effective in your role as a manager. In the next section, you'll receive training for leading your team's day-to-day activities.

Setting and Communicating Team Goals

To help store managers set clear, actionable goals for their teams and communicate them in a way that drives motivation, accountability, and performance.

The Importance of Clear Goals

Clear goals give your team direction, purpose, and motivation. In a fast-paced fashion retail environment, goal setting helps focus efforts on what really moves the needle — whether it's increasing sales, improving customer service, or executing a visual standard.

Enhanced Performance

Employees have a clear focus, making it easier to stay motivated, avoid distractions, and work efficiently.

Greater Team Alignment

When everyone is on the same page, they work in unison toward shared objectives—amplifying the team's impact as a whole.

Improved Morale and Relationships

Clear goals create shared understanding, helping to prevent potential conflict due to unmet expectations.

SMART Goals Framework

S—Specific —

Add a description.

Example: Provide an example.

M—Measurable —

Add a description.

Example: Provide an example.

A—Attainable —

Add a description.

Example: Provide an example.

R—Relevant —

Add a description.

Example: Provide an example.

T—Time-Bound —

Add a description.

Example: Provide an example.

How Do I Develop Goals?

- **Use Daily Huddles**: Start each day with a 5-minute team meeting to set focus and energy.

- **Visual Goal Boards**: Post daily/weekly goals in the break room or backroom.

- **Individual Alignment**: Ensure each associate knows their role in achieving team goals.

- **Recognize Contributions**: Celebrate wins in real-time—call out team members who hit their targets.

Setting Team Goals

Review your store's KPIs from last week.

Identify one area needing improvement.

Create a SMART goal for your team.

Write down how you'll communicate this goal during your next team huddle.

Coaching Tip:

Use positive, specific language when setting goals. Instead of saying, *"We need to do better,"* say, *"Let's aim to convert 5 out of every 10 customers today — I know we can do it."*

Step 3

Create Relevant Team Goals

Describe how team goals should directly support the larger company objectives, as identified in step one. Consider providing an example.

Step 4

Set Smaller Milestones

Explain how to break team goals into smaller steps, phases, or milestones. Consider demonstrating how to do this using a hypothetical example below.

Team Goal: Add a sample team goal here.

Milestones:

- Add the first milestone.

- Add the second milestone.

- Add the third milestone.

Step 5

Assign Individual Action Items

Instruct managers to break their milestones down further by identifying individual action items. Explain the importance of assigning clear **task owners** and **due dates** for each action item.

Summary

Summarize the steps covered in this interaction.

> ⓘ Use this statement block to explain that—while managers have the final say—the goal-setting process is best viewed as a collaborative dialogue.

CONTINUE

Follow-Up & Tracking

Effective managers are clear, concise, and consistent when communicating goals. They also communicate in a way that inspires employees to take ownership of their roles and be a part of the vision.

Provide managers with a checklist of points to address in their goal communications. You can edit, delete, or add bullet points below:

☐ **Why is this project important?** Describe what makes the assignment particularly exciting or impactful—both for the business and employees' professional growth.

☐ **What is the scope of work?** Detail the specific milestones and tasks involved. If relevant, also define the work that is out of scope.

☐ **When is it due**? Provide a clear timeline and due date.

☐ **Who is responsible?** Assign task owners and make sure everyone understands their roles.

☐ **How will you measure success?** Establish specific deliverables or performance indicators.


Hold Your Team Accountable

Use this space to remind new managers that setting team goals is only half the equation. To achieve success, they must also help employees follow through with those goals by tracking progress and scheduling reviews.

CONTINUE

You can communicate goals and track progress regularly in team meetings. The next lesson provides tips for leading team meetings effectively.

Leading Effective Team Meetings
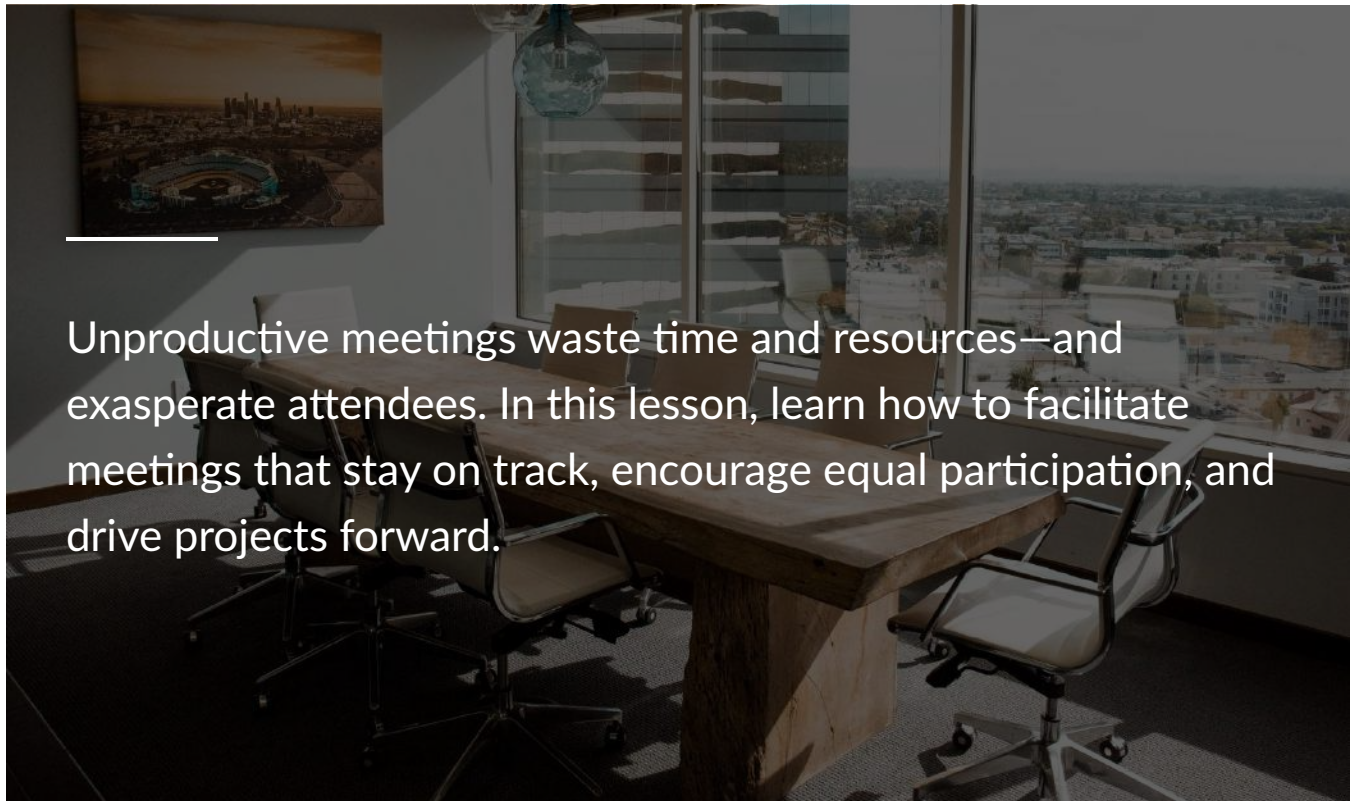
Unproductive meetings waste time and resources—and exasperate attendees. In this lesson, learn how to facilitate meetings that stay on track, encourage equal participation, and drive projects forward.

Should I Call a Meeting?

WHEN TO MEET	WHEN NOT TO MEET

Meetings are best suited for discussing topics that are:

- **Highly collaborative.** Meetings can save time when working on highly collaborative projects that involve a lot of back-and-forth discussion or building upon one another's ideas.

- **Extensive or complicated.** Extensive or complicated topics may be easier and faster to discuss verbally as opposed to an email or direct message.

- **Sensitive or interpersonal.** Written communications are less personal and leave room for misinterpretation of tone. That's why highly sensitive or interpersonal topics may be best addressed in a face-to-face meeting.

WHEN TO MEET	WHEN NOT TO MEET

You should **not** call a meeting in the following situations:

- You could communicate your message effectively through a short email or message.

- You or your team could solve the problem independently.

- You and your team can collaborate effectively without a meeting. Or, it's possible to collaborate on the project asynchronously and produce the same results.

- The purpose of the meeting is ill-defined, a low priority, or otherwise not urgent.

"Meetings must be deliberate and intentional —your organizational rhythm should value purpose over habit and effectiveness over efficiency."

Chris Fussel

Meeting Checklist

Use this section to highlight managers' core responsibilities as meeting facilitators. Encourage them to refer to this checklist before their next meeting:

☐   Define the meeting objectives.

☐   If relevant, translate those objectives into a planned agenda and disseminate it to your team in advance.

☐   Choose a meeting time and location.

☐   Confirm that the right people will attend.

☐   Assign any necessary pre-work so that everyone arrives prepared.

☐   Manage the clock for pacing and punctuality. Keep the discussion on-topic, and take responsibility for starting and ending the meeting on time.

☐   Encourage full and equal participation from all attendees.

☐   Summarize the meeting results and communicate next steps.

CONTINUE

Common Meeting Challenges—and Facilitation Techniques to Overcome Them

Improve managers' ability to engage participants, create a productive environment, and achieve meeting objectives with the help of these facilitation techniques.

How do I encourage equal participation?   —

Whether you're dealing with an overzealous meeting attendee—or a wallflower—here are some techniques for balancing participation in meetings:

- **Go around the table.** This technique is ideal for encouraging participation from quiet employees—or preventing a single team member from dominating the conversation. After asking the group a question, collect responses by going around the table and having every team member share something.

- **Ask open-ended questions.** Use open-ended questions to either increase or balance participation. For example, you could ask: "What else?" or "What do you think?" or "Who else has something to add?" or "What are your thoughts from X perspective?"

- **Break into groups.** Consider assigning pairs or small "breakout" groups to give team members time to work through more involved prompts or activities. Smaller groups are easier for participation and can give employees space, time, and support for developing their ideas.

What do I do if people talk over one another?   —

When multiple team members want to speak at once, establish who will speak first, second, third, and so on. If possible, write down the speaker order somewhere that the group can see,

and add a checkmark next to each name after a speaker has had their turn. This process is known as **speaker stacking.**

What should I do if the discussion gets off track? —

If an employee makes a point that isn't relevant to the issue at hand, acknowledge and record it, then set it aside for now. You might say, "That's a good point, but I'm not sure it's relevant to the objectives of this meeting. Let's table it for another time." You aren't ignoring the employee's ideas, but you're also staying on track and moving forward.

What do I do if we get stuck talking in circles? —

When your team gets stuck talking in circles without committing to specific decisions, solutions, or plans, you need to intervene. If that happens, you might:

- **Encourage decision-making with visual aids.** Use visual aids such as whiteboards or flip charts for capturing ideas, summarizing outcomes, or bringing closure to decisions or action items. Visual aids can help you keep the group aligned and signal when to move to the next agenda item.

- **Reframe and refocus.** Another technique is to reframe and refocus the conversation with a specific prompt, such as, "What are the next steps?" "Where did we land?" "How can we keep moving forward?" Or, "What's our final decision here?"

How do I solicit ideas from team members? —

Quickly generate ideas with a team brainstorm. Give your team a prompt and have them shout out ideas as fast as possible. Set the expectation that no idea is a bad idea in a brainstorm. Record ideas where everyone can access them.

How can I create a safe space for discussing sensitive topics? —

Agree on **ground rules** to guide team interactions. Having ground rules can foster a respectful environment that encourages participation or invites team members to voice disagreements constructively.

Some examples of ground rules include: "Consider and respect others' opinions," and, "Give everyone an opportunity to speak." You might even agree on signals team members can use when they have something they'd like to add without disrupting the person speaking.

What do I do if the meeting is taking too long? —

A drawn-out meeting isn't just frustrating, it also lowers productivity. Manage the clock with the help of these tips:

- **Create a "no-rehash rule."** A "no-rehash rule" prevents your team from repeating previous points. If an item has already been addressed, say, "No rehashing," and encourage others to do the same. That will help call out counterproductive behavior.

- **Give a time limit.** If your team is struggling to reach an agreement, give them a certain amount of time to decide. If a decision can't be reached after that time limit, assign independent work and defer the topic until the next meeting.

Many meetings end by summarizing or assigning action items. The next lesson explores when and how to delegate tasks as a manager.

Delegating Tasks Effectively

To empower retail managers with the skills to delegate tasks efficiently, ensuring store operations run smoothly while developing team capability and ownership.

Why Is Delegation Important?

As a retail manager, you can't do everything yourself. Effective delegation allows you to focus on high-impact leadership activities—like coaching, analyzing performance, and driving sales—while developing your team's skills and confidence. Delegation also improves productivity, accountability, and morale.

1   **Improves team efficiency and productivity.** Provide additional context or explanation.

2   **Frees your time to focus on big-picture items**. Provide additional context or explanation.

3   **Increases employee engagement.** Provide additional context or explanation.

4   **Creates a culture of growth and empowerment.** Provide additional context or explanation.

What and How to Delegate

Invite new managers to navigate the tabs below to explore the nitty-gritty of what and how to delegate.

WHAT TO DELEGATE	HOW TO DELEGATE

Use this tab to provide managers with examples of tasks they should delegate versus handle themselves.

WHAT TO DELEGATE	HOW TO DELEGATE

Use this tab to provide delegation tips. For example:

- **Choose the right person for the job.** Provide additional guidance or explanation.

- **Communicate expectations**. Provide additional guidance or explanation.

- **Provide training and support.** Provide additional guidance or explanation.

- **Give the appropriate level of authority.** Provide additional guidance or explanation.

- **Give feedback and celebrate success.** Provide additional guidance or explanation.
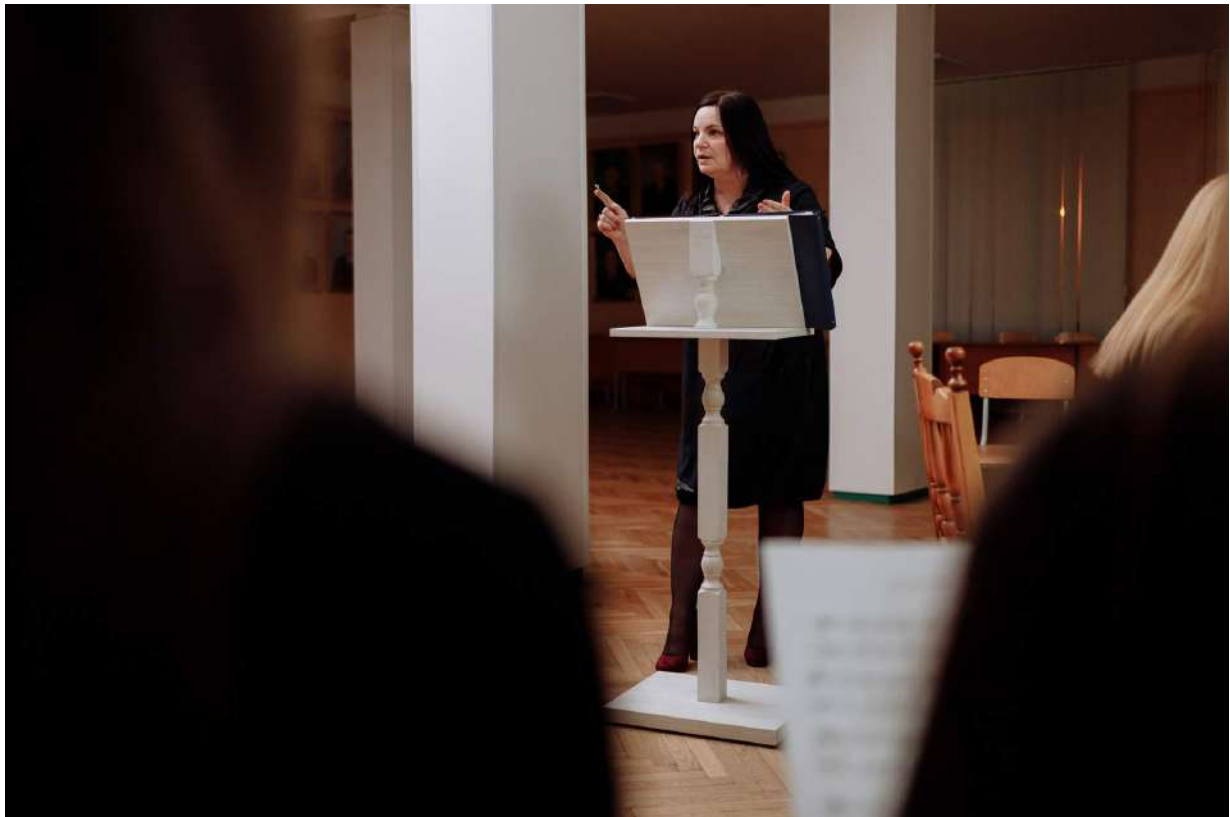
The Bottom Line

Delegation is not about offloading work—it's about building capability. Start small, support often, and celebrate wins.

Even after delegating tasks, it's still a manager's responsibility to support employees with what they need to succeed. The next section focuses on how to create a team environment that enables members to thrive.

Fostering Positive Relationships

The Foundations of Strong Working Relationships

To help retail managers create a supportive, respectful, and motivating work environment by building strong relationships with team members, customers, and head office partners.

☐ **Mutual respect.**

☐ **Mutual trust.**
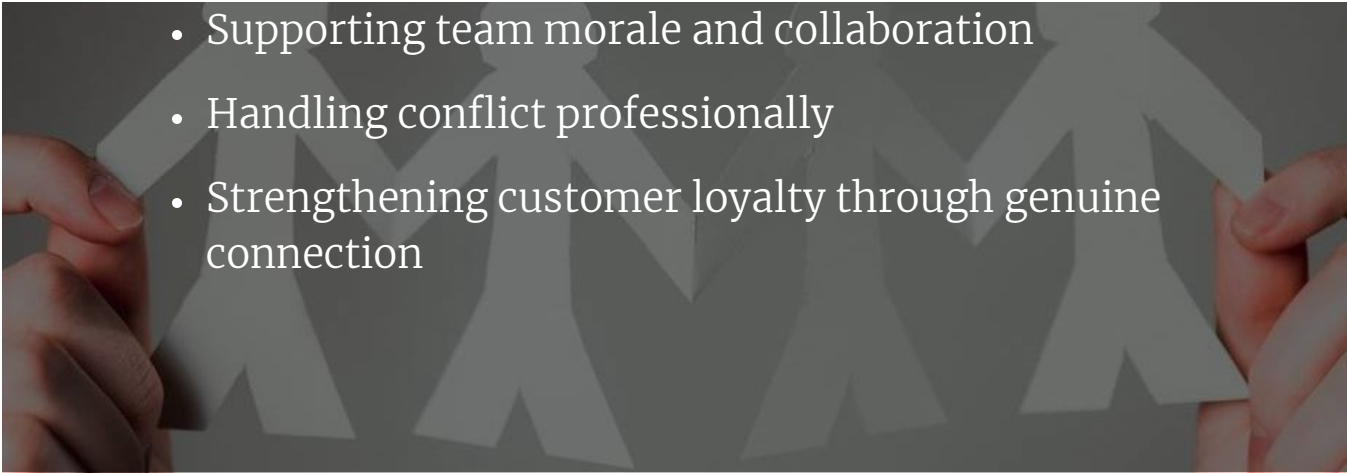
☐ **Shared purpose and understanding.**

☐ **Sense of goodwill or camaraderie.**

> ❝
> - The impact of relationships on store culture and performance
> - Building trust and open communication

- Supporting team morale and collaboration

- Handling conflict professionally

- Strengthening customer loyalty through genuine connection

Building Positive Team Relationships

Fashion retail is fast-paced and people-driven. Positive relationships increase teamwork, reduce turnover, improve customer satisfaction, and boost sales. As a manager, you set the tone—how you connect with your team and customers directly shapes store culture and success.

Handling Conflict Constructively

- **Listen First:** Allow the other person to speak without interruption.

- **Stay Neutral:** Focus on facts, not feelings or blame.

- **Seek Solutions Together:** Ask, "What can we do to move forward?"

- **Follow Up:** After resolving an issue, check back to rebuild trust and ensure improvement.

CONTINUE

While it may seem counterintuitive, disagreements can strengthen team relationships when managed effectively.

Continue to the next lesson to explore how.

Managing Disagreements

The Value of Voicing Disagreements Respectfully

Introduce the benefits of respectful disagreement on teams. Benefits might include a more inclusive work culture, increased creativity and innovation, and improved team decision-making. You might also summarize a key takeaway using the text and image block below. For example:

When managed well, disagreements foster positive outcomes.

They encourage team members to consider different perspectives, share new ideas, address problems, explore alternative options—and ultimately, reach a shared understanding.

> (i) However, for respectful disagreement to happen, team members must feel **psychologically safe** expressing themselves.

What Is Psychological Safety?

Define **psychological safety** as the belief that employees won't be punished or humiliated for openly sharing their concerns, ideas, questions, or mistakes. It creates the feeling that employees belong—and their thoughts are valued and welcomed. Invite learners to explore this topic further by navigating the tabs below.

WHAT IS IT?	HOW TO BUILD IT

There are four stages of psychological safety. Edit the sample text below, and invite learners to explore each stage:

- **Inclusion safety.** In this stage, we satisfy our basic human need to connect and belong, fully accepted as ourselves.

- **Learner safety.** In this stage, we satisfy the urge to learn and grow because we feel safe to ask questions, make mistakes, and give and receive feedback.

- **Contributor safety.** In this stage, we begin using our skills and abilities to make valuable contributions to our team and organization.

- **Challenger safety.** In this stage, we feel safe to speak up and challenge norms when there are opportunities for change or improvement.

| **WHAT IS IT?** | **HOW TO BUILD IT** |

Psychological safety doesn't develop overnight. Consistency builds trust over time. Use the list below to highlight a few ways managers can foster psychological safety on their teams. For example:

- **Explicitly ask for team members' input, questions, ideas, and concerns.** Provide additional context here.

- **Avoid shutting down or reacting negatively to input.** Provide additional context here.

- **Model that it's OK to make and admit a mistake.** Provide additional context here.

- **Establish agreed-upon ground rules for respectful discussion.** Provide additional context here.

- **Invite employees to share their "bad" or incomplete ideas without judgment.** Provide additional context here.

"Psychological safety is not about protecting people, but the quality of conversations. Your colleagues should feel safe to express their ideas and think differently. Tap into the collective wisdom of your team. Remove the fear of retaliation, not conflict."

Gustavo Razzetti

Leading Through Disagreements

Employees should feel comfortable voicing their honest opinions. However, you might clarify that disagreement is not the end goal. Ultimately, managers want to help their teams **surface** and **work through disagreements** to reach a solution that everyone supports.

CONTINUE

Helping employees navigate disagreements is one example of the many ways managers can remove roadblocks for their teams. Discover additional team enablement strategies in the next lesson.

Setting Your Team Up for Success

What Is Employee Enablement?

Employee enablement is the process of giving your team everything they need—resources, training, clarity, and support—to do their jobs effectively and confidently.

It's not just about motivation (engagement)—it's about **removing barriers to success** and **empowering action**.

Enablement vs. Engagement

Concept	Focus	Example in Retail
Engagem ent	Motivation and emotional buy-in	An associate feels excited about new collections
Enablem ent	Capability and support	The associate is trained, knows store goals, and has access to tools

Both are critical—motivated teams need the **ability** and **confidence** to follow through.

Opportunities to Enable Employees

There are a number of ways managers can enable their teams. Use the following accordion interaction to highlight the most common team enablement factors.

Why Enablement Matters in Fashion Retail

- Speeds up onboarding and role readiness

- Increases sales performance and customer service consistency

- Reduces frustration and turnover

- Boosts confidence and job satisfaction

- Encourages self-sufficiency and accountability

ⓘ **Avoid becoming a roadblock, yourself.** Sometimes, managers inadvertently stand in the way of team development and performance.

Summarize how new managers can prevent this situation. For example, you might advise them to avoid micromanaging.

"People want guidance, not rhetoric. They need to know what the plan of action is and how it will be implemented. They want to be given the responsibility to help solve the problem—and the authority to act on it."

Howard Shultz

Ask for Team Input

Managers don't have to brainstorm ideas alone. Encourage them to regularly solicit feedback from team members by asking questions, such as:

- What are your biggest bottlenecks or barriers?

- What resources, training, tools, or processes do you need to be successful?

- What can I do to make your job easier?

CONTINUE

How can you help employees develop the skills they need to be successful? Continue to the next section to explore strategies for managing performance, giving feedback, and coaching employees.

Performance Management

What Is Performance Management?

To equip retail managers with the tools and mindset to monitor, evaluate, and improve individual and team performance consistently and fairly.

- Understanding performance expectations

- Setting and communicating clear standards

- Monitoring and measuring performance

- Providing feedback and coaching

- Managing underperformance

Performance management is not just about correcting mistakes—it's about creating a culture of growth, accountability, and achievement. In fashion retail, consistent performance drives customer satisfaction, sales, and store success.

An Ongoing Process

Explain why managers should take a continuous approach to performance management. In the list below, provide best practices for establishing regular checkpoints with team members throughout the year:

1   **Give on-the-spot feedback.**

2   **Check in with employees weekly.**

3   **Conduct monthly one-on-ones.**

4   **Meet for regular performance snapshots.** .

Reiterate that performance management should be an ongoing, year-round process—not an annual or semi-annual occurrence.

Monitoring Performances

Observe Daily —

Spend time on the floor watching interactions, task completion, and teamwork

Use Data —

Review metrics like sales per associate, transaction counts, clienteling efforts, etc.
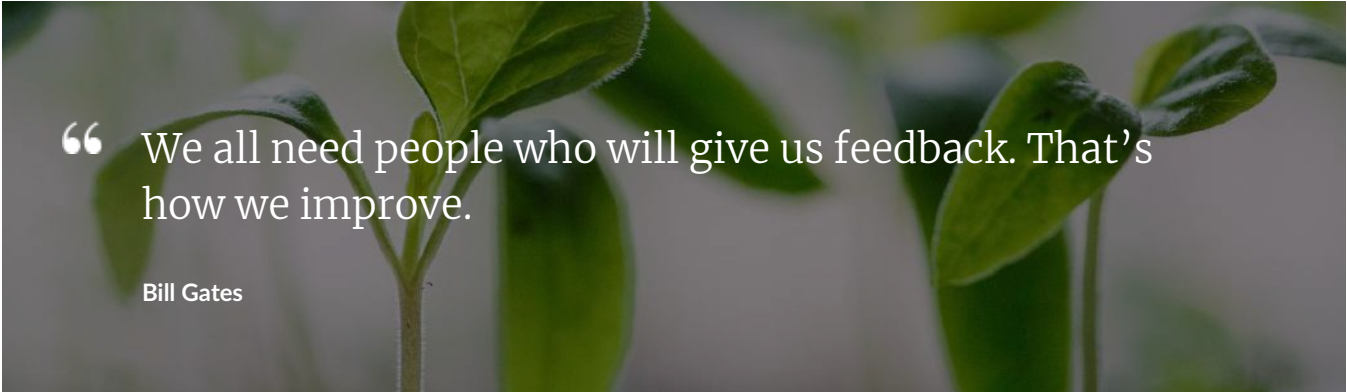
Check Consistency —

Look for patterns, not just one-off mistakes.

CONTINUE

Giving feedback is an essential component of performance management. In the next lesson, you'll discover how to

deliver feedback in a way that maximizes the impact and value for employees.

Giving Feedback

> " We all need people who will give us feedback. That's how we improve.
>
> **Bill Gates**

The Benefits of Feedback

Feedback helps team members understand what they're doing well and where they can improve. In a fast-paced retail setting, timely and specific feedback improves sales performance, enhances customer experience, and supports personal growth.

Two Types of Workplace Feedback

Type	Purpose	Example
Positive	Reinforce good performance	"Great job on upselling accessories today!"
Constructive	Correct or improve performance	"Let's work on greeting customers faster during peak

hours."

Redirecting	Add a definition and describe the purpose of redirecting feedback here. Explain how this type of feedback benefits employees.
Reinforcing	Add a definition and describe the purpose of reinforcing feedback here. Explain how this type of feedback benefits employees.

ⓘ You might use this note block to emphasize the importance of **both**

types of feedback.

Best Practices for Feedback

✅ Be timely – Give feedback as close to the event as possible

✅ Be specific – Focus on the exact behavior, not personality

✅ Be balanced – Recognize strengths while addressing areas for growth

✅ Be supportive – Offer help, not just criticism

✅ Follow up – Check progress and give encouragement

Expand this row. —

Explain how delaying or avoiding feedback can prevent the employee from developing, which is more hurtful in the long run. Continuous feedback prevents issues from escalating. By telling people the truth about what they're doing right and wrong, managers empower employees to become the best version of themselves.

Remember: Caring about someone doesn't mean sparing their emotions by distorting the truth. It means sharing honest feedback so that they can grow. And the sections below will cover how to deliver honest feedback compassionately.

The Feedback Process

Invite new managers to click through this interaction to learn about each step in the feedback process. **Note:** You can add, edit, or delete steps as needed.

Prepare

Encourage managers to think about what they want to say, how they want to say it, and what outcome they hope to achieve.

You might also provide them with some questions to consider, such as:

- What's the purpose of this meeting?

- What behavior do you want to discuss?

- How do I anticipate this person will respond?

- What outcome am I hoping for?

- How can I help this person achieve that outcome?

Tip. If managers think the feedback won't be received well, this step is especially important. It gives them a chance to collect their thoughts and rehearse before having a potentially contentious conversation.

Arrange a Meeting

Next, instruct managers to arrange a time to meet and introduce the topic of discussion. Remind them to be mindful of their language during this step, as the wrong wording can trigger an adverse reaction. A message that starts with, "We need to talk about your performance," for example, can induce anxiety and cause someone to think they're getting fired.

Consider providing managers with sample phrasing they can use for this step, such as:

- "I have a few notes I'd like to share with you. When are you free?"

- "Do you have a chance to connect? I have some feedback I'd like to share."

Share an Empathetic Message

An **empathetic message** focuses on the positive reasons for giving feedback. Encourage managers to start feedback sessions with a statement that's future-focused and motivating. If giving redirecting feedback, ask managers to frame feedback as an expression of their care for the employee and desire to see them succeed.

Provide managers with some example phrases they might use below, such as:

- "I want you to grow and develop here at [company name]. So, I have some feedback I'd like to share."

- "I've been really impressed with your performance. I'd like to share some feedback so that you can keep moving on that track."

- "I want you to be successful here. I have some feedback to help make that happen."

- "I know it's hard to receive feedback, but I have some observations that I think can really help you in your career development."

Describe the Behavior and Its Impact

Next, instruct managers to describe the behavior and its impact in detail. Use the bullet points below to provide additional explanation.

- **A behavior** is an observable action—such as a person's verbal comments, nonverbal signals, and work products. For example, rather than saying, "You're disruptive in meetings," you might say, "I noticed you interrupting Warren and shutting down his ideas during yesterday's meeting."

- **An impact** is the result of a behavior. It's what you or others thought, felt, or did as a result of a person's actions. For instance, using the previous example, you might say: "By speaking over Warren, you made him feel like he didn't have a voice and that his opinions didn't matter."

Tip: Remind managers that this same model holds true for reinforcing positive behaviors. Telling someone, "That was an excellent webinar" doesn't reinforce a future behavior. Instead, it leads to questions such as, "What was excellent?" Consider how it would be more helpful to say: "That was a great webinar! You delivered a well-organized and easy-to-follow presentation."

Start a Dialogue

After shared feedback, advise managers to allow employees to process that information and get their take.

You might also provide managers with a few questions they can ask to solicit an employee's perspective, such as:

- "What's your reaction to this feedback?"

- "Can you offer any insights?"

- "Do you have any questions?"

By giving employees a chance to share their thoughts, managers can start a conversation and gain additional insight into the discussed behavior. For example, the manager may learn why an employee was unable to complete a task well. Or, they may learn about a set of challenges they weren't previously aware of.

Offer Suggestions

In this next step, instruct managers to switch the conversation away from what the employee did right or wrong and discuss future behaviors. Alongside improving performance, this will shift the conversation to a positive note—considering future plans rather than past setbacks.

During this step, ask managers to think about what they'd like to see happen, and how they can help this person achieve those results. For example:

- If redirecting performance, managers might identify the challenges an employee is facing, what support they need to overcome those challenges, and what alternative approaches they can try.

- Or, if reinforcing performance, managers could use this time to offer suggestions on how the employee can continue those actions going forward.

Agree on Next Steps

Then, suggest that managers and employees agree on actionable next steps.

- **If redirecting behavior**: Those next steps should cover how things can change. For example, someone who interrupts during meetings might have a plan that includes action items such as: "Don't think about what you're going to say while someone is speaking." and "Pause for 10 seconds before filling a silence gap."

- **If reinforcing behavior:** Those next steps should cover what the manager and employee will do to recreate that behavior in the future.

Say "Thank You"

Finally, counsel managers to say "thank you" and express their appreciation for the employee's willingness to have a difficult conversation.

You might also provide managers with sample statements to create closure, such as:

- "Thank you for taking the time to talk. I know feedback conversations can feel uncomfortable."

- "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide this feedback. I know it can be difficult to hear, and I appreciate your openness."

- "Thank you for sitting down with me today. I feel great about your action plan, and I'm confident you can make these changes."

Summary

Summarize how to give employee feedback here.

Tips for Delivering a Well-Received Message

Use this space to explain how a manager's delivery can impact an employee's receptiveness to feedback. Provide some tips below to ensure their feedback delivery is respectful and more likely to produce positive outcomes.

- [ ] **Be specific and direct.** Describe what this means and consider providing an example.

- [ ] **Focus on behavior, not character.** Describe what this means and consider providing an example.

- [ ] **Stick to the facts.** Describe what this means and consider providing an example.

- [ ] **Make feedback timely—don't wait until the end of the year.** Describe why timely feedback is important and provide a suggested time frame.

> ⓘ **Watch your tone of voice.** You might use this note block to encourage

managers to use a calm and neutral tone of voice.

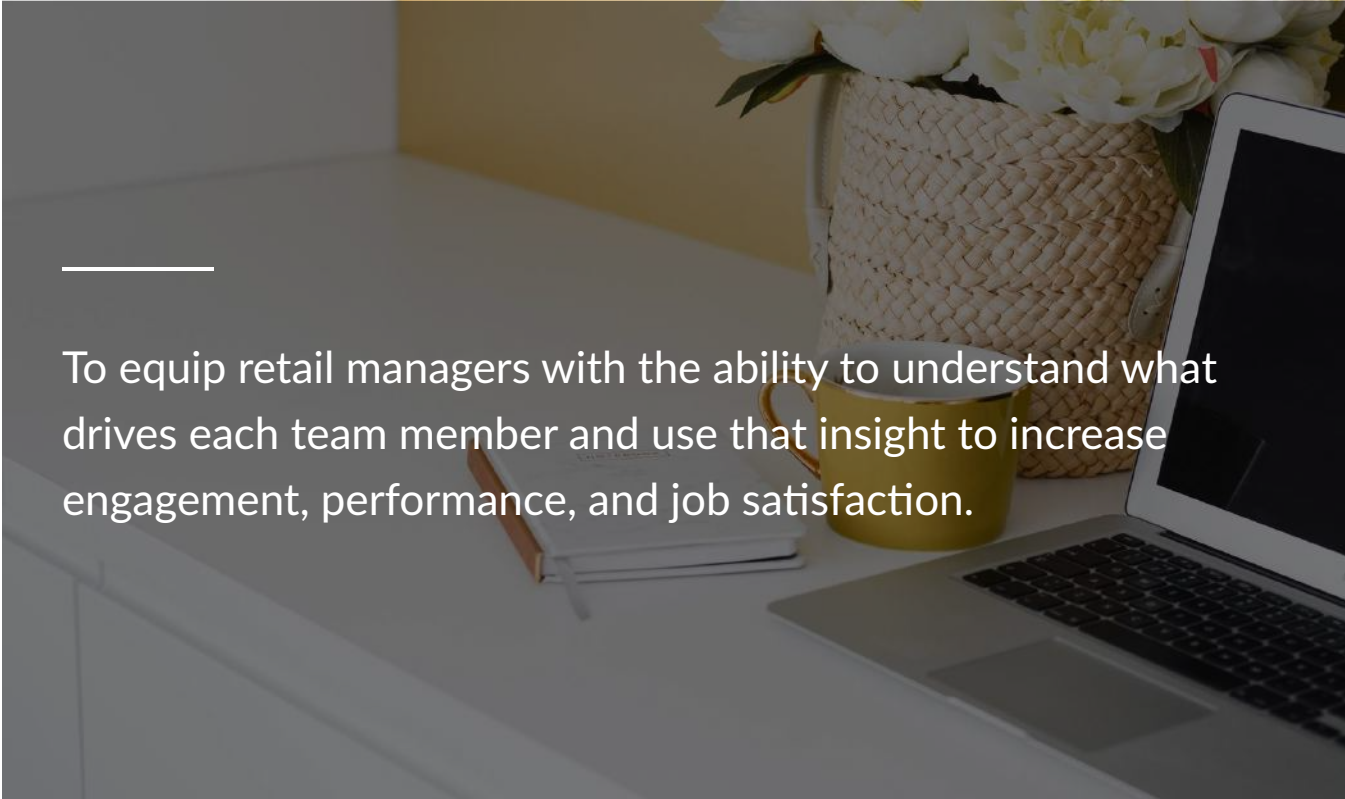**CONTINUE**

Check Your Understanding

Encourage new managers to think critically about delivering feedback to their team members in the following **branching scenario**. Branching scenarios help learners apply their knowledge to a realistic situation that illustrates the consequences of their choices.

In a branching scenario, a character presents the learner with a series of challenges. The challenges vary based on the learner's previous choices until all challenges have been completed and the learner has reached the end of the scenario. This branching scenario concludes by presenting learners with feedback based on the consequences of their choices.

CONTINUE

Feedback has one primary purpose: to enhance employee performance. Think empathetically and consider what your employees need to hear so that they can improve.

Engaging Employee Motivations

To equip retail managers with the ability to understand what drives each team member and use that insight to increase engagement, performance, and job satisfaction.

Why It Matters

Motivated employees are more productive, committed, and enthusiastic. In fashion retail, this translates directly to better customer service, higher sales, and stronger teamwork.

Fair compensation plays a critical role in employee motivation—but

Myth #1: Money is the only motivator.

that's only one factor in the equation. Intrinsic motivators—such as the desire to do meaningful work, make an impact, or develop one's skills—are just as important as financial incentives.

Myth #2: Managers are responsible for employee motivation.

A manager's role is to create a motivating environment and do what they can to engage team members' motivations. However, the team member also has to be willing to work with you and take responsibility for motivating themselves.

Myth #3: Fear is a powerful motivator.

Fear of punishment—such as fear of getting fired, demoted, or facing other professional consequences—can motivate employees in the short term to do what you want. However, using fear to motivate

Understanding Motivation

There are two types of motivation:

Type	Description	Examples in Retail
Intrinsic	Motivation from within (personal drive)	Pride in delivering excellent service, desire to grow
Extrinsic	Motivation from external rewards	Bonuses, public recognition, flexible schedules

Go to the Source —

Encourage new managers to **ask team members about their motivations directly** in one-on-one meetings, performance conversations, or employee surveys.

They might ask, "What do you want most from your work?" or "What are the top three things that motivate you?" If a team member struggles to answer these questions, managers might use the following examples to spur ideas:

- Work that's interesting or meaningful to the employee

- A strong work-life balance or high level of flexibility

- Learning, developing, and growing one's skills

- Attaining a role with greater responsibility, authority, or power

- Advancement opportunities

- A sense of accomplishment or achievement

- Making a positive impact

- A sense of team camaraderie and belonging

Encourage Ownership Through Active Participation   —

It's difficult to feel invested in your work or company if you're not an active participant in it. Likewise, employees may struggle to get on board with decisions in which they had no say. That's why new managers should **involve their teams** in major decisions or important projects as much as possible.

Highlight a few ways managers can do this below. For example:

- Take a democratic approach to brainstorming ideas and making decisions.

- Ask employees to brainstorm and present their ideas to you for approval.

- Create a "first draft" and ask your team to review it and share their thoughts or edits.

- Invite your team to collaborate with you on big, exciting, or important projects.

- Delegate a decision or project to your team. Schedule checkpoints to review their work and redirect their efforts or give feedback as needed.

- Regularly ask for your team's suggestions on how you can better support them or what ideas they have for the team or organization to improve.

Connect Employees With the Impact of Their Work   —

People want to do work that's meaningful and impactful. They want to know that their work matters—and their efforts aren't in vain.

So, encourage managers to take every opportunity to **communicate the impact of their team's work**. Remind them to explain why a project is important and what the result will be.

When relevant, you might also suggest managers connect employees directly to the end user. For example, a nonprofit or a healthcare organization might share impact stories of the people their organization helped. Or, a startup might share testimonials or words of appreciation from customers using their products.

Assign Incremental Challenges   —

Explain how assigning incremental goals and interesting challenges can motivate employees to rise to the occasion.

Remember: While goals should be challenging enough to keep employees engaged and stimulated—they should also still be attainable enough that employees don't feel overwhelmed or defeated.

> ⓘ **Reinforce that motivation is an individual experience.** Explain here that the best managers will find out what their employees want most and then apply customized strategies to each team member.

CONTINUE

In the next lesson, you'll learn how to coach employees when they face challenges or get stuck.

Coaching Using the GROW Model

What Is Coaching?

Coaching is a collaborative conversation that helps an employee **unlock their potential**, solve their own problems, and grow in their role. It's about **guiding**, not telling.

Great coaching in retail supports performance, builds confidence, and prepares team members for bigger responsibilities.

"Coaching is unlocking people's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them." —John Whitmore

Benefits of the GROW Model

✅ Empowers employees to think for themselves

✅ Builds trust and accountability

✅ Encourages learning and ownership

✅ Keeps conversations focused and productive

✅ Supports long-term growth, not just short-term fixes

G—Set a Goal

Setting a goal at the beginning of a coaching session will give the conversation a focus and clear direction.

Instruct new managers to ask probing questions to understand what their team member wants to do, improve, overcome, solve, or change. Provide sample questions below, such as:

- What would you like to get out of this coaching session?

- What's the biggest thing that's holding you back in your work or professional development?

- What have you been struggling with?

- What do you hope to accomplish over the next [insert specific amount of time]?

- In what areas of your work do you think you could improve?

- What skills would you most like to develop?

- What's one topic that you'd like to learn more about?

R—Examine the Current Reality   —

Explain why managers should invite employees to **describe their current reality,** aka their current performance or the current context and situation that they're operating within.

Examples of questions managers might ask include:

- What steps have you already taken?

- What's happening now (who, what, when, and where)?

- What is the impact of X?

- What are your current constraints?

- Describe your current approach, system, or process.

- Are there any competing or conflicting priorities?

- How much control do you have over X?

- What are your greatest concerns or doubts?

O—Explore Options —

In this step, advise managers to **solicit ideas** from team members about all of the possible ways that they might achieve their goals.

Provide new managers with examples of questions they can ask, such as:

- What practical steps can you take to achieve this goal?

- What else could you do?

- What would you need to start or stop doing to accomplish X?

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?

- What factors should play into your decision?

- What could you do differently?

- If you were to start from scratch, how would you approach X?

W—Determine the Way Forward —

Describe the final step here: Not only do team members need to decide on the best option, but they also need to **develop an action plan** and **sort out the logistics** for moving forward.

New managers can get their team members to commit to a solution and chart a path for achieving their goal by asking questions such as:

- Which option will give you the best results?

- What steps are involved in implementing this solution?

- What would you need to do to make this happen?

- What problems or challenges might you face—and how will you address them?

- What resources do you need to be successful? How and when will you get them?

- Whose help do you need? How and when will you ask for it?

- How will you know when you've achieved your goal?

- When should we check in or when will you need feedback?

- What are your criteria for success?

- How will you stay motivated?

- How will you balance competing priorities?

- When is your deadline?

ⓘ **Explain here that coaching is a collaborative process.** And, when done correctly, it helps employees cultivate the confidence, skills, and thought processes they need to succeed in the workplace.

CONTINUE

Resist the urge to give all the answers. Use GROW to guide your team to their own solutions—they'll grow faster and take more ownership.

Quiz

Introduce your quiz here. This is a great location to inform learners that they now have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge. You can also set expectations by providing learners with the total number of questions and the score they need to pass the quiz.

Take care when writing questions so that learners can interpret them correctly. Use simple, straightforward language.

○   Choice 1

○   Choice 2

○   Choice 3

○   Choice 4

A multiple response question is an effective means of adding difficulty to a quiz, as the learner must consider multiple, possible combinations.

☐ Choice 1

☐ Choice 2

☐ Choice 3

☐ Choice 4

Did you know that you can add images to your questions? After adding a question, simply click the camera icon.

○   Choice 1

○   Choice 2

○   Choice 3

○   Choice 4

When constructing your choices, each choice should seem plausible. This will cause the learner to think critically and not quickly discount poorly constructed choices that are obviously wrong.

○   Choice 1

○   Choice 2

○   Choice 3

○   Choice 4

Think about the learner. Don't set up your questions as "gotcha" questions. Also, keep your questions simple and direct. Don't confuse the learner by adding extraneous content.

○   Choice 1

○   Choice 2

○   Choice 3

○   Choice 4

Summary

> ## "Always be the person you would want to work for."
>
> ### Liz Brenner

Key Takeaways

The GROW Model is a simple yet powerful coaching framework that helps retail managers guide their team members toward clear goals and actionable solutions. By focusing on the employee's goal, current reality, options, and commitment, managers can foster growth, accountability, and problem-solving. Coaching through GROW builds trust, empowers employees to take ownership of their development, and strengthens overall team performance.

1   **Coaching is a supportive, empowering tool** that helps employees find their own solutions and grow professionally.

2 The **GROW Model** provides a simple, structured framework for coaching conversations:

- **G** – *Goal*: Define what the employee wants to achieve.

- **R** – *Reality*: Explore their current situation.

- **O** – *Options*: Identify possible solutions or paths forward.

- **W** – *Will*: Commit to specific actions and next steps.

3 Asking open-ended questions at each stage helps **encourage reflection, problem-solving, and ownership**.

4 GROW is a versatile model that can be used during:

- Performance improvement conversations

- Career development check-ins

- Problem-solving discussions on the floor

5 As a manager, your role is to **guide, not give all the answers**— trust your team to think and grow.

6 Effective coaching builds **confidence, motivation, and accountability** in retail teams.

Have Questions?

Please contact your DM or HR

Thank you for completing this training!