



Leveraging Talent: Using Coaching at the Top

Description

Coaching can sometimes be regarded as another toolkit to address performance issues. However, coaching provides a means to leverage and develop the talent pool within an organization. Potentially, this is a competitive advantage as important as product and process innovation. Jack Welch, in *Winning*, says that the middle 70% of performers are “the heart and soul — the central core — of any company.” To make the best use of your coaching time, tailor your focus to the individual’s performance level.

Instructions

Evaluate each individual according to the table below. Decide how you will conduct your coaching to make most effective use of your coaching time. Share your assessment with the individual and get their perspective. Given the distinctions, ask them how they want to be coached. You can include this topic in a designed alliance conversation.

	New Employee, Performance Management	Middle Performer	Top Performer
Description	<i>New Employee:</i> the first one to three months from their hire date. <i>Performance Management:</i> correcting below expectations job performance.	The middle 70%, who are competent, dependable, and are mostly self-directed.	Top 20% in performance. Quickly out grow current job assignment, willing to take risks, strong internal drive.
Coaching Focus	Goals and tasks, accountability, reconciling self assessment with manager’s, skill building.	Identify strengths and build on those. Celebrate success. Explore ideas for breakthrough improvements. Overcome internal roadblocks.	Long-term planning and strategy. Developing the coachee’s leadership skill and EQ. Balancing attention on self and building cross-organizational relationships. Building breadth.
Intended Outcome	<i>New Employee:</i> successful on-boarding, clarity regarding expectations, successful transition into the culture <i>Performance Management:</i> return to meets expectations performance; renewed ownership for performance.	Employee stays motivated and continues to grow their competencies and contribution. Increased willingness to take risks and view mistakes/failures as feedback and learning opportunities.	A cadre of capable and respected leaders who know the business well and can step into senior management at the appropriate time.
Coaching Approach	Coaching will be concentrating on the short term, frequent meetings, coach recommending actions, generally more directive and solutions oriented.	Helpful to distinguish those on the border of slipping into performance management or have the potential to break into the High Performer Category. Time spent on clarifying personal mission, vision, and values. Conversations explore what is possible, searching options, finding commitment. Revealing Saboteur strategies and working around those.	More on the person than short term goals and projects. Helping them to understand themselves and the impact they have. Working on “self-mastery”. Exploring assumptions and beliefs, experimenting with new assumptions and beliefs. Use of inquiry, gathering and responding to feedback, challenging the coachee.



The following illustration illustrates that the focus of coaching may shift depending on the developmental level of the individual, progressing from simple/directive to complex/non-directive.

