Developing people through effective workplace coaching english language essay

Developing People through Effective Workplace CoachingA guide to improve your knowledge, skills and practice in unlocking the potential in others'image: www. freeimages. co. uk'

Contents

Growing your staff via effective coaching

" I cannot teach anybody anything; I can only make them think."

Socrates

1. What is Coaching?

What is coaching and why is it a very useful tool to all those who have a leadership /management responsibility in the University? The answer will become more apparent as you work through these guidance notes. First of all it is worthwhile to think about what exactly is coaching? Compare your own definition with those given below. How similar/different is your definition?" Coaching is not giving advice or giving solutions. It is about helping the other person find his or her own solution."" Coaching is a cyclical process of enhancing the other persons' awareness of 'what is really going on'; guiding them to choose responsibility for the actions they will take to achieve their personal goals and helping them to evaluate the

consequences."" You can get the best efforts from others not by lighting a fire beneath them but by building a fire within them."" A very important factor in coaching is to define personal goals and intended actions required to achieve those goals"" The effects of good coaching are reciprocal. Effective coaching helps managers and leaders to experience the satisfaction of seeing others grow and develop and perform at their best."" Coaching is gaining acceptance and recognition as an emerging profession because it works. While individual coaching continues to be important for personal and professional development, team coaching is increasingly utilised within organizations. Coaching with teams creates the opportunity for broader organizational impact and performance."

2. Conversational Coaching

'image: www. freeimages. co. uk'

Purpose of a coaching conversation

To gain attention to the key issues affecting performance. This can be performance of the individual or of the teamTo focus on the detail and relevance of the conversation to those key issuesTo create a positive feedback loop. Focus on what is working as well as what is not working.

Construction of a coaching conversation

Ask open questions: What? When? Where? Why? Ask probing questions: How much? When you say a lot, how many are we talking? When you say…can give me an example of what you meanCaution - do not appear too critical, it is not an inquisition! Why - test out assumptions, rationalisations, values,

beliefs etcHow - when the person is vague in detailStart broad then increase the focus to the specificsFollow interest and use the words of the other person reflected back to them " You said that you feel unable to challenge the way things are done" Tell me a little more about why you feel this way. The purpose of coaching is to generate responsibility on the other person for actions to solve the problems or issues they identify as part of the coaching conversation. To do this you must not: Lead the other personForce your own agenda on themPush your own solutions

The urge to give people the " correct" answer is strong but coaching is all about learning so please resist the urge.

There are a number of different coaching models and many specific techniques that you can add to your repertoire. However, rather than wait until you have been trained to use one of the various models of coaching, you can start coaching people today. The following 9 steps outline the essentials of conversational coaching that feature in many of the approaches to coaching people. The description of conversational coaching is a good one in that it emphasises the idea of having an informal chat with someone and in doing so helping them have a positive impact on performance, weather that be at the individual or the team level. It is not just having a chat of course rather about having a chat with some structure and using appropriate skills and techniques that achieve the desired results of a coaching conversation: To maximise performance.

One

Make time every day to build and strengthen the relationship you have with your colleagues. Showing a genuine interest in their work and in them as people establishes a foundation for conversational coaching. Having good rapport with people is the essential starting point of a coaching conversation.

Two

Rather than always waiting for staff to come to you with problems, get out and ask people how they are doing. This way you will get opportunities to coach more people than you would if you only deal with those people who come to your door. Prevention rather than cure is far more productive in the long term. There is no point waiting for an SRDS review to undertake coaching. Coaching opportunities will present themselves much more frequently.

Three

Clarify whether the person would like your assistance or support to tackle the challenge in hand, or whether they are just venting there feelings about an issue to get it off their chest.

Four

Ask questions that help both you and the other person gain a more accurate picture of the issue. Tease out facts from beliefs and look at the situation through the eyes of different stakeholders to get a more complete picture of the problem. If you have additional facts or information that can help clarify the situation, share it at this time. Formal or informal feedback from others is

a useful way of identifying the key issues. Solving the problem rather than a symptom can take more time but can have lasting benefits.

Five

Ensure you are " fully present" in the conversation and give your full attention to what the other person is saying by actively listening. Active listening is not just waiting for your opportunity to speak. In some cases we can't wait and interrupt! Occasionally repeat back a summary of what you think has been said to ensure you have understood it correctly. Do not jump in with solutions or by comparing their situations with war stories of your own. " Well that happened to me once and this is what I did." (implying you should also do this)

Six

Help the person identify different ways forward and then help them evaluate each option. " Have you considered"...rather than " If I were you I would" .... Help keep ownership with the individual rather than yourself.

Seven

Get the other person to make a firm commitment to the next steps they will take. These steps may involve a total resolution of the problem, or in some cases they may only be initial actions leading to a subsequent decision on how to solve the problem or even redefine the problem into one they can solve.

Eight

Finish the conversation by indicating you are interested to know how it turned out and ask them to let you know. You can also extend the offer of further assistance at this time. " let's meet again next week to explore this a little further and see how things are going."

Nine

Follow up with the person and see how things have gone. You can begin back at step one as coaching is an iterative process. The nine steps of coaching are examples of how the coaching process is essentially a reflective learning process. We are all busy " doing" every minute of every day and coaching represents the opportunity to and think before resuming business as usual. The role of the coach is to help this thinking process to move from: 1. What is happening? 2 . What could I do about what is happening? 3. Choosing what to do 4. Doing it!

3. The TGROW model of coaching

The overall purpose of coaching is to maximise the performance of the individual. As a person with Leadership and Management responsibilities one of your key roles is to align and then maximise an individual's efforts to the success of the team's objectives. You can use the TGROW model to provide a structure for any coaching conversation. The model ends with action (will) but is preceded by the stages of analysis and choice. What is happening and what could I do about what is happening? The benefits of using such a model are that it puts the other person at the centre of learning and thus engages them at the outset. It also helps consolidate learning and apply it to other

situations because it helps solve problems with the person rather than for them. You as a manager simply use the stages of the model together with the techniques of appropriate questioning and listening to move the person around three discrete stages of personal improvement. Reflect (TG)Consider (RO)Act (W)T – TopicWhat are we going to talk about? G – GoalsWhat do you want to happen? R – RealityWhat is happening? O – OptionsWhat could be done? W – WillWhat will you do? Based on the GROW model of coaching J. Whitmore (2002)

Topic

Tell me about? What would you like to think/talk about? Explain in a few sentences xxxx? What are you trying to achieve in the longer term? What would you say are your essential " must achieve". ?

Goal

What is the specific aim of this discussion? How much personal control or influence do you have over this goal? What would a milestone look like? What do you want to achieve by doing this? Is that positive, challenging, and attainable? How could you measure this as an outcome?

Reality

What is happening now? Who is involved? When things go badly on this issue what happens to you? What is the effect on others? What have you done so far? What effect did this have? What do you feel is holding you back? What is really going on here? Is this a symptom or a cause?

Options

What options do you have? What else could you do? What if….? (time, resources, influence)What are the costs and benefits of each option? What are the risks, if any, of doing this? What are the risks, if any, of doing nothing?

Will

Which option do you choose? To what extent does this meet your objectives? What are your criteria for success? What support do you need and from whom? What else could you do? Who needs to know your plans and how will you inform them? What precisely are you going to do - what steps? What could hinder you taking these steps?

4. Active Listening

Stage One

Carefully select the location of the coaching conversation (if possible): choose a quiet room or area free from the distraction of other people and noise; arrange seating to avoid any physical barriers such as a desk, but don't sit too close; set aside any other work you are doing; arrange for telephone calls to be diverted; remove or ignore any other distractions, particulary your e-mail inbox!; switch computer screen off! close the door, if possible.

Stage Two

Create the right atmosphere: make sure the person knows you want to listen to them, look interested and maintain eye contact without staring; give the

other person your full attention; address the person by the name they want to be called, usually their first name; be patient — allow the person time to say all they want to say (within reason); maintain a relaxed posture and encourage the speaker to feel relaxed; be encouraging by leaning forward, nodding, putting your head to one side, smiling whenever appropriate; empathise as necessary, if something difficult or painful or different from your own beliefs or values is being discussed; don't take any views personally and try not to be defensive.

Stage Three

Practise helpful listening behaviour: make appropriate listening noises: eg 'Mmmm', 'Yes', 'I see'; pause before responding to indicate that you are digesting what has been said; keep an open mind — do not prejudge people, jump to conclusions, argue or interrupt; other people may have a different point of view; be aware of your own emotions; listen carefully even where you might disagree; suspend prejudice; don't allow the fact you disagreed make you turn a deaf ear to what is being said; concentrate on what matters by trying to get at the core of the response; be sensitive to mood, facial expressions and body movements to understand the full meaning of what is being said; imagine you are planning to make a report to someone else following the meeting and that they are the sort of person who likes to know all the details of what you have heard; (you won't actually do this as the conversation is confidential!)seek more information by summarising, asking questions, repeating or paraphrasing; summarise to check your understanding. Finally, make a habit of taking notes. Listening only occupies

something like one-quarter of our available mental capacity. The remaining three-quarters of the mind will wander if not otherwise used. More importantly, note-taking gives you a record of what you are hearing and helps to emphasize the importance you are placing on what is being said to you. Many of these helpful behaviours we have listed will be made easier by good and accurate note-taking, but it helps if you explain to the other person why you are taking notes. The following checklist should prove a useful guide to improving the way you use your eyes and ears.

Checklist

Non-verbal signals are important and you should learn to recognize them in order to get the full picture. Beware of cultural differences in communication habits. Recognise that your own emotions affect the signals you send. Don't let your own values, attitudes, and beliefs get in the way. Concentrate and pay attention to details. Take accurate notes to avoid misunderstanding. Tone of voice is often as important as what is said. If you want to understand you must be prepared to listen and show you are listening actively. Establish the performance criteria before you begin to observe or listen to issues relating to performance. Plan in advance to avoid distractions.

5. Ten Great Coaching Questions

Within coaching there are key questions that unlock larger doors than their own size seems to justify. These are questions that really punch above their weight. Some are asked of the person being coached; some can be reflective questions you are ask of yourself as a coach:' Help me to understand . . .' takes responsibility all the time for not yet having understood. No blame is

attached to the other person.' Help me to understand what is going on with you right now.....' Although this is a request, it is received as a question. In order to explain to you what is going on right now, the person must first understand it themselves. This question triggers them into a less emotional and more logical view of their situation.' If you did know, what might it be?' Ask this when the person says they do not know how to respond to a specific question. Often they cannot answer because they are blocking out or suppressing the answer. This question gives them permission to imagine what the answer is as if they are making it up, allowing the " real " answer to come out.' What do you need (from me) right now?' This question makes the person connect with their true needs and allows them to express them.' What would be a good question for me to ask right now?' This question works because it takes the coach to the most relevant areas of the situation. Also, it stimulates objectivity for the person.' What does this person/client need from me right now?' This is a question the coach asks of themselves in order to give themselves a direction.' And. . .?' If you're not sure which direction to go in, or if you feel there's more the person needs to say.' Because. . .?' enables the person to explore their rationale or assumptions.' You want to leave this session at X pm having achieved what, exactly?' enables the person to focus on successful outcomes within their time frame. (A less effective version of this might be: ' What would you like to achieve, if that's possible, within our time constraints?')' What have you achieved, that you might not have been aware of at the time?' enables a person to start filtering for what they have done that has worked for them.

The value of coaching in everyday life

Coaching is a cost-effective, efficient way of supporting people's development and growth. Unlike a training course, coaching is flexible in its timing and an integral part of the day, providing exactly what is wanted, where and when it is wanted. This is what parents do when they ' coach' their children when crossing the road. This is how children ' coach' their parents to use home electronics. At its best it is a partnership, where both sides gain satisfaction. For this to work both parties need to be motivated to participate in the coaching process by being open and trusting and setting out the ground rules for coaching to take place. Different people can coach on different aspects of a person's work. When this happens a coaching culture is being developed. An organisation that can build and sustain a coaching culture will be in a much better position to deal with change and to maximise the efforts of people in understanding their personal contribution to the organisations success.

6. Agreeing " SMART" objectives

In the TGROW model Goal is an important initial stage of the coaching process. Having " SMART" goals or objectives to talk about provides a very useful focus in a coaching conversation. It clarifies the overall purpose of a work based coaching conversation : To Improve or maintain performance.

What is an objective?

A written statement of intent that clearly describes what actions or tasks, with measurable end results, an individual, team or organisation wants to achieve within a specified time period. They can be " hard" in the sense that

something quantifiable is to be achieved. A 10% increase in student numbers on xx degree programme or " soft" in the sense that they are difficult to attach a number to. Descriptions are often the best way of setting soft objectives. You may also have objectives related to developing skills or knowledge. I. e. John is to attend an advanced excel training course by Sept 09 to enable him to use macro commands to speed up data analysis in xx dept.

Why have objectives?

Give direction to an individual's workMake clear what tasks individual are expected to focus onMake clear standards to which individual are expected to perform in their roleClarify priorities and the relative importance of tasks and activitiesClarify the purpose of the role and its place and contribution within the team or deptProvide an opportunity to think systematically about all aspects of the job and performance in those aspectsProvide a basis for discussing how people are doingProvide an agenda for professional & personal development.

Objectives provide the focus for coaching conversations. The " SMARTer" the objectives the sharper the focus of the coaching conversation.

SMART Objectives

An objective should be: SpecificMeasurableAchievableRelevantTime-constrained

Specific

Unambiguous and clear to those contributing to its attainment so misunderstandings are minimisedClearly written, leaving little room for doubt or ambiguityNormally stating an outcome and not simply an activitySpecifying a single key result to be achievedContaining a verb and an object – i. e. what is to be accomplished/end result/value added by the activity. Verb should be action verb (design, develop, write, implement, increase, ...). Object is ' thing' to be designed, developed written, etc, ... Workshop, Programme, Conference etcContaining a standards component indicating expected level of activity or outcome

Measurable

Capable of verification so that progress can be monitoredWherever possible quantified in terms of numbers and/or standardsWhere quantification is not possible, other success criteria could be devisedQuantity and quality can impact on each other

Achievable

Challenging and interesting - exciting wherever possible - but realistic. An objective that is not achievable may cause de-motivation. One that lacks sufficient challenge may lead to boredom. Do take account of factors beyond the individual's control. I. e. the difference in control over writing papers and publishing papers. Research proposals submitted and bids accepted etcJob holders should have necessary skill and knowledge to achieve objectives, or be able to acquire them quickly as part of personal development needs identifiedConsistent with available resources – i. e. budgets other peoples

skills and knowledge levelsServe as a motivational and, often, a developmental tool for the individual

Relevant

Have a real application and benefit within the organisationBe within job holder's authority to deliverMay be developmental to allow people to move to a different role

Timeconstrained

Indicate target dates (start and end), milestones, timescales or deadlinesWhere a specific timescale is not applicable, a statement such as ' at all times', ' in accordance with laid down procedures' etc should be used.

Sources of objectives

Problems and their avoidance: problem-solving - where something is missing, not being done or needs to be developed; ongoing activities needed for ' business as usual'Possibilities and Projects: innovation - opportunities on which to capitalise; new projects, initiatives, courses, modules etc to developProcesses: related to achieving specific measurable improvements in the outcomes of a processPractices: where a different way of doing something needs to be foundPeople: related to the management and development of staffPersonal development: developing knowledge, skills, and abilities for current or future roles.

Other characteristics of objectives

Clarity versus brevity. Work objectives can be short and sweet but this is not essential. Clarity however (to those involved) is essential. Broad or narrow.

Work objectives can be broad or narrow in scope. For broader objectives (e. g. ' upgrade and improve the capacity and resilience of the student portal'), the measurement criteria will need to be specified with particular care so that progress and performance can be evaluated. I. e. Install x by x. Situational and recurring. Work objectives can address situational (e. g. one-off situations, i. e. organise a conference) or recurring work requirements (e. g. day-to-day activities i. e. teaching on a particular module). Results versus activity. Work is a process with a result or outcome. Results and activity/action are not the same. Both results objectives and activity objectives can be valid but they should not be confused. Both should reflect, in measurable terms, the results of/value-added by the activity. Furthermore, people may perceive ends (end results) and means (activities to achieve end results) differently depending on their position in the organisation. One is a measure of outcome - Have you achieved what you set out to achieve? The other is an example of an " in- process measure" - Are you achieving what you set out to achieve? It is not enough, when setting objectives, simply to discuss WHAT must be achieved and HOW. The person needs to also understand the larger context: WHY the achievement is important and where it fits into the team and organisational context. Further guidance on writing SMART objectives as part of the SRDS process http://www. leeds. ac. uk/sddu/online/sdrs_objectives. html

Reflective questions to help the person you are coaching " smarten" up their goals/objectives

Think of one of your objectives for the next year. Write it downWhy do you need to do this - why is it important? If it is not already SMART use the above

notes to rewrite or re think this objective in a SMART formatOnce the objective is conceived in a SMART format it is less ambiguous and open to interpretation. The next part of the process would be to discuss and review achievement/performance against objectives in both a formal and informal way. This often involves giving and receiving feedback or constructive criticism.

7. The Art of Feedback

Having management or leadership responsibilities can be a little nerve-wracking, particularly if this type of responsibility is new to you. You suddenly find that not only are you responsible for your own work but you now have some responsibility for the work of others. Having this broader remit and dealing with it effectively will always boil down to building positive relationships with others. An essential part of building effective relationship with others is to open up and maintain effective lines of communication. Communication is of course two- way: transmit and receive. The art of feedback is the ability to transmit and receive in the most effective way in order to achieve the dual purpose of feedback which is motivation and development. Motivating and developing others are two of the 10 key areas in the University of Leeds Leadership and Management Standard. http://www. leeds. ac. uk/sddu/personal/people_management. html Although feedback can be a very useful part of the SRDS process, It would be unwise to just think of feedback as part of the annual SRDS review. Feedback needs to be undertaken in a fairly regular and consistent way if it is to be really effective.

SRDS Guidance:

http://www. leeds. ac. uk/hr/development/srds. htm

How do you give feedback effectively?

Feedback is a process that helps people reflect and focus on what they are achieving, why they need to achieve this and how they are going about achieving it. Feedback may be defined as " information about past behaviour and actions, delivered in the present, which may influence any future behaviour and actions." The word feedback can have negative connotations for some people. Just think how you feel if someone says " do you mind if I give you some feedback." You are probably waiting to hear the list of things that you are doing wrong or waiting to defend yourself against the incorrect perceptions of the other person. As a leader/manager or staff reviewer you must ensure that feedback is not perceived in this negative way and as a pejorative exercise. If feedback is concerned with the behaviours and actions of others it is also concerned with the behaviours and actions of yourself. The tone and atmosphere you create in giving feedback will often determine how effective and positive it will be. Feedback will need to be both balanced and constructive if it is to really address the aims of being motivational and developmental.

Aim one: Motivational:

Every social psychologist since Maslow* has stressed the importance of motivation and recognition in valuing people for a job well done. Praise is a leading motivator for us when you identify and recognise good work. This can be good in both activities and outcomes. The person may have worked

very hard in putting together and submitting a grant application and still not have been successful in securing the grant. If you were to focus solely on the outcomes then it could be very de-motivating for a person as they may feel that all the hard work was wasted time. However, It may be that a grant application was successful but you feel that some of the work the person did In securing success was not as efficient or as effective as it could have been and may have been achieved at the expense of other areas of work. Would you focus on just the positive outcome as it will be motivational for the person or would you feel obliged to look at the activities as well and risk the effect of de-motivating the person. The point is that partial feedback i. e. just focusing on the positive or the negative aspects of work can be counter productive. Feedback needs to be motivational and developmental to be effective.*Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs http://www. simplypsychology. pwp. blueyonder. co. uk/maslow. html

Aim Two: Developmental

Everyone has the capacity to improve or do things differently or better. It may be that improvement is achieved by stopping doing things or doing less of them. Individuals need to constantly make choices based on what is happening around them and if what is happening around them is changing then change is the only constant. Development is mostly about building on what is already being done well. Identifying areas for personal change and growth can be just as positive and motivational for an individual if it is done well. Giving people feedback when things are not going well or as good as expected does not have to be confrontational. The words you use, the tone

of voice, the order that you present information or " facts" can all play a part in making the feedback positive or negative. What type of feedback will achieve the aims of motivation and development? Feedback that is: based on observable or observed behaviour or actionsspecific to a given situationbalanced in identifying what has been successful what as been less successfulTo improve the accuracy and clarity of a message during a feedback conversation, use clarifying feedback statements such as the following:

" Let me be sure I understand what you have said."

" Let's see if I can review the key points we've discussed."

" So what you are saying is…"

" I think I hear you saying that your central concern is…"

" As I understand it, your major objectives for next year are…."

Clarifying feedback statements can also end with the following:

" Did I understand you properly?"

" Did I hear you correctly?"

" Was this in line with what you meant?"

" Were those your major concerns?"

" Can you add anything to my summary?"

A good rule of thumb is: " When in doubt, check it out." One of the best ways to check it out is through the effective use of questioning skills. Clarifying questions, (so what you mean is…?) expansion questions, (you say… tell me

more?) direction questions, (can we explore this aspect a little bit more?) fact-finding questions, (what makes you think this is the case?) feeling-finding questions, (and how did this make you feel?) and open questions (what, when, why, how?) can be used freely during conversation to test for the impact of your feedback.'image: www. freeimages. co. uk'

Characteristics of effective feedback

Feedback should be FAST: Frequent: don't wait until the next formal SRDS meeting. Do it as a matter of routine. Accurate: descriptive of observed or verifiable behaviour and facts; not evaluative of the person based on assumptions, interpretations, generalisations and judgements. Specific: related to a specific, observable or verifiable behaviour, action, event or result. Timely: close to the event. Examples: ⸮ " That was a very poor report. I wish you were more committed to doing a good job." Just try and do it better next time please!⸮ " I thought you ran the meeting very effectively. John can have a lot to say and it was a little surprising that he came with a paper fully arguing his views. However, I thought that you ensured that his contributions were focused and allowed others to become involved in the discussion. One thing you may wish to consider is to ask people to send papers out before the next meeting to give everyone a chance to familiarise themselves beforehand. Or , What do you think would make future meetings even more productive than this one?

Two caveats:

1. What if you can't be present to observe the individual at work? Make sure you have processes in place through which you can learn about how the

person is doing. These processes should be open, fast and understood by everyone concerned. For example: Looking at the outputs of their workHaving routine one-to-one meetings with them and including discussions about their performance against agreed objectivesPeriodically review and discuss with them, if appropriate, the standards of performance for their job, and clarify with them mutual expectations of someone operating at the level defined by their role or job descriptionAsk them to write or e-mail periodic updates and to share them with you for discussionObtain feedback from " customers" or users of the service provided – in writing where possibleCall in or phone or carry out interim reviewsUse 360o feedback. Ask for confidential evaluations by peers and, where appropriate, direct reports. This process should, however, be applied fairly to everyone and clearly understood by everyone. This is an optional part of the SRDS process2. There's a difference between timely and rushed feedback. If you're providing feedback around an emotionally charged event, wait a day or two (but never more than a week) until your own emotions have subsided a little. If the feedback involves a difficult issue, find an appropriate time and place. Make an appointment and have a meeting, but don't do it in the corridor. Also prepare yourself – what you're going to say and how –think about how the recipient might react.

Basic guidelines for giving feedback

Be clear what you want to say and why you need to say itGive feedback with care: take account of the needs of the receiverGive feedback with attention: to your own body language and tone of voice as well as to the words you

useBe timely: feedback is most useful when the recipient is receptive to it and when it is close to the eventBe specific: behavioural feedback should be based on specific, observable or verifiable data and behaviourEmphasise the positive before moving on to areas for improvementRefer to behaviour that can be changed and not personality that in most cases cannot. You " did" rather than you " are." Be descriptive rather than evaluative. Discuss the impact on performance or its consequences. If judgements must be included, state clearly that these are matters of subjective evaluation, then describe the situation as you see it, and finally let the recipient make the evaluationAvoid ' general' words like ' all', ' never', ' always' etcBe very careful with advice. The aim of feedback is to help the person to understand the issue better and to identify actions to improve or maintain in the futureAsk the recipient for his/her input after you have described your observations, for example to check out their perceptions of the situationGet feedback on your feedback. Think about two or three recent occasions on which you gave feedback to someone and then answer the following questions: what prompted you to give feedback on that matter at that time? what was the substance of the feedback? Was the impact positive or negative on the other person? was there any concrete action as a result?

Summary

Through feedback, you can agree which areas to spend more time on and which ones need less time. It is important to confirm all uncertain verbal, vocal, and observable cues through feedback. Your leadership and management skills create a virtuous circle that has a much wider impact

than just on the individual who is receiving the feedback. The proper and effective use of feedback skills leads to improved communication and improved communication leads to positive working relationships. This increased sense of mutual understanding will lead to less interpersonal tension, increased trust and respect, and higher levels of performance at an individual and an organisational level. Feedback that is done incorrectly can result in a win- loose mentality whereas everyone wins when communications lines are clear and open. Where there are performance issues, schedule meetings at regular and frequent intervals to discuss performance and provide feedback. Use coaching conversations as a way of providing a clear way forward for the other person to adopt. This proactive approach will ensure that you address issues promptly and foster a problem-solving approach between the " manager" or reviewer and the other person. Use an action or development planning approach to relate the person's objectives, the agreed performance standards, and any development needed to meet the agreed standard.

8. Guidelines for Effective Delegation

Webster's dictionary says delegation is " to entrust to another.'' As managers entrust to another, typically their direct reports, they create opportunities for these individuals to enhance their knowledge and/or skill level for specific tasks. Delegation allows another individual or group to work on a project or task that offers motivation and rewards on its successful completion. It also offers the manager/ reviewer the opportunity to grow and develop individuals who can then be recognised as high-level contributors in the

goals of the unit. Effective delegation can be accomplished by coaching employees to improve their skills and knowledge level. Managers who delegate effectively have staff who are more capable and enthusiastic because of their delegation experience. Staff are seen as competent and committed to take on more projects or tasks, thereby freeing up the manager's time to work on tasks that cannot be delegated or more importantly to concentrate on strategic issues and not day to day operational issues. As valuable a management skill as it is, too often delegation is either nonexistent or done half-heartedly or haphazardly. When delegation is done half-heartedly, people become dissatisfied and de-motivated, and they will not improve their skill or knowledge levels. Delegation is a key performance management tool because it will help you to improve the performance of individuals in your work area, your team and improve your own management and leadership skills. An effective manager knows that delegation is the way to achieve results through others and create capacity to spend time on those important strategic issues.

Delegation guidelines

It is crucial to establish the right tone and environment for effective delegating. You can do this if you follow these guidelines: Be very clear about what you want done, and about when and how results will be measured. Ambiguity will lead only to a disappointing experience. Encourage people to tell you about their special interests at work and about the time they have available for new work or projects. Build a sense of shared responsibility for the team's overall goals. Those goals shouldn't be your

goals alone. Avoid dumping only tedious or difficult jobs on your staff Instead, delegate tasks that spark interest and can be enjoyable. Provide career opportunities for others by delegating functions that have may high visibility within the Faculty or Service area. Delegate to people whose judgment and competence you trust. This, of course, requires that you know your staff and their capabilities very well. Recognise that delegation is a learning experience for your staff, so offer training or coaching as needed. Develop trust in less-skilled or experienced staff members by delegating highly structured assignments. Then provide the support they need to increase their competence. Whenever possible, delegate an entire project or area of work and not just a small piece; doing this will increase motivation and commitment. Monitor progress and provide feedback. Maintain open lines of communication, " Let me know if you run into problems." Don't interfere!

Making Delegation Successful

When you realise that you should be delegating, and you are comfortable with what tasks, projects, or responsibilities you can delegate, how do you go about it? There are some specific steps that you can follow that will help to ensure your success.

Analyse the Specific Task That Needs to Be Done

What is the scope of the work? How important or visible is the outcome? When does it need to be done? Is it urgent or is there time to train someone? What are the specific measurable goals? What is the level of responsibility you are delegating? What resources (tools, budgets, people, and other

resources) are available? Once you have a clear understanding of the task, you are ready to move on to the next step. In order to take this next step, you must know your people—their skills, experience, and knowledge. What you don't know about them you need to find out, the best source of information is the individual himself or their latest SRDS review. What information can you find out about your staff that would help you to decide if they are the right match for the job/activity you want to delegate? The following list may help you determine what to look for: Areas of strength/weaknessCapabilitiesDevelopmental needsPast work experienceCareer aspirationsFears and/or concernsIf you don't know this about each of your staff, you can get the information by asking each one about previous experience, goals, and career aspirations, and what he or she knows. You can also review SRDS files for their past experience, and you can talk to their former reviewers or people who know them better than you do. Once you have the necessary information, you can proceed to step two.

Identify the Person for the Job

What skills and experience do you need? Whom do you have on your staff that can meet those needs? Is there time on the delegated task to use this as a developmental activity? What training and/or support will the individual need to be successful?

Meet with the Person and Explain What You Need Done

Describe the task and the goals. Specify why this person has been selected. Be specific about responsibilities and authority. Get the person's agreement

that they will take this assignment. They need to be both confident and

competent that they can achieve the task.

Implement the Delegation

Allow the individual to " run with the project''—don't interfere unnecessarily.

Establish a follow-up plan.

Hold the Follow-Up or progress Meetings

Make yourself available for support. Discover problems early. Determine

what you will need to do to ensure success. Praise what has been done well,

and redirect what could have been done better. As you proceed through

these steps, keep in mind that delegation is a process, not an event. Keep

the following in mind: Make the entire delegation process as collaborative as

possibleUse coaching as a way of keeping this a two way process in each of

the five stepsKeep the lines of communication openTailor your monitoring to

the individualAsk for regular progress reports (frequency depending on the

individual). You may agree to use exception reports in order that you are not

meeting unnecessarily and it feels more like checking up on the

personProvide timely and constructive feedbackEncourage solution

thinkingRecognise that mistakes are part of learning. (How can you do it

differently/more effectively next time?)Celebrate successes (even small

ones)As you begin to delegate, you must remember that it is important to

select the right person for the assignment. You will need to be prepared to

work with that person on developing the new skills necessary for effective

completion of the work. Once a task is delegated you can use your coaching

skills to ensure that not only are things still on track but also that any

learning as a result of the delegated tasks is used to develop the other person in a robust and effective way. What coaching skills and knowledge do I already have? What are my main goals in coaching others? How will I achieve these? What options do I have? What obstacles stand in my way? How will I deal with these obstacles? What are my target dates for these goals? Are there any short term, medium term, goals along the way? What support and resources do I need? How and when will I get access to this? What will I feel like when I achieve the goals? What first step will I take towards these goals? Timescales. When? 9. Self Assessment of Your Coaching Skills

10. Resources

Bolton G. (2001) Reflective Practice, London, Paul Chapman. Hardingham A., (with Brearley M., Moorhouse, A., Ventner, B. (2004) The Coach's Coach: Personal Development for Personal Developers. Chartered Institute of Personnel Developers. Moon, J. (1999) Reflection in Learning and Professional Development, KoganPage, London. Rogers J. (2004) Coaching Skills Handbook, Open University. Whitmore, J. (2002) 3rd ed., Coaching for Performance, Growing People, Performance and Purpose, Nicholas Brearly. Zeus P. and Skiffington S. (2002) The Coaching at Work Toolkit: A complete Guide to Techniques and Practices, McGraw Hill. Eileen Carnell, Jacqui MacDonald and Susan Askew (2007) Coaching and Mentoring in Higher Education: A learning-centred approach Institute of Education, University of LondonTaylor Fracis: Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice. Available from the University Library

Useful Web sites

http://www. mentoringgroup. com/index. htmlhttp://www. coachingnetwork.

org. uk/Default. htmhttp://www. associationforcoaching. com/home/index.

htmhttp://www. cipd. co. uk/subjects/lrnanddev/coachmntor/coaching. htm?

IsSrchRes= 1http://www2. learndirect-business.

com/business-courses/coachinghttp://www. the-coaching-academy.

com/http://www. coachingnetwork. org. uk/Default. htm