
The Mathis Group's Messenger

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Coaching/Counseling Skills For A New Millennium



Everyone has a different definition of managers and coaches. Put simply, a manager is a person who is in charge and who makes most of the decisions. However, a coach is a person responsible for leading the team to making the decision over time. Let's look at each of these management styles.

Managers tend to be one directional in their leadership style. The manager will tell team members how the project is to be done without much input from others. This person likes to be in charge. On the flip side, coaches build the team to work together. This person supports, encourages, and directs team members to think on their own. A coach will facilitate decisions and give feedback back as needed by members. A coach loves to see the team succeed without taking the glory for himself.

We are seeing a shift in management styles from the Dinosaur Management to the New Millennium style. A manager who uses Dinosaur Management is very autocratic, demanding, screaming, cursing and is only interested in the results being achieved with little or no communication from others. In the New Millennium style employees are empowered, educated, and thought of as a resource. Employees work in an atmosphere conducive to creativity. These managers want the opinions of their team and include them in the decision making process.

Eventually, every coach will have to deal with an employee that is not performing up to par. To deal with this employee, a meeting is needed. Once you have the face-to-face meeting scheduled with the employee, you must prepare. Following these guidelines will help ensure that the meeting goes smoothly and successfully.



Conduct the meeting in private.

No one enjoys getting critiqued in public. A private meeting ensures that everything said will be confidential. Also, people are more willing

to express themselves openly if they do not have an audience.

Have only yourself and the other person, unless a third party is absolutely needed.

If possible, keep the meeting to only yourself and the other person. Occasionally it is necessary to have a third person in attendance as a witness.

Prevent interruptions so that the flow of the discussion will not be stopped.

By preventing interruptions, the meeting will flow more smoothly. The discussion will not be stopped and you will not have the risk of another person overhearing any of the conversation. Not answering your phone or taking visitors are all ways to achieve this.

Allow plenty of time for the meeting.

Do not rush the meeting. By not having to rush off, you will be able to cover all necessary topics and allow ample time for questions.

Describe the exact behavior the employee must change and how to change it.

Do not assume that the employee knows the behavior that needs to be changed. When discussing the unsatisfactory behavior give specific dates and times. Don't focus on the little things, but on the behavior that is really the problem. The more specific you are, the more likely the employee will make the desired changes.

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*Thoughts on Leadership:
Make sure everybody's on board the train.
Mike Krzyzewski
Duke Basketball Coach*

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Anticipate the employee's response and how you will answer them.

By planning ahead, you should be able to anticipate what the employee's reaction will be. Keep the meeting positive. Do not give the employee reason to get defensive.

Create a plan on how you and the employee will attack the unwanted behavior.

Work together with the employee to find a plan of action that is acceptable to both of you. By letting the employee be a part of the solution, he or she will be more likely to follow through.

Get buy-in from them before moving forward.

Before the meeting ends, make sure the employee understands everything discussed and the action plan. Make sure they know how to change the performance and where to get help. Reiterate the consequences for not changing the behavior.

Follow-up

After an agreed upon amount of time, have a follow-up meeting with the employee to evaluate if the necessary changes are being made or if some adjustment needs to be done.

Be aware of some common coaching mistakes.

1. Coaches withdrawing from the employee.
2. Coaches don't talk with the employee about the goals. They set them for the worker.
3. Coaches don't get employee buy-in at the end of each session.
4. Coaches get gutless and take the path of least resistance.
5. Coaches lose perspective by getting too friendly with the employee.

Coaching employees is difficult to achieve. By following these guidelines and learning from common mistakes, you will be able to improve undesirable employee behavior.

Do you want to change employees' performance and behavior quickly?

Order Keith's book Dinosaur Tracks: Modern Leadership Strategies for Successfully Changing Employees' Performance and Behavior

Check out www.keithmathis.com for more information!



Greatness is not standing above our fellows and ordering them around--it is standing with them and helping them to be all they can be.

*G. Arthur Keough (1909-1989)
Educator*

Nobody stands taller than those willing to stand corrected.

*William Safire
Columnist*

Values For Successful Coaching

Vision - Have a clear vision of what you want to accomplish.

Support - Lay a foundation that allows the employee to feel supported in making future changes.

Build up - Seek to increase self esteem and not to tear down.

Ownership - Make the worker own the problem. Don't work harder than the worker in making their behavior change.

Risk - Encourage risk taking in the employee to try new things. Get them out of their comfort zone.

Patience - Recognize that it takes time to make behavior changes. They did not get there overnight and they will not change overnight.

Confidentiality - Help the employee save face by keeping the matter private.

Respect - Focus on changing behaviors, not on attacking the person.



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