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Leadership Fundamentals

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CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE “COACHING-TO-CHANGE- PERFORMANCE” MEETING 62

Course Overview

We designed this course for the new supervisor or anyone who wants to know more about taking a leadership position. It will teach you how to develop practical leadership skills for use with any workforce regardless of educational, professional, or social background. You will learn effective and proven techniques in motivating people, setting effective performance objectives, assessing that performance easily, and coaching for performance.

You will receive tools that you can use immediately in the workplace. This course includes a quiz consisting of true false and multiple-choice questions at the end, which will help you understand and implement the course materials.

We have written it to provide practical and easy-to-follow guidance for new leaders who want to develop effective leadership skills without the pain of a trial-and-error approach. It is also effective for seasoned leaders to use as a guideline in mentoring newer ones. Systematic guidance helps users develop “soft skills” measurements for activities such as teamwork, quality service, oral and written communications. There is also a structured methodology to determine why an employee is not performing to expectations as well as a powerful “how to” guideline on effective coaching for use anywhere in 30 seconds or less.

The objective of this course is to help participants develop effective leadership skills that will increase their value to their employer and their career satisfaction

Course Deliverables

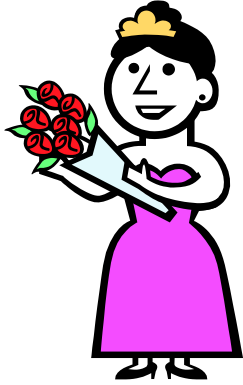


If you are a supervisor or manager taking this course, you will learn how to:

- Discover what motivates your employees.
- Improve your interaction with employees who are your minimal performers.
- Channel employee motivation into improved departmental morale and performance.
- Identify measurable work performance goals for your employees
- Create a Goal Setting Worksheet (GSW) to make the annual performance assessment less stressful on you and your employees
- Conduct an effective goal-setting meeting
- Identify potential training needs for your employees
- Determine whether an employee cannot perform to standards or simply does not

want to

- Coach effectively to change undesirable behavior in your employees
- Coach effectively to continue desired behavior in your employees



Think about the movie, MY FAIR LADY. What was the story about?

(A speech teacher that taught, coached, and encouraged a common “flower girl” in Victorian London to act like and pass for a member of nobility.)

How could the premise of that story apply to your department?

(The talent you are looking for may be hidden in your department awaiting discovery, teaching, and encouragement by you.)

Think of two of your current employees: your top performer and your lowest performer.



Fill in this table as honestly as you can about what may be their impression of you. Use a rating scale from 1= Lowest to 5=Highest

Component of Motivation	How would <u>your TOP PERFORMER</u> RATE YOU?	How would <u>your LOWEST PERFORMER</u> RATE YOU?
My supervisor tells me what he/she expects of me in measurable (Q, Q, T see page 11) terms.		
My supervisor gives me a chance to perform.		
My supervisor lets me know how I am doing.		
My supervisor gives me help and guidance		
My supervisor rewards me with pay or praise when I succeed.		

Is there a difference in their scores?

What could these differences in scores tell you about your relationship with them?

What could the difference in scores tell you about opportunities for motivation?

WHAT WOULD MOTIVATE YOUR EMPLOYEES?

“WHEN YOUR EMPLOYEES GET WHAT THEY WANT, YOU’LL GET WHAT YOU WANT!”
 ---Zig Ziglar Motivational speaker

Ask your employees what you could give them that would have the most value for them. Tell them to keep in mind that you cannot hand out spot bonuses, private parking spaces, etc. (You may be surprised at what they tell you!)

What do your employees want in a work situation?	Does it cost money?	What do you want in a work situation?	Does it cost money?

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GIVING THEM THE FREE ITEMS TODAY?

WHAT IS KEEPING YOU FROM GETTING THE FREE ITEMS TODAY?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO GIVE THEM THE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT FREE?

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO GET THE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT FREE?

YOUR EMPLOYEE’S VIEW OF HIMSELF / HERSELF

Use the same table for them to rate themselves. Compare your score for each employee with their score of themselves and discuss any differences in scores.

Put them at ease by saying you are trying to see their world through their eyes and are trying to become a better leader for them.

There is a strong probability that the employee you think is the best matches their self-perceptions most closely with your perceptions of him or her.

Likewise, the biggest gap is probably with the person you call the worst employee. This means you have a great opportunity to work with the worst one and you may gain a better employee.



WHAT IS IN IT
FOR YOU TO
DO THIS?

.....

Your Name _____ Date _____

Your Supervisor _____

Put a “L” (low), “M” (medium), or “H” (high) in the column at the right to describe <u>your confidence level</u> in understanding these items:	
Knowing the <u>MEASURABLE EXPECTATIONS</u> your supervisor has of your work performance (“You must complete X tasks, within Y time, and a quality level of Z”)	
Knowing the <u>MEASURABLE EXPECTATIONS</u> you have of your own work performance (“I will complete X tasks, within Y time, and a quality level of Z”)	
Knowing your work performance or knowledge <u>strengths</u>	
Knowing your work performance or knowledge <u>weaknesses</u>	
Knowing where and how to get help.	
Knowing how to measure your work performance against your goals	
Your expectation that rewards will follow your achievement.	

The US Chamber of Commerce asked 40,000 hourly employees and 5,000 supervisors to rate the 10 job conditions below from one (most important) to 10 (least important).

YOUR TASK: Rate the conditions from 1-10 in each table from the perspective of the hourly employee. Then score the difference between the actual results as shown on page 18.

(You can use each number only once.)



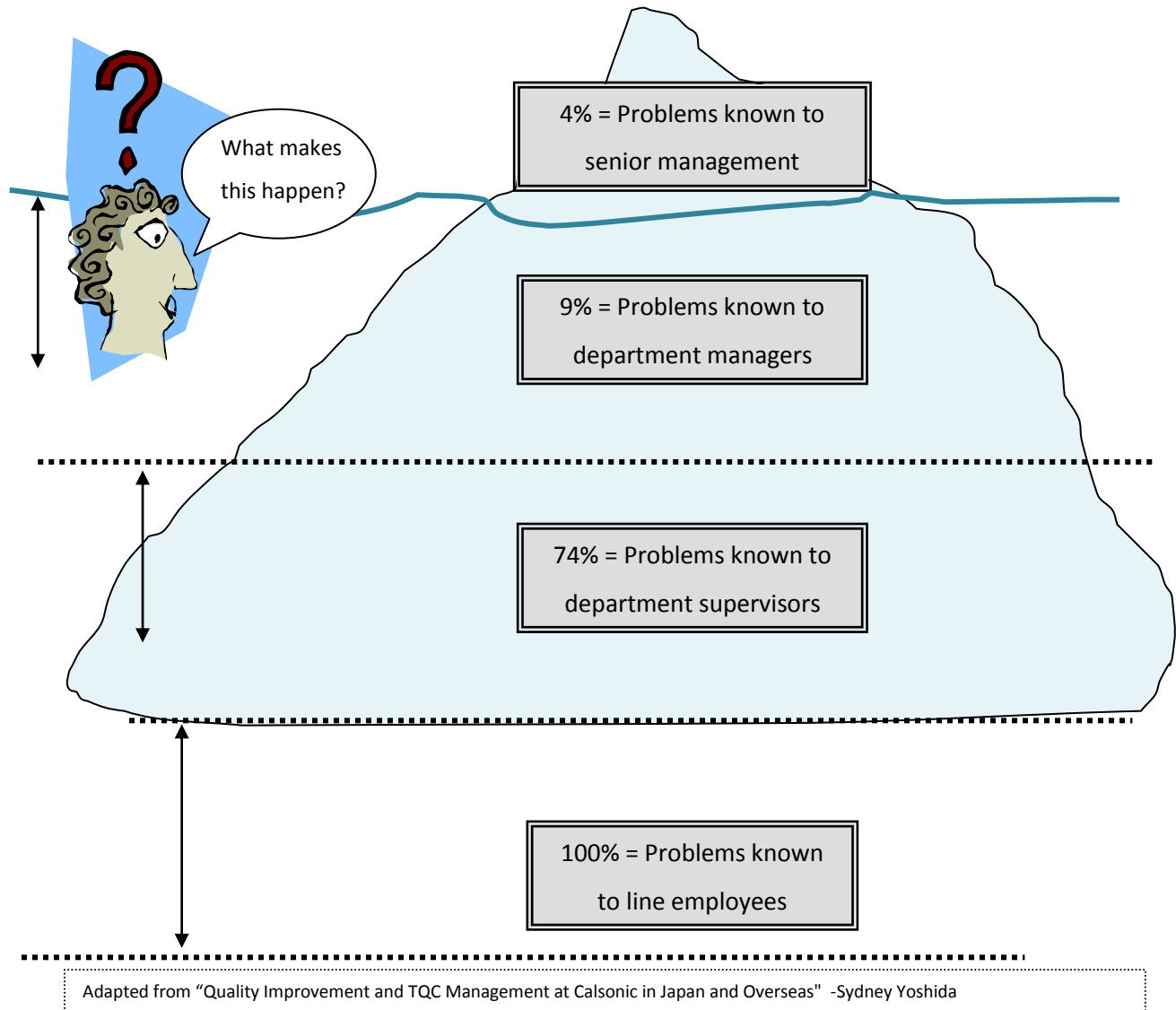
RATE THESE FROM THE HOURLY EMPLOYEE’S VIEWPOINT

Job Condition	Your Rating	Actual Rating (Page 18)	Difference without +/-
Full appreciation of work done			
Feeling “in” on things			
Sympathetic help on personal problems			
Job security			
Good wages			
Work that keeps you interested			
Promotion and growth in the company			
Personal loyalty to workers			
Good working conditions			
Tactful discipline			
Total the numbers in the “difference’ column>>			

The greater your difference score, the greater the gap between your view of these working conditions and those of line employees. What can you do to close that gap?

The “Ignorance Iceberg”

A distribution showing the extent of awareness of operational line problems at higher levels within an organization.



The message with this picture is that the line employees have most knowledge about conditions (problems or opportunities) at the production level. A wise leader creates an environment of motivation where employees want to take care of their leaders (and their employers) by dealing with problems before they can occur – or get bigger – or take advantage of opportunities to improve efficiency. However, if they do not feel their leader values them, they stay quiet and let things happen.

Do you think problems exist today in your department where supervisors above and below you may not know about them? If so, where are the most likely places: specific departments, specific workflows, under specific people?

What is there about your work place that could keep your people from telling you about existing problems?

What is in it for AN EMPLOYEE to tell you about the problem so it can go away?

What is in it for YOU if that happens?

The US Chamber of Commerce asked 40,000 hourly employees and 5,000 supervisors to rate the 10 job conditions below from one (most important) to 10 (least important).

ACTUAL SCORES for the Table on page 16
RATE THESE FROM THE HOURLY EMPLOYEE’S VIEWPOINT

Job Condition	Your Rating	Actual Rating from Survey	Difference
Full appreciation of work done		3	
Feeling “in” on things		4	
Sympathetic help on personal problems		9	
Job security		1	
Good wages		2	
Work that keeps you interested		5	
Promotion and growth in the company		7	
Personal loyalty to workers		10	
Good working conditions		6	
Tactful discipline		8	

SETTING EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE GOALS

The Value of Setting MEASURABLE Goals



What value do you think there is in having measurable goals?

(Specific measurables – in terms of Quality, Quantity, and Time, QQT – make it easy to monitor progress toward their achievement.)

What are some sources of stress in your work life?

What are some measurable goals in your work life?

What are some sources of stress in your home life?

What are some measurable goals in your home life?



Do you think there are significant differences between work pressure and work stress? If so, how would you describe them?

(Many times work stress comes from “undefined” sources or vague expectations. For example, if your boss tells you to complete a financial proposal within a week, and you do not know what he expects in it or what it should look like, you will be stressed trying to meet his vague expectations. Even after you turn it in, you still worry because you do not know whether you did it “right” and he will like it.

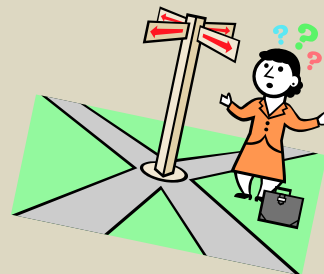
But if you have done many financial proposals for him in the past, you still may feel some work tension and job pressure until you finish. However, once you turn it in, you are relieved because it is finished and you know you did a good job.)

Traits & Examples of WORK PRESSURE	Traits & Examples of WORK STRESS
<p>The monthly reports are high <u>pressure</u> because final data does not get in until about 2 hours until the report is due.</p> <p>It would take 3 hours effort to get it all but we must compress this into 2 hours.</p> <p>Lots of pressure to get it right, formatted correctly and to the boss before the deadline.</p> <p>Whew! What a relief when that is out of the way for another month!</p>	<p>The monthly reports are high <u>stress</u> because final data does not get in until about 2 hours until the report is due.</p> <p>My boss never helped me understand why we do this or just how it wants it. He showed me a past example but I am not sure how to get it into that formatting.</p> <p>Even through it only happens once a month, I start dreading it two weeks out. I could tell he was not happy about last month's but he took it. Even after I turn it in, I half expect him to call me back in there and give me a blast. Waiting for him to yell makes me just as crazy as doing the report.</p> <p>I am not used to doing less than my best work and this is starting to get to me.</p>

How can measurable goals reduce stress in your life?

List some activities associated with your job that you wish were defined more clearly regarding what your leader expects you to do.

How does this lack of clarification affect you and your work?



What risk does this lack of clarification mean to your employer's perception of your value to the organization?

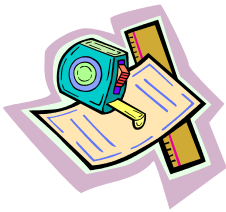
What will you do about this after you finish this course?



The Elements of Effective Goals

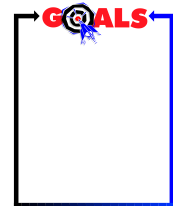
An effective goal requires at least these four elements:

- **Realistic** (in the mind of the person doing the work) – The person must feel they have some chance of success or they will not bother trying.



- **Quantifiable** – It must tell the person HOW MUCH (Quantity), HOW WELL (Quality), and BY WHEN (Time). This knowledge helps them gauge their own progress toward the ultimate goal. We will abbreviate this to “QQT” in this course.

- **Job Related** – He/she must understand how his/her personal goals associated with this task support the goals of the department, which support the goals of the division. If it just seems like random “busy work”, then do not expect any enthusiasm or quality of performance.



- **Doable** – They must involve his/her **doing something** that they can observe and measure: otherwise, you will create confusion. A goal that calls for “Understanding how work flows through the Highway Department” is useless because you cannot measure UNDERSTANDING.

It only becomes useful if he/she must **do something** that demonstrates his/her understanding such as, “explain in writing the complete workflow of a request from a citizen for a safety sign on his street until it is installed.”





PRACTICE ACTIVITY

Describe an activity associated with your job that is clearly defined and contains “quantity, quality, and time” components.

The Quality component is:	The Quantity component is:	The Time component is:

How does this clear definition of what your leader expects affect your personal satisfaction and your work performance?

How does your work performance and personal satisfaction regarding this clearly defined task compare with the task you identified earlier that is not defined as clearly?

How can you use this comparison of two of your tasks with your employees and some of their tasks?

(It may give you some insight why they are not working to your expectations.)

Why would you want to do this?

Goals and Tasks

Do you think a person can be very busy but not very productive?

How could this happen?

Tasks are not always productive. Sometimes people are just “busy.” When you focus a task with the three critical performance standards that define “how much,” “how well” and “by when” (QQT), you establish goals and become productive.



The source of light in a bulb is essentially the same as a laser beam.



However, the laser has all of its energy amplified and narrowly focused upon a particular point that gives it incredible power. How could you compare parts of your workday to the light bulb and the laser beam?

When do you feel more satisfied with your work: when you are acting like a light bulb or a laser beam?

Which condition ultimately makes your job more enjoyable and your work more productive?

How can you use the light bulb and laser beam example in a discussion with your employees?

Why would you want to do that?

Are these situations productive or busy?



Read each situation and put a checkmark under the appropriate “Productive” or “Busy” column. Remember, we define “productive” as having all three elements of how much (quantity), how well (quality), and by when (time) present in a situation.



The situation	Productive	Busy	If “busy,” what is missing?
Grant has been pushing the cart loaded with statements up and down the hall for the past 45 minutes.			
Logan has processed 200 documents in the past 3 hours.			
Murphy has the machine running items at a speed of 375/hour and a reject rate of .82%			
Cindy completed 3 hours of classes at night school this past quarter.			
Describe a typical activity of yours that is busy but not productive because you have not been told the three components of productivity: quality, quantity, and time.			
Which of the three components is missing?			
What will you do about it?			

Grant is just busy. Nothing has been accomplished. What is the “quality” measurement?

Logan has processed 200 documents but are they the correct ones? Where they processed accurately? There is no QUALITY component.

Murphy has been productive. The quality component is the “reject rate”.

Cindy completed the courses but what was her grade? If she received an “F” for failure, she was still productive but her quality was so low (the “failure”) that it was a waste of time. If she received an “A”, she was more productive than if she received a “C”.

Establishing Effective Performance Goals

Select one of your current employees and write two effective performance goals for them. Put the words “how much,” “how well,” and “by when” in parenthesis behind the proper element within your goal. Use this as a sample:

Sandy will complete the night school Accounting 101 class (“how much” = one class) within 6 months of today (“by when”) with at least a grade of ‘B’ (“how well”).

My employee is _____

Their performance goal #1 is:

Their performance goal #2:

Think
about...

Three possible situations can happen when **setting performance goals**:

You set them; your employee takes them and tries to meet them.

Your employee sets them; you accept them and hope they can meet them.

You and your employee set them together and track progress together.

Which do you think is a better situation and why?

Those “Hard-to-Measure” Performance Topics

How can you put a measurement on these topics?



Quality Service



Team Work



Written Communication



Oral Communication

It is easy to measure if you will do this:

1. Work with your employees to define jointly the behavioral traits that demonstrate the topic. (It is critical to the success of this measurement process that you include those whose behavior you expect to measure. Their “buy in” is critical for the success of this approach.)

For example, if you wanted to measure “PRIDE IN WORK,” you must first identify behavioral traits that indicate they have pride in their work.

- There are no spelling errors.
- It is always on time or before.
- She always uses the proper format for the report.
- There are no smudges or “white outs” on the form.
- Her data is always accurate.

2. Establish a scale with a range of values for use with each trait. [This is a Likert Scale.]
 - 1 = I never see this (Do not get overly concerned with the definition of “Never.” As long as you and the employees agree on what frequency it means, the scale will work.)
 - 2 = I occasionally see this (Do not get overly concerned with the definition of “occasionally.” As long as you and the employees agree on what frequency it means, the scale will work.)
 - 3 = I always see this (Do not get overly concerned with the definition of “Always.” As long as you and the employees agree on what frequency it means, the scale will work.)
- X = Does not apply

CAUTION: Professionals such as engineers, surveyors, and accountants are used to working with specific data and may be uncomfortable with this concept. They should remember we are measuring impressions and attitudes that may be vague at best. Asking a customer to rank satisfaction along a scale from “Not satisfied,” “Some satisfaction”, Very Satisfied,” or “Does not apply” is more useful than asking them “are you 43% satisfied or 72%?”

3. Then create a scale that converts the average of the trait scale (#2 above) to your performance assessment system.

Joan Smith’s Pride in Work (“Pride in Work” is the <u>behavior</u> we are evaluating) Evaluation	Scores
There are no spelling errors.	3
It is always on time or before.	2*
She always uses the proper format for the report	2*
There are no smudges or “white outs” on the form.	3
Her data is always accurate	2*
Average score for the observation period →	12/5= 2.4
<p><i>*A wise leader will have documentation of the times when the employee did anything that would result in a less than perfect score. You can expect them to ask for proof they did not earn the top score.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, their morale improves if you put the burden of proving they <u>did not</u> get the max score on you instead of putting the burden of proof <u>on them</u> they did earn it. This would be like a teacher in school telling you at the start of the year “Everyone has an “A” in this class until your scores show otherwise.” The result from a grade standpoint is probably the same but the attitude of the students is much more optimistic and they <u>may</u> score better!</i></p>	

These five “behavioral traits” from part #1 define the behavior “Pride in Work.”

You can ask your work team how they want to be measured on their “teamwork” skills.

Some **“TEAM WORK”** traits that they may suggest:

- Demonstrates willingness to help others when finished with own work without being asked.
- Demonstrates willingness to help others with less experience or confidence
- Demonstrates willingness to give credit to others when praise is given
- Demonstrates willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked)
- They are reliable and can be counted on to carry their share of the workload

You should consider accepting any traits that satisfy them and still fall within your general bounds of what the topic should cover. They feel more bound by their community standards than your outsider standards.

This is how the XYZ Corporation may set up a simple, yet effective because employees easily understand it, performance assessment scale of 1.0-3.0.

Performance scale ranges:

< 2.0 requires probation and a specific improvement plan

2.0 – 2.4 = Satisfactory performance with lowest merit increase

>2.4 – 2.7 = Above satisfactory performance with medium merit increase

>2.7 = Outstanding performance and maximum merit increase

Employees Rating Each Other: Good or Bad Idea

Ask that question among a group of supervisors and managers and you will get many reasons for and against it. *We believe that it is a good idea only when the group doing the rating has the maturity to understand the benefits it offers.*

Here are some issues for consideration about the argument for those who have not attempted it before.



- Teamwork is important to the success of our group. (No one will argue that fact.)
- There are only two ways to evaluate individual performance contributions by members of the team: the leader can do the evaluation or the fellow team members can.
- The leader is not always present while the team is working. Frequently there are duties unique to leadership that requires him or her to be elsewhere such as attending meetings, working in the office planning, scheduling, budgeting, reporting, etc.
- There may be team members who work more diligently while the leader is present than they do when the leader is absent.
- Other team members frequently have to pick up that slack to meet the group's production goals.
- Since the leader was periodically absent and not able to observe performance at all times, there is a distinct possibility the slacker will get a performance rating that is higher than deserved when the leader does individual performance assessments on group members. This is unfair to those who had to pick up the slack to meet the group's goals.

- The group's members can solve this problem by doing anonymous assessments of each other if they choose to act objectively. The leader can use these for the individual's performance scores under the "teamwork" category.
- Some group members will object saying that assessments are the job of the leader. While that is true, it is also true that the frequently absent leader cannot evaluate individual performance within the group as often as other members can.
- The group can choose to score itself anonymously and be very accurate or insist the leader do the scoring and admit there may be undeserved scores. They cannot have it both ways unless the leader gives up some leadership practices such as being objective and treating employees equally. However, if the leader stopped doing those leadership practices, he or she would not remain a leader very long.
- The possibility of groups of team members giving those they do not like lower scores (or friends higher scores) than they deserve can be defeated by using the Olympic judge technique of throwing out the highest and lowest scores. On the other hand, you can require specific examples be included for the highest or lowest scores to count.
- If a group is willing to self-score, work production will increase because the slackers can no longer "get away" with their games: they know it and the group members know it.

Designing a “Soft Skills” Performance Evaluation

This is a review of the Those “Hard-to-Measure” Performance Topics on page 26. We will show you how to build a group assessment for the soft skill of teamwork.

Meet with the work group and explain to them that you want to develop a way to assess “teamwork” that fits with their work and is desirable and fair to all. (Be sure to reference the arguments on page 29.)

Ask them to offer some “Teamwork” traits that you could use on their organization’s annual performance assessment. Let us assume these are what they offered:

- Willingness to help others when finished with own work without being asked.
- Willingness to help others with less experience or confidence
- Willingness to give credit to others when praise is given
- Is reliable by always being here on time and doing what they promise
- Willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked)

EXTRA BENEFIT: Traits like these also provide a group’s unofficial “code of conduct” that becomes a self-policing guideline. This takes a large burden off the leader because the team self-monitors its performance and helps new members assimilate more quickly.



Performance Assessment Sample using a Likert Scale

(A Likert Scale is one that surveys a range of opinion from one extreme to another such as ‘Agree very strongly’ to ‘Disagree very strongly’.)

Send a survey with a cover memo like this to group members.

“John Smith is due for a performance assessment of his last 12 months of work. Part of our company’s annual Performance Assessment form requires an assessment of TEAMWORK.

We value the Teamwork traits listed below in our group. Please rate John based on your experience with him during this past assessment period and send it to me by (date). If you want to include the highest or lowest scores, you must include specific examples for those scores to count.

Your name will be helpful if I have questions about your response BUT IT IS NOT REQUIRED. If you will feel more comfortable returning it anonymously, you may do that.”

Please rate these situations from a 1-10 using this rating: 1 = I never see that trait 3 = I rarely see it 5 = I see it occasionally 8 = I see it frequently 10 = I always see that trait X = I do not know well enough for an opinion.	
The trait we are looking for...	Your rating
Willingness to help others when finished with own work <u>without being asked.</u>	
Willingness to help others with less experience or confidence	
Willingness to give credit to others when praise is given	
Is reliable by always being here on time and doing what they promise	
Willingness to carry his/her fair share of the workload (and more at times if asked)	

When you get the replies, average the scores and assign a value according to the system you have developed with your employees.

List Five Traits That You Would Want to See Displayed for

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

List Five Traits That You Would Want to See Displayed for

ORAL COMMUNICATION

List Five Traits That You Would Want to See Displayed for

QUALITY SERVICE

Developing an Action Plan

Setting goals is meaningless without an action plan of what you will do to make them happen.

Here is an action plan that an employee would write using the night school example on page 24.

- Step #1. I will call the night school representative within 2 days of this meeting and ask for the form needed to register for class.
- Step #2. When I get the form, I will fill it out, get my boss' signature, and send it back to the night school representative within 2 days of receipt.
- Step #3. Then I will call the night school representative on the fifth day after sending it to confirm she received it and ask if I need to do anything else.

Transfer to here one of the performance goals you just wrote for one of your employees:

Now identify at least three action steps the employee could take to get started toward that goal. Identify the quality, quantity, and time elements.

How much should a leader be concerned about the perceived difficulty of achieving goals?

(Some concern but not as much as the employee who has to accomplish the goals.)

Who (leader or employee) should determine (and **WHY**) whether a goal is difficult?

(Both should be involved. If the leader thinks the employee can do it, then strong coaching skills are needed to get the employee to attempt the activity.)

CONDUCTING THE GOAL-SETTING MEETING

PREPARATION

The goal-setting meeting can be an excellent, non-threatening, opportunity for you to make sure your employee understands his or her job junction and how it fits into the purpose of your organization.



Here is an easy way to make that determination:

Give a copy of the Worksheet for the Goal-Setting Meeting (on the next page) to your employee about a week before your meeting.

Tell them to think about their work performance and professional development goals for the next observation period. Say something like, *“This helps me discover how well I have communicated with you about your job and my expectations of your performance. Please fill one out about what you expect of yourself and I will do one for you defining what I think you can do – plus a little stretching for professional growth. Then we’ll compare them to help me understand your view of the job and your development plans.”*

If you are not sure of what to say, try something like, *“If you were me, what would be the minimum acceptable performance and professional development that you would expect from someone with your experience, skills, and potential? Then what would be the maximum you think could be achieved?”*

Remember, the more time you spend today clarifying questions, the less time you will have to spend tomorrow fixing mistakes.

You and your employee must both be prepared for the goal-setting meeting: here is a useful guide for preparation.

Worksheet for the Goal-Setting Meeting

Employee's Name: _____ Date: _____

Employee's Position: _____

Supervisor: _____

Goal setting period from (dd/mm/yyyy) _____ to _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

WORK PERFORMANCE GOALS:

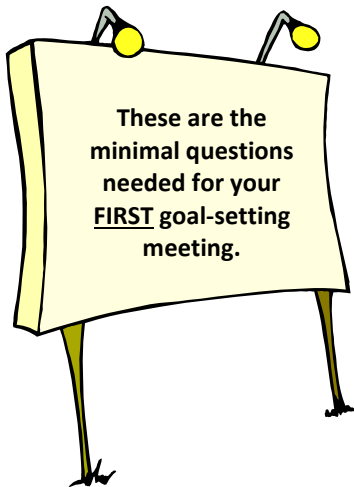
I plan to achieve these performance goals *as an average* over this period (including measurements of quality, quantity, and time).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

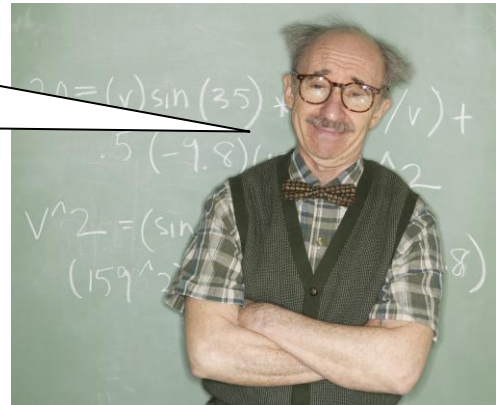
I plan to achieve these professional development goals over this period (including measurements of quality, quantity, and time).

1. “What are your goals for this first period (1st quarter is ideal) of observation?”

2. “How can I help?”

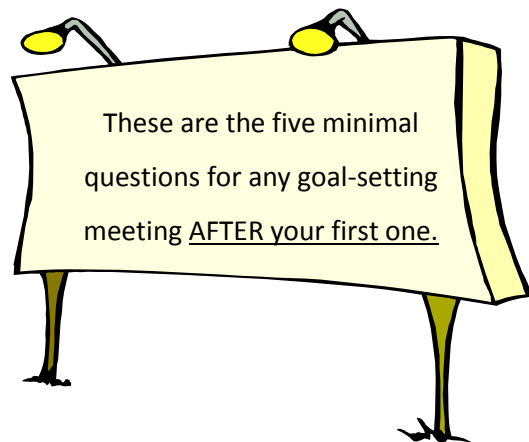


It does not have to be more complex than those two questions!



After the first period of observation when they have had a chance to build a record of accomplishment with you, there are three additional questions that you should ask. The new questions are in **blue**.

1. “What were your goals for this past observation period?”
2. “**How did you do?**”
3. “**How do you account for the gap above or below your goals?**”
4. “**What are your plans for the next period?**”
5. “How can I help?”



ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS – WHY?



Why do we do annual performance assessments?

What do you think is the typical opinion among your fellow leaders about doing performance assessments?

Why do you and they think this way?

.....



When you were in grade school, were you ever surprised about what your report card would look like?

How were you able to figure closely what your grades would be?

How often did you get report cards?

How did your teachers, your parents, and you use them?

Did you have to wait until the end of the school year to learn whether you had passed that grade? Why or why not?

What differences are there between report cards you had in school and performance assessments you get (and do) at work?

What is keeping you from creating that same “report card” environment in your department with your employees?

Performance or Activity?

Caterpillars move through trees in long lines; each one with its head snugly fitted against the rear of the one ahead. Jean-Henri Fabre, a French naturalist, enticed a string of them once to the rim of a large



flowerpot. There he succeeded in getting the first in line butted up against the last in a big, hairy circle that moved around and around continuously.

He expected them to catch on somehow that they were going nowhere but they did not. He even placed ample food and water nearby where they could see it but just outside their path. Through sheer force of habit, they continued the march for seven days until exhaustion and ultimate starvation ended their march.

There was plenty of activity, all were deeply engrossed in the habit, custom, tradition, or “way-we-have-always-done-it,” but they accomplished nothing!¹

Performance means achievement of goals, **activity** means staying busy!

The Performance Assessment exists to reward employees for what they accomplish, not for just showing up and staying busy. Do you think that you, your leader, and your employees have a clear understanding of this difference?

¹ *Think Like a Manager*, Roger Fritz, Ph.D., copyright 1994, page 97

Three Critical Parts of Elements of an Effective Performance Assessment Process

1. YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION

This defines and describes the job the company will pay you to do in support of the employer's mission.

QUESTION: What is the mission of your employer?

What is your department's mission in support of your employer's mission?



Why is it important to ask these questions in a module about performance assessments?

The employee and supervisor work together to define how well to do them via the different performance levels using the goal setting worksheet.



List here the top three things you are paid to do in your job using the terms of HOW WELL (quality), HOW MUCH (quantity), and HOW OFTEN (time).

If you are having difficulty doing this, what does that tell you about communications between you and your supervisor?



What is your level of confidence that you and your supervisor would list the same three items? If it is not very high, what does that tell you about your leader's possible view of your job performance?

What are you going to do about this situation?

What does job CONFIDENCE have to do with job COMPETENCE?

(The more confident we are that we are doing the right things right means we will be more competent doing them.)



What determines your sense of job CONFIDENCE?

How does your sense of job CONFIDENCE influence your job COMPETENCE?

How does your job COMPETENCE affect your job PERFORMANCE?

On which of those elements (confidence, competence, or performance) does your boss judge you?

How comfortable are you with your work situation?

What do you plan to do next?

2. WRITTEN PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

“Performance standards “are organizational minimums for specific job tasks. “Clerks should type a minimum of 35 words (quantity) per minute (time) with no errors (quality)” is an example of an organizational standard.



“Performance goals” are an individual’s performance improvement path to achieving organizational standards.

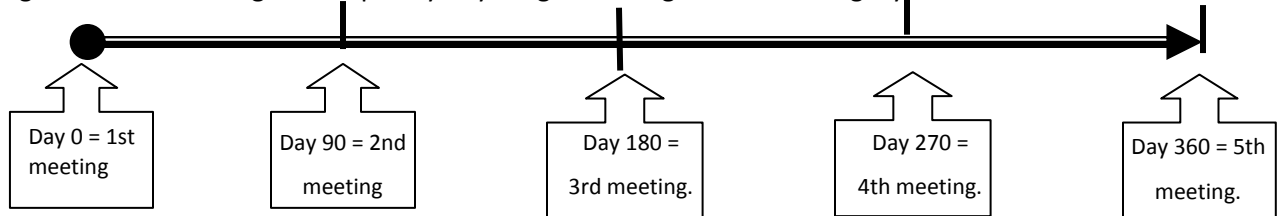
“Carl currently frames a unit to our standard in two hours and ten minutes: 10 minutes more than the performance minimums for his position. He is steadily getting closer to the company standard of two hours. His goal is to achieve the company standard within 2 weeks of today.”

List some performance standards of your organization. Then list some performance goals employees would set as they work toward achieving the organizational standards.

ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS	INDIVIDUAL GOALS

3. CONDUCTING A GOAL SETTING MEETING

Use the “report card model” from the Setting Effective Performance Goals as a guide to establishing the frequency of your goal setting sessions during a year.



Did your teachers ever have to tell you how you were doing in class or did you know?

How much stress do you think they experienced at “report card time”? (None)

Why? (Giving students feedback on classwork scores allowed the students to track their own grades.

The work was already finished by report card time. The students knew fairly closely what to expect.)

Why would that experience from school be any different from your work place? Who controls whether you have a stressFUL or stressFREE time doing performance assessments?



QUESTION: If you ask your employees at the beginning of the year, “How much do you want to earn this year?” what do you think they would say?

Do you think it would be, “I want to earn all I can?”

Compare that question to your days in school when the teacher asked, “What kind of an average do you want to end up with this year?”, and you said, “I want to get on the Honor Roll!”

If you wanted to end the year on the Honor Roll, what part did the teacher play in your plans?

(Establishing the grading system and getting your scores back to you.)

Who carried the biggest part of the load of getting you on the Honor Roll? (You did!)

How does that situation in grade school compare to your department when an employee says, “I want to earn all I can”?

Do you remember this from the Goal setting module?

Worksheet for the Goal-Setting Meeting

Employee's Name: _____

Date: _____

Employee's Position: _____ Supervisor: _____

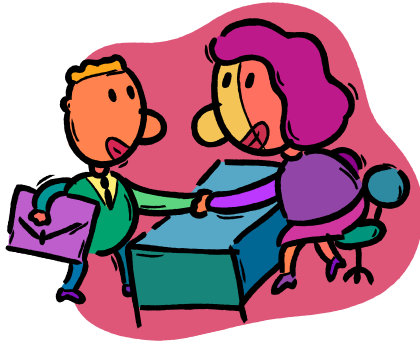
Goal setting period from (dd/mm/yyyy) _____ to _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

WORK PERFORMANCE GOALS:

I plan to achieve these performance goals *as an average* over this period (including measurements of quality, quantity, and time).

Do you remember these from the Goal setting module?

Use these questions for the first meeting of an observation period (usually one year).	Use these questions for every other meeting after the first for that observation period (quarterly).
"What are your goals for this first period of observation?"	"What were your goals for this first period of observation?"
"How can I help?"	"How did you do?" (Comparing goals vs. accomplishment)
	"How do you explain the gap between goals and actual performance?"
	"What is your plan for the next period?"
	"How can I help?"



QUESTION: Which is better?

Hold the end-of-observation-period evaluation and set-goals-for-next-period meeting at one time, or have two distinct meetings?

(Two distinct meetings are better. If there is bad news in the first one, the employee needs time to settle down before you set goals for the next period. If they did very well, they need time to

settle down so they do not reach for unrealistic goals that may become self-defeating.)

DOCUMENTATION THAT SATISFIES THE “ORP”-Person



Do you know the ORP-person? (The Ordinary, Reasonable, and Prudent person is an individual who did not witness the event but may sit in judgment of your actions at an administrative hearing or as a member of a jury.)

Be sure to chisel this into your memory just as it is chiseled into this block of stone! You will

understand why in just a few moments.

**“IF IT ISN’T DOCUMENTED,
IT DIDN’T HAPPEN”**

Suppose your employee’s desk looked like this, which is very contrary to your sense of orderliness and what a professional environment should look like. *Write a comment here as if you were putting an entry onto a disciplinary form.*



QUESTION:

What determines whether an employee’s behavior requires your intervention? (The most universally applicable answer is, “If it impacts work adversely!”)

What impression could these sentences give the ORP-person about the supervisor and why could they give that impression?

- Her supervisor said: *“She just doesn’t take pride in her work!”*
- His supervisor said: *“His attitude toward customers is rude and very unprofessional.”*
- Her supervisor said: *“She is so loud and arrogant that no one wants to work with her!”*

*(The ORPman may think the supervisor has a grudge against them or there is something personal going on. You must always focus on **observable, descriptive behavior** and **not opinions** unless asked specifically for an opinion.)*

Rewrite them so they do not give the impression you described above.

(Hint: How can you write them to focus on objective behavior and not your value system?)

“She just doesn’t take pride in her work!”

Her lack of accuracy (quality reference) and tardiness in submitting the report (time reference) are performance problems. Because of those observations, I do not think she takes pride in her work. (If you are compelled to refer to her ‘pride’, then precede it with behavioral references so the ORPman will know you have valid reasons for saying so.)

“His attitude toward customers is rude and very unprofessional.”

He keeps interrupting them, does not allow them to finish questions, and calls them “stupid” to their face. (All specific behavioral references) He is uncommonly rude and unprofessional to customers!

“She is so loud and arrogant that no one wants to work with her!”

You can hear her talking several cubicles away. She is always correcting people and usually she is wrong! I have had a request from every one of her co-workers at different times for a transfer to another part of our department away from her.

CONDUCT A PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT MEETING

This process uses the “Report Card” model on page 43 that presupposes you and your employee share a common understanding of performance required to achieve the various performance levels recognized by your organization. (These equate to your knowing what it took to be a “C,” “B,” or “A” student in school.)



This “common understanding” can only result from you teaching them what you have learned about objective performance measurements, motivation, and wanting them to take charge of their own careers.

Schedule the meeting. Give your employee sufficient notice and invite them to bring documentation that supports the rating they think they should have. (Were you not ready with your test scores and other grades to argue with your teacher at report card time in case you did not get the grade you expected?)

Conduct the meeting. Take an approach that they are going to tell you how well they did on meeting their goals by presenting supporting documentation. In the meantime, you have prepared your view of what they have accomplished. (Remember that the teacher had her grade book, too.) Compare the documentation of performance the employee provides with the goal setting worksheet’s definitions for success. (“Here is what you are paid to do and these are the different requirements for a 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, and a 5.0 rating. Using our organization’s scale, what scores do you think you earned this period?”)

REMEMBER that your teachers did not give you good or bad grades, you earned them. You showed your teacher what grade you wanted by the way you performed!

It can be the same way with your performance assessments: let your employees’ performance tell you the scores they want to see!

The biggest issue many supervisors have with getting salary recommendations accepted by Compensation is THEIR (the supervisor's) CREDIBILITY.

If you are known as a supervisor who avoids conflict with employees by giving high and unearned or poorly documented salary increase recommendations, you will not be very successful in having them approved.



Likewise, if your reputation is that you are fair and objective and that your documentation proves the employee's achievement, you will be much more successful in having your recommendations accepted.

Your Human Resources Department will support your recommendations when you have built credibility with them over time. The more reason you give them to agree with you, the greater the likelihood they will!



QUESTION: What would be in it for Human Resources if you invited them to your department to review your revised goal setting and performance assessment scoring process?

(They could see a way to make their job easier by reducing the number of complaints they receive annually about performance assessment scores.)

What could that do for your credibility with them?

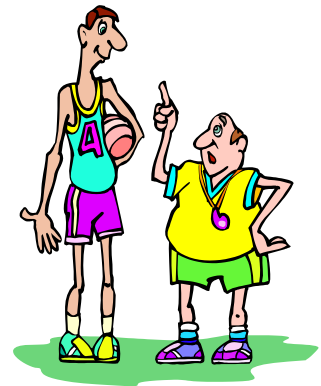
EFFECTIVE COACHING

The Basics of Coaching

Effective coaching starts with CATCHING THE EMPLOYEES DOING WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO...
THEN REWARDING OR REINFORCING IT!

Think about your employees. Some do the right things all the time and you hope they continue. Others do mostly right things and you wish they would change.

List below two of your employees and their behaviors you want to see continued or changed. (The same employee may be in both situations.)



Employee	I want them to continue doing this...	I want them to START doing this...

Getting people to STOP doing the wrong thing does not mean they will automatically START doing the right thing! They will only stop doing wrong things so you do not punish them.

If you want them to do the right things, you must make sure they know what right things are and then praise them.

“YOU GET WHAT YOU REINFORCE.”

What are you REALLY seeing?

Coaching must focus on observed performance – what people are actually doing – and not on our impression of what we think they are doing.

Read these situations and decide what you think is happening.

Jennifer is arriving for work again at 8:30, which is 30 minutes later than the rest of have to be here.

(If you thought she was late, you are wrong. She has a work schedule different from yours.)

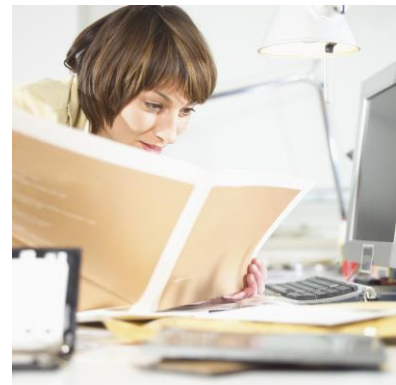


Mike is just leaning on the column and staring out the window.

(Mike is not wasting time but waiting for a print job to finish. He is thinking about the next report he has to write.)

She is sitting there at her desk reading a magazine again while the rest of us are still working.

(She is not wasting time but looking at a tech journal trying to figure out how to get her system running again.)



The “ORP” Person (again)

The Ordinary, Reasonable, and Prudent person did not witness the event. However, he or she may sit in judgment of your actions at an administrative hearing or as a member of a jury.



Look back at the exercise on page 50 in which you identified some of your employees and what you want them to continue doing and start doing. Have you identified behaviors they do or attitudes that reflect your impression of what you think they are doing?

Does your statement reflect the objective behavior of the employee or your impression of their attitude about their work? How could you reword the statement more effectively?



“He just doesn’t take pride in his work!”

What risk is there for **you** if you cannot separate an employee’s behavior from **your opinion** about that behavior?

(The ORPman may think the problem lies within you, not the employee.)



Coaching to CONTINUE Desired Performance

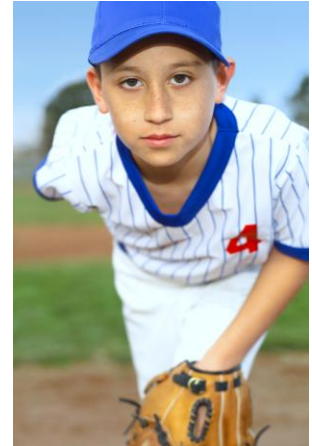
It is more effective from a coaching standpoint to focus your employee's attention on the things they are doing right instead of reminding them of what they are doing wrong.

Think of the Little League baseball coach shouting to his pitcher, "Be sure to cover home plate on a passed ball so the runner on 3rd doesn't score!"

What message do you think he is unintentionally sending between his words?
(I expect you to throw a wild pitch, so cover home plate in an attempt to lessen the damage you are going to cause!)

What do you think is the inevitable outcome of his "coaching" of the pitcher?
(There is a high probability there will be a wild pitch!)

What should he be saying? *(Hint - What does he really want the pitcher to do?) ("Hit the catcher's glove! Throw it across the plate!")*



There is a simple, yet very powerful, method an effective leader can use in less than 30 seconds to help employees focus on what they are doing right. Also, it will increase the likelihood they will keep doing it! This is how it works:

1. Draw his/her attention to the desired performance you want. *"You've finished your work early AGAIN! That is great!"*
2. Get him/her thinking about what he did by asking how he did it. *"Please tell me how do you achieve that EVERY DAY!"*
3. Listen carefully to his/her description to check whether it was an intentional act or random chance. (If random, review with them what they need to do to make it happen consistently.)
4. Give him/her a chance to continue doing the right thing by asking what else you can provide to make sure it keeps happening. *"Is there anything I can do to help you keep finishing early?"* (If their suggestion is reasonable, consider doing it. If not reasonable, you are not obligated to do it.)
5. Reinforce the moment and wrap it up with an encouraging phrase. *"You have certainly made our department look good! Keep it up!"*

Remember the word P-A-C-E-R (Performance – Ask – Check – Else – Reinforce) to take you through the steps easily.

Here is an example of how it works. Imagine you are a Little League parent and your player got a base hit. After the game or as soon as you can, you run up and congratulate him. Your conversation – after learning this technique – will go like this: (This will take about 30 seconds!)

Parent: “Great hit, son! That ball really took off! How did you hit it so well?” (This calls his attention to the performance you want repeated.)



Player: “Well, I held the bat like you taught me, stayed relaxed, and watched the ball. When I thought it was close enough; I turned my hips into the ball and whipped my hands around. Then followed through and the ball took off!” (You ask what he did and check to make sure it is correct. If he says, ‘I just closed my eyes and stuck the bat out there’, have him repeat what he should have done!)

Parent: “What did it feel like when you hit it? Was it exciting hearing everyone screaming?” (These questions help him relive the moment and create a desire to do it again.)

Player: “It was great! This is the best baseball day I’ve ever had!” (This is more reinforcement of the moment.)

Parent: “It sure is! Is there anything else we can do to make sure you keep getting great hits like that?” (Asking ‘what else’ gives them a chance to offer any ideas they may have. Remember, you do not have to act on them if they are unreasonable.)

Player: “I can keep doing what I’ve been doing. And, we could start going down to the batting cage!”

Parent: “OK! You keep swinging correctly and we will go to the batting cage some more, too! Son, you are doing great! We are very proud of you! Keep it up!” (This is the ‘reinforce’ by praising him.)

SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

Here are some other considerations when using the P-A-C-E-R model. We will continue with the Little League example to explain.

“How did you hit it so well?”

Be sure you do not say this with a tone of disbelief – as if you never expected him to succeed. Be amazed at how successful he was and how he made it look so easy: Never act surprised!

“What did it feel like when you hit it? Was it exciting hearing everyone screaming?”

This helps him recall the feel and sounds of success. The more you involve all of his senses in the recall, the greater the impression on him.

Especially involve his emotions. The more he recalls his emotions to imprint further the feeling of achievement, “How proud did you feel? Was it exciting? “The easier you make it to relive the moment means the greater the stimulus to keep practicing properly. (This works for adults as well as Little Leaguers!)

Coaching to CHANGE performance

“85% of employee performance problems have their roots in systems controlled by management.” --W. Edwards Deming
(Famous Quality guru)

What are examples of “systems” controlled by management? (Hint: It is not always computers.)

(It could policies, procedures, traditions, or resources.)

How could employees have performance problems if there are errors within “systems”?

(If employees rely on material, such as reference data, within systems provided and controlled by management, then errors they make are traceable more to management than to the employees.)

“Insanity is doing things the way you always have and expecting different results.”
--Albert Einstein

How does Einstein’s statement fit with Deming’s above?

(Management frequently tells employees to stop making mistakes but rarely goes “upstream” in the process to change the things that lead to employee mistakes.)

Can you recall trying to do something the same way over and over and expecting different results? How does this situation apply to your workplace or your personal life?



What may have led your employee to the wrong performance? (The section is based upon Analyzing Performance Problems² and Why Employees Don't Do What They're Supposed to Do³)

You cannot begin to coach for a change in behavior without first addressing the CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM. Otherwise, the problem will never be resolved!

YOU MUST DO SOMETHING DIFFERENTLY IF YOU WANT A DIFFERENT OUTCOME!

Here is a series of questions that will help you isolate the source of the employee's performance problem. Use this series to make sure you have eliminated any possible reason why your employee does not perform.

STEP #1

Ask yourself, "Is this problem worth pursuing?"



Question

How do you know if it is worth pursuing?" *(The answer should always be, "Does it impact work?" If it does, then pursue it. If not, it may not be worth the effort.)*

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done! If not, go to the next step.

Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is "**sufficiently solved.**"

"Sufficiently solved" means the gains derived from solving it 'better' may not be worth the effort required to get them so you decide to stop here.

² Analyzing Performance Problems or *You Really Oughta Wanna*, Mager and Pipe, 3rd Edition, 1997

³ Why Employees Don't Do What They're Supposed To Do *and What To Do About It*, Fournies, 1988

STEP #2

Ask yourself, “Are my expectations clear?”



Question

What do you ask your employee here?
(What do you think I am expecting you to do in terms of QQT?)

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done!
If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “*sufficiently solved.*”

STEP #3

Ask yourself, “Are the resources adequate?”



Question

What do you ask your employee here?
(Do you have everything you need to do the job I expect?)

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done!
If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “*sufficiently solved.*”

STEP #4

Ask yourself, “Do they get fast and frequent feedback on their performance?”

Question

What do you ask your employee here?
(How do you know how well you are doing at any time?)

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done!
If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “*sufficiently solved.*”

STEP #5

Ask yourself, “Does the desired performance seem punishing?”



Question

What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

(Hint: What do you usually do if they finish early and others have not finished yet?)

If you give them extra work from the others, then you are punishing their desirable behavior!

You must reward them with an entry in their file or an ‘atta boy’ and then ask them to help the others)

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done!
If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “**sufficiently solved.**”

STEP #6

Ask yourself, “Is poor performance rewarded somehow?”



Question

What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

This is the inverse of step #5. You cannot reward their slowness by asking others to help them without first documenting they are not performing to standards. That way, they are not getting away with anything.

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done!
If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “**sufficiently solved.**”

STEP #7

Ask yourself, “Is there any penalty for not doing it right?”



Question

What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

What is the penalty for not acting as expected? If there is no perceived penalty by the performer, there will be no change.

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done!
If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “**sufficiently solved.**”

STEP #8

Ask yourself, “Is their non-performance a genuine skill deficiency?”

Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done! If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “*sufficiently solved.*”

Question

What do you ask your employee (or yourself about the situation) here?

“Why should I think he or she should know how to do it to the standard I expect?”

- If they have never done it, train them.
- If they could do it in the past but have not for a while, give them a chance to practice.

STEP #9

Ask yourself, “Can the task be made easier?”



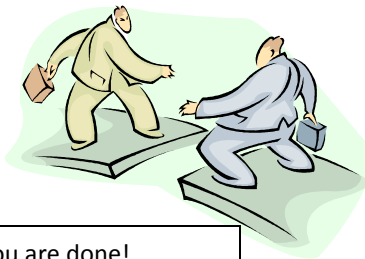
Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done! If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “*sufficiently solved.*”

Question

What do you ask your employee here?
(Can we make the task any easier?)

STEP #10

Ask yourself, “Are there any other obstacles?”



Did this solve the problem? If so, you are done! If not, go to the next step. Remember, you can stop anytime the problem is “*sufficiently solved.*”

Question

What do you ask your employee here?

(Is there any other obstacle in your way?)

STEP #11

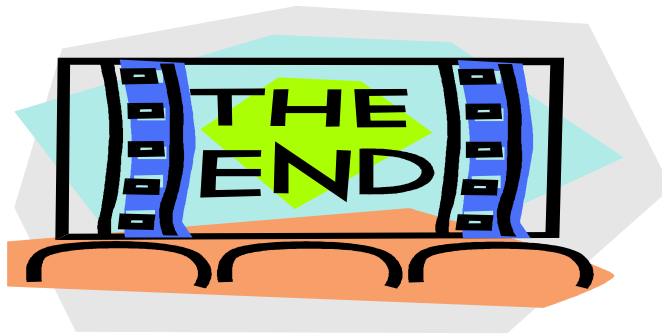
Ask yourself, "Does the person have the potential to change?"



Question

What do you ask your employee here?
("How likely are you to change your behavior to doing what we expect?")

Their answer will determine whether you train them, give them a chance to practice their skills or terminate them)



Conducting an Effective “Coaching-to-Change- Performance” Meeting

Always plan your meeting, and then meet your plan! Know before the meeting what you intend to emerge with when it is over.

Here is a simple and effective meeting outline:

1. Ask the employee, “What are you paid to do in terms of quality, quantity, and time?” and note their responses. (This presumes their job description contains these elements and you have used it during your previous goal-setting meetings.)
2. Contrast their actual performance results with those identified in their job description and ask for their plans to close the gaps.
3. Make note of their plans, sign it, and ask them to initial it if they want a copy. (If they do not want to sign or initial it, the original is your copy and you are under no obligation to give them one.)
4. Ask them if there is anything you can do to help them achieve their minimal performance expectations. (If you can do what they ask, then do it. If it is something that would compromise your position or appear that you are giving special treatment to him or her that another employee could not expect to receive, explain to them why you cannot do that.)

Remind them that they must make changes somewhere in their work routines if they want different outcomes in their work performance. (Remember Einstein’s statement about insanity: *You cannot do things the way you always have and expect different results!*)

On the other hand, if they would rather give their job back to you and save each of you a lot of aggravation, they can do that, too!