



Career Development Skills & Workshops

Management Modules

Coaching Conversations and Skills

Employee name:

Pub:



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Coaching Conversations and Skills

The skills and knowledge you will gain:

- ✓ The objectives of coaching
- ✓ Understanding the Coaching Continuum
- ✓ Understanding coaching styles
- ✓ How to use the OSCAR coaching model
- ✓ How to frame and carry out a positive coaching session using OSCAR and the coaching checklist

Introduction

*“The most powerful motivating condition people experience at work is **making progress at something that is personally meaningful**. If your job involves leading others, the implications are clear; the **most important thing you can do each day is to help your team members experience progress at meaningful work.**” Monique Valcour, HBR July 2014*

All managers should understand the importance of being able to help and develop their management and team members however not all will have been exposed or have gained the necessary skills and behaviours needed to do this.

A good manager will, somewhere along their career path, have acquired or been exposed to these key management skills either through a formal training course or have been coached by senior manager who displays and uses these leadership skills.

Coaching conversations and the skills to facilitate this can be learnt and mastered. They allow a manager to have structured conversations with positive outcomes in a time efficient manner whilst helping the learner to continually develop.

This workshop will give you the theory, skills and tips for developing a leadership coaching approach to team development.

What to expect:

- ✓ Some reading and simple exercises for you to practice and complete within this workbook.
- ✓ A practical assignment to complete.

Who will be your mentor and what can you expect from them?

Your mentor is there to coach you through the theory learning and can help with any questions you have. They are there to support you but not to carry out the practical assignment – that’s down to you to show off your talents! Your mentor will be a person who is competent in the skills and knowledge you need to gain either a GM or Deputy Manager.

How long do I have to complete my workshop?

You may take as long as you need to read and complete the exercises so you are comfortable and able put your learning into practice.

For the practical assignment you will have time assigned throughout your working week to complete your assignment.

So let’s get started, remembering our Team Value, *“Preparation is the key - always prepare for success.”*

What is Coaching?

Coaching as well as mentoring are both training development techniques based on the use of one-to-one discussions to enhance an individual's skills, knowledge or work performance.

In this workshop we are going to look at coaching in relation to individuals of both team and management levels.

Coaching targets high performance and improvement at work. It usually focuses on specific skills and goals although it may also have an impact on an individual's personal attributes such as social interaction or confidence. The process typically lasts for a relatively short defined period of time or forms the basis of an on-going management style.

Understanding Coaching Styles and Types of Learner

Coaching is:

"A process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be a successful coach requires a knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place"

Eric Parsloe, The Manager as Coach and Mentor (1999)

Before you can be effective as a coach you need to have an understanding of your own style and how it can help or hinder the coaching process. Once you understand your own style you may need to adapt this depending on who you are coaching and the objectives.

The *Coaching Continuum* is a scale commonly used to demonstrate training styles. It shows the amount of involvement a coach will have in a coaching session balanced against the amount of involvement or input a learner will contribute to the session. Both of these are dependent on the knowledge, skill set and level of the learner.

All of us have a natural, or preferred coaching style. We need to understand what it is and when it's appropriate so that as coaches we can learn to adapt our style to the needs of the situation and the person we are trying to coach. To develop a good understanding of our style it's helpful to consider the extremes.

At one end of the Coaching Continuum you will see there is the "teaching" coach.

This type of coach does a lot of "telling".

They have the expertise and they are trying to pass it on to help the other person achieve something concrete. This sort of coaching is appropriate when tasks are to be performed in the "right" way over and over.

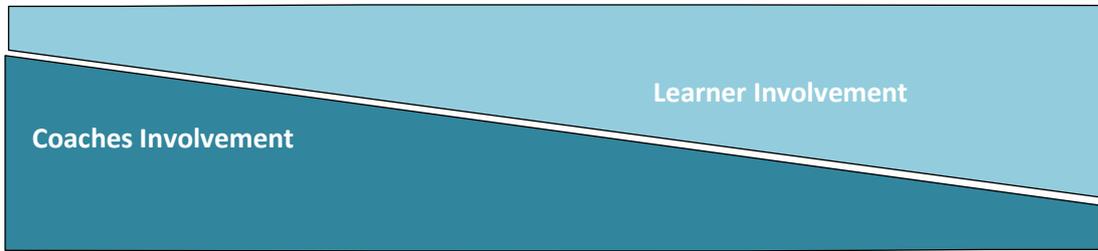
It can be helpful to people who are in front-line jobs where they have to achieve a consistent and predictable outcome in providing a product or a service.

You can see (diagram 1) this type of coaching requires larger input from the coach than the learner.

At the other end of the scale is the "learning to learn" coach. This type of coach is more interested in asking questions and listening instead of telling.

Rather than hands-on technical experience the "learning to learn" coaching style is used for individuals who have high skills and potential. They will have challenges and opportunities to stretch themselves and learn how to learn (especially when they may have projects to undertake as part of their learning journey). This type of coaching is appropriate when there are many paths to a good result and there is not just one "right" approach. Looking at the scale you can see the change of involvement; the coach's role is far less with the coachee shaping the session.

Coaching Continuum (diagram 1)



Directing

Coach shapes the conversation using their views, opinions and energy by

- Giving direction
- Offering feedback
- Offering opinions

Directing

Short of time

Coachee low skill

Seeking compliance

You have task expertise

Objective is dependency

Enabling

Individual shapes the conversation using their ideas, problem solving skills and insight by

- Answers and questions
- Offering solutions
- Decides on actions within parameters

Enabling

Plenty of time

Coaching high skill

Seeking commitment

You have process expertise

Objective is independency

Your current coaching skills

Thinking about the last coaching session you carried out answer the following questions honestly. Think about your style of coaching in relation to the scale and who you were coaching.

What type of coaching were you doing?

Where did you do this?

How long was the session?

Before the session had you planned any objectives and if so what were they?

What was the outcome?

Have you had or organised a follow up session?

Were there any difficult moments during the coaching session?

How effective do you think the coaching session was on a scale of 1-10?

OSCAR Model

There are various coaching models used to act as a structured guide for coaches.

The **OSCAR Coaching Model** is quite simply a framework on which to hang your coaching questions.

It provides you with a simple structure that helps to keep the coaching process *focused structured and time effective*.

At the very start you need to establish the *necessary ground rules and get your coachee to identify the issue to be coached on*. What will they want to talk about and what are the outcomes for the session in the time you have?

The model works through 5 simple stages:

Outcome (*Your destination*)

This is what you and the team member want to achieve from the coaching session – resolving the specific problem or issue. It's where you help the individual to clarify the outcome they would like after the session and for the long term.

Situation (*Your starting point*)

This is clarifying the current situation, main issues, what's contributing to the problem. Note this is to raise the individual awareness and the questioning in this section is for the benefit of the individual not the coach.

Choices and Consequences (*Your route options*)

Here you help the individual to generate as many alternative course of actions and help them increase their awareness of the consequences of each choice.

Actions (*Your detailed plan*)

You help the individual review the options generated and clarify the next steps they need to do to take responsibility for their plan.

Review (*Making sure you are on track*)

This is where you help the individual to check that they are focused and on course. If you are their manager it also helps you to be fully informed about what they are doing and why.



The OSCAR Model Steps

OUTCOME - (your direction)

You help the individual to clarify the outcome for the session.

- What is your long term outcome around this issue?
- What would success look/feel like to you?
- How will you know you've achieved it, what will be happening?
- Which outcome or outcomes do you want to focus on?
- What will it cost you if you don't achieve this outcome?

SITUATION - (your starting point) You get clarity where the individual is right now . Questioning in this section is for the benefit of the coachee.

- What is the current situation?
- What do you see as the main issues right now?
- What impact is that having on you? (your family, your performance etc)?
- What impact is that having on others?
- Who is contributing to the problem?
- What are you doing that could be contributing to this problem/issue?

CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES - (your route options)

You help the individual to generate alternative courses of actions and increase awareness of consequences of each choice.

- What could you do to start to resolve the situation?
- What choices do you have?
- What's stopping you from doing that now?
- How far towards your outcome would that option take you?
- What advice would you give to somebody else in your position?
- What else could you do? Who else could help you? What's stopping you from asking them?

ACTIONS - (your detailed plan)

Help the individual to review options, clarify steps forward and take responsibility for their action plan.

- What actions are you going to take?
- What will you do to move yourself forward?
- What specific actions are you willing to take? When will you take them?
- What support will you need? Where will you find that support?
- How will you maintain your motivation?
- What actions will you take in the next 24 hours to move yourself forward?

REVIEW - (making sure you are on the right track)

Help the individual to check they are on course.If you are their line manager this helps you being fully informed about what they are doing and why.

- How will you review your progress?
- What will you do to check whether your actions are moving you towards your outcome?
- How will you measure your success? How will you celebrate your success?
- How will you maintain your momentum? What interim support do you need?

Let's look at an example of putting the *OSCAR Model* into practice:

Carl has a problem with one of his team members, Eloise. Eloise works hard, but can communicate in an offhand way. Carl's concerned about the impact this could be having on clients.

Carl calls Eloise in for a meeting where he outlines the communication approaches that he prefers to see from team members.

He asks her to rate how she feels she's meeting these objectives and why this might be.

It becomes clear that Eloise is shy and often feels nervous about speaking to people.

The result is that without realizing it, she's coming across as curt and abrupt.

Together, they work to identify practical actions that they can both take to improve Eloise's communication skills.

In doing this, Carl has taken a **solutions-focused coaching approach** known as the *OSCAR coaching framework*.

Outcome - Carl wants Eloise to speak to clients more appropriately. Eloise wants to feel confident enough to do so. So they both have a shared outcome.

Situation - Carl outlines the communication approaches that he prefers to see from team members. He asks her to rate how she feels she's meeting these objectives.

Eloise gives herself a two.

Choices and Consequences – Eloise explains that she's afraid of saying the wrong thing and so tries to keep conversations as brief as possible. Through discussion she sees how this might be seen and knows she needs to work on her confidence in dealing with clients.

Action - She and Carl focus on the steps that she needs to take to develop the skills they've identified. This includes Carl organising relevant training sessions for her.

Review - Carl and Eloise are pleased with her progress as a result of the training sessions. He suggests ongoing mentoring support to develop her communication skills even further.

The OSCAR model is a collaborative approach and its emphasis is on progress and positive achievement. This can be much more motivating than simply highlighting a problem that needs resolving.

Focusing on success and moving forward can empower the people you're coaching – higher morale can encourage better working relationships and greater confidence can inspire creativity.

It also focuses on small achievements and steps. This means that it can be helpful in tough situations where you need to encourage someone to achieve larger goals, one step at a time.

However, it's important to maintain a balance of dialogue between you and the individual, *particularly if they are at the "teaching" end of the scale*. Although the model encourages a collaborative approach, it's important to **be clear throughout the process of the OUTCOME that you wish to achieve**. If your *outcome* is not clear your team member could lose focus and forget the original purpose of the exercise.

Coaching Conversation Checkpoints and Tips

Using the OSCAR model will give a structured approach that deals with solutions rather than focusing too much on the issue or problem. However there are skills and behaviours you should try to adapt and use during your coaching sessions. Some of these you may already do, others may come less naturally but after practice are easy to remember.

Always frame the conversation:

- 1 What are the outcome(s) for the conversation?
- 2 Is there a flow or process that would help? E.g. the coachee starts with self-assessment.
- 3 What time do you have for the conversation? Preparation and keeping it structured using a coaching model such as OSCAR works when time is limited.
- 4 Any ground rules that would be helpful to observe?

Ask more than tell:

- 1 Closed question – e.g. did you? Was it the case that... Have you? – gives a yes or no answer. Choose open questions in order for the coachee to contribute and raise their awareness.
- 2 Beware of “Why” – it can come across as challenging, as though you are asking for justification of actions.

Listening and pacing skills:

- 1, Listen effectively by letting the individual talk and be heard.
2. Repeat the individuals own words back to them so they hear exactly what they have said as you have heard it e.g. “So you have an issue with Marks closedowns because the checks aren’t completed and you’ve heard from a team member that he just sits in the office whilst the team finish?”
3. Resist the temptation to finish sentences or to interrupt and speak whilst they are thinking about a question.
4. Try to transition smoothly from one topic or model area into another so the discussion flow becomes natural.

Seize the moment

Tackling poor performance or behaviour is never easy. It can be difficult and the most challenging of all management tasks. The best way is to confront the performance or behaviour issue is quickly and confidently and in the right manner and you will find it is possible to do this without too much pain.

- 1 Be tough and concise about the facts. Agree what they are so that you and the coachee have the same understanding.
- 2 Be open-minded on the reasons. You can show empathy and help the coachee to solve the problem.

Balance your feedback:

Coach individuals to do MORE of what they are doing brilliantly as well as what they need to improve.

Focus on moving forward positively:

Often in coaching conversations the individual will get caught up in expressing their frustrations. Whilst it can provide a temporary relief to vent it doesn’t generate solutions.

- 1 Always acknowledge their frustrations but encourage them to think about how to move past them in a positive way.
- 2 Using OSCAR will give a clear vision of the future and an action plan to move forward positively.

The benefits of Leadership Coaching Conversations

For any business to be healthy and productive it must have strong leadership. Learning the skills to coach your team can help you to become more effective as a leader, to build stronger workplace relationships, and to promote a more positive environment, with a result that everyone and ultimately the business all benefit from.

Adopting and embracing the OSCAR coaching model will enable you to have positive coaching conversations or coaching sessions with your team members. This allows the individual or coachee to:

- Establish and take action towards achieving goals
- Take greater responsibility and accountability for actions and commitments
- Become more insightful and self-reliant – moving along the Coaching Continuum scale
- Gain more personal and career satisfaction
- Receive regular feedback; being thanked and congratulated for areas they are doing well in, receiving coaching support and help with solutions for areas that need more focus
- Contribute more effectively to the team and the organisation
- Work more easily and productively with others (boss, direct reports, peers)
- Helps them to learn the skills and behaviours to communicate more effectively with colleagues and other managers



Your coaching conversations

Now you know what coaching is, have measured yourself on the Coaching Continuum, understand how the OSCAR Model for coaching sessions works and its benefits, let's review your current coaching techniques against the model:

A Which leadership coaching conversations do you have regularly? (who, when , where and about what)

B How would you describe your style from the coaching continuum?

C How would you rate the importance and quality on terms of outcomes of your coaching conversations?

D Looking at the OSCAR model what aspect do you already use or cover regularly?

E Looking at the coaching checklist and tips what areas do you already use regularly?

F What do you feel would be 3 development objectives for you in your coaching conversations?

G Practically how do you plan to achieve your 3 objectives?

Well-done! You've completed the workshop.

Ask your mentor to review your coaching answers with you. Once this is done you're ready to start your practical assignment.

Remember you have all the knowledge you need to help you carry out your practical assignment within your workbook.

Practical Assignment

1. Using the *OSCAR model* carry out a coaching session with a team member that is either learning a new skill, needs help to grasp part of their job role or perhaps has a behaviour issue that is affecting their productivity.
2. Make sure you carry out some pre planning to know what you want the outcome to be, the level of involvement you will be giving and the level you feel the individual should have.
3. After the coaching session complete the questions on page 4 *again* and make a note of any areas that went really well and any areas you feel could be improved. Discuss your completed questions and notes with your GM who will give you feedback where appropriate.

Remember our Team Value, "Preparation is the key - always prepare for success!"

Blank for Notes

GMs Comments:

Area Managers Comments: