

# 8 Steps to High Performance Coaching

Doesn't it make sense if you are a manager that you become a better coach? There is just too much to do, too little time to get it done and the goals too big to think otherwise.

Coaching is a term we seem to reserve for athletics. It's also a concept we deem necessary in that setting. All team players need coaching, right? No matter how good a sports team is, we always think it's absolutely essential for the team to have a coach. *Yet, when it comes to the business sector, too many managers and companies don't do coaching with any consistency. Why is that?*

## **The Payoff for You and Your Team**

Many managers don't think they have the time to coach. Many more haven't been trained adequately. Too many don't quite grasp the concept of coaching, because they have never been effectively coached themselves, so they don't really know where to start.

Passionate and diligent coaching leverages your expertise and time by increasing a team's productivity, customer service and creativity. By coaching your employees-lower and higher performers-you are providing them with an example that they can carry far into their future. You gain a more successful employees and a better performing team.

With one client that was hard pressed by new competition, the following coaching model helped them gain, in less than one year, 20% in service satisfaction, and 75% in sales to existing customers. We have replicated these kinds of gains time and again. *Learn to coach well, and it can accelerate your career.*

Coaching involves a deliberate methodology to build rapport, ask questions, give advice, provide support, follow-through on previous conversations, develop confidence, and improve results. Coaching is not micro-managing and limiting. If it is done right, it's empowering and liberating.

# The High Performance Coaching Model

One-on-one formal coaching sessions requires an investment in time (Usually 30-60 minutes a session).

I recommend at least monthly in most cases. The sessions are valuable for these reasons:

- Promotes effective communication and trust.
- Creates an employee-manager relationship.
- Creates an atmosphere of continuous improvement.
- Helps businesses and employees reach and exceed their goals.
- Aids daily performance management.

Here are eight formal coaching steps that the best managers do, and the worst managers don't do or don't do very well. In order to get a gauge as to where you might stand on the coaching spectrum, evaluate how you think you do in each of these areas.

**Step 1** - Pre-meeting preparation (action plans, numbers, goals, etc.)

**Step 2** - Greeting (be positive, do some small talk, ensure privacy.)

**Step 3** - ***The bottom-line is be a good listener. Your goal is to help an employee or the person you are coaching to solve his or her own problem through creative, innovative or common sense thinking.*** Use the **ASK Model** of questioning. Engage the employee in a dialogue about their goals, action steps, problems, and potential solutions. As you talk, praise progress, recognize good performance, and identify areas to improve. Ask with these types of questions to begin:

- How is it going since we met last time?
- What progress did you make on your goals and action plans?
- What went well?
- What didn't go well?
- What areas do you need help?

**Step 4** - Ask the employee to tell you how and why they made their decisions. Ask these kinds of questions:

- What was your thinking process?
- What did you do next?
- What more could you have done?
- What can you do differently or better next time?
- How can I help you?

**Step 5** - Seek solutions and build a new plan on how to improve the results. Ask questions like these:

- What other ideas do you have for improvement next time?
- What do you think of this idea... ?
- Did you try... ?
- Are you open to some suggestions?
- Have you thought about trying...
- This is what I recommend...(Yes, in many cases, a manager or coach does need to make suggestions or recommendations. Not all employees will come up with good plans or ideas. Now, don't start here, you precede your thoughts by doing a good job of communicating with thoughtful questions and active listening.)

**Step 6** - **Keep** plans and commitments. Make sure to review all key action steps from the last meeting. Set new goals and action steps if necessary.

**Step 7** - Summarize your discussion and an updated action plan in writing. (Keep it more informal, on 1-2 pages if you can). This will help with performance reviews later.)

**Step 8** - Schedule another meeting and show your appreciation for the employee's efforts. Ensure that you follow-through.

Notice you **ask** a lot of questions. Again, you need to be a good listener; and you strategically give feedback and guidance if needed. Coaching is not a place for yelling and telling. Managers who do that

are archaic. *Also, just note that all of your other work related interactions with employees- texts, meetings, casual encounters, phone conversations- support or detract from your coaching efforts.*

### **An Antidote for Employee Disengagement**

One on one coaching is specifically about effective communication and performance. You talk about goals, expectations, problems, and solutions to those problems. You give employees positive feedback about their efforts while identifying performance issues clearly and directly. You develop employee skills and attitude about getting the job done well and achieving the best results. You train employees to think proactively when faced with challenges, and obstacles. All of these actions help create robust employee engagement.

Over the course of time, the coaching process teaches employees problem-solving skills they can execute more effectively on their own. They become more innovative and learn to take initiative to go the extra mile. Excellent coaching actually saves you time. *Managers really can't afford not to coach but it's becoming a lost art.*

So, if you're hesitating about whether or not high performance coaching is for you, ask yourself this next question. Which team would you feel more confident cheering for during World Cup Soccer match, one that had no coach, or one that had a coach with a championship reputation?

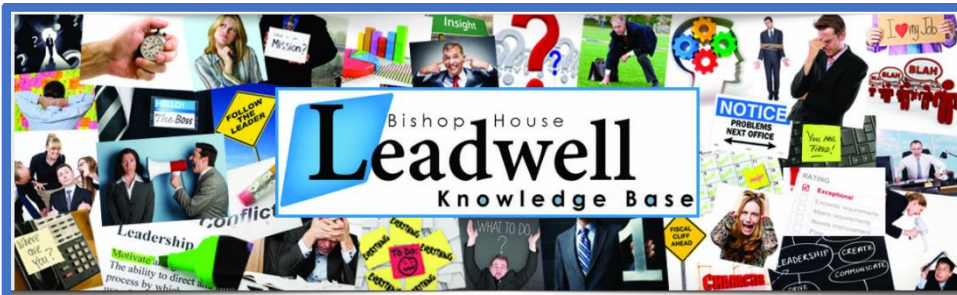
**By:** [Rick Conlow](#)

---

This article was originally posted at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140408122941-64275548-an-8-step-approach-to-high-performance-coaching/>

---

Visit [Bishop House's Leadwell Knowledge Base](#) for more resources on the topics that matter most to leaders



### New Leader

Whether you just got promoted and don't know where to begin, or you have been in a leadership role for a while, these resources will provide you with valuable insight into the fundamentals of leadership.



### Managing Change

Managing change can be challenging. Look here for ideas on how you can manage yourself through change and strategies for leading your team through change.



### Effective Communication

Effective communication skills are essential to effective leadership. Click here to explore how to better communicate with employees, peers and others.



### Managing Up

How to manage up when your boss has you down. Look here for strategies for dealing with your boss.



### Your Development

Look here for ideas on how to develop as a leader and to continue to grow in your leadership knowledge.



### Managing Performance

Explore content about being a coach to your employees, guiding them to success, managing poor performers, motivating good performers and more.



### Productivity

Insights and tips on how to be more productive as a manager. Learn how to effectively and efficiently manage time, emails, meetings and other aspects of your role as a leader.



### Building My Team

Resources for learning how to build a cohesive team as well as strategies for where to start when it is anything but.