

Northern New England School of Banking

On the Road from Supervisor to Leader

Part II

Coaching and Counseling

Watch Those Speed Bumps!

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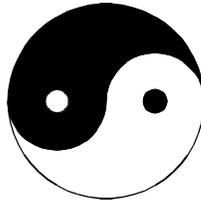
THE WHAT AND WHY OF COUNSELING AND COACHING

By the end of this section you should have a clear idea of what counseling and coaching are and what skills they require. Your ability to coach and counsel contributes to your effectiveness as a supervisor.

DEFINITIONS

Counseling: A supportive process by a manager to help an employee define and work through personal problems or organizational changes that affect job performance.

Coaching: A directive process by a manager to train and orient an employee to realities of the workplace and to help the employee remove barriers to optimum work performance.

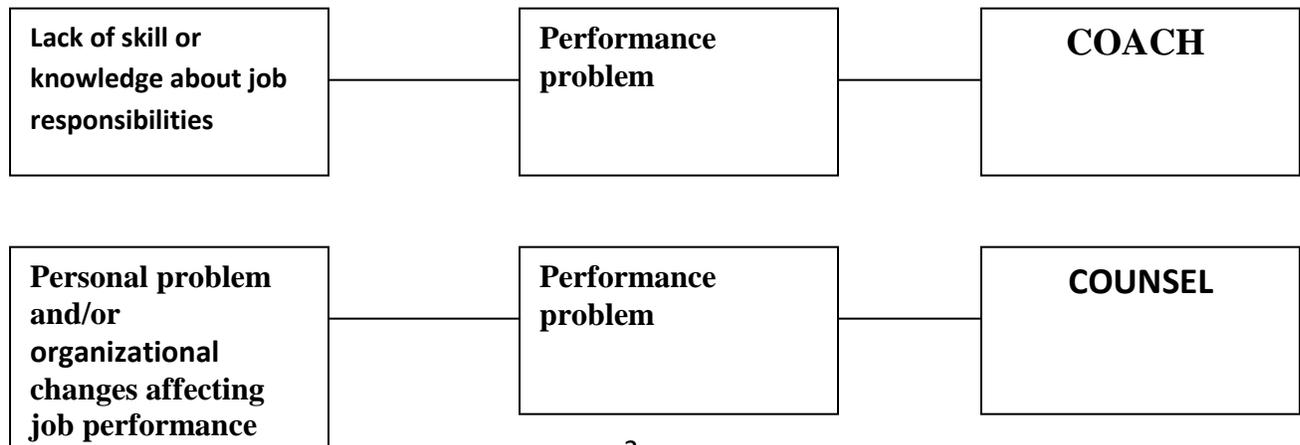


Counseling and coaching share many of the same skills. At times they may seem to overlap. When they do, remember the following diagrams. These diagrams, shown below, will help you differentiate the two processes.

Root Cause

Symptom

Desired Approach



WHEN TO COUNSEL OR COACH?

Knowing when to counsel or coach is an important skill. It is the first step in the coaching or counseling process. When you can identify, in a timely manner, situations that need your expertise you are on your way to becoming an effective supervisor.

As you read through the following work situations, remember that they may not only apply to an employee reporting to you but to a peer, a boss or even yourself.

Listen



Success

Talk



Failure

A successful coach or counselor listens more than talks

WORK SITUATIONS THAT MAY REQUIRE COUNSELING

Check any that you have personally encountered:

- 1. Reorganizations.
- 2. Layoffs-counseling for those who are laid off *and* those who are not.
- 3. Demotions due to organization changes.
- 4. Salary freezes; decreases in salary, status or responsibility.
- 5. Employee faced with other career opportunities inside or outside of the organization.
- 6. Employee faced with no career opportunities inside the organization.
- 7. Employee unhappy with you as a boss.
- 8. Employee unhappy with work assignment.
- 9. Employee who has conflict with peer.
- 10. Employee that feels stressed, burned out, or is having a grief reaction due to loss.
- 11. Employee who feels insecure about skills or ability to do the job.
- 12. Employee quitting to take new job.
- 13. Employee who has been promoted and is scared.
- 14. Employee that shares personal problem requiring support.
- 15. Employee whose personal problems are affecting performance of others.
- 16. Performance problems that persist.
- 17. Employee who is experiencing failure.
- 18. Employee who is disappointed in new job.

Can you think of any other situations from your personal experience where counseling would have been effective?

WORK SITUATIONS THAT MAY REQUIRE COACHING

Check any that you have personally encountered:

- 1. Orientation and training of a new employee
- 2. Teaching a new job skill
- 3. Need to explain standards of the work unit
- 4. Need to explain cultural norms and political realities of the organization
- 5. Simple corrections to performance are required
- 6. Goals or business conditions change
- 7. You are new to a group
- 8. Employees facing new work experience
- 9. Employee that needs help setting priorities
- 10. Follow up to a training session
- 11. Employee that displays low or moderate performance
- 12. Employee who needs reinforcement for good performance
- 13. Employee wants to become peak performer
- 14. Formal or informal performance reviews
- 15. Employee needs preparation to meet his/her future career goals
- 16. Employee needs preparation for more challenging work assignment
- 17. Employee needs self-confidence developed
- 18. When power or control battles are affecting team cohesiveness

Can you think of any other situations that may require coaching?

Case Studies to Evaluate Your Skills

- | | <u>Counsel</u> | <u>Coach</u> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. You have just hired Miguel who has a degree in Finance. He has a lot of energy and enthusiasm for his new job. You want him to get off on the right start. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Sally has been with your branch for one year now. She has just been promoted to Marketing Manager. She has shown creativity in her marketing campaigns and lots of drive. She has extremely high standards of performance, and pushes herself and others equally hard. Unfortunately, her behavior seems to have created a morale problem in her unit. She has her unit working overtime and weekends as she attempts to oversee every detail. Sally demands perfection. You have had several complaints from her employees. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Fred, head teller, has been working for you for three years. He has been a superstar, increasing productivity in his unit by more than 70 percent in the last year. Due to his tremendous talents in dealing with people you have offered him a promotion to Head Teller. Fred has stopped by your office to talk about his fears and insecurities regarding the new position. You have no doubt that Fred can do it well. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Samantha has been a conscientious employee with a good track record. She shows a lot of initiative and enthusiasm for her job. She has stopped by your office to discuss a personal problem that may interfere with her job – she has just discovered that her mother is dying of cancer. She is close to her mother and seems very upset. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Joe, one of your employees, has been with your group for six months. His performance has been substandard in many ways. He shows up late for work at least two days a week, is disruptive in departmental meetings and has made many errors. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

CASE STUDIES FOR COACHING AND COUNSELING

Develop a coaching and/or counseling plan for each of the following situations and compare your ideas with other participants. Include in your plan the type of feedback you will use to motivate the employee.

Case Study 1

You have just hired Tara. She is a software engineer who has just graduated from a major university. Although she is a recent graduate, you feel confident that she will bring enthusiasm and fresh ideas to her new job as a programmer. You have given her an important project to work on.

You would: Coach _____ Counsel _____

Explain your answer

Case Study 2

Marsha is a loan officer in your branch. She has been with the bank for five years and seems to love her job. She was promoted last month to senior loan officer due to her ability to get along well with coworkers, customers, and management. You have been swamped and have not had much time to spend with her. She just stopped by to discuss how she feels about her new job. She has stated that she is feeling overwhelmed by all the responsibilities and is unsure of her ability to handle all the pressure.

You would: Coach _____ Counsel _____

Explain your answer

Case Study 3

Your boss of the last three years, Will, stopped by for a chat. He has seemed “out of sorts” lately – depressed and irritable. You genuinely like working for Will and feel he is an excellent role model for you as a manager. You don’t know much about his personal life except that he is a family man and his wife, Mary, is Vice President of a large insurance company. Will has three kids aged six, eight, and ten. He is now saying that his wife has been offered a job in charge of a new division in Chicago and she really wants to take it. He is very concerned about the problems of relocation. He doesn’t want to take the kids out of school. Also he is a candidate for a promotion. He is having a difficult time trying to decide what to do. Will asks for your advice.

You would: Coach _____ Counsel _____

Explain your answer

Case Study 4

Joan, your Production Control Supervisor, has been working for you for three years. She has been your star performer. She has implemented a new PC System, organized the workflow procedures and gets along well with all of the group managers. Unfortunately, a recent merger is underway with ABC Bank has led to a budget freeze. Although you have an open manager’s position, you are currently unable to promote Joan, even though she is your first choice. You know that Joan has a strong future with your bank and want her to stay and “weather the current financial crisis.” She has called you to set up an appointment to discuss her career options.

You would: Coach _____ Counsel _____

Explain your answer

Case Study 5

Ned is a Marketing Specialist who is quite ambitious. He's been working for you for three months and you are basically pleased with the work he's done, although you have seen him overstep his boundaries at department meetings. You have had complaints from other team members about how he forces his ideas on others and seldom listens to theirs. He also seems to talk about his needs, career goals, and strengths constantly. On two occasions you noticed he took credit for the ideas of other team members in front of upper management.

You would: Coach _____ Counsel _____

Explain your answer

Case Study 6

John has worked for you for the past year. He has been a steady moderate performer, but lately you have become very concerned about his work. For the past six months you have noticed him coming in late, taking long lunches and leaving early. You have discussed your concerns with him and coached him on the importance of good work habits. He confided in you that he was having marital problems and his wife was seeking a separation. You gave him two weeks to "sort things out" but told him you expected him to be punctual and get back on track by then. Four weeks have gone by and his performance has continued to deteriorate. He has become belligerent and hostile and other members of the team have complained about his behavior. One mentioned that John has been drinking excessively every day at work.

You would: Coach _____ Counsel _____

Explain your answer

PREPARING FOR A COUNSELING OR COACHING SESSION

If a counseling or coaching session goes poorly it is usually because the manager or supervisor has not prepared properly.

By using the checklists on pages 4 and 5 you will be able to determine the type of session you need. Now you are ready to prepare for the session by completing each of the following items:

- 1. Consider how many sessions I will need, the degree of trust, and the employee's confidence level.
- 2. Be clear about my reason for the session and define my goals.
- 3. Review the work goals and past performance of the employee.
- 4. Give the employee notice of the time and place.
- 5. Allot a minimum of 30 minutes for the session.
- 6. Remove all distractions (phone, visitors, etc.) from the meeting place.
- 7. Remove physical barriers between me and the employee (i.e. don't sit behind a desk).
- 8. Write out what I plan to say and rehearse it. Keep my notes in front of me during the session to avoid the feeling of losing control.
- 9. Plan to take notes to document the session, and develop a record of the corrective action plans and performance improvements.

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL COACHING OR COUNSELING SESSION

You are ready to begin your counseling session. You feel confident prepared, ready to listen, have notes and a pencil. Your employee walks in. You begin your session.

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

1. Put the employee at ease by being warm and friendly and using positive body language, lots of eye contact and physically facing the person.
2. Define the reason for the discussion if you called the session, or encourage the employee to define its purpose.
3. Ask open-ended questions about the employee's feelings and thoughts.
4. Paraphrase the content and feelings of the employee's message.
5. Encourage the employee to identify alternatives to solve the problem or resolve the issue.
6. Seek the employee's feelings about the possible consequences of each of the alternatives.
7. Avoid expressing your views but remain alert to provide information on company policies that may help the employee make a decision.
8. Demonstrate empathy for the employee and show confidence in his/her ability to solve problems.
9. Provide support and/or resources when appropriate.
10. Refer the employee to Human Resources and/or employee assistance program if the problem is beyond your scope.
11. Summarize key points at the end of the discussion to clarify and seek understanding.

EMPLOYEE COACHING/COUNSELING WORKSHEET

Employee Name: _____ Date: _____

Managers Name: _____ Department: _____

Issue(s) Discussed:

Employee Response:

Agreed-upon Action Steps and Follow up Dates:

Manager Signature: _____ Date: _____

PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

I will look for opportunities to use my coaching and counseling and feedback skills with the following people by the specified date:

PERSON _____ DATE _____

PERSON _____ DATE _____

PERSON _____ DATE _____