



The Coaching Manager

The 7 Habits of Effective "Coaching Managers"

Steven Covey produced a wonderful book called "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" and if you haven't read this book, get it now! It really does highlight what individuals have to do, and how they have to behave in order to be successful.

Similarly, I have looked at the habits of good, effective, coaching managers and I have come up with the following 7 "habits".

No.1 - Constantly builds Rapport through Contracting and Re-contracting.

The effective coaching manager is skilled in identifying different behaviour styles and can flex his or her own style to build rapport with those people they are dealing with. This ability to flex is consistent even through periods of stress and tension. In the initial stages of working with someone, the effective coaching manager will take time to "contract" how best they are going to work with that person and that through the "contract" expectations on both sides are discussed and agreement is met. The effective coaching manager can also identify when a "contract" is needing revisited either because one party has broken a contract or because the agreed contract is not working as well as it should.

No.2 - Ensures own objectives and those of sub-ordinates are clear and understood.

A manager has to have focus and clarity on what he or she is striving to achieve and also how best they are going to achieve their goals. An effective coaching manager will take time to check that all sub-ordinates will have that same clarity and focus as regards their own business and personal objectives. A coaching manager will challenge and support both the reality of the objectives as well as the processes being put in place to hit the objectives.

No.3 - Routinely reviews and updates personal plans and objectives and those of sub-ordinates.

An effective coaching manager will not only put clear plans in place and support the development of their sub-ordinates' plans but they will also ensure regular review and adjustment of plans.

No.4 - Ensures balance between "management" and "leadership"

Too many ordinary managers do not get the balance right between "management" and "leadership". Broadly speaking some managers are happier stuck in front of their plans and their spreadsheets than spending time with their team and the individuals in the team. Some are exactly the opposite. An effective

coaching manager will ensure that all the management tasks are done routinely and efficiently and that they will still have the right amount of time listening to, motivating, coaching and leading people.

No.5 - Prioritises time spend between task, team and individuals.

An effective coaching manager will again, as above, be able to "juggle" all the tasks a manager has and also get the split right between team meetings and meetings with the individuals. Too many managers think by organising team meetings on a regular basis that this will be all the interaction that members of the team need. Individual meetings have to take place and an effective coaching manager gets this balance right.

No.6 - Ensures time is spent with each individual and the correct coaching approach is taken.

One to ones with each team member is essential if the coaching manager is going to enable and support the development of that individual. The correct approach with each individual should be taken depending on where the individual sits on the skill/will matrix within a particular context. A challenge that many managers have is that of a "blanket" approach with individuals within the team, and this approach tends to be "advice giving" or in some cases "do as I say".

No.7 - Leads the way in giving constructive feedback and getting personal feedback from superiors, peers and sub-ordinates.

A huge development area for everybody! Most of us are very good (although I have met some managers who are not!) at giving praise but many of us do not want to give "constructive" or "critical" feedback. An effective coaching manager is skilled at both the giving and the receiving of feedback. And they ask for feedback regularly. Not only from their superiors, but also from their peers and from their sub-ordinates. Too many managers think that because they are the "boss" they do not need to ask for feedback from sub-ordinates. Nonsense!

