

# Workplace Coaching...What Is It? And Why Do I NEED It?

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word coaching? If your mind immediately flashes back to images of soccer coaches blowing a whistle, dance moms giving instructions, or football coaches yelling out corrections, it is safe to say you are not alone. However, this newer trend in coaching has a different setting than green grass fields. Instead, imagine your workplace surrounded by your coworkers and bosses. This is the setting of workplace coaching.

## Okay, it isn't sports we are talking about....What is it then?

Workplace coaching is on the rise and is increasingly used in organizations, but what is it exactly? Workplace coaching is something that happens internally within an organization with the purpose of helping employees, managers, and leaders attain work-related goals. This is not to be confused with coaches who are external to the organization and provide formal coaching services for a fee. The focus of internal workplace coaching is on both performance and WELL-BEING. When workers are satisfied with their jobs, their performance is more likely to increase. Therefore, it's best to not only press for production, but to look at the healthiness and happiness of your employees as well.

Now your mind may be wondering what characteristics are consistent with this type of approach or what this would look like in your workplace. The key characteristics of workplace coaching are to *keep it simple, personalize it to the person being coached, and maintain effectiveness*. Keeping it simple and keeping it effective may seem like common sense...because well, they are. However, it may shock you to know that sometimes business people struggle with this. Sometimes people will try to overcomplicate a process which can decrease its effectiveness. This is about a relationship, not about who can sound the smartest or who can create the most perplexing situation. Deep personalization on the other hand may be a bit more thought-provoking. We live in a work generation where people want to be treated like people. They want to be seen as a not just a name, not just a number, not just a profit, but as a person with a real life outside of work. Therefore, it is imperative to make sure they are receiving personalized coaching. If it is not, it will probably not benefit your company in any way. If the person likes positive reinforcement, give it to them. If they like to be talked to in a stern manner, talk to them sternly. If work-non-work balance is important to them, help them figure out how to work more effectively to have more time to relax when they get home. This takes really listening to people, something that can sometimes be overlooked in the workplace.



***“Deep  
Personalization”***



## Let's Talk Benefits

Several benefits to the person being coached, as well as benefits to the team and the larger organization are outlined in John Whitmore's book *Coaching and Performance* (2009) and are also listed in Steve Nguyen's (2017) article on the benefits of coaching employees. To name just a

few, the benefits of workplace coaching are (but are not limited to!):

- Better performance
- Improved productivity
- Improved learning
- Improved quality of life for the individual
- More creative ideas
- More time for the manager
- Better use of people, skills, and resources
- Greater flexibility and adaptability to change
- More motivated staff
- Increasing job satisfaction
- Clarifying and working toward goals
- Achieving new skills overcoming personal challenges
- Maximizing individual strengths
- Developing and fostering more productive teams

*Better*      *Increasing*  
*Maximizing*  
*Clarifying*      *More*  
*Achieving*  
*Greater*      *Improved*

As stated above, this is not a comprehensive list of the benefits of coaching your organization's employees. Coaching is essentially just helping someone reach their potential through conversations that help lead to awareness and action. It is not a costly action to take nor does it take so much time that it prevents anyone from efficiently doing their jobs, so what would an excuse to not adopt this practice be? Given the increasing popularity of workplace coaching, it seems like an easy and ideal way to start to increase the well being on your workforce while simultaneously increasing productivity.

## References

- Grant, A.M. (2017). The third 'generation' of workplace coaching: creating a culture of quality conversations. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, 10(1), 37-53.
- Nguyen, S. (2017). The Many Benefits of Coaching Employees. *Workplace Psychology*.
- Whitmore, J. (2009). *Coaching for Performance* (4th ed.). London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.