

How did Coaching get its “Bad Name”?

By ATCEN

In a given situation, which would make you more uncomfortable; coaching or counseling? Many will claim the latter, regardless of whether it is on the ‘giving’ or ‘receiving’ end. Counseling sessions are not a favorite amongst many, thanks to the negative implications it is often associated with.

Coaching theoretically plays a different role in performance management compared to counseling. According to Florence Stone, author of “Coaching, Counseling & Mentoring”, coaching begins with an assumption. An assumption that most employees are:

- 1) Eager to do well,
- 2) To please their managers, and
- 3) To achieve as high a position as they can with the organization.

As a coach, you are to ensure your employees or team members do all the three. Should the above three statements not depict the actual situation, only then should counseling be considered.

“Why do employees not welcome or resist coaching as part of performance management?” – is a question frequently asked by the management. Below are three possible reasons that gave coaching its “bad name”.

Mindset 1: “You’re doing it wrong. Let me show you the right way.”

Coaching is not about correcting mistakes. Neither is it required only when things go wrong. Frequent coaching can identify specific areas of improvement. Its objective should be to assist employees to do the right things, better. For increased effectiveness, coaching sessions should be planned periodically.

Mindset 2: “I’m the Coach. You do as I say because I’m the expert.”

Yes. A coach should be an expert. A coach should also have the necessary communication skills and the willingness to accept certain limitations an apprentice may have, in terms of knowledge, abilities and skills. The roles are not one of a leader and a follower, but more precisely, a partnership.

Mindset 3: “I don’t have the time to coach. There are more important things at hand.”

Many managers argue that they do not have the time to coach. Coaching is time-consuming, yet the results are beneficial. Managers fail to realize that if they do not continually work at developing their employees’ skills, much of the additional work will have to be delegated to other resources, or eventually wind up on their own ‘to-do’ list. Worst still, there is also the kind of manager who accepts the challenge to coach yet does not allocate the time for it.