

# Coaching Skills for Supervisors



Presented on behalf of Heffernan Insurance and  
Aspen Risk Management by

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## Our Agenda

- The business case for coaching employees.
- The business case for mentoring employees.
- Targeted coaching for selected employees.
- Coaching processes and delivery modes.
- Running coaching meetings.
- Realistic and effective coaching tools.
- Coaching the four types of employees.

## Why Coaching?

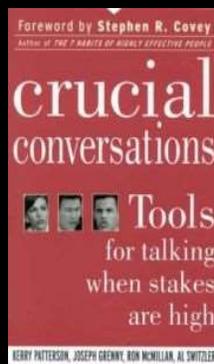
What it is:

“One or more pre-discipline conversations about performance or behavior.”

and what it isn't. . .

## **Crucial Conversations**

by Patterson, Grenny et al. (2002, McGraw-Hill)



Opinions vary.

Stakes are high.

Emotions run strong.

## Coaching Skills

Behavior Improvement  
Performance Improvement  
Negotiated Agreements Between Employees  
Team Success  
Team Conflict Resolution

What words or phrases, ideas or themes  
come to your mind when you define:

Mentor?

Mentee or Protégé?

Mentoring?

Mentor – “A wise and trusted counselor and role model.”

Mentoring – “Guided support and teaching. Leading others to their own successes.”

“The process where an experienced, highly regarded, empathetic person (the mentor), guides another individual (the protégé) in the development and re-examination of his or her own ideas, learning, and personal and professional growth.”

“A legacy-building tool for succession planning.”

## Initial Discussion Points

Labels vs. behaviors.

Don't get stuck with excuses or rationalizations.

Addressing confidentiality concerns.

Writing after-action reports and recaps.

Using praise, recognition, rewards, and support.

## Coaching Delivery Modes

On the spot: "corridor coaching"

On or off-site - Face to Face

By Phone

By E-mail

## Coaching "The Big Seven"

Work performance

Violations of policies & procedures

Attendance

Attitude

Conflict

Teamwork

Service

*How do we demonstrate success?*

Compliance, improvement, and positive changes in attitude, interactions, responsibility, and accountability.

## Coaching Events: Business Impact

Pre or post-discipline intervention for the Big Seven.

On-the spot / M.B.W.A.

To identify skill gaps or training needs.

For career planning and advice; mentoring.

To provide referrals for off-the-job problems.

As part of conflict resolution; to stop problems.

As a reward and to help improve morale.

## Age Diversity

**Baby Boomers** (1946 – 1964 - a/k/a the 78 Million)

**Generation X** (1965 – 1980 - a/k/a the Baby Busters)

**Generation Y** (1981-1999)  
(a/k/a the Millennials, Gen Why?, the Internet Generation)

**Generation Z** (2000 to now)

## Why Don't We Coach?: The Supervisor's Paradox



Fear of conflict.

Fear of confronting poor performance.

No formal training.

No knowledge of or access to resources.

Top management apathy or resistance - until something happens.

Inverse reward system.

## Answering the "WII-FM?" Coaching Question For Employees

It lets employees know where they stand with you.

It tells them what, specifically, they need to improve.

It helps them set their own personal, professional, and educational goals.

It shows them what they need to do to promote or move into other positions.

It solves conflicts between employees.

It rewards them for their efforts and accomplishments.

## The Self-Fulfilling Prediction

Does what you *think* about your employees, positively or negatively, have any effect on their motivation or performance?

Expectations are a powerful thing. How you *expect* people to work is generally how they *actually* work.

(Spend more time with your most challenging employees.)

## Finding Coaching Candidates

Review past performance evaluations.

Speak with other managers and supervisors.

Offer coaching services via e-mail and staff meeting announcements.

Meet proactively with at-risk employees.

Meet proactively with employees who are on the fast track for promotions.

## Ground Rules for Coaching Meetings

A goal for each session.

Respect for each other's time.

No physical or electronic interruptions.

As-discussed confidentiality.

Completed "homework" or readings.

Demonstrated use of the tools discussed.

Preparation for the next session.

## Targeted Coaching

Executive / Strategic Coaching: senior leaders, strategic issues, the top team. **Goal = Direction**

Career Development Coaching: leadership, career guidance. **Goal = Personal Skills**

Performance Improvement Coaching: knowledge enhancement, training. **Goal = Job Skills**

Corrective Coaching: career "rescue," skills deficit, compliance issues. **Goal = Compliance**

Special-Problems Coaching: special skills, special issues, high-threat situations. **Goal = Peace**

## Personal Accountability Meetings (PAMs)

Otherwise known as having a “cards on the table meeting.”

Useful for employees who use sarcasm, negative opinions, idea killing, or create conflicts.

Try explaining your expectations and asking the employee for his or her help.

Don't argue or get overly-frustrated; tell the employee what he or she needs to do to comply.

## Coaching Meeting Steps

1. Plan for the meeting. (time, place, any handouts)
2. Open the meeting. (build rapport, discuss the purpose)
3. Describe any problem areas. (being specific)
4. Help the employee generate solutions. (ownership)
5. Discuss the solutions. (fine tune the choices)
6. Describe employee's strengths. (reward successes)
7. Discuss a development plan. (next session)
8. Close the meeting. (with thanks and a recap)

## The Keep / Stop / Start Tool

“What do you need to **KEEP** doing, because it’s working?”

“What do you need to **STOP** doing, because it’s not working?”

“What do you need to **START** doing, because it will work better?”

## Meeting Subjects

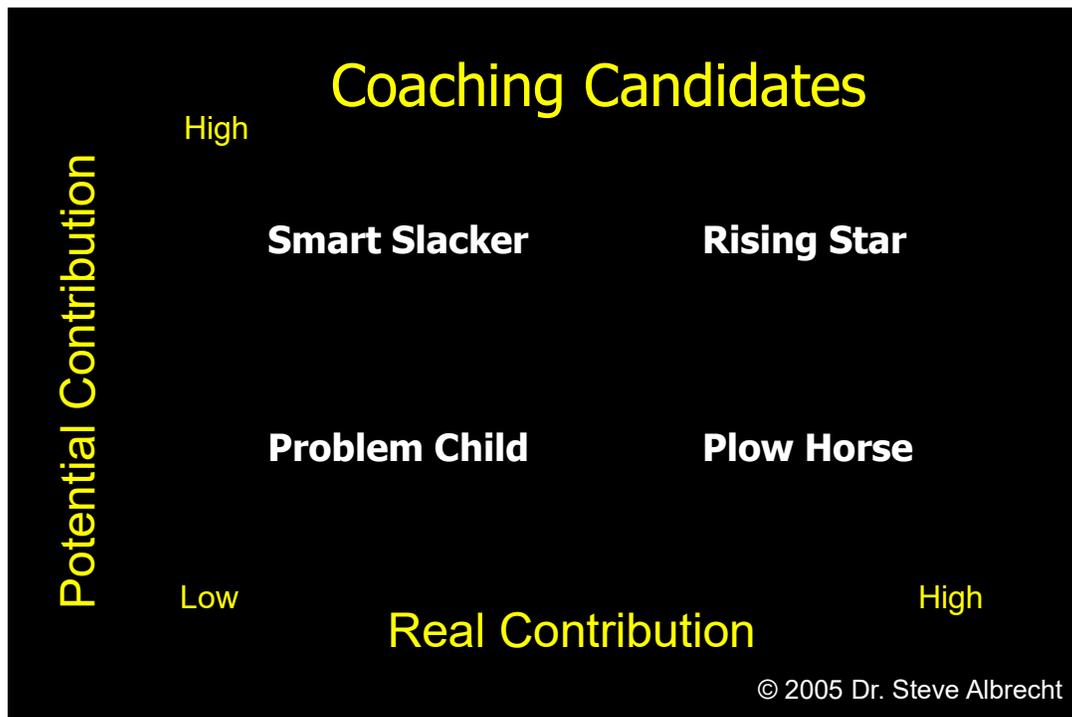
“What’s working well for you? Not so well?”

“What or who is your biggest challenge at work?”

“What SDBs can you identify that we can discuss?”

“With whom do you have a positive relationship at work? Negative relationship?”

“What do you want to do differently in your department?”



## Coaching the Usual Four

**Smart Slackers** – Confront their behavior, attitude, or performance. Remind them of their “legacy employee” status. Ask for their help.

**Problem Children** – Use your progressive discipline process. Ask them to make a stay/go choice.

**Plow Horses** – Encourage them to use option-thinking to problem-solve. Reward progress.

**Shining Stars** – Give them challenges but watch for job burnout. Create a career path.

## The Coaching Contract

Based on specific behaviors, not labels.

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Deadline-driven, results-oriented, reward-focused.

The employee owns the solutions.

Recognizing shared fates and shared responsibilities.

## The Coaching Dynamic

"A Spectrum of Influence"

