

Employee Development

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Coaching Employees

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Introduction

A coach is a person who:

- plans the development of others
- reviews development plans
- requires that people develop
- gives instructions on the job
- corrects mistakes when they occur
- considers job rotation opportunities
- provides time for development opportunities
- develops replacement candidates
- identifies people development needs
- works with other development resources
- places informal and formal resources
- plans upward career paths
- identifies promotional potential

Self Inventory

Test your perceptions about people development. The Coaching Self-Inventory opposite is a self-test. In column 'A' tick each statement if you agree, mark with an x if you disagree. Leave column 'B' alone for the present.

Let's now discuss, over the page, each of those ten statements in the Coaching Self-Inventory as though each was being presented for ratification as a policy statement. The suggestion is that each and every one of them be made a policy in your organisation and every organisation which is interested in achieving results. These statements then come to a more practical grasp of exactly what it means in the job description when it says to be responsible for the development of people.

| Coaching Self Inventory | | A | B |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Planned people development should be one of the basic concepts of any organisation's professional management systems. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | The development of my people should be planned professionally, just as sales or budget programs are. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | It is my responsibility to review individual plans for development at least annually. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | Each of my subordinates should work out a specific plan for personal development. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | I should require individual development plans for each of my subordinates. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Period instruction / assistance on the job is a major part of any individual's development. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | Correcting mistakes / errors is a part of any individual's development. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | I should encourage my subordinates to take advantage of job rotation opportunities in order to grow. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | I am expected to provide time for people to pursue development activities consistent with the workload. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | I am expected to recommend someone and help develop at least one replacement candidate for my job. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Coaching Concepts

Planned people development should be one of the basic concepts of any organisation's professional management system.

This is an attempt to state a broad policy which removes any option about people development by stipulating that developing people is a pillar of whatever system of management your organisation espouses. This people development should be planned, not given mere lip service or expected to happen by itself.

Adoption of this policy would guard against the simplistic way in which some managers consider themselves to be results oriented as opposed to people oriented, thus absolving themselves from people development. The major thrust of people development will be to emphasise that the development of people is the best means available to achieve results for the organisation. Hence, rather than choose between one or the other, they are seen to be two sides of the same coin.

Development of my people should be planned professionally just as production or budgeting programs should be:

What is suggested here is not the hiring of outside staff specialists who become "professional" people managers. Rather, the comparison with sales or budgeting programs is to remind individual managers that they are personally responsible for planning people development, just as they are personally responsible for planning production and budgets. This responsibility should not be taken lightly, but carried out professionally with the same care, training and assistance that is necessary in any other important responsibility they have.

Admittedly, most managers have not had training to be a professional in this field. All too often they have yielded to the internal "experts", usually in personnel, to do this. In turn, this causes many people to resent such passing of the buck even when they understand what causes it.

It is my responsibility to review individual plans for development at least annually

Three new thoughts are intended in this policy recommendation. *First*, because development is different for everyone, there should be *individual* development plans. While there may always be areas of growth or development common to many at the same time, these ought not to be the sum total of the people developing process taking place. It is often an easy excuse for managers to point to plant-wide or company-wide "people" programs as a way of absolving themselves of their people developing responsibility.

The *second* operable word in this policy statement is *review*. The manager is required to follow up on the people development plans. They are not to be spoken of enthusiastically for a brief period and then forgotten. If documented on

company forms, they ought not to be forwarded to some staff office as though floating off into never-never land. They require monitoring so that progress any be checked periodically.

Third, individual plans should be reviewed at least annually. This is an attempt to offer some time frame for periodic review, so as not to make the task too time-consuming. Furthermore, a lot can happen in twelve months, so that this time span is not too soon for considering new situations that might warrant changing or updating the plan. Many practising managers indicate a twelve month time frame as a practical one, especially when the development plan is discussed in the context of the annual performance evaluation.

Each of my subordinates should work out a specific plan of personal development

Two thoughts are contained in this policy statement.

First, each subordinate is to have a development plan. Again, we speak of the universality of development. This isn't only for the weak, or only for those identified as shining stars, or only the chief executive's relatives, or only for any select lucky or unlucky few. Everyone has developmental needs in order to help achieve the mission of the organisation.

Second, there is the question of who works out this plan for development. Some of you will immediately think of some subordinates who do not appear capable of working out their own personal development, hence this may prompt a negative vote (or "false" mark) on this statement. Clearly there will be some individuals less qualified than others to work out such a plan. But the intent is not to expect people to do it alone – quite the contrary. As we go on, we shall be able to identify together the individuals who might assist somehow in this responsibility. The real point of this statement is to fix on the subordinate a sharing of the development responsibility for which the manager is accountable. It becomes then a shared responsibility between manager and subordinate.

I should require individual development plans from each of my subordinates

This statement is a reinforcement of the previous one. In earlier versions of this Self—Inventory, the word demand was used but was found to sound unnecessarily harsh. Perhaps what the word 'require' connotes is closer to the mark. If it is to be a policy that all be challenged to develop to their full potential, if the option is not left to the manager to pick and choose which individuals benefit from development opportunities, then it ought not be a matter of choice to the subordinate either.

Again many managers can point to individuals who might state, or have stated, they are not interested in development. We've all encountered people like that. They readily assert that they have no interest in getting promoted; they know their job, they do it well, they simply want to work 9 to 5 and leave the jockeying for positions to someone else. This is precisely why the

universality of the need for development needs reinforcing. It ought not to be an option.

The organisation cannot afford to let people maintain that attitude. It is not what we want to people to think of promotion or becoming managers or anything they truly do not want to become, but in order to continue to perform well in the present areas of responsibility, people must keep pace with developments in their field. Because no job stays the same, no jobholder can stay the same. "Future shock" is a concept with which we are all familiar.

So much happens in the work developments around us that no job remains the same very long. Hence, if a worker is doing the job the same way he or she did a year ago, that person is less effective, if not completely wrong.

Periodic instruction / assistance on the job is a major part of any individual's development

The hope here is that the manager will feel at home. Periodic instruction or assistance on the job is an everyday occurrence. No one will deny the need for giving instruction or assistance on the job to those who need it, and some need it more than others. If we can begin to see this part of the warp and woof of individual development, then the universal changed envisioned in these statements will not be so threatening to some.

Further, this statement begins to move us away from the planning of individual development to actually participating in that process. The best plan in the world is going to have holes in it and will require amendment from time to time. This is one-way in which a manager will move from talk to action, from moral support to personal involvement. As in work-orientated objectives, you can plan the work, then work the plan; the same is true for personal development.

Correcting mistakes / errors is a part of individual development

This is very much like the preceding statement, in that opportunity for this kind of development activity is likely to occur on a day-to-day basis, and ought to be seen as an integral part of helping people grow. This makes correcting mistakes an opportunity to learn and profit rather than a matter of chastisement or shame.

Both this and the last statement should even be considered a part of a person's plan for development. The manager and the subordinate should envision that there will be times when giving instructions or giving corrections will be necessary. Engaging in these kinds of communications ought not to be seen as indicative of problems or failure or anything necessarily negative.

I should encourage my subordinates to take advantage of job rotation opportunities in order to grow

This is intended as another example of a possible kind of

development activity that might be appropriate for many individuals. Everyone should be encouraged to consider whether job rotation might be appropriate. Clearly not all individuals will find this so. It will depend on the nature of the job and so on. This statement is intended to indicate that this will not equally apply to people performing all jobs, but only to those where there is an opportunity.

I am expected to provide time for people to pursue development activities consistent with the work load

Again, recall that we are talking about this statement as a proposed policy, not as things actually exist at present within the organisation. The organisation is encouraged to adopt this statement as a policy, removing most of the option from the individual manager. All managers would then be expected to provide time for people to engage in whatever the appropriate developmental activities will turn out to be for each individual.

It is really not a laughing matter when a worker asks to attend a workshop, for example, and is told by the manager, "OK you can go, but remember while you're gone the work will be piling up on your desk, so be ready to get stuck when you come back." It's as though the worker grows or develops on his or her own time, and should not be stealing company time to become a better employee.

Still, the exigencies of the job cannot be ignored, and that is why the statement includes mention of being consistent with the workload. This policy provides an obvious chance to cop-out. However, it is not reason enough to delete reference to it, because the fact that development can often be scheduled around work exigencies, to the detriment of neither the work or the growth of people, if only an honest attempt be made to balance one with the other.

I am expected to recommend and help develop at least one replacement candidate for my own job

There are a couple of words here which are often overlooked and which sometimes lead some managers to mark this one false. Notice it is a matter of **recommending** a replacement, not promising anything to anyone. The last thing you want to do is identify an heir apparent when there may be several persons in the organisation who might be possible candidates in their own minds, if not yours.

Then it is a matter of helping someone to be a candidate for the job, not just selecting a person who might already be qualified and dropping the subject at that point. The manager realises his or her chances for further upward movement may be enhanced by having someone already developed to take over the position to be vacated tends to take people development seriously.

Some have interpreted this as a promise to move upward as soon as someone is developed. This is not the intent. Rather the intent is to have someone qualified if and when the manager moves on. Some refer to this as the concept of "organisational

surplus". As more and more organisations report they are "growing by leaps and bounds", there are more complaints that the one thing slowing down further growth is the lack of qualified personnel to move into key positions that open by virtue of this growth.

This policy statement can prevent delays in organisation- al growth, can prevent the need for constantly hiring from outside whenever new position opens up (thereby ruining morale), and can literally provide a surplus of people qualified to move into positions before there is even need for it. Some argue, that having too many qualified staff members is also a way to damage morale. While that has to be admitted as a possibility, it would seem to be a much happier fate. The record seems to indicate that we are so far in arrears the other way, that it will be a long time before we do any serious damage by having too many qualified people.

Policy Summary

Here is how the president of one company put across the ideas set forth in the preceding policy statements when introducing planned people development in his organisation.

- Our organisation is proud of the professional approach we take in all aspects of conducting our business.
- Having on-hand managers to meet growth opportunities is a valid and basic concept to which we are committed just as we realise the need for other resources like capital, land and ideas.
- A professional approach to helping development of our people in order to maximise their full potential will have a direct impact on the "bottom line".
- Professionalism in people development is as important a responsibility for line managers as any other program they pursue to achieve results. We are a "people" business.
- A professional approach to people development is the responsibility of every manager in the company. We are dedicated to Planning for Individual Achievement and Organisational Results.

Self Inventory Again

Assuming you can accept the ten policy statements as operable in your organisation, whether or not they are actually made a formal matter of written policy, how many of them are you now putting into practice to your own satisfaction? You might want to now go back to Figure 1 and make a notation under column 'B' about each of the ten statements. A simple 'Yes' or 'No' will indicate which of them you practise and which you don't. Clearly, the statements you do not practice might be areas in this workbook to which you will wish to pay special attention.

Coaching Responsibilities

The *Linear Responsibility Chart* is a method of controlling the development of a subordinate. Here the manager would spend some time negotiating possible development needs with his subordinate to come to an agreement as to who should assist in the development and by what date the development will be completed or reviewed.

The responsibility for developing a subordinate need not fall on the shoulders of one manager. Utilising and sharing resources to develop people would be in line with company policy. Looking at the *Linear Responsibility Chart*, recall one of your key people that you will be responsible for developing.

Enter the subordinates name and title. Write your name and title where it states "Prepared By".

Down the left hand side of the sheet, list the activities concerned with the individual's development and by what date the development will completed or reviewed.

Some possible development needs could be:

Business Climate

- Understanding of the product, services and goals
- Knowledge of production
- Knowledge of company culture
- Understanding of costs and marketing
- Understanding legislation

Policies and Decisions

- Knowledge of corporate policy
- Knowledge of the process and techniques for decision making
- Use of problem analysis and problem solving

Personnel Selection and Development

- Recruitment and selection
- Determining manpower requirements
- Job evaluation
- Employee induction
- Using the appraisal system
- Establishing training needs
- Using techniques for motivation
- Counselling subordinates

Interpersonal Skills

- Delegating responsibility
- Handling complaints
- Improving work habits
- Maintaining improved performance
- Overcoming resistance to change
- Handling emotional situations
- Disciplining subordinates

Self Development

- Management theories
- Motivation theories
- Marketing
- Engineering
- Finance
- Legal
- Industrial Relations
- Research and Development

Communications

- Understanding oral and written communications
- Report writing
- How to do presentations
- How to communicate a brief

Planning and Control

- Basic techniques for planning and control
- Critical path analysis
- Understanding Management by Objectives
- Evaluating to determine success

Personal Productivity

- Time management
- Use of management techniques
- Developing work assignments

Note the above are but a sample of some of the dimensions that may be used.

Across the top is room to insert the title of several persons within the organisation that could assist in the program. Include yourself and the name of your subordinate where he will be controlling his own development.

Use the data boxes to indicate start and completion date of development.

Summary

A coach therefore is a person who:

- plans the development of people
- reviews development plans
- requires that people develop
- gives instruction on the job
- corrects mistakes when they occur
- considers job rotation opportunities
- provides time for development activities
- develops replacement candidates
- identifies people development needs
- works with other development resources
- places formal and informal resources
- plans upward career paths
- identifies promotion potential

Suggested Steps in Coaching

- Set climate
- Talk around subject
 - isolate and state problems
 - indicate opportunity clearly
- Reinforce past achievements
- Ask for ideas and assist in evaluating ideas
- Agree on plan
 - set and agree on realistic objectives
 - delegate authority
 - clarify and confirm plan
- Confirm assistance
- Agree on follow-up procedures

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Linear Responsibility Development Chart

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| For the development of: | Name |
| | Job Title |
| Prepared by: | Name |
| | Job Title |
| | Date |

Developer (Coach)

| Development Need | Developer (Coach) | | | | | | | Due Date |
|------------------|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|----------|
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|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Consider some development needs from the following headings | Organizational Business Climate | Organization Policies and Procedures | Personnel Selection and Development | Interpersonal Skills |
| | Self Development Opportunities | Communication Skills | Planning and Control Systems | Personal Productivity Skills |