

# Six Coaching Strategies You Can Apply in the Workplace

Whether on the gridiron, in the boardroom, as part of a project team, or as a personal or professional counselor, all coaches use similar tenets and tools to help others excel. Coaches might implement these tools in different ways, but the common denominators present in most coaching relationships can have lasting effects on employees' performance, as well as on your own.

Apply these six strategies to boost the effectiveness of your workplace coaching:

**Have a game-plan:** A clear vision and action plan ensure that all "players" are focused on the same end-result. As the coach, this will help you more quickly see when the group is off-course and needs to re-calibrate its efforts. What happens if you lack a vision and action plan? Just imagine a football coach trying to coordinate each player's movements without a predetermined play.

**Associate the game plan with individuals' goals:** A personal coach is only as effective as the client is motivated. A coach can recommend approaches and tools until she is blue in the face, but if the client isn't genuinely focused on attaining the expressed goals (rather, his boss told him to go to the coach), little change will be made.

**Do drills:** Isolate the key skills required to succeed, and develop exercises that hone those specific skills through practice. For example: Rarely (if ever!) will someone give a presentation in front of a mirror. And yet, isolating the skill to "wear" a comfortable expression and posture, and practicing in front of a mirror, builds those talents for real presentations.

**Put people in roles that suit their aptitude:** Discuss natural propensities with your employees. Learn what they like to do and why. Suggest new or modified roles for individuals. Fill talent voids in your organization, as opposed to filling an open job title. Don't be afraid to give someone new responsibilities or roles if his demonstrated traits suit what's needed. A vocal coach, for example, will shift a student with a low singing voice out of the soprano section and into the alto section. Singing out of range damages the student's voice and reduces the quality of the chorus' sound.

**Use appropriate communication modes and content:** The best coaches in any arena know how to mold their communication style and content to benefit the person they are coaching -- leading to greater understanding, better rapport, and longer retention. This applies to word choice, voice tone, personal space boundaries, and the way you explain required actions and expectations. For example: When explaining how to cup your hands properly when swimming, a coach might toss out all explanations and visuals directly relating to swimming and instead say, "Pretend you're petting a cat." Since they have stroked a cat before, the person will better understand how to use the correct swimming form.

**Celebrate:** Achieving goals and surpassing milestones deserve credit. Celebrating these accomplishments underscores the value that each person brings to the table and confirms expected behaviors -- all while serving as motivators for future learning.

**Still interested in more advice?** Here are [7 tips for motivating employees](#).

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