

# Mentoring and Coaching

Your role as coach is vital, teaching people to become independent thinkers and conditioning their minds for success. Ask questions, listen and learn. Set ground rules and expectations for coaching. Allow people to progress at a comfortable pace. Recognize limitations or an unwillingness to change. Alter your style and approach based on the individual student. Invest time in your people, get to know them and understand them. Help them help themselves so they can become a more valued asset. Merriam- Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines a coach as a private tutor. One who instructs or trains. Coaching means to instruct, direct or prompt. To train intensively as by instruction and demonstration.

People need a coach for many reasons like training, teaching, educating and informing. You offer them the wisdom and knowledge gained from other experiences and a different perspective to give them the power to simplify complicated issues. You are part of an accountability system for goal setting and achievement. You help them identify issues, concerns and mental blocks, to see the forest for the trees. The systems, processes and procedures you introduce streamline business practices. You provide them assistance in the creation and implementation of tools. Your intuitiveness helps them see what they cannot and raise their level of consciousness in areas of concern.

There are many reasons coaching fails and you must be aware of them in advance. Personality clashes, poor explanation or insufficient communication will destroy a coaching relationship. Lack of commitment to the coaching program from either party. Insufficient follow through or implementation by client. Client discomfort, disbelief, or dishonesty regarding a tool or idea that was to be implemented. If the coaching takes a backseat and is no longer a priority or when other issues take precedent. Insufficient resources to follow through with recommendations or inflexibility from either party cripple the relationship. You must also be aware of a poor coaching environment that is noisy or invites interruptions.

Ensuring the desired outcome requires respectful cooperation, flexibility with in reasonable parameters and putting personalities aside. Open effective communication, where appropriate information is supplied, quality explanations are given by the coach and clarification questions are asked by the student makes the relationship work! Having an agreement of the degree of accountability that should be expected makes good sense. Consistent updates regarding progress, resource issues and other obstacles should be conveyed. A suitable location is a must and in some cases a coaching contract to acknowledge commitment could be signed by both parties.

Coaching isn't always the answer. You must understand why poor performance exists. It could be because of poor or inadequate soft skills or product knowledge training. Inadequate equipment and job related tools could be the source of challenges. There may be real or perceived time constraints. Lack of motivation, an unwillingness to change or try new ideas, or implement different techniques cannot be coached. Sometimes, people are unable to change for either intellectual or emotional reasons. The coach must ask which of the aforementioned reasons apply? Is coaching needed to solve the problem? If yes, what should the coaching sessions address?

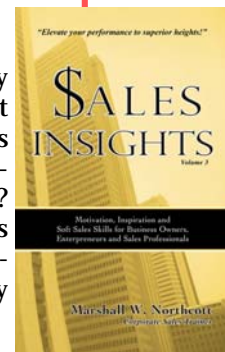
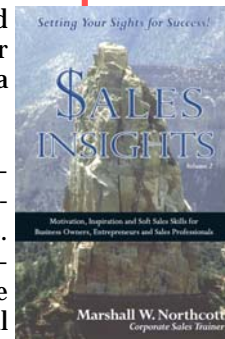
In order to coach you must ask questions like, Is this person conscious of what they are supposed to do and when? What is the specific difference between the present and the desired performance level? Do they know and accept that the performance is unsatisfactory? Do they have the skills required to perform their duties? Is the performance standard realistic? What is the impact of the substandard performance? Are adequate resources available to do the job? Is it possible to address the obstacles affecting performance or are they beyond the person's control? Does positive performance yield sufficient rewards? Is the person intellectually and motivationally capable of doing the job if the desire is present?

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Getting Beyond Average!



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***“Great players don't always make great coaches and great coaches weren't necessarily the greatest players.”***