

Fantastic Feedback Skills & Confidence Coaching: Pre-Course Context and Reflection

Background

Hello. In advance of the development session on “feedback” and “coaching”, please use this document to help you think ahead to what you’d like to get from the session and reflect on your progress afterwards.

Thank you – we’re looking forward to seeing you.

Seven reasons why it’s important to take a year-round approach to your people’s development

Five are Logical:

Employee engagement: hinges upon not only what people do but on what type of development they receive in terms of their personal experience and growth from their line manager (e.g. feedback..coaching...)

Economic uncertainty or growth or contraction: good employees are more likely to stay if they experience good development; in the absence of it, they leave and the less effective ones sit tight

The Gen Y effect: More and more you will be working with people who have grown up in a culture of continuous feedback, not limited to only the half-yearly and yearly appraisal. If they are not receiving feedback, they will challenge you for it. If they don’t get it...see the two points above!

Saving yourself time: By doing these things regularly, appraisal meetings will be used to recap on feedback given and progress made, leading to a much more productive, enjoyable and effective way of working

Create independent thinkers: who are able to take decisions, implement action plans and live or die by the results

Two are Emotional:

The belief that “It’s different foreg lawyers/ directors/managers because we’re in such a professional environment ”: The reality is that it’s *not* different depending on sector or profession because we all achieve results in the same way as everyone else – via our people, and finally, because

Or maybe it’s really that “I don’t know how to..... ..deliver feedback...or coach people onto better performance”. All too often, we haven’t had great feedback and coaching role models. So it’s time to break the cycle, if you feel that applies to you. Thankfully, we can show you not only why you should be doing year-round feedback and coaching but how to do it well (and what to avoid)!

Here are the fundamentals of HOW to ensure that your **feedback** lands well.

Consider: How often are you doing these (or not)?

- Making it timely ie soon after the event while it’s fresh in your and the other person’s mind
- Making it regular. Little and often is good
- Making it an expectation eg having it on your catch-up agenda as a standing point (if there’s no feedback for/from either of you that’s fine – you can pick it up next time)
- Getting to the point quickly, so that the other person knows what you’re talking about and why
- Being specific – talking about what you saw and heard and giving clear examples of both
- Being even more specific – avoiding “You always/never”
- Making sure you’re calm
- Avoiding making judgements eg “You were obviously.....”
- Giving the other person an opportunity to respond (eg asking questions for clarification)
- Leaving the door open for future discussion (they might need time to reflect and come back at a later date)
- Really listening to the other person (so, not just waiting for them to finish; or thinking about other things)
- Related to the point above, being “present”; ie really focusing on them and what’s important to them
- Being clear about what actions the other person (and you, if applicable) is taking forward
- Setting a time and date to catch up on progress
- Saying “Thank you” for their time and input into the conversation

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What we mean when we're talking about "coaching" and why it's important for today's manager

It's about change: so it focuses on the future more than the past (you'll have done your feedback for that)

It put the person you're coaching in the driver's seat and you in the passenger seat: your role is to keep the conversation on track and ensure that it starts with a clear outcome and ends with an action plan

It assumes that the person is resourceful: in other words, that often they know what the options for action are – your role is to help them work that out for themselves

It's about saving you time: the process takes a bit longer in the short term, but longer term saves you time because it creates independent thinkers and means that they are capable of acting when you're not around

It's about empowering your people: it's not about abandoning them to work everything out for themselves – if they're stuck, as a manager you can of course come forward with options and ideas (as long as you encourage them to evaluate *why* these are good) – but about giving them an opportunity to show you their "working out" so far

It starts with a goal and ends with an action: it's as "simple" as that – and during your session we'll look at a model to help you track your progress in helping set that goal, explore what the person has already done, identify and evaluate options and choose the best options going forward

It's about motivating people: high performers don't want to be micro-managed. Coaching is supportive, outcome-focused and is something to do when they and you spot a gap in their knowledge or skill.

Here are the fundamentals of HOW to ensure that your coaching lands well.

Consider: How often are you doing these (or not), generally?

- When you're having a coaching conversation (or any conversation really) being "present" – focusing on the other person and the issue under discussion, and nothing else
- Asking open questions. And making sure you ask one question at a time (aiming for twelve words or fewer each time for clarity and brevity)
- Looking for opportunities to reflect what you're seeing and hearing eg "I notice that you've mentioned that three times – it sounds important to you". OR "I can hear your voice changing – you sound angry"
- Summarising regularly what you've heard so far. This is helpful for you, as you can check that you've got the right information and haven't missed anything out, and for the other person as they can correct or fill in anything that's wrong or missing. Also – if you're dealing with someone who talks in order to think this helps them get everything ordered and organised
- Using silence. This is important for a number of reasons – it encourages the other person to think; gives them time to do that and signals that you're not going to give them the answers. If you're dealing with someone who thinks in order to talk they like the silence – it feels very alive to them – and they'll use it to get what's in their head ordered so that they can communicate it to you clearly and concisely
- Trying to develop/demonstrate empathy ie you'll never truly know how another person feels, but taking into account that person's personality and behaviour, trying to seeing things from their perspective (the goal being to understand, not necessarily to agree)

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What are your biggest barriers to giving feedback? Please tick all that apply	
	I'm worried about the response that I'll get from the other person? (e.g. they're going to get angry/upset/deny it/agree superficially but change nothing?)
	I'm not quite sure of the best way to open up the conversation?
	I'm not sure how to structure the feedback message?
	I'm not sure where and/or when to deliver the feedback?
	I'm not sure how to bring out their comments?
	I'm not sure when/why/how I should follow up?
What are your biggest barriers to using coaching skills? Please tick all that apply	
	I'm worried about how much time it will take
	It's easier – and safer for us both – to give the other person some clear direction
	I'm not sure what coaching is, to be honest
	I'm not sure who in my team is a good candidate to practise coaching skills on
	I wouldn't know what to do if they got stuck/didn't respond well to it
	I'm not sure when/why/how I should follow up
Other? Please jot down your thoughts here:	
Consider: a) What you'd like to get from the session and b) How you'll know that you've got what you need ie what you'll think/feel/do that is different and better for you/others:	
What I would like to get from the session:	I'll be able to measure that by:
What I would like to get from the session:	I'll be able to measure that by:
What I would like to get from the session:	I'll be able to measure that by:
Consider: after the session please reflect and write down here, or discuss with a trusted colleague	
What's been working well when using feedback and/or coaching skills?	Is there anything I need to do:
What's been more of a challenge for me when using feedback and/or coaching skills?	More of?
Who can give me some feedback on my feedback and/or coaching skills (and what specifically would I like them to comment on)?	Less of?
	Stop altogether?