

A coaching leadership style

Over the past few years the managerial role has changed significantly. To lead with orders and control seems less and less effective for many situations. Instead a coaching leadership style has risen to the top as a success model for managers. The ultimate benefit from a coaching leadership style is that long-term you develop self-reliant direct reports. They will be increasingly able to handle more responsibility and find their own solutions. Direct reports who don't receive coaching will likely start off as high-performers, but slowly decrease their efforts over time. Someone who spends a long time in the same organization or the same role will likely experience a decreased motivation over time. They reach a plateau where their personal development stops and without significant changes or challenges they may become low-performers and a detriment to the organization.

The solution is to create opportunities for development. One of the most important responsibilities you have as a manager is to create the right conditions for your coworkers to motivate themselves. Providing opportunities for personal development is one of the best ways to improve motivation and move past the plateau.

Distinguishing between the concepts of mentorship, individual coaching and coaching leadership is important. Mentorship is when a senior person usually within the same profession or industry guide and give advice. It could for instance be in regards to career path or how to behave and strategize in certain situations. Individual coaching is often provided by a professionally trained coach who closely assists someone in their development. A coach rarely provides solutions but listens and guides. A coaching leadership style is when a manager asks open-ended questions and actively listens in order to assist a direct report instead of offering direct solutions. Managers who coach their direct reports aim to help them develop solutions and answers on their own.

With that you can say that a coach is someone who takes people to a desired place, a set out goal.

Why you should coach as a leader

- You establish increased trust in your coworkers and clarify their responsibilities.
- You show that you value the effort and competence of your direct reports
- As a leader you free up time for strategic thinking, which allows both you and direct reports to reach full potential

Benefits of coaching

For the organization:

- Increased motivation amongst members
- Creates loyalty
- Allows for more effective implementation of strategies, changes, and decisions

For the direct report who receives the coaching:

- More thought out and active decisions
- Knowledge transfers into competence
- Allows for greater development

For the manager who coaches:

- You get increased strength in your leadership role
- Your role as a manager gets clearer and more impactful
- You become a more insightful leader

*Author: Karin Nygren
Posted: Nov 1, 2014*