

Transforming Your Organization with the getAbstract Coaching Solution

A getAbstract White Paper

Discover how to transform your managers and leaders into coaches while developing the learning culture within your organization

January 2011

For more information, visit www.getabstract.com

Focus

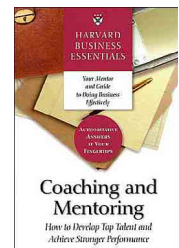
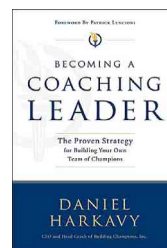
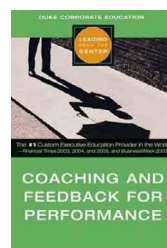
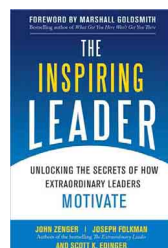
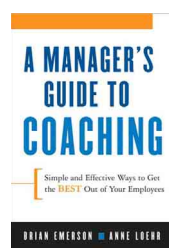
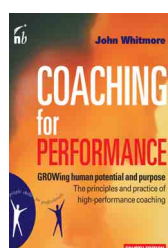
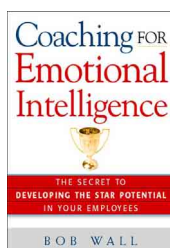
Leadership & Management

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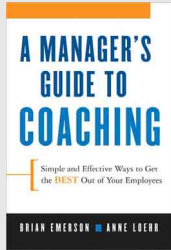
Take-Aways

- Coaches do not teach. They help others learn through probing questions.
- Many managers have technical skills or interpersonal skills, but rarely both.
- 20% of learning is through informal or formal coaching, feedback or mentoring.
- Study the structure of a coaching dialogue so it becomes second nature. Then make it second nature to use it regularly.
- Those who receive coaching (“coachees”) undergo self-actualization, which improves their skills and talents.
- Coaches who ask questions are not probing for information they can use to resolve others’ problems; instead, they are advising respondents to think about issues.
- The coaching relationship is based on commitment, trust and the aspiration to help employees progress and flourish.
- Coaches must be accomplished communicators and active listeners.
- Coaches must listen, pay attention, offer feedback and celebrate successes.
- The getAbstract summaries will essentially Encourage and Empower your managers how to coach, instead of just offering information on the topic itself.

Recommended Abstracts



Relevance



“Coaching involves helping another person gain the confidence, motivation and drive to complete the task at hand.”
A Manager’s Guide to Coaching

Introduction

Coaches help people become more effective by creating a discussion that results in self-awareness and action. A coach’s role is not to give advice or to make decisions, but to expand the coachee’s perspective. Coaching explores employees’ lack of self-confidence, motivation and awareness in order to help them find ways to overcome these inadequacies and become more productive.

Coaching is a vital skill for leaders at all levels today as it enables positive and professional transformation. Furthermore, executives all over the world have come to recognize the value of coaching and realize how much everyone benefits when employees are more inspired and focused. Due to the increasing demand, the current trend is to form internal coaching teams rather than hiring outside teams at expensive hourly rates.

Problem

Employees are not always 100% aware of what is expected of them. They often do not receive the praise or positive feedback they deserve or get rewarded for their achievements. In addition, they generally do not get the quality of support needed to advance in their career. To restore employee morale, essential coaching skills are necessary - skills which are not commonly taught in business schools.

The issue is that workers need a certain type of manager. Companies need managers who are inspiring. Therefore, coaching is undoubtedly gaining momentum in the corporate arena. However, turning managers into coaches is no easy accomplishment. There can be great obstacles to deal with. For example, while some managers have technical brilliance, others have strong interpersonal skills, but seldom do they have both.

Coaching Solutions

getAbstract summaries will actually teach your managers how to coach, rather than just providing information on the topic itself. Learn the coaching skills that will ensure breakthrough thinking from your staff. Employees will inevitably acquire talents that fuel innovation and tap into unforeseen opportunities.

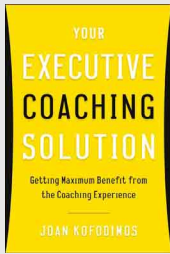
By utilizing getAbstract summaries to create a coaching culture, your managers and ultimately all employees will:

- Build organizational intelligence
- Create aligned goals
- Connect people
- Promote diversity
- Drive innovation
- Increase engagement
- Enable knowledge sharing

Each company’s culture is unique, so naturally they will have their own approach to turning their managers into coaches. The solution must be tailored to each firm’s specific needs.

In order for a coaching solution to be successful, it should be a process-based learning experience. It ought to be long enough so that leaders and those being coached can create

“Some managers mistakenly believe that coaching isn’t worth their time, but since poor employee attitudes can kill productivity, managers who don’t coach are not, in fact, using their time well.”
A Manager’s Guide to Coaching



“If coaching is to have a positive impact, your participation must be voluntary.”
Your Executive Coaching Solution

“Most executives don’t get authentic feedback about how they’re perceived or the effects of their behavior on others.”
Your Executive Coaching Solution

“If you remain dependent on your coach to...help you learn, then your coach has done you a disservice.”
Your Executive Coaching Solution

habits; your coaching solution cannot be a one-time event, otherwise people will forget as soon as they leave and revert back to their original behaviors.

The goal should be to create a high performance culture that helps align company goals, boost productivity and increase employee engagement and collaboration.

getAbstract suggests that the coaching model should be an ongoing, never ending process. An example cycle could be as follows:

Feedback and Coaching → Set Goals → Monitor → Review → Reward → Repeat

The process should be kicked off by senior leaders who are able to:

- **Prepare-** Define, assess and plan the dialogue they will use to engage with their coachee
- **Engage-** Use open-ended questions, practice active listening, confirm outcomes, and help and encourage coachees
- **Sustain-** Observation, evaluation, reinforcement and direction

Through the coaching solution, your leaders should find that the more they engage with their direct subordinates, the more they understand their own roles. As a result, their performance will also increase.

Coaching Scenarios

1. Coaching the Executive
2. Coaching the Middle Manager
3. Coaching Employees
4. Coaching Teams

Strategic questions to address for each scenario:

- Who am I coaching?
- What does my coachee need to learn?
- What tools will I be using to coach? (The getAbstract Coaching Portal and Virtual Business Forum)
- How will I track progress?

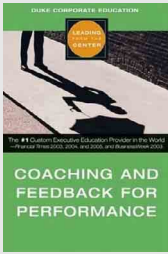
Coaching the Executive

Initially, present the coaching culture as a special program available only to the most highly respected executives. Consequently, other leaders in your organization will demand for inclusion.

It is not easy to decide whether an executive requires coaching, or if he or she would even be open to the idea. Many executives never receive genuine feedback about their performance because they hold leader positions. As a result, the executive’s self-perception may vary significantly from others’ perceptions.

A coach to an executive may be an outsider; he or she can view things neutrally and is able to assist effectively. The coach would need to produce a private environment in which the executive can concentrate on developing better strategies to:

- Gain genuine feedback from employees.
- Reach out to colleagues.
- Launch an action plan.
- Incorporate newly-learned skills.



*“In a typical Manager employee relationship, coaching is an ongoing cycle of goals and desired outcomes, plans, experimental actions, learning opportunities, reflections and retries.”
Coaching and Feedback for Performance*

*“Establish a relationship that allows you to discuss goals in detail, including the roles you will each play and how these affect the outcomes.”
Coaching and Feedback for Performance*

*“Approach all coaching conversations as collaborative, mutual exchanges of ideas and possibilities.”
Coaching and Feedback for Performance*

Coaching is successful, providing the executive:

- Trusts it can work.
- Makes a time commitment.
- Is truthful with others about changing.
- Agrees to take feedback.
- Employs new skills.
- Is honest and open with the coach.

Most importantly, when coaching executives, the following four components are essential:

1. **Adopt a results orientation to the leader’s problem** — Focus on an outcome based on the goods, services or information that characterizes the firm’s success.
2. **Establish a partnership** — Become a confederate to the executive.
3. **Focus on specific challenges** — Get the executive to explore what pulls them off course or how they might have a negative impact on others.
4. **Link the team’s work to goals** — Show the executive why they need to set specific expectations so their team can achieve coherent results.

Feedback allows executives to see how others view them, and brings focus to the particular areas which need development. The executive and the coach will then meet again to create a plan to implement improvement.

This coaching scenario will help the executive increase collaboration throughout the organization. Executives meet with their colleagues and explain how they propose to apply their plan. Some executives may be embarrassed sharing this information because they feel it reveals their weaknesses, however, co-workers will appreciate the honesty and respect the executive’s objectives.

Coaching the Middle Manager

Middle managers work with top managers, colleagues and employees. They transfer information and communicate, or guide other’s opinions and actions. When coaching middle managers it is important to show how management and employee relationships can be reinforced to develop both individual and organizational success.

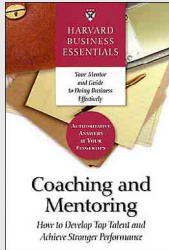
The following is particularly useful for helping middle managers build up those relationships to attain their desired outcomes.

An important part of the middle manager’s role is to motivate others in the company to think, feel and act in a positive and productive way.

In this scenario, coaches should use action plans with middle managers that focus on specific behavioral changes that can be implemented (e.g., how to be a better follower, champion, collaborator, listener and/or director).

Their role as a collaborator includes peer-to-peer communication where they first search for understanding and try to inspire one another.

To measure the effectiveness of coaching middle managers, interviews and complete assessments should take place. By examining productivity data, the nature of their collaborations and work done with superiors, colleagues, or subordinates; the problematic behaviors can be identified.



“Chances are that every one of your direct reports could benefit from coaching in some way.”
Coaching and Mentoring

“Many of your coaching situations will involve personal behaviors or performance problems that you’d rather avoid.”
Coaching and Mentoring

“If you’re a new manager, or new at coaching, your first efforts may feel uncomfortable and may not be entirely effective.”
Coaching and Mentoring

When middle managers improve their performance, the effect on their work relationships are self-reinforcing.

Coaching the Employee

In many cases, employees are told exactly what to do, when to do it and even how to do it. Employees are under the impression that the manager is responsible for all issues and must resolve them. However, this mentality can be discouraging. When employees feel as though they have no right to an opinion and are not given the chance to participate outside of their work tasks, they are never fully engaged.

It is more effective for employees to be coached, which then provides for a more collaborative and engaging environment.

Most companies use a formal evaluation system to assess employees. But simply classifying areas in which employees need to improve their performance is not enough. Employees need worthy, disciplined coaching to help them face obstacles and create results.

Use the following when coaching individuals:

- **Observation** – Monitor employees’ work behaviors, production and collaboration with other co-workers.
- **Discussion** – Articulate concerns in a tactful, knowledgeable style. It will help you and your employees recognize agreeable coaching goals.
- **Active coaching** – Create a coaching plan. Set defined, achievable goals and a sensible timeline to complete them.
- **Follow-up** – Ensure that employees are following their coaching plans.

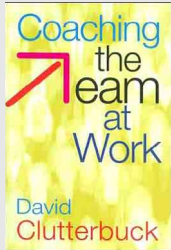
Expected results when coaching individuals:

- **Improved performance** – Coaching resolves hindrance issues and employees can then maximize their skills.
- **More competent employees** – Coaching expands employees’ skills.
- **Better productivity** – Employees who are trained to work more resourcefully will increase productivity.
- **Promotable employees** – Coaching employees can prepare them for more responsibility and higher positions.
- **Less turnover** – Employees are more devoted and committed to the company when they are continuously encouraged to improve and advance.
- **Positive atmosphere** – Coaching reinforces executives’ relationships with employees and creates an optimistic atmosphere.

Coaching the Team

Teams have a number of people who share goals and rely on one another in order to reach them. Team members are required to fill particular roles and perform to meet the needs of the team.

Coaches should use the same skills to coach a team as they would an individual, but apply them in slightly different ways. Team coaches focus on helping the group comprehend its processes and develop its performance. Coaches should begin by outlining goals and the steps required to reach them.



*“Organizations employ teams because they have found this is a more effective way to organize complex work than any alternative yet designed.”
Coaching the Team at Work*

*“Team learning is a key component of organizational learning.”
Coaching the Team at Work*

*“Although team members don’t have to like each other for the team to function well, there is a minimal level of rapport, mutual respect and understanding required to sustain the communication needed for consistent high performance.”
Coaching the Team at Work*

The following process should be used when coaching the team:

- Ask relevant questions, continually, as an ongoing process.
- Encourage team members to inquire about their goals, their control over their circumstances and how others will evaluate performance.
- Press for responses
- Help each person examine his or her relationship with the other team members, with the job and with specific tasks.
- Create a learning system that guarantees that your participants will remain attracted to the experience.

Teams frequently have weak, habitual approaches to dealing with conflict and communication. To boost the team’s position in the company and improve its relationships with other teams, help your team examine those repetitive tendencies, assess them and fix them.

It is the coach’s responsibility to help the team to:

1. Define its purpose and priorities
2. Understand its environment
3. Identify and tackle barriers to performance
4. Build the team learning plan
5. Instill confidence in themselves and their leader
6. Develop a self-coaching system applying appropriate behaviors and ample skills.

Collaboration

As the coach, your role is to guide your team to produce solid decisions that have members’ support and commitment. Guide the team through the process of reaching conclusions when everyone is ready to decide. Agree on the decision and how to implement it.

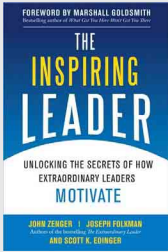
As team members gain additional skills, shift your focus. Help them master knowledge transfer within the team, and guide individuals as they take over leadership positions. When the coach-team relationship ends, hold a final “outcome review” to help your team members articulate what they have achieved.

Getting Started

getAbstract provides world-class business and coaching resources with expert outside perspective. In order to successfully utilize these resources within your firm, a coaching system must be put into place.

In addition to considering the different coaching scenarios, the following steps are recommended in the getAbstract coaching implementation process:

- Begin with the commitment and support from top executives.
- Develop coaching plans with the top leaders to set the expectations of your company and what they need to do to be successful.
- Communicate with business leaders to identify the types of problems to which coaching would be a beneficial solution.
- Create a learning experience agenda for the managers and test it with them. They will better understand and appreciate the type of learning activity you are recommending.



“Having the team set its goals collectively can be a powerful technique. Invariably, one or more of the team members would like to reach higher.”
The Inspiring Leader

“In today’s organizations, with fierce competition and ever-increasing demands, there is a signifi cant need for leaders who can inspire.”
The Inspiring Leader

“A leader leads by example, whether he intends to or not.”
The Inspiring Leader

- Obtain the encouragement of a small group of prominent leaders who will support your endeavors in executing a coaching experience.
- Build a CONTINUOUS learning experience so that it forms habits among leaders and employees.

Informal Learning and Coaching

The 70/20/10 model shifts the focus of learning and development to informal and coached learning. This model declares that 70% of learning takes place from real-life and on-the-job experiences, responsibilities, and problem solving; 20% of the time learning comes from other people through informal or formal mentoring, coaching, or feedback; while 10% of learning comes from formal training.

Informal learning forces a learner to set his or her own goals and to oversee advancement toward those goals. Learners may not set goals as strictly as instructional designers might, but it is important that they recognize what it is they want to learn.

Many learners benefit from having someone coach them by detecting their learning needs, arranging the options for learning and development, and managing what they learn when they pursue any of the existing learning paths.

A learning coach needs to:

- Be well-informed about learning options
- Be understanding of learner’s choices
- Mildly demand results
- Encourage learners to set challenging goals and to express clear strategies for meeting them
- Recognize and take pride in the coachee’s achievements

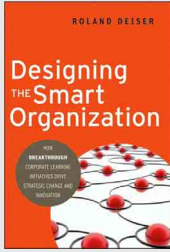
A good manager improves their staff, and there is no more influential way to do that than to be a reassuring and persistent learning coach. If managers take on this role, the question of how to supervise and assess informal learning will dissipate. Managers will be closely involved in knowing what, how, when and to what amount their direct subordinates are learning.

The 70/20/10 model makes it clear that coaching connects people and serves as a catalyst for driving an organization’s learning culture, and the learning culture directly impacts business performance. Therefore, it is important to focus on the key elements below that drive the learning culture:

- Leaders are used to teach leaders
- Learning, as coaching, is continuous
- Collaboration, knowledge sharing and networking are enablers
- The entire spectrum of the Learning Universe needs to be embraced
- Learning is consistently supporting the company vision and brand
- Learning culture needs to be cascaded to all levels of the organization
- Organization agility encourages rapid change and individual responsibility

Keep in mind that coaching and the learning culture within an organization are not:

- About the L & D organization
- An overnight change. It’s a Process
- About introducing more courses
- Competency assessments
- Measuring usage using the LMS



*“The competitive success, if not the mere survival, of most of today’s organizations is in large part dependent on their ability to learn, to innovate and to change on an ongoing, sometimes radical basis.”
Design of the Smart Organization*

getAbstract Leading Customers

- getAbstract has had an enormous impact on the learning culture of MasterCard, and has also helped their leaders become coaches and drive development.
- To develop leaders, MasterCard focuses on managerial coaching and mentoring.
- To generate top level support and ensure the confidence of their executives, MasterCard continues to recognize the need to match executives with topics that connect well to their strengths and interests.
- GE has integrated getAbstract into its existing learning processes to expose managers to innovative business thinking outside of GE, and to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing within.
- getAbstract is considered a significant knowledge enabler at GE. They now use external thinking to increase organization agility and enable their employees to see the complexity of the world. They must ensure that their leaders as coaches see around corners and understand the future that is being created inside and outside of the company.

Conclusion

- Coaching is about developing people and driving performance.
- The getAbstract coaching solution and various scenarios provide managers with the expertise and knowledge essential to successfully coach employees.
- getAbstract provides leaders with continuous support, accessible and up-to-date knowledge they can employ with their recently learned skills.
- Business leaders have revealed the influence and accomplishment of getAbstract’s coaching solution through their ongoing involvement.
- It is crucial to support leaders in their coaching endeavors through nonstop learning.
- Coaching is an essential part of developing the learning organization.
- GetAbstract will help you design the portals that can assist you in achieving your coaching objectives at all levels within your organization.

GE and Mastercard Testimonials

“getAbstract solved a challenge for us: the breadth of knowledge and great external thinking that is out there in books by really smart authors.” -GE

“getAbstract is one of the coolest things I’ve seen the company do for us. This is an awesome service for the BlackBerry, and I have been reading some summaries that I put in My Bookshelf via the browser.” -GE

“For us, getAbstract is absolutely a must-have. Absolutely. I can’t think of a learning tool we have that’s more accessible to the entire population.” -Mastercard

“getAbstract is so versatile. Regardless of the topic, there’s always a relevant abstract that will just get the wheels turning.” -Mastercard

“When it comes to highly strategic learning initiatives that our executive committee wants the organization to focus on, getAbstract is so complementary to everything that we do. It gets all the employees at a baseline level of understanding.” -Mastercard

*“Most of today’s learning activities in large organizations happen in more or less sophisticated settings that focus on the qualification of the workforce and the development of leadership bench strength.”
Design of the Smart Organization*