

# A New Tool to Improve Team Performance: "Coaching Reviews"

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Coaching Reviews are short performance reviews that can be done monthly or even weekly.



Performance reviews in most companies are done yearly as part of a benefit review. This is lazy and uncaring management. Management's job is to improve performance, not yearly, but weekly and monthly. Management does this through coaching and training.

Training and coaching should be based upon objective criteria. Most reviews are too subjective rather than based upon whether the job got done or how well it got done. Job or department checklists, office or employment manuals, and of course, performance statistics should be referred to. Coaching based upon what the team member can refer to in writing helps them improve faster.

Good Coaching Reviews improve individual and team performance and morale. They can be an excellent tool to train staff. They are also used to keep in touch with each team member and let them know you know how they are doing and that you care about them. And, it gives you the opportunity to give them honest feedback on their performance. It can help keep everyone on their toes but in a friendly fashion.

Coaching Reviews also make obvious those staff that don't want to improve and who should work elsewhere. They give you a record of attempting to help them.

They provide four essential functions:

1. **Two way communication** - Seeking to understand and getting understood. This is empathetic communication that fosters understanding, rapport, and team synergy.
2. **Feedback.** Employees want to know where they stand with management. Let them know and give them praise or reprimand them for specific performance outcomes.
3. **Coaching.** Help them improve by giving them tips to support their good outcomes and correct their poor ones. This could also include role-playing, study assignments, etc.
4. **Monthly Goals.** Help them set their own goals—just a couple or so. Encourage them to stick their neck out, but make sure they are realistic. Tell them that you look forward to meeting them next time to see how they did.

## Procedure:

**1. Be Prepared.** Review the team member's performance over the last period. Note 2-3 activities that they have improved on and 1-2 activities that need improvement. Base these upon items in their written department or job checklist and or statistics.

**2. Schedule 10-30 minutes** for the coaching review with the team member. If they are new and need lots of coaching, 30 minutes weekly. And if they are doing great and are veterans, 5-10 minutes every month - or take them to lunch as a reward.

**3. How Are They Doing?** Check-in on how things have been going, generally. Take up any specifics, but only to try to understand what is going on from their point of view. Seek to understand. Ask questions as needed and make sure they feel you understand and empathize.

**4. Go Over the Improved Areas.** Give feedback and praise - let them know how genuinely pleased you are with their good work. Ask how they can keep it improving, and if there is any help they might need. Give them tips and coach as appropriate.

**5. Go Over Areas for Improvement.** Give them feedback and let them know that you personally are not happy with that specific outcome. (Don't be mean - a little disapproval goes a long way.) Refer to written materials and or statistics. Take up only one or two items. Ask them what happened. Keep asking nicely until they see what happened. Let them know that you don't approve. Ask them how they could have done it better. Refer them to procedures and coach them on how to improve.

**6. Goals.** Have them set 1-3 goals for the next time period.

Repeat this every week with new team members and every month or so with others. To be effective, they don't need to be too formal.

**A note about praise and reprimand:** It is not what you say... it is how you honestly feel about their performance. Your communication is more emotional and less verbal. You have to care about them and know that they can improve. When you see that improvement, it should honestly make you happy and you should let them know. When they underperform, you are disappointed because you care about them and know that can they can do better, and you want to help them get better.

**Two Roles: Doctor and CEO.** Lastly, this Coaching Review procedure may seem obvious, but it has been hidden under the misconception that team members are only there to serve the doctors and the patients. On the one hand, this is true. We are all here to help the doctor and the patients. But the doctor has another role, even if much of it is (and it should be) delegated. She or he is also the CEO of the business. In this role, the CEO is there to help the business become more productive and profitable by improving the performance of the team and of each team member. The CEO is a coach. *Regular Coaching Reviews of the support team can be done be delegated to manager.*