

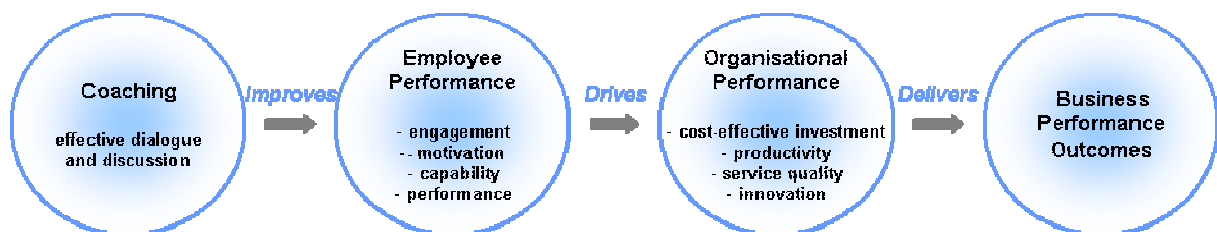
The ManagerCoach

Engaging and Empowering Others

The global economic crisis and recent ethics scandals may be viewed as symptoms of a culture where personal responsibility was not valued. There is now a growing trend, in response to these recent events, towards encouraging and valuing personal accountability.

Taking personal responsibility, together with the drive for improved workforce efficiency and performance in organisations, are increasing the demands on leaders and managers. How do they balance the organisation demands and individual demands of their employees? What is the impact on their teams? How can they ensure the motivation and engagement of their people? How do they respond to the 'Millennial Generation' *?

By developing the coaching competencies of leaders and managers - to become ManagerCoaches – individual and team performance will improve, which will drive organisation performance, resulting in better business performance outcomes.



In many organisations the 'command and control' style of management still prevails, a culture of being 'task-focused', getting the job done, irrespective of the developmental and emotional needs of employees. In such situations leaders and managers face many challenges but they are not insurmountable. A shift in mind-set to balancing the needs of the organisation as a whole and those of employees is required. Focusing on engaging and empowering employees through adopting a coaching style of management – becoming a ManagerCoach – will enable leaders and managers to achieve increased efficiency and performance improvement – to achieve more with less.

* Those born after 1985 – the 'Digital Natives'. "The first generation that has grown up with the ready availability of computer and computer technology. The Millennial Generation have a preference for individuality, entrepreneurial inclinations, are self-starters, and prefer to use networks and apply collective intelligence." (Stauss & Howe)

“To create responsibility in most organisations will take a fundamental shift in approach, and there is no better way to create that shift than coaching.” (Hana Searson, Inspirational Development Group)

Enabling leaders and managers to become ManagerCoaches

Being an effective ManagerCoach is about being able to build relationships and work well in collaborative interactions with others. To succeed they need to :

1. Know themselves. There is invariably a discrepancy between our self-image and how others perceive us, so they need to be aware of and reflect on their core values, beliefs, biases and assumptions, and recognise their self-limiting beliefs.
2. Establish relationships built on trust. This means showing respect, being compassionate, honest, genuine, empathetic and non-judgmental. To maximise individual competence they should provide the right balance of challenge and support, help individuals remove obstacles to their success and focus on the end result.
3. Build and maintain good rapport. Building self-esteem and rapport in employees involves expanding their boundaries to ensure success and minimise failure. This also necessitates valuing difference and diversity – opening up opportunities, welcoming innovation and keeping the individual’s best interests central to coaching conversations.
4. Communicate effectively, both verbally and non-verbally. This involves listening actively and questioning carefully. Listen actively, using empathy, intuition, reflecting, paraphrasing, and silence. Explore the thinking and feelings of the employee through a variety of types of questions : powerful, open/closed, evidentiary, clarifying, hypothetical, cause and effect, summary, incisive, questions. Using mirroring techniques, metaphors, humour, meaningful language and being aware of eye contact, voice, facial expressions and posture, will enhance the relationship.
5. Encourage and support. Provide both positive and critical feedback. Focus on behaviour rather than personality, and encourage the coachee to come up with ways to build on their performance.

Successful ManagerCoaches know who they are, how they appear to others, and the impact their behaviours and style of leading and managing have on others.

The Advantages of ManagerCoaches in Organisations

ManagerCoaches are of great benefit to organisations as an internal resource, as they reject the command and control model of management, as being too time consuming, onerous and ultimately ineffective. Rather, they encourage personal responsibility and ownership of actions. Some of the advantages are :

- In-depth knowledge of the organisation and its people
- Longer term relationships : Leaders and managers spend a lot of time with their employees and thus have the opportunity to get to know them better.
- A more committed team : Empowerment is a powerful motivator. When a genuine effort is made to include people in making decisions and implementing their own ideas, they are likely to become more committed and focused at work. Believing in the abilities of the people they work with builds confidence.
- Better team performance : With its dual functions of managing performance and developing people, coaching leads to better individual and collective performance. The ongoing learning process means that the learning curve may become steeper over time.
- Better working relationships : Good coaching promotes trust and collaboration and leads to better working relationships. It does not mean ManagerCoaches become everyone's best friend, but it does mean working relationships can become easier, less stressful and more enjoyable for everyone.
- Better generation of ideas : When the leader/manager gets into the habit of asking questions to draw out people's creativity, they may be quite surprised at the quality of the ideas generated.
- Better information : If the leader/manager genuinely coaches people in a collaborative, open spirit, people will feel more confident in coming to them with vital information – including the 'bad news' while there is still time to do something about it.
- Investing time to gain time : There is no doubt that in the short-term it is often quicker to take charge and give orders instead of coaching. That's fine for 'fire fighting'. If the manager invests time in coaching, over time their people will require less and less direction, and the manager will be confident in delegating more and more – both responsibility and authority.
- Engagement and empowerment of employees for the benefit of themselves and the organisation.

- A medium to long term view of what can be achieved : The ManagerCoach can focus on developing the skills within the team for long term results.

*“Millennials will bring a fresh approach to the workplace potentially revolutionising traditional organisations and bring business benefits.”
(David Chan, City University London)*

Coaching is a powerful way to engage and empower employees, to improve workforce efficiency and organisational performance, and ManagerCoaches have a key role to play. Their impact is greatest when they are active at all levels in an organisation, cascading through the management ranks, with senior managers coaching middle managers, who in turn coach their staff (and sometimes vice-versa). At this point coaching behaviours become the norm – part of ‘the way we do things around here’ – a coaching culture.

There are many tools and techniques available to assist the ManagerCoach, but most important is to practise, practise and practise! Remember : coaching improves employee performance, which drives organisational performance, which delivers business performance results.



HRCgroup is an international management and organisation development practice, designing and delivering innovative action learning and blended learning initiatives that directly enhance organisation and individual performance. They work with a variety of organisations nationally and internationally and in both the private and public sectors. HRCgroup's work has taken them to many different countries in Asia/Pacific, Europe, North America, South America. Contact HRCgroup at : info@hrc-group.com ; website : www.hrc-group.com
