

Leadership coaching styles: Everything you need to know

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Introduction

With the introduction of leadership coaching as a strategy for human capital development and organizational enhancement, business decision-makers are now choosing to add value to their firms by improving the quality of their leaders.

Theoretical studies of great leadership practices that have influenced the world have found that leadership style is a predictor of organizational success in terms of follower influence. Using a variety of leadership styles will be the most effective strategy.

What is Leadership Coaching?

When a leader coaches team members to improve themselves, this is known as coaching leadership. It emphasizes on developing people as persons and professionals in the long run. Coaching leadership can be time-consuming and demanding.

Daniel Goleman (2002) defines coaching leadership as a method of developing teams over time, even if the short term results drop. This creates engagement builds relationships and improves the future output of the individual being coached.

Leadership coaching is a "profitable opportunity for organizations to provide assistance for leaders and leverage their interests for the benefit of all" stakeholders (Gladis, 2007), including consumers, at all levels of the organization. Leadership coaching is a method of facilitating affirmative change that impacts an organizational leader's "performance, development of particular skills, or a broader sense of personal growth" (Stober, 2008)

Why Leadership Coaching?

Coaching is based on a methodical approach of inquiry (Gladis, 2007) that promotes a trusting and admiring client-coach relationship. Because coaching is one-on-one, the client can develop a unique relationship with the coach, which is marked by a mix of cognitive and behavioral training experiences (Killburg, 1996).

During the coaching session, the coach keeps track of the information and behaviors observed for use in planning the next session. They use this to develop a plan of action with the client "through a rigorous process of self-discovery and awareness, goal setting and accountability, action learning and execution, and evaluations and revision" (Gladis, 2007).

Theories Associated with Leadership Coaching

Autocratic leadership

Autocratic leadership is one of the most extreme forms of leadership, where leaders have full power and control over their workers. Employees have almost no say in expressing their opinions and getting their voices heard.

Although this type of leadership style is rarely used in the West, it still prevails in many countries around the world. If used correctly, it works best for low-skilled jobs that just need a supervisor to explain what needs to be done and oversee workers.

Bureaucratic leadership

Bureaucratic leaders are all about following rules and regulations. They make sure they adhere to the rules themselves and their staff follows suit. This leadership style is most suited for working in a risky environment that deals with worker safety issues including working with heavy machinery, toxic chemicals, quality assurance, and large financial dealings.

It may not be the best approach for developing a new product or re-defining a brand where an out-of-the-box approach and creative thinking is required.

Charismatic leadership

Charismatic leaders are the driving force behind their teams. They generate a lot of enthusiasm in the team by inspiring employees and helping them stay motivated at work. The one risk with this sort of approach is too much motivation without action. Charismatic leaders may succumb to overconfidence rather than analyzing the realistic ability of the team to take a project to completion.

However, as long as the leader maintains realistic expectations, his or her team may be inspired to reach new heights never thought possible. A major premise of charismatic leadership is a value-based influence that encourages team members to strive harder for the achievement of organizational goals and objectives (Dvir et al; 2002).

Democratic leadership

Even though a democratic leader reserves the right to make the final decision, he or she may invite the opinions of team members involving key decisions that need to be made. This increases job satisfaction

as employees feel they are a part of the decision-making process and also helps develop communication and interpersonal skills.

Overall employee motivation increases as their ideas are valued, which helps retain top talent. As this process can take time and involve meetings and discussions it might reduce productivity but will most often improve quality.

Laissez-faire leadership

A French phrase meaning "leave it be," laissez-faire leaders give their team all the freedom they need to work on their own. Laissez-faire leadership is a style that implies the "lack of leadership" or a "hands-off" approach to influence (Northouse, 2006).

This can be effective when there is a solid channel of communication between the leader and members of the team, deadlines are being met, and the project is on track. It can work when employees are very experienced, and a micro-management approach can work against the team. However, with a lack of communication and mismanagement, this leadership style may mean never meeting deadlines and wasteful use of time and resources.

Task-oriented leadership

Highly task-oriented leaders just want to get the job done. They put forth action plans and monitor their staff to make sure everyone is on track. Task-oriented leaders might set fixed lunchtimes, implement a punch card time system, and demonstrate a lack of trust in their team.

This could lead to low motivation among employees and a lack of job satisfaction with staff leaving for another firm. However, task-oriented leaders can often make efficient time use, meet deadlines, and keep staff focused to complete a critical task at hand.

People-oriented leadership

The opposite approach to task-oriented leadership, a people-oriented leader is all about helping the team and individual employees by offering support and flexibility and meeting the needs of the team. This style focuses on team-building skills and building positive work relationships, increasing overall work satisfaction, and helping retain star employees. Competent leaders know that combining both task-oriented and people-oriented styles of leadership can prove to be most effective.

Servant leadership

A servant leader has no official title and is not formally recognized as a leader but is a role assumed by a person at any level in the organization that leads the team simply because they seem to meet the needs of the team. This particular style is close to democratic leadership where the entire team is involved in the

decision-making process. A servant-leader style is based on gaining power through ideals and values, which may not work in a highly competitive situation where other, more assertive, styles are employed.

Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership is more of a management style involving a "transaction" between leader and worker—getting paid in exchange for doing the job. In this style, the leader has the right to punish workers and take action if their work is not of the standard discussed when the job was accepted. This approach may be effective in achieving short-term tasks and making sure routine work is done reliably.

Transformational leadership

The transformational leadership style is one of the most popular leadership styles today and can be applied to a wide range of corporate opportunities. The transformational leader has integrity, defines clear goals, encourages steps to clear communication, coherently expresses a vision, and sets a good example.

The leader is considered visionary and he or she sets goals for the organization and develops plans to achieve them (Northouse, 2006). This style of leadership encourages, motivates, and supports employees, often recognizing and rewarding people for their good work.

A transformational leader inspires the team to work together toward a common goal. Transformational leaders combine the best practices of most other leadership styles and are leaders who are trusted and can motivate employees and get them to take action. In practice, they are supported by transactional leaders who work as managers, making sure tasks are accomplished and the job gets done.

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