

ADAPTATION 3 OF 4 — COURSE MATERIAL

Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers

For the handout your course or workshop needs.

Excerpt drawn from approx. 4:01–14:43 (full segment) of the full recording.

1. Four Behaviors That Support Coaching

Demonstrate genuine care. People can tell when a manager's concern is real. It shows up in what you notice, remember, and follow up on over time, not in what you say.

Play to strengths. Most people improve faster in areas where they already have some ability. Coaching time spent building on strengths tends to produce more progress than time spent closing gaps.

Don't punish failure. Punishing mistakes discourages risk-taking and teaches people to hide problems instead of raising them. Coach the person through what happened and what they'd do differently next time.

Celebrate success. Acknowledging what went well, privately and publicly, is usually more motivating than a general pep talk.

Reflection exercise. Think of a manager you considered genuinely good. Which of these four behaviors did they show most consistently, and which did they rarely show?

2. The Power of Asking Questions

A good question requires the other person to construct an answer, which builds understanding in a way that being told an answer doesn't.

- **Closed questions** (yes/no) produce less learning. Use sparingly.
- **Open questions** have no fixed answer and are the most useful for coaching.
- **Leading questions** carry an implied opinion and restrict thinking. Avoid them.
- **“Why” questions** can feel like an accusation and put people on the defensive. Swap “why do you think that” for “what makes you think that.”

Reflection exercise. Write three open questions you could ask a team member this week instead of offering your own solution.

3. Active Listening

Active listening is not nodding while planning what to say next, staying silent while running through your own to-do list, or interrupting to finish someone's sentence.

A simple test: if you can't summarize what the other person just said, you weren't really listening. Tone of voice and body language often carry more than the words themselves. Practical habits: eye contact, following without planning your response, and periodically paraphrasing what you've heard.

Reflection exercise. In your next one-on-one, paraphrase what the other person said before adding your own point. Notice what changes.

4. Coaching for Performance: The GROW Model

When coaching is tied to a specific goal, the GROW model offers a simple structure.

Goal. Clarify what the person is aiming for, and make sure it connects to the team's needs.

Reality. Assess the current situation on facts, not opinions or assumptions. Ask for evidence when someone states an opinion as fact.

Options. Help the person generate as many paths forward as possible, including ones that seem unlikely at first. Past experience often limits the options someone considers.

Will. The person being coached, not the manager, decides on the action. The coach's job is to test that action against the goal, not choose it.

Every session should end with at least one concrete action agreed. Review progress against it in the next session.

Reflection exercise. Pick a current challenge on your team. Write one question for each GROW step (Goal, Reality, Options, Will) you could ask the person facing it.