

Six Tips for Coaching Conversations (provided by BizLibrary)

1. Ask good questions.

Great questions lead to great answers, and great answers lead to great conversations. As a manager or leader, it is critical that you develop strong relationships with your employees. This will help you determine if your employees are curious, have the capacity to perform and improve, and have a positive attitude.

2. Take a positive approach.

You should always try to maintain a positive outlook on things, even in tough situations. A positive attitude toward situations will help both you and the person you're coaching respond and react in a way that fosters positive change.

3. Listen and empower.

Coaching requires both encouragement and empowerment. Managers must work with employees to build one-on-one relationships that result in improved performance.

Your employees are likely to have a lot of input, questions, and feedback. It's important for them to know you care enough to **listen to what they have to say**, and encourage them to share their opinions.

4. Know how to guide conversations.

This is where communication skills and **emotional intelligence** really come into play. Managers must guide conversations both by asking questions and listening, not by giving directives. **Employees learn and grow the most when they uncover the answers themselves.**

5. Commit to continuous learning.

Make a commitment to improve your own skills and competencies. If you're not continuously learning, why should your employees? Lead by example and your team will follow.

Show that you are interested in their success (why wouldn't you be?). Ask questions about where they see their career going, or how they see their role evolving in the company. Even if they don't have a plan laid out yet, these questions will make them think about their career and what they want to accomplish within the organization.

Show your employees that you don't just want them to do better so you look better, but that you're actively interested in their career, accomplishments and professional success.

6. Coach in the moment.

Learning is best when things are occurring in the moment. If an employee comes to you with a question about a process or protocol, use this opportunity to teach them something new.

Most people learn best by doing, so coach as you go! If you're busy at the moment, try to schedule some time for later that day. They will appreciate that you took the time to show them how it's done, and they can now coach others who have the same question.