



SAGANA



FEEDBACK AND COACHING

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ONGOING FEEDBACK AND COACHING

Building a culture of ongoing feedback and coaching takes effort but, once implemented, it is very effective in motivating, developing and retaining employees. 2022 Gallup data show that when employees strongly agree they received "meaningful feedback" in the past week, they are almost **4X** more likely than other employees to be engaged. These conversations can be transformational to a company.

1. First, managers need to understand their role in the coaching. Job descriptions and leadership competencies should be updated to reflect the coach's role. Training and guides should also help them develop the skills needed to be great coaches.
2. Once trained, managers and employees should be meeting regularly to discuss the following (recommended: a standing agenda for each coaching meeting):
 1. Key task over the last week and upcoming tasks to be completed
 2. Goal updates
 3. Any support or guidance the employee needs to achieve expected tasks and goals
 4. Any feedback on performance
 5. Other topics to help build employee and manager relationships. This is a great opportunity to build in mental health checks and other
3. The most effective feedback is honest, specific, strengths-oriented and focused on behaviors rather than personal characteristics. It should be provided in a timely and ongoing manner to help an employee course correct and not necessarily need to come from coaches. Other sources of feedback include peers, other leaders or managers the employee works with and sometimes even external customers or clients. A feedback checklist should be shared with all employees to know how to deliver feedback effectively.

Best Practices

- ✓ Coaching conversations should happen every 1-2 weeks, 30-60 min conversations
- ✓ Coaching conversations should be structured so employees are bringing up topics for discussion like pain points or development needs
- ✓ Feedback and coaching should be future-focused and strengths focused
- ✓ Good managers are coaches, not dictators

Tools and Forms

- Coaching training for managers
- Coaching and feedback guide
- Feedback checklist
- Coaching conversation outline
- Optional: Performance management software

REGULAR COACHING AND FEEDBACK CONVERSATIONS

As part of the performance management process, employees should be frequently meeting with leaders to discuss work performance, progress on goals (work and development), feedback, and to build safety and trust. This can be done in routine coaching conversations between employees and their managers (or prescribed coach). These conversations should be scheduled at a regular cadence (weekly, biweekly or monthly). Cadence is dependent on the work complexity, tenure of the employee, and seniority of the employee and manager. Below is a suggested agenda and best practice checklist for these conversations.

Coaching Conversation Best Practices

- Create a relationship of trust and safety. You can do this by getting to know each other, demonstrating authenticity in the relationship, and asking more than you are telling.
- Balance out positive and development-based feedback. Your conversations should primarily be about what is going well, what challenges the employee is facing, and the feedback on how they can improve. It's important to remember negative feedback will always have a larger impact than positive due to [negativity bias](#).
- Be honest and transparent when providing feedback, the best feedback is specific, strengths-orientated, and focuses on behaviors and not character traits. See the feedback checklist for more support in delivering tough conversations.
- When possible, engage the employee in a two-way discussion about performance. Leverage open-ended questions to understand what development opportunities they want to pursue, what areas they require support in, etc. Examples: Tell me about your week/month – how have things been progressing? How are you going to approach this?

Coaching Conversation Agenda

- Week in review:
 - Wins, learnings, challenges
 - Goal and development
- Upcoming work:
 - Upcoming milestones
 - Upcoming priorities and needs
- Sharing feedback (if any): Share any tactical/behavioral feedback collated from the project lead and help the employee identify 1-2 max clear actions towards improvement (as needed)
- Other topics:
 - Administration topics like upcoming vacations
 - Team updates or news
- Finish off by asking "How can I help you be successful in the next few weeks?"

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Providing negative or development-focused feedback can be difficult, especially for newer coaches and managers. Practice makes it easier, and preparing to deliver feedback is key. See the feedback checklist below to help managers get started.

Feedback Checklist for Managers

- Provide feedback in person or over the phone as much as possible, avoid using emails or instant messaging. Tone matters for these conversations and employees should be able to ask clarifying questions
- Make feedback timely and discuss issues within 1-2 weeks. This will keep the details fresh and allow employees to correct any negative behaviors as soon as possible
- Deliver feedback in a concise and thoughtful manner. It is best to use a STAR method:
 - **Situation/Task** : What was the situation and context of the specific scenario
 - **Action**: Give details of the action the employee took
 - **Result**: Describe what the outcomes were. Discuss with the employee possible solutions to improve outcomes for the next time
- Only provide 1-2 areas of feedback at a time, don't overwhelm the employee
- Practice and prepare for the conversation. Write down your STAR and consider role-playing the scenario with a senior leader if you feel the situation is particularly sensitive
- Be compassionate but do not sugarcoat the major concerns, stick to the facts and be straightforward in your delivery