

## Questions & Answers | Coaching your Drivers

Webinar 8 May, 2019

### Q: What is coaching?

A: Coaching is the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge and opportunities they need to fully develop themselves to be effective in their commitment to themselves, the company and their work.

Coaching is part of the day-to-day interaction between a supervisor and an employee who reports to him/her. At its best, coaching helps an employee improve their performance in both the short and long terms. A short-term impact could follow from feedback on how a task went and how to do it better next time. A long-term impact might flow from a conversation about careers and what skills the employee needs to develop.

### Q: What is the difference between coaching and training?

A: Essentially, training is about transferring knowledge while coaching is about enhancing knowledge (or skills)—development.

### Q: What are the benefits of coaching?

A: The benefits are ample. Organisations that have embraced coaching as part of their performance management have reported the following benefits:

- 80% of the work force who have experienced coaching says it positively impacts their performance, productivity, communication skills and well-being.
- 65% are highly engaged.
- Another study has shown that when managers apply coaching it can lead to a 130% increase in business performance.
- Another benefit is that employees stay longer with an organization, which can be good for a sector where employee retention is low.
- Last but not least: employees feel more engaged and more valued which leads to higher productivity and produce strong bottom-line results.

### Q: What topics can I coach my drivers on?

A: You can coach your drivers on many different topics. You can think of improving the performance of the driver in his day-to-day tasks as well as his long-term development. Some examples are: driving behaviour, communication skills and interpersonal skills as well as data collection.

### Q: What if I don't have the time to coach my drivers?

A: Coaching can be done in 10 minutes. For example, in the time that the driver checks the vehicle in the morning, you can be at his side, having a coaching conversation. It is also better to have short coaching conversations. Research has shown that having a lot of short coaching interactions generates a better result than having 1 long session less frequently.

### Q: What is the impact of coaching on performance?

A: Organisations that have embraced coaching as part of their performance management have reported the following benefits:

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- 65% say they are highly engaged.
- Another study has shown that when managers apply coaching it can lead to a 130% increase in business performance.

**Q: What makes for a great coach?**

**A:** A good coach asks a lot of powerful (open) questions and applies active listening techniques. Good coaches are also curious people who do not know everything (and are not afraid to say so).

**Q: How much time should I spend coaching my drivers?**

**A:** We advise that you spend around 60% of your time coaching your drivers.

**Q: How often should I coach?**

**A:** As much as possible. Make it part of your daily interaction with the drivers.

**Q: What if driver does not perform even after lot of coaching efforts?**

**A:** Coaching is, just like the year-end appraisal, part of so-called 'on going performance management'. If the coaching that you do does not lead to improvement of the performance you can look at your own coaching techniques and see if you need to make changes there. You can off course ask the driver what hinders him from performing and what needs to be changed to perform. If this does not lead to the desired result, you can start the more formal process of giving the driver an appraisal that reflects his performance.

**Q: Should coaching be result oriented or performance oriented?**

**A:** Coaching for results and coaching for performance go hand-in-hand. If you coach a driver to improve his performance (for example: reducing speeding) than the results will improve. In this case your safety records will be better.

**Q: What is the difference between coaching and giving feedback?**

**A:** Coaching is about assisting drivers reach their short and long-term goals. Feedback is about helping employees understand what prevents them from reaching their current goals. Coaching is about advocating optimal performance. Feedback is about reinforcing appropriate behavior.

**Q: Can coaching be done remotely (for example over the phone)?**

**A:** Yes, you can but it requires that you – as the coach – pay undivided attention to the person that you want to coach, so multi-tasking is not allowed. It is also recommended that you prepare some powerful questions that you want to ask and that you ensure that you have understood the challenge at hand well. For example, by summarizing and paraphrasing. If possible, we suggest that you use tools with video technology (i.e. Skype, webinars, etc) to help you to 'read' the non-verbal communication of the coachee.

**Q: If drivers are recruited by a 3rd party (for example in the case of rental vehicles) how do I boost their moral?**

**A:** Similar as you would do with your own drivers: coach them to improve their (short-term) performance. Especially when the drivers frequently drive for your organisation you would invest coaching time in them as they have an influence over the performance of your fleet.

**Q:** In Europe vehicles are equipped with technology such as tracking systems that enable us to coach. How would we do that in countries where this technology is not available?

**A:** You can also coach without modern day technology. Coaching is about helping another person to develop, improve and become a better version of himself. Start by asking one powerful question per day to see what is on the mind of your driver and you will be surprised what the answers are.

