

Coaching is helping people with their thinking



Coaching is helping people with their thinking

The concept

Regardless of whether or not leaders have undertaken some training in coaching, many still don't feel confident to 'coach' their staff. This may be due to leaders being:

- Unclear about what coaching looks like in a work context (versus a sporting context);
- Overwhelmed by coaching definitions, models or techniques;
- Unsure what a coaching opportunity looks like; or
- Concerned about it feeling unnatural.

These are all valid concerns. However, a really simple way to frame coaching is that...

Coaching is helping people with their thinking

By simply holding a mindset of 'how can I help this person think through this issue or challenge', and believing in their capability, will drive you to play a coaching role. With this basic mindset you will likely ask them questions to:

1. Help them talk through and clarify their own thinking;
2. Identify options and ways forward; and
3. Ensure they commit themselves to action.

Why it's useful

Great leaders grow their people. Coaching is often cited as a fantastic way for leaders to grow capability, build accountability and empower their people. Coaching does not need to be a complex or elaborate process – simply putting into practice a mindset of *helping people clarify their thinking* will be a very effective form of coaching.

How/when to apply it

When your people come to you with an issue or a challenge, it presents a great opportunity to apply a coaching mindset. So, by resisting the urge to provide direction or solve the problem for them and simply asking:

Would you like some help with your thinking on this?

Then, assuming a 'yes' answer, you're on your way to having a coaching conversation. This question will likely be better received than: *Would you like me to coach you through this?*

