

Coaching for Results

Superior coaching: Disciplined conversation, using concrete performance information between you and a sale rep that results in the continuous improvement of performance.

Point Number One

- Management is getting things done through others.
- You need your sales reps more than they need you.
- You get paid for what your sales reps do, not for what you do.

Obvious conclusion is that the only reason for you to be there as a sales manager is – TO DO EVERYTHING IN YOUR POWER TO HELP THEM BE AS SUCCESSFUL AS POSSIBLE. YOU SUCCEED ONLY WHEN THEY SUCCEED.

Point Number Two

Your behavior is the greatest influence over your sales reps in the work environment. If you don't do the right things you will not be successful as a sales manager. All of your behavior on the job is interpreted by your sales reps as either for them or against them.

Point Number Three

Don't play amateur psychologist, there is no need for you to be a psychologist to be a successful manager.

Point Number Four

As a manager your job is not to change people, but to manage and change their behavior while at work.

Point Number Five

People do not go through life doing self-destructive things on purpose. The reasons people do what appear to be illogical things at work, things that turn out to be self-destructive behavior are because 1) they do not truly know what the consequences are, 2) they overestimate their ability to escape the consequences, or 3) they don't know what else to do

Point Number Six

Scientific management of people called *behavior modification* is based on the premise that all behavior is a function of its consequences. People do the things they do because of the results or consequences to them. People's behavior is measurable, you can see it when it is wrong, and you can see it when it changes.

- Behavior that is followed by a positive consequence (to the individual) will tend to repeat itself.
- Behavior that is followed by a negative consequence or painful event (to the individual) will decrease in frequency.

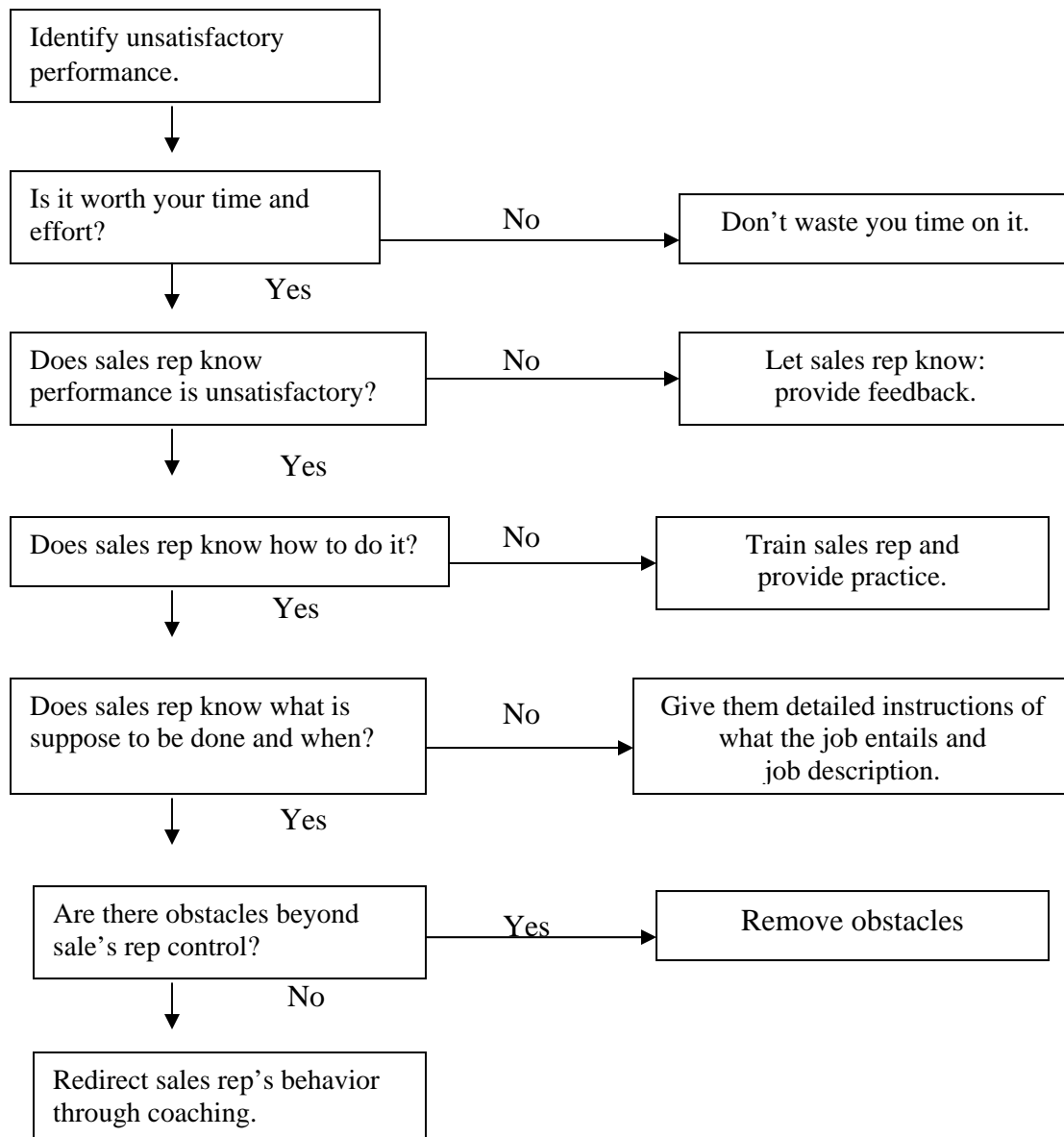
Instead of directing your attention to decreasing the behavior YOU DON'T WANT, direct your attention to increasing the behavior YOU DO WANT.

Coaching Analysis

Purpose of the coaching analysis is to answer the question, “What is influencing unsatisfactory performance”? Reports only show numbers, you have to define what the sales rep must do differently so the desired result will occur. As a manager, you must know what the inappropriate behavior is before you can select a correct solution to change it.

If you lack sufficient information to answer all the questions in the coaching analysis, talk to the sales rep or someone familiar with the problem. In other words after, you observe a performance discrepancy, your first discussion with the sales rep may be to collect information. This is separate and distinct from any discussion you might have after you have completed your analysis and identified the reason for nonperformance

COACHING ANALYSIS What is influencing unsatisfactory performance?



Coaching Face to Face

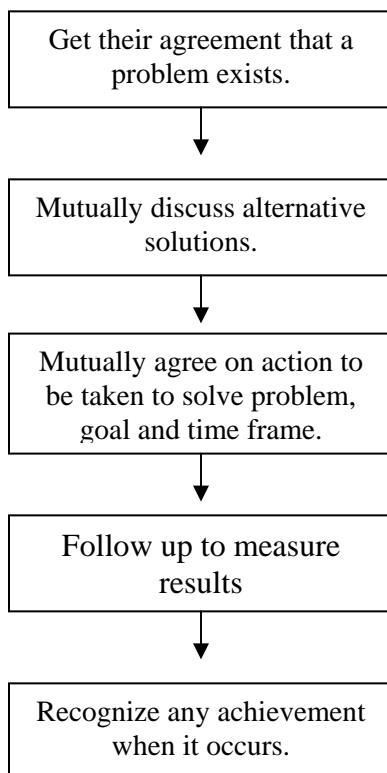
Setting the Stage:

- Conduct in private – not in a restaurant, food court, or while driving.
- Take steps to ensure no interruptions, or phone calls.
- Allow as much time as it will take so you don't have to end the discussion before you have completed it.
- Do not start the coaching meeting until you are able to control your emotions.
- Be prepared: Have a specific description of the behavior discrepancy that is going to be discussed. If you are going to talk about tardiness, have accurate information, such as the specific incidences of lateness, amount of time late as related to scheduled work days as well as to the norm for other sales reps.
- Be relaxed.

Overcoming defensive communications:

- Deal with the problem, not the person. Sales rep is basically a good person, their performance is the problem.
- Listen to what you have to say and how you say it.
- Don't respond to emotional comments; deal with the words people say not their intent.

Steps of Coaching – Face-to-face



Coaching Face-to Face

Step 1 - Get their agreement that a problem exists

The first step is to get agreement a problem exists. Yes the employee may know they are doing something wrong, but they don't know it's a problem. Remember from the coaching analysis you determined this problem is worth your time and effort. Important part of this first step is not telling people there is a problem, it is actually **GETTING THEIR AGREEMENT A PROBLEM EXISTS**. The only way to know you have achieved this is when they tell you something like this, "Yes, I agree that is a problem."

There are only two reasons that convince sales rep a problem exists:

1. Rep perceives the consequences to **them** if there is no change. These are things that happen to them if they don't eliminate the nonperformance.
2. Rep perceives the results or outcome of what could happen to **everybody** else because of their non-performance

Reasons why employee won't agree a problem exists:

- What you are dealing with is not really important.
- You are trying to get the employee to recognize unrealistic consequences or hypothetical consequences which are not likely to occur.
- Your past relationships with the employee have proven to them that you threaten a lot but never do anything about it.
- There is a positive consequence for the employee if they are fired.

Remember, we believe that people will always select what they believe to be the best alternative from those alternatives they see available to them. The reasons people do what appear to be illogical things at work, things that turn out to be self-destructive behavior are because 1) they do not truly know what the consequences are, 2) they overestimate their ability to escape the consequences, or 3) they don't know what else to do.

Step 2 - Mutually discuss alternative solutions

The purpose of the second step is to identify as many alternative solutions as possible. This is not the selection of alternatives, just the listing of what the possible alternatives might be. Come up with five possible solutions. The mutual aspect of this step relates to the expectation that both of you will contribute to the solutions.

Sometimes this discussion may end with sales rep saying "OK, I'll try harder" and the sales manager takes that as a solution. It's nice the rep will try harder but the question is: What will they do differently to change the results?

Step 3 - Mutually agree on action to be taken to solve the problem, a goal, and time frame

The plan should spell out the following points:

1. Step-by-step action plans – Identify the behavior and which solution (s) will be acted upon, and what the manager is to do. Include target dates as to when efforts are to be accomplished.
2. Consequences – Positive and as needed negative. If verbal counseling does not yield improvement define as appropriate, what the next step of negative consequences would be.
3. Follow-up time – Set a date when you and the employee will sit down and fully review their progress.

Step 4 - Follow up to ensure that agreed upon action has been taken

Two reasons for follow-up:

1. If people are doing what they are supposed to, the manager must recognize those achievements.
2. If people are not doing what they are supposed to do, manager does one of the most important reasons for being on the payroll, and that is to ask, “How can I help?”

A very common reason for manager failure is lack of follow-up. Employee does change initially, performance improves, and because the manager does not follow up there is no recognition of this change, no reinforcement to support the change. So the employee returns to the inappropriate behavior. Feed back is continuous.

Why managers do not follow up:

- Lead to further confrontation with employee.
- They feel like they are treating them as a child.
- They don't know what to do.

Recognize any achievement

- The sooner recognition occurs after the actual performance achievement, greater its influence.
- Performance will not go from failure to perfection in one jump. Individuals experiencing little bits of achievements are motivated to achieve more.

Personal Problems

Personal problems refer to those happenings in a person's private life outside of work that appear to be reasons for non-performance on the job.

- Recognize that at least half of the personal problems that appear to be reasons for work non-performance are only reasons for non-performance because managers permit them to be.
- Realistically identify which personal problems the company will accept as reasons for nonperformance on the job so all are following the same guidelines.
- Make yourself available to employees who want to talk to you about their personal problems. Merely talking about a problem frequently helps people find their own solutions. If they are emotionally upset but performing appropriately, you don't have a performance problem, you are merely helping to brighten their lives. Don't play amateur psychologist or marriage counselor because you will fail.

For those situations where there is a personal problem but performance must occur, do the following:

- Discuss the problem and try to help the employee's personal problem go away by directing the person to sources of assistance.
- If the employee's problem can't be eliminated, explain that there really are two problems. Employee's personal problem is one, and the employee's nonperformance is a second problem.
- Explain that it is understandable that personal problems may not go away quickly, but the work problem must go away quickly. For example it would be okay to say, "I'm sorry that you're having marriage problems and I can see how this emotional situation may last a few months. Unfortunately, my work problem can't continue for a few months. Since I can't make your problem go away, can you help to make my work problem go away?" Ask for the employee's cooperation in eliminating the work problem.

You as a manager do not have the arbitrary right to excuse people from working for any reasons you or they choose. Teamwork means following the same team rules.

For you to be successful in eliminating employee's unsatisfactory performance:

- You must accurately identify what behavior change you desire. Manager's job is not to manage results, but to manage those aspects of performance (behavior) that will cause the result. If you have done an effective coaching analysis, you will know in advance of your face-to-face discussion what behavior change you desire. If you can't identify the behavior change you desire, that means any discussions you have with the employee are for the purpose of collecting more information to find out "What Is Going On?"
- The employee's behavior must affect the results. It may seem obvious if obstacles beyond the employee's control are causing non-performance, a change in the employee's behavior will not affect the results.
- Employees must understand that they are responsible for their own behavior. Sometimes employees blame others or obstacles in the environment as the reasons for their actions of unsatisfactory performance. Their assumption is that they did what they did because others made them do it.
- Employees must perceive that what is happening is in their interest. The purpose of the coaching process is to help improve employee's performance; to help them stop their self-destructive behavior so you are not forced to administer consequences that are not in their self-interest. The employee's perception of coaching will be based on your action to solve the problem. If you really believe the only reason for you to be there as a manager is to help them be as successful as possible, you will be doing helpful things. It is equally important to explain that their behavior dictates your behavior.
- You must be committed to the same things you want employees to do. Walk the Talk. If you are not committed to the same things you want your employee to do, you will not be successful in getting them to do those things.
- You must acknowledge and praise employee's achievements. Behavior modification emphasizes the importance of your praise and recognition as a positive consequence to influence your employee's actions.