

Qualities of an Effective Coach

Introduction

A coach pertains to a person that participates in the guidance and management of the activities of the organization and its people. The responsibilities of coaches differ depending on the type and structure of organization where they are working (Sabock, 2004). Quite naturally, people within organizations like to be guided by coaches that have personalities and strategies that they believe would suit well for them. As always, the relationship of the coach and their supervisees determine the success or failure of the coaching process.

Coaching is perceived as an important capability that has to be possessed by organizations to be successful. This is because of the fact that the present setting has established the trend for organizations to remain productive even if they have minimal resources to use. Organizations have learned to address this dilemma through taking full advantage of their workforce, believing that effective and reliable workers would aid them improve and handle different activities (Flaherty, 2005). This is the reason why coaching is an excellent method of enhancing the capabilities of workers, which in turn would lead to a more stable performance of the organization.

Characteristics/qualities of an effective coach

1) Knowledgeable

The coach has to be knowledgeable of his or her craft from the most basic coaching methods to the most sophisticated ones. They have to possess the necessary expertise in handling different

types of people that have various issues. Their extensive knowledge would surely help them in coping up to the challenges.

Being knowledgeable requires coaches to become aware of the latest developments in their craft and integrate them into their own strategies. This is part of their commitment towards excellence and also the desire to never becoming stagnant or complacent with their own knowledge by rather always aspiring to improve and innovate.

2) An inspiring person

The effective coach has to possess an excellent and optimistic behavior that could produce positive influences on their supervisees. This is a key characteristic that frequently leads to the effectiveness of the coaching process. As a source of inspiration, the coaches make their supervisees become confident in their own skills and accomplish things they thought were they could never do (Whitworth, 2007). These coaches are able to bring out the best out of their supervisees. They provide constant challenges for their supervisees to make sure that they are able to attain consistent improvement.

3) Patient and understanding

It is well known fact that not all supervisees can easily adjust to the coaching methods of the coach regardless of how good or relevant they may be. This is the reason why it is important for coaches never become easily discouraged by early failures or slow improvement of their supervisees. It would be easy for their supervisees to observe signs of frustration or even anger once these circumstances happen, and once they sense these signs the supervisees tend to give up rather easily (Fournies, 2000). Being patient and understanding that the results of the coaching

process would take some time to happen are crucial characteristics that coaches need to have to be able to become effective.

3) Can interact well

Coaching definitely requires effective interaction between the coach and his or her supervisees. This contributes towards establishing reliability and confidence, as the coach is able to always deliver his or her intended message to the supervisees with clarity. The coach has to be approachable and be able to exude an identity that welcomes the participation of the supervisees as far as voicing out their concerns and recognizing them along the way (Stone, 2007). It is important for the coach to be able to know the reactions or responses of his or her supervisees in the coaching process to determine its strong and weak points. This will make sure that the coach would be able to make the necessary adjustments in his or her coaching strategy by retaining those procedures that the supervisees like and eliminating those procedures that don't seem to work very well.

4) Dedicated / Committed to success

There is no point to continue the coaching process if even the coach himself does not believe that it would bring forth success and remarkable improvement to the supervisees. Through good and bad times, the coach has to remain steadfast in his efforts to help his supervisees reach their potentials and become productive people. They have to exhibit professionalism all the time and act as people worthy of respect and admiration (Knight, 2008). This way, it won't be that hard for their supervisees to believe in the lessons as they know that their coaches can be trusted and supportive of them. When the supervisees demonstrate significant improvements, it is important

for the coaches to recognize them to further boost the morale of their supervisees and guide them to the right path.

Assessment of my skills and readiness to serve as a coach

I believe I am ready to be an effective coach. I can say this with confidence based on the considerable expertise and knowledge that I obtained while being both a leader and a supervisee in the group activities in the school. Over the past couple of years, I have been able to get immersed and supervised by expert teachers who along the process taught me their secrets in effective coaching. Staying under their guidance for a relatively long period of time definitely served me well as I was able to broaden my knowledge and understanding of effective coaching strategies that really work.

I must say though that the learning process for me as a potential coach was a tough and difficult one. I encountered plenty of obstacles and challenges along the way that almost made me doubt my own capabilities as an effective coach. Fortunately, my coaches were patient and understanding enough to accept my weaknesses and inspired me to keep working hard because someday my time as a coach would surely come. They never lost faith in my capabilities and offered me their full support any time I needed them. It may have taken a long time for me to develop as an excellent coach but at least the challenges and obstacles I faced before only made me stronger.

I have been able to practice my coaching skills by being a leader in different groups within the school. Along the way, I have been able to get along with various types of people with unique characteristics and potentials. Being the leader, I was always the person that my group

mates looked up to and they consistently relied on me to make sure that the group was functioning properly.

Perhaps the greatest challenge for me as the leader of the group is coaching those group members who are not living up to their potentials and becoming liabilities to the success of the group. Initially, they were apprehensive of my intention to coach them but through my sincere approach and explanation, they were able to realize that I was doing so to help them and not to humiliate them. It also took some time before the group and I saw some significant improvements in both their attitudes and performances but it was all worth the wait. This success significantly boosted my confidence that indeed I am completely ready to be an effective and versatile coach.

I have also realized that my years of training as a supervisee and a coach enabled me to obtain most of the essential characteristics of successful coaches. Being knowledgeable, inspiring, effective communicator and committed to success are some of the important characteristics that I am confident that I already have, and this is a clear confirmation of my readiness as a coach. These were the same qualities that my previous coaches also possessed, and I am glad that I was able to have them as well now that I am prepared to become a successful coach myself.

Upon assessing my skills as a coach, I also realized that I am not perfect, as I still have some areas of my personality that I have to improve. These include being pessimistic at times, getting easily discouraged and being impulsive in making decisions. However, I realized that these were minor concerns that I can easily address along the process of my coaching initiatives.

Again, it will take some time before I could eliminate all these bad habits but I am confident that they won't affect my effectiveness as a coach.

An Individual I would like to coach

I would like to coach a specific supervisee that can be considered as a frequent liability to the group. This person is unreliable and hard to deal with especially when we have group assignments or activities. As a result, the performance and outputs of the group are always unsatisfactory. As the leader of the group, I am ready to shoulder the responsibility to coach him with regard to the importance of team work.

A coaching program would be advantageous for him because this will give him the opportunity to be able to know his common mistakes and how they negatively impact the group's performance. I believe the coaching program would be able to make him realize also that while he has been considered a frequent liability to the group, we are giving him a chance to redeem himself and prove to us that he can change his attitude and contribute significantly towards the success of our group's efforts. As the leader of our group, I am not giving up on him because I know he's got something important to offer to our group. The coaching program that I will offer him would probably be the last opportunity for him to show to the group that he deserves to stay.

Teamwork will be the main theme of my coaching strategy to this supervisee of mine, and I intend to follow a systematic procedure to do so. The initial part of my coaching strategy would be determining the cause of the problem of the supervisee. I would make sure to get his explanations as to why he is having a hard time cooperating and bonding with our group. I

believe it is important for me not to jump quickly to conclusions and try to put myself in his shoes.

Upon hearing his explanation, I would then do my best to reach an agreement with this supervisee of mine that he would do his best to become a team player and be as productive as possible. I would make sure that he would be able to understand the negative impacts of his lack of productivity for the group. This is the point of my coaching strategy where I would teach my supervisee how teamwork works and why it is beneficial for the group to strive together as a solid group. I would emphasize more on the idea that every member of the group is important and has crucial roles to fulfill.

After this process, my coaching strategy would then move forward and set sensible and particular objectives for the supervisee to accomplish along the process of his improvement. I and my supervisee would have to establish these improvement objectives together and get his word that he would do his best to fulfill them faithfully. As a coach, it is just fair for me to give him every opportunity to regain his confidence and help in his re-integration into the group. This will give him an impression that I am sincere in my efforts to coach him and help him improve significantly. I would aim to get his trust that with me as his coach, things are only going to get better.

My coaching strategy would also include monitoring and assessment. Because of the history of laziness and lack of productivity of this supervisee of mine, it is but normal for him to be tempted to revert back to these old habits. This is why there is a need for me to monitor if he is really doing his part and striving to attain the goals that we established together. I would also

assess whether there are indeed improvements that are happening based on the performance and outputs that he would deliver.

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