

ABOUT COACHING

What does it mean to coach?

- Essentially, coaching is the purposeful and skillful effort by one individual to help another achieve specific performance goals.
- coaching is fundamentally a commitment to teaching and reinforcing behavior that makes an organization function at its best
- By coaching, we model how we must interact with each other if we are to achieve our best individual and organizational performance.

Why is it important to coach?

Coaching improves individual and team performance, and ultimately, the effectiveness of the whole organization. "...an organization is effective when things get done well and easily, people, work easily together, and processes work easily. Individuals and groups of people are able to get work launched and get great results without getting bogged down in interpersonal conflict or mired in process. Self-confidence, tolerance, celebration, and good-natured humor dominate the atmosphere. New processes emerge, as they are needed. People understand that their jobs are more than completing tasks and that success for the customer means staff work together for the good of the whole library's community. In organizations like these, people learn that they can handle whatever comes along." (*Coaching in the Library*, p. 84)

Who needs coaching?

Just about everyone in the organization, individual and team, benefits from coaching. The library director, senior managers, middle managers and supervisors, management and work teams, emergent leaders and those who have promoted into more challenging positions.

When to think about a coach?

Coaching isn't a solution to everything, but it is a powerful tool for developing your individual and team capability. For example:

- You have a novice manager with a steep learning curve whose success is crucial to the library.
- You are a manager with an employee whose behavior has coworkers and you cowed.
- You are an interim director who wants to succeed and land the permanent job, too.
- Your library wants to groom leaders to succeed managers who are looking toward retirement.
- You believe your organization needs to make a significant attitude shift or wilt on the vine.

Why cultivate coaching as a management strategy in your organization? Because doing so...

- Develops your sensitivity to conditions that threaten your effectiveness and that of your library
- Cultivates in managers and leaders an observing attitude about what threatens individual and team performance
- Develops in managers and staff a feel for what constitutes superior performance

- Develops individual and team initiative to influence the work environment for the better by a conscious choice of action