



EFL “Brieflet”: Engaging with a Coaching Culture

You’ve heard that having a “Coaching Culture” is the best way to achieve sustained staff engagement and retention. Coaches have told you that it improves staff satisfaction and productivity. You’ve also heard that it can be costly and take time to implement; and outcomes don’t always match those originally planned. So, what is a Coaching Culture and will it work for you?

Definition

The EFL Brieflet: **Engaging with Coaching** noted that coaching includes working collaboratively and purposefully to empower others to elicit the best of themselves. **Engaging with a Coaching Culture** is about integrating this approach within the daily mindset and behaviour of every individual within an organisation. It is where everyone has

“learned to value and effectively use feedback as a powerful learning tool to produce personal and professional development, high-trust working relationships, continually improving job performance, and ever increasing customer satisfaction”
(B. Pullen & E. Crane, 2011).

As well as being task-focused and supportive, it can also be challenging. It involves *“a coaching approach [as] a key aspect of how leaders, managers, and staff engage and develop all their people and ... stakeholders, in ways that create increased individual, team and organisational performance, and shared value for all”*
(P. Hawkins, 2012).

Benefits

- Improved relationships and communication - staff are more likely to trust in, and be committed to, one another and organisational goals if their experience is one of being encouraged to be the best that they can be
- Increased strategic focus - as attention is more purposefully engaged
- Meaningful staff reviews (less Personal Grievances) - leading to understanding of organisational goals and enhanced learning, skills and performance
- Enhanced leadership pipeline - through alertness to, and engagement of, high performers
- Consistent coaching strategy - purposefully embedded within the organisation as the right and responsibility of all staff, rather than a few executives

Effort

Once you have bought a beautiful plant for your garden, you know that the real cost is the effort you put into caring for it once planted. Engaging a Coaching Culture is similar. It is as much about everyday behaviours, as it is about gaining intellectual and emotional engagement with the concept. So, more than a glossy workshop or two, implementing a Coaching Culture involves you in a well-planned and methodical process to support every member of the organisation to be active, purposeful and reflective in sustaining coaching approaches in their daily workplace interactions.

Process

1. Clarify Vision - ensure a common understanding of your organisation's mission, values and mindset. Engage key representatives of all staff in the discussion from the outset
2. Coaching Culture - what does it mean; how does it look in other organisations? Is a Coaching Culture consistent with your organisation's vision/identity?
3. Risks and Benefits - is the benefit of having a Coaching Culture greater than the risk of not having one?
4. Champions - who will lead, model and monitor the process? Engage senior leaders, managers and others throughout the organisation. If possible identify roles, as much as individuals, to sustain the culture when key staff leave
5. Plan - tie implementation to other processes. E.g. how will a new project or change process be implemented using a coaching approach, led/modelled by whom? Plan for obstacles. Engaging from the top, involve interested staff
6. Reviews & Measures - what processes/forums will review the Coaching Culture? E.g. within project, or performance, reviews. What will be your measure, e.g. pace of change/staff engagement; performance reviews?
7. Communication & Training - from initially signalling a Coaching Culture, consolidate the transition via information and media events. Engage staff to attend brief workshops outlining coaching approaches. Target advanced training for likely Internal Coach candidates
8. Vary Coaching Opportunities - on a regular and formal basis e.g. for new, transitioning and leadership staff
9. Supervision - to enhance Internal Coach development and ethical practice
10. Ongoing Evaluation - How does each project, strategy, process, performance review utilise a coaching approach? How can the measures be made more relevant? Are coaching behaviours being regularly acknowledged, strengthened, rewarded? How are you learning from each other? How has a Coaching Culture benefited other key stakeholders?

Sources for your further interest

Hawkins, P (2012). *Creating a coaching culture: Developing a coaching strategy for your organisation*. OUP, McGraw-Hill.

Lawrence, P. & Whyte, A. (2014). How to build a coaching culture. *Research Bulletin*, 16 (Spring), WhyteCo.

Pullen, B. & Crane, E. (2011). Creating a coaching culture in a global organization. *International Journal of Coaching in Organizations*. 30 8(2) 6-19

Sam Farmer is Owner-Director of Enhance Facilitation Limited and strongly advocates that leadership is a team responsibility. He works with large organisations across the state, not-for-profit and corporate sectors. Strength-based in his approach, Sam is passionate about collaborative contracting and coaching. As well as offering professional supervision, he provides psychosocial support to professionals working within high emotional impact contexts. He is a registered psychologist, has regular professional supervision and is bound by the Psychologists' Code of Ethics.

Contact Sam:

T: +64 27 411 8522

E: sam@enhanceltd.co.nz

 [LinkedIn](#)

© Enhance Facilitation Limited www.enhanceltd.co.nz

Coaching Psychosocial Support Supervision