



# How to Create a Great Coaching Relationship

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Being a coach to someone is mutually rewarding. Aspiring managers gain encouragement and guidance for their careers. Coaches gain deeper insights into their own careers and the satisfaction of helping others. You can benefit from coaching at any stage in your career. Here are the key steps creating a great coaching relationship.

## **1. Ask "What are your hopes?"**

Start your relationship by understanding what's important to the person you are coaching and, most importantly, why. Help them look a little deeper for what truly interests them.

## **2. Uncover the real issues.**

What stands between them and where they want to be? What issues or obstacles need attention? Use reflective listening (paraphrasing what you hear from them) to help them surface underlying concerns. Listening thoughtfully is a big gift.

## **3. Explore options.**

What choices do they see? What additional options can you offer that may fit with what they hope for their careers? Choices encourage and empower people.

## **4. Share stories and experiences.**

Rather than telling people what to do, offer stories about what you've seen or experienced that may be relevant to them. Stories help people understand the messages more deeply and integrate them into their own thinking.

## **5. Hold a big vision for them.**

Sometimes people hold themselves back in their careers. They make too many assumptions about what they think can and can't happen. Tell the person you are coaching what you want for them. Encourage them to consider a big leap.

## **6. Invite action.**

Most people need a nudge to take flight and really soar. "I'd like to invite you to consider [whatever action seems appropriate]." You're not telling them what to do, but you are giving them something concrete to which they can react. Always leave the choice to them. Don't become attached to your own suggestions.

## **7. Build a "dream team."**

Who can help them realize their potential? Guide them to expand their networks for success.

***Celebrate the results!***

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## Good Coaches....

- ❑ Model positive, professional behavior, i.e., are people to look up to
- ❑ Create safe environments for growth and learning by:
  - Providing challenging assignments to stretch skills and experience
  - Serving as an accessible resource and sounding board when needed
  - Treating mistakes as learning opportunities
  - Recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance
- ❑ Give protégés full credit for successes, but share responsibility for failures
- ❑ Provide candid observations, even constructive criticism, when deserved
- ❑ Work hard to develop a positive, mutually beneficial coach—protégé relationship
- ❑ Push protégés onwards and upwards when it's time (Sometimes, even the bravest needs a nudge.)

## Good Protégés....

- ❑ Take the initiative in scheduling regular time to meet with their Coach. Then, take the initiative in setting the agenda.
- ❑ Are open to candid feedback, even when it's not pleasant to hear
- ❑ Ask for what they need, when they need it
- ❑ Engage their Coach as a resource to discuss issues, evaluate results, and identify future steps for continued professional growth
- ❑ Are open to challenging, seemingly "impossible" assignments
- ❑ Work hard to develop a positive, mutually beneficial coach—protégé relationship. Express appreciation for coach's time and support.

