Supervising for Excellence

Module Ten

22-Jun-06
Table of Contents

Coaching Your Team............................................................................................................. 3
Coaching Your Team

Putting it all Together: Being a Coach for Your Team

Objectives - Display PPT 56

- Define “coaching”.
- Determine the steps involved in effective coaching.
- Identify the typical needs and coaching implications for each stage of worker development.
- Assess a worker’s stage of development.
- Identify whether or not effective coaching has been given.

Presentation Display PPT 57

The Coaching Investment
Effective Coaching...

- Facilitates the work of the unit
- Increases job satisfaction
- Avoids performance problems
- Benefits families
- Reduces supervisor’s workload
- Prepares workers for advancement
- Upgrades professionalism

How do you coach your employees?

Ask, “What are some of the benefits of effective coaching?”

- Supervisors often feel they do not have time to coach each and every worker. With this course we would like to change that way of thinking.
- Coaching is a necessary practice that can help
  - facilitate the work of the unit
  - increase job satisfaction
  - avoid performance problems down the road
  - benefit families
reduce the supervisor’s workload
prepare workers for advancement
upgrade professionalism throughout the system

Coaching is an investment of time up front that yields many rewards later.

Presentation Display PPT 58-59, Refer participants to PG 4

Coaching Process Step 1: Expectations
?
Ask—Do you have individual goals for your employees?

- Supervisors must clearly communicate the expectations of the job and the unit to workers.
- To coach a worker towards best performance, you must also identify the worker’s
  - strengths,
  - needs, and
  - goals as they relate to the expectations of the job and unit.
- In other words, you must identify which areas need improvement so that each worker can achieve the goals of your unit.
- For newer workers, coaching may focus on basic mastery of the job. However, for more experienced workers that have already mastered the job, the identification of strengths, needs and goals becomes relative to the requirements of each one’s future profes-
professional direction and specialty interests.

Strengths, Needs and Goals...

- **Strength** – A specific behavior that allows the worker to accomplish assigned performance goals and expectations. The supervisor is responsible for identifying worker strengths that contribute to strong job performance.

- **Behavior** is an action that is observable (i.e., you can either see or hear the action) and measurable.
  
  For example: Joe develops life books (observable) for all children on his caseload (measurable). Joe documents assessments thoroughly; Joe demonstrates competent active listening.

- **Need** – A specific behavior that is missing or underutilized that must be fully utilized and developed to allow the worker to perform the job and meet departmental outcomes. Needs should be stated in positive terms.

- **Positive terms**– What the worker will do differently vs. what the worker will stop doing.
  
  For example, “Betty needs to document all contacts with families in objective terms” vs. “Betty needs to stop using subjective conclusions in chronological notes.”

Discussion

- Listen to the following examples of stated needs and answer these questions about each one.

  - Is the need stated correctly according to the definition of “need”?
Why or why not?

- Example. 1: “Sue will refrain from making inaccurate determinations of services to reduce risk.”

  *Suggested Response: No, this statement does not identify the missing behavior. It identifies the problem, what Sue will stop doing. It does not identify what she needs to start doing.*

- Example. 2: “Sue will implement services to reduce a family’s risk.”

  *Suggested Response: Yes. It isolates the behavior that Sue is currently missing (i.e., implement services) and it is stated positively.*

  - Why is an accurate need statement important?

  *Suggested Response: So that workers receive a clear expectation of the behavior required to meet an identified problem.*

- Goal – A desired outcome which answers the questions,

  - “What will be accomplished when the need is met?”
  - “What departmental outcome will be achieved when the need is met?”
  - “When can we consider the worker effective at performing the behavior?”
  - “What step or steps can we prescribe that will help to meet the need?”

- The goal must be easily measurable.

**Activity ~ Strengths, Needs and Goals**

1. Refer participants *PG 6, Identifying Elements of Strengths, Needs, and Goals.*

2. Ask the class the following questions:

  - Is the strength stated correctly according to our definition? What,
if anything, is missing?

_Suggested response:_ This strength could be improved upon by stating how Joe specifically maintains compliance. This addition would make the strength observable and measurable.

? Is the need stated correctly according to our definition? What, if anything, is missing?

_Suggested response:_ This need is not measurable or observable. We need to be able to state exactly what we mean by “better assisting” foster parents to manage their foster children’s needs.

? Is the goal stated correctly? What, if anything, is missing?

_Suggested response:_ This goal is stated OK. It provides a measurable goal (identify a plan for each family on the caseload that meets their specific needs) and provides a timeframe (within 6 months).

Presentation _Display PPT 60-61_

In this example, our goal included one step (i.e. develop life books) that Joe could take to help him to learn the placement history of each child on his caseload. The outcome was also stated, to facilitate transition out of care.
In this example, we stated the goal as legible documentation. Thus, it would provide a thorough history of the case and facilitate appropriate case planning.

Activity ~ Identifying Needs and Goals

1. Refer participants to PG 8, Identifying Needs and Goals

2. Ask participants to identify each statement on the handout as either a correctly stated need, a correctly stated goal, or neither.

Suggested Responses:

ü Do an initial child safety assessment (Answer: Neither. Not a need because it’s not a measurable behavior. Not a goal because it doesn’t identify an outcome.)

ü Complete an entire initial child safety assessment form so that all items are complete and the narrative section contains factual, descriptive information as given in training. (Answer: Need because it is a behavior that is observable and measurable and must be present to achieve goals.)

ü Stop filing late reports. (Neither. Stated in negative terms).

ü Make an increasing number of case decisions on her own, based on law and policy, that ensures the safety of children and reduces risk. (Answer: Goal because it includes observable, measurable behavior and states an outcome.)

ü Needs to improve his attitude. (Neither. Not behavioral and not measurable).
Understand compliance policies. (Neither a need nor goal, but a problem; is not clear and not measurable. What does understanding look like?)

Build overall confidence. (Neither because it’s not behavioral and can’t be measured)

Justify conclusions in written documentation with facts in every investigation. (Need because it’s observable and measurable and must be present to succeed in the job.)

Presentation Display PPT 62

Step 1—Supervisor Reflection

The supervisor must review the worker’s overall job expectations and consider the caseworker’s performance according to those expectations. The supervisor then identifies the individuals’ strengths and needs based on the worker’s job expectations and performance.

In most cases, the supervisor should also specify a goal or “measure of success” so that the worker will know when the need has been met.

Step 2—Worker Reflection

Second, the supervisor must ask the individual worker to identify his or her strengths and needs. This should be done from the worker’s perspective without input from the supervisor.

Emphasize that you are not talking necessarily about things he/she would like (e.g., training, more time, less cases), but rather
abilities that might need to be developed or enhanced to achieve quality performance.

- Step 3—Meeting
  - Third, set a time for an individual case conference with the worker. Define the purpose of the meeting for the worker (i.e., to share your lists of strengths and needs and to develop goals).
  - The objective of the meeting is for each to understand the other’s viewpoint and to then develop a final list of strengths, needs, and goals.

- For existing workers, the formal process of identifying a worker’s strengths, needs, and goals can occur at any time throughout the year to correct recurring performance problems, improve skills, or work on complex tasks. It can even be incorporated into the performance management process or the performance appraisal process.

- Then, as you coach all of your workers on an everyday basis (e.g., on the spot, during case reviews, after court, on the ride to home visits), remind them of the strengths, needs, and goals you have discussed. This will help workers link your coaching to the expectations they are trying to achieve.

? What process within the child protection system is analogous to these three steps?

*Suggested Response: Case planning. The worker and families identify needs and develop goals and tasks based on the strengths and needs of the family.*
Activity ~ Identifying Worker Strengths, Needs and Goals

1. Ask participants to think of a worker on their staff who has been on the job for three months or less.

2. Ask participants to identify strengths and needs for the individual they have in mind.

3. Divide the class into specific program areas.

4. Distribute a piece of flipchart paper and a dark marker to each group.

5. Ask groups to record their results on flipchart paper and be prepared to present them to the large group.

6. Give participants ten minutes to complete their lists.

7. Reconvene the large group.

8. Ask each group to present. Encourage groups to revise strength, need, and goal statements that do not fit the definitions.

11. Change as staff members learn more about the job.

Presentation Display PPT 63 Refer participants to PG 10

Coaching Process Step 2: Provide a Model of Performance

- The second step in the coaching process is for the supervisor to provide a model of performance. You must ensure that each staff member knows what good performance should look like.
Before workers try to improve their performance, they need sufficient information to succeed (i.e., you have clarified expectations and then given an example).

You can model good performance by either demonstrating an activity or presenting a tangible sample of excellent work. If you present an example, you must clarify with your workers what qualities make the examples so effective.

? What are some examples of tangible work samples?

Suggested Responses: Thoroughly documented safety assessments, court reports, and PDS.

? What are some ways of demonstrating desired performance?

Suggested Response: Sending new workers out with experienced workers to observe specific aspects of performance.

? How might you provide a model of performance to a worker who is old to the agency, but new to the specific program (e.g., a former CPI now working as a foster care worker)?

Suggested Response: Assign them to an experienced worker to shadow and process information at end of the day with a PDC field trainer or supervisor. “Shadowing” allows modeling to occur with new workers through mentors.

? Refer participants to the example on PG 10. Minnie Coach identified examples of action steps that Try Harder could take with the family in areas of greatest risk. Then, she let Try identify other action points to help the family.
Coaching Process Step 3: Feedback

- After allowing the worker a period of time to improve their performance, begin providing the worker with feedback on how well he or she is doing.
- This is not a one-time event. Feedback must occur on an ongoing basis.
- When workers are learning or enhancing skills, they need frequent positive and negative feedback that clearly specifies and isolates the behavior to be changed or maintained.
- Following Try Harder and Minnie Coach’s conference, Minnie continued to meet with Try and review his progress pointing out which tasks were completed successfully, which were not, and why. She continued to provide specific feedback until more tasks were successfully completed.

Presentation *Display PPT 32* Refer participants to PG 12
Coaching Process Step 4: Encouragement and Assistance

- **Encouragement** – As workers are learning and enhancing skills, they need the supervisor to support their efforts. You can encourage them by
  - providing reassurance that “they can do it!”
  - reminding them of their strengths.
  - urging them to share their difficulties and stumbling points with you so that you can provide assistance.
  - providing developmental feedback.

- **Assistance** – When workers need your help, provide the necessary guidance and tools to do their job. Assistance may require the following:
  - Be available. Be in your office!
  - Clarify the need statement more specifically. If the need be misinterpreted by you or the worker, clarify it further.
  - Develop goals if you haven’t.
  - Develop a plan for improvement that clearly lists specific steps the worker must take to meet the goal and the dates for completion. This could include training, role-playing, shadowing, or reviewing good examples. This is especially helpful for complex tasks or tasks that have not improved over time and is similar to a family case planning process.
  - Provide guidance or instruction on casework tasks.

**Presentation** *Display PPT 63  Refer participants to PG 13*
Coaching Process Step 5: Recognize Achievement

- Finally, workers need for the supervisor to recognize their efforts and their successes.
- Recognition can be given in formal ways, such as announcements at staff meetings, performance reviews, or case reviews or informally with a note, email, or acknowledgment in the hallway. A good rule of thumb is to incorporate a combination of both for each individual.
- Refer participants to the example in their participant guides. Try Harder was recognized by his supervisor during a staff meeting and asked to share his methods with peers.
- Finally, each step in the coaching process should be readjusted along the way, as the situation requires.
- Here are some examples:
  - Add needs at a later date or move a previously identified needs to the “strengths” side once improvement has been made.
  - Adjust the improvement plan if the situation changes, such as a training date that changes or a helpful resource that becomes available.
  - Give feedback more or less frequently depending on the worker’s progress and personality.

Activity ~ Coaching Pat

1. Refer participants to PG 14-16, Coaching Pat.
2. Explain to the participants that the purpose of the activity is to practice using the coaching steps.
3. Divide participants into pairs.
4. Ask participants to read the scenario and answer the questions that follow.
5. Give participants 20 minutes to complete the exercise.
6. After 20 minutes, reconvene the large group.
Debrief

Step 1: Let the caseworker know what is expected.

? What are Pat's strengths?

Suggested Responses:

ũ Has worked for the agency for two years.
ũ Visits each of her families at least once per month and some twice a month depending upon the level of risk.
ũ Does an excellent job of gathering information.
ũ Accurately assesses this information to identify risk and safety.
ũ Pat has stated the issues that pose a threat to the safety and stability of the children as facts.

? What are Pat's needs?

Suggested Responses: Pat needs to do the following:

ũ Maintain policy requirements.
ũ Relate service interventions to case plans.
ũ Document efforts towards case closure and permanence.
ũ Update case plans after completing referrals.
ũ Identify and implement effective services to alleviate identified risks and assure ongoing safety and permanency for children.
ũ Articulate what the family must accomplish in order to assure child safety and stability.
ũ Articulate a plan of action to assist the grandmother in the Murray case.

♦ Next you should identify Pat's goals.

For now, focus specifically on one of Pat's needs: Identify effective means to see 85% of victims.
State a goal for this need:

*Suggested Response: At least 85% of victims will be seen; multiple daily attempts now necessary.*

Step 2: Provide a model of performance.

? What specific examples will you give to help Pat achieve the above goal?

*Suggested Responses: Treat each case like a 911.*

Step 3: Provide feedback.

? How do you plan to give Pat feedback about improvements made toward the goal?

*Suggested Responses: Document Pat’s progress and provide ongoing monitoring. Set up an appointed time to provide feedback specifically relative to the improvement plan.*

Step 4: Provide encouragement and assistance.

? What are at least two different ways to encourage Pat as she tries to reach goal?

*Suggested Responses: E-mail a “keep on truckin” logo, remind Pat of strengths, acknowledge a specific example of improved performance.*

? If Pat has trouble meeting the goal, what are two ways you can assist her?

*Suggested Responses: Skill build and develop an improvement plan. An example of skill building is to coach Pat towards the identification of necessary options to achieve success.*

♦ Develop a plan for Pat’s improvement. Include steps that will help Pat meet the above goal.
Sample Response: Pair Pat with high performing partner who will go over techniques used to achieve goals.

Step 5: Recognize achievement.

◆ Give at least two ways you might recognize Pat’s improvements:

  Suggested Responses:

  Make staff recognition a regular part of each staff meeting and either select “staff high performer of the week” award or recognize all achievers.

◆ How will the coaching process help families?

  Suggested Responses:

  u The coaching process will create a more proficient worker to help them
  u Provide workers with a model for identifying families’ strengths and needs
  u Provide workers with a model for mutual problem solving that the worker can duplicate
  u Provide workers with a model for case planning and follow up

◆ Conclude: Supervisors who emphasize coaching help their workers achieve job mastery more quickly and better prepare them for advancement than supervisors who do not. They achieve better unit results, worker job satisfaction, and ultimately better assistance for families.

Transition

◆ In order to be a truly effective coach, you need to be able to assess where your workers are and identify the appropriate coaching response.

◆ Next we’re going to talk about the stages of worker development.
Activity ~ Worker Development

Now let’s reflect on your experiences as a worker before you were promoted to supervisor.

1. Divide a flipchart page into two columns. In the left column label “New Worker Feelings” and in the right column, label “Experienced Worker Feelings”.

2. Ask participants the following questions, list responses to questions 2 and 3 on the flipchart:

   ? How many of you were workers before you became supervisors?

   ? How did you feel when you first started your job as a worker?

   ? As you gained more experience as a worker, how did you feel?

   ? Remembering those first experiences, what were some of the things your supervisor did to help you?

Presentation Display PPT 64-65

- All new workers, regardless of level of experience coming into your unit, will begin at stage 1 and progress through stage 4. Those with more experience may progress from 1 to 4 more quickly, while less experienced workers may progress more slowly.

Four Stages of Worker Development

- High Anxiety (Day 1 to 6 months)
- Engagement (2nd to 4th week)
- Basic Mastery (3 months to 2 years)
- Independence and Commitment (1 year on)

Terms

- Mastery relates to the worker’s skills and knowledge. It comes from a worker’s experience, training, and education.
- Motivation relates to the worker’s confidence, enthusiasm, and commitment to the job.
It is your goal as supervisor to move all workers from stage 1 through stage 4 using coaching.

The basic differences between stages are the worker’s level of job mastery and his or her motivation.

This model can also apply to specific job tasks in which a worker may be at different stages of development simultaneously for different tasks. For example, a worker may be independent and committed in the area of assessment, while only at a basic mastery stage of report writing.

**Activity ~ The Four Stages**

1. Refer participants to PG 18-21, *The Four Stages of Worker Development*.

2. Divide the participants into 4 groups.

3. Assign each group one of the stages and give them 15 minutes to review the stage and come up with a plan to present the stage to the class. Presentations should be no more than 5 minutes.

4. Encourage creativity.

5. Review PG 18-21 as a class to ensure all the points were covered.

**Discussion**

? Ask: How do you think the stage of worker development would affect the type of encouragement and assistance you give?

*Suggested Responses: Different stages will have different levels of mastery and motivation. As mastery increases, the worker may not need as much assistance. As motivation increases, the worker may not need as much encouragement.*

? What level of encouragement and assistance should you give during the High Anxiety stage?
Suggested Responses: Low Encouragement/High Assistance. Because workers are exceptionally enthusiastic at the beginning, supervisors do not need to emphasize encouragement as much as with experienced workers.

A supervisor’s real challenge at this stage is to assist workers who are low in mastery. Workers at this stage need more instruction on how to complete job tasks.

Their role and goals need to be clearly articulated and possibly reviewed several times. They need close supervision. The Supervisor will probably make important decisions at this stage.

Activity ~ Coaching Based on Development Stage
1. Divide the class into program areas.
2. Refer participants to PG 22, Identifying Typical Needs and Coaching Implications.
3. Distribute a marker and three pieces of flipchart paper to each group.
4. Ask participants to label each flipchart page with their program area and one Stage of Worker Development (2, 3, and 4). Then, ask them to divide each flipchart into two columns: Needs and Coaching Implications.
5. Explain that they must identify the typical needs and coaching implications at each of the stages for their program area. Remind them that coaching implications means the level of emphasis workers need on encouragement and on assistance (i.e., either high or low emphasis). They must also develop examples of what they would actually do to provide assistance and encouragement.
6. Give 30 minutes to complete the exercise.
7. After 30 minutes, reconvene the large group.
8. Ask one group at a time to tape their three pieces of flipchart paper
at the front of the room and present their answers. Their flipcharts should show typical needs and coaching implications at each stage for their program area. (Coaching implications should be stated in terms of high or low emphasis on encouragement and high or low emphasis on assistance. Each group should also give examples of assistance and encouragement).

9. Encourage participants to state needs according to the definition (i.e., a specific behavior that is missing or underutilized that must be fully utilized and developed to allow for successful accomplishment of goals and that is stated in positive terms).

10. Ask the groups to leave their flipchart pages on the wall.

11. After all groups have presented, the flipchart pages should still be visible. Debrief the entire exercise by implementing the following steps:

- Begin three new flipcharts labeled Stage 2, Stage 3, Stage 4.
- Divide these flipcharts into two columns: Needs and Coaching Implications.
- Identify the common needs and coaching implications among program areas for each stage.
- Record these commonalities on the appropriate flipchart.

See Suggested Responses below.

*Stage 2 Common Needs*

- **Problem: Demanding premature autonomy.**
  
  *Need: Seek supervisory approval of decisions that are relegated to management, i.e., removal and replacement decisions.*

- **Problem: Remaining overly dependent.**
  
  *Need: Make case decisions independently of supervisory input.*

- **Problem: Developing a negative view of clients.**
  
  *Need: Employ skills that engage families in a positive working relationship.*
ü Problem: Denial of learning needs.  
Need: Identify strengths and needs relative to expectations given.

ü Problem: Specific skill deficits and continuing confusion about priorities.

ü Need: Identify missing skills needed to establish priorities of required job tasks.

Stage 2 Coaching Implications

ü High Assistance – To clarify the worker’s autonomy at this stage, reinforce laws and policies and encourage workers to consult with supervisors and more experienced caseworkers on case decisions.

ü If over dependence is a problem, the supervisor should assign meaningful tasks that will enhance confidence and promote risk taking.

ü To support independent problem solving, make special efforts to get the worker’s input into decision making. Also, use deductive questions to coach a worker through the process rather than telling the worker what to do. This allows the worker to develop his or her own repertoire for problem solving in the future.

ü To help workers learn the job, continue to offer instruction and examples with tasks; also explain his or her rationale for decisions that affect the worker.

ü High Encouragement – recognize efforts and congratulate the worker for work even if it is not yet right.

Stage 3 Common Needs

ü Problem: Difficulty accepting case results  
Need: Worker must identify and recognize his or her own efforts.

Need: Worker must identify examples of steps the client family agreed to take, but did not, to achieve the desired outcome.
Problem: Frustrated by the bureaucracy of the system.  
Need: Identify individual steps that worker has taken to address systemic barriers.

Problem: Can not identify personal barriers to performing their job more effectively or family’s barriers to achieving desired outcomes.  
Need: Worker must identify additional skills needed to ensure achievement of desired outcomes.

Stage 3 Coaching Implications  
- Low Assistance - Mastery is high at this stage, so the supervisor listens but encourages independent decision making and problem solving.

- High Encouragement – Because motivation is low, the supervisor must give frequent positive feedback to maintain desired performance.

Supervisor can also stimulate motivation by encouraging the following:

- Team work (e.g., assigning responsibilities as a team, encouraging group problem solving, creating a team dynamic).

- Organization influencing skills.

- Time/priorities management skills.

- Specialized skills to develop practice specialization.

Stage 4 Common Needs  
Problem: Has reached a developmental plateau.  
Need: Worker needs to identify advanced career goals and take action steps toward achieving them.

Stage 4 Coaching Implications  
- High Encouragement – The supervisor must work with workers to identify their own professional goals and help them balance their personal needs with the organization’s needs. The supervisor must also provide ever-increasing challenges such as arranging
rotations in specialization areas, giving opportunities to mentor new staff, or encouraging advanced training and higher education. The supervisor should advocate on behalf of the worker within the organization.

- **Low Assistance** – Although job mastery is high, the supervisor must still remain available to provide resources as needed.

**Conclusion**

- Summarize the coaching implications for each stage.
- Different stages require a different emphasis on encouragement and assistance.
- Coaching helps workers move from one development stage to the next. If a supervisor neglects coaching, workers may never be able to reach the third and fourth stages of worker development. This will only mean more work for the supervisor!