

The Leadership Framework and Coaching

Introduction

Coaching is one of the key approaches through which leadership within organisations can be developed. Coaching is a method of developing an individual's capabilities in order to facilitate the achievement of organisational success. In the past decade, there has been enormous growth in the field of coaching as organisations increasingly recognise its value, with a recent Learning and Development Survey by the CIPD suggesting that 72% of organisations in the UK find it a highly effective tool for development and have made it available to their staff.

This one to one focused and bespoke relationship is often perceived as the single most effective development intervention that a senior leader in the NHS can access. Benefits include increased self-awareness, motivation and enthusiasm, better work prioritisation, improved confidence and better team management. Sometimes it is even possible to link such personal and behavioural benefits directly to specific advantages for the organisation, whether it be increasing revenue, reducing costs, hitting targets or achieving the business plan (NHS Institute 2009).

There are many different perspectives and approaches to coaching. Each approach places a particular emphasis on how coaching should be conducted. Coaching is not the exclusive preserve of formally trained professional coaches. All managers who work with or support individuals may have an important part to play in providing coaching. For example line managers can play a key role in coaching their staff and helping them to develop and improve their performance. Coaching is applicable to all job families and roles within an organisation from senior executives to more junior members of staff.

To find out more about the coaching offers available through the NHS Leadership Academy, please visit www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/coaching.

Uses of the LF in Coaching

The Leadership Framework, like other leadership models, works best within a coaching engagement in the early stages where there is a requirement to identify or clarify the need for coaching. It provides a shared and safe language for starting conversations with coachees about their behaviours and capabilities. This is particularly important for helping those people who are struggling to find direction and who lack insight into their leadership behaviour. Rather than simply asking unstructured unframed questions about how they are performing, the Leadership Framework can help focus conversations around specific leadership behaviours key to the coachee's role within the organisation. These types of coaching discussions can be held not just between a formal coach and a coachee, but between peers, or line managers and members of their team.

Using a tool such as a 360-degree feedback questionnaire can be helpful in a coaching assignment as it allows the coach and their coachee to work with structured data and feedback from others. It can help the coachee gain a deeper insight into the reality of some of the issues raised in the early stages of the coaching engagement. Obtaining feedback from others is vital for learning and performance improvement and often sits at the heart of an effective coaching intervention. Please visit <http://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/lf-360> for further information on the Leadership Framework 360-degree feedback tool.

A final benefit of the LF when working in a coaching role, is that it can provide a measure of the success of the coaching intervention. Using a 360 tool as a pre and post measure after a coaching assignment enables a comparison to be made between the coachee's observed behaviours at two

points in time. This helps the organisation to identify if changes in behaviour have taken place and whether the coaching intervention has been a worthwhile return on investment.

FAQ

Should the Leadership Framework always be used in a Coaching assignment?

It is important that the Leadership Framework should never be imposed on a coaching programme and should only be used where appropriate. While the coach might have insight into the value of using the Leadership Framework in a coaching intervention it is essential that the needs of the coachee should be considered. If imposed, the Leadership Framework may become a distraction rather than an aid in the coaching session.

When can a coach make use of the Leadership Framework 360° tool?

The Leadership Framework 360° tool is currently available and can be accessed by visiting www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/lf-360. It is important that coaches are appropriately trained and accredited as LF Feedback Facilitators in order to use the LF 360° tool as part of a coaching intervention. Coaches also need to prepare thoroughly and make sure that they understand the Leadership Framework and its definitions before opening up a conversation around it. Visit www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/lf for further information on the LF and 360° feedback.

I've heard about team coaching. What is this and how do I access a team coach?

The NHS Leadership Academy has commissioned a register of team coaches that provides the opportunity to work with highly specialist individuals to drive performance improvement, tackle difficult governance issues and explore development initiatives for whole teams. This opportunity is significant as the productivity of the Board or senior team plays an exceptionally important role in the performance of organisations especially in an increasingly complex environment and at a time of growing financial constraint. You can access the team coaching register by visiting www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/coaching.