



## COACHING A WINNING TEAM

by Rex C. Houze

1. **Be generous with encouragement.** Without encouragement, most people will only give you a minimum effort. Encouragement will cause people to give you an extra effort. All encouragement makes a difference.
2. **Give positive feedback regarding outstanding, improved, and consistent performance.** Giving feedback on outstanding performance is usually easy because it is obvious. Giving feedback on improved performance is a little harder because you need to recognize that performance has improved. A good scorekeeping system will help you become aware of improvements. The hardest feedback to give is for consistent performance. People ask me why they should give feedback for people who are "just" doing their job. My response is, "because you want them to continue being consistent – doing their job."
3. **Help people set and achieve personal, business, and professional development goals.** Personal goals provide motivation. Business goals are objectives to make the business better. Professional development goals will help the person be capable of accomplishing more and helping the business achieve its goals.
4. **Communicate your expectations clearly and in writing.** The people on your team want to meet or exceed your expectations. If your expectations are unclear, non-existent, or constantly changing, team members will be uncertain and/or confused and will not give you their best effort.
5. **Help people clarify their thinking.** It's been said that the problem with people is they just don't think. When you help people clarify their thinking by asking good questions and giving good direction, they will be more focused, motivated, and productive.
6. **Reinforce the behaviors you want repeated.** Give feedback on what you want to happen, not on what you don't want to happen.
7. **Focus on specific issues or behaviors the person can control.** Results come from behaviors and behaviors are observable. When you focus on observable behaviors rather than intangibles you will have a greater chance of getting the outcomes you want.
8. **Avoid personal attacks, sarcasm, or innuendos.** Personal attacks, criticism, sarcasm, and innuendos do not bring out the best in people. These types of interaction will cause resentment and people will get even by not performing up to their potential.
9. **Avoid inflammatory words such as "should have", "ought to", "have to", "always", and "never".** Using words and phrases like these usually causes resistance and defensiveness. People will feel like you are "wagging your finger" in their face. Parental words will many times bring out the "rebellious" child in even the most mature employee. Consider substituting "next time..." or some other positive, forward-thinking word or phrase.
10. **Believe in your people.** People will live up or down to your belief in them. They can read your mind, and, that's good because you can determine what's in your mind for them to read – that you believe in them and expect them to perform at their best.
11. **Be a positive role model.** Most people, if not all people, would rather see a "sermon" than hear one any day. Say what you will do and do what you say. Practice what you preach.
12. **Stay in the moment. Give the other person your complete time and attention.** When you don't stay in the moment, the other person will sense it and could feel devalued and/or you might miss something crucial to the relationship or issue being discussed. Either of these outcomes can hamper productivity, lower the quality of work, and damage an important relationship.