

Valuable Coaching Skills

Group Exercise: Coaching Miscues, Part 1

Read the situations below. The coach makes one or more miscues. Identify the miscues and then make your own suggestions for improvement.

Situation 1

Employee: "She gets on my nerves."

Coach: "Why don't you sit down and discuss it with her. I'm sure you two can solve this like adults so we can get some work done around here."

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Situation 2

Employee: "Yeah, I know mistakes are costly."

Coach: "Do you proofread the articles before you send the newsletter to the printer?"

Employee: "Every time."

Coach: "Are you sure you understand your new computer?"

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Coaching Miscues—Part 2

Each person in the group should take one of three roles: coach, employee or observer. Have the coach and employee read the situation below. Have them continue the discussion to a conclusion after the script ends. The observer should identify the miscues and then make suggestions for improvement. The observer should also ask the coach and employee for their own suggestions after they complete the exercise.

Situation 3

Employee: “Things are really hectic this time of year. We can’t get caught up because someone always wants something different this week than last week or last year.”

Coach: “This is a holiday that comes every year at this time. You need to improve your planning and use the system I showed you.”

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Situation 4

Employee: “Good morning.”

Coach: “This is the third time you’ve been late this month!”

Employee: “I didn’t know we had to punch a management time clock.”

Coach: “Don’t you realize how much it disrupts my meetings to have you always coming in late?”

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Situation 5

Coach: “Didn’t we have this discussion once before?”

Employee: “Yes, but that was different.”

Coach: “Well, I’m surprised you didn’t remember. I don’t like having to stop what I’m doing to take care of something you should have handled.”

Coaching miscue:

Suggested improvement:

Reproduced from *50 Activities for Coaching/Mentoring*, by Donna Berry, Charles Cadwell and Joe Fehrmann. Amherst, Mass.: HRD Press.