

Coaching Top Tips

Resist the temptation to give advice - remember your task: to help your colleague to think, not tell them what to do!

Use the core communication skills:

- Listening - it is amazing how we so often get caught up in our own story and thoughts, and forget that conversations are two-way: listening is probably a manager's most vital and yet neglected skill.
- Empathy - understanding the other is vital, in a coaching conversation. "...empathy requires the much more complex and delicate process of stepping into another person's shoes and seeing the world through his or her eyes without, however, losing touch with one's own reality " Carl Rogers, Mearns and Thorne, (2001) Person-Centred Counselling in Action, Sage
- Supportive Challenging - coaching is about challenging as well as listening: being a sounding board to test ideas, being a critical friend. In a coaching relationship you have permission to challenge; use it with confidence and sensitivity

Maintain confidentiality - be clear about your 'contract' what is confidential and what can be shared. If your colleague believes something has been said in confidence, and this is broken the relationship falls apart!

Be genuine, respectful and sensitive

Keep it focused - don't let it turn into a cosy chat, become engrossed in an interesting story or turn it into an opportunity to tell your colleague what needs to be done

Have fun - coaching conversations don't have to be sombre, they can be creative and playful