

## **Day to Day Coaching**

Performance reviews are designed to answer the questions, “What do you expect of me?” and “How am I doing?” It is important to address these questions during a performance review, but a good supervisor will seek to answer these questions on a regular basis throughout the year. The process of providing this guidance is called coaching or mentoring.

Good coaches and mentors do many different things, but for our purposes here, let me suggest three things that you can do to provide helpful feedback for the people you supervise.

### **Good Coaches Model**

If you want someone to learn a new skill or practice a different behavior, a good coach or mentor will model the desired behavior. This can take the form of interpersonal skills (such as listening, managing conflict or comforting people who are distressed), ministry skills (such as teaching, evangelism, or discipleship) and completing tasks (such as doing paperwork, using public transportation, or using a new software package.) By demonstrating how to do things well, a missionary can get a concrete idea of what their behavior should look like.

### **Good Coaches Give Feedback**

Everyone loves to hear the words, “You did a great job” and positive feedback can be a great encouragement and motivator. Too often, supervisors fail to encourage people by remaining silent when they see others doing a good job. However, it can be difficult to give negative feedback when someone is not doing a good job. Asking and answering the question, “How can I do it better next time?” can be a helpful way to approach giving negative feedback.

### **Good Coaches Ask Powerful Questions<sup>1</sup>**

Great coaches have the ability to ask questions that get others to think about issues in a new way. Even if the coach has a clear idea of the nature of an issue or problem, it is often more effective to ask powerful questions which help the other person identify solutions or problems or ways of improving the way we work. Powerful questions are open-ended and ask the person to consider possibilities that he or she might not have considered otherwise. Here are a few powerful questions:

- If you could do it over again, would you do anything differently? If so, what?
- Why do you think that person reacted the way they did?
- What was going on “behind the scenes”?
- What are our options in this situation?
- Who are the key players here?
- What are the major challenges or problems we are facing in this situation?

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<sup>1</sup> For a long list of powerful questions, go to <http://www.peggygrall.com/documents/Powerful%20Coaching%20Questions.pdf>