



Coaching 101: Motivate Your Team Through Coaching

By Marielle Gauthier, Founder, Redworks Communications and Coaching

The modern leader's role is no longer about solving problems or giving instructions—it's about unlocking potential. Coaching builds trust, develops capabilities, and fosters a culture of accountability and growth.

Teams with coaching-oriented managers experience higher engagement, better collaboration, and stronger performance.

This resource provides practical strategies and insights to help leaders incorporate coaching into their daily interactions, empowering their teams to thrive in today's evolving workplace.

WHY COACHING MATTERS

Coaching shifts leaders from being problem-solvers to enablers of innovation. In tourism, where adaptability and excellent service are critical, coaching empowers employees to confidently handle guest interactions, solve on-the-spot challenges, and deliver memorable experiences.

ADOPTING A COACH APPROACH

A Coach Approach is a leadership style where managers guide and support employees toward achieving their goals rather than directing or controlling their work. This collaborative approach fosters growth and self-reliance, essential in a fast-paced tourism environment.

Key Characteristics of a Coach Approach:

- Collaboration: Partner with employees to find solutions.
Example: Work with the event coordinator to troubleshoot potential challenges for a VIP group.
- Active Listening: Focus on understanding employees' concerns and perspectives.

Example: Pay attention to a tour guide's feedback on guest preferences to improve services.

- Powerful Questions: Encourage self-reflection and innovation.
Example: "What steps can we take to improve guest check-in efficiency during peak hours?"
- Encouraging Self-Reflection: Help employees assess their challenges and solutions.

By adopting a Coach Approach, tourism managers can cultivate teams that are more engaged, innovative, and capable of providing exceptional service.

WHAT COACHING IS—AND ISN'T

Coaching for Performance

Performance coaching is a one-on-one developmental process that helps individuals improve self-awareness and skills to meet or exceed job expectations. For example, a front desk manager could coach a new receptionist to handle guest complaints more effectively, improving both their confidence and the guest experience.

Coaching Is NOT

- Therapy: It's not about fixing personal issues.
- Mentorship: Mentors guide through experience; coaches help employees find solutions.
- Consulting: It doesn't focus on giving recommendations.
- Training: It's not just about sharing knowledge or skills.
- Discipline: It's not about addressing poor performance directly.

CORE COACHING COMPETENCIES

1. Develop a Coaching Mindset

- Believe in employees' potential and unique perspectives.
Example: Empower a concierge to suggest creative guest itinerary ideas instead of dictating standard options.
- Empower and motivate through compassionate, confident leadership.
Example: Encourage a housekeeping team member to share their innovative workflow tips with the team.
- Accept not having all the answers and create space for others to solve problems.

2. Build Trust

- Foster psychological safety and show genuine investment in employees' success.
Example: Make it clear that experimenting with solutions to guest requests is encouraged, even if they don't work perfectly the first time.
- Communicate openly and take accountability.
- Embrace failure as a learning opportunity.

KEY COACHING SKILLS

Listen to Connect

- Be present and focus on understanding, not just responding.
Example: Actively listen to a tour guide's concerns about their route or schedule and explore possible adjustments together.
- Build authentic connections by tuning into emotional subtext.

Ask Powerful Questions

- Use open-ended questions to spark reflection and insight.
Example: "What do you think could enhance our guests' dining experience?"
- Help employees find their own solutions, fostering accountability, growth, and creativity.

THE GROW MODEL: A SIMPLE COACHING FRAMEWORK

The GROW model provides a structured way to guide meaningful coaching conversations:

- Goal: Define the desired outcome.
Example: "What would success look like in handling a large group booking next weekend?"
- Reality: Assess the current situation and challenges.
Example: "What challenges have you faced in similar situations before?"
- Options: Explore and evaluate possible solutions.
Example: "What are some ways we could ensure smooth communication between departments?"
- Way Forward: Create an action plan and ensure accountability.
Example: "What steps will you take, and how can I support you in preparing for the event?"

By focusing on thoughtful questions and self-discovery, the GROW model empowers employees to overcome challenges, achieve goals, and unlock their full potential—essential in delivering exceptional service in the tourism sector.

Source for the GROW Coaching Framework – The GROW model was developed by Sir John Whitmore in the 1980s, in conjunction with Graham Alexander and Alan Fine. (*Coaching for Performance*, John Whitmore, 25th edition 2019)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marielle Gauthier, founder and principal of Redworks Communications and Coaching, works with emerging, new and current leaders to build a solid foundation and make improvements in their knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to succeed in their role and become the best leader they can be.

As a strategic advisor, coach, and trainer her areas of focus are leader development, career change and transition, and retirement lifestyle planning. Marielle is a certified professional Results executive and personal coach, an Associate Certified Coach (ACC) with the International Coach Federation, a Conversational Intelligence coach, a Positive Intelligence coach, and an Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) with the International Association of Business Communicators.