

TIP SHEET: Performance Coaching Fundamentals

From *Coaching, Mentoring and Succession Planning*
by **Clark Reed and his associates at Netgain Partners Inc.**
(Cultural Careers Council Ontario and Cultural Human Resources Council, 2003).

Performance coaching focuses on achieving specific performance goals - either improvement goals, or "stretch" goals to build on recognized strengths - usually within a limited time period.

If your goal is to help other people improve their proficiency and competence at performing a specific task, then your role is as a performance coach and your goal is to help a person improve the way they perform in a specific area.

Like any other skill, performance coaching is a process that you need to learn and practice in order to use effectively.

Here are the essential rules of coaching:

1. *Set expectations.* Clearly state your expectations and goals and explain why they're desirable both for your employee and the organization.
2. *Carefully watch their performance.* Observe and determine the individual's needs in these areas: knowledge of what to do, skill at actually doing it, their interest and confidence level, and any barriers limiting their performance.
3. *Coach them.* Choose appropriate improvement methods: giving advice, showing them what to do, involving other "good" performers, creating challenge, inventing better tools or removing barriers to performance.
4. *Assess the result.* Look at the outcome in relation to your goals. Raise or lower targets based on the person's current performance level.