[Coaching and Mentoring]

Lecture Title:

5. (Coaching and Mentoring: Plans, Programmes, Processes, Strategies)

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Learning Objectives

Following this session students will be able:

To critically develop coaching and mentoring plans, programmes, processes, and strategies.

Learning Method

- **Lecture focused on learning objectives and core content** as a key instructional process.

- **Formative assessment through participative learning tools and activities** will be utilised evaluating students' comprehension and academic progress throughout - with respect to understanding and applying HRM concepts.

CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COACHING & MENTORING STRATEGIES

From Ad-Hoc to Strategic Coaching & Mentoring

Individual Exercise and Discussion

- What is meant by Strategic Coaching & Mentoring?

Formative Assessment

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION & FOUNDATIONS

Objectives:

1. Deconstruct the difference between C&M.
2. Critically align C&M with organisational strategy.
3. Design robust programmes (plans & processes).
4. Evaluate effectiveness and ensure quality (Supervision).
5. Embed a sustainable C&M culture.

Coaching vs. Mentoring: The Strategic Distinction

- Coaching (Non-Directive):
- Focus on performance and skill development in the current role. Short-term, specific goals (e.g., GROW Model).

- Mentoring (Directive/Advisory): Focus on holistic/career development.
- Long-term, relationship-based, knowledge/experience transfer.
- Critical Error: Using them interchangeably leads to poor programme design and unclear metrics.

The Case for Strategic C&M

- Business Imperative:

1. Talent Pipeline: Prepares future leaders.
2. Retention: 94% of employees stay longer when invested in.
3. Agility: Supports change management and rapid upskilling.
4. Knowledge Transfer: Mitigates risk of senior staff exit.

- Critique: If C&M goals aren't linked to business KPIs (e.g., succession metrics), they're seen as a "nice to have," not strategic.

Maturity Model: From Tactical to Embedded

- Critical Audit:

- Where is the organization now?

1. Nascent: Ad-hoc, uncoordinated.
2. Tactical: Programme exists, linked to specific outcomes (e.g., new manager training).
3. Strategic: Coherent plan, linked to core values and priorities.
4. Embedded: C&M is the default management style.

Goal: Move rapidly toward Strategic and Embedded status.

PART 2 - STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT & PROGRAMME DESIGN

Phase 1: Strategic Blueprint

- C&M must support the business strategy.

Example Links:

1. Growth Strategy → Coaching for creativity/innovation/agility.
2. Succession Plan → Mentoring for high-potentials.
3. Diversity Goals → Sponsorship/Mentoring for diverse talent.

Action: Create a formal C&M Strategy Document, not just an HR plan.

Defining Target Audiences & Needs

- Critique: *One size does not fit all.*
- Segmentation: Executive: External coaching (neutrality/confidentiality).
- High-Potential: Formal mentoring, stretch assignments (internal).
- Line Managers: Coaching skills training (manager-as-coach).
- New Hires: Buddy/Peer coaching and mentoring.

Stakeholder Buy-In: The Role of the Top Management Team

- Critical:
- Executive sponsors must be visible role models, not just endorsers. They should participate as mentors.

- Action: Secure time and budget approval.
- Establish a Steering Group of cross-functional leaders to govern the strategy.

The Programme Architecture: Blended Approaches

- Avoid *"Programme-Fixation.“*

- Develop a Portfolio:

- Formal: Structured, matched, time-bound.
- Informal: "Manager-as-coach" culture.
- Peer-to-Peer: Reciprocal learning for broad skill diffusion.
- Group/Team: Focus on collective performance and relational dynamics.

Developing the Plan: Key Elements

- Planning Detail:

1. Goals: Measurable, linked to strategy.
2. Timeline: Phases of rollout.
3. Budget: Cost of training, external coaches, and technology.
4. Technology: Platform for matching, tracking, and evaluation (Scalability).

- Critical Barrier: Lack of dedicated programme management resources (must be planned for).

Setting ROI & Success Metrics (The Outcome Plan)

- Focus on Level 3 & 4 of Kirkpatrick:

- Level 4 (Results/ROI): Hi-Po retention rate, time to proficiency in a new role, leadership readiness scores.
- Level 3 (Behavior): 360-degree feedback on coaching behaviours, change in conflict resolution style.
- Level 2 (Learning): Coach/Mentee capability assessment.
- Level 1 (Reaction): Satisfaction surveys.

PART 3 - PROCESSES: RECRUITMENT, TRAINING & QUALITY ASSURANCE

“Coaching is a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve.”

(Armstrong 2015, p. 186)

Therefore, the *careful recruitment & selection of coaches/mentors is critical.*

Process 1: Recruitment & Selection of Coaches/Mentors

- Criteria:

- Skills: Active Listening, Powerful Questioning.
- Behavioural Fit: Empathy, Non-Judgmental Stance.
- Experience: Relevant knowledge base (for mentors).
- Action: Implement a rigorous application process, including interviews and potentially observed practice (for internal coaches).

Process 2: The Critical Match

- Challenge: Poor chemistry/mismatch is a top reason for failure.
- Strategy: Use both hard criteria (role, goals, department) and soft criteria (learning style, personality, preference).
- Tool: Leverage matching software for large, complex programmes to improve administrative efficiency.
- *But nothing compares to the human element of face-to- face coaching experience.*

Process 3: Mandatory Training Curriculum

- Training must be differentiated:

- Coach/Mentor Training: Focus on the non-directive model (e.g., GROW), ethical boundaries, and feedback skills.

- Mentee/Coachee Training: Focus on accountability, self-reflection, driving the agenda, and giving feedback to the mentor.

Process 4: Contracting and Ethical Boundaries

- The Contract (Tripartite):
- Must involve the Coachee/Mentee, the Coach/Mentor, and the Line Manager/Sponsor (for goals and alignment).
- Ethics: Explicitly adopt an ethical code
- Detail rules on Confidentiality and how information (especially goal progress) flows back to the organization.

Process 5: Embedding Core Competencies

- Focus: Powerful Questioning: Encourages self-discovery (not advice-giving).
- Active Listening: Ensures the coachee feels heard and valued (psychological safety).
- Constructive Feedback: Timely, specific, and empathetic critique.

Process 6: Managing Power Dynamics & Impartiality

- Critical Challenge: Inherent power imbalance in manager-subordinate or senior-junior relationships.
- Strategy: For high-stakes coaching, use External Coaches or internal coaches from a non-related business unit to ensure impartiality and trust.
- Reinforce the rule: Coaching is not performance evaluation.

Process 7: Quality Assurance - Supervision

- Supervision:

- The essential quality check. A dedicated process where coaches (internal/external) meet with a qualified supervisor to:

1. Reflect on challenging cases.

2. Maintain ethical standards.
3. Prevent burnout and ensure coach well-being.

- Critical: This is non-negotiable for professional standards.

Creating Successful Mentoring Programmes

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBS5JkvfVDg

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Part 4 - PROCESSES: MONITORING, EVALUATION & SUSTAINABILITY

Process 8: Monitoring and Support Systems

- Programme Management: Dedicated staff to monitor match health.
- Check-Ins: Scheduled programme check-ins to assess relationship quality and goal progress.
- Remediation: Clear process for addressing non-engagement or poor fit (re-matching).

Evaluation Plan 1: Measuring Behavioural Change (Level 3)

- Methods:

- 360-Degree Feedback: Measure change in target competencies (e.g., delegation, strategic thinking) before and after the programme.

- Line Manager Interviews: Qualitative assessment of applied skills on the job.

- Focus: Did the coachee actually apply the learning?

Evaluation Plan 2: Measuring Business Impact (Level 4/ROI)

- Methods: Correlate programme participation with objective metrics:
- Employee Engagement (Employee Attitude Survey data).
- Talent Retention (especially in Hi-Po groups).
- Succession Fill Rate and time-to-competency.
- Action: Present data in a business case format to secure future funding.

Programme Closure & Knowledge Capture

- The Exit Process:

- A formal closure meeting to reflect on learning and plan next steps (continuous learning).

- Knowledge Capture: Anonymously aggregate learning trends *(e.g., "Our leaders struggle most with delegation")* to inform broader L&D strategy.

Groups Exercise

- Problem: C&M time is often sacrificed for "urgent" work.

- How do you convince employees to follow the coaching programme and not postpone coaching sessions?

Formative Assessment

Critical Barrier: Time Constraint Management

- Problem: C&M time is often sacrificed for "urgent" work.

- Solution:

1. Mandate Protected Time (e.g., first 90 minutes of the week).
2. Integrate C&M into standing meetings (e.g., 15 mins of 1:1 is dedicated coaching).
3. Simplify Processes (e.g., reduce admin via technology).
4. Sell the benefits of long term growth.

Process 9: Continuous Improvement Loop

- The Iterative Strategy: Use evaluation data to constantly refine the programme.
- Example: Low retention ROI → Adjust target audience to focus on earlier career stages.
- Action: Schedule an annual, formal strategy review with the Steering Group.

Part 5 EMBEDDING THE C&M CULTURE

Conclusion: The Critical Takeaway

- Summary:

- Moving from ad-hoc activities to a strategic C&M culture requires intentional alignment with business goals, rigorous quality assurance (supervision), and a data-driven approach to measurement.

- Call to Action: Initiate the C&M Strategy Review and Steering Group formation today.

The Goal: A Sustainable Coaching Culture

- Definition: A culture where coaching behaviours (listening, questioning, feedback) are the default way of managing and interacting.

- Development is a shared responsibility, not just an HR mandate.

Integrating "Manager-as-Coach"

- Strategy:
- Provide mandatory coaching skills training for all people managers.
- Link coaching effectiveness to the manager's performance review/bonus structure.
- This moves the culture from doing coaching to being a coach.

The Strategic Role of Mentoring in Equity

- Critical Need:
- Use mentoring (and sponsorship) as a tool for equity and inclusion.
- Pair senior leaders with diverse Hi-Potentials to break down systemic barriers and ensure fair access to opportunities and networks.

Digital C&M: Future-Proofing the Strategy

- Leverage Technology: AI Matching: For scale and precision.
- Virtual/Video Coaching: Increases accessibility and flexibility (hybrid work).
- Digital Content: Resources for self-reflection and continuous learning.

Sustaining Momentum & Visibility

- Action:

1. Internal Marketing: Publicize success stories (anonymized if needed).

2. Community of Practice: Create peer groups for internal coaches/mentors to share best practice.

3. Leadership Communications: Regular messaging from the top on the value of development.

Case Study:
ElevateCo’s Coaching & Mentoring Transformation

- Background:

- ElevateCo, a mid-sized professional services firm, had long relied on informal coaching and mentoring (C&M) practices. Managers occasionally mentored junior staff, and coaching was sporadically offered during performance reviews. However, these efforts lacked consistency, alignment with business goals, and measurable impact.

- Challenge:

- The HR Director, Priya, recognized that while individual efforts were well-intentioned, the lack of structure limited organizational learning and leadership development. She proposed a strategic shift: embed C&M into the company's talent strategy, align it with business objectives, and introduce supervision and measurement protocols.

Intervention: Priya led a three-phase transformation:

1. Strategic Alignment:
- Mapped C&M goals to business priorities (e.g., leadership pipeline, client retention, innovation).
- Developed a competency framework linked to coaching outcomes.

2. Quality Assurance & Supervision:
- Introduced supervision for internal coaches and mentors.
- Created feedback loops and peer review mechanisms.
- Trained supervisors in reflective practice and ethical boundaries.

3. Data-Driven Measurement:
- Implemented KPIs (e.g., promotion rates, engagement scores, retention).
- Used pulse surveys and 360 feedback to assess impact.
- Built dashboards to track progress across departments.

- Outcomes:

- 25% increase in internal promotions within 12 months.
- 20% improvement in employee engagement scores.
- Coaching became a core part of leadership development programmes.

Individual Comprehension & Reflection Question followed by Groups Discussion

- Discuss this scenario with a critical perspective.

Formative Assessment

9 Steps to Creating a Mentoring Programme

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjEAos0ZMo4

References

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