

Be the guide on the side

5 ways to coach employee performance

By Monica Wofford

On more than one occasion, Dr. Jack was not pleased with Margie's decisions and made it quite clear.

Margie did the best she could in using her own judgment to make decisions and give other staff members in the front office direction, but she couldn't read Dr. Jack's mind. It was very frustrating to her and other staff members.

How are they supposed to learn without any guidance or instruction? Margie had always tried to be proactive and learn before doing something rather than only learning after her mistakes. But, in her situation, this had become almost impossible.

She was working with a doctor who, instead of being a guide on the side, was becoming quite skilled at being "Jack in the back."

Proactive learning comes through coaching. Yes, you can teach people through allowing them to make mistakes, but you also run the risk of damaging their self-esteem in the process.

Practice being the guide on the side in your office. Take the time to be a coach first and a disciplinarian second. Give them a fighting chance to do something well or close to right the first time by following these tips. They can help you help those you have the privilege of leading.

1. Train versus "Tell and yell." Trainers certified by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) receive instruction entitled "Tellin' Ain't Trainin'!" and it's true.

Telling someone what to do is not the same as training them how to do it.

The definition of training is the transfer of knowledge and skill. Thus, your first training begins with finding what they already know, and what knowledge and skill is missing.

The guide on the side spends time finding out what

they know and then fills in the gaps by telling them the instructions, showing them how to do something, and observing as they do it themselves.

Keep in mind that everyone learns at different speeds, and just as tellin' ain't trainin', directin' and yellin' ain't coachin'!

2. Handle with care. With any office staff you employ, you are entrusting someone you may not know very well with important and confidential records.

You may be tempted to micromanage this persons' every waking move and make sure they do every single thing right.

Much as you would handle those records with care, the same is true for the people you have trusted to work with them.

Take the time to be a coach first and a disciplinarian second.

Only micromanage those who are brand new or those who seem to be having trouble.

Once they've got it, do all you can to let them do it on their own. Too much micromanagement will teach them to always rely on you and never take initiative.

3. Avoid giving them their opinions. Don't give them their opinions, ask for them. You might be surprised at what they say.

After all, if they work every day with these issues, their opinions and ideas on how to improve on those issues might be more accurate than yours.

4. Give them wings. If you stifle the initiative and freedom of those you work with, then you are removing their ability to try new things, find new solutions, create smoother processes, and so forth.

More importantly, you might also kill their desire to keep trying and to be an integral part of your business. Do you want high-initiative employees that you occasionally have to rein in, or robots who only do as you say when you say it?

5. Be a good neighbor. People ask a question, you provide a great answer, and think all is solved. But when they are not satisfied, they seek out a neighbor to provide a better answer.

When you discover the answer is exactly the same as yours, but that the perception of this neighbor is one of greater credibility, you will have experienced what is common among employees.

It is good for you to be there, to be the guide on the side, yet to also

realize that because these employees see you everyday, your wisdom and credibility will be taken for granted from time to time.

Be there when they need you, but also realize that you aren't the only resource in town.

Coaching and guidance can be art forms. They can also be taken to the extreme which means you guide their every move.

Strike a balance between the "benevolent dictator," or micro-manager, and "Jack in the back."

Be there when they need you and before they have a problem. Be the guide on the side and watch employees succeed, grow, and believe in your business. ☪



Monica Wofford is a nationally known trainer, author, speaker, and coach. The author of Contagious Leadership and

Contagious Customer Service, she inspires audiences to produce results. She can be reached at 866-382-0121 or through www.monicawofford.com.

Don't miss this essential product for your daily treatment.



Detox-Kit™

Increase your patient compliance
Support a healthy lifestyle



Our #1 comprehensive and synergistic Detox product for your Chiropractic practice

Provided by Heel, the maker of Traumeel®

Traumeel®

-Heel 
Healthcare designed by nature

CIRCLE 225 FREE INFORMATION

Quick Tip

Bring the message home

Home-based parties are back in vogue. This trend led us to develop "Power of Prevention Parties" as a way to promote health and wellness.

Ask your practice members to host a "Power of Prevention Party" in their homes. Provide invitations and food and refreshments. Your practice member is merely providing the location and a houseful of friends, family, and co-workers.

Just as with any other home party, incorporate a presentation (of course this will highlight the benefits of chiropractic wellness), games, prizes, and free gifts for attendees and host alike.

Close the party with an offer of chiropractic services at your office. Have your schedule book ready. Our experience has shown up to 80 percent of attendees signing on for wellness care!

— Heidi Farrell

*Chiro Advance Services,
www.chiroadvanceservices.com
715-635-5213*