



[Kirk Halliday](#)

Senior Manager, Enterprise Systems Management Group at Grant Thornton, LLP

Published on LinkedIn on October 2, 2015

## Manager to Coach Transformation

Oct 2, 2015

We all have a plethora of relationships that we build in all aspects of our lives. These relationships are building blocks in creating who we are and what we become. Coaching and not just managing in our work environment involves trust and mutuality.

As we all know, most work environments require interacting with others. Some people view these interactions as separate events they must endure (dealing with management) and others view them as enriching, ongoing relationships (working with a coach). The truth is, you get out

of your work relationships what you put in. We need to learn how to build strong work relationships.



This leads me to ask two specific questions:

1. What “kind” of relationships do we have with those we coach?
2. What are the “quality” of the relationships we have with those we coach?

Just saying "we're going to work together" isn't really enough. An essential requirement for coach transformation is to dig in deep and define those relationships. So why don't all managers coach? There are many reasons, but three stand out to me. 1) they don't understand the value derived from coaching, 2) they don't have the skill to do it, and 3) they don't have the time. To

transform a manager to a coach, all three MUST be addressed.

Coaching is more than just a buzzword in today's complex work world. Executed with care, coaching is an intimate, significant relationship that truly will affect two people deeply and produce measurable results for organizations. – *Sophie Oberstein, Author of 10 Steps to Successful Coaching*

Managing people today is moving from command and control to development and empowerment. Management is all about telling, directing, authority, and outcomes. Coaching involves facilitating, partnership, exploring solutions, and improvement. Now I'm not saying that there is only one hat. There is a time for both. My argument, however, is that the latter will drive creative results, build relationships, and increase morale.

In the drive for coach transformation, I have found four key ways to build strong coaching relationships...

## **Be Trustworthy**

It is important for you to do what you say. People will watch you to see what you do when you commit to something. They want to know if you can be trusted to deliver. Stephen M.R. Covey stated in his book *The Speed of Trust*: "When trust is high, the dividend you receive is like a performance multiplier, elevating and improving every dimension of your organization and life."

## **Show You Care**

People want to know if you care about them as a person or see them as an object or as a means to an end. No one wants to be viewed as a resource to be consumed by someone else. They desire to be looked at as someone who has a lot to give, an individual with life experiences, and a person who can really contribute. Showing care requires showing respect regardless of position. Work to gain knowledge of who they are and what they like and dislike.

## **Strive for Excellence**

Attitude toward work and quality of effort affects relationships. Committing to excellence means showing initiative and not waiting for someone else to point things out to you. Having a can-do attitude signals you are not afraid of a challenge. Strive to instill that in those that you have relationships with. They will come through for you when times get tough.

## **Achieve Together**

One of the worse things that a coach can do is take credit for other people's achievements. Always give credit where credit is due. Achieve your goals together and not just for your own personal fulfillment. Create an environment of collaboration and synergy. Bill Marriott said that the four most important words employees need to hear from their boss are: "*What do you think?*" Involving team members in decisions will show that you care about their opinion and want to involve them in what you're doing. When team members discover answers for themselves, it breeds empowerment. You reinforce in their minds that you believe in them and that their opinions, knowledge, and experience are matter. You build their confidence

In the drive to transform yourself from a manager to a coach, above all else, be teachable. Seek wisdom from others you look up to such as a mentor or another coach who does things well. Accept constructive feedback on how you can do better. Regularly ask yourself: Am I more of a manager or a coach? What would my employees say?