

Characteristics of a Good Job Coach

Even the best job coaches can improve with training and practice. The job coaching readiness self-assessment was designed to help you identify areas where you can improve your job coaching skills. The statements on the assessment and the related information in each box define the characteristics of good job coaches (adapted from Leach, 1996).

Box 1: Desire

Successful job coaches want to coach. They take pride in sharing what they know. Improving their teaching skills is important to them. A successful on-the-job training program will have job coaches teaching jobs in standardized ways with an emphasis on safety.

Box 2: Responsiveness

Successful coaches need to engage trainees. Their listening and communication skills are key to conveying the right information. Questions can be used to direct the learning process. Successful job coaches understand that learning will increase when trainees are comfortable asking questions.

Box 3: Enthusiasm

Successful job coaching takes energy. Job coaching sessions take time to prepare and commitment to conducting them. Job coaches who feel good about their jobs will pass on those feelings.

Box 4: Humor

Successful job coaches have a good sense of humor. Things do not always go according to plan. Everyone has learned something the hard way. Laughing about things that have gone wrong sends the important message that messing up while learning is OK.

Box 5: Sincerity/Honesty

Successful coaches do not fake it. They truly care about the success of their trainees and deal with them in a straightforward manner. Trainees will respect a job coach who admits not knowing something, then goes, and finds the answer for both of them.

Box 6: Flexibility

Successful job coaches are adaptable. They know when to eliminate, adjust, or change what they are teaching to match the capabilities of the trainee or outside constraints.

Box 7: Tolerance

Successful job coaches are open to the opinions of others. They recognize and accept differences in personalities. They are interested in what others have to say, even when they do not agree, and accept negative feedback as a tool for improvement.

Box 8: Commitment

Successful job coaches improve over time. Training, practice, and honest reviews help job coaches develop and refine their skills. Formal certification programs provide a public statement of support from the company. Successful job coaches take their job coaching duties seriously.

Look back over your answers to the job coaching readiness self-assessment.

Boxes with more high numbers circled show areas where you are most confident. These qualities will help you be an effective job coach.

Boxes with lower numbers circled show what you can work on to improve your job coaching. You can be trained to incorporate these qualities effectively into your job coaching even if they do not come naturally to you.

If you gave a low rating because of a barrier related to company policy, practice, or procedure, discuss your concerns with your supervisor, safety department staff, or supervisor. If you are comfortable bringing up your concern during the workshop, you may find others have similar reservations, and changes are needed to make the job coaching program successful at your operation.

**Every job coach is different.
Capitalize on your strengths and work to improve other areas.**