

Feedback and Coaching Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to provide general guidance for the application of the recently negotiated collective agreement and the intent of the new Article 8.9 – Coaching.

Feedback and coaching creates a culture of continuous learning and development that supports employees in meeting employment expectations.

Best practice is when meaningful performance discussions and relevant coaching occur on a frequent, timely and on-going basis so that employees understand what is expected of them and where concerns may exist. On-going feedback and coaching should occur throughout one's probationary and/or assessment period and beyond.

What is required for feedback and coaching to be effective?

Feedback and coaching provide for dialogue and effective relationships between managers and their employees when:

- Promote the value of feedback as a support for learning and development and establish a non-disciplinary tone
- Identify, establish and regularly discuss expectations, roles and responsibilities of employees and management
- Ensure two-way discussions focus on observed performance, are facts-based and specific and occur in a timely manner
- Identify areas for improvement and determine steps that may be taken to assist in meeting expectations
- Allow for a reasonable time period for improvement to occur
- Provide an appropriate level of support (e.g. training, equipment/technology) for the employees' learning and development needs
- Document discussions and provide written summaries or coaching letters to employees as necessary to achieve mutual understanding
- Commit to employees' and the institution's successes
- Recognize and appreciate contributions and accomplishments

Feedback and Coaching Tactics

The following suggestions offer strategies and approaches to support a culture of constructive feedback and coaching:

- Encourage a shared responsibility between employees and management
- Offer encouragement and advice
- Ask what employees feel they need, and determine what management can offer
- Explain the resources available to assist improved performance and success
- Consider both informal (e.g. verbal) and formal methods (e.g. coaching letter)
- Establish any existing boundaries and/or identify barriers (e.g. around available supports, appropriate forms of recognition, developmental opportunities)

Guidelines for Consideration – Article 8.9 Coaching

1. When concerns or gaps in expected performance are identified, the employer encourages that efforts first be made through feedback and coaching, consistent with Article 8.9 of the collective agreement.
2. This Article encourages managers to have coaching conversations with employees regarding areas of concern.
3. The intent of the Article is supportive and developmental. It is intended to provide a framework for coaching, to assist the employee understand the concerns or gaps and to identify steps that may be taken to address the concerns.
4. Feedback and coaching opportunities should occur since the initial appointment into any position and should also be used during the probationary and assessment periods to determine and inform an employee of the suitability into the position at an early stage.
5. A verbal, coaching conversation may be followed up in writing and if so, the letter will form part of the employee's personal file. The coaching letter will be removed from the employee's file after one (1) year.

Feedback and Coaching Resources

For further information and guidance, please contact your Human Resources Analyst and/or Consultant.