Coaching in Multi-Generational Organizations

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Abstract

Coaching is a useful way to develop the skills and abilities of individuals. By coaching, the coach tries to provide guidance and support to coachee (person being coached) in training and improving the performance of work.

Today, the workplace is the most diverse due to the age range of employees. The presence of employees from different generations at all levels of the organization has made it important to understand the differences and similarities of generations in order to successfully implement coaching.

This paper first discusses the issue of generations in the organization and the generational differences affecting the way coaching is implemented. Then, with consideration and focus on the status of multigenerational organizations, it offers a model and some suggestions for improving the coaching process.

Introduction

Coaching is an interactive relationship that helps individuals identify, direct and fulfill their personal and occupational goals faster than they can do themselves. Coaching, in addition to enhancing communication skills, problem solving, teamwork, and individual empowerment, also lead to the development of core competencies. Individual leads to the development of core competencies. Coaching is a continuous process of supporting individuals to keep pace with his goals and obligations, which means moving forward, overcoming fear, and enhancing key attributes. In other words, coaching is the art of facilitating the implementation of activities, the process of learning and progress of the individual that constantly focuses on the processes of development.

The needs of people to development and improvement are very diverse and different. Coaching is a flexible and responsive approach towards improving individuals and an approach to addressing current performance deficiencies and enhancing developmental skills of individuals. Coaching is a way to empower people, so that they feel calm and helpful, and feel satisfied with reaching their desired positions. In general, coaching is a careful process that uses deliberate negotiations to create an environment for the growth of individuals, targeted actions, and progressive and sustainable development.

The coach's job is to teach one or more skills to a coachee. Like a coach who teaches the flight. The coach is only responsible for learning the same skill, apart from that, he has no other responsibility for the personality of the person, if he has low self-esteem or other problems is not relevant to the coach.

Despite the fact that coaching is known as an efficient method, there are still many differences in its definitions. Each expert has provided a definition of coaching. Some of them are stated below.

- Coaching, is the art of facilitating learning, improving performance, and discussing the results of the research. Coaching helps the person to overcome the difficulties he sets out to set goals according to their aims and values.
- Coaching is a process that leads to learning and improvement, and as a result, performance improves [1].
- Coaching can be described as an activity related to development and improvement, which includes the development of professional and personal skills [2].
- Coaching is the key to increasing talent development and empowering potential talents, encouraging people to focus on their strengths, rather than focusing on their weaknesses and faults. Emphasizing the strengths of individuals reduces the ability to leave the job and increase productivity and customer satisfaction. This contrasts with the traditional view that advises people to identify and resolve their weaknesses [3].

Coaching is an interactive and result-oriented process aimed at facilitating conditions for individual growth, self-improvement and self-centered learning, and at a deeper level, increasing empowerment in problem solving and improving self-esteem in a person.

With this view, coaching, while focusing on challenges ahead, emphases on goals and tries to help individuals achieve faster and better results by providing the necessary support. The skills of establishing a constructive relationship, effective listening, effective questioning and facilitating the process of determining goal-oriented goals are merits that distinguish a successful coach. In simple terms, coaching is helping a person to come up with an appropriate solution to a problem without giving the solution by coach. The process is based on the principle that the person facing the challenge is the best option that can solve the problem, perhaps it is enough to help him to look at the subject in all its aspects and from different angles. In summary, coaching is a process in which the first person in the role of coach provides the second person's learning field to improve his performance and career success by developing key capabilities such as problem-

solving skills, so that the second person can then independently taking advantage of those capabilities to create the conditions for his success.

The main features of coaching activities agreed upon by most professional coaches are:

- Include individual and organizational goals.
- Give people feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.
- Focuses on improving performance and individual skills.
- Based on the assumption that people are self-conscious, or they can achieve self-awareness.
- A coach is not limited to human resource development and is used in many other areas.
- A coach focuses on the strengths of individuals and seeks to identify potentials of individuals.

The Importance of Coaching

Nowadays, most of the trainings in organizations are compact and short. For this reason, the importance of coaching on the job is felt more. Due to this compact nature of the programs, employees alone cannot apply new skills in complex and diverse environments. Assistance in the job includes job coaching for skills needed and advice for long-term development and job requirements. Coaching in designing and implementing the program helps participants to develop new skills [4].

Learning outcomes will quickly go away if the skills learned are not transferred in the short term. In this regard, coaching in the job can help identify workplace opportunities for the use of skills. Organizations are constantly affected by the pressure of change. The ability to learn and adapt to the environment is one of the important skills that employees must have. Hence, coaching is an effective way of helping people make major changes to the workplace. Coaching supports different learning styles, which provide more support to staff than traditional teaching methods. Improvement needs vary from person to person, and in small organizations there are not many people with specific skills and needs for improvement. In such cases, coaching can be a good way to improve, which can emphasize on individual improvement.

Some of the reasons for the importance of coaching can be summarized as follows:

- Increasing the complexity of the environment, resulting in increased work problems and challenges.
- Fixed capabilities of people inadequate in responding to a dynamic and diverse environment.
- The expansion of service sectors in businesses and the creation of diverse working conditions, and the importance of paying attention to continuous improvement in the quality of processes.
- Need to immediately benefit from learning from work environment experiences to achieve optimal performance.
- Increase the importance of knowledge management and the transfer of tacit knowledge to employees during business processes.
- The growing tendency of employees to grow and develop their capabilities in their desirable career paths and the need for diverse ways to increase their knowledge and professional skills.

Multiple Generations in Today's Organizations

They defined generation for the first time, as a group of people who were born and grown at certain times, and in similar social and historical conditions [5]. From a sociological point of view, age cohorts are considered as generations that have common experiences and interests, and are aware of these experiences and interests. In another definition, the generation is defined as a specific group of people who share with each other in cases such as year of birth, age, place, and important events they experienced in the critical stages of their lives [6]. Different generations have different values and characteristics based on different experiences of their lives.

From the point of view of the organizations and their related issues, it can easily be verified that one of the important features of today's organizations is the existence of a workforce belonging to different generations. In organizations, employees from different generations are working together. This is so widespread that one can simultaneously see the activity of young people in the workplace with older people who are their parents [7]. One of the most important factors in creating the diversity and difference in the workforce of today's organizations is the existence of this combination of workforces. This generational diversity can also promote creativity and innovation among employees, but, on the other hand, generation differences between employees may lead to negative organizational results such as conflicts. For this reason, today special attention is paid to generational relations and the development of related human resources strategies in leading organizations.

Intergenerational Differences Affecting Coaching

If the multigenerational workforce viewed from the point of view of coaching, companies can adopt an approach in which all the different coaches are grouped together and trained in a similar way. Another approach is to consider a multiple learning approach in which the coaching is designed and built based on the communication styles and motivations of generational cohorts. A prerequisite for adopting a second approach is the exact recognition of intergenerational differences, some of which are mentioned below.

Difference in learning styles

Older generation prefer traditional classrooms, along with a professor, with paper-based education, while the newer generation would place more emphasis on development in general, and prefer independent learning, often with the use of computer or Internet education.

Difference in performance management styles

Individuals of different generations may be interested in being managed in a variety of ways. Newer generations prefer to trust them for independent work rather than autocratic leadership, they need urgent and frequent feedback, tend to enjoy work and provide social opportunities in their work. While older generations may be more inclined to recognize their experiences, their time to give the organization and their performance by the organization.

Difference in technology literacy

Newer generations are more comfortable and skilled with new technologies. They use more media and technology to complete their

works than previous generations. Compared to previous generations, they tend to have more works simultaneously [8-10].

Difference in communication methods

The desire of new generations to communicate with others through new communication media such as email and social media is more than the previous generations. All generations still value the traditional face-to-face interactions, but new generations feel less need for it [11,12].

Difference in need for guidance

New generations need more guidance and direction from their leaders and coaches [10].

Difference in opportunities for progress

New generations attach more importance to career advancement opportunities and are willing to upgrade faster [13-15].

Difference in position in the organization

New generations place more stress and emphasis on job positioning [16].

Difference in education, growth and development

New generations at the workplace, have more emphasis on lifelong learning and personal development than older generations [11,17,18].

Thus, since generational differences exist in each organization, it is important to identify workforce styles and their learning preferences before providing coaching.

Coaching Challenges in Multigenerational Organizations

Multigenerational organizations, force coaches to do coaching someone older in the age of their parent or grandparent, or someone younger in the age of their child or grandchild. This will be led to a multigenerational gap and highlight the generational differences and in turn makes coaching in such organizations face serious challenges.

Rekalde et al. [19] identify the top three factors with the most impact on coaching effectiveness include factors associated with the coach (Do they create trust with their coachee? Do they have solid management communication skills? What's their commitment to the individual coachee and the organization? Can they motivate?), with the coachee behavior (How motivated is the coachee to learn and change? How committed is the coachee to their development and do they feel responsible for it?), and with the coach-coachee relationship (Is there trust? Is it confidential? Respectful? Authentic?).

One of these challenges is the coach from one generation and the coachee from another generation. This may be difficult even for the best coaches, because they should be concerned about the impact of beliefs, expectations, and behaviors held by all generations in their workforce. In such a situation, communication obstacles and cultural barriers between generations may prevent different generations to coach for each other. In order to succeed, it is necessary for coach to have specific abilities depending on the case, in addition to general characteristics of the coaches described in the previous sections.

The coach from older generation - The coachee from younger generation

In an analyze of the relationship between age and Responsiveness, Self-reflection, Non defensiveness, and Degree of Change, as judged by organizational stakeholders, executives between the ages of 30-39 exhibit lower levels of self-reflection and a lower degree of observed behavior change than those executives between ages 40-49 and 50-59 [20].

The results of this research and similar researches indicate that in the coaching process, when a person from an older generation coaches a person from newer generation, this stereotype may arise to consider their coachee s to be lazy. If an older coach, based on such stereotypes, make assumptions about a younger coachee, the amount of recognition considered by him may not be very significant. The focus should be on the individual and not on the age. This problem can be overcome by linking generations and recognizing the values and experiences of each generation.

De Haan et al. [21] suggest that in a strong coach-coachee relationship, effective tasks and goals may be more influential than bonding. Matching based on personalities might not be as necessary or effective for coaching outcomes as you might like to think. Instead, coaches need to look less at stereotypical generational differences and more at personal-level differences in maturity, experience, and age [21].

Also younger coachee s should be taken seriously and respectful of their brief experience. If they feel they have not been taken seriously by the coach, they will probably not take the coach seriously. Although these coachee s have less experience than older people, they have other benefits from many other aspects. There are many ways to fertilize their abilities, and this is the responsibility of coach to find this pathway to help each coachee adopt the appropriate method.

The coach from younger generation - The coachee from older generation

It can be worrying to coach people who are older, especially if the age gap is significant.

Younger generations may look at older generations, such as overly cautious or obsessive people. Under these circumstances, it's unlikely that a young person can coach an older person, well and comfort. This challenge can be overcome by removing previous stereotypes of thinking, opening minds to see them as they really are.

Also the coach should attract coachee 's trust by demonstrating his self-confidence and modesty. Trust is incredibly important in a coaching relationship. If someone feels you lack either confidence or modesty, they may be less willing to trust you as their coach, and therefore, may make no progress or may decide to end the coaching process.

Also the coach should establish his expertise and credibility. Some elderly people who have had many years of experience may feel that young people are not reliable because do not have a lot of experience. So the coach should try harder to show his expertise.

Coaching Process

Although various coaching processes are suggested in the literature, a step-by-step approach for coaching with regard to generation differences in the organization can be presented as follows.

Targeting

Both parties will find out what the purpose of coaching is. Coachee 's awareness of the need for a coach is an important part of this stage. Of course, the coach can help in creating this awareness.

Confidence creation

Understanding the characteristics of different generations, employee needs assessment and multigenerational evaluation is down at this stage. Then there are actions be taken to ensure that both parties find a positive view of each other, achieving the compatibility of each other's values, interact and evaluate one another, and believe that this interaction and affiliation will be beneficial.

Data collection and detection

Identify strengths and recoveries using available data (e.g. performance appraisal results).

Planning and implementation

Review, plan, and implementation of options and actions that improve performance. Also, the criteria for defining the progress and success of the work are determined.

Evaluation

Continuously evaluates the implementation process and the whole process and improve.

Coaching Implementation in Multigenerational Organizations

What can be mentioned as a contribution of this paper is the suggestion of a suitable coaching approach in the implementation stage (the 4th step of the above) that takes into account generational differences.

If the coach from older generation and the coachee from younger generation, it is better to apply the coaching approach to "directive or push approach", in which coaching behaviors are such that the coach solves the problem directly or implicitly for the individual. The direct coaching approach is more appropriate for when the speed of achieving the result is very important or there are no opportunities for risk taking. Also when the coachee has neither the interest nor the capability to solve the problem, this approach will be useful. Continuous and long-term use of a direct approach can limit the innovation and capabilities of coachee. It also may create an impression that the coach always recognizes and act correctly, raises the possibility of mistakes due to low participation of others in decision making, and finally, do not create a sense of commitment and ownership of decisions by others.

If the coach is from younger generation and the coachee is from older generation, it is better to apply the coaching approach to " non-directive or pull approach". In this approach, the coach acts indirectly and with the creation of conditions, so that the coachee can solve the problem by himself. The coach spends only about 20% of the time directly and one-sidedly, and spends the rest of the time actively listening, exploring and guiding questions, summarizing comments, and correcting the perceptions and systematic observation of the other's behaviors. Hence, the main point in the indirect approach is the use of indirect methods of communication for the development of the coachee 's learning and development. The indirect coaching approach is more appropriate for individuals who assume to have the basic knowledge and experience to progress. In this situation, coach can give them the opportunity to create an idea of ownership, give them the opportunity to learn solutions so that they can use these solutions in other situations, give them a sense of success, and finally encourage individuals to find confidence for finding solutions.

It should be noted that these two approaches form a two-dimensional spectrum. Depending on the circumstances, it is possible to use approaches taken between these two.

Conclusion

Generation is a factor that causes many differences in human resources of organizations. Each generation has its own view on life and priorities. Younger generations are less committed to the existing social order and are more prone to change in this system. In contrast, older generations are more conservative and maintain a social order and have a stronger link with traditional values and norms. This factor has a profound effect on how to use coaching in organizations as well as its success.

On the other hand, it is necessary that managers at all levels of the organization engage in the coaching of their employees from different generations. Thus, there are challenges for coaching younger and older coachee s. A coach can overcome these challenges with proper attitudes and ignore many stereotypes about the older generations and the younger generations.

Managers now need to know what factors affect productivity and how their effects can be coached. Managers as coach should be able to put individual goals in line with the organizational strategy. This will be down by emphasizing their strengths in responsibility for growth, progress, increasing their ability to learning and achieve talents, and thus increase their productivity.

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