



Integrating the 12 Elements Into Everyday Conversations

This is an excerpt from Gallup's State of the American Workplace Report, 2017.

When organizations effectively engage employees, they also improve the way they manage performance. Many organizations fall short of their performance goals, however, when they treat engagement as a thing to do or a survey to complete rather than a continuous way to manage and develop people.

Turning the 12 elements into cultural expectations for “how we do business” must take multiple forms in different levels of the organization. The 12 elements should align with the organization's overall strategy and leadership expectations, be part of a clear and ongoing communication strategy, reflect accountability of leaders and managers, and drive a system for development that refines strengths-based performance coaching skills and charts the course for the right managerial job demands within the organization.

Transformation can and should occur at multiple levels. At the most basic level, managers need to discuss engagement needs with their employees, and at a higher level, they must transform the way they work with their teams. Additionally, leaders have to integrate engagement into their growth strategy, and organizations must create a culture of engagement.

If organizations want to engage their employees, the best place to start is by developing managers' abilities to coach. Teaching managers to be a coach begins with helping them develop the communication, managerial and people skills needed to connect with their team, understand their needs, become an active part of their performance and individualize each team member's development.

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The challenge then becomes making coaching an everyday part of a manager's routine, from anticipating how to handle different types of coaching scenarios to planning the logistics of fitting the necessary coaching conversations onto their calendar.

Gallup's overview of five types of coaching conversations that drive performance provides managers with a practical framework for how and when to execute the fundamentals of effective performance-oriented coaching conversations: establish expectations, provide continual coaching and create accountability. The framework helps managers understand the types of coaching conversations they should have and how to approach each. More specifically, it allows managers to revisit the 12 engagement elements more naturally through the five types of conversations.

With Gallup's five coaching conversations framework, managers learn the importance of spending disproportionately more time establishing expectations with their team by getting to know them, discussing why performance expectations exist and creating an open dialogue about the work they will be pursuing together. By having the right types of conversations with more frequency, managers increase their awareness of best practices and barriers to performance and become more efficient in managing their team members so they can do what they do best while achieving organizational goals.

Five Types Of Coaching Conversations

- 1 Role and Relationship Orientation**
Occurs when employees join the company, when job responsibilities shift and when employees change roles
- 2 Quick Connects**
Give managers an opportunity to assess quickly how an employee is doing and to identify successes and barriers
- 3 Check-ins**
More formal opportunities to seek and give feedback on goal achievement, priorities, progress on projects and employee needs
- 4 Developmental Coaching**
Aims to direct and guide an employee to improved performance and individual career development
- 5 Progress Reviews**
Formal reviews of progress on goals, expectations and planning for future opportunities