Coach and Develop Others: One-on-One Coaching

One of the most important one-on-one conversations you can have is your coaching conversations with employees. Read the guidelines below. They suggest a discussion format and process to logically address what needs to be covered in a first-time coaching session. Then schedule time with your supervisor or coach to role-play a coaching situation. Use the guidelines to discuss the areas you need to improve.

- Listen to the individual’s development plan and provide guidance about whether it is realistic, complete, a stretch, and balanced.

- Make recommendations to reduce the amount of time it will take to get the employee ready for the next steps. Recommendations might include people to meet, workshops or other training, special assignments, on-the-job skill practice, or cross-department experience.

- Discuss the leadership/career-development process, the role that coaching plays, the expectations that you have of the team member, and the role an individual development plan plays.

- Ask appropriate questions: What are your career goals? What do you believe are your strengths? What knowledge and job competencies will you need? What experiences would better prepare you?

- Offer your support. Ask how you can support the team member’s effort. What does the team member need from you for success?

- Provide your input and advice. Ask if the team member would be willing to hear something different from what was proposed in the person’s plan. Give your point of view and ask if the ideas make sense to him or her. Use dialogue to enrich the plan.

- Finally, ask the team member to recap what was decided and what he or she will do next. Let the team member know that you will help locate resources or experiences required. Establish the next time the two of you will meet.

After the role-play, ask for feedback from your supervisor to learn what you did well and what needs to be improved.