

Your Guidance Matters

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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MANAGING AND COACHING AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Most managers focus on producing results, such as: finishing projects on time and on budget, scheduling crews, ordering materials, managing subcontractors and suppliers, winning new contracts, getting paid, hiring good employees – all the many things necessary to keep a company functioning properly. They're constantly telling employees what to do, how to do it, and when to do it.

The problem with focusing 99% of their attention on the work is that they are not dedicating proper attention to developing and building great employees. People are the No. 1 asset in every construction company, but most managers never have enough time to focus on mentoring, training, and coaching people to help them improve, grow, or gain responsibility. In some cases, people are treated like machines; tools that do the work. But people require much more maintenance than machines, including coaching, support, training, and help to improve.

Managing and coaching people to perform are two different roles, and focus on different aspects of a person's needs. A manager achieves results by overseeing and organizing the work, and holding people accountable to perform. A coach develops, builds, improves, and drives performance to help talent perform at their highest level.

PEOPLE PRODUCE RESULTS



Most contractors do a good job of managing systems, processes, and production, but what about focusing on the factor that produces results? People produce results. Coaching and building a team must be a major focus. If you study the NFL, you might note there are two important roles required to build a winning team: manager and coach. Both are equally important, and without one or the other, consistent winning is impossible. Have you ever noticed the same coaches tend to win championships? But can you even name the general manager or owner on most teams? Do you focus much time on developing talent, building people, and helping them perform at their highest level? Or do you spend most of your time controlling, managing, and doing the work?

MANAGING & COACHING

People who are in charge of others must be both effective managers and winning coaches. Again, most people don't

provide enough coaching to help their people produce results or want to improve. Managers focus on getting work done. Coaches focus on helping their people perform to their highest level. Let's take a look at some of the differences:

Manager

- » 100% accountable to achieve results, perform tasks, and meet deadlines.
- » Responsible for holding direct reports accountable to achieve results, perform tasks, and meet deadlines.
- » Accountable to manage, organize, coordinate, and support a team, project, department, or group of players.
- » Directs, monitors, solves problems, and supports progress of players.
- » Develops strategy, monitors activities and tasks of team and direct reports.

Coach

- » In charge of the team; sets and monitors performance standards and achieves winning results.
- » Focuses on talent and employee development, improvement, recruiting, retention, and teamwork.
- » Accountable to drive team performance, and help players improve to reach their full potential.
- » Implements, develops, and enforces winning strategies, systems, and plays.
- » Mentors, trains, teaches, engages, motivates, supports, and challenges players to become more effective and perform at their highest possible level.

Construction leaders have common problems. As companies grow, they may not be able to afford to hire a construction operations general manager who directs the project managers (PMs). Companies with up to five PMs typically have them report directly to the president.

The problem? The president doesn't have time to manage and oversee the PMs, so, he or she hires PMs, gets them up to speed, and sends them off to war. Without a manager providing constant attention, the PM's work goes unchecked, leaving the president to discover the PMs have not done their job properly, and potentially exposing the company to risk.

To build a great company, there must be someone to both manage and coach every employee, including the PMs. To

improve, the company's president (in this scenario, acting as construction operations general manager) must fill the construction operations position by holding both weekly one-on-one management accountability meetings and biweekly coaching sessions with every PM. The following are a few examples.

WEEKLY: MANAGE THE PMS

Hold a weekly one-on-one meeting with the PMs to review and monitor the progress and performance of every assigned project, and hold PMs accountable to meet expectations, deliver on productivity, achieve results, and meet deadlines.

Review:


- » All subcontracts and materials orders awarded by company deadline
- » Submittals and shop drawings submitted and approved by deadline
- » Project on-budget and updated job cost report with accurate estimated cost to complete
- » Project payment requests submitted on time and paid
- » Projects on schedule per contract and weekly look-ahead schedules
- » Weekly customer project meetings and subcontractor meetings held
- » Weekly PM job walk to review schedule, costs, quality, and safety
- » Superintendent and foreman performing and meeting goals
- » Maintaining positive customer relationships

BIWEEKLY: COACH THE PMS

Hold a biweekly one-on-one meeting with president and PMs to help employees improve, reach their goals, and move to a higher level of performance. Review:

- » Discuss personal details; get to know them and show you care about them
- » Check in on work-life balance, goals, and self-development
- » Personal performance update
- » Workload, current priorities, activities, and performance
- » Performance improvement
- » Career advancement goals and growth
- » Mentor and train

DO WHAT YOU MUST

Doing what doesn't come naturally is uncomfortable, like holding regular sessions with your direct reports. Most construction business owners have an entrepreneur's mindset and don't enjoy regularly scheduled meetings, holding people accountable, reviewing details, and pushing people to perform at higher levels. Unfortunately, they may have to dedicate the time required to act as the construction operations general manager or another unfilled position on their organizational chart. But to achieve great results, someone must be responsible to manage and coach your company's key players. Therefore, if there isn't a manager overseeing every employee, the manager must be you. 



About the Author

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