SPOTLIGHT: EMPATHY

Building Rapport
COACHING CONVERSATIONS

> " Empathy is a powerful tool in coaching and mentoring because it communicates to the client that we have understood, or at least tried to understand, their unique experience, rather than imposing our view or making assumptions.

Connor, M. & Pokora, J, (2012)

INTRODUCTION

This Spotlight is one of a series of Spotlights to support the Institute's 'Coaching Conversations', an accredited Institute of Leadership and Management product that recognises coaching both as an invaluable tool for any leader or manager, and for developing your ability to support your colleagues in the workplace or those you may meet in a voluntary capacity.

This Spotlight provides a transcription of '**#1 Demo Coaching with Marcia Reynolds' (25.00 – 29:32**): the coach demonstrates active listening and empathy, investing time in building a trusting and effective relationship, acknowledging the team member's concern about the neediness for praise and lack of dedication she perceives in some members of her team. The coach uses the team member's own words to reflect back what she has heard.

REFERENCES

Connor, M., and Pokora, J., (2012). **Coaching & Mentoring at Work** 2nd ed, OUP, McGraw–Hill Education

Reynolds, M., (2018). **#1 Demo Coaching with Dr Marcia Reynolds,** https://youtu.be/Vdwya5j3D8k

The Institute of Leadership & Management, (2019). **Coaching Essentials: Building Rapport**

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COACH	TEAM MEMBER
– So it's really about the relationship of wanting recognition for work that is not what you expect?	– It's not bad but it's not something to be, yeah, you know to get an A or an A+, you know, you're not on the owner's role just yet. I think it's great it's we pay you your salary to do that right, but there is expectation I think sometimes that, 'I do everything great I'm so good' I know they need that pat on the shoulder, and I consider myself a very social person, very much in touch, you know, have a lot of empathy for people and I know where they are coming from, and this is my challenge, how do I have that difficult conversation when I do have this empathy where I do know where they're coming from. What I do know that they need that that pat on the back to say 'you're you are doing a good job' but I want to sound sincere and at the same time I want to say 'but this is how we can improve it', 'this is how you can do it better', and I think I do well but it is uncomfortable sometimes for me to continue especially when it's like high level high stress, you're on the road, you have five minutes at the airport before you get on another flight to come down.
– So, let me share with you what I'm hearing, that it's, there's sort of two issues, one is, do they understand, or why don't they perform to the level you want? But what I'm hearing really is your bigger frustration, because you've come back to it a number of times, is that 'Really? Do I have to do that, do I have to give them that kudos, when I really need to get to the point and say ah here's what's not happening? And yet I have to stop and do that.' And I also hear a values conflict because you are a caring person. Right, and so this is a difficult thing for you to resolve. So, for our time today can we work on that, just that, how can you work through that feeling of your frustration, with needing to give them kudos when you really need to give them direction. Is that true?	– True, yes, tough love, haha.
– Haha, tough love ok, good. Ok, how can I deliver tough love!	– Yes.
– Ok thanks, Aurora, you know I can see that it's a really frustrating thing and you haven't had to deal with this all your career, there's been a shift. So, tell me about this sense of requirement, how is that getting in the way of what you need to do to be their manager?	– Hmm, I guess sometimes I feel, two things, sometimes I give in and sometimes I'm too tough. So sometimes I feel that if they push at the end, I say ok and I find a compromise. But often times its more giving in to some things. And other times which is the control part of me, especially in those stressful situations which I mentioned, is, as you say, this is what we've got to do.

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