

Worksheet: Coaching Stories

The following are three steps to help you coach others in their storytelling. Review this worksheet before you start. Remember, your goal here is to listen and to support the coachee in improving their stories. Steer clear of sugar feed-back - "That was really great!" - and instead, try asking questions and observing how the coachee responds.

Step 1: Ask questions.

Start by asking:

"How did that go for you? How did you feel telling your story?"

"If you were to tell it again, would you change anything in the telling? If yes, what would you do differently?"

Then, note some of your first impressions and give them space to speak to what you noticed.

"I noticed you did _____ or made this decision in telling your story, why did you do that?"

"You said _____ in telling your story, what did you mean by that?"

Step 2: Pay attention.

As you're listening, reflect on the following elements of the story and ask yourself the attendant questions. Repeat some of your reflections back to the storyteller using the sample statements.

A. Challenge, choice, outcome.

- What were the specific challenges the storyteller faced?
- Did the storyteller paint a clear picture of those challenges?
- Was there a clear choice made in response to the challenge(s)?
- What was the outcome that resulted from the choice(s)?

"When you described _____, I got a clear picture of the challenge."

"I understood the challenge to be _____ and the choice to be _____. Is that what you intended?"

"How would you describe the outcome of your choice? I heard _____ or learned _____, is that what you intended?"

B. Values.

- Could you identify the storyteller's values and where they come from?
- Did you hear the storyteller voice or describe certain emotions? How did the story make you feel?

"It's clear from your story that you value _____."

"Your description of that value / emotion resonated with me because..."

C. Details & Setting.

- What were the sections of the story that had especially vivid details? What did these descriptions do or how did they make you feel?

"Your description of detail / image / feeling helped me identify with your experiences because..."

Step 3: Tell them what you'll remember.

Tell the storyteller what stood out for you or resonated with you, and what you will remember.

"Your description of detail / image / feeling stood out for me, because..."

"The story hooked me at _____ point, because..."