

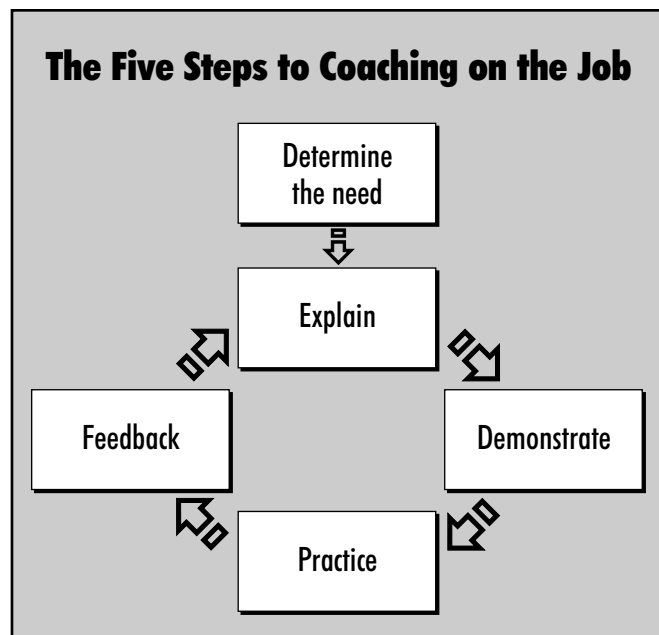


**A**s jobs change to meet new market requirements, people need to learn new skills. Training can be delivered via a number of methods such as formal classroom training, computer based training... and on the job coaching.

The people who conduct coaching include supervisors and managers, but also people in other roles - fellow team members, technical experts, mentors and consultants.

Having expertise does not necessarily mean knowing how to pass on that expertise to someone else. That is why it is important to learn how to teach, train and coach.

The five step method for coaching on the job described below, dramatically increases the success of any coaching session.



### Determine the Need

To start the coach, we will have to make sure that a need for coaching exists. The four most common situations that indicate a need for coaching are as follows:

1. A new employee starting off in a new job, who requires new skills and knowledge.

2. When performance of the employee is not up to scratch, and this is often observed by a supervisor or team leader, coaching is often required to solve the problem.

3. When a person asks for help. Since we encourage staff to ask for feedback, we should not be surprised that many do request and describe their own particular training needs.

4. Finally, the employee can be consulted or asked about any difficulties or problems they are experiencing on the job.

Once a need for coaching has been determined, the coaching session can start. The following four steps describe the actual coaching session itself.

### Explain

When coaching someone to do a task, a coach must start by explaining the task. This involves describing in a clear, logical way each major step of the task, along with details of how to do each step quickly, easily and safely.

It can help for this step of coaching to analyse the task to be taught. Doing a "task breakdown" involves identifying the major steps of the task and writing them down on a piece of paper in the left-hand column. In the right-hand column for each step, list the key points - suggestions or tips on how to do each major step.

### Demonstrate

After explaining the task, a coach should demonstrate how to do it. It is important to demonstrate it in exactly the same way it is meant to be done, with all the equipment, or other resources that are necessary.

It is also important to watch the person being coached to see any signs that they are not understanding or confused. Frequently asking them if they are following what is being said is a good way of checking.

Often the two steps of explaining and demonstrating can be done at the same time.

*Continued...*

### **Practice**

Unfortunately many people who coach others on the job only explain the task. Some go on to then demonstrate it, and then end there. Too many coaches do not continue the coaching session by getting the employee to practice the task.

The coach should aim to get the employee to do the task or activity with no assistance or prompting under the same conditions as they will have to do it on the job.

### **Feedback**

Both during and after the practice step, the coach should give the employee specific feedback of what they have done well (positive feedback), and not so well (negative feedback).

If the employee has managed to complete the task successfully, the coach should tell them (give positive feedback), and the coaching session can end there.

If the employee has not successfully completed the task themselves, constructive negative feedback should be given and they should have another practice go at the task.

Going back to the practice step, and even to demonstrate the step, may be necessary to ensure the employee knows how to do the task and can satisfactorily demonstrate it in a practice go.

---

### **REFERENCE**

***Coaching on the Job***, a video training package produced by Ash.Quarry Productions and distributed by Seven Dimensions Pty Ltd, ph: +61 3 9686 9677.

---

For more free articles and online resources, be sure to visit Seven Dimensions' website at  
**[www.7dimensions.com.au](http://www.7dimensions.com.au)**.