

Do you have time to Manage?

For a manager, understanding the importance of leveraging performance and releasing the potential of colleagues through appraising and coaching is fundamental. To do this, managers need to be given the space to get beneath their job title and understand what their job is really about and to be encouraged to recognise that their own success is dependant on 'raising the game' of those around them.

Identifying coaching as a key aspect of their job and spending time on it are fundamentals to business success and is probably why as a consultancy, we spend so much time working on a mix of Time Management and coaching with our clients!

Some managers coach instinctively, others need to be guided. Of those who embrace the principles, most find that it is a practical, realistic approach - rooted in the real world.

The great benefit is that coaching addresses real work and 'live issues'. Content and tempo are focused on the individual performer and their business imperatives – manager and colleague, (coach and performer), work together to deal with 'things that matter' at work and without the apparent 'interference' of trainers.

The three main drivers behind coaching are usually outlined as being:

- the correction of weakness
- a desire to release latent potential, and/or
- a requirement to leverage performance, through focused development

... but coaching also has a fundamental contribution to make to the apparent levels of individual and team motivation, which has an obvious knock-on to improvements in productivity, quality of product and levels of service.

Coaching enables a manager to delegate, whilst growing their people and providing the coachee with a feeling of personal empowerment and career progression. Out of this comes one of the biggest hidden benefits – the link between coaching and staff retention.

At exit interview, many people offer the fact that they feel that they have not been managed properly as being a major contributory factor in their deciding to leave an organisation. Coaching, which demands a manager and performer spend time together in a focused, developmental, process driven way, addressing issues and finding agreed ways to move forward, fulfils the need for people to feel 'managed' and helps them to recognise that they 'are making progress' or are 'getting on' – important factors, which make employees decide whether or not 'this is a good place to be'.

Do you have time to Manage?

One of our clients, TGI Friday's, have given increased focus to developing management skills to enable them to think and behave like coaches. Over time, this came to be seen as one of the key contributors to the fact that their staff turnover has fallen and retention figures have improved – to the extent that they have been used as both company and industry-wide aspirational benchmarks.

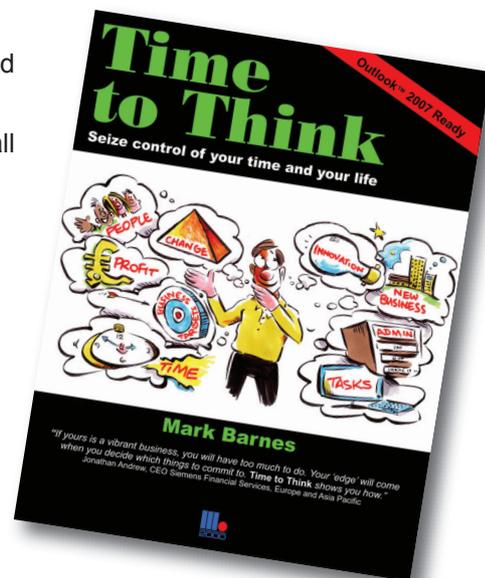
Even given the above, managers often still need to be encouraged to coach. The biggest nudge that they can receive is to understand that proactively developing people is as big a part of their job as the reactive task-based things that they do every day. Their role is not to be 'busy', but to be 'effective' and as part of this it is incumbent upon them to find the time and space to facilitate the success of their people.

Establishing the importance of coaching by making it a measurable objective is the first step in ensuring that managers manage to manage – the second step is probably to coach the coaches!



Mark Barnes is Managing Director of Step System International training and coaching consultancy. Step System develop and deliver interventions in all areas of team and personal effectiveness.

His second book: **Time to Think** – Seize control of your time and your life, is published by Management Books 2000. Priced at £18.99.
ISBN: 978-185252-538-5



STEP

INTERNATIONAL

For more information please contact:

Step System International Limited

Gable End, Main Street, Upper Brailes, Banbury, Oxon OX15 5AX

Tel: 01608 685105

email: mark@stepsystem.co.uk

Website: www.stepsystem.co.uk