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## **Employees Coaching Leaders**

Leaders coaching employees is a typical occurrence in the workplace today, but employees coaching leaders can sometimes be a little more challenging. Some leaders are very open to feedback and coaching as part of their leadership style, while others have a more traditional approach to management. The tips below can help whether you're coaching on a behaviour, situation or decision.

1. **Don't call it coaching** - Frame it as an honest open dialogue that focuses on understanding a situation or behaviour and sharing feedback. For some leaders, the word 'coaching' can have connotations relating to hierarchy or weakness.
2. **Practice makes perfect** - If you're nervous about the conversation, practicing alone or with a friend can help increase your confidence.
3. **Set the stage** - Taking time to build up the trust to have an open and honest conversation will be worth it. Even when you get there, do whatever you need to do to prepare your manager for the conversation, whether it's booking a meeting in advance or asking for permission to speak freely when you do sit down.
4. **Ask questions** - There may be a particular style or decision that you don't believe is effective, but you've likely made a story in your head as to why your boss is doing that and what their intent is. Be curious, and you may gain a new understanding.
5. **Be factual** - As with giving feedback to anyone, make sure you're being fair and professional. Don't just dish out a lot of criticism without balancing it with strength, and stick to the facts by giving examples where possible. Own your own responses e.g. "I feel this"...rather than "You make me feel this".
6. **Be open to new information** - Although things might look like to you like they need fixing, there may be a reason for the situation or behaviour that you don't know about in your position. Your boss may not be able to share additional information with you, and that can help realign your own perspective.
7. **Come with a recommendation** - Whether you're tackling a project, decision or behaviour, always look ahead and arrive prepared to talk about alternative options for moving forward.
8. **Be humble** - You and your leader are both humans. It might feel like they should be more than that as they're senior to you/paid more than you, but that's not realistic.
9. **Keep the conversation going** - If the conversation is genuine and authentic then it should also be ongoing. If you're finding that your styles are still clashing or that you're not seeing improvements, bring the topic up again in a proactive, solution-focused way.