

Sarah Cirone:

Welcome to today's webinar ***Coaching Conversations***. Hosted by HRDQ-U and presented by Tanya Longino. My name is Sarah, and I will moderate today's webinar. The webinar will last around one hour. If you have any questions, just type them into the question area on your go to webinar control panel, and we'll answer them as we can, or after the session by email. The foundation of this webinar is based on our product *Coaching Conversations*, and includes an instructor led classroom training program and supplemental self-study PowerPoint, providing a complete toolbox for skill development. It's part of the reproducible training library, a full suite of high quality researched based soft skill courseware that you can download, customize, and reproduce.

Sarah Cirone:

And I now like to introduce our presenter today, Tanya Longino. Tanya is the president and founder of HR Partners, an interview strategy firm. In this role, Tanya has helped clients develop competitive interview strategies for more than 25 years. As the human resources director and the director of employee relations, she has developed and trained on a variety of topics including diversity and inclusion, leadership styles, conflict resolution, organizational effectiveness, and workforce training and development. Her HR career spans several industries and specialties including finance, IT banking, specialty materials, pharmaceuticals, retail, and healthcare. She has enjoyed a great working relationship as a global business partner with companies such as Bank One, Rohm and Haas, GlaxoSmithKline, Toyota Financial, and others. It's an honor to have you speaking with us today Tanya.

Tayna Longino:

Thank you. Thank you, Sarah. Good afternoon everyone, and thank you for joining our webinar. How to say it, *Coaching Conversations*. Again, my name is Tanya Longino, and I'm excited to be with you. We will spend the next 45 to 60 minutes together talking about why coaching is important. The best coaching techniques and who benefits when we apply good coaching skills in different situations. Let's get started.

Tayna Longino:

So once again, we're going to spend time. And here's some of the objectives we'll cover. We'll identify the three main steps of an effective coaching section. We will spend some time on recognizing the correct application for inquiry and advocacy. As the coach, it's my job to keep the conversation moving. And we'll spend some time talking about how best to do that. How to apply basic coaching techniques for individual performance and improvement, career development, and also training for specific skills if they're needed.

Tayna Longino:

So you see one of my favorite go to career place gurus, which I will share with you is Dilbert. And I guess you wonder why. Why would Dilbert be one of my gurus? And in this particular depiction, you see what Dilbert says is the state of coaching. What it looks like today. Dilbert sometimes has the pulse of while it may be rather awkward sometimes, what you'll see is that they sometimes hit the nail on the head. In this depiction it says, "I got a text message from our boss." "What does it say?" "Keep up the good work." Work spelled W-R-K of course. "What does that mean?" "You just got your annual performance review, is what that means."

Tayna Longino:

What does that sound like to you? Does that sound like something that you have experienced from your current boss, or are you on the other end where you have been the sender of that type of text or sort communication? This may seem a little extreme, but it is indeed showing us that sometimes in the modern workforce, this is about as much engagement that happens. What we learn is gone are the days where a pat on the back is simply what our employees are looking for.

Tayna Longino:

So based on a Gallup survey, one in four employees strongly agree that their managers provide meaningful feedback. Feedback that helps them to get better. And only 30% of employees would agree that their manager involves them in setting goals at work. So when you look at the state of coaching, that doesn't seem like very good results.

Tayna Longino:

But what we do know and recognize is that modern workforce considers engaging workplace as an absolute fundamental requirement. As I mentioned, gone are the days where employees are just satisfied with the pat on the back, or the courtesy pass in the hallway. "Hey, good job. Thumbs up." The courtesy of just the even annual employee survey is no longer enough. Employees really do thrive in organizations where leaders communicate with them openly and consistently. So what employees are telling us is that they would like to have more feedback. More consistent feedback, more personalized feedback.

Tayna Longino:

According to the International Coach Foundation, coaching improves work performance by 70%. Time management is improved by 57%, and team effectiveness by 51%. Coaching impacts managers and supervisors as well. 30% of managers who are trained in utilizing the correct coaching techniques, they report that they have changed their managerial style to be better. Better as they empowered their staff, their employees. 60% of them feel more valued themselves. And 40% report that they feel more valuable to their immediate bosses. So these numbers support a case for why good coaching is important.

Tayna Longino:

So let's talk about the definition of coaching. Let's define it. Coaching is defined as an interaction in which one individual enables another to develop skills, attitudes, or behaviors to help them maximize their performance in their current role or in their future career. What is it? It's an interaction where a manager does what? Empowers. And I wanted to draw that word, that term out empower. So let's keep empowerment or empower in our minds. What else does this definition tell us?

Tayna Longino:

It's also an interaction in which one individual enables another to do what? Maximize their performance by developing their skills. That's really important. And developing those skills helps with the improvement, growth, and advancement. Keeping in mind the objective of a career, the individual is for team success. What else can we parse out of this definition? What else resonates with you when you read it?

Tayna Longino:

Again, the interaction in which one individual enables another to develop skills and attitudes that help them to do what? Improve their performance in their current role or their future career. Improving performance. So that's the goal there. That's the definition. And I just wanted to highlight those three areas in that definition.

Tayna Longino:

So now that we understand clearly what coaching is and why it's important, it would seem that it would be something that everyone would look forward to providing. But what makes it hard? What makes coaching such a struggle?

Tayna Longino:

So you can see by this next slide, someone that many of you may be familiar with or a depiction of someone we may be familiar with. How many of us have either experienced the feeling of being perceived like the hulk if you are the ones delivering a coaching conversation, or you've been on the receiving end of a hulkish exchange? I know I have. Just getting to the table is sometimes just riddled with anxiety. You're unprepared, you fumble over every sentence, you resist making eye contact because the goal is just to get through it. And just in general, you'd rather be spending time doing a million other things rather than sitting across from an employee talking about what they should've, would've, could've done differently.

Tayna Longino:

So let's talk a little bit about why it's deemed such a challenge. In some workplaces, there may be an office norm that's been set up as a tradition where conversations with the leadership of the organization is not viewed as positive.

Tayna Longino:

They only take place when it's for perhaps a punitive reason or only set aside for the annual performance review, if you have one. Sometimes, the supervisors feel like, "I just don't have enough time. We can't take time away from production or sales to sit down and go back and forth about what you should or shouldn't be doing better." Or they may feel very much like, "We'll get to it soon. I'm not stressing about it right now. It's a waste of valuable time anyway. We send out that annual survey and we get fewer responses, and I don't know what employees want me to do. I can't read their minds. So if employees aren't happy or if they need something more, they should speak up."

Tayna Longino:

So how many of you have heard or said those words in your conversations? Either with your colleagues, or you've heard them around the water cooler? And finally, I've heard managers say, "Nowadays I have to be really careful about what I say, so I'm not so sure what or how to coach around certain topics." That's something that we hear managers talk about often these days.

Tayna Longino:

So here's where teaching managers and supervisors how to give great coaching is so important. It's difficult sometimes to change behavior because it has become a norm in the office. We decide that we want to prioritize other things ahead of spending time with our employees and helping them to get better. Or, we shy away because we don't know how to facilitate a constructive conversation.

Tayna Longino:

So with those things in mind, what we do know is that good coaching pays off. According to a source on the Corporate Executive Board, amongst the many companies that they have surveyed, there are some formidable reasons why it's important to pay attention to how we coach. And you can see here that it improves employee retention. For example, if my boss and my company are invested in my performance, then I'm more apt to say where I feel valued. I like my job and my company, I'm satisfied. I feel as though I am improving as a professional. Learning and I'm developing new skills that I can add to my professional toolbox. So my satisfaction is improving. That's important.

Tayna Longino:

My organization, my commitment to the organization has improved because I'm now looking at leadership opportunities. I see myself as a rising leader in the organization. I have a strong affinity for my organization, and I want to do what? I'm more apt to share that with others, make referrals to those that I see seeking the same things that I find in my current organization.

Tayna Longino:

And finally, if I'm positive and I then begin to model the same behaviors that I want to see in others. It makes for a really good company culture, a good environment. A good working space.

Tayna Longino:

I found this quote that I like. "Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them." If I have ownership and accountability in my professional development, then it becomes a part of who I am and not just what I do. That was my takeaway from that one.

Tayna Longino:

So here's a question for you. I'd like for you to take a moment to think about this one. What percentage of time do you currently spend on coaching your employees? So if you wouldn't mind. Yup. Thank you, Sarah.

Sarah Cirone:

You guys can type your answer into the question box when you go to webinar control panel. Tanya, we have some responses coming in here. Leslie says, "One hour a month minimum." Tia says about 40%. Earl says 25%. Morella says quarterly. We have some more 30%'s coming in. Yeah, we seem to be all over the board here. Daily is what Lori says. Yep. We have another response saying that they coach daily. Yes. We have some interesting responses across the board here.

Tayna Longino:

Wonderful. Sarah, thank you. And thank you for all that have answered that question. And what you have heard based on the responses is that there's no realistic science to how much time you need to spend on coaching. However, the time that you spend, it must be effective. And what we found is that using smart goals with frequent touches is one of the best ways to go about it. I liked in particular, I think it was Lori who said that daily she takes an opportunity to coach. Because coaching sessions don't always lend themselves to sitting down across the table for 45 minutes to an hour. It could be as you walk through a lunch period or outside with an employee talking about some ways to improve performance, their technique, or development. Sharing with them some training opportunities. And all of those incorporate and encompass opportunities for coaching. So I do appreciate everyone's response there. Thank you.

Tayna Longino:

So course objectives for some of the balance of the time that we're together. I just want to remind us that we're going to touch on the three steps of effective coaching. We will recognize that asking the right questions is very critical and very important as we're sitting down and talking with an employee. And recognizing when it's appropriate to use skills and techniques that we've learned in different situations.

Tayna Longino:

So in that first bullet, focusing on effective coaching. So you see here that focusing on the person is important. And why is that really important, focusing on the person? These are important elements to remember when you're coaching. Focusing on the individual and not just the issue

or the problem, or the entire team, lends itself to me, the employee understanding that this is time that you've set aside for me. And that you my supervisor, my manager, or the leader is paying attention to my growth and my development. It becomes personal.

Tayna Longino:

Being an expert questioner, if that's a word we could use. Asking good questions, probing for understanding, doing our best not to read from a checklist. A cookie cutter checklist that's been created for everyone. Using inviting language. The goal of an effective coaching session is to establish trust in the engagement. And we want to remember that our questions and our conversations should not imply judgment or wrongdoing. That's not the time for that. This is not a performance planning meeting. This is more of how can I support you become the best at what you desire.

Tayna Longino:

Be mindful that we don't fall back on the traditional feedback sessions. And many of us on the line can't speak back to feedback sessions that we've been a part of. On either side of the table. Feedback sessions are mostly one-sided engagements. We want our coaching conversations to be what you see here depicted. It's a two way engagement. It's not just a lecture for the employee.

Tayna Longino:

This next slide shows exactly what those feedback sections can lend themselves to. Welcome to your one sided review, please take a seat. And think about it. You stand in there looking at that trap door like I might just fall inside that door if I sit in that seat. And that's pretty much how feedback sessions historically have been thought about on both sides. So we want to apply techniques that are performance improvement driven, development for your high potentials and those who seek to be high potentials. And training for specific skills, whether it be for individuals or for a team.

Tayna Longino:

And you see here in the next slide, that the conversations can be reflective assessing and looking at past projects and tasks that have been completed. Discussing strengths and opportunities, and looking at ways to improve. All of this can happen in the same discussion, but certainly can happen in a way that is not seen as punitive.

Tayna Longino:

And this conversation gives opportunity for what? Opportunity for encouraging the employee to lead the discussion, giving them opportunity to ask questions where they have reflected on their past performance. And also, looking ahead where the employee and the manager began to strategize on how we move forward in the future.

Tayna Longino:

So remember earlier, we talked about focusing on the individual more than focusing on a particular problem. Because this is where coaching sessions rely on the ability to focus on the needs of the individual. You're creating a strategy that's unique for the individual or the employee that's sitting before you. Remember the tone, nonjudgmental. Remember some of your active listening skills, being mindful of your body language. Because you want to create an atmosphere that is inviting, and positive, and approachable.

Tayna Longino:

Remembering that not every conversation or interaction with every employee will be the same. So doing your homework upfront, you're going to take time to make sure that the session is specific to the individual that you are talking to. You want them to walk away feeling that this was a session that was designed for them. You've been proactive. You have looked back at various communications that you've had with the employee. You may have even spoken to some of their colleagues that they have worked with, if it's a matrix environment. If you're talking about an employee who works across different organizations or different groups. You've done your due diligence and done some of the pre-work, and it shows in your individual conversation with the employee.

Tayna Longino:

Be inquisitive. Asking thoughtful questions. You are asking open-minded and open ended questions. Open ended questions, very thoughtful questions, not just your yes or nos. Because what ultimately when asking those open ended questions, it leads to self reflection and more realization of how we can get better. So being inquisitive is important.

Tayna Longino:

We talked about body language. Active listening is a skill. It requires what you see here in this slide. It requires you to be focused and engaged on the person that you're speaking with, that you're talking to. That you respect what they're saying. If you don't understand something that's been shared that you're asking a clarifying question or asking them to repeat or say, "I believe what you said was," or, "I want to make sure that I understand." Those are the clarifying questions.

Tayna Longino:

That you're leaning into the discussion. You're not sitting with your arms folded, watching the clock, looking at your cell phone, tapping your pencil. You're remaining engaged. And that you acknowledge. You're taking the time to acknowledge what's been shared with you. That's all a part of showing good body language, showing that you're present, and you're intentional.

Tayna Longino:

So when I'm asking good questions, what does that look like? Here's some examples. You're asking questions that are going to help diagnose and give you options. So here's what that looks like in a coaching session.

Tayna Longino:

What does success look like to you? So you're asking questions that are very specific to either the role that your employee is currently in, or an opportunity that they're seeking. Or the part that they play perhaps on a team. So what does success look like for you in this role? Questions that explore absence.

Tayna Longino:

So here's where again, you want to ask those questions that create thought around the best opportunities and options that exist. And remembering that asking these questions help the employee to do some self realizations and self actualization. And some thought around what it is that they want out of the engagement. Again, what does success look like?

Tayna Longino:

And then, questions that drive action. So after the coaching session, there should always be a call to action. And follow up. Questions like, "What is the first thing you plan to do when we leave this discussion? Who's going to help you reach those goals? How can I help you? What are some of the tools or resources you might need to help you achieve success?" So those are the types of questions that are good to ask when you're sitting down with your employee and coming up with a plan.

Tayna Longino:

And it's good to ask the questions. Because oftentimes, what good looks like for each individual can be different. So here, success looks different for different people. For some, it's getting from point A to Z without any hiccups. That's what success looks like. And then for others, for many of us, this is more of a realistic approach to success. We know that there are some turns left and right, some steps that we have to take backwards, to get to a place of success. You still get there, but there certainly are some stops and starts perhaps along the way, or some course correction. And that's where the conversations come in. That's where the frequency of touch, the frequency of the daily or biweekly coaching sessions are important.

Tayna Longino:

So think about what does your vision of success look like? Does it look like the A to Z straight line with no interruptions? Or does it look more realistically like the other depiction here.

Tayna Longino:

Asking the right questions. This is very important, and this is why the homework piece is important. This is why doing the upfront pre-work is important. Asking all the right questions and seeking information, and being proactive ahead of your discussion will help you with asking those questions. And uncovering answers to questions you think might come up in your discussion. Anticipation.

Tayna Longino:

We talked about who we might go to, and how we anticipate some of the questions that might be asked of us. If we spend time with our employees learning what they are interested in, then we have an opportunity to get to know them, get to know what their likes, their dislikes are. And what type of environment do they work best. Are they great on teams, or are they most productive when they're working individually? How are those cross matrix relationships working, and where do they see themselves in a year from now or two years from now? And how can I help them? Do they have mentors or allies in the organization where they work? All of those questions can be prepared for in advance so that you can ask those questions. And maybe even be prepared with resources, and tools, and support for answers.

Tayna Longino:

Avoiding questions that suggest judgment or blame. What does this look like? The pointing of the fingers. "Well, have you tried to do X?" "And the last time I heard that you tried, this is what happened. Why did you do it that way? It didn't seem to work the first time. Why did you keep trying it that way? It didn't work for Adam. So what makes you think it's going to work for you? And how do you plan to get that done without some upfront planning? And who told you you could do that anyway? We've always done it this way and it's worked for us."

Tayna Longino:

So all of that sounds rather accusatory. It sounds judgmental. It gives little room for opportunity to try something different, experiment with new techniques or new strategies. Or even to do something that best fits the way that I personally or professionally work. And it also, what this technique here, the one we're asking you to avoid also does, is it shuts me down as the employee. I don't feel very much like I want to try or do anything different with fingers being pointed at me.

Tayna Longino:

Instead, here's some of the options that we think work best. "Tell me about how you came to this decision, or this method, or this plan. What are some of the options you feel will work best? And how will you go about creating the plan in order for you to get to your desired objective?" And you can see by the body language here, how can I support you?

Tayna Longino:

So here's a little case here. Employee Pat and coach Sam. Here's the coaching need. A deeper understanding of some products that are being offered. Pat is a driver who likes his independence but is always eager for coaching. And Sam's approach is to be proactive with more formal coaching interactions, and trying to create enough space for independent thoughts and feelings. It's very much what we've been discussing.

Tayna Longino:

Number two in the course objective says recognize the correct application for inquiry and advocacy. What does that look like? Before you begin any coaching conversation, and we talked about this in some of our earlier discussion. Review your employee's most recent metrics and other performance evaluation. Getting feedback as we discussed. If you use a dashboard or however your reports are designed, whatever platform you use. Always take time to review those before you sit down with an employee. Identify a couple of topics that you want to discuss in your conversation. Make sure that it's based on current performance, or a level of urgency that you need to address a certain area of development.

Tayna Longino:

And again, look to others who perhaps work with this particular employee for feedback. Peers, project managers, mentors, advisors, etc. And then please always plan out your key messaging. How do you want the conversation to be delivered and remembered? So making sure that you have that information in your hand before you talk with the employee.

Tayna Longino:

During that conversation, here's some of the key activities you want to make sure happen. Make sure that you keep the employee's preferences and needs in mind as you begin your conversation. Remember that this is their individual time for each topic. Talk it through. Remember current performance and keep a positive, encouraging tone. A positive and encouraging dialogue. Remember, the goal is to empower the employee as we learned in the definition. Empowering them and providing them with skills, tools, and resources. Leave sufficient time for your employee to share their own perspective, that this is where the self-reflection becomes important so you have time to respond to any questions where they feel that they need support or guidance. And then the two of you agree on what's next, including the when, what, and the where. What topics will you focus on? What actions do they need to take? Setting some smart goals, checking those goals off.

Tayna Longino:

During your discussion, make sure that we're asking some of these questions. What strategies that work well for you that we can apply to other situations? Find out what's contributed to the success that they're currently having, if we can duplicate that as we move forward and progress. If you find that something has not gone as well as you would have liked, it's a good time to ask. "So what are some things you would do differently if there's an opportunity to start over, what could you do different? Or share with me the roadblocks that have gotten in the way of your success? What challenges exist and how can I either remove them or less work toward how to work through them, how to better manage them? And what are the next steps, and how do I help you get there?" Sarah, here's a poll question.

Sarah Cirone:

Right? I will launch the poll. And you can just submit your answers. Give people a couple of minutes there to cast their votes. We're now sharing those results, Tanya.

Tayna Longino:

Thank you. So thank you for sharing your results of the poll. The question, we list a couple of questions there. What's the most effective question we've talked about when you're sitting down and having a discussion or conversation, a coaching conversation, what are some of the most effective questions? And it looks like every one of us agree is that number two is most effective. What are some of the options that you are considering? So when you're sitting across from your employee and you're having a coaching conversation, it's a good idea to ask a question that will elicit some response that helps get to the desired outcome. So we want the employee to have some ownership and accountability for achieving the success that they desire. So thank you for participating in that.

Tayna Longino:

So what happens after the discussion? What happens after the conversation? As a supervisor, the manager, or the coach, it's important for me to summarize the conversation. And of course the agreed upon next steps. We want to record it, and it helps us to remember what we've agreed upon. And also, it's our guide. It's our guide for future conversations, right? We're providing specific plans and resources if they've been requested or we find that they're needed. Because this is the commitment that we're making to the employee. That I as the coach, the supervisor, the leader, I'm here to support you in your success. And with that call to action that we talked about earlier, we're keeping track of the results as we move ahead. We're measuring progress. And we're course correcting, or we are providing additional coaching, mentoring, resources, whatever it is we're providing. And we're keeping track of it.

Tayna Longino:

Applying basic coaching techniques for performance improvement, career development, and other skills. Remember we talked earlier about the importance of being able to use these techniques in various situations. While we've done a lot of conversation, a lot of talk about individual coaching sessions on individual performance improvement and career development. Of course we can use these techniques. We can modify them and have them work for even if there is a specific skill that is to be learned. If we are having a conversion in our department or we are upgrading and we're teaching, or we have expectations that our employees are picking up on specific skills. We use the same techniques, applying them, and modifying them to fit the other opportunities that exist in our departments.

Tayna Longino:

We always get this question. What does developing once we do that call to action, what does that action plan look like? And it's always wise to have your employee help to develop that plan, right? And there goes the opportunity for inclusion and accountability. Ask those open ended questions again. What will you take away from our discussion? What do you need from me? Remembering to set realistic expectations. In those subsequent conversations, we will identify and celebrate small wins. If we're meeting on a regular basis, then we can measure the outcomes, and we can course correct when something might not be working in the direction or

on pace as we thought. And of course we want to set a completion date.

Tayna Longino:

When will we know that success has happened? Or how much time are we giving ourselves? And while we're working through our plans, set some frequent and consistent checkpoints.

Tayna Longino:

So what we've done with the time that we've had is we have identified the steps of an effective coaching session. We have spent some time recognizing how to apply the techniques. And looking at the skills and the techniques that are need for performance improvement, career development, and in all the other areas of our organizations. And what's needed for improvement and success. So I hope you found our time together beneficial and helpful. You've been able to take away a few pearls from our conversation. This is a topic that I strongly over my 25 plus years of working, I strongly advise leaders. Especially new leaders or even those leaders as things evolve, as you saw with our Dilbert comic strip there. Times have evolved and they continue to change. And leaders and managers should look for opportunities to meet their employees where they are. And this is a way to do it where everyone benefits. So Sarah, I am open for questions, and I thank everyone for the time that they've participated.

Sarah Cirone:

Yeah. So please just type your questions into the question area on your go to webinar control panel. We have some time here to answer some of those. While we're waiting, we actually had a question come in earlier Tanya, from Jamie. They would like to know what some examples of questions that create tension are.

Tayna Longino:

Thank you Jamie for that question. What are some examples of questions that create tension? So I'm assuming these would be questions that come from the supervisor or the manager. And what we have found in our experience is if you go back to some of those questions that are more accusatory or more judgemental, those questions contend to put you on more of a defensive if I'm the employee. The questions that are finger-pointing or they are not necessarily questions that are positive, but they're more in line with what you did not do, more than how can I support you? What are you looking for? It's more of the, "Well that didn't work for Bob. So how do you think this is going to work for you?" Or, "Wow, well why would you do it that way? That's different. We've not ever done that before. We've always done it this way." So those are the questions that contend to create a little uneasiness. Does that help? I hope Jamie.

Sarah Cirone:

Great. We have another question that came in from George. And he would like to know what you think are the most frequent mistakes that we managers do in this process?

Tayna Longino:

That's a really good question, George. What are the most frequent mistakes that we managers do in this process? What I find and what the surveys find George, is that not doing the pre-work is one of those areas that we found can be very beneficial. If we use a cookie cutter approach for every interaction, then we really are delivering a message to the employee that A, does my manager really know and understand me? Or B, does my manager really care or have real true interest in my development or my success as an employee? I have been on the receiving end. This was a personal story, of receiving a performance review that while started off in my name written out to me. But as we progress through the performance review and evaluation, I can see where the names were changed or left unchanged. So it was really one of those templated conversations or reviews. So the pre-work is really important because it shows that you are engaged and connected, and you really are making an intentional effort to have conversation with your employee.

Tayna Longino:

Something else that we do as managers that sets us off on the wrong track is not being an active listener. As a manager or supervisor, we spend a lot of our time prepared with the answer. So you all know that feeling. You listen half-heartedly because you think you already have the answer to the question or you want to finish the sentence of the employee. All of that sends a message, a negative message. And not necessarily allowing for the complete engagement and trust that you're trying to build with your employee. Thank you George.

Sarah Cirone:

Great. And Sherry's asking for employees who are very resistant to change and have spent time coaching them with no progress, what's the next step in a coaching environment?

Tayna Longino:

Thank you Sherry. Those employees who show resistance to change, and I'm sure that all of us have had these experiences with employees. What we've found that works well is this is where asking a lot of those open ended questions. Again, asking them for what does success look like for them? What are their goals, their objectives? Doing a lot of the work around what is it that they want in the engagement, the working relationship, their professional experience. How can you support them filling up their backpack, their professional backpack? If you envision it that way. What are some of the tools and resources we can support you with so that you can get to your desired goal or achievement? Oftentimes it's as easy as asking those questions. Sometimes employees don't know what they don't know. And that coaching conversation becomes an opportunity for them to express that. And remember not to fall back on in those initial conversations, it being the traditional feedback session. Where I'm just telling you all the things that you have failed at, not done right. Where you've not come in at goal, at budget. We want to talk about what is it that you're looking to do? Because here are our goals, and I want to understand what your goals are. What are your professional goals? Sherry I hope that helps.

Sarah Cirone:

Carol's asking, "How do you respond to the employee who says, 'I don't know. You tell me what

to do."

Tayna Longino:

That's a good one. "I don't know. You tell me what to do." And that's not uncommon. As I just talked to Sherry about, oftentimes employees don't know what they don't know. And often that response, "I don't know you tell me," that usually comes from I just don't know. Right? I truly don't understand what the expectations are for me. What are you my supervisor, my leader, my manager? What is it that you want me to do? And this becomes an opportunity for that give and take, that exchange, the real dialogue and engagement. "So here's what our company expectations are, our goals, the goals that we want to work towards. How do you see yourself fitting into the organization? Where are your personal professional goals? Where are they aligned? How can I support the alignment?" And have a conversation from there. Carol, I hope that helps.

Sarah Cirone:

We have time for maybe one or two more questions. And Belinda asks, "How do you handle a supervisor that refuses to go with the company vision rather than their personal belief?"

Tayna Longino:

Well, that's good. How do you handle a supervisor who refuses to go with the company goals rather than their own beliefs? That's a good one, Belinda. That can be a challenge for sure, because it sets up for confusion on your team with individuals. And when you have a supervisor that either shadows the fence or walks away from the company goals or mission, it can be troubling. And this is where having mentors and allies within an organization becomes very important, or aligning yourself with other supervisors or other leaders in the organization. Because if there is a misalignment, then it's very difficult to understand what expectations are. And you always want to have alignment and understanding of the goals after you've had the discussion with your supervisor or your manager. And there's still no clarity around, or there's misalignment.

Tayna Longino:

Because ultimately, your charge as an employee is to align yourself to the goals. Especially if those goals are tied to your performance, any incentives, or just purely the direction of the organization. You want to be tied to those. You want to understand them. So if you had that initial conversation expressing that there seems to be some disconnect. And you want to understand, you want to follow the company's direction. If after that initial discussion occurs, then Belinda, I think then it might be an opportunity for you to seek out perhaps another mentor or another leader or supervisor that you trust to have a discussion with. A broader discussion around your need to understand. Thank you for that question.

Sarah Cirone:

And that brings us here to the top of the hour. I want to thank you very much, Tanya. This was

wonderful.

Tayna Longino:

Thank you.

Sarah Cirone:

And we appreciate you looking to HRDQ-U for your training needs. We published research based, experiential learning products that you can deliver in your organization. Check out our online or print self assessments, our up out of your seat games, our reproducible workshops that you can customize such as the one we spoke about today, and more. Either at our website, or give our customer team a call. And if you need help learning a training program or you'd like one of our expert trainers to deliver it for you, we also provide those services. We look forward to being your soft skills training resource. And another big thank you for joining us today, Tanya.

Tayna Longino:

Thank you, Sarah. Thank you very much, and everyone who joined.

Sarah Cirone:

Yes. And thank you all for participating in today's webinar. Happy training.