

Brief Notes on Training and Coaching

It is in the interests of each organisation that all staff have the opportunity to develop their skills. This can be done in a formal way through training courses and seminars or through a variety of other methods.

Here are some:

- Training courses or workshops
- NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications)
- Seminars
- Personal study
- Working alongside a more experienced colleague
- Attending conferences
- Reading a book or watching a video
- Professional bodies / journals

And here are some others:

- Observation
- Discussion
- Learning by experience
- Teaching someone else
- Research
- Writing instructions
- Role-playing
- Case studies
- Case conferences
- Rehearsing a situation
- Projects
- Mentoring

Although people are generally aware of the value of training, coaching is a means of learning sometimes overlooked.

Coaching is less about telling and showing and more about helping people to learn from their experiences. A good coach encourages the learner to explore their ideas, think about the impact and implications of their actions and find their own solutions to problems.

The advantage of coaching is that the learner can use 'real' work to develop their skills. They can gain confidence by tackling tasks, achieving results and seeing the end product. This means that the learning is more easily applied to the workplace than some more theoretical training.

While every care has been taken in compiling these notes, Action in rural Sussex cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions; the notes are not intended to be a substitute for specific legal advice.

A good coach:

- encourages and supports
- helps the learner consider options open to them
- sets reviews so that risks are minimised
- is patient
- helps the learner work through their ideas – even if they doubt their feasibility
- sets clear boundaries of authority
- clarifies
- asks questions
- accepts that it might be a slow process
- helps the learner review their learning

A good coach does not:

- do it for them!
- tell them what they should or should not do
- impose their own ideas or methods
- set them up to fail
- set too simple a task
- use hypothetical problems – the task must be real