Coaching Conversation Job Aid

Turn everyday workplace moments into focused conversations that support reflection, ownership, and action.

USE THIS JOB AID WHEN

- ☐ A team member needs to reflect on how a conversation or meeting unfolded.
- ☐ You want to reinforce a communication skill after training.
- ☐ A recurring communication pattern needs to change.
- ☐ You need to recognize progress and agree on a practical next step.

The 5-Part Coaching Conversation

PREPARE	Choose one observable situation. Clarify the purpose, desired outcome, and what you personally observed.
OPEN	Set a constructive tone. Explain why the conversation matters and invite the employee's perspective.
EXPLORE	Use open questions, listen for patterns, and help the employee connect impact, choices, and alternatives.
AGREE	Define one or two specific actions, what support is needed, and how progress will be noticed.
FOLLOW THROUGH	Revisit the commitment soon. Recognize application, offer feedback, and adjust the plan if needed.

Conversation principles

- Coach the person; address the behaviour.
- Use facts and examples, not labels or assumptions.
- Ask before advising. Aim for the employee to do most of the thinking.
- Keep the focus narrow enough to produce action.
- End with clarity: who will do what, by when, and how you will follow up.

Conversation Planner

Use the prompts below to prepare, guide the discussion, and capture the commitment. Keep the conversation centered on one real workplace situation.

1. PREPARE: What matters most?

- ☐ What specific situation, behaviour, or pattern do I want to discuss?
- ☐ What did I observe or hear directly?
- ☐ What impact did it have on the work, relationship, client, or team?
- ☐ What outcome do I want from this conversation?

My notes:

2. OPEN: Create context and safety

- ☐ "I would like to talk about [specific situation] so we can understand what happened and identify what would help next time."
- ☐ "I noticed [observable behaviour]. I would like to hear how you saw the situation."
- ☐ "My goal is to support your success and agree on a practical next step."

My notes:

3. EXPLORE: Build insight and choice

- ☐ What was happening from your perspective?
- ☐ What were you trying to achieve?
- ☐ What worked well? What did not land as intended?
- ☐ How do you think the other person experienced the conversation?
- ☐ What pattern do you notice in how you respond under pressure?
- ☐ What could you adapt next time while still being authentic?

My notes:

4. AGREE: Convert insight into action

- ☐ What will you do differently in the next relevant conversation?
- ☐ What is one small behaviour you can practice this week?
- ☐ What support, preparation, or feedback would help?
- ☐ How will we know the new approach is working?

My notes:

5. FOLLOW THROUGH: Reinforce learning

- ☐ When will we check in?
- ☐ What evidence will we review?
- ☐ How will I recognize progress and provide useful feedback?

My notes:

Manager Question Bank

Choose two or three questions, not the whole list. Follow the employee's thinking and use a brief pause before adding your own perspective.

To understand the situation

☐ Walk me through what happened. ☐ What information or assumptions shaped your response?	☐ What did you notice in the moment? ☐ What part of the situation was most challenging?

To build self-awareness

☐ When pressure increased, what happened to your communication? ☐ What impact did your approach have?	☐ What do you think others needed from you in that moment? ☐ What feedback or reaction gives you that impression?

To encourage adaptation

☐ What might you keep the same? ☐ How could you make your message clearer, more direct, or more inviting?	☐ What could you adjust for this person or situation? ☐ What would a successful second attempt sound like?

To create ownership

☐ What options do you see? ☐ What could get in the way?	☐ Which option are you willing to try? ☐ What support do you want from me?

To reinforce progress

☐ Where have you already used the new approach? ☐ What are you learning about yourself?	☐ What changed in the response you received? ☐ What will you practice next?

Helpful language when you need to offer feedback

Observation	"In yesterday's project meeting, I heard..."
Impact	"The impact was..."
Invitation	"How does that compare with your experience?"
Alternative	"Would you be open to trying...?"
Commitment	"What will you do, and when will you try it?"

Action and Follow-Through

A coaching conversation is complete only when insight is translated into a clear experiment and revisited in the workplace.

Focus behaviour	*What specific behaviour will be practiced?* _____
Workplace opportunity	*Where and when will it be tried?* _____
Success evidence	*What will be different or observable?* _____
Support	*What preparation, resource, or feedback is needed?* _____
Check-in date	*When will we revisit progress?* _____
Next step	*What happens after the check-in?* _____

30-60-90 day reinforcement rhythm

Within 30 days	By 60 days	By 90 days
Practice the behaviour in 2-3 relevant conversations. Hold a short check-in and review one example.	Look for consistency across different people or situations. Offer specific feedback on progress and impact.	Review the pattern over time. Confirm what has become a habit and identify the next development focus.

Quick self-check for managers

- ☐ I used a specific example and described observable behaviour.
- ☐ I invited the employee's perspective before offering advice.
- ☐ I listened for understanding rather than preparing my response.
- ☐ The employee identified or helped shape the action.
- ☐ We agreed on support, timing, and follow-through.

Better communication becomes sustainable when managers create regular opportunities to reflect, practice, and receive feedback.