

## WELCOME '4Q PERFORMANCE COACHING' – RIP APPRAISALS

Most people hate traditional performance appraisals for a lot of good reasons. So thank God traditional appraisals are rapidly dying an overdue death.

So what are the alternatives to actually help people and teams reflect on their performance, exploit their strengths, overcome limitations and actually learn profoundly?

### '4 Q Performance Coaching'

We call the alternative 4Q Performance Coaching. It can be used as a self-coaching technique or to constructively coach other individuals and teams. It is very quick, simple, positive and even pleasant to do. 4Q coaching also delivers great performance and learning outcomes

*The 4 Q label simply stands for the 4 empowering questions that are asked as the foundation of the process. And all four questions must be asked.*

# 4Q

#### Question One – What are we / you doing well?

A very empowering and positive question that invites people or teams to reflect on their behaviours and actions that deliver great results. It is positive as it implies positive outcomes are being achieved. It is also motivational as it recognises and celebrates the desired outcomes and behaviours.

This question reinforces the desired outcomes and behaviours and also motivates their repetition. This occurs because people will repeat the behaviours that they are rewarded for and positively recognised. It engages people in continuous improvement.



#### Question Two – What could we / you be doing better or differently?

Another empowering and future-focused question aimed at enhancing performance and developing desired behaviours and action. This reflective question is essential when reviewing any performance and especially when remedial action and different behaviours are required.

This question indicates that continuous improvement is possible and required. It respectfully communicates that the status quo is not OK. The self-imposed requirement is that we must always strive to be better, quicker and smarter.

It also places the responsibility to identify and implement improvement strategies very strongly with the people or teams involved. It actively engages people and is more powerful than boss prescribed solutions.

#### Question Three – What have we / you learned from this experience?

Ongoing learning is a critical leadership capability. This reflective question builds on the powerful learning principle of "learning by experience". Work and life is a

series of ongoing experiences that offer wonderful learning opportunities, if we choose to use them. Unfortunately many are lost.

An important concept in asking this question is that it extracts great learning from successful and unsuccessful experiences. There is undoubtedly huge learning from reflecting on positive events, instead of the frequent focus on failure.

#### **Question 4 - What do we / you do next?**

This future-focused question engages the individual or team in formulating essential action steps that will be implemented as a result of the review and reflection process outlined above. It ensures that performance and capability is continuously improved through the 4 Q process.

This question also ensures optimal people engagement, motivation and ownership of ongoing performance improvement and continuous learning.

#### **What about key results areas (KRA's), goals and key performance indicators (KPI's)?**

Goals and performance measures are an excellent way of communicating performance expectations, which we very strongly encourage. They provide a great foundation for the 4 Q performance coaching process.

The reality is that while we agree that formal setting and communication of performance expectations is a great concept, it is seldom done well or done at all.

The 4 Q performance coaching process works well in the absence of formal performance expectations. It respectfully forces discussions around implicit expectations, as we can't discuss what's going well or needs changing, unless we have some quantitative or qualitative standard to compare to.



#### **Invitation**

We invite you to seriously review the effectiveness of your current performance review and appraisal process. Then ask yourself the question: 'Will the 4 Q process be worth considering?'

To find out more about the process, implementation and training, feel free to contact the writer [ron@wial.in](mailto:ron@wial.in).

I would welcome your comments or views on this topic.

#### **Acknowledgement**

I would to acknowledge the great contribution WIAL Action Learning has made to the "4 Q Performance Coaching " concept. The first three reflection questions have been drawn from the WIAL Action Learning process and applied with poetic licence in a different context.

Written by Ron McLuckie, CEO WIAL India, Master Action Learning Coach

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