

Act Like a Coach and Improve Your OHS Outcomes



As a safety professional, you're likely the driving force behind your company's OHS program. But you can't ensure compliance with the OHS laws and protect workers' health and safety on your own—it's a team effort. So if you adopt some of the characteristics of a coach—that is, be collaborative, supportive, challenging and helpful—it may help you better engage with both members of management as well as workers to improve OHS outcomes.

To help safety professionals, the IOSH in the UK released [Coaching for safety 'An introductory guide'](#), which aims to provide OHS practitioners with a basic understanding of the soft skill of coaching.

To determine your existing style, answer 'yes,' 'no' or 'maybe' as to whether your colleagues would say that you:

- Encourage and support them'
- Listen carefully and in depth'
- Use frequent summarizing to check on their understanding'
- Demonstrate that you understand their situation and appreciate the constraints that influence their choices'
- Question them and help them explore options and find solutions'
- Help their personal understanding and development'
- Acknowledge and praise their successes'

- Are a valuable member of the team'

If most of your responses were 'yes,' then you're already a coach, even though perhaps not consciously, and probably without that role description.

If most of the responses were 'no,' is that because your organisation has an outdated internal culture or because you haven't personally kept pace as it has evolved to a more supportive style'

In either case, you can use the IOSH guide to get a better understanding of the skills of an effective coach and how to develop or improve them yourself.

The [OHSInsider.com](https://www.ohsinsider.com) has resources, articles and tools to help [safety professionals](#) do their jobs more effectively, including:

- Avoiding [personal liability](#) for workplace incidents
- [Model Safety Coordinator Job Description](#)
- [New Framework Provides Clarity on the Role of OHS Professionals](#)
- Articles to help you make the [business case for safety](#) to senior management.

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