

Coaching for Improved Performance

By Christopher Huston

Many times on the drill ground, it is difficult for the instructor to see every action being taken. Furthermore this makes correcting mistakes come after the fact, either it wasn't seen or caught while it was happening. Do not let mistakes in training turn into bad habits. Poor performance on the drill ground leads to poor performance on the fire ground.

The training ground **IS THE TIME** to correct mistakes, seek out weaknesses and coach to improve the performance of all.

5 Steps to Coach for Improved Performance

1. Stop the act, ask what they are doing.
2. Ask, "What is the plan?"
3. Coach it, Correct it!
4. Allow them to Finish
5. Review with them to check for understanding.

The first step is to **Stop the act, ask what they are doing**. Find out what the issue is. Could it be a team problem such as communication. It is a lack of knowledge or understanding. If tools and equipment are involved, is there a problem with the tool or operator error.

Once the issue is identified then **Ask what their plan is**. Are they performing improperly, are they doing it a different way. What outcome do they expect? They may have a different means to the same end.

The third step, **Coach it, Correct it**. Intervene to correct the issue. Show them proper/departments methods. Demonstrate if necessary, but ensure they understand before proceeding.

We then want to **Allow them to finish** the task to completion, as long as it is safe to do so.

Finally, talk about it, **Review** why you stopped them, ask what they expected to happen, how you corrected the situation and finally what we learned. Contract with them so that they leave wanting to perform properly again and again.

Proficient performance does not happen automatically nor does it happen overnight. No one should be expected to see it, do it, then master it, all in a single training session. As Trainers, Instructors and Drillmasters we must coach personnel so that they walk away with the knowledge and information to practice skills on their own until proficiency is met.

Be a COACH, not a dictator.

