

## OSCAR Speed (Corridor) Coaching

### Speed Coaching: five minutes in the corridor

Coaching is not necessarily a special activity that needs intricate planning and a carefully negotiated date in the diary. It can be a brief five-minute exchange in the corridor or while you are waiting for a meeting to start. The typical scenario here is that you are asked a single question by a team member. The temptation is to offer advice although the person is perfectly capable of answering the question him or herself. They may be looking for reassurance that some proposed action meets with your approval, they may be worried about a sudden problem or may be looking to delegate the problem upwards to you because they are frightened of dealing with it themselves.

Here is how it might go. A team member sees you helping yourself to a cup of coffee while people are gathering before the start of a meeting. **She announces, looking a little apprehensive, that there is a difficulty with hitting an important deadline on a project in which you are both involved.** What does she want from you? There are several possibilities: reassurance that the deadline can slip, the hope that you will take it over and relieve her of the responsibility, the chance to offer you her own solutions. You have no means of knowing, but you do know that this is an opportunity for coaching.

You say	Your mental dialogue
Mmm...Sounds tricky	I need to offer her some rapport here and give her my full attention even though I was hoping to glance at my papers for this meeting, but this sounds like a priority.
What do you need from me – I’m aware we’ve only got five minutes before the meeting starts?	Need to get the Outcome clear and to make it clear time is short
[The team member pauses for a moment and says, ‘I need to run my ideas past you’]	
So the situation is that we might miss that deadline? What’s behind that?	Need to move to S - Situation
[The team member gives you a quick run down on the cause – an equipment breakdown – but also hints at a longer-term safety issue]	
So what are your options here? And what choices do you have?	We’re at C (Choices and Consequences) now and I need to make sure I ask her for upsides and downsides and don’t overlook the safety issue in a future conversation
[The team member quickly outlines two possible courses of action, briefly describing why she prefers Option A to Option B. You nod wisely while she is talking, encouraging her to continue without interrupting. The conversation then moves to the Action and Review phases]	
Yes, I agree. Option A sounds best to me. What’s your next step?	Make sure she tells me when this is going to happen and how she will get back to me to report on progress, and get a meeting in the diary to look at the safety problem.

This conversation took 4 minutes and 30 seconds. It is over by the time the Chair taps a glass and starts the meeting.

Speed coaching is a good solution when the problem is relatively simple or is part of an ongoing dialogue. In fact, when coaching does become your default way of managing, long coaching sessions become less and less vital because coaching is knitted into every conversation you have with each member of your team.

*Extract from 'Manager as Coach, the new way to get results' by Jenny Rogers, McGraw-Hill 2012  
pgs 178-180*