

## Tips for Managing with Empathy Do's and Don'ts for Successful Coaching

Are you struggling with employees who don't seem to be operating at their full capabilities? How do you successfully coach team members — especially through times of change, stress or uncertainty whether it's a personal crisis or anxiety related to the recent pandemic? When having difficult conversations under any scenario, it's important to focus on creating positive outcomes by showing empathy — the ability to understand. And if we can't fully understand, we can use language that will enable employees to better absorb feedback and accept coaching and be more cooperative with the adjustments.

### DO

- Recognize that your role is to problem solve and not accuse
- Treat others how you wish to be treated
- Be prepared; know the facts of the matter and the exact issue you believe needs to be addressed
- Set the scene by starting with outlining the purpose of your conversation with an employee
- Only use facts; avoid bringing third-party comments into the conversation
- Repeat what the employee is telling you to (1) ensure that you understand and (2) demonstrate to the employee that he or she is heard
- Simply ask, “How can I help?”
- Thank your employee for being open to the discussion

### DON'T

- Use “you” statements or place blame; for example, “You never meet your deadlines” or “You are not communicating”
- Blindside employees; let them know ahead of time what you wish to discuss and why
- Take too long to discuss issues when they arise — address concerns in a timely manner
- Generalize by making “always” or “never” statements
- Interrupt, but actively listen
- Take the employee's emotions personally
- Assume you understand; ask the employee what he or she means or to clarify, for example, “Can you tell me more about that?” or “Can you provide an example?”