



## Getting Better at Giving Feedback On-The-Job



Artaud has recently been promoted to being a manager with 7 new direct reports. He has been an outstanding project team leader. He has led several special project task forces, delivering excellent results.

Artaud demonstrated that he is capable of directing and leading people, even when he did not have a personal reporting relationship over them.

Y Start Up does not have a management development program. Now past the first frantic-stages of being a new start up, Heena, Y's CEO, is now thinking about investing in professional development for Y's people.

Heena had found [Roelf Woldring's Internet publications on talent management](#) through an Internet search. She wanted to experiment with his e-learning program on "[Feedback: Becoming A Work Place Wizard](#)". The price was right. E-learning is delivered on demand. Artaud could fit it in when it suited him. Heena asked Artaud to pilot the program

Heena planned to meet periodically with him to see if the e-learning program was really helping Artaud give his new direct reports useful feedback. Did it or did it not lead to them improving their on-the-job performance?

Artaud was surprised when he first started the e-Learning program. Instead learning ideas and concepts about feedback, he was using his smart phone to video himself practicing very focused behaviors. At first, he was a bit concerned. Psychology courses at university has always been more conceptual than behavioral.

Committed to working through the program, Artaud keep at it. To his surprise, he found himself putting the skills he was learning into practice at work. His confidence at providing feedback to his direct reports grew. He told Heena that he could see some of his folks getting better. All in all, he was encouraged that he was on the right track.

## Coaching: A Key Skill for Engaging Staff

X Corporation is a rapidly growing "software as a service" company. For the past five years, it had doubled its business each year. Andrea, the new CHRO (Chief Human Resource Officer) wants to encourage X's managers to grow the skills of their direct reports.

Andrea, and Kavya, her CEO, are convinced that the best source for the talent they needed to grow their company is the staff they already have. But that means that their existing managers needed to become great coaches.

Andrea's own at-work coaching skills had developed during an executive coaching relationship that her previous financial services company had set up for her. Her executive coach had



## The Right-Talent.ca E-Learning Soft Skill Program Cases

helped her understand the only way to measure the effectiveness of a soft skill development program/ Did it change people's behavior on-the-job? Did those changes lead to increased business results?

When Andrea had systematically applied this test to her financial service's company's investment in interpersonal skill programs, she was appalled. Very few of their people skill programs met this test. Their soft skill training programs simply did not lead to behavior change on-the-job.

Andrea wanted to know why. She attended a presentation by a former CIO talked about his own history of investing millions of dollars in increasing the people skills of his IT people. Two things the CIO had said really hit home with Andrea.

1. Without a systematic program of support, encouragement, and reward for managers to increase the skills of their direct reports, managers were simply did not motivated to do this. Instead, they were more concerned that growing subordinates' skills meant that these people would be moved to other jobs. The manager then faced a 'replacement hassle'. Once the CIO started to specifically reward managers for growing subordinates who could be moved to roles of greater scope, this changed.
2. Without motivation, people did not apply new soft skills on the job. Implementing new soft skills meant they had to change their behaviors on-the-job. Their behavior change impacted the others around them. These other people needed to adapt to the person's new behaviors. Their patterns of interaction needed to change. The other people often resisted this.

Only the most motivated individuals worked through this 'social pressure to go back to old behavior patterns'. The CIO had discovered that this type of person was a "self initiator" about soft skill development. They found books and e-learning programs that helped them develop the new people skills they valued. Unfortunately, these people also often left the company unless they were moved to new jobs where they could use their new skills. In these new jobs, there was no history of interaction with others which acted as a kind of new skill "extinction" effect.

The CIO had used e-learning programs to 'test out' this motivation factor. He funded access to an e-learning coaching skills program, ["Coaching: Becoming a Work Place Wizard"](#). Implementing these new skills was within the manager's scope of control. Managers could change behaviors more readily with direct reports than with peers or others in the organization. The HR professionals in his organization monitored the managers who did this They 'tagged' these managers for potential promotion / transfer.

Andrea decided to try the same approach. Andrea asked her CEO to publicly 'champion' coaching as a key skill for the future. They made the same e-learning program available, and watched carefully to see which managers worked at implementing these new skills on-the-job.