

Coaching at UCalgary

Why Coaching Matters

Coaching is a core leadership practice at UCalgary. It creates space for people to learn, grow, and do their best work—while staying connected to shared goals and our academic mission. Rather than providing answers, coaching helps individuals reflect, build skills, and take ownership of their work.

Strong Coaching Conversations

- Strengthen confidence
- Improve performance over time
- Support meaningful career development
- Build trust and clarity in working relationships

Your Role as a Leader

- Listen with curiosity
- Ask thoughtful, open-ended questions
- Offer observations and balanced feedback
- Encourage strengths and insight
- Support clarity, action, and follow-through



When to Coach

Coaching is most effective when the goal is learning, reflection, and growth. Use coaching when you want to help someone:

- Think through a challenge
- Explore options
- Develop new skills
- Take ownership and accountability

A more direct approach may be needed when there is a safety concern, An urgent issue requiring immediate direction, A performance matter that needs clear instruction

Effective Coaching

Coaching works best when leaders bring:

- Strong listening: understanding before responding
- Thoughtful questions: helping others think differently
- Balanced feedback: supportive and specific
- Strength-based insight: recognizing what's working
- Clear accountability: identifying next steps and commitments

Effective coaching is supportive, future-focused, and tied to learning—not judgment.

Conversation Framework

Use this flow to guide informal or planned coaching conversations:

- **Set the focus:** “What feels most important for us to explore today?”
- **Explore:** What's happening? What has been tried? What matters most?
- **Build insight:** Discuss options, strengths, and possible approaches.
- **Agree on next steps:** Clarify actions, support needed, and follow-up.

Go-to coaching questions:

- What does success look like?
- What are you learning from this experience?
- What options do you see?
- What's one small step you can take next?