

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Meetings: A Toolkit provides a step-by-step coaching process which has been developed by Dr. Maria L. G. de Almeida and used with successful outcomes. If you have tried traditional ways of coaching and they have not worked, this is a new way. It will challenge you to look at coaching situations from a cultural lens. Results, of course, will vary based on your coaching skills and the motivation level of your learner. However, if you follow the steps and complete the coaching exercises for yourself and provide the learner with the attached resources, you will be well on your way to making a significant impact on your staff's work performance.

When you begin the coaching process, it is vital that you take an inventory of your own skills and readiness to take on the responsibility. The approach discussed means thinking outside the box; if that makes you uncomfortable then it might be better to hand the responsibility over to another member of the organization or contact Diversity at Work for assistance. Let's face it, the coaching process that I outline in a few of the workplace success stories takes a few hours. You may not have that kind of time. However, just remember that the effort you both put in now, will have longlasting benefits.

If you decide that you do not want to be a coach, do take the time to read the book. By doing so, you will most certainly become more aware of how a new immigrant may experience workplace situations and the unique obstacles they face.

When coaching new immigrants, the exercises and process can apply to other employees including those with little work experience or who have been away from the labour force for a while and need a refresher.

This book is intended to share internally. Feel free to upload it to your intranet. Just remember, if your organization would like to use the material with outside clients, please contact me about licensing fees. It's the lawful and respectful thing to do. Please and thank you.

Included in this package is a 20-minute telephone consultation if you need some more help with coaching. The bonus is specifically related to dealing with meetings. Telephone consultations are available by appointment. The offer expires within 6 months of purchasing the book. This is your incentive to get started right away!

I thank you in advance for respecting my intellectual property. Moreover, supporting a small business.

Maria L. G. de Almeida, President, Diversity at Work

Scenario 1

EMPLOYEE DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN MEETINGS.

As a meeting chair, you recognize the importance of involving staff and seeking their input into decision-making. However, you notice in particular your new immigrant employee does not express their opinions or offer suggestions even when prompted.

All employees need time to adjust to a new environment, and this is especially true when it comes to new immigrants. It is unreasonable to expect them to respond right away in a meeting. What about in one month's time? Depending on their role in the organization, meeting participation may be an integral part of their job description.

When an employee does not contribute to the meeting, this could be happening for so many reasons:

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS:

- The employee does not know the expected behaviour.
- The employee may be self-conscious of their pronunciation or grammar and speaking in front of a group will only exacerbate the problem.
- The employee is accustomed to attending more informational/directional type meetings in their country of origin where the boss speaks for the full meeting and staff listens.
- The employee does not agree with the Chair's viewpoints and is uncomfortable expressing a dissenting opinion for fear the boss will see them as confrontation or trying to steal their power.
- The employee feels comments that are different or are new or questioning could come across as undermining their leadership.

VALUES/POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

- Employee input is valuable.
- No one is perfect and English grammar and pronunciation are difficult.
- Learning new ways of doing things takes time.
- Participating in meetings shows teamwork, interest, and engagement.
- Well-managed meetings can save time and improve communication.
- Sharing your expertise is an opportunity to increase your visibility and impart knowledge.
- Differences of opinion are welcome and can spark creativity and innovation.