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# Telematics based coaching

**A guide to support productive coaching sessions**

Drivers who receive a serious alert or have a low driver score should be promptly informed of the company's concern and provided guidance on how to improve. Use this checklist and the attached driver review form to assist you during individual coaching sessions with your drivers.

# Preparation

In preparation for your scheduled coaching session with your driver gather the following supporting materials:

**Driver scores:**

Get the overall scores and sub-scores.

**Scoring history:**

Identify when scores started to change.

**Group / Team scores:**

Check how scores compare to other drivers in same group or team.

**Event documentation:**

If you have access to the telematics portal, use it to highlight specific trips with events. If portal isn't available, take screenshots to share evidence.

**Company policies and procedures:**

If your driver is violating a specific company rule or policy, have that rule or policy available or reference. Prepare to talk to your driver about their driving behavior that triggered alerts or low scores to develop an improvement plan. Look for trends or changes in their routes or duties that could be impacting their driving performance.

# Discussion with driver

Clearly lay out the situation using supporting documentation gathered prior to the coaching session. Most drivers feel they're safe drivers. Show the driver benchmark group data for co-workers to highlight opportunities for improvement. Don't compare them to a specific driver.

**Example:**

"Tom, your overall driver score is 42. The average score for the southern sales division is 85. Your score is the second lowest of 25 drivers in the group."

Ask the driver of their assessment of the incident in question

Ask open-ended questions

Listen fully without interrupting

Confirm what they have told you as a way of acknowledging your understanding of what they said

Be prepared for push-back, or excuses such as, "My region is in the city where traffic is worse."

Reinforce your company policy of safe driving over operational priorities

# Speeding

In 2022, speeding was a contributing factor in 29% of traffic fatalities, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA).<sup>1</sup> Major speeding violations occur when the speed is more than 15 mph over the posted speed limit. **Speeding** indications can also occur when the driver exceeds the limit set by the telematics device. These minor violations should be addressed with the driver each review period or whenever they exceed certain percentages; or the driver has consistently been in the top of the driver pool for speeding indications. Managers should review a driver's trip reports to identify problem locations or trends.

## **Speed occurrence:**

Look for where speeding can be particularly dangerous such as in residential areas, ramps or curves, rural roads, near intersections, or on busy interstates/highways.

## **Driving above the posted speed limit:**

Exceeding the posted speed limit decreases the reaction time of the driver. During your coaching session address the following dangers linked to speeding:

- Increases the likelihood of tailgating, which can lead to a rear-end collision
- Often results in more lane change accidents as the driver passes slower vehicles, making it easier to lose control of a vehicle
- Increases merging- and intersection-related accidents, as other drivers do not expect your vehicle to approach so quickly

## **Speed reduction actions drivers can take:**

- Plan ahead and leave on time
- Do not speed to make up for lost time
- Know and drive the speed limit on the road/routes you're on or will take
- Stay out of the left or other faster-moving lanes where you may be inclined to accelerate to keep from being tailgated
- Use your cruise control



## **Look for signs indicating a reduction of speed**

Drivers should slow down when approaching smaller towns where speeds drop quickly, often 30 miles per hour or more in a short distance. Discuss sudden drops in the speed limit when approaching the following areas:

- Work construction sites
- Curves or merging areas
- School or business zones
- Deceleration lanes, ramps, and cloverleafs on freeways

<sup>1</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA)



# Sudden acceleration

## Sudden acceleration indicates that a driver may be:

- Pulling out in front of others without adequate spacing
- Aggressively changing lanes or passing other vehicles
- Performing other unsafe driving maneuvers to make up or save time

## Managers should review driver trip reports to identify problem locations or trends and determine if sudden acceleration is occurring:

- On straight sections of roads, indicating the driver may be making aggressive lane changes or passing maneuvers
- When exiting parking lots or side streets onto a main roadway, indicating the driver may be pulling out in front of cross traffic
- When turning at **intersections**, indicating the driver may be pulling out in front of oncoming traffic or cross traffic
- On highway entrance ramps indicating the driver waits too long to get up to speed to merge safely

## Discuss with the driver the following general practices to reduce sudden acceleration events:

Before entering an intersection from a stop, carefully observe cross traffic that may be running a red light or stop sign.

Check for cross traffic prior to entering a roadway from a parking lot or side street. Other drivers should not have to slow down or change lanes as you enter the roadway in front of them. Be patient and wait for a safe opening so you don't have to accelerate suddenly.

Enter intersections only if you can safely make it through without stopping. Going partially into an intersection while waiting to turn leaves you in an unsafe spot, which may result in having to accelerate suddenly as the light changes.

Carefully judge the speed and distance of oncoming traffic while making a left turn. Use intersections with green arrows for left turns when available.

Wait for an adequate opening; you should be able to complete the turn without oncoming drivers having to slow down or change lanes.

Look twice for motorcycles, which are difficult to see and may be closer than they look.

**Note: Sudden acceleration can increase wear and tear on suspensions, tires, and brakes. It also can significantly increase fuel consumption.**

# Hard braking

## Example:

Our system generates a hard braking alert anytime a vehicle has a sudden decrease in speed of, in one second. The hard braking score makes up \_\_\_\_ % of a driver's overall safety score.

## Hard braking indicates a driver:

- May not be paying attention or is **distracted**
- May be following the vehicle in front of them too closely
- May not be slowing down in advance as they approach an intersection or stopped traffic
- May not be driving defensively, anticipating unsafe actions of others

## Managers should review driver trip reports to identify problem locations or trends and determine if hard braking is:

- Occurring at intersections, an indication that they are not slowing gradually as they approach, or not anticipating a light turning to yellow/red
- Occurring on straight sections of roads or freeways, indicating inattentive driving or following too close

## Discuss the following best practices with your driver to reduce hard braking events:

Drive defensively

Scan ahead for potential hazards, such as a driver trying to pull out from a side street, vehicles merging, stopped traffic, etc.

Anticipate the actions of others. Slow, cover your brake, and look for an alternate path if needed.

Keep your eyes focused on the forward roadway

Keep mirror and blind-spot checks to one second or less

Increase your following distance when looking for an address, sign, etc.

Don't perform any distracting activities while driving such as:

- **Using a phone**—calling, texting, social media, etc.
- Reading, writing, reaching, eating, etc.



# Providing solutions for improvement

Discuss possible solutions to operational issues that could be changed: routes, time of travel, etc. Indicate what changes you expect the driver to make and have him or her confirm what those expectations are. Indicate the consequences of not complying. Use your organization's system for documentation of employee performance issues.

Provide guidance on ways to improve.

Leverage [Drive the 5 safety](#) program resources.

Establish reasonable goals for improvement and timelines. For example, "Your daily speeding score should average at least 75 over the next two weeks."

Establish a date and time for follow-up discussions.



Drivers name \_\_\_\_\_

Coached by \_\_\_\_\_

	Event Occurrence	Date	Location address or closest intersection
Hard braking event over set weekly %	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		

Speeding event 1-14 MPH over set weekly %	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		

Speeding event 15 MPH and over	1st		
	2nd		

Acceleration event over set weekly %	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		

Retraining assigned?    Yes    No

Dates of training \_\_\_\_\_

Type of training    Classroom    On road    Virtual or online

Notes:

**Type of location**

Intersection    Rural road    Freeway    In town

**Coaching action**

Verbal    Written    Suspension    Termination

Driver authorized to operate equipment    Yes    No

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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