

Coaching conversations -top tips

What it is

Non-directive coaching is the practice of supporting an individual through the process of achieving a specific personal or professional goal. It is often carried out in a facilitating style; the coach asks questions and challenges the coachee.

According to Sir John Whitmore, "...the role of the coach is not to produce the answers, the role of the coach is to help people think deeper for themselves and discover the answer within themselves".

What makes it effective

For coaching to be effective, the coachee must have 'protected' time with their coach – a space to focus on a particular issue away from the normal workplace distractions. Coaching should take place in an uninterrupted, private place.

The effectiveness of coaching will be influenced by the extent to which the coachee can speak openly and honestly about the situation. A coach must, therefore, build a trusting relationship with the coachee to encourage openness.

Key factors to creating a trusting relationship are clear agreements around the confidentiality of what is discussed (which are kept to), active listening by the coach, a non-judgemental approach and strong skills in 'paying attention' to what the coachee is saying and how they are feeling.

Skills to use

- Asking Questions
- Summarising
- Paraphrasing
- Reflecting back
- Encouraging
- Listening

G.R.O.W. – Non-directive coaching

G

GOAL

The end point – what the individual wants to achieve.

The goal should be as S.M.A.R.T. as possible so that you recognise when you have achieved it



R

REALITY

This is a description of the current situation. It includes any assumptions the individual is making about the situation.

It also describes how far the individual is from achieving the goal at the moment and how they feel about it. It includes what they may have already tried.



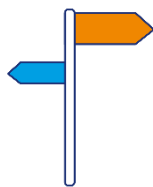
This is a description of the factors that may be getting in the way of the individual achieving their goal at the moment.

O

OPTIONS

These are the potential ways of overcoming any obstacles and achieving the goal.

The individual should generate as many options as possible



W

WAY FORWARD

This is the individual's decision about the steps they will take to achieve their goal.

This is where the individual makes choices from among the options they generated and make a commitment about what they WILL do.



Within the GROW model, the coach is encouraging the individual to:

Become more self-aware – using questions to challenge assumptions, reflecting back what the individual has said to give them an opportunity to reflect on this, noticing any contradictions in what the individual is saying, reflecting the individuals use of language

Take responsibility – it is up to the individual to generate options and make a decision about the way forward. The coach will support the individual to decide what they can do rather than focus on what others must do or what they feel unable to do.

Grow coaching questions

GOAL

- What do you want to achieve?
- If I could grant you a wish for this session, what would it be?
- What would need to happen for you to feel that our session had been worthwhile?
- What would that look/sound/feel like?
- What would you be doing if you had achieved your goal?
- What makes this an issue for you now?
- What does success look like?
- What would you like to focus on during this session?
- How important is it for you to achieve this goal (scale 1 – 10)?
- How will you measure that you have achieved your goal?
- What does more/better/less mean for you? (e.g. I want to feel more confident)
- Why it is important to you to achieve this goal?
- What happened to make you realise that you need to work on this subject?
- By when do you need to have achieved this goal?
- How much control do you have over this?
- Do you believe you can achieve that?

REALITY

- What is happening now? (who, what, why, when, how)
- Who else is involved?
- How do you feel about it?
- How long has it been like this?
- What do others say about the situation?
- What have you tried so far?
- What assumptions have you made about the situation?
- How do you know that is the case? What's the evidence?
- What is your 'gut feeling' about the situation?
- What do you notice about your reaction/ the reaction of others?
- What has stopped you taking action before now?

- What obstacles to you to you taking action?
- What do you find difficult about the situation?
- What is going well in the situation at the moment?
- What is going badly in the situation?
- When this happens, how do you normally react?
- What is going through your mind when you encounter this situation?
- How do you know you are not taking the most effective approach at the moment?
- Who is expecting you to resolve this situation?
- Who do you think would be good at dealing with this situation? What would they do?
- What else is going on?
- What resources do you have to deal with the situation?
- What information do you have? Would you like to have?

OPTIONS

- What could you do?
- What options are open to you?
- Tell me the options you see – however outrageous they might be!
- What else could you do?
- What approaches have you seen used in similar situations?
- What might be the best approach?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of that option?
- What are the risks associated with that option?
- What you like a suggestion from me?
- What might the consequences of that option be?
- What are the potential responses from others to that approach?
- If you had more confidence in yourself, what might you do?
- If you had all the time/resources you need, what might you do?
- What would be 'good enough' for now?
- Which option would give you a long term solution?
- Of all the options you've suggested, how would you rank them from most effective to least effective?

WAY FORWARD

- What will you do?
- What are the steps you need to take?
- By when will you have taken those steps?
- What needs to be in place to give you the best chance of success?
- When would be a good time to review the progress you have made?
- What is the first step for you to take?

- What might affect your progress?
- What can you do to eliminate these barriers to your progress?
- If I were to see you in the corridor two weeks from now, what would you tell me you have done?
- To what extent does that approach meet your objectives?
- How motivated to take action do you feel (on a scale 1 – 10)?
- If less than 10, what can you do to help you reach a 10?
- What support do you need to take action?
- Who will you involve in supporting you to take action?
- When should we meet again?
- If you were to apply the SMART criteria to that action, what would look like?
- How will you know that you have taken the steps you have identified?
- Who do you need to update about your proposed way forward?
- How will you update them and by when?

Additional questions – space for you to write any other questions you might think of