



Coaching and Mentoring Skills for the Workplace

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Introduction

Coaching and mentoring are useful strategies for staff development. Both have become more and more common, and many companies are employing them to improve their employees' performance, knowledge, and abilities related to particular objectives and capabilities. (CIPD, 2019)

To effectively carry out their duties, managers need possess leadership, management, and coaching abilities. Basic interpersonal skills are necessary for coaching, and many of these are directly related to effective leadership. Effective coaching will be challenging if a manager lacks these abilities or is unable to implement them correctly. (Elisabeth Goodman's Blog, 2020)

Instead of engaging outside coaches to educate their employees, many organisations are training their managers to become internal coaches. Organisations may require outside coaching. The best uses for external coaches could be to help managers develop their coaching abilities and to cover for them until internal coaches become available. (Elisabeth Goodman's Blog, 2020)

What is coaching?

The goal of coaching is to enhance and maximise performance in the workplace. It focusses on particular abilities and objectives and could also affect a person's personal qualities like assurance or interpersonal abilities. (CIPD, 2019)

What is mentoring?

In the workplace, mentoring refers to a partnership where a more seasoned colleague contributes their deeper understanding to aid in the growth of a less seasoned colleague. Mentoring partnerships are typically longer-term agreements. (CIPD, 2019)

Gibbs' Reflective Model

The Reflective Cycle was first published by Professor Graham Gibbs in his 1988 book "Learning by Doing." It's extremely helpful for assisting people in drawing lessons from routinely occurring circumstances, especially when things don't go as planned. A method for improving experience-based learning is the reflective cycle. People can use it to examine and reflect on their responses to various events, help them learn from their mistakes, and make sense of the world around them. (Mindtools.com, 2024)

To use Gibbs' Cycle to structure a coaching session, first select a situation to examine, and then follow the steps listed below.

Step 1: Description

Ask the person you are coaching to explain the circumstances in detail first. You just want to know what happened at this point. Make judgements afterwards.

To assist them in describing the scenario, think about posing questions similar to these.

When and where did this happen?

- Why were you there?
- Who else was there?
- What happened?
- What did you or other people do?
- What was the result of this situation?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

Step 2: Feelings

Encourage them to discuss their thoughts and feelings after the experience. Don't discuss their feelings at this point.

Utilise enquiries such as these to direct the conversation.

- What did you feel before this situation took place?
- What did you or others feel while this situation took place?
- What did you or others feel and think after the situation?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

Step 3: Evaluation

It is now necessary to support the individual you are coaching to consider honestly which strategies were successful and which weren't.

Ask him:

- What was positive about this situation?
- What was negative?
- What went well?
- What didn't go so well?
- What did you and other people do to contribute to the situation ?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

Step 4: Conclusions

After assessing the circumstances, you can assist your team member in making conclusions about what transpired.

Urge them to reconsider the situation in light of the data you have gathered so far. Then pose queries such as these.

- How could this have been a more positive experience for everyone involved?
- If you were faced with the same situation again, what would you do differently?
- What skills do you need to develop, so that you can handle this type of situation better?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

Step 5: Action

Now that you know some potential courses of action, your team member should be able to handle similar circumstances in the future with greater effectiveness.

You have to design a plan in this final phase so they can implement these modifications.

After you've decided which areas they'll focus on, ask them to commit to taking action and schedule a time for you both to evaluate their progress.

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

A reflection of coaching session using Gibbs Reflective Model

The combination of strategic and holistic leadership, which included the bravery to implement liberating processes and resolve shadow issues with deep inner work like creating aspirational intent and resolving them, was determined to be the reason for the coaching's high effectiveness.

Intention, Interaction, and Integration serve as the foundation for the emerging Vertical Development Theory that results from this. Along with highlighting some notable changes in coachee perception that aided in later stage development, the coaching season delves into the complex nature of the transformative coaching method as a coach. The design of advanced development programs and the coaching findings are significantly impacted.

Grow model

What Is the GROW Model?

A straightforward yet effective structure for organising your coaching or mentoring sessions is the GROW Model. Sir John Whitmore (1937–2017) collaborated with Alan Fine and Graham Alexander to design the GROW concept.

GROW is the most well-known coaching model in use today and offers a structure for a coaching session.

(Culture at Work, 2024)

GROW stands for:

- **G**oal.
- **C**urrent **R**eality.
- **O**ptions (or Obstacles).
- **W**ill (or Way Forward).

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

An effective way to conceptualise the GROW Model is to picture how you would organise a journey. You first determine where you are now (your existing reality) and where you are heading (the objective). After that, you investigate your options—different routes to your target. By committing to the

path and being ready for any challenges along the road, you demonstrate your resolve in the last phase, forming the will. (Mindtools.com, 2024)

How to Use the GROW Model of Coaching:

The following actions should be taken in order to organise a coaching or mentoring session utilising the GROW Model:

1. Establish the Goal

The behaviour that you wish to modify must first be examined by you and your team member, after which it must be framed as an objective for them to meet.

A SMART objective is one that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

When doing this, it's useful to ask questions like:

How will you know that your team member has achieved this goal?

How will you know that the problem or issue is solved?

Does this goal fit with their overall team's and career objectives?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

2. Examine the Current Reality

Ask your team member to explain their present situation after that.

This is a crucial phase to take. Too frequently, people attempt to accomplish a goal without fully understanding where they are coming from. Additionally, they frequently omit facts that would help them accomplish their objective successfully.

Your team member may begin to reveal the answer when they share their current situation with you.

In this level, helpful coaching questions to ask are as follows:

What is happening now?

What is the effect of this?

Have you already taken any steps toward your goal?

Does this goal conflict with any other goals ?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

3. Explore the Options

Now assist your team member in coming up with as many wise choices as they can. After that, talk about them and assist them in selecting the best ones.

In this phase, provide your own recommendations. However, give your team member the opportunity to speak mostly by letting them make recommendations first. It's critical to steer them in the proper direction without assuming decision-making authority over them.

The following are some common questions you can use to investigate your options:

What else could you do?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?

What factors or considerations will you use to weigh the options?

What do you need to stop doing in order to achieve this goal?

What obstacles stand in your way?

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

4. Establish the Will

Your team member will now have a clear understanding of how to accomplish their objective.

Getting your team member to commit to particular actions is the last step in helping them achieve their goal. You will strengthen their will and increase their motivation by doing this.

These are some appropriate questions to pose:

So, what will you do now, and after that? When? What else will you do?

What could stop you moving forward? How will you overcome this?

How can you keep yourself motivated?

When do you need to review progress? Daily, weekly, monthly?
(Mindtools.com, 2024)

Lastly, schedule a time for the two of you to assess their development. This will help them be held somewhat accountable and provide them the flexibility to adjust their strategy if the initial plan isn't succeeding. (Mindtools.com, 2024)

An Example of the GROW Model

(The example given below is a collaboration of UWTSD module Assessment 1 - Role model's example and Mindtool's example.)

Philippa has a strong commitment to her position as manager of this important division in the pharmaceutical company. As a microbiologist, she has always been exceptional; at her best, she creates novel testing techniques, solves challenging technical issues, and communicates with manufacturing regarding production procedures. Although she is highly motivated and considers her work to be very fulfilling, it's possible that she finds it hard to accept that others may not share her feelings. Her stance is that professionals are dedicated to their work and will, for the most part, handle themselves, and that she is not dealing with a group of shop floor labourers.

Maria Cook is a microbiologist of the lowest calibre. After four years with the company as a graduate, she feels stuck in her career. Despite the seeming lack of opportunities, she is ambitious and seeking a promotion. There are moments when her annoyance becomes hostile towards the other team members. She hasn't hidden the fact that she is actively seeking employment, but she hasn't been successful in her search thus far.

(UWTSD module assessment's example)

Philippa uses the GROW Model to assist Maria, one of the team members, in reaching her objectives. In the next six months, Maria says she would like to be promoted to team leader. This goal is SMART because it is time-bound, relevant to Maria's overall career goals and the team's mission, detailed, quantifiable, attainable (since she has four years of experience and there are team leader jobs in her department), and time-bound.

Maria and Philippa are currently examining her present circumstances. Although she is a basic grade microbiologist, she possesses some of the abilities required for a team leader already.

Philippa discusses the extra competencies Maria will require to succeed in a team leadership position:

Her dissatisfaction occasionally turns into hostility towards the other team members, thus she needs more experience leading others.

Although Ruth has been actively seeking employment but has not been successful thus far, Philippa reminded her that in addition to looking for another work, she must continue to perform well in her current role in order to be given consideration for a promotion when one becomes available.

Philippa proceeds to go over Maria's options. She may manage a small group of people on a modest project to gain the experience she needs. She might also work with the international team for a while.

Philippa finally establishes the will. Philippa offers to let her supervise a small team on a modest project in her capacity as her manager. She will be able to take on more challenging projects in the fu-

ture if she performs well. In order to continue doing well in her current position and make arrangements to spend time in that department, Maria must also speak with the team located overseas.

Finally, Philippa agrees to give her progress a review in three months.
(Mindtools.com, 2024)

An analysis of the skills of an effective coach.

It is very likely that the line managers will assume primary accountability for providing coaching. Organisations usually incorporate coaching into one-on-one sessions and performance discussions as a routine management practice. One question that comes up frequently is how well managers can mentor their own employees. (CIPD, 2019)

Skills

Being an effective coach requires these skills:

Active listening

Active listening is paying close attention, comprehending what is being said, and being able to repeat it. It is critical for coaches to listen to their staff members in order to understand what motivates them. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Communication

A large part of coaching involves sharing instruction, therefore having excellent communication skills is crucial for effective leaders. A coach can work more effectively with their team and set a positive example by being a skilled communicator. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Interpersonal

Relationship building is facilitated by interpersonal skills. Developing relationships with staff members enhances productivity, facilitates communication, and may even help you become a more capable leader. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Goal setting

One of the regular tasks for coaches is to set goals. This ability is useful for training staff members and assisting them in reaching achievement. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Observation

Coaches can utilise observational skills to assess whether employees require assistance and how best to support them. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Education

Since training personnel is a coach's main responsibility, education abilities are crucial. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Evaluation

An essential function of a coach is to assess workers' performance. This facilitates goal tracking and coaching approach adjustments. The capacity to watch, assess, and understand data as well as give an employee feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement are all part of evaluation abilities. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

How an effective coach uses his skills to develop the overall skills, behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and values of coachee.

Skills

New hires who need assistance with technical and communication skills are paired with coaches. Training programs enhance talent and can increase a company's competitiveness, which is advantageous. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Behaviours

If an employee's actions are impacting their or others' ability to do their jobs, they may need coaching to change. In order to assist staff members in altering their conduct and adjusting to new developments, coaches may offer one-on-one training when corporate policies change. (Indeed Career Guide, 2024)

Attitudes

Encouraging an individual to examine their own attitude and how they are acting in the workplace is the first step in coaching them to alter it. One of the most difficult issues that managers will face at work is coaching mindsets. (Swift, 2023)

Beliefs

As part of the contracting and initial coaching session, having the learner identify their own beliefs will make you both more aware of each other, and you can then discuss potential outcomes if any of you sense awkwardness or disagreement. Understanding your own interpretations of each of your beliefs—which can cause problems in and of themselves—will also be a part of this process. (Swift, 2023)

Values

Behaviour is fundamentally shaped by values. However, the majority of people only have a cursory understanding of their own values, their origins, and the ways in which they are influenced. By assisting customers in expressing their values, we increase their ability to effect change by bringing their objectives and values into alignment.

By having coachees list their values in a values-based decision matrix, the list of values can also be utilised to guide decision-making. They may be asked to make choices depending on whether each option respects or violates their values.

(Lancer, 2024)

Recommendations

Having a highly productive and successful workforce is the aim of any corporate organisation. A disengaged and unproductive workforce is the result of failing to coach people. (Quantic School of Business and Technology, 2021)

The actions listed below will assist you in becoming a successful coach:-

Before you approach your staff, be clear about the goals you have for them.

Coaching can focus on process improvement or new process training. Whatever the cause, don't lose sight of the intended outcome.

Communicate your expectations to your staff members clearly from the beginning.

Establish precise standards and a deadline for accomplishing the objectives.

Make sure there is constant communication leading up to, during, and following the coaching process. Knowing the skill sets and areas of expertise of your personnel can help you decide on the best course of action.

As you proceed in the intended direction, remember to motivate your staff.

Recheck progress and offer encouragement to staff members at all times.

Give them room and autonomy while providing guidance, instruction, and support.

Reprimand without becoming confrontational and continue gauging the workers' accomplishments in relation to the schedule.

Make sure your feedback is clear.

(Quantic School of Business and Technology, 2021)

Conclusion

It is essential to take into account the relationship that coaching has with general learning and development approaches. However, coaching is not the only intervention that businesses can use to address identified needs for learning and development; it is not the answer to every developmental issue.

It is vital to bear in mind that individuals may not always react positively to coaching. This might be the case because another kind of intervention is more appropriate to address their developmental requirements. Consequently, before beginning coaching, organisations should determine a person's "readiness" for this method and drive to attain the intended result.

Professionals working with people must know whether coaching and mentoring are suitable and successful interventions in comparison to alternative choices.

(CIPD, 2019)

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Appendix