

Coaching and Mentoring BMPF7061
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Assessment Component 1 – 3000 words

‘Evaluate a range of coaching and mentoring theories and models and identify a model that is appropriate for the needs and culture of their organisation including a clear rationale for the choice of model.’

Word Count - 3582

Learning Outcomes

- **Critically examine a range of underpinning theories and differing perspectives in relation to mentoring and coaching and explore the issues that can arise from these.**
- **Critically evaluate the relevance and value of a range of coaching or mentoring models and identify a model that is appropriate for the needs and culture of their organisation.**

Within this assignment I intend to research a range of theories relating to coaching and mentoring and apply my findings to my professional context. I will critically examine a range of models and apply the most relevant model to my working organisation.

My own context in relation to mentoring is reasonably unique as part of the Yr Athrofa Initial Teaching Education (ITE) department within the Institute of Education and Humanities (IEH) at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). As one of a team of ten Professional Tutors I am responsible for the 'Partnership' of eighteen Lead Schools and their Partner Schools. In each school that an ITE student teacher may attend there will be a Class and Senior Mentor responsible for their development. As a Professional Tutor it is my responsibility to supervise that process and ensure that student teachers are part of a robust, consistent, and ethically sound mentoring relationship with their school colleagues that allows them to develop as teachers to meet the Education Workforce Council (EWC) Professional Teaching Standards. Some of the student teachers train for 3 years and some train for one year, however each meets a series of mentors throughout their course.

The concept of mentoring has a long and varied history stretching back to Ancient Greece where the notion of an experienced individual passes on knowledge and skills to an apprentice who would practice those skills until they themselves were capable. Caraccioli (1760) describes a process where observation would lead to correction and ultimately an awareness of the knowledge, which supports Fénelon's (1808) preposition of guided experience. Mentoring has developed over the years and evolved into a 'multi-perspective' approach (Garvey, 2010) This newer approach to coaching has become somewhat distinct from mentoring, from its origins, however, still shares many of the core fundamental conditions. Furlong and Maynard (1995, p.18) talk about this as a 'changing of stance' so that it can respond to the changing needs of the coachee. This stretching of the initial ideals of mentoring has created a continuum where social context and individual needs are paramount to the coaching process. Parsloe (2009, p.11) agrees and talks of a 'continuum of situation' where styles and techniques can be tailored to the coachee. There has been a move away from a more instructive, mentoring culture of sponsorship (Connor & Pakora, 2012) towards a more self-managed, inclusive coaching culture where coaches act as facilitators rather than experienced experts who disseminate

their own personal expert knowledge and “assume this is relevant for the mentees.” (Rosinski, 2004, p. 5)

As Cox et al (2010) state the terms mentoring and coaching themselves can cause confusion and the terms are often used interchangeably, due to the similarities along the coaching continuum. (Hawkins & Smith, 2006) The indiscriminate use of the terms can lead to individuals misunderstanding the role of participants and when allied with the extensive list of ‘models’ used in everyday practice it can lead to ineffective progress towards learning and a lack of direction. Willis (2005) attributes much of this confusion to the rapid rise of techniques in sports performance and workplaces and that they share the same processes and target similar skills.

Zeus & Skiffington (2000, p.14) identify one of the key similarities between coaching and mentoring as “a conversation where learning takes place, through asking the right questions rather than providing answers.” Socratic questioning (Neenan & Palmer, 2001a) is essential to illicit reflection using focused, open-ended questions (Clark & Egan, 2015) The importance of purposeful dialogue in developing self-awareness cannot be underestimated and must be one of the core fundamental conditions of any learning relationship. Connor & Pakora (2012), Sieler (2003) and Bluckert (2005) discuss the importance of ‘learning relationships’ and place this relationship at the heart of any change the coachee may make. Lave & Wenger (1991) expatiate the development of ‘communities of practice’ where individuals learn together as a social activity, sharing ideas and seeing knowledge as a building process. Kohn (1999) challenges the use of instruction which in turn challenges behaviourism. He agrees that the social activity of exploring and discovering your own realistic, personal goals is far more beneficial than a mentor telling you how to do something and then rewarding you. He is clear that this could rupture relationships and provoke resistance in the coachee especially if they had been encouraged to attend coaching by their organisation. Parsloe & Leedham (2009, p. 9) is definite that “not everyone has the patience or skills to help people learn in this way” and to develop an “ask, not tell” habit (Parsloe & Leedham, 2009, p.15) is difficult but essential.

The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE, 2005) agrees with the ‘fluid’ idea of coaching and identifies many overlapping aspects of coaching and mentoring. They note the

similarities of asking good questions, active listening and shared action planning, all skills that effective mentors and effective coaches should employ.

Many authors write of the key humanistic abilities required for both mentors and coaches to encourage learning development, all having their own combination of essential skills. Rogers (1961, p. 50) in his book *'Becoming a person'* identifies the three key skills of respect, empathy, and genuineness which are recurring themes in Connor & Pakora's (2012, p. 13) work where they add 'faithfulness, acting fairly and transparency' of communication. Connor (1994) adds integrity, Tschannen-Moran (2010) mutuality and Parsloe & Wray (2000) and Mezirow (1990) both note objectivity as an absolute necessity where judgements are withheld by the coach. MacLennan (1995), Clutterbuck & Megginson (1999), Grodzi & Allen (2005), Megginson et al (2005) and Parsloe & Wray (2000) all say the fundamental critical requirement for successful learning relationships is confidentiality.

Confidentiality crosses the boundary from humanistic quality into an ethical standard. Mook & Turai-Petrauskiene (2013) report that the European Mentoring Coaching Council (EMCC) survey found confidentiality as the 'key' factor in all coaching engagements. Robbins (2019) talks about the importance of establishing a 'safe' environment where coachees can trust their discussions are confidential and the International Coaching Federation (ICF) recommends determining ethical boundaries early in the coaching relationship so confidence can develop between the coach and coachee. It is this opportunity that the coach can take to demonstrate a professional responsibility to their coachee and develop a firm foundation for trust. Development of a contract (McCannon et al, 2017) is recommended by the ICF, where expectations are set by both parties and confidentiality requirements are discussed so that the professional duty of the coach is evident. McMahon (2018, Feb 28) notes that "trust is closely related to psychological safety" and as Madireddy & Rufa (2021, May 9) explain "when students feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to adopt behaviours that enhance learning, such as willingness to practice at the edge of their abilities, sharing their thought process, and discussing and learning from mistakes." This is especially pertinent in the ITE organisational context as student teachers are constantly encouraged to try out new techniques and strategies and reflect deeply on the impact they had. In this respect the ethical decision to supervise

mentors (Hawkins & Smith, 2006) in schools and follow a code of ethics to create a consensus of morally acceptable behaviour is essential (Brennan & Wildflower, 2014p. 377)

Although there are many similarities that have been noted so far it is important to mention the inherent differences between the coaching and mentoring processes. Macafee & Garvey (2010: July 14) describe them both as “helping activities” but with different outcomes and ideals. When looking at coaching and mentoring from certain perspectives you begin to see the differences. The focus of each appears distinct, with coaches being more task orientated or skill based (Grant, 2001) whereas mentors are relationship driven, listening and advising to facilitate career development more broadly. (Ibid, 2001) Carruthers (1993) notes this polarises the focus into either professional development for coachees or a more personal development for mentees. Hunt & Weintraub (2002) allies this to the timescale for development attributing a shorter timescale to coaching activities and a much longer timescale for mentoring relationships. They note that due to the shorter timescale they would expect a far weaker emotional bond to form in coaching relationships saying, “we believe that coaching doesn’t necessarily require the type of emotional bond usually associated with mentoring.” (Ibid, 2002, p.10) Clutterbuck (1991) sees this more holistic development of the mentee and the longer timeframe of transition contributing to the mentor becoming a more ‘transformational’ influence. Mezirow (1990, p.7) links this to transformational learning where “a shift in perception” can lead to deeper reflection and an altered understanding. Kolb (1984) supports this and links coaching to a more experiential learning approach where the coachee constructs new meaning through trial and error. This is especially true of sports or performance coaching where mastery of new skills is the ultimate goal.

Wilbur (2006) has developed a ‘holarchy’ (2006, p. 68) of needs, pulling ideas from Piaget (1976) concerning making meaning, Kohlberg (1969) regarding moral reasoning, Goleman’s (1995) theory of emotional intelligence, Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy of needs and Fowler’s (1981) spiritual awareness theories in order to ‘track’ the development within an individual mentee. Wilbur (2006, p. 68) talks about creating a ‘space of shared consciousness’ where you can assess a mentee’s openness to different perspectives and aid them in a holistic way. It is essential that the mentor is aware of their own development along these ‘lines’ and as Wilkinson (2016) says has the ‘motivation to change’ and the aim of searching for wisdom in all their interactions with clients.

One final consideration is that of relational power dynamics between coach and coachee, mentor and mentee. Baker et al (2005) agree that traditionally mentors are older and more experienced, holding a higher status and seniority than the mentee. The mentor drives the relationship by passing on learned experiences and advising rather than asking questions of their mentee. Rosinski (2004, p. 5) describe coaches as facilitators who “enable coachees to discover for themselves what is right for them.” Wilkinson (2016) examines the debate over the expertise of coaches with Surbhi (2018, July 26) adamant that ‘coaches must have expertise in the concerned field’ however Cox et al (2010) noting a move away from an expert coach towards a more ‘clean’ coach who simply has the expertise in coaching. Coaching is non-directive, and this supports the premise of coaches providing limited knowledge or information (Passmore & Fillery-Travis, 2011). The benefits of a ‘clean’ coach would be a lack of bias shown in discussions with a new coachee, however Wilkinson (2016) states that expert coaches are better placed to contextualise discussions and that bias would develop as soon as the coach begins the process of development with the coachee. (Garvey et al, 2021) talks about a ‘clean’ approach compared to a ‘messy’ approach taken by mentors, however if mentors are looking more holistically then it makes sense that it will be more complicated or ‘messy’ in nature.

When using a combination of mentoring and coaching techniques, rules, and strategies you can see how the process can be individually specified for each client. As Kegan (1982, p. 260) says a more development minded coach will work in a more comparable way to a traditional mentor. They may gain qualifications to validate their abilities whilst also building the relationship to “see, recognise and understand who the person is and who he or she is becoming.”

Lambert (1992) talks about a change in core conditions and that recent approaches have downplayed the importance of the relationship in any coaching or mentoring engagement. I believe that the quality of the learning relationship is of supreme importance, and this will inform my rationale when I assess a range of coaching and mentoring models in the next section.

To select a relevant model for trial in my organisation I have chosen to evaluate three different models. For each of these models I will look at its strengths and weaknesses in relation to my

organisational needs and assess its value for the student teachers and large team of school mentors that I work with.

Firstly, I have chosen to evaluate the 1992 GROW model (Whitmore, 2017) This model is the most widespread coaching model in literature (Passmore et al, 2013) and is also the model that my organisation currently recommends to our team of mentors. I am interested in evaluating the impact of encouraging our 'mentors' to use a 'coaching' model and question whether what we are expecting our mentors to be is more aligned with the developmentally minded coach (Kegan, 1982) rather than a more traditional mentor. As Algan (2016) states it is an action-orientated model with four phases which makes it quite simple to remember and use in engagement with the student teacher and focuses on the creation of an action plan. Key strengths include the flexibility to use this model in both individual and group settings and can be used by leaders and managers effectively. (Algan, 2016)

1. Goal - Student teachers would be asked to articulate their goals and Palmer & Whybrow (2007) state it is the coach's role here to support this process and set the expectations for the sessions. Beginning with the goal seems a focused way to work, however for many of our student teachers they do not yet know what their specific goals are yet, and this stage may in fact seem quite daunting as there may be a wide range of goals that are relevant. The immediate choice of goals may cause some student teachers to shy away from decisions unless the coach can establish a space of 'psychological safety' (McMahon, 2018, Madireddy & Rufa, 2021)

2. Reality – McPheat (2010) describes this stage as assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the current reality. However as Zenger Folkman (2015) states 'reality is subjective'. Palmer & Whybrow (2006, p. 76) suggest asking open-ended questions such as "What is the problem? Why is it happening?" Furlong & Maynard (1995, p. 181) stages of student development suggest that the student teacher at this early stage would be modelling or mirroring the mentor as they seek to establish rules, routines and authority in their classroom, and this may inform the student teacher's perceived reality.

3. Options – Palmer & Whybrow (2006, p. 76) suggests questions in this phase like "What would be your first step? What would happen if you did nothing?" This phase requires a more creative, problem-solving approach (Algan, 2016) where the coachee can brainstorm ideas. The coachee is

encouraged to take ownership of their ideas and suggest their own path (Passmore et al, 2013). It is possible that student teachers would not have the experience in the classroom to see the variety of options needed here and may become fixed in their thinking.

4. Way Forward or Will – in this phase the coach needs to manage the development of explicit steps for the action plan. They should clarify and refine the options and the student teacher should be able to visualise the steps needed. McPheat (2010) also identifies a need for the coach to identify potential obstacles to progress. Palmer & Whybrow (2006, p. 76) suggest a key question of “What will success feel like?”

Key concerns for my use of this model in my organisation would be the lack of opportunity for the student teachers to take ownership of their own goals as it could feel quite demotivating to be unaware of the wide range of options open to you. Lindon (2007) noted that self-confidence and motivation emerge from creating respectful relationships and I do not feel there is enough time given explicitly to form these relationship bonds in this model. McPheat (2010) identifies no mention of coach enthusiasm which may lead to a lack of sustainable motivation towards goals, and this is supported by a study by Scoular & Linley (2006).

The second model I have chosen is the FUEL Model developed by John Zenger and Kathleen Stinnet (2010) I chose this model as I felt it was a step away from the GROW model and its framework encourages and drives more conversation which is what teachers and mentors are good at doing in school situations. I wanted to look at a model that was designed to challenge the student teacher while at the same time allowing them a higher level of input and ownership. I also appreciate the implied meaning of the acronym where the model encouraged student teachers to ‘Fuel up’ with information and ideas to allow them to progress.

1. Frame the Conversation – Zenger & Stinnet (2010) notes this phase allows for a ‘safe’ space to be created where ethical considerations can be given full appreciation and expected outcomes discussed, outlining the purpose of the coaching in a caring environment. At this stage there are no predetermined goals so both coach and coachee are free to explore any thoughts together and the coachee feels ‘heard.’ Egan (2010) believes that clients benefit from telling their story in phase one and leaving the consideration of goals until after their preferred future

has been imagined. Connor & Pakora (2012:10) reinforces the ethical implications of establishing a connection through dialogue and actively listening to your client. Grimley (2010, p. 190) suggests asking questions relating to neuro-linguistic programming where the coach can mirror the emotion and language of the coachee to establish an awareness of context.

2. Understand the Current State – This is an opportunity to clarify understanding by asking Socratic questions (Neenan & Palmer, 2001a) that challenge assumptions, viewpoints and perspectives.
3. Explore the Desired State – At this point the goal is to create a vision for success and the steps needed to create a framework to achieve it. (Zenger & Stinnet, 2010) It may involve the coach asking questions like, what resources are needed? what could be the obstacles to overcome?
4. Layout a Success Plan – This stage is almost identical to the Way Forward stage on the GROW model. (Zenger & Stinnet, 2010) The plan must be adaptable and flexible using SMART goals to allow the coachee to identify milestones towards change.

On balance I feel this model is more suited to my organisation than the GROW model.

Thirdly, the last model I have chosen to evaluate is the Mobius-Strip Model which is used in the method of Evocative Coaching developed by Bob and Megan Tschannen-Moran (2010). I was attracted to the model due to the use of the mathematical object as a core feature that creates a non-orientable surface and was intrigued how that signified a constantly evolving coaching relationship. The Mobius-Strip model is based on adult learning principles and andragogy as defined by Knowles (1988). His principles centre around the key facts that adults are autonomous, that they will build learning based on their own experiences but must see a reason for learning something. Adults want to be treated equals but still require specific feedback and support to facilitate and advance their learning over time. (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2010)

The Mobius-Strip represents two 'Loops' with two phases in each. Loop 1 is the No-Fault turn and Loop 2 is the Strength-building turn. (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2010)

Loop 1 – Story. In this phase the coach listens attentively and carefully. They should encourage a safe environment (Zenger & Stinnet, 2010) where they can listen for themes, values and needs from the coachee. The coach should invite student teachers to tell their stories and maintain a non-judgmental

focus (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2010:95) An essential skill is to look beyond the coachee experience and transpose the meaning.

Loop 1 – Empathy. In this phase the coach must show empathy not sympathy for the coachee. Empathy facilitates communication (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2010) and an understanding of what others are experiencing (Rosenberg, 2005) Validating those experiences creates a space where student teachers will reflect on their own understanding and reframe their thoughts.

Loop 2 – Appreciative Inquiry. Here student teachers will become curious about what is possible and how much capacity they have to enact strategies that before may have seemed too far out of their reach or out of their understanding. It is the coach's role to ask appreciative questions which help the student teacher extrapolate their ideas, invoke possibilities and become the start of the change (Cooperrider et al, 2003)

Loop 2 – Design Thinking. At this point coaches must encourage student teachers to brainstorm new ideas and prioritise the action learning experiments they want to try. If this coaching model is successful then the student teachers will develop a strong intrinsic motivation to improve their own learning. (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2010)

This model offers me a more holistic, motivational set of ideas to actualise learning in the student teachers and mentors I work with. It will offer our mentors and their student teachers an opportunity to build strong learning relationships, where ethical expectations are set from a safe environment for discussion and give student teachers opportunity to trial action learning experiments rather than just write an action plan.

This third model of Evocative coaching using the Mobius-Strip model is my choice for trialing in Part 2 of this assignment. My only issue is that of a clear acronym allied to the model that would make it more straight-forward to use in sessions, so I have adapted the titles to suit my needs.

The acronym I will use is '**SEE IT**' where the two words stand for the two separate loops.

"If you can '**SEE IT**' you can achieve it"

S	E	E		I	T
Story	Express Empathy			Inquiry	Thinking

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