

BMSW6105

Coaching & Mentoring Skills for the Workplace

Part B: Reflective Statement

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Introduction

This reflective statement focuses on the analysis of a coaching session that took place between Philippa Graham, the Quality Assurance manager, and Robert Lee, her head of section, working at Healthcare International. The context entails newer changes in the organization such that there has been shedding of staff and an augmentation of the use of technology that has been a hindrance to Robert. Thus, for the purpose of structuring this reflection, I shall use Gibbs' Reflective Cycle which is a model that comprises six stages allowing for the profound analysis of experiences. Thus, this framework will help structure my analysis of the coaching session since it facilitates a structured examination of the events, feelings, and consequences. In applying Gibbs' cycle, my objective is to analyze the outcomes of the particular coaching approach, assess the areas of the best practice, and generate the understanding of essential skills and dispositions for effective management of the corporate coaching practice within the organization in transforming conditions.

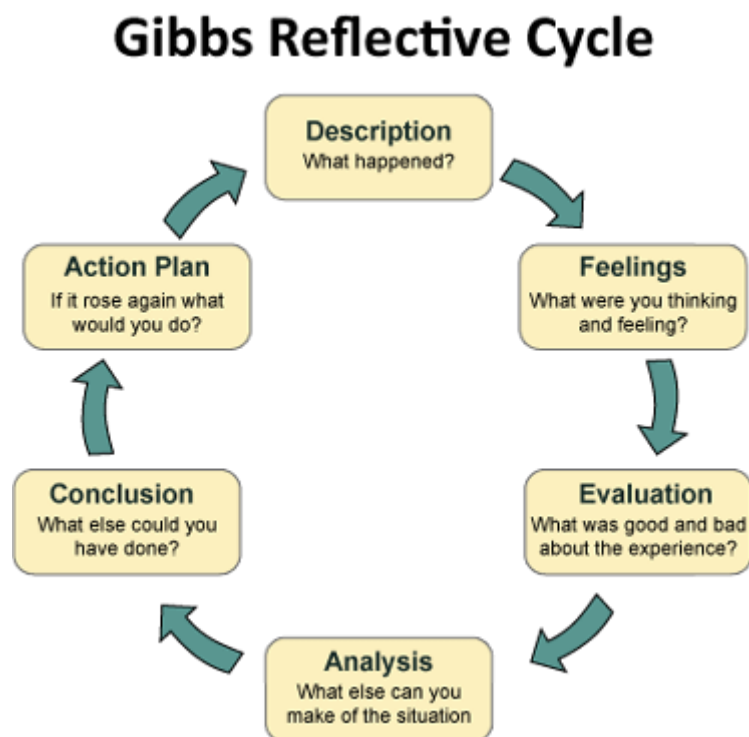


Figure 1: The Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Main, 2023).

Application of Gibbs Reflective Cycle to Reflect on the Coaching Session

Description

Issues discussed in the coaching session between Philippa and Robert came from organizational changes that had recently occurred. Robert who is already close to reaching his retirement age complained of rising workload, lay-offs, and embrace of technology. Based on the analysis of the content of the conversation between Philippa and Robert, it can be concluded that Philippa used what looked like the GROW coaching model, which is one of the most popular frameworks for structuring a conversation in coaching (Whitmore, 2017).

To start the session, Philippa engaged with the employee and asked Robert to express his problems. This corresponds with the Reality stage of the GROW model to help Robert define his current position in detail. Some of the topics that were talked about include working more without being paid for the extra hours, new system in the organization, and reduction of a number of people in a particular department with examples such as Robert's particular concern on automated systems.



Figure 2: The Grow Model of Coaching (Güzelsevdi, 2024)

Finally, Philippa had to steer Robert in the direction of potential solutions, matching the 'Options' process of the frame. Some of them included classical scheduling and optimizing the priority of tasks, extra training for automation, and a mixed work model. It was this teamwork that made Robert to own the responsibility of potential solutions.

The final stage of GROW was clearly seen when Philippa and Robert agreed on certain tasks to perform as a result of the session. These were the organization of training on the automation systems, work on the proposal of the working model that would be a combination of the working from home and working physically in the office, the holding of more meetings to follow up with the issues mentioned during the previous meetings.

During the course of the interaction Philippa reviewed active listening and incorporated open-ended questions throughout the interaction with Robert. However, there are situations where Philippa could have gone a bit deeper into Robert's problems particularly those touching on retirement.

Feelings

As Philippa, I did not really get angry but I did feel slightly annoyed as well as empathizing with her, during the role-play. Compassionate listening involved exercising patience and drawing solutions developed from the conversation towards understanding the changes in the workplace and how they affected Robert soon to be retirement age. This emotional aspect is vital in coaching since the ability to identify with the coachee and foster trust is among the key constituent of the coaching relationships (Egan, 2013).

I also felt a slightly frustrated; this was mainly when Robert appeared to be a bit rigid and unwilling to transform. This frustration was due to a flurry of attempts to discuss things constructively and, at the same time, not hurt Robert's feelings. At the same time, it was difficult to maintain equal feelings and to balance the principals' anger and insistence on success that were essential in this situation, as Goleman et al. (2002) noted the significance of emotional intelligence in coaching.

Based on the sliced reactions towards Robert, it appeared that he was and may have been extremely worried and stressed out. Body language and vocal tonality revealed that he was stressed concerning these changes, particularly about having to work with automated systems and possibly worried about his future. From the perspective of main subject – Robert, it

became observable in the course of the session that crossed over to a somewhat hopeful disposition especially when addressing possible remedies.

This emotional ride shows that coaching is psychological especially when it comes to organizational development. In their writing, Cameron and Green (2019) called change some of the responses that it elicits emotions such as; fear, anger, and after sometime acceptance. Acknowledgment and moderations of these emotions are fundamental to coaching contacts in periods of organizational change.

Evaluation

Several benefits and opportunities for the subsequent improvement of the method are outlined when the session is evaluated. Among the happened successes, an important one was the conversation of support and openness. This case demonstrated how effective active listening and empathic response can help a source establish a rapport to enable other parties articulate their concerns; in this case, Robert could freely give his perspective due to Philippa's consideration. This goes with Cox et al. 's (2014) observation that establishing trust is crucial in coaching.

The technique used in the conversation identified as the GROW model ensured that the conversation was on track from defining the problem to developing action. Whitmore (2017) stresses that this structured format is especially effective in organizational cultures because it preserves concentration and goal orientation toward deliverables. Thus, the session covers all steps of the described model when a therapeutic plan is set for Philippa and Robert.

The other advantage was that the different aspects of the product's problem solving involved a bottom-up approach. As a result of making Robert look for the solutions on his own, Philippa was promoting a feeling of ownership and power. For this reason, the approach aligns with what Grant (2013) referred to as solution-focused coaching since the clients were engaged to identify solutions to the existing challenges.

Nevertheless, some aspects should have been done to increase the impact of the coaching. First of all, Philippa could have elaborated on the conversation about the future and retirement with Robert. This missed chance to discuss a rather profound systematic problem could have been very informative and would have offered broader solutions.

Also, the session with Robert covered work-life balance only briefly, and did not discuss more about how some of the organizational changes might influence employees' mental

health. Considering that encouraging companies to focus on mental health in the workplace became an important issue in recent years, as Memish et al. (2017) noted, this could have become one of the directions to investigate.

In this case, the application of the GROW model was rather favorable in terms of the fact that it set out the structure for the conversation. However, it had a more linear current structure which at times seemed to limit the continuity of the conversation especially when Robert introduced new issues. The more relaxed approach, possibly incorporating parts of the narrative coaching (Drake, 2018) might have provided a better chance to go deeper into the details of Robert's experiences and preoccupations.

In future sessions, it would be beneficial to:

1. Spend a proportionately longer period of time 'drilling-down' into real-life considerations such as career development and retirement.
2. Increase the number of questions about mental health and coachee's well-being.
3. Apply the GROW model more loosely, without directly referring to it in conversation so that vital matters can be discussed if they come up.
4. Trace this more specifically back to how Robert felt about it; give more case-specific support to this subject.

These changes, it was thought would increase the depth and efficiency of the coaching improving the extensiveness of the solutions and the happiness of the employees.

Analysis

Analyzing the results of my coaching session with Robert, it is possible to state that coaching and mentoring when conducted with confidence, openness and the ability to listen, are some of the most effective practices that can be implemented in the organization to enhance performance and motivation of the employees in what can be described as a rather difficult environment at Healthcare International. The organization is going through significant changes; having laid off people, and more focus has been put on using technology to do work, hence why I think focused coaching can have great impact on the working pressure of an employee as well as productivity.

While coaching, I was able to witness how employees' work outcomes can be enhanced through the acquisition of new patterns of behaviors at the workplace by dealing with increased workloads and effects of change in technology. As rightly said by Jones et al.,

(2016), coaching during the change can help the employees to be more ready for the change. Thus, I see that we have made certain actions that may have a direct influence on Robert's performance – these being actions like identifying areas and tasks for prioritizations and recommending extra training.

Further, I noted that there is some potential in affecting morale by way of the coaching processes. Hence, my intervention strategy was to offer Robert some time and ensure that he would feel comfortable to voice the things bothering him and also have the opportunity to work out ways to overcome the challenges affecting his motivation and removing anxiety. This corresponds with Theeboom et al. 's (2014) study that revealed that the overall benefits of coaching include performance, well-being, manner of coping, work attitudes, and goal-regulated self-management.

But I understand that to get the most of these advantages, coaching must become a continuous process and a component of an organizational culture. It is for this reason that although having value, this single session may not be enough to meet the root of the problem that worries Robert or bring a lasting change. In a paper by Garvey et al. (2021), the authors assert that for coaching to be applied effectively in increasing the performance and morale of employees it has to be supported by an organizational improvement plan. This is something I must have thought through as I proceeded to with the coaching program in the role of Phillipa.

Introspection of myself as a coach, I found the positive aspects as well as the negative areas that I possess or exhibit as a coach. Some of the things that I did well during the role-play were listening, understanding, the empathetic approach, and goal focus obtained from the GROW model. These correspond with core of the coaching skills as described by Whitmore (2017) as well as Eagan (2013).

However, I also recognize areas where I could have been more effective:

Emotional intelligence: To demonstrate empathy I could have explored further as to how Robert felt and additionally, he was approaching retirement years. Something that Goleman et al. (2002) strongly focus on as being vital at the managerial and coaching levels, I find that there are inefficiencies here.

Flexibility: It might be that the GROW model focus which promised structure often left the mentee and me in the session with less exploration of what they called 'new topics'. I still

mean to make some changes for the further sessions so the balance between structure and freedom seems to be the best option for the further sessions.

Cultural awareness: Taking into account the organizational changes, as the coach I could have demonstrated more awareness of the cultural transformation process that takes place and how it affects enduring personnel such as Robert.

When evaluating my approach to the facts and effective coaching practice described in literature, I identified several aspects of similarity and several discrepancies. Extensive literature on goal setting favors the GROW model and goals-coaching hence I will utilize this in my practice. Nevertheless, the literature also stresses the aspect of the flexibility of the coach with reference to the coachee's requirements (Cox et al. , 2014), which is the aspect where I am personally insufficient.

Conclusion

I have been able to learn a lot regarding my coaching process as I wrote this reflection. The application of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle has enabled me to evaluate the situation in a structured and logical manner, with some positives and negatives highlighted.

At least, I feel that by establishing a comfortable atmosphere of free conversation with Robert, I managed to do something right. As a whole, the GROW model was useful to me and still, looking back I can realize that at times it restricted me from expanding on the emerging issues further. From what I witnessed in the session, I think that coaching was able to show that performance and motivation might be problems in the workplace but when each is given an opportunity to express their issues and come up with possible recommendations, productivity could be boosted.

However, I have identified several areas where I need to improve my coaching skills:

Emotional Intelligence: For me, it is necessary to strengthen the knowledge and skills of dealing with feelings in organizational change.

Flexibility: I should become more flexible when using the models for contracting with the coachee.

Holistic Approach: I lack a global perspective on the organization's employees where I should factor in, mental health issues in particular.

Long-term Perspective: I should be ready to solve not only pressing problems but also develop the strategies affecting the whole life and career, for example, how to save for the retirement.

Cultural Awareness: I have to improve my knowledge of the organizational culture and its influence on each worker in situation of the change.

Action Plan

To enhance my coaching skills, I will:

1. Identify the elements of emotional intelligence with reference to Daniel Goleman's 'Emotional Intelligence.' Participate in a training program on practical uses of EI with regard to coaching situations.
2. Set a goal to enhance the level of flexibility by practicing the application of various kinds of models throughout the sessions.
3. Explore and integrate theories that address general health, especially the employees' mental health.
4. It is also important to obtain training in the aspects of organizational culture and change.
5. Do mindfulness meditation to enhance the level of present time consciousness and listening abilities.

In future sessions, I will conduct a more comprehensive initial assessment, use coaching models more flexibly, pay closer attention to non-verbal cues and emotions, incorporate more questions about work-life balance and well-being, and follow up more systematically with multiple sessions when needed.

Conclusion

This reflection has helped me understand the best practices to be followed while coaching and the major shortcomings observed in my situation. Hence, despite the success of having fostered a framework to build a constructive interpersonal environment and implementing a structured model for delegating tasks, I would mention the following areas of perceived personal deficiency that is Emotional Intelligence, Flexibility, Cultural Sensitivity. As for the further personal growth, I will have to work on the balance of becoming a more flexible and variability-sensitive interventions coach with the need to effectively address various issues which an employee, for example Robert, may encounter during organizational change processes. Through the cultivation of these skills, I will ensure that I am regularly updating my knowledge and experience to be able to change the model and develop stronger sense of intrapersonal intelligence. Finally, I trust that the above enhancements will facilitate more support to the staff in the manner that would help foster high performance and attitudes within the changing organization.

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