



Coaching and Mentoring Skills for the Workplace

BMSW6105

Task 3 – Written Reflection

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Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving societal and organisational landscape, coaching and mentoring stand as critical developmental strategies aimed at enhancing individuals' skills, knowledge, and overall performance (Parsloe and Melville Leedham, 2009; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2021). These practices, typically encompassed within one-to-one conversations, are designed to support both personal and professional growth, being key to unlocking one's full potential and contributing to both individual and organisational effectiveness (Stober and Grant, 2006; MacLennan, 2017).

Whilst united in their purpose of facilitating individuals' enhancement, coaching and mentoring present certain distinctions. Coaching is typically short-term and performance-driven, concentrating on improving specific skills, behaviours, or achieving defined goals (Backhausen, Thommen, 2017). It is structured around a formalised process that supports individuals in setting clear objectives, identifying obstacles, and creating actionable plans as a means of driving measurable results (Knight, 2009). Meanwhile, mentoring is a longer-term, more relationship-oriented process wherein a mentor offers guidance, insight, and support, often drawing on personal experience to facilitate the mentee's broader career and personal growth (Mullen and Klimaitis, 2019). Rather than focusing on immediate outcomes, mentoring encourages individuals to broaden their perspectives and explore opportunities that may enhance their professional and personal horizons (Megginson, 2006).

As Khakwani *et al.* (2012) highlight, within a workplace context, coaching and mentoring stand as fundamental drivers of performance management, preparing and supporting individuals through organisational change, and fostering ongoing learning and development. These developmental practices not only support the attainment of immediate performance targets but also undertake a central role in advancing individuals' competencies, equipping them to respond to evolving organisational demands and pursue sustained professional growth (Bennett and Bush, 2009; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2021). By providing tailored guidance and support and addressing both short-term goals and long-term career trajectories, coaching and mentoring foster the cultivation of a resilient, skilled workforce capable of meeting current challenges while preparing for future opportunities, thereby contributing to organisational agility and long-term success (Renton, 2009; Connor and Pokora, 2017).

Against the backdrop of the evolving organisational landscape marked by an increasing emphasis on employee development, this report will explore the critical role of coaching and mentoring in fostering both individual and organisational growth. The paper will discuss the

essence of coaching and mentoring, examining the key skills required to ensure their effective implementation and their resultant benefits. Furthermore, it will explore the GROW model as a structured framework commonly used in coaching to guide individuals through goal setting and problem-solving to conclude by leveraging Gibbs' Reflective Cycle model to engage in a reflective analysis of my personal experiences in undertaking coaching and mentoring roles, highlighting insights gained and areas for future development. Ultimately, the report will seek to illuminate the transformative potential of coaching and mentoring in fostering individual development, driving organisational success, and cultivating a culture of continuous growth and adaptability.

Coaching and Mentoring: Essence, Necessary Skills and Associated Benefits

Encompassing “the expansion of an individual’s capacity to function effectively in his or her present or future job and work organisation” (McCauley and Hezlett, 2001), employee development has emerged as a critical element of organisational strategy in the modern workplace (Dachner et al., 2021). Within the context of the 21st century, characterised by rapid technological advancements, globalisation, and shifting workforce dynamics, both individuals and organisations are increasingly prioritising continuous learning and development (Connor and Pokora, 2017). As technological innovation accelerates, interconnectivity between global markets and industries expands, and competitive pressures intensify, the ability to continually adapt, reskill, and enhance personal and professional capabilities has become essential (Abiddin, 2006).

In this regard, Lim and Ibrahim (2024) highlight that coaching and mentoring have emerged as integral mechanisms for cultivating both soft and hard skills in employees, providing a holistic and effective learning experience that transcends traditional training paradigms. Unlike conventional training approaches, typically reliant on standardised methodologies, coaching and mentoring offer more customised, personalised frameworks, specifically tailored to the unique developmental needs and goals of the individual (Parsloe and Leedham, 2016). The resultant dynamic learning processes foster the effective cultivation of a wide array of competencies and abilities underpinning individuals’ adaptability, performance, and resilience in navigating the complexities of today’s fast-paced and ever-evolving business environment (Neupane, 2020).

As further highlighted by Khakwani et al. (2012), coaching and mentoring serve as powerful means of providing support to individuals, helping them realise their capabilities, augment their potential, leverage their strengths, address their weaknesses and overcome barriers impeding their progress. Khakwani et al. (2012) stress the interconnected yet distinct nature

of coaching and mentoring, delineating four key areas of distinction between the two developmental strategies (as depicted in Figure 1).

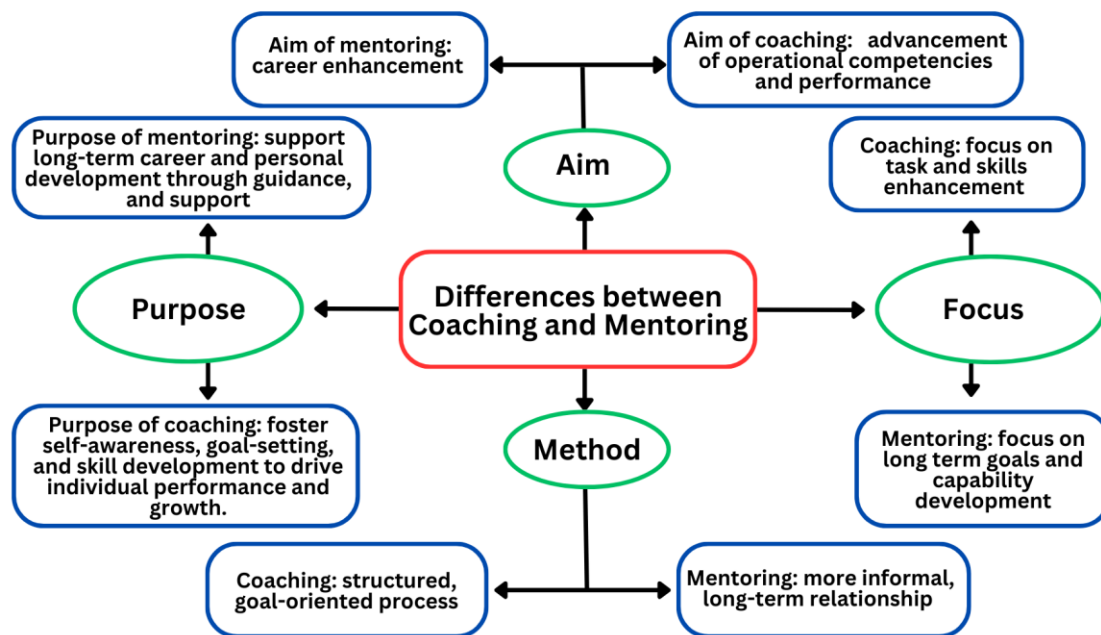


Figure 1. Differences between Coaching and Mentoring (Adapted from Khakwani et al., 2012)

Notably, the effective implementation of coaching and mentoring is contingent upon the possession and application of several key skills by those facilitating the process (Brockbank and McGill, 2006; Bachkirova, Jackson and Clutterbuck, 2021). Coaches and mentors should adopt an open-minded, non-judgmental stance, demonstrating empathy and understanding of the individual's perspective (Payne, 2017; Connor and Pokora, 2017). They should remain focused throughout the session, effectively building rapport through active listening, thoughtful questioning, and responses made based on the summarisation and reflection on the key points discussed (Lancer, 2016). Establishing a supportive environment, coaches and mentors must ensure constructive feedback is provided, helping individuals overcome obstacles, dismantle limiting beliefs, unlock their potential, and work towards achieving their personal and professional goals whilst maintaining the confidentiality of all shared information (Rogers, 2012; Hudson and Hudson, 2014).



Figure 2. Effective Coaching Skills (Adapted from Making Business Matter, no date)

The effective implementation of coaching and mentoring yields multifaceted benefits that extend beyond the individual, encompassing advantages for the coach or mentor, the broader organisation, and its stakeholders (Stober and Grant, 2006; Clutterbuck *et al.*, 2017).

On an individual level, coaching and mentoring facilitate personal growth, skill enhancement, and increased self-awareness. They empower individuals to recognise their potential, take responsibility for their development, cultivate a proactive approach to problem-solving, and gain confidence and motivation in pursuing their goals (MacLennan, 2017; Serrat and Serrat, 2017). As individuals receive guidance and constructive feedback, they become better equipped to navigate challenges, enhance their decision-making abilities, and unlock their full potential, ultimately propelling greater personal and professional success (Khakwani *et al.*, 2011).

Concurrently, for the coach or mentor, the process of coaching and mentoring offers professional development opportunities, enhancing their leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills (Dent and Brent, 2015). As Holliday (2001) highlights, by guiding others, coaches and mentors can gain a deeper understanding of their own strengths and areas for growth, with the reflective nature of coaching and mentoring contributing to their ongoing self-improvement. Furthermore, coaching and mentoring practices serve to strengthen professional relationships within the workplace. In supporting others in their pursuit of goals,

coaches and mentors forge lasting, mutually beneficial relationships that have a positive impact on both parties (Ensher and Murphy, 2013).

At the organisational level, effective coaching and mentoring practices facilitate the achievement of strategic objectives by enhancing employee performance, engagement, and retention (Zachary and Koestenbaum, 2011; Moss, 2021). As individuals refine their skills and build confidence, they are better positioned to assume greater responsibilities, contribute more meaningfully to team objectives, and adapt to evolving business needs (Grover and Furnham, 2016; Drake and Pritchard, 2017). This contributes to the development of a more agile workforce, capable of responding adeptly to emerging challenges and seizing new opportunities, while simultaneously enriching the organisation's knowledge base (O'Connor and Cavanagh, 2013). As Hollywood et al., (2016) note, through the facilitation of knowledge exchange, the sharing of expertise, and the dissemination of best practices, coaching and mentoring foster a culture of continuous learning and innovation, thereby enhancing organisational effectiveness. Moreover, these practices engender a sense of value and support among employees regarding their professional growth, leading to heightened job satisfaction, strengthened loyalty, and a deeper commitment to the organisation's sustained success (Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Nuraini, 2024).

Consequently, the benefits of coaching and mentoring ripple outwards to have a positive impact on the organisation's stakeholders. With a workforce that is more skilled, engaged, and motivated, organisations augment their capacity to deliver high-quality services and products, thereby enhancing customer value and satisfaction (Khakwani *et al.*, 2011). Furthermore, the culture of continuous learning and innovation fostered by coaching and mentoring drives the development of creative solutions and improves overall organisational performance, ensuring the organisation remains competitive and responsive to stakeholder needs (Hawkins, 2012).

The GROW Model of Coaching

There exist various models of coaching, each designed to provide a structured approach to facilitating personal and professional development (Passmore, 2021). Among them, the GROW model, developed by Sir John Whitmore in the 1980s, stands as one of the most prominent and widely utilised frameworks (Hancock, 2024). Characterised by its simplicity, flexibility, and goal-focused methodology, the GROW model is centred on a four-stage process: Goal, Reality, Options, and Way Forward (Athanasopoulou and Dopson, 2015).

Goal

The first stage of the model revolves around establishing clear and specific objectives for the coaching process, with the aim of this step being to define measurable and achievable goals that provide a clear sense of purpose and direction and align the individual's aspirations with broader organisational objectives or personal development needs (Passmore, 2016). As Downey and Downey (1999) highlight, this alignment ensures that the coaching process remains relevant and impactful, fostering both individual growth and contributing to overarching goals. Effective goal setting often follows the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound), a commonly utilised framework that enhances clarity and focus in the goal-setting process (Worden, 2014). By articulating their desired outcomes, individuals gain clarity and motivation, which lays the foundation for a purposeful coaching interaction (Athanasopoulou and Dopson, 2015).

Reality

The subsequent stage, Reality, involves a thorough exploration of the individual's current situation. This step encourages honest self-assessment and reflection, allowing the individual to identify existing challenges, resources, and opportunities (Hancock, 2024). Hereby, the coach undertakes a key role in fostering critical thinking by asking open-ended questions such as, "What is happening now?" or "What has been tried so far?" (Mogonea, 2022). This stage is aimed at bridging the gap between aspiration and action by offering a realistic understanding of where the individual stands in relation to his or her goals (Alexander, 2006).

Options

Within the Options stage, the focus shifts to exploring the various strategies and alternatives available to the individual in order to overcome barriers and progress toward the accomplishment of the previously established goals. This stage typically entails the use of brainstorming techniques to generate a diverse range of possibilities, encouraging creativity and lateral thinking (Passmore, 2021). As Whitmore (2009) notes, the role of the coach here is to guide the coachee in evaluating the feasibility, positives, and negatives of each potential option, helping them to critically assess each possibility in light of their objectives, resources, and constraints. This process of evaluation fosters deeper insight into the options available and ensures that the coachee selects the most effective and practical path forward, while also considering any risks or challenges that may arise during implementation (Alexander, 2006). Ultimately, this stage promotes informed decision-making and enhances

the coachee's sense of agency and ownership over the chosen course of action (Norman, 2024).

Will or Way Forward

The final stage, named Will or Way Forward, is centred around developing a concrete action plan that outlines the specific steps the coachee will take to achieve their goals, translating insights and options from the previous stages into realistic, achievable and measurable actions (Passmore, 2021). This stage focuses on ensuring that the coachee has a clear understanding of what needs to be done, when, and how, while also addressing any potential barriers. It involves establishing timelines, identifying resources, and creating accountability structures to monitor progress (Hancock, 2024). The GROW model's final stage is essential for ensuring the coachee's commitment and motivation to move forward, empowering them to take responsibility for their own development and work towards the successful attainment of their goals by following a structured, focused plan (Grant, 2020).



Figure 3. GROW Model Framework (Okorie *et al.*, 2022)

The GROW model offers several advantages, with its simplicity and a logical and easy-to-follow framework that can guide both the coach and coachee through the coaching journey (Leach, 2020). This structure helps to focus attention on the specific needs of the coachee (Rubtcova, Pavenkov and Pavenkov, 2016)

Another strength of the GROW model is its emphasis on empowering the coachee. By encouraging individuals' active involvement in defining their goals, assessing their current

reality, exploring options, and determining a way forward, the model fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility (Athanasopoulou and Dopson, 2015). This active participation enables coachees to take charge of their own development, which, as Martens (2012) highlights, is often linked to greater intrinsic motivation and a more sustained commitment to achieving their goals. As further emphasised by Hancock (2024), the empowerment inherent in the GROW model's approach promotes self-reliance, as coachees are not merely guided by the coach but are actively involved in the decision-making process.

Nonetheless, despite its strengths, the GROW model also presents certain limitations. For instance, Passmore (2021) highlights that the GROW model may not be suitable for addressing cases where the coachee's challenges are deeply entrenched or emotionally complex, such as unresolved trauma or interpersonal conflicts. In such instances, the model may fail to adequately address the deeper emotional or psychological factors at play, necessitating the incorporation of a more holistic, therapeutic approach (Teller *et al.*, 2014).

Furthermore, another limitation has been noted by Bishop (2012), according to whom the model's predominant focus on goal-setting and problem-solving may overlook the importance of engaging individuals emotionally and establishing a routine for sustained progress. To address these potential setbacks, Bishop (2012) proposes an expanded version of the GROW model, known as the GROWER model, in which two additional elements—"Engage" and "Routinize"—are incorporated as a means of augmenting the relational and long-term aspects of coaching.

Still, notwithstanding its limitations, the GROW model remains a widely adopted and effective framework in various coaching contexts. It finds wide applicability across various corporate domains, facilitating both individual performance improvement and leadership development (Ely *et al.*, 2010; Grover and Furnham, 2016). Furthermore, the model is often employed in career planning and progression, helping individuals to define career goals, assess their current standing, explore career options, and chart a clear path forward. As highlighted by Leach (2020), by guiding individuals through its stages, the GROW model supports both personal and professional growth, rendering it a highly valuable tool for enhancing career trajectories and fostering work success.

Reflection through the Application of Gibbs Reflective Model

Reflective practice has been recognised as an essential facilitator of one's professional growth and development, providing individuals with the opportunity to critically assess their actions, decisions, and experiences. The Gibbs model, developed by Graham Gibbs in

1988, encompasses a structured six-stage process, whose stages—description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan—are aimed at guiding individuals in reflecting systematically on their experiences (Galli and New, 2022). The application of the Gibbs model will enable me to critically reflect on my role as a coach-mentor, offering a framework to evaluate my professional interactions, identify areas of strength and development, and enhance the overall effectiveness of my coaching approach (Main, 2023). This reflective process will contribute to a deeper understanding of my practices and guide my continuous improvement in coaching and mentoring roles (He, 2018).

Description

As part of the Coaching and Mentoring Skills for the Workplace module, I was required to engage in both a coaching and a mentoring session. Working collaboratively with a peer, I first assumed the role of the coach, employing the SMART framework to structure the coaching process and facilitate the coachee's effective goal-setting. By applying the SMART criteria—ensuring the goals were Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (Bjerke and Renger, 2017) —I was able to guide the coachee in formulating clear, attainable objectives that aligned with their personal and professional aspirations. Subsequently, I took on the role of a mentor, where the focus shifted from goal-setting to offering feedback and guidance to support the mentee's personal and professional growth. In this capacity, I worked to create an open, supportive environment where the mentee feels comfortable discussing their challenges and aspirations and is open to receiving constructive feedback that can help her refine her skills and foster more informed decision-making.

Feelings

In the time preceding the sessions, I experienced a mix of emotions. On one hand, I felt a sense of anticipation and enthusiasm about the opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired from the Coaching and Mentoring Skills for the Workplace module. I recognised the sessions as a valuable platform for both personal and professional development, offering the chance to further advance my practical skills in coaching and mentoring. However, on the other hand, I experienced some anxiety, stemming from my limited prior experience in these roles. Having never facilitated a formal coaching or mentoring session before, I was unsure of how effectively I would be able to translate theoretical concepts into practical application and provide meaningful support to the coachee and mentee in their development. Still, ultimately, upon the successful completion of both sessions, I realised that my initial nervousness had been largely unfounded. Being content with my performance, I experienced a sense of

accomplishment that not only boosted my confidence but also heightened my motivation to further cultivate and refine my coaching and mentoring competencies.

Evaluation

Reflecting on my coaching and mentoring sessions, I identify both positive and negative aspects of my performance.

In terms of positives, I acknowledge myself as having been able to successfully implement the SMART as a means of helping the coachee develop well-structured, actionable goals. Furthermore, I effectively built rapport with the coachee, fostering open communication and creating a supportive environment. This encouraged them to openly share their challenges and aspirations, contributing to the overall success of the sessions.

However, areas for improvement were also evident. For instance, I occasionally found it challenging to maintain a balance between active listening and offering guidance, inadvertently steering the conversation rather than empowering the coachee to independently explore their own solutions. Additionally, there were instances where I struggled to provide clear and actionable solutions to some of the mentee's concerns, potentially leaving certain issues insufficiently addressed. Whilst I sought to manage the situation by offering the mentee reflective opportunities to identify their own solutions and suggesting the option of booking a follow-up session to revisit unresolved topics, I recognise that further developing my ability to address complex issues more confidently and effectively would enhance my coaching and mentoring capabilities.

Analysis

Overall, the experience of conducting coaching and mentoring sessions was widely beneficial as it provided me with the opportunity to put my theoretical knowledge into practice. It facilitated the identification of my strengths, as well as areas for improvement, which, in turn, enhanced my self-awareness and rendered me better positioned to refine my coaching and mentoring abilities. Although I encountered certain difficulties, the obstacles encountered will serve as valuable learning opportunities, pushing me to further develop my skills and adapt my approach to ascertain my capacity to effectively coach and mentor others.

Action Plan

Drawing from the insights gained, I plan to refine my coaching and mentoring practices by addressing my points of weakness. To this end, I will focus on improving my active listening skills, ensuring that I fully understand the coachee's concerns and provide guidance that is both relevant and practical, while still not overly prescriptive. Moreover, I aim to build greater confidence in my abilities as a coach and mentor by trusting in my knowledge and experience, which will enable me to offer more decisive and assured guidance and facilitate the cultivation of a more supportive and empowering environment for the coachee.

Objective	Specific Actions	Measurement	Achievable Steps	Relevance	Timeline
Improve active listening skills	Practise paraphrasing and summarising during sessions. Set aside time post-session to reflect on coachee's key points.	Gather coachee/ mentee feedback on clarity of understanding. Track instances of effective communication in a coaching log.	Attend an online or in-person active listening workshop. Practice during informal conversations to develop the habit. Engage in role-playing exercises with peers to simulate sessions.	Active listening will help me build trust, understanding, and effective problem-solving in coaching/mentoring relationships. It will support deeper engagement with the coachee.	1 month for initial steps, ongoing thereafter.
Provide relevant, practical guidance	Research industry-specific case studies for session use. Incorporate real-world examples and actionable	Evaluate coachee/ mentee feedback on relevance of guidance. Assess implementation success by	Develop a library of relevant to coaching and mentoring literature and case studies.	Providing practical, targeted guidance will ensure the coachee gains valuable, real-world insights and actionable strategies.	2-3 months.

	strategies into discussions. Adeptly tailor guidance to the coachee/mentee's personal goals and challenges.	observing coachee/mentee's progress.	Seek input from others to enrich understanding of best practices.		
Build confidence in coaching ability	Reflect on past successes to reinforce positive outcomes. Seek advice from experienced coaches and mentors for feedback. Practise self-affirmation to boost confidence before sessions.	Assess self-confidence levels through reflective journaling. Gather peer and mentor feedback on session delivery.	Connect with other coaches and mentors to learn from peers. Actively participate in discussions and seek constructive feedback. Read literature on effective coaching strategies and apply them.	An enhancement of my confidence will bolster my decisiveness and clarity, strengthen the coachee/mentee's trust and foster greater session productivity.	Ongoing over 6 months.

Conclusion

This report has examined the critical role of coaching and mentoring in the context of today's dynamic business environment. It explored the fundamental principles and skills required for the effective implementation of these practices, alongside the benefits they offer.

Furthermore, an analysis of the GROW coaching model was provided, discussing its applicability, strengths, and limitations in guiding individuals. Finally, the paper reflected on my personal experiences in coaching and mentoring, highlighting key insights gained, areas of strength, and opportunities for future development. By synthesising theoretical perspectives with practical reflections, this report underscored the significance of coaching and mentoring as pivotal tools for driving performance and resilience in contemporary

organisations, whilst concurrently offering a pathway for advancing my coaching and mentoring abilities and overall professional development.

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Appendix

BMSW 6005	FEEDBACK	Date of Interview:	09.11.2024				
Coach	Dimitrichka	Coachee	Yasminka				
Coaching Model:	SMART /GROW/MMM/RAW		SMART				
The numerical rating system is based on the scale below.							
Scale:	5 – Yes	4 – Most of the time	3 – Some of the time	2 – Almost never	1 – No		
Explained the purpose of the session first.				Rating			
				5	4	3	2
<i>Questionning techniques were applied and relevant questions were asked , here probing questions could have been further expanded</i>				☒	☐	☐	☐
Is the coach patient? Is He/She giving the coachee time to think through issues and arrive at a conclusion in the way THEY process information? <i>Active listening and full attention to details practiced, the coach was relatively calm and paying attention to the coachee</i>				☒	☐	☐	☐
Is the coach focused on the coachee's agenda? <i>The Coach focus on the coachee's agenda - Time Management skills – 15 minutes were fully utilised with a summary of the conversation provided</i>				☒	☐	☐	☐
<i>The coach was professional and non judgemental</i>				☒	☐	☐	☐
Is the coach acting as a problem solver, providing the solutions for the coachee? <i>The coach did not provide solutions but instead planned for a mentoring session without solving problems</i>				☒	☐	☐	☐
Has the SOLER technique been applied Applied				☒	☐	☐	☐
Additional Comments Good attempt							