

***Programme:*** BA (Hons) Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

***Module:*** Coaching & Mentoring Skills for the Workplace

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## **Introduction**

Human resource professionals are crucial in the workplace. They serve a range of roles ranging from functioning as change agents, strategic business partners, advisors, and advocates as well. Within each of these roles, coaching and mentoring components are always present. This makes coaching and mentoring very important in the workplace. Iqbal and Hakaraia (2017) define coaching as “a method of learning which enhances responsibility and awareness.” In order to improve a person's abilities, knowledge, or job performance, coaching and mentoring are both successful methods for employee development, according to CIPD (2023). While mentoring refers to the connection in which a more seasoned colleague offers their knowledge to help the development of less seasoned persons, coaching strives to produce optimal performance and improvement at work (CIPD, 2023).

Coaching evolved in the 1970s introduced by Timothy Gallway and spread worldwide into the world of business with the development of the GROW model by Sir John Whitmore and colleagues. Coaches are experts who help people think constructively, thereby taking action. On the other hand, mentors are experts when it comes to sharing their experiences by offering professional advice and guidance to clients. Mentoring and coaching don't involve giving advice, giving lessons, or instructing someone what to do. Asking the correct questions to promote increased self-awareness and more informed decision-making is the core focus of coaches and mentors. The role of a mentor or coach does not involve solving problems but rather asking the right questions on how the best solutions can be found (Iqbal and Harakaia, 2017). For everyone that succeeds in the workplace, it is because there is somebody there to show them the way out. Therefore, coaching and mentoring have many benefits to both an individual and employers. For an individual, coaching leads to improved personal effectiveness and growth, improved self-

awareness, improved informed decision-making, improved individual performance and skills development which enhances employability. For an employer, coaching improves organizational effectiveness, the effective use of resources, improved organizational productivity and performance, informed decision-making, and achievement of organizational goals (CIPD, 2023).

## **Reflection**

### **Description of Experience**

During the eighth week of the course, I took part in a role-play exercise in which I took on the role of a coach and coached an employee based on case study. The experience involved analysing the employee's situation and whether it could be addressed through mentoring or coaching in which I determined that coaching was more appropriate, applying the GROW model of coaching and applying different skills, behaviours, attitudes, values and beliefs as a coach. During the coaching session, I initially took the role of a coach in which I had to coach an employee playing the role of Maria Cook, a microbiologist who has been with the company for years and was eager for a promotion. Maria is frustrated with her current job and had made it public that she was looking for another job. During the coaching session, I had to help Maria come up with solutions to her problems in which we applied the GROW model. We later switched roles during which I had to play the role of the coachee. Once we switched roles, I went through a session during which I had to be coached while playing the role of Maria.

### **Feelings and Thoughts**

At the start of the session when I had to play the role of a coach, I was a little nervous. I was not confident enough. However, I was willing to give the session my all. I thought that even if I was nervous and doubted my ability to play the role of a coach effectively, the least I could do was try. As we progressed with the coaching, I started to get more confident. I began to

realise that it was not as hard as I had expected and that with little effort, we could do it well. In the end, I was happy with the result. We were able to complete the coaching session. I was proud of myself and everything I had achieved during the session.

## **Evaluation**

One thing that went well during the coaching session is that we were able to successfully apply the GROW model. As a coach, I was able to help the employee Maria identify goals she wanted to achieve, evaluate her current reality, evaluate any obstacles to achieving the set goals and also come up with solutions to her problems. Another thing that worked well during this session is that I was able to remain very supportive, and attentive, and empowered Maria to come up with strategies to achieve her career goals. This played a crucial role in making the coaching session a success. I cannot think of anything that did not go well during the coaching session. We did experience difficulties with the planning of the coaching sessions. For instance, due to poor time planning, we had little time to plan for the session. However, other than that, I did not have any negative experiences.

## **Conclusions**

The coaching session helped me learn a wide range of things. As argued by MacLeod and Brounstein (2023), coaching is crucial to help employees develop their careers. It not only helps gain new skills but also improves existing skills by identifying one's strengths and areas for improvement as well (MacLeod and Brounstein, 2023). When I was acting as a coach, I realised that one has to have many different skills to be able to coach an employee successfully. For instance, I had to be very patient with Maria during the coaching session, ask open-ended questions, be focused on the agenda of the coaching session. Although I did offer some solutions I now understand that I could have offered more proactively while still emphasising the

importance of training and development. In the future, I will work on achieving a better balance between offering guidance and proposing solutions when it's appropriate, while ensuring the development of the individual remains a central focus.

The coaching session also helped me learn that applying a good coaching model is as important in a coaching session. MacLennan (2017) argues that the coaching/mentoring approach adopted during a coaching or mentoring problem is probably the most effective way of helping others to achieve optimum performance in the workplace. Without an effective coaching model, it can be very challenging to successfully coach someone. One can fail to keep up with the coaching agenda if an effective coaching model is not applied (MacLennan, 2017). During the coaching session, applying the GROW model made the coaching session a little less difficult and more fruitful. This helped me learn that in coaching, the coaching model adopted is significant.

Furthermore, this experience helped me learn that with determination and commitment, one can achieve anything. As I earlier mentioned, I was very nervous and doubtful of my ability when we started the coaching session. However, being very determined and committed to the coaching session later made me very confident and played a crucial role in making the coaching session successful. Ultimately, this coaching experience has highlighted areas in which I need to enhance my skills. As argued by Iqbal and Hakaraia (2017), coaches are experts that help us think constructively, thereby taking action. Therefore, they ought to have many crucial skills. During the coaching session when I acted as a coach and even when I switched to be the coachee, I realised that I needed to improve skills like my teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, and improve my ability to maintain a positive attitude despite the kind of situation I am faced with.

## Action

| Goal (s)                                                             | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Deadline      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Improve my teamwork skills                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ask for and also give more constructive feedback</li> <li>-Learn from others with strong teamwork skills</li> </ul>                                                     | October 2023  |
| Improve my problem-solving skills                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Volunteer to more roles requiring the application of problem-solving skills</li> <li>-Regularly conduct online assessments to identify areas for improvement</li> </ul> | December 2023 |
| Enhance my ability to maintain a positive attitude in all situations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Meditate more often</li> <li>-Interact more with positive environments and positive people</li> <li>-Volunteer more</li> </ul>                                          | December 2023 |

## Critical Evaluation

Iqbal and Hakaraia (2017) argue that while it may be easy to apply coaching and mentoring in the workplace, sometimes people may not understand what they are applying or why they are applying it. Therefore, ensuring business coaching in everyday business activities plays a crucial role in helping improve organizational effectiveness as well as personal effectiveness and development (Iqbal and Hakaraia, 2017). CIPD (2023) indicates that

mentoring and coaching assist in performance management, prepare and support people through change, support self-directed learning and development and support sharing curated resources (CIPD, 2023). Garvey et al., (2008) argue that coaching and mentoring, whichever form they take, are intended to enable some sort of exchange of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding between their participants. Knowledge is power, and therefore, coaching and mentoring give individuals and employers power which leads to transition, development and growth (Garvey et al., 2008). Connor and Pokora (2017) argue that coaching and mentoring enhance effective practice in the workplace which leads to individual and organizational growth.

In this context, coaching and mentoring could play a crucial role in improving my performance as well as morale. Iqbal and Hakaraia (2017) argue that mentoring cannot succeed unless there are clear objectives agreed in advance, unless there is an agreed plan of action, and unless a company replaced traditional training. Iqbal and Hakaraia (2017) argue that coaching cannot bring about change unless clear SMART goals are put in place in advance, there is strong support from the senior management and without full commitment from the coach and the individual (Iqbal and Hakaraia, 2017). Applying the GROW model (Shown in Table 1 below), coaching and mentoring can be effective in improving my performance and morale.

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Goal    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be more optimistic about work</li> <li>-Enhance my communication process with colleagues in the workplace</li> <li>-Improve my performance and productivity</li> <li>-Develop better relationships with colleagues</li> </ul> |
| Reality | <p>-Currently, I believe that I have many skills and expertise that can help me achieve my goals. For instance, I have strong communication and interpersonal skills. I am a very creative, resilient and flexible person as</p>                                      |

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                  | well. I have also been performing fairly at work and have developed a positive relationship with colleagues though it is not as strong.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Obstacles        | -I think the workplace environment would be an obstacle to developing strong relationships at work and improving my performance. Mostly, the lack of support from colleagues and leaders can be demoralising and affect my performance. Furthermore, I am still growing as a professional and therefore, there are many areas I lack expertise in which can also be another obstacle. My problem-solving and teamwork skills also require improvement.                                           |
| Options          | I think receiving more support from colleagues and supervisors at work could be of great help. Furthermore, I think interacting with positive environments and people can make me more optimistic about my work and improve my performance and productivity at work. I also think that receiving constructive feedback from my colleagues and supervisors can greatly help me to identify my areas for improvement and come up with ways to improve which can help me grow and achieve my goals. |
| Way Forward/Will | One of the actions I am willing to take is to interact more with positive environments and people to learn to be more optimistic. This can also help me improve the communication process with my colleagues. I am also ready to receive and give constructive feedback to help better improve myself as a person and professional to improve my performance at work.                                                                                                                            |

### **Skills, Behaviours, Attitudes and Beliefs of Coaches**

According to Iqbal and Hakaraia (2017), coaches are experts that help us think constructively, thereby taking action. Therefore, coaches use effective listening and questioning skills to assist their clients in finding their solutions. Coaches do not merely provide their clients with solutions to the problems they are facing, rather they coach them to improve self-awareness and find the best solutions for themselves. To be able to do this, coaches need to have effective listening and questioning skills to ask their clients the right questions and listen to their responses. They should also be able to analyse and interpret those responses and be creative enough to help their clients identify solutions to problems they are facing (Iqbal and Hakaraia, 2017). Furthermore, coaches use interpersonal and communication skills and intentional coaching skills to coach their clients depending on the area of coaching needed. For instance, a business coach will need to have effective communication and interpersonal skills to better communicate and interact with the client and their environment to better understand the client and their problems as well as their environment. This makes it easy for the coach to identify how to best help the client. Communication skills are crucial to enable a coach to communicate their ideas with the client clearly and simply to understand (Iqbal and Hakaraia, 2017).

Giant and Watson (2014) argue that coaches should be empathetic and have a positive attitude. Empathy is more important in coaching because it helps create a safe and supportive space for the client to explore their goals, challenges and emotions. An empathetic coach is better placed to understand the needs, values, and motivations of the client and tailor their approach accordingly to enable the client to achieve greater self-awareness and make informed decisions. When a coach is empathetic, it shows the client that the coach cares, respects and believes them (Giant and Watson, 2014). This is the same as having a positive attitude. Connor

and Pokora (2017) argue that as a coach, one needs to support, motivate and encourage their clients and get them through any bad patches or work on maintaining a positive attitude. To do that, the coach needs to have a positive attitude first. Only with a positive attitude can coaches provide positive and constructive feedback and coach clients to improve their performance (Connor and Pokora, 2017).

Starr (2016) argues that an effective coach is observant, and can pay attention. They should be able to keep their eyes and ears open when dealing with a client. This means being aware of what is said and what is not said. They should be able to pick up on body movements and tone of voice as well. Effective coaches also have a high ability to trust and support others. In the workplace, employees will always have good and bad days. Good coaches should know how to support their clients and trust them to be conscientious, and to tell the truth. Effective coaches are also respectful, patient and assertive. Coaches have to be assertive to understand what is involved in any decision. They ought to be patient to understand their clients better and help them address the problems or difficult situations they are going through. Lastly, Starr (2016) argues that an effective coach should be goal-oriented. One role of a coach is to help clients set SMART goals. A coach cannot achieve that if they are not goal-oriented themselves. They should be able to base coaching sessions on clear, definable goals which can include basing specific tasks on the set goals (Starr, 2016).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, coaching is very important in the workplace. It plays a crucial role in helping employees improve their performance. During the coaching session in class, I initially played the role of a coach before playing the role of a coachee. This session was very fruitful. It helped me learn how important coaching is and some of the skills that a coach should have such as being patient and empathetic with the coachee and having strong communication and interpersonal skills. This session played a crucial role in improving my morale. After the session, I was highly motivated. Through the application of the GROW model, I am now able to set goals for myself, identify my reality, any obstacles to achieving the set goals, the options I have and the way forward as well.

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|                                                                                                                                                                   |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>BMSW 6005</b>                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Feedback</b>        | <b>Date of Interview:</b>   | 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2023      |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| <b>Coach</b>                                                                                                                                                      | Sevda Gyunaydan Beysim | <b>Coachee</b>              | Loraine Kristel tabila Eleccion |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| <b>Coaching Model:</b>                                                                                                                                            | GROW MODEL             |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| The numerical rating system is based on the scale below.                                                                                                          |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| <b>Scale:</b>                                                                                                                                                     | <b>5 – Yes</b>         | <b>4 – Most of the time</b> | <b>3 – Some of the time</b>     | <b>2 – Almost never</b>  | <b>1 – No</b>            |                          |                          |                          |
| Explained the purpose of the session first.                                                                                                                       |                        |                             |                                 | <b>Rating</b>            |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                   |                        |                             |                                 | <b>5</b>                 | <b>4</b>                 | <b>3</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>1</b>                 |
| Is the coach asking open ended questions or closed questions                                                                                                      |                        |                             |                                 | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Brief introduction and briefly explained the process but coachee was encouraged to answer open questions                                                          |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Is the coach patient? Are they giving the coachee time to think through issues and arrive at a conclusion in the way THEY process information?                    |                        |                             |                                 | X                        |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The coach was very patient and actively listening to the coachee                                                                                                  |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Is the coach focused on the coachee's agenda?                                                                                                                     |                        |                             |                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Good questioning skills that allow coachee to reflect on experience and help coach to finding a better solution</i>                                            |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Is the coach coaching in their own image?                                                                                                                         |                        |                             |                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Good – but could have probed in more detail and reflect on own experience</i>                                                                                  |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Is the coach acting as a problem solver, providing the solutions for the coachee?                                                                                 |                        |                             |                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | X                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>The coach acted as a problem solver but solutions could have been offered, this was attempted to its minimal although training and development was offered</i> |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| <b>Additional Comments</b>                                                                                                                                        |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| GROW model was applied so the session was quite well structured, But SOLER techniques could have been applied to ensure the 7c's effective communication process. |                        |                             |                                 |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |



