



Assessment Component (task 1) Written assignment

Evaluate a range of coaching or mentoring theories and models for the identification of a model(s) appropriate for the needs and culture of own organisation with a clear rationale for the choice of model(s).

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To understand the research topic, I have critically examined various coaching models and theories, some of which enabled me to think differently as I look at my own coaching practice and apply this to the nature of the current organisation, The University of Wales Trinity St David (UWTSD). I have enjoyed the breadth of reading to narrow down the focus for this subject. This has enabled me to broaden my knowledge, whilst also drawing upon my own personal experiences of coaching.

Being a multi – layered theme, one size does not fit all but I found that there are some contradicting viewpoints that have been investigated within this thesis as I explore the complex details. UWTSD is at the heart of this assignment, and the aim is to critically evaluate the relevance of some coaching or mentoring theories and models with the view of identifying one that is appropriate for the needs and culture of the organisation.

I have consistently perceived UWTSD as already having a diverse, student-focused, inclusive but patriotic culture with a strong sense of pride in who they represent.

The mission statement is: -

“Transforming Education, Transforming Lives”

There is a clear sense of purpose and drive to improve communities and widening access to education. The university embraces its students and staff members from all backgrounds and walks of life refraining from judgement (UWTSD, 2025). Supporting one another has always been what I would consider a very endearing and attractive trait that UWTSD offers.

To help understand the culture of the organisation and where coaching would be effective, I have decided to utilise the Johnson and Scholes Cultural Web Model (Johnson et.al., 2017) as scaffolding for this assignment. This model is made up of seven elements: Rituals and Routines, Stories, Symbols, Power Structures, Control systems, Organisation Structure, and The Paradigm. The table in Appendix A (The Cultural Web Model – Johnson and Scholes, 1992) provides a visual representation to allow for a deeper understanding, analysis, also changing assumptions surrounding the company culture. This brings together different sections within the model that will help to indicate any intricacies of the organisation such as routines and symbols that may be present.

Mullins (2019) states that it is a worthwhile model because of the breadth of ideas captured by the elements that give the model its distinctive character. Bates (2015) has even attributed the success of the British Cycling Team and a cycling knight, David Brailsford, to the Johnson and Scholes Cultural Web due to the fine-tuning in planning and going the extra mile with marginal gains. Heading up

Team Sky and The British Cycling Team, achieving a multitude of medals, Brailsford thought of resetting the culture even amidst strong performances, looking at how the team could improve, then marginal gains was born out of the smallest of changes that made the difference (Hall, James and Marsden, 2012). Conversely, the cultural web model has been argued against by McDonald and Foster (2013), who believe that the shape may be too simplistic and fails to capture deep complexity of the organisational culture. However, I believe that it is a credible model because it clearly presents the different cultural elements, demonstrating a balanced, holistic view across the organisation's cultural landscape.

Following a restructure of 'The Library Services' (the wider team in which I work), now called 'Digital Learning and Library Services' there have been significant variations that have had an impact on colleagues and team members. Through my assessment of the situation, I wanted to highlight the transitional period that the library has been experiencing, as well as critically evaluate whether this could be of help when determining the previous and current culture. I will then identify a suitable coaching theory, model and approach to use in this new working environment. To deepen the analysis, I examined Charles Handy's Model of Organizational Culture questionnaire to explore the already overarching existing culture and the preferred culture of UWTSD (see Appendix B, p. 18). Having looked at the dominant culture, which was revealed as a task – oriented culture the impact that coaching would have, would be a renewed sense of pride and unity within the organisation by supporting collaboration and problem-solving. I think also branding and lanyards also give us a clear identity so when this has been refreshed to reflect the new team, this will also be representative of culture (see Appendix A pp. 10 – 11). Furthermore, this cultural insight also linked to the power of language within coaching was prevalent throughout my research, which is consistent with French's et.al., (2010) view that organisational culture is formed through shared meanings and assumptions.

As I continued my literature further, I noticed that several coaching theorists discuss conceptual metaphors to enable creative thinking (Giaraldez-Hayes and Earnes, 2025; Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2005), which almost made the coaching process easier to grasp for both the coachee and myself as well as to understand the metaphorical language being used in context. In my view, metaphors present a conceptual diagram of the subject and can help with imagery and imagination. This was reflected in my own coaching experience, where the metaphor assisted my practice and helped the coachee to understand how they could make sense of a situation. The metaphor of driving a car to a destination using a satellite navigation system illustrates more than simply formulating a plan as was highlighted in my coaching practice when I recorded the third session with coachee one. Although, the coachee initially looked towards clarity on how she was going to achieve

her goals, our discussion revealed that through this language her focus was less on arriving to the destination but more on navigating changing circumstances and adapting to a new team. Language is an important part of coaching, in helping coachees understand where they are coming from and in articulating their information and experiences in their own way, in whichever form this takes in conversation (Garvey, et.al.,).

Building on this, an area of interest for me is Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). One technique within NLP, the Milton Model uses language to challenge ill-formed sentences, and uses metaphor, enabling the coach to reframe or replace the problem in a way that supports deeper insight (Cox, et.al., 2010). It has been argued by Megginson and Clutterbuck (2005) that metaphors may or may not be a way of expressing themselves and that some may bring less success or satisfaction than the coachee wants. Therefore, the metaphor may need to be adapted or developed depending on what the coachee needs. Although, I already had a productive working relationship with my coachees I still delved into the unknown. I decided to use metaphorical language as discussed to open creativity and expand the minds of the coachees into what could be explored. With reference to the metaphor of driving a car to get to a destination that was explored earlier on in this assignment, this would be like practising gear changes until it becomes second nature. Breaking tasks down into smaller chunks so that they are easier to digest (Freeth, 2003). I think this framework would be relevant and of value to UWTSD, the organisation, particularly in the team because it would encourage colleagues to compartmentalise their thoughts and understand where they come from. NLP also emphasises modelling, which demonstrates replicating the behaviour of someone, who epitomises success and effective performance (Freeth, 2003). This can be valuable during this period of organisational change; colleagues may benefit from understanding how others are navigating their way through an uncertain time. I would envisage that the way modelling fits into coaching would be when a coachee is stuck and not sure which direction to take or maybe they want to feel empowered and more confident in their new roles.

Although the Insights Discovery colour energies are not a coaching model, the framework in which they operate in has supported my coaching experience (see Appendix B, the paradigm shift) due to the communication style and preferences used, which can have the ability to empower the coachee. At times, when providing a coaching experience that gradually evolved into a mentoring dynamic between coachee two and myself as the coach, I continued to use specific questioning techniques such as “what evidence supports that thought?” to bring the focus back to the core issue during the session as I believe that the coachee could have been a sunshine yellow due to the high-spirited nature of her character. On reflection I could have used a particular ‘anchor’ word to channel the

thought processes. However, coachee one provided lots of detail and thought into her answers, so I felt connected to a blue colour energy. As a coach, I was able to provide empathy and actively listen, making sense of the information to repeat back to the coachee to validate understanding.

Throughout my coaching practice, I drew upon the GROW model, structured around four key stages: Goal, Reality, Options and Will. This appeared consistently across my research, including work by Megginson and Clutterbuck (2005) and Bates (2015), representing identifying a goal, to taking action to achieve it. GROW became prevalent throughout my coaching approach due to its simplistic nature and easy to follow questioning framework. This was especially useful in the early stages because of the nature of setting goals and outcomes. Both the coachees came to the coaching experience with goals that they wanted to ultimately achieve by the end of the process, and we worked with these to set the precedence for the sessions. However, it comes with its limitations and assumes that coachees already have a clear goal in mind in the early stages of the coaching program (Garvey et.al., 2018). This may not be the case, and I understand that there could be ambiguity surrounding the issues that need to initially be identified. Looking at a potential coaching program for the current culture of the organisation, some colleagues may have goals, but I believe that many will not as the shift in the culture and paradigm (see Appendix B) will have created a certain level of emotional disruption and perhaps a loss of identity. They may need space to voice their concerns and reassurance before meaningful goals and direction can occur. Therefore, I have critically evaluated Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) because of my invested interest in changing the way people think as well as reframing their thoughts. According to Cox, et.al., (2010), the coach assesses what issue the coachee has, and examines the evidence or lack of evidence they have, to support their current perspective. I think that this provides a constructive support structure that helps to challenge the inner critic and the negative self - impression that can sometimes be present in a session. This worked well, particularly with coachee one as it got her to realise that she didn't have evidence to support what her current view was and that what she came to realise was that she had evidence for being able to do the job role she was transitioning into as her confidence was being supported by her previous experience and what she had already achieved. I also used Socratic questioning (Cox, et.al., 2014) to guide the coachees to discover how they are feeling and to take them on a journey of self-discovery, whilst also recognising their strengths. These open-ended questions such as "could you explain this further?" worked well as a way of eliciting responses on a deeper level. Both coachees were very open and expressive, so this I found facilitated the coaching experience. I think that the ability to practice self-talk and employ positive affirmations to build coachees' confidence is an important learning curve in coaching practice and a method that I believe would work well integrated into the task culture. I think that within the library, colleagues could

employ self-compassion techniques under the unprecedented circumstances. Part of CBC are Performance Enhancing Thoughts (PETs) that are formed from Performance Interfering Thoughts (PITs) so the negative, unhelpful thoughts such as “it’s going to go badly” for a particular situation such as a presentation are reframed more positively into “it will at least be okay.” (Cox, et., 2024, p. 41). The limitations of CBC are that it is not for clinical disorders, where a coachee may not be able to accept the emotional responsibility for presenting problems or the responsibility of taking action. Instead, it is helpful for bringing about change and altering negative thought patterns (Cox, et.al.,).

I have noticed from working in the library (the wider team that I work in at UWTSD) for the last four years, that there has always been strength in collaboration and continuous professional development. However, due to the recent restructure, the following are the topics and interest that has come up for the individuals I coached. Coachee one was transitioning into a new role and coachee two was dealing with the effect that her position was no longer being renewed. Amongst this, there were jobs that became available, job losses and opportunities for voluntary severance. From what was such a highly supportive culture (see Appendix B, p. 17), the GROW model, I felt was appropriate for both the coachees and through my reading has been reinforced by Garvey (2009), who states that goal-oriented working is at the core of effective coaching. It has a clear structure and easy to follow framework that can be adapted as necessary for each coachee.

However, now under the new overarching umbrella team of Digital and Information Services instead of Library and Learning Resources; Information Technology (IT), and the Digital Creativity and Learning Team have merged with the library creating hybrid front line roles. Therefore, there are changing roles and dynamics within the team. From a coaching perspective, I am currently unsure of the culture of the IT side of the department but as an observer they may appreciate goal setting in coaching to support them in their roles. SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals could be used in this instance to define goals as clearly as possible (Doran, 1981, cited in Cox, et.al., 2024). This may help the coach align the new changes with that of the individual helping them to adapt to the current situation.

As a Digital Skills Officer (DSO), I am responsible for delivering sessions to both students and staff to improve their digital competencies online and in person. I work with academics to ensure that digital skills are rolled out across the board with the aim of embedding them into the curriculum. The job is multi-faceted and sometimes you cannot pre-empt a query, but it is important to upskill as a DSO and gain further knowledge. Consequently I endeavour to engage in continued professional development where I can. For example, the Coaching and Mentoring course that I am currently working towards helps me to upskill and prepare for the future. This course has given me the

confidence needed to step out of my comfort zone and progress in ways that will support my career development.

Coaching, particularly Cognitive Behavioural Coaching I believe would be influential in the current climate as it could inject a more positive and nurturing environment and encourage small successes (Cox, e.al.,). It would be helpful in creating connections and deeper relationships to bring some renewed unity and togetherness into the new team. However, there could be limitations such as the motivation of the coachee to commit and be willing to change their thought patterns.

This is, therefore, why I would choose CBC over GROW initially to alter the mindset and rebuild confidence. After which the coachee would be in a better position to set goals and further develop their skills.

Although, during my coaching practice, I wanted to combine a variety of models to assess which would be better suited to my style. In the recorded session, as well as the metaphoric technique, I also utilised the OSCAR model (Outcome, Situation, Choices, Actions and Review), which provides a structured framework for coaching conversations, (Bates, 2015) and used probing questions to encourage the coachee to reflect more deeply and consider their responses more carefully. I used this model specifically at this stage of the session due to the choice's aspect of the model as it is appropriate to assess the benefits of each choice or option and consider the most effective one (Bates, 2015).

To conclude, my aim throughout the assignment was to critically examine a range of underpinning coaching models and theories, with one model(s) that is appropriate for the needs of the organisation. I have explored a select few and connected them to the culture in changing times and enjoyed learning about the various models that are available to us as coaches. Having looked at these in detail, I would suggest that my preferred style of coaching would be to use Cognitive Behavioural Coaching as I like to reframe unhelpful thoughts into more positive ones that enable us to really adapt to situations. Aligning very closely with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which has supported me on my own developmental trajectory, I feel that I have a familiarity to CBC and this has worked during my own coaching practice as already discussed within this thesis.

I strongly believe that the ABCDEF model, standing for Adversity, Beliefs, Consequences, Disputations, Effective new rational beliefs and new feelings (Cox, et.al., 2024) within Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) would be able to support the shift in the new culture. This framework is designed for stress and coping mechanisms (Cox, et.al., 2024). The linear approach would support colleagues with their thoughts and be able to rationalise them. Having the ability to shift negative

thought patterns as CBC aligns with this process and reframe them with positive ones almost like positive affirmations, would certainly help individuals make this habitual and consequently impact the team.

I think it helped to explore a select, few models, to discover which would be the most effective. For example, the GROW model, which as identified would work in the former, supportive culture due to its simplistic nature. However, CBC can be naturally introduced to support individuals in the new culture. Additionally, with regards to the transition, it is important to provide support in a different way but also to bring back a similar sense of unity and collective identity.

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Appendix A

Johnson and Scholes Cultural Web

Elements	Analysis
Symbols	<u>Grading system</u> Your grade determines your level or rank within the university structure. In my experience, I think that this is true of universities across the board, but it can create the level of intimidation for those further down the tree because individuals can see where they sit in the hierarchy, which can trigger self-comparison. <u>The desk</u> The desk can be seen as a symbol due to hybrid working but with “hot desking” it is not always possible to get the desk that you gravitate towards when coming into work so this can translate to a sense of not feeling as valued within the workplace. <u>Lanyards</u> Lanyards are seen as a symbol of authority and importance. I feel like I am part of a team and a culture when I wear this as a statement of respect.

	<u>Branding</u> The library has its own branding and therefore symbolises unity and togetherness. I feel as though having a visual identity is positive and demonstrates a strong reputation. This branding will need to be changed to form a new sense of unity reflecting who we are today as the wider Digital Learning and Library Services.
Stories	<u>Lack of control</u> Due to the restructure, there has been a feeling of lack of control as the decisions being made are not within our own remit they come from the hierarchical perspective giving a feeling of a them versus us culture (see Appendix B, The paradigm shift).
Ritual and Routines	<u>Curriculum Review</u> The Curriculum review draws upon student performance data and module feedback encouraging staff to engage in continuous enhancement, possibly looking at embedding digital skills into the curriculum for it to become more prominent. There is also an expectation for staff, whilst also influencing decision making. <u>Bilingualism</u> As Digital Skills Officers, we need to ensure that our information is translated into Welsh in line with the UWTSD Welsh language policy to ensure consistency across the board and emphasis on bilingualism.

Induction

This gives students the information they need to succeed in their studies as it is an integral part of starting university and being prepared.

Exams

Exams are a way of assessment that has been a ritual for a long time to evidence learning. With Artificial Intelligence being accelerated due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 – tools are being used to really enhance online learning during this challenging time (Generator, 2024), additionally the nature of being able to replicate in assignments what AI expresses, possibly how Academics assess students work could change. It may be useful to have more oral assessments to see what the students have learnt rather than relying on AI.

Graduation

This is a formality that celebrates students' success and achievements – a special day for everyone involved. It marks the end of a lot of hard work and diligence that should be esteemed.

	<u>Meetings fortnightly with manager</u> This makes sure that colleagues are focused and on the right track learning of any new work or projects that need to be looked at. Personal Development Reviews are also held on a 6 monthly basis to outline any continued professional development training or events that would supplement the existing role. Also, projects to be reviewed and assessed within a given timeframe.
Control Systems	<u>Time keeping</u> Clocking in is informal at UWTSD there is an element of trust with an hour given for lunch. This is a loosely controlled format as a university, I feel heightens motivation in terms of wanting to go to work as you know there is faith there in the employee. Previously, I worked in industry where time keeping was strict and if you were 5 minutes late your pay was docked by 15 minutes. As Mullins (2019) stated some workplace rules are ridiculous and seem to create regulations to disengage their staff. I agree and it was evident that the culture had become increasingly limiting, with employees expressing their dissatisfaction over the working environment.

	<u>Nexus awards</u> UWTSD holds the Nexus awards, which is a reward system that encourages employees and co-workers to vote for each other for their hard work and due diligence throughout the year. When presented with the awards, it is usually a formal affair. I feel this boosts morale amongst the staff as it gives something to work towards and aim for. <u>Governance Frameworks</u> As a Welsh university, UWTSD operates under clear governance frameworks (UWTSD, 2025) such as... • Policies on AI • Safeguarding • Data protection.
Organisational Structures	<u>Hierarchical</u> UWTSD has a clear level of authority, and this can be identified with the organisational chart that connects management with their fellow colleagues. There are defined roles and responsibilities. With the restructure that has been put in place within the last couple of months within the library services team, roles and dynamics have changed and adapted.

	<u>Formal</u> There is a structured format within UWTSD that is formal and official. The Vice Chancellor arranges briefings at least once or twice a year, to communicate any changes or new information. The dress code with the library is smart/casual so it is not formal in terms of suit attire, which I think is highly encouraging as it makes the environment more relaxed. <u>Mechanistic</u> The study of Burns and Stalker analyses the mechanistic system, which according to Mullins, 2019, p. 478 “is a more rigid structure unable to deal adequately with rapid change; it is therefore more appropriate for stable environmental conditions.” This, I believe to be true of UWTSD due to the impact of the recent changes in the library team, seen in Appendix B, The paradigm shift and the main body of the essay. <u>Charts – structure</u> There is an organised chart that displays where staff sit and their respective roles.
Power Structures	<u>Clear lines of authority</u>

	There is a top-down decision-making culture that has been evident in the recent restructure with library services. There has been a lack of communication and decisions made without colleagues being consulted
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Appendix B

The Paradigm shift

If this paradigm is looked at in more detail in relation to UWTSD it can be identified that there has been a shift particularly within The Library - that fear of what is happening before is happening again as a restructure has been prevalent in the past. Although, during this time I was not an employee of the university, the comparisons and feedback from others, who were present are clear. The library staff deemed to have been dealt with differently and perhaps in a more organised manner. There is now a strong feeling of not being heard or the uneasiness of if you say something it will not be considered. As an example, my job was at risk as a former Digital Skills Advisor (DSA) due to the reorganisation and there was a possibility one of the three former DSAs would be downgraded. However, as a team we did not just allow this to be followed through we pushed back and created a counter proposal with evidence and data that we presented to the leaders of the restructure. Some doubts were creeping in as to whether this would be accepted due to the nature of the format – however, it did make a difference and the former DSAs were eligible for a promotion to which one was successful as my other colleague as well as myself declined the offer of promotion, consequently remaining in our current positions. Suffice to say we now have a new manager since July of this year. I think it brought the team even closer together than we were and we supported each other as well as receiving wider support from other colleagues. This gave a boost to morale, and it made me realise how important the university and its nurturing culture is. The nature of the restructure aims to make the library a more digital entity, moving towards further online resources and establishing a digital transformation, changing the names of roles and giving power to a digital identity for the future of the service. Falode and Shaw (2020) argue that the transformation of the global education sector is being catapulted by technological advancements and enhanced accessibility. I understand where the direction is heading but the ideas were not communicated with everyone early on. This enabled us to have to adapt very quickly and think on our feet on how we were going to tackle the potential challenges ahead that were clearly affecting the subculture of the library. The union played a supportive role acting as a buffer between employees and management and were able to provide scaffolding when we needed it the most, observing the changes from an objective view. Suddenly, the model as highlighted in Appendix A became jolted slightly and we found ourselves in a situation where we had to adapt in an increasingly uncertain environment. For example, some new roles start earlier than others and consequently in some cases, the library

assistants are having to cover the library desk as well as engage in their new position. In terms of our roles as Digital Skills Officer's (DSO's), we are short-staffed by two, who would be based in London and Birmingham, therefore my colleagues and I are having to compensate for the vacant positions by delivering digital skills sessions to their cohorts. Although, we are happy to provide support where we can, this can pose a certain shift of workload that isn't quite balanced.

In the new structure, there are two new posts that have been filled (*information Skills Support Officers*), which will assist with 121 support with students online. This is an interesting culture dynamic so any queries will be fed through the portal, Service Now and will be dealt with online, but any enhanced level of support will be signposted and triaged to the Digital Skills Officer's (DSO's). I am looking forward to seeing the developments of how this will be programmed and although the training will not be so hands-on giving training on an individual basis, I am sure that this process will alleviate some of the pressure of having to manage the digital skills inbox. With The Cultural Web Model (see Appendix A), I can see trends in how the organisation is likely to operate and what the preferred culture would be. This enables me to utilise the information that has been developed and take forward some of the insights that have been created. In comparison to alternative models, I have found Johnson and Scholes to be useful in compartmentalising the various sections and understanding the current culture and what it ultimately may shift to. Although, it is still early days to make an impact and to discover the idiosyncrasies of what will be a different and unique approach to how the library will function. We must not forget that the culture of the library will look different and the way that students borrow and collect books will also change. Students are still at the forefront of the organisation and if we can facilitate this process then that is what matters. However, seeing how it will all fit together is sometimes hard to visualise and keep in mind. Additionally, the Insights Discovery Colour Energies could come into play here as based on Jungian Psychology everyone would have a mix of colour energies, accelerating team communication and productivity (Insights, 2026). This means that the adjustment in expressions of individuals and how they react to situations may differ. For example, in 2022, I did my own Insights profile and colour energies were blue/green. This means that I am sensitive to change but also detail oriented so I may recognise the lack of detail in the communication of certain aspects of the change. This could be frustrating, but it is learning to counteract some of these emotions and realising that it is out of my control, so adapting is the most measured way forward. Throughout the restructure, I have endeavoured to remain resilient and maintain a positive outlook. The Johnson and Scholes Model have enabled me to look at and identify trends whilst critically reflecting on what I would ideally aspire the culture's organisation to achieve. This would look like Handy's questionnaire when I revealed that individuals have the power themselves. I believe that if management had discussed with various teams within

the library about their roles, then they would have gained a further insight into what jobs entails, which could have supported the decision - making process. I feel that the restructure has been a learning curve and I question that if it was done again would it be handled differently.

Charles Handy describes four main types of organisational cultures: power culture; role culture; task culture and person culture (Mullins, 2019). This introduced an unexpected theoretical perspective and perhaps gave a cultural nuance that I would not have initially considered within the university context. Through assessing the dominant view not only within the library but taking into consideration the whole organisation in the statements given, the result was a *task* culture. Bates (2015) likens this structure to the Greek gods, which aims to lend itself to an expression that helps to identify the meaning behind these sections. Athena is discussed as the *task* culture – “leaders are wise, ambitious and good at solving problems” (Bates, 2015, p.188). I also looked at the preferred culture as a comparison, which displayed as *self*, meaning that the power comes from the individuals of the organisation and is characteristic of the god Dionysus (Bates, 2015). I enjoy working in teams to achieve a particular task and problem-solving but have loyalty towards the organization. I see the value in helping to nurture and support other employees, which in turn contributes to my own continued development. I think that the impact that coaching could have on task culture would be a renewed sense of unity and pride within the organisation, creating increased confidence. According to French, et.al., (2008, p.394) “people are brought together to work in teams for specific purposes rather than be located in functional or departmental areas as in role cultures.” Therefore, coaching would bring autonomy and responsibility but also enhanced collaboration, whilst looking at employee engagement. It could even give added value to support problem-solving and the outcomes needed to succeed. This could possibly lead to higher performance and growth within the organisation.