



Coaching and Mentoring Skills for the Workplace

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Introduction

Staff development can benefit from the usage of coaching and mentoring techniques. Both are becoming more and more popular, and many businesses are using them to enhance the performance, expertise, and skills of their staff members in relation to certain goals and competencies, (CIPD, 2019).

To effectively carry out their duties, managers need possess leadership, management, and coaching abilities. Basic interpersonal skills are necessary for coaching, and many of these are directly related to effective leadership. Effective coaching will be challenging if a manager lacks these abilities, (Elisabeth Goodman's Blog, 2020).

Instead of engaging outside coaches to educate their employees, many organisations are training their managers to become internal coaches. Organisations may require outside coaching. The best uses for external coaches could be to help managers develop their coaching abilities and to cover for them until internal coaches become available, (Elisabeth Goodman's Blog, 2020).

What is coaching?

Improving and optimising performance at work is the aim of coaching. It emphasises on certain skills and goals and may also have an impact on an individual's character traits, (CIPD, 2019).

What is mentoring?

In the context of the workplace, mentoring describes a collaboration in which a more experienced colleague shares their deeper understanding to support the development of a less experienced colleague. Mentoring partnerships are typically longer-term agreements, (CIPD, 2019).

Gibbs' Reflective Model

Professor Graham Gibbs originally published the Reflective Cycle in his 1988 book "Learning by Doing." It's quite beneficial in helping people learn from everyday situations, particularly when things don't go according to plan. The reflective cycle is one technique for enhancing experience-based learning. It can be used by people to analyse and consider how they react to different situations, help them grow from their errors, (Mindtools.com, 2024).

The stages stated below should be followed after choosing a situation to analyse in order to apply Gibbs' Cycle to the structure of a coaching session.

Step 1: Description

Ask the person you are coaching to explain the circumstances in detail first. You just want to know what happened at this point. Make judgements afterwards.

To assist them in describing the scenario, think about posing questions similar to these.

When and where did this happen?

Why were you there?

Who else was there?

What happened?

What did you or other people do?

What outcome did this situation have?

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

Step 2: Feelings

After the encounter, encourage them to talk about their experiences and opinions.

What did you feel before this happened?

What emotions did you or others experience throughout this situation?

What thoughts and feelings did the situation leave you or others with?

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

Step 3: Evaluation

It is now essential to assist the person you are coaching in honestly evaluating which tactics worked and which didn't.

What went well?

What didn't go well?

What actions did you and the others take to aggravate the situation?

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

Step 4: Conclusions

You can help your team member come to a conclusion about what happened after evaluating the situation. Encourage them to re-evaluate the matter in light of the information you have already acquired.

In what ways would this have been a more satisfying experience for all those engaged?

How would you respond differently in the same circumstance if it were to happen again?

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

Step 5: Action

Your team member should be better equipped to deal with such situations in the future now that you know some possible courses of action.

In this last stage, you have to create a plan so they can put these changes into practice. Once you've determined which areas they'll concentrate on, ask them to promise to act, and then arrange a time for you both to assess their development. (Mindtools.com, 2024).

Grow model

What Is the GROW Model?

GROW is the most well-known coaching model and straightforward yet effective structure for organising your coaching or mentoring sessions. Sir John Whitmore (1937–2017) collaborated with Alan Fine and Graham Alexander to design the GROW concept.

GROW stands for:

- **G**oal.
- **C**urrent **R**eality.
- **O**ptions.
- **W**ill.

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

Imagine how you would plan a journey as a useful method of conceptualising the GROW Model. You start by figuring out where you want to go (the goal) and where you are right now (your current reality). Subsequently, you research your options and alternate paths to your destination. In the last step, establishing the will, you show your commitment by committing to the route and being prepared for any obstacles along the way, (Mindtools.com, 2024).

How to Use the GROW Model of Coaching:

The following steps need to be performed in order to set up a GROW Model-based coaching or mentoring session:

1. Establish the Goal

It is necessary for you and your team member to first assess the conduct you want to change before framing it as a goal for them to achieve.

A specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound goal is known as a SMART goal.

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

2. Examine the Current Reality

After that, ask your team member to describe their current circumstances.

This is an important stage to be in. All too often, people try to achieve something without fully understanding their own perspective. Furthermore, they typically leave out information that could aid them in successfully achieving their goal.

When your team member shares their existing circumstances with you, they might start to disclose the solution.

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

3. Explore the Options

Help your team member make as many smart decisions as they can at this point. After that, discuss them and help them choose the finest ones.

In this phase, provide your own recommendations. However, give your team member the opportunity to speak mostly by letting them make recommendations first. It's critical to steer them in the proper direction without assuming decision-making authority over them.

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

4. Establish the Will

At this point, your team member will know exactly how to achieve their goal.

The final step in assisting a team member in reaching their objective is to get them to commit to specific actions. By doing this, you will boost their motivation and fortify their will.

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

Finally, arrange a time when the two of you can evaluate their progress. This will enable them to be held partially responsible and provide them the freedom to change course if the original plan isn't working, (Mindtools.com, 2024).

An Example of the GROW Model

(The example given below is a collaboration of UWTSD module Assessment 1 - Role model's coaching sessions example and Mindtool's example.)

Philippa has a strong commitment to her position as manager of this important division in the pharmaceutical company.

Maria Cook is a microbiologist of the lowest calibre. After four years with the company, she feels stuck in her career. Despite the seeming lack of opportunities, she is ambitious and seeking a promotion. There are moments when her annoyance becomes hostile towards the other team members. She hasn't hidden the fact that she is actively seeking employment, but she hasn't been successful in her search thus far.

(UWTSD module assessment's example).

Reflection from role model coaching session

Conduct a coaching session using Grow model

Philippa uses the GROW Model to assist Maria, one of the team members, in reaching her objectives. In the next six months.

Asking open ended questions by Philippa and answers made by Maria

Goal

Q - Where would you like to be with this issue by the end of our conversation ?

Ans - I would like to have a solid plan in place to follow which will give me confidence to work with-in a team and become a team leader.

Q - What do you want to achieve?

Ans – I would like to gain proper skills and experience to get ready for promotion within the next six months.

Reality

Q - What is happening now ?

Ans – I joined the company four years ago and want to be promoted but it seems there is no option out there. This situation has made me annoy with the team and I looked for a new job.

Q - Can you tell more on how this frustration affects your performance and interaction with colleagues ?

Ans - This has been so frustrating, And it annoys me most of the time. It even creates tension with my fellow employees. I feel like my unhappiness is showing and is affecting others .

Q - What has stopped you from achieving your ideal outcome?

Ans – I have 4 years' experience but not enough skills to be able to manage larger team and project.

Options

Q - What could you do to change the situation?

Ans – I need to work towards solution. Our organisation got training material and online courses available for its employee to gain job skills. I can do some online courses.

Will

Q - What is your next step? What do you need from me?

Ans – help and support me to gain skills and experience to manage larger projects and teams. Then I will be ready for promotion.

(Imperial College London, 2024)

Outcome from coaching session

Maria says she would like to be promoted to team leader. This goal is SMART because it is time-bound, relevant to Maria's overall career goals and the team's mission, detailed, quantifiable, attainable (since she has four years of experience and there are team leader jobs in her department), and time-bound.

Maria and Philippa are currently examining her present circumstances. Although she is a basic grade microbiologist, she possesses some of the abilities required for a team leader already.

Philippa discusses the extra competencies Maria will require to succeed in a team leadership position:

Her dissatisfaction occasionally turns into hostility towards the other team members, thus she needs more experience leading others.

Although Ruth has been actively seeking employment but has not been successful so far, Philippa reminded her that in addition to looking for another work, she must continue to perform well in her current role in order to be given consideration for a promotion when one becomes available.

Philippa proceeds to go over Maria's options. She may manage a small group of people on a modest project to gain the experience she needs.

Philippa finally establishes the will. Philippa offers to let her supervise a small team on a modest project in her capacity. She will be able to take on more challenging projects in the future if she performs well. In order to continue doing well in her current position and make arrangements to spend time in that department, Maria must also work with the team closely to gain trust.

Feedback given by Philippa

Maria should try to take more responsibility. Maria can work with team more closely to gain trust.

Leadership, effective listening and proper communication are the key. Maria can Join some online courses to gain skills and confidence.

Follow up session

Philippa agrees to arrange some online courses from next week. Also Maria will have more opportunity to manage larger team and project. Philippa will keep close eye on Maria and her performance. Finally, Philippa agrees to give her progress a review in three months.

(Mindtools.com, 2024).

What went well

At the conclusion of the meeting, Philippa and Maria had achieved remarkable advancements. They agreed on the purpose of the meeting, established reasonable goals for the session, determined the topic, and scheduled their next meeting. They discussed possibilities and decided on a plan of action. Maria was driven and open to change right away, which is an important first step in the coaching process. Philippa thought she was doing well in her capacity as coach. Philippa observed Maria's increasing drive and her aspirational goal setting. Philippa found inspiration in witnessing how, by just listening to someone and enquiring about their objectives, she was assisting them in realising their vision.

What did not go well

In coaching session, Philippa was explaining GROW model which was not needed. Also she was not having patient. Sometimes Philippa was not giving Maria time to think through issue and arrive at a conclusion. As we know a coach should not provide solution, but in an occasion Philippa was acting as a problem solver, providing the solution for Maria. Sometimes Philippa was acting more like a manager, not coach.

For Philippa to create a productive coaching session, she required more substantial upfront contracts.

An analysis of the skills of an effective coach.

It is very likely that the line managers will assume primary accountability for providing coaching. Organisations usually incorporate coaching into one-on-one sessions and performance discussions as a routine management practice, (CIPD, 2019).

Skills

Being an effective coach requires these skills:

Active listening

Active listening is paying close attention, comprehending what is being said, and being able to repeat it. It is critical for coaches to listen to their staff members in order to understand what motivates them, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Communication

A large part of coaching involves sharing instruction, therefore having excellent communication skills is crucial for effective leaders. A coach can work more effectively with their team and set a positive example by being a skilled communicator, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Interpersonal

Relationship building is facilitated by interpersonal skills. Developing relationships with staff members enhances productivity, facilitates communication, and may even help you become a more capable leader, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Goal setting

One of the regular tasks for coaches is to set goals. This ability is useful for training staff members and assisting them in reaching achievement, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Observation

Coaches can utilise observational skills to assess whether employees require assistance and how best to support them, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Evaluation

An essential function of a coach is to assess workers' performance. This facilitates goal tracking and coaching approach adjustments. The capacity to watch, assess, and understand data as well as give an employee feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement are all part of evaluation abilities, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

How an effective coach uses his skills to develop the overall skills, behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and values of coachee.

Skills

New hires who need assistance with technical and communication skills are paired with coaches. Training programs enhance talent and can increase a company's competitiveness, which is advantageous, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Behaviours

If an employee's actions are impacting their or others' ability to do their jobs, they may need coaching to change. When business regulations change, coaches may provide one-on-one training to help staff workers modify their behaviour and adapt to new developments, (Indeed Career Guide, 2024).

Attitudes

Encouraging an individual to examine their own attitude and how they are acting in the workplace is the first step in coaching them to alter it. One of the most difficult issues that managers will face at work is coaching mindsets, (Swift, 2023).

Beliefs

As part of the contracting and initial coaching session, having the learner identify their own beliefs will make you both more aware of each other, and you can then discuss potential outcomes if any of you sense awkwardness or disagreement. Understanding your own interpretations of each of your beliefs—which can cause problems in and of themselves—will also be a part of this process, (Swift, 2023).

Values

Behaviour is fundamentally shaped by values. However, the majority of people only have a cursory understanding of their own values, their origins, and the ways in which they are influenced. By assisting customers in expressing their values, we increase their ability to effect change by bringing their objectives and values into alignment, (Lancer, 2024).

Recommendations

Having a highly productive and successful workforce is the aim of any corporate organisation. A disengaged and unproductive workforce is the result of failing to coach people, (Quantic School of Business and Technology, 2021)

The actions listed below will assist you in becoming a successful coach:-

Before you approach your staff, be clear about the goals you have for them.

Coaching can focus on process improvement or new process training. Whatever the cause, don't lose sight of the intended outcome, (Quantic School of Business and Technology, 2021).

Communicate your expectations to your staff members clearly from the beginning.

Establish precise standards and a deadline for accomplishing the objectives.

Make sure there is constant communication leading up to, during, and following the coaching process. Knowing the skill sets and areas of expertise of your personnel can help you decide on the best course of action, (Quantic School of Business and Technology, 2021).

As you proceed in the intended direction, remember to motivate your staff.

Recheck progress and offer encouragement to staff members at all times.

Give them room and autonomy while providing guidance, instruction, and support.

Make sure your feedback is clear, (Quantic School of Business and Technology, 2021).

Conclusion

It is essential to take into account the relationship that coaching has with general learning and development approaches. However, coaching is not the only intervention that businesses can use to address identified needs for learning and development; it is not the answer to every developmental issue. It's important to remember that people might not always respond well to coaching. This could be the case because their developmental needs are better served by a different type of intervention. As a result, businesses should assess a person's "readiness" for this approach and motivation to achieve the desired outcome before starting coaching.

Professionals working with people must know whether coaching and mentoring are suitable and successful interventions in comparison to alternative choices. (CIPD, 2019).

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Appendix

ROLE PLAY

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Philippa is highly committed to the role of manager of this key department within the pharmaceuticals company. She has always been a highflier as a microbiologist - at her best developing new methods of testing, dealing with tricky technical problems and liaising with manufacturing about production processes. She is strongly motivated herself and derives a great deal of satisfaction from her job, but possibly finds it difficult to understand that others do not necessarily feel the same. Her attitude is that she is not dealing with a group of shop floor workers, but that professional people are committed to their work and will on the whole manage themselves.

Maria Cook is a basic grade microbiologist. She is a graduate who has been with the Company for four years and feels in a rut. She is ambitious and looking for promotion – although there appear to be very few opportunities. Her frustration sometimes leads to antagonism to the other members of the team. She has made no secret of the fact that she is actively looking for another job but so far has been unsuccessful.

(UWTSD module assessment's example)

Introductions

When Philippa attempt to improve team members performance and morale, she advised by HR to introduce a coaching and mentoring programme.

Philippa helping Maria by taking a coaching session, to achieve her goals using the GROW Model.

Grow model

The GROW Model is a simple yet powerful framework for structuring coaching or mentoring sessions.

GROW stands for:

Goal :- Maria says that she would like a promotion to team leader within the next six months. This is a SMART goal – it's specific, measurable, attainable (as she already has four years of experience, and there are team leader positions in her department), relevant (both to Maria's overall career aspirations and the team's mission), and time-bound.

Current Reality :- Philippa and Maria now look at her current reality. She's in a basic grade microbiologist, but she already has some of the skills needed to be a team leader. Philippa brainstorm the additional skills which improve her to work with team better and skills that Maria will need in order to be successful in a team leader role. She needs more experience of managing other people because Her frustration sometimes leads to antagonism to the other members of the team.

As she is actively looking for another job but so far has been unsuccessful, but Philippa advised her Ruth then looking for another job she also needs to continue performing well in her current role, so that she'll be considered for a promotion when next one is available.

Options :- Philippa then review Maria's options. To get the experience she needs, she could lead a team on a project. She could also spend time in the overseas team.

Will :- Finally, Philippa establish the will. As her manager, Philippa offer to let her lead a team on a minor project. If she performs well, she can take on additional projects with more responsibility in the future. Maria must also approach the overseas team to arrange to spend time in that department and continue performing well in her current role.

At last, Philippa agree to review her progress in three months' time.

(Mindtools.com, 2024)

Open ended questions

Goal

Q - Where would you like to be with this issue by the end of our conversation ?

Ans - I would like to have a solid plan in place to follow which will give me confidence to work within a team and become a team leader.

Q - What do you want to achieve?

Ans - I would like to gain proper skills and experience to get ready for promotion within the next six months.

Reality

Q - What is happening now ?

Ans - I joined the company four years ago and want to be promoted but it seems there is no option out there. This situation has made me annoy with the team and I looked for a new job.

Q - Can you tell more on how this frustration affects your performance and interaction with colleagues ?

Ans - This has been so frustrating, And it annoys me most of the time. It even creates tension with my fellow employees. I feel like my unhappiness is showing and is affecting others .

Q - What has stopped you from achieving your ideal outcome?

Ans - I have 4 years' experience but not enough skills to be able to manage larger team and project.

Options

Q - What could you do to change the situation?

Ans - I need to work towards solution. Our organisation got training material and online courses available for its employee to gain job skills. I can do some online courses.

Will

Q - What is your next step? What do you need from me?

Ans – help and support me to gain skills and experience to manage larger projects and teams. Then I will be ready for promotion.

(Imperial College London, 2024)

Feedback

Take more responsibility. You can work with team more closely to gain trust. Leadership, effective listening and proper communication are the key. Join some online courses to gain skills and confidence.

Review

I will arrange some online courses from next week. Also you will have more opportunity to manage larger team and project. I will keep close eye on you and your performance. After I will review your goal every three months to check the progress.

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