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Understanding Coaching and Mentoring in the Organisation

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By signing below, I confirm that the work/evidence presented is my own, unaided work. I understand the regulations pertaining to candidate malpractice and the action that may be taken as a result.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duncan Hook', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

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Understanding Coaching and Mentoring within the Organisation

1.1

At their most basic, both coaching and mentoring processes centre around conversations had between two people and the resultant development of skills and proficiency in a chosen field (Haden, 2020). Both are largely non-directive with the emphasis on the mentee/coachee discovering the best path to take based on their personality, knowledge and awareness of themselves.

Coaching as a term has historically been most prominent in the sporting world where in the moment feedback and motivation help drive sportspeople to achieve better results (Snape, et al., 2017). Nobody knows the athlete's body better than themselves but it is the coach who helps focus the athlete on what is important for them to work on next by "placing the athlete at the centre of the model rather than the coach being the 'expert'" (Snape, 2018). Mentoring has its roots in Greek mythology where in Homer's *Odyssey*, the persona Mentor took the form of companion and guide (Landsberg, 1996, p. 91). These mentors support and "walk alongside us" (Bye, 2018) and are there to guide us through life.

Landsberg (1996, p. xi) defines coaching & mentoring in the workplace simply as processes which will "enhance the performance and learning ability of others". In his writing, the focus is on the coach guiding the coachee to find their own solutions by delivering and requesting feedback, asking questions, using motivation techniques and the development of a relationship between coachee and coach (Landsberg, 1996, p. xi). Fundamental to this guiding approach is the balance between asking and telling the coachee what to do next (Landsberg, 1996, p. 8). Landsberg refers to the teaching of Socrates who explained that while you cannot make someone understand an idea, you can help them get there often by asking a "pivotal question" which helps guide an individual to come to the right conclusion for them. In a work context, Landsberg uses a scale which places situations where the coach or mentor ask questions as more "empowering" to an employee while tell situations are more "controlling". He does concede that there are situations where a manager telling the employee what to do will be appropriate, such as a one off simple task that just needs to be completed, but through asking questions the coachee/mentee will achieve the most personal growth and gain their own understanding of the task they are engaged in (Landsberg, 1996, p. 9).

1.2

Coaching and Mentoring are often grouped together or the titles used interchangeably (Francis, 2019) and this can make sense in a work setting, as they can be similar and some individuals will relate better to one concept or the other. They both more commonly rely on a one-one-one relationship between two people with their basis in good conversation and listening. They both superficially also have the same goal of improvement for the recipient. However, the CIPD (Haden, 2020) defines the difference as down to the separate aims and approaches of each.

The aim of Coaching is focussed on developing an individual with an aim to improve their ability to perform in their job role (Haden, 2020). Clutterbuck et al (2016, p. 7) concede that definitions of coaching do vary and that depending on the delivery there can be very clear instruction and tasks; or a lighter touch approach guiding the learner (Zentis, 2016). The ambiguity around defining coaching is down to the much more bespoke, dynamic approach it takes when compared to traditional training methods (Whittaker Dunlop, 2017). For each coach, coachee, organisation or sector the approach will vary and is encouraged to do so to get the best results. However, the aim remains to help the individual assess their own ability and focus on skills they need to develop towards a clearly defined goal (Haden, 2020).

Mentoring is much more open-ended activity and is traditionally built around an experienced employee forming a working relationship with a lesser experienced employee and the resultant knowledge shared between them (Haden, 2020). Jeremy Snape, former cricketer draws the line by stating that “Coaching isn’t mentoring as mentoring calls for the lead person to have reached the heights of performance themselves” (Snape, 2018). The benefit of Mentoring over Coaching is that the mentor becomes an aspirational figure for the mentee and someone they may want to emulate in their own career (Francis, 2019) while also opening the eyes of the mentor to new ways of thinking. There will be occasions where this relationship is there just to enable conversation, to discuss problems or a chance to vent but it is thought that through these conversations the participants will learn more about each other and themselves (Landsberg, 1996, p. 92).

Feedback between mentor and mentee is essential in developing this relationship and should be encouraged to go both ways, be regularly delivered but also requested and accepted without animosity (Landsberg, 1996, p. 15). This mentor/mentee relationship may last for a long period of time without specific goals for either individual but the knowledge and experience shared will develop both mentor and mentee allowing them to, upon reflection, think differently and make different decisions in the future (Clutterbuck, et al., 2016, p. 7).

With a similar approach but with subtly different aims, both coaching and mentoring offer a flexible framework for development. Both put the emphasis on being non-directive where possible and as such each can be used dependent on situation or culture of an organisation.

1.3

- Speaking further on the definition of coaching, Jeremy Snape (2018) states that it “isn’t teaching which relies too heavily on one way transfer of information.” Although learning is an important part of both coaching and mentoring processes, the approach to learning is non-directive (Landsberg, 1996, p. 8) while classroom teaching and training tend to be more directive in their delivery. Many of the theories of learning place the emphasis on it being a personal process, one developed through reflecting on experiences and engaging with others (Hayden, 2020). While teaching and training are important for imparting knowledge they will focus on an expert sharing what they know rather than on developing self awareness. This distinction can lead some to think of coaching as form of therapy or counselling as self-help is the ultimate aims of these processes. There are many similarities, with a counselling relationship focussing on listening, avoiding giving advice and helping the individual to realise their own next steps (Hughes, 2015). A workplace counselling relationship is primarily based on benefitting the health of the employee and would usually be called upon when an employee is suffering from stress or similar strains on their mental state (Navare, 2008). There are ethical concerns about a coach or mentor offering counselling support (Association for Coaching, 2020) as they are not trained to deal with issues of mental health or trauma but also this could push the relationship into territory which is not about improving performance. Coaching and mentoring, unlike Counselling or Therapy, are usually not intended as remedial processes and rather seen as part of an ongoing journey of seeking for every employee in their career (Bennett, 2003). Although the coachee will overcome challenges it is a process of seeking solutions and agreed action rather than healing.

2.1 Explain 3 different types of coaching and 3 different types of mentoring which can be implemented within organisations – give examples of models – [GROW, OSCAR, Instant Payoff, wheel of life] (586 words)

Coaching, on the whole, is focussed on process and quality of conversation with the results coming from this process. This is exhibited in the three types of coaching session below:

- The 'GROW' model provides a simple structure for an effective coaching session (Landsberg, 1996, p. 30). This is tailored around a series of questions based on the acronym GROW aiming to identify and brainstorm solutions to a developmental or work related problem. Beginning by determining a **Goal** or ideal outcome of the session; then measured against the current **Reality** involving an element of self-reflection on the coachee's part; together looking into suitable **Options** before **Wrap-up** when next steps are agreed upon together (Landsberg, 1996, p. 31). For the solutions to be ideal for the coachee it is important to use more 'ask' than 'tell' (Landsberg, 1996, p. 30) as the result will likely be achievable and the coachee will likely already be bought into the plan.
- The 'Instant Payoff' coaching model is based on a situation when either the coachee or coach is pressed for time allowing for quick problem solving or dealing with an issue that is stalling progress on a project (Landsberg, 1996, p. 48). The first step is to discuss the **Problem** that has been identified, the **Ideal Outcome** that we want to get to at the end and the **Blocks** that are preventing reaching this resolution. The remainder of the session is **Brainstorming** solution(s) to clear or work around the blockage agreeing on next steps (Landsberg, 1996, p. 49). This approach to coaching would be appropriate when there is a problem that cannot wait but there is not the time for a long coaching session.
- The 'OSKAR' coaching method takes a similar process to GROW but is much more focussed on solutions and an ongoing monitoring of progress towards a larger goal (Sparrow, 2008). First focussing on the coachee's desired **Outcome** then measuring how far from this outcome on a **Scale** of 1 to 10; this is both a moment of self-reflection and an invitation for feedback from the coach. The conversation then shifts to reviewing the **Knowledge or Know-how** required to achieve the outcome before agreeing on **Actions** to take from here. The final part is a **Review** of how the coachee is doing against their outcome and deciding when the next session will be (Mind Tools, 2021).

In contrast, variations of mentoring approach generally refer to the status of the relationship rather than the specific method of mentoring. The benefits for both parties are a product of the different types of relationship:

- 'Situational mentoring' is based on the mentee learning and adapting to a new set of skills or developing knowledge in a field (HR Daily Advisor, 2018). Such as when a new employee joins an organisation and they are mentored by an experienced colleague.
- 'Peer based mentoring' focusses on the developing relationship between a group of colleagues. This encourages employees to share their experiences and knowledge to help each other through difficult situations (HR Daily Advisor, 2018). This forges bonds between the team and allows flexibility with which employees can select mentors who work best for them in their own work, sociographic or personal situation (Zimmerman, 2016).
- The concept of 'Reverse Mentoring' focusses specifically on the development of the experienced participant in the relationship. With potentially alienating areas such as digital literacy or processes (Jolin, 2018), pairing a newer employee with a more established

employee can have benefits on the older employee learning from the younger colleague (Crowley, 2019).

2.2 Evaluate the role of line managers within coaching and mentoring (387 words)

- There are pros and cons to the Line Manager taking the role of coach (Haden, 2020).
- While Line Managers may seem perfectly positioned to be a coach or mentor and may have already assumed that role, there is a history of directive leadership and an already existing 'boss/employee' relationship which may be at odds with the asking and not telling approach of coaching (Graziano, 2019, p. 3). However, in a rapidly changing world, learning a non-directive approach to managing is the best way for managers to create autonomy, engagement and get the best out of their teams. The tech world is notorious for being the most rapidly changing market and for Microsoft they found in 2014 (Graziano, 2019, p. 9) that their old ways of managing had become outdated. A new CEO brought a coaching culture to the leadership team and the company a new lease of life.
- There are also benefits to the relationship between employee and manager. By building a relationship based on trust and empathy, the manager can determine the best approach to take with this individual (Weintraub & Hunt, 2015). They may also become more in tune with the "skill/will" (Landsberg, 1996, p. 54) of the employee and the impact on their work or development. The employee with low skill/will may need specific direction while someone with high skill/will can have projects delegated to them allowing them greater freedom.
- Linked to this idea of skill/will is the understanding of the motivation to learn that the line manager may be aware of. If the manager is clear on whether praise, feedback or additional training is required, (Landsberg, 1996, p. 67) they can help to guide the employee into a cycle of motivation.
- By approaching management as a coach and not a "boss" (Royal, 2019), the employee is taught independence and not a reliance on constant direction. Ultimately, engaging the employee in their work is in the hands of the manager and their approach will often dictate how engaged, motivated and satisfied they are. Although a Manager may not be the first choice of the employee as their coach, by learning the skills and as part of an organisational coaching culture, a manager can be an influence by "walking the talk" (Graziano, 2019, p. 9), modelling coaching behaviour themselves and bringing it into everyday conversations.

2.3 Assess factors to be considered when implementing coaching and mentoring programmes in organisations. Your assessment should also include considerations around operating during a pandemic (512 words)

- One of the initial barriers to implementing coaching and mentoring programmes comes the work with senior leaders on having their 'buy-in' to the concept (Clutterbuck, 2016). Then understanding their vision for the culture and how it aligns with the larger organisational aims (Clutterbuck, et al., 2016, pp. 56-57). This was the approach taken by Nestle when buy-in was achieved by tapping into the personal experience of senior leaders (Snape, et al., 2017).

- Also to be considered is the cost and value of introducing a coaching and mentoring programme. Informal methods can be difficult to measure in terms of manager/employee time (Hayden, 2020). It could be more effective to benchmark against factors such as people metrics like retention, performance or on response from staff surveys.
- This method was utilised by the team at River Island who felt that it was patronising and timewasting to give targets for number of coaching sessions delivered and instead focussed on the results from employee engagement surveys and what staff were saying (Snape, et al., 2017).
- In the early implementation, external coaches and mentors may be needed before building up skills internally. The benefit of internal coaches is that the learning approach becomes deeper integrated into the overall culture but have accredited external coaches, provided the organisation can afford them, is a good initial way to get results and highlight the benefit of coaching (Personnel Today, 2008).
- There need to be clear guidelines of ethical responsibility of coaches but also the legal responsibility on data protection with GDPR (Clutterbuck, 2016). This is of particular concern with internal coaches as it will be important to ensure the security of personal information amongst fellow colleagues.
- During the current pandemic, we are in a time of unprecedented business change, a total shift in the types of roles needed and the way we work transformed (BBC, 2021) leaving employees under stress and lacking direction. Mentoring can be an effective way to model the ideal response for how to behave or act in these trying times (Fessell, et al., 2020). Likewise, through non-directive coaching conversations, an employee can discover for themselves their new purpose or direction for the way that their career is changing (Gino & Cable, 2020).
- One of the most important factors in maintaining these activities has proven to be robust digital infrastructure to support video calling. Regular contact from home can strengthen the bond between mentee and mentor as seeing the mentor in their “natural habitat” can humanise and increases trust (People Management Insight, 2020).
- The other important consideration is for managers not to see remote working as a barrier but to continue the coaching culture from home as an effective way for employees to work independently. Managers who only see their employees for a few hours a day over video call may find it difficult to know how to help them with tricky challenges as they may feel they aren’t seeing the complete picture (Chugh, 2020). Coaching puts the decision-making in the hands of the coachee/mentee allowing managers to have impact from a distance by asking questions and listening.

3.1 Assess the potential benefits of coaching and mentoring for coachee/mentee and coach/mentor (390 words)

- Self determination theory, created in the 70s by Deci and Ryan, describes how humans need ‘Autonomy’, ‘Competence’ and ‘Relatedness’ in making human connections as essential components to develop, have emotional wellbeing and feel fulfilment (Wietrak, et al., 2021, p. 5).
- The non-directive approach we have already established as being effective in developing independent, autonomous workers.

- A study by the Institute of Employment Studies (Hicks, et al., 2013) found this approach had an impact on the well-being of coachees. By being empowered to find solutions to problems by themselves participants felt reduced stress and higher fulfillment in their work (Hicks, et al., 2013). There is also evidence to suggest that a good coach can have impact long after a working relationship has ended. Clutterbuck (2014) describes how he has people return to him explaining how their whole career has been changed from him asking powerful questions that were not only impactful but also “reverberated” with the coachee by coming back to them repeatedly.
- The major benefit to mentoring is the continued development benefits to both sides in the relationship. Mentoring increases confidence and self-awareness in both parties as the success from support given to the mentee is validation for the mentor in their own abilities (Cronin, 2019). Reverse mentoring is a great example of this. By flipping societal norms on their head, it can have an added benefit of empowerment to both a younger mentor who can develop confidence and skills as a mentor while the older mentee is empowered with the satisfaction of new knowledge (Crowley, 2019). This process also pays dividends in motivating the older employee to work on skills such as digital literacy while also engaging them in an area of work that they may have felt distanced from previously. Some organisations such as KPMG went further to improve the work culture of the organisation. In their example they partnered younger senior partners with older black employees and the sharing of fresh perspectives helped to make a difference for inclusivity and diversity (Jolin, 2018).
- Finally, although managers are not counsellors or health professionals, continued contact can have benefits to the employee’s feelings of relatedness. Particularly through the pandemic, an approach of open, coaching questions, listening and taking time to understand anxieties and concerns has helped employees stay healthy or seek medical advice if required (Winfield, et al., 2020).

3.2 Assess how coaching and mentoring programmes can support the achievement of organisational objectives - Examples (403 words)

- One blocker for the implementation of coaching into organisations is the idea that it is simply a nice thing to do and more geared towards welfare than results (Weintraub & Hunt, 2015). Coaching methods have proven to be not only beneficial for development of individuals but also key in reaching business goals.
- Implementing a coaching method such as ‘OSKAR’ is geared towards brainstorming potential solutions, this helps drive productivity forward and helps remove obstacles (Sparrow, 2008) and in turn makes a coaching method attractive for senior leaders.
- Mentoring has been implemented as an appropriate method to aid succession planning by building a pipeline of younger employees, mentored by older (People Management Insight, 2020). This can also be felt by external mentors across organisations. Schemes such as ‘Mentoring for Growth’ use a reverse mentoring strategy by pairing senior leaders of SMEs with managers from larger organisations which help expand ideas and improve retention and productivity in their business (People Management Insight, 2020).

- The idea of asking an employee what they think they should do next rather than telling them may not feel like it would have the business results that organisations would be pushing for but the 'Ask/Tell repertoire' from Landsberg (1996) suggests that this will be the result. The quality of the results should be higher as employees are following their own ideas and finding their own solutions they are then invested in. This should also result in a more motivated and self-reliant employee in the long term who requires less manager time to keep on task which in turn is more time/cost efficient (Landsberg, 1996).
- Manager time and efficiency is an important factor in many organisation which adopted a learning culture.
- The returning example is Microsoft, who's stock price, productivity and reputation all improved after they adopted a coaching culture. They were not only more efficient as they were not micromanaging employees on a daily basis but they also removed interrogatory mid-year reviews in favour of regular coaching which had historically forced staff into a month of preparation time and therefore reduced output (Graziano, 2019).
- This is part of a bigger trend in removing annual appraisals with companies such as Allen & Overy (Graziano, 2019), Deloitte and River Island (Snape, et al., 2017) ditching annual reviews in favour of consistent feedback in the moment that is much more in line with the idea of a sports coach having impact in the moment.

On the Job Research

1. Coaching Culture within Pembrokeshire County Council

Having met with Julie Watkins, Learning and Development coordinator and Coaching Coordinator at Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC), I feel I have a good understanding of how coaching is integrated currently and where she and the L&D team want to take it in the future. The philosophy that L&D got buy in from was that by coaching senior leadership first, these leaders would see the benefit of time efficiency from having more autonomous staff, better relationships with their teams and better results and the culture would spread outwards from there. This was first introduced four years ago and although to begin with the coaching programme was providing coaching to individuals, the ultimate aim is to transform the whole organisation to have a coaching culture (Clutterbuck, et al., 2016). Therefore, anyone can make a difference by embracing and evangelising the coaching mind set.

Coaching Culture has been introduced as part of a wider initiative to change the culture of the organisation as a whole. L&D have worked collaboratively with Transformations to create a vision of a culture as pictured by Directors and the Chief Executive and then define the behaviours that underpin said culture. As a result, the 'Our Behaviour Standards' and 'Coaching Strategy' documents were produced and outlined the path to organisational change through 2020 and 2021. One major change was rather than coaching be an activity solely handled by L&D, an initiative in 2019 sought out 12 leaders from within the organisation who would take the 'ILM Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring' qualification (Institute of Leadership & Management, 2021). The 12 individuals come from many different areas of the organisation with more coming from Social Care as they have been one of the services most receptive to this change.

Unfortunately, as with everything else, the pandemic and stay at home orders have slowed the progress of this project and so there has been a delay in realising the vision. However, Julie is positive about the way that the coaching training has supported those who had already received it and how they dealt with the situation. They found that the non-directive approach worked very well with remote working and helped them as leaders to have better connections with their teams and help them to achieve their goals without needing a manager there at all times. One Manager even went as far as to say that the coaching training had "saved them" by giving them the tools to handle remote managing smoothly (Winfield, et al., 2020). From June 2021, all 12 coaches will be qualified and available to start coaching leaders within the organisation extending the reach of the programme. Julie has also been training as a Coaching Supervisor enabling her to support coaches with feedback and in difficult coaching situations.

In terms of success, this is a mixed story as each directorate and service follows a very different structure. IT is an example of a service that have a flat management structure and here coaching and mentoring have been embraced upwards and downwards with leaders happy to give and receive feedback. Other areas with a more hierarchical structure are struggling to implement as Senior Leadership have not historically been as open to coaching from a manager on a lower Grade. This is where L&D want to tap into external coaches (Wales Coaching Network) as they are an outside influence although this is a challenge in the public sector as the budget is small. They have begun to liaise with Academi Wales who can provide coaches gratis and the hope going forward is that this will be embraced over time opening the door to the internal provision.

2. Review notes of Pembrokeshire County Council's 'Coaching Strategy' document

PCC's Coaching Strategy was introduced in 2019 as a plan for the next two years of transformation to set the groundwork for a coaching culture. This document was revised in early 2020 and again in 2021 and, as a result, appears to be aligned with current best practice. Notes follow with reference to my reading:

- Aims are outlined with an emphasis on development of leaders to cope with constant change and support their team better as a result (Weintraub & Hunt, 2015).
- Other aims are focussed on the wellbeing of staff and the better culture of working relationships coaching will provide (Hicks, et al., 2013).
- Benefits to the organisation are listed with improvements to employee engagement, better results and retention of staff attributed.
- It also outlines the benefits to the Coachee aligning them with the benefits outlined by the CIPD (Haden, 2020) namely the increased self awareness, positive attitude, independence and development towards future goals (Cronin, 2019).
- Coaching is explained as being focussed on the "process rather than content" and envisages coaches not seeing their grade and coaching anybody at any level .
- The document explains that Coaching is not mentoring where the Mentor is the expert (Snape, 2018) and neither is it Psychotherapy or Counselling (Miller, 2020).
- Three pathways to Internal Coaching are planned for: Line Manager coaching, Individuals allocated one of the ILM accredited coaches, Team coaching led by ILM accredited coach.
- External coaching resources include utilising the Wales Coaching Network, Executive coaches for Senior Leadership and Supervisors.

The strategy does not go into detail about confidentiality and the ethical standards surrounding coaching at PCC. The ILM accredited coaches will be trained in this but for the wider coaching culture (and for line managers) some standards should be set (Clutterbuck, et al., 2016, pp. 187-188).

3. My own development needs aligning with the CIPD Profession Map

In my current CPD plan one of my focuses has been on the 'Skilled Influencer' Behaviour and has been primarily based on developing soft skills by working with and advising a wide variety of colleagues from across the Council. I have been researching on the CIPD site the methods for writing persuasive reports and have been working on ways to introduce this into my influential conversations with managers. There is a move with a new Chief HR Officer and a new CEO to make HR at PCC more strategic and therefore, collecting and presenting key data should be of benefit to help the impact of HR. I have also been working with more tenured Peers to understand how they influence managers and leaders particularly with the agility needed to influence managers in the diverse range of service areas within the Council.

This behaviour has formed the basis of my plans made with my manager for development with Coaching and Mentoring work. With some areas of the authority more receptive than others to Coaching I plan to work with them initially to understand for myself the benefits they have felt and potentially work on building a data case for introducing the concept to other departments. I will continue to work with L&D to see how they have already been introducing the culture to new areas and will look to understand the methods they take to be influence and what they have found to be less effective. Our hope is to further develop my confidence in persuasive language while backing this up with supportive data.

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