

Coaching Overview

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1. Introduction to Coaching and Mentoring

You may be considering one-to-one support as a development method for a member of your team, or perhaps you would like to find someone to help you with your own development. You will no doubt be familiar with the terms coaching and mentoring, the two most common forms of one-to-one support relationships, but you may also be uncertain of the distinction between them. In what follows, we will investigate the topic of coaching and mentoring, outlining a set of guidelines that will help you implement support relationships within your organisation.

Sometimes coaching is thought to be the more job—and task—orientated of the two, while mentoring is thought to take a broader view, aiming to support individuals in their long-term personal and career development. However they both do essentially the same thing, and in many cases the terms are used interchangeably. Both coaching and mentoring help people to show increased initiative in their own personal and career development in the short as well as the long term. They should be seen as methods of development that complement, rather than replace, traditional training.

What Do Coaches/Mentors Do?

Coaches and mentors can play a wide range of roles. Some of the most common are:

- **tutor** – helping someone to acquire new skills and abilities
- **counsellor** – listening and helping someone to work out solutions to their problems
- **networker** – helping someone to develop the connections they need to gain experience, get a job, etc.
- **facilitator** – helping someone to set and achieve goals
- **critical friend** – being honest and providing constructive feedback
- **sounding-board** – giving someone the chance to try out new ideas and approaches in a safe environment
- **role model** – providing an example from which someone else can learn.

They may do this in a number of ways: by challenging the learner's assumptions; encouraging the learner to explore new ideas and different ways of thinking; setting development tasks for the learning; or simply by providing a different perspective. Whatever method the coach/mentor chooses, the important point is that they do not 'teach' or direct the learner. Rather, their role is to empower the learner by providing them with the tools to learn for themselves.

Benefits of Coaching and Mentoring

Advocates of coaching and mentoring cite a wide range of benefits for organisations and individuals alike. Some suggested benefits for the organisation include:

-
- the recruitment, retention and development of key employees
 - increased productivity
 - provision of a stabilising factor when change occurs
-

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- bottom-line benefits
 - help with succession planning
 - encouragement of knowledge-sharing and transfer of skills across the organisation.
-

For the individual receiving the coaching/mentoring, the alleged benefits include:

- improved individual performance
 - increased motivation and morale
 - an unthreatening environment for discussion
 - encouragement to tackle difficult tasks
 - help with the transition from one level of responsibility to another
 - the satisfaction of learning for oneself
 - stress management
 - the opportunity to develop personal networks.
-

Some of the benefits for the coach/mentor include:

- greater visibility and respect within their organisation
 - opportunity to practise their personal skills
 - opportunity to share valuable tacit knowledge/skills and experience
 - satisfaction in seeing their client develop
 - insight into the needs of the organisation.
-

Characteristics of the Effective Coach/Mentor

A report published by The Coaching & Mentoring Network came up with the following list of skills, knowledge, and qualities required of the effective coach: ¹

patience	detached
supportive	interested
good listener	perceptive
aware	self-aware
attentive	retentive
technical expertise	knowledge
experience	credibility

¹ Somers, 2001.

authoritative

Coaching and mentoring both promote self-reliance, self-confidence, self-awareness and learning for individuals. They are effective methods of development, as people learn more than 60% of skills from 'direct association with peers and colleagues'.² Person-to-person learning such as coaching and mentoring has been quoted as having the highest transfer of knowledge. So long as the correct coach/mentor is chosen, multiple alleged benefits exist for the client and their organisation. At the same time, the coach/mentor often benefits as much from the relationship as the individuals they support.

Establishing a Coaching/Mentoring Relationship

If you think that someone in your team or beyond could benefit from coaching or mentoring and are considering taking on the role of coach/mentor, perhaps to further your own development as well, consider the following questions in order to assess your suitability.

Why Become a Coach/Mentor?

Adopting a coaching/mentoring approach can have many benefits. As well as helping people with their personal or career development, coaching/mentoring can help to boost motivation and job satisfaction and increase productivity. The coach/mentor can also benefit in many ways – it can help them to develop their interpersonal skills and increase their visibility within the organisation.

You may be considering becoming a coach/mentor for one or more of the following reasons:

- You have identified an individual whom you think would benefit from having a coach/mentor.
- You have been asked by an individual or organisation to become their coach/mentor.
- You want to add to your management skills and increase your visibility/profile in your organisation.
- You believe that coaching/mentoring can optimise the management potential within your organisation and believe that you have useful skills and knowledge that you could share.

Coaching/mentoring involves many of the things that managers already do. If you have not been a coach or mentor before, there is a good chance you will have relevant experiences to draw on and will have built up many of the competencies required to undertake this satisfying role successfully.

² Sue Mathews, 'Mentoring in Effective Staff Development', *Employee Development Bulletin* No 106 (October 1998), p 9.

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Some core management skills that can be applied to coaching and mentoring are:

communication	problem-solving
intuition	building rapport and trust
delegation	giving praise and recognition
training others	goal-setting
listening	motivating and inspiring others
planning	managing performance

Who Can Be a Coach/Mentor?

The coach or mentor will usually be more experienced than the individual, but may not necessarily be their line manager. Coaches and mentors should be interested in developing themselves and others. They should be approachable and should be someone in whom others feel they can confide.

Could I Be a Coach/Mentor?

The success of coaching/mentoring as a development tool will, to a great extent, depend on the coach's/mentor's experience, interpersonal skills and abilities.

If you have ever done any of the following, you may already have developed the skills necessary for effective coaching/mentoring:

- helped someone structure ideas about how to tackle career opportunities/problems
- helped someone analyse why things went well or badly
- given constructive feedback
- acted as a sounding board
- offered alternative ways of looking at an issue
- helped someone set higher personal standards
- helped someone set realistic learning objectives
- offered an individual personal observations about their behaviour in a sensitive but constructive manner
- helped someone assess their own progress

If you think you would be a good coach/mentor, you need to start by asking yourself a number of questions:

- Are you clear about what kinds of practical help you can give someone else?
- Are you prepared to enter into a relationship that will involve a great deal of time and commitment?
- Do you have some ideas of what you are looking to achieve for yourself from this relationship, or what learning you might acquire from this experience?
- Are you prepared and able to allow and encourage the client to drive the

relationship and to focus only on their needs?

How Can I Become a Coach/Mentor?

There are various possibilities. You may already have been approached by someone asking you to be his or her coach/mentor. Or perhaps you know someone who would benefit from coaching/mentoring and you may wish to approach them informally. Alternatively, your Human Resources or training department may have an organised coaching or mentoring scheme that can pair people up. If not, they may well know of individuals who have expressed an interest in being coached or mentored.

Organisations that have coaching or mentoring schemes will no doubt have training programmes to help people to develop the skills required to be a successful coach or mentor. Alternatively, you may want to:

- enquire about the possibility of attending an external training course
- undertake some personal study at your organisation's learning centre if it has one, or your local library
- get some advice from or shadow an experienced coach/mentor.

2. Effectiveness of Workplace Coaching

Introduction

In order to measure the effectiveness of coaching in bringing about behavioural change, Carol Gegner, a specialist in individual and organisational change conducted a research study with a number of executives who had been coached. The objectives of the study were to gauge executives' perceptions of the coaching process, identify the most effective elements of the coaching process, and determine whether coaching is able to bring about lasting behavioural change.

Using a sample of 48 executives, the data was gathered by means of postal questionnaires. Of this number, 28 also agreed to participate in telephone interviews. The telephone interviews, structured around a set of six questions, provided the most useful insight into the executives' perceptions of the effectiveness of the coaching process. The major findings were in the following key areas:

The manner in which the coaching relationship was initiated

Most individuals had a positive and receptive attitude towards the process, whether it was initiated by the organisation or by themselves. Although there was a small degree of initial scepticism, hesitation turned to enthusiasm for most participants during the process.

How progress was measured

40% of the executives said that there was no form of measurement, 28% reported that 360° feedback was used, 24% reported the use of goals, and 8% stated that personal values were used to measure progress. However, although not everyone could quantify the improvement in their performance, all reported positive results.

Obstacles to the process

40% named time as the largest obstacle. Corporate culture came second, with 20%; 12% identified other people in their organisation, and 24%, did not experience any obstacles.

The most valuable learning experiences

All participants claimed to have learned more about themselves and/or gained new skills, 35% believed that their communication with others had improved, and 16% found the objective perspective provided by the coach useful for helping them to learn.

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How the experience affected life outside the organisation

Again, all participants believed that the benefits of coaching reached beyond their professional life and reported positive changes in their personal life in terms of relationships and life balance.

Conclusions

The research concludes that the coaching process has a generally positive effect on the individuals involved. All participants in the telephone interviews perceived positive performance changes. This was also reflected in the findings of the postal survey.

The common areas in which participants reported positive behavioural changes were:

- increased awareness of self and others
- a greater sense of responsibility for their actions
- increased confidence
- greater receptiveness to change.

Gegner herself points out that the study has its limitations in terms of the small sample size, the subjectivity of the methods used, and the lack of follow-up to establish whether behavioural change was sustained.

However, the study does provide a useful starting point by giving an indication of executives' attitudes towards coaching and its effectiveness, and highlighting the key areas in which it may improve performance.

3. Coaching Tips for Managers

Introduction

What is coaching? One favourite author on the subject, Sir John Whitmore, defines it as “unlocking a person’s potential to maximise their own performance – helping them to learn rather than teaching them.”

Coaching goes beyond training or teaching in that it allows your colleagues to find their own solutions to their problems – and people are far more likely to accept an idea if they’ve come up with it themselves. Here are some tips for effective coaching:

1. Choose your moment

The next time someone comes to you for the answer to a problem, ask yourself “Do they know the answer already?” If they might, then this is a chance to coach them. If you are busy and the issue is not immediately urgent, offer a time later in the day to discuss the situation.

2. Think tasks and behaviours

Coaching can be a powerful tool for both activity-based issues and behavioural change. With greater emphasis now on HOW we work as well as WHAT we do, this can help us all to work more effectively together.

3. Resist the urge to tell

Very often, you will know the answer to their question. Put this to one side, and instead ask questions to get them to come up with their own ideas. An effective coach asks lots of ‘open-ended’ questions to get their colleague to explore the issue and potential solutions. Don’t be afraid to ask stupid questions.

4. Set clear goals

Make sure you and your colleague both know what they are looking to get out of the conversation. “I want to be more organised” is not a clear goal – “I want to be able to submit my weekly report by 10am on a Tuesday” is.

5. Hand over responsibility

Managers are often tempted to take ownership of their teams’ problems. Although, when you have eight team members all with their own issues, this can be quite tiring. It’s their issue, so get them to take responsibility for solving it wherever possible.

6. Recognise the impact on you

You might be the sort of person who feels good about solving people’s problems and so feel reluctant to let go of offering solutions. Recognising this is the first step to changing your coaching style.

7. Follow up

Checking back with your client is vital to ensuring that they have made the changes they are proposing. Set a date and time to discuss their experiences with the situation – and make sure that you stick to it.

8. Get feedback

Ask your client how it was for them. What did they like? What could you have done differently? This will make you an even better coach next time.

9. Get support

Brush up on the materials from any coaching skills courses that you may have attended in the past. Ask your line manager, coach or mentor to run through how you might deal with a challenging situation (this will be a chance for them to coach you.)

10. Coaching is contagious

Once you have a success in getting people to come up with their own solutions to problems, you will want to do it again, and again. Other people will see you doing it and will want to do the same. Your team will notice that you are giving them more freedom and responsibility. Your team will become more successful. Your organisation will become a better place to work.

4. Code of Practice for Workplace Coaching

Introduction

What follows are some ideas for inclusion in a code of practice or standards of conduct that can be adopted by a professional or workplace coach. It adheres to a form of coaching that honours the client as the expert in his/her professional life and believes that every client is creative and resourceful. Standing on this foundation, the coach's responsibility is to:

1. Discover, clarify, and align with what the client wants to achieve
2. Encourage client self-discovery
3. Elicit client-generated solutions and strategies
4. Hold the client as responsible and accountable.

Approach to Workplace Coaching

Workplace coaching is an ongoing partnership that helps colleagues or clients (if using an external coach) produce fulfilling results in their professional lives. Through the process of coaching, clients deepen their learning, improve their performance and enhance their quality of life.

In each meeting, the client chooses the focus of conversation, while the coach listens and contributes observations and questions. This interaction creates clarity and moves the client into action.

Coaching accelerates the client's progress by providing greater focus and awareness of choice. Coaching concentrates on where clients are today and what they are willing to do to get where they want to be tomorrow.

Pledge of Ethics

In your capacity as a coach, you should acknowledge and align to ethical obligations to coaching clients and colleagues and to the public at large. You might promise to comply with Standards of Conduct and openly commit to treating people with dignity and respect. A Standards of Conduct statement might include some or all of the following commitments.

Standards of Conduct

As a professional coach

- You will conduct yourself in a manner that reflects well on coaching as a profession and you will refrain from doing anything that harms the public's understanding or acceptance of coaching as a profession.
- You will identify your level of coaching competence to the best of your ability and you will not overstate your qualifications, expertise or experience as a coach.
- You will, at the beginning of each coaching relationship, ensure that your coaching clients understand the terms of the coaching agreement between

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you.

- You will not claim or imply outcomes that you cannot guarantee.
- You will respect the confidentiality of your clients' information, except as otherwise authorised by your client, or as required by law.
- You will obtain permission from each of your clients before releasing their names as clients or references.
- You will be alert to noticing when your clients are no longer benefiting from your coaching relationship and thus would be better served by another coach or by another resource and, at that time, you will encourage your client to make that change.
- You will avoid conflicts between your interests and the interests of your client.
- Whenever the potential for a conflict of interest arises, you will, on a timely basis, discuss the conflict with your client to reach informed agreement with your client on how to deal with it in whatever way best serves your client.
- You will honour every term of agreement you make with your client and, if separate, with whoever compensates you for the coaching of your clients.
- You will not give your clients or any prospective clients information or advice you know to be confidential, misleading or beyond your competence.
- You will acknowledge the work and contributions of others; you will respect copyrights, trademarks and intellectual property rights and you will comply with applicable laws and any agreements concerning these rights.
- You will coach in a manner compatible with the Approach to Workplace Coaching and, whenever asked by your client about your ethical standards, you will inform them of your pledge and agreement to comply with these Standards of Conduct.

5. Points to Reflect on in Planning to be a Coach

Introduction

'Coaching is simply about *helping people to help themselves*.'³ It is about a coach helping someone (the coachee/client), in a directive or non-directive way depending on the situation, to help themselves so that they own the solution.

Coaching is a form of one-to-one paired support relationships aimed at facilitating personal development. Peter Hill defines coaching as '...the art of facilitating the development of learning and enhanced performance of another.'⁴

Characteristics of an Effective Coach

A report published by The Coaching & Mentoring Network identified a list of skills, knowledge and qualities required of an effective coach. It suggested that he or she should have patience, be detached but supportive; a good listener but authoritative, etc.⁵ Research has also shown that, in general terms, the gender of the mentor has no bearing on the coach/client relationship.⁶

Coaching Characteristics and Competences

The coaching competences developed by the School of Coaching, based on behavioural-based competences include:

- Initiating the coaching relationship
- Developing the coaching relationship
- Managing self
- Working within an agreed ethical code
- Communicating
- Working within a set of beliefs
- Focusing on goals
- Striving for excellence
- Having a flexible approach
- Thinking and understanding.

In terms of competency, the coach needs to be Truthful, Responsive, Uniform, Safe and Trained (Cope 2004. p22). This is Hill's TRUST model.

³ Cope, M. (2004) The Seven Cs of Coaching Pearson Education Limited

⁴ Hill, P. (2004) (Concepts of Coaches:A Guide for Managers Institute of Leadership and Management, p. 9.

⁵ Somers, 2001.

⁶ Christopher Conway, Strategies For Mentoring: A Blueprint for Successful Organizational Development (John Wiley & Sons, 1998), p 14.

Barriers to Coaching

Some of the barriers to effective coaching include inappropriate environmental conditions (e.g. the physical setting) and the misuse of styles not suited to the individual or their situation. For example, using a push style and being directive when a pull style and listening approach might work best.

Not understanding the perception of others or seeing “their map” of things as the metaphor goes, will determine how you approach things and it may result in a lack of understanding that is a barrier to coaching success.

Coaching Contract

Contracting in coaching is about setting the ground rules for conduct, process and professionalism in a coaching relationship. According to Hill⁷ there are two elements to a contract. One is the process and the other is the practice. Cope (Cope 2004, p216) makes the point that there is no “definitive, all-encompassing outline contract”. He suggests a process and model that suits both players to include:

- Confidentiality
- Objectives
- Measurement
- Timeframe
- Approach
- Key Breakpoints
- Responsibilities
- Others/Stakeholders
- Termination
- Review.

He underlines the point that the goal at the contract stage must be to take care of the specification of the desired outcomes.

Hill (2004, p95) also provides a useful contracting checklist which includes a FOE factor; a technique that is particularly useful for establishing the right atmosphere for a coaching session. Amongst other things, his list includes:-

- Timescales
- Notetaking
- Confidentiality
- Expectations

⁷ Hill, P. (2004) (Concepts of Coaches:A Guide for Managers Institute of Leadership and Management

- Your Style
- Their FOE factor⁸
- Your FOE factor.

Learning Styles

It is important for a coach to recognise that 'not everyone learns and processes information in the same way.'⁹ Kolb's and later Honey and Mumford's 'learning styles' has been updated and modernised, in a practical way, by Tidswell and Rodgers.¹⁰

They describe two important ways to help understand learning in that they focus on the way we prefer:

- information to be presented
- to make sense of information

Improving either of these factors will make us more effective learners. This is a critical realisation and a skill that needs to be applied by coaches. Both coaches and their clients will be able to recognise their preferred (and under used) learning styles by using techniques such as a self-assessment questionnaire or a feedback process, perhaps going to a 360 degree level. Clients should be encouraged to reflect on their style, prior to commencing results-oriented coaching/mentoring sessions.

By paying attention to learning styles and by removing other barriers to learning such as distractions and 'noise' we can enhance the learning environment and effectiveness of learning through coaching.

Top Learning Tips

In giving top tips for 'leaders of learning' the following ten process ground rules are recommended approaches for accelerating learning development and growth in a coaching situation:¹¹

- Engage in goals setting activities
- Provide measurable milestones for the learner
- Help people extend beyond what they see as possible
- Use affirmative judgement when providing feedback
- Be deliberate about the communication process
- Create opportunities to learn by doing
- Encourage enjoyment

⁸ F.O.E. is an abbreviation for Focus, Openness and Energy

⁹ Hill, P. (2004), p. 46.

¹⁰ Rogers, K. A. & Tidswell, K. (2002) Practical Learning Styles Designed and published by Keith A Rogers and Karen Tidswell

¹¹ McCluskey, K. (2001) Mentoring for Talent Development Reclaiming Youth, Lennox, South Dakota

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- Establish a climate that supports new ways of thinking and acting
- Manage the formal and informal nature of the relationship
- Be deliberate in managing shifts between mentoring and coaching i.e. with different emphasis.

Overcoming barriers to learning can be greatly assisted through feedback generated by self-assessment and intensive listening on the part of the coach.

Resources to Support Coaching

The resources needed to support coaching are both social and physical. Social resources include personality, competence, mental modelling, behaviour, experience and networks, whilst the physical resources include time, money, meeting space, and so on. For a coaching programme to be beneficial, some basic hygiene factors (such as feeling physically and psychologically safe) need to be in place to underpin the sessions.

Specific learning resources include the GROW model, the Skill/Will Matrix and the Rule of 3 all of which are promoted by Peter Hill (2004) as useful and relevant supports to enhance understanding between coach and client.¹²

Other resources useful to support coaches and learners include networks (The Coaching Network (www.coachingnetwork.org.uk), membership organisations such as the ILM (www.i-l-m.com), standards bodies such as EMCC and forums hosted by a range of organisations. Learners themselves can be supported through follow-up contact by telephone and email and through networks as indicated above.

Recording and Assessing Learning

In order to assess learning we can use a variety of techniques including learning journals, personal action plans, observation of changed behaviour and feedback up to 360 degrees.

Cope (2004, p7) talks about goals and outcomes that will deliver change that will stick. He uses examples of change that include things like reducing work hours, getting promoted, improving health and so on.

In his 7 Cs model, Cope talks of a 'Close', where the coach helps the client to 'Look Back and Learn' so as to ensure that the outcome has been delivered that learning has taken place. In Cope's words, "the closure process might be viewed as both an art and a science".

Using a version of resistance theory (driving and resisting forces) of change, Cope speaks of repressive forces and reinforcing forces. He says that as the coach withdraws, the client will retain the learning gain or may improve or regress according to the environmental and psychological forces that they encounter. This 'sustainability curve' is improved by having an action plan agreed and implemented by the client. It is important to anticipate this so that intended outcomes become actual outcomes.

¹² Whitmore, J. (2002) Coaching for Performance: GROWing People, Performance and Purpose, Nicholas Brealey

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Using a flying instructors' coaching analogy, the coach should be ready to end the relationship and the client ready to 'fly solo' when they have: practiced capability; belief in themselves; the right attitude or confidence; completed the mandatory elements and have been tested; achieved a level of responsiveness to new situations or unexpected occurrence by applying the learning acquired.

6. Session Planning Checklist

This checklist is designed to help you to prepare, deliver and follow up a coaching or mentoring session with one of your team members. This logical, structured format should enable a session to run smoothly and effectively.

Preparing for the Session

- Check the FOE factor (Focus-Openness-Energy)
- Agree when and where the session will be held.
- If applicable, review the last session and progress since the last session to see if there is anything that needs to be discussed further.
- Consider the individual's behavioural patterns and learning needs, and their preferred learning style.
- Share expectations as to what the session will entail.
- Draw up a plan to structure the session in a logical fashion.

Conducting the Session

- Always focus on the individual's needs.
- Review progress since the last session and celebrate achievements.
- Agree on learning objectives for the session with the individual.
- Agree on how the session will be structured and what will be discussed.
- Focus on opportunities for the individual to practise what they have learned back at work.
- At the end of the session, summarise the main learning points.
- Agree with the individual what they are going to do following the session, the timescales and who else will be involved to support them.
- Ask the individual what they would like you to do to help.
- Agree the date, time and venue for your next session.

Following the Session

- Make brief notes on what was covered, how the session went and what both of you got from it.
- Plan how you will review the individual, observe what they are doing and obtain feedback from others involved.
- Note any personal actions in your diary.
- Brief anyone who will be involved in what the individual will be doing as a result of the session.
- Arrange for any necessary resources to be put in place.
- Work out your expectations of what the individual should achieve by the time of the next session.
- Prepare for the next session.

7. Using Psychometrics in Coaching

Introduction

A very wide range of psychometric assessments are now available, offering an insight into aspects such as your personality, emotional intelligence, aptitude, values, motivations, mental toughness, interpersonal relations, preferred team role and leadership style. A fair question to ask is: what benefit can they bring to coaching?

Raising Self-Awareness

Psychometric assessment reports can add real value to the coaching process when they help to raise the self-awareness of the coachee. They can provide clear signs and paths that the coach and coachee can use to reflect on the coachee's preferred styles of behaviour and competencies - and the impact of these in different situations.

Coachees are sometimes uncomfortable talking about themselves and how they interact with others. However, if they've undertaken a psychometric assessment, you can often have a much richer, more intimate conversation, because in their 'results' they will have already revealed their view of themselves to you through the questionnaire. That's what a self-report psychometric test does. It simply reflects back your own perception of yourself, analysed through a psychological model.

Many experienced coaches advocate using psychometrics early on in the coaching relationship, once a good rapport has been created, as the results can inform and guide the coaching process.

Value as a Coach

As a coach, your role is to help the coachee on their journey. Helping them to dispassionately review their self-perception and how that influences how they behave, is a good way forward. Psychometrics enable you to do this in two ways:

Firstly, by asking questions about the 'profile' that's been generated by the test. For example: How accurate do you think the findings are? What interests you about your result? When are you more or less like that? What causes you to change? What are the implications for your role or what you're trying to achieve? What are your real strengths? When do they help you and when do they trip you up? Which aspect of the results would you most like to be different? When have you shown the qualities you'd like more of?

Secondly, by linking together some of the different aspects that have been highlighted. For example, if a personality questionnaire shows that the coachee prefers to be low profile and is quite sceptical, you might reflect this self-perception back and ask how it impacts on their ability to create relationships.

Using Psychometrics: Three Caveats

We would advocate using psychometrics however there are three caveats to watch out for:

- 1) Be an expert in process

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Your coachee will often want you to tell him/her the implications of their psychometric report. What does it mean? What should they do as a result? Your role is to facilitate the reflection and awareness of the coachee, not to wear the expert hat and tell them what they should do. Encourage your coachee to reflect on which aspects of their results help them in their role and which aspects get in the way.

2) Don't pigeon-hole the coachee

Some assessments, such as the Myers-Briggs personality test, tend to put you in a box. People often like these tests because they're straightforward but there is a danger that a coachee may just take the test result at face value, without reflecting on its implications. Everyone has preferred personality traits but these can shift at different times. Your natural preference may be to stay low profile but in certain situations, with certain people, you may be much more gregarious. The decision for a coachee is what 'profile' would be most helpful in their next interaction? How do they achieve that in a way that remains true to them?

3) Encourage the coachee to consider other options

It is unlikely that a coachee will be able to change their personality. For example, if someone lacks empathy, it might be difficult for them to become empathic. But if the coachee knows that he/she is not empathic, at least they can start to think about what they can do to get a better sense of what's going on for other people. They might enlist the help of someone in the team who is very empathic. That person can act as a guide for them on what the team is thinking. Or it could involve just asking a few more questions around the team.

How Others See You

360-degree feedback can help a coachee to become aware of how well their perception of themselves matches up with other people's perception of them. A coach can help a coachee to reflect on several things: Are the results from others consistent with what the coachee thinks about him/herself? How do the results of their manager, peers, direct reports and others compare? Is the coachee perceived in a different way by different people? How situational is their behaviour?

Emotional Intelligence

Some coaches prefer to use an emotional intelligence (EI) assessment. Although there are personality aspects to this, the results of an EI assessment are usually expressed in the form of social and emotional competencies and skills. EI helps coaches in a practical way to help coachees reflect on their emotional competencies and how these might be altered through changes in behaviour to produce benefits for themselves and others. This is easier than trying to contemplate change personality traits.

Emotional intelligence is defined as the personal, social and emotional qualities that allow you to cope successfully with everyday life. It's being able to recognise and understand your own emotions, to sense and understand the emotions in others and to take action to achieve a positive outcome, based on the emotional content that you find.

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By gaining a better understanding of their emotional intelligence, coachees become more aware of their strengths, the challenges they are facing and the impact they have on other people. Their emotional intelligence profile can be likened to a 'graphic equaliser' where each competency moves up or down according to preferences, situation and context. To be emotionally intelligent is to consciously choose the best profile at the right time with the right intent, in the right way, with the right person, to achieve a desired outcome that's positive. In practice, this is difficult to achieve. However, it's worth the effort, as EI underpins sustainable high performance.

Gaining Value from Psychometrics

Psychometric tests have long been used for recruitment, selection and development. Used in the right way, they can certainly add value in coaching too. Remember, it's not the results of psychometric tests that are important; it's what you do with them. The real value comes in the quality of the conversations that psychometrics enable you to have.

A sophisticated, industry-standard personality questionnaire (developed by ex-SHL test developers) is available entirely free of charge at <http://www.findingpotential.com>. This is a useful resource that coaches can use with coachees. The questionnaire takes around 15 minutes to complete and no specific training is required to interpret the results.

8. How to Ask Appropriate Questions

Being able to ask appropriate questions is central to leading effective appraisals. Whether you are looking to create the right atmosphere and get a team member to open up, or lead and carefully control the discussion, this guidance will cover seven types of questions you can use to good effect along with some top tips for asking questions. We also alert you to the two main types of unhelpful questions to be avoided at all costs.

Helpful Questions

1. Open Questions

Open questions, as the name suggests, 'open up' areas in which you are interested in finding out information, but allow a range of possible replies.

Open Questions

- “Tell me about your current project.”
 - “How do you feel the last few months have gone?”
 - “What do you think about the objectives we agreed for this year?”
 - “Which parts of your job are you happiest with?”
-

Open questions are useful to begin with; they put the other person at ease because they are not too demanding and they enable areas to be identified which may be investigated further at a later stage in the discussion.

2. Probing Questions

Probing questions enable the appraiser to focus on the particular areas in which they are interested.

Probing Questions

- “Tell me how you dealt with that query.”
 - “How much time do you spend on drafting reports?”
-

Probing questions help to obtain specific detailed information and are often used to follow up after open questions.

3. Reflective Questions

The most useful form of reflection is phrased as a statement rather than as an identifiable question. They begin with phrases like,

Reflective Questions

- “You seem concerned that”
 - “It sounds like”
-

Reflective questions are extremely useful for obtaining explanations for attitude and opinions in detail, or to gain a deeper understanding when the person is showing emotions. To be effective in the use of reflection, you need to listen carefully to what is being said, interpret it accurately and respond accordingly.

4. Closed Questions

Closed questions force the reply towards a precisely defined area and usually elicit a one- or two-word answer.

Closed Questions

- “Do you enjoy meeting clients?”
 - “Have you had sufficient training to enable you to produce the report?”
-

Closed questions are useful to check out and confirm facts or to regain control of the interview.

5. Key Word Repetition

Although not strictly a question, key word repetition is another way the person can be encouraged to say more. When asked with a questioning tone of voice, this will normally be sufficient for them to expand on the point.

Key Word Repetition

- “You say that you like working with people?”
 - “You enjoy design work?”
-

6. Statement Repetition

Also known as the ‘broken record technique’, repeating statements can be a good way of asking questions or making a point if you feel the person hasn’t heard or taken in what you have said. State the point as many times as necessary in a calm and direct manner.

Statement Repetition

- “Do you feel challenged in your role?”
 - “Yes, and do you feel challenged in your role?”
-

7. Summary

Again, like reflective statements, not really a question, summaries are concerned with interpreting a response, but rather than reflecting emotional content, they concentrate on factual content.

Summary

- “So, what you are saying is that although you enjoy working on the projects, there are some aspects which you find mundane?”
 - “As I understand . . . ?”
-

Summary questions can be used to review briefly, to summarise, to check your understanding of the facts, or even to clarify the other person’s own thoughts. Summary questions can also prevent a drift from the purpose of the discussion and allow you to regain control smoothly.

Unhelpful Questions

1. Avoid Leading Questions

Be careful not to ask leading questions. Some people will try to give the answers that they think you want to hear, rather than the answers they would truly give if they had not been influenced in any way, e.g.:

“You will be able to produce that report, won’t you?”, or

“I presume you are confident that you will have the figures for the 15th of each month?”

For a genuinely truthful answer, do not pose leading questions.

The above questions can be phrased as non-leading questions by re-wording as shown below:

Instead try...

- “Will you be able to produce that report?”, or
 - “How confident do you feel about getting the figures for the 15th of each month?”
-

2. Steer clear of multiple questions

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Multiple questions are questions that contain more than one question, e.g.:

“Do you feel satisfied in your role? Do you feel overloaded with work, because I could review project assignment methods?”

Multiple questions often confuse the person to whom you have asked the question. People tend not to answer all parts, but usually answer the first or the last part and forget the others.

The best way to overcome this problem is not to ask multiple questions but to ask each question separately, eliciting an answer before posing the next question.

Multiple questions can also lead people into making false choices e.g.:

“Do you want more contact with customers? Or maybe you would prefer to stay in this department?”

This could lead the person to think that these are the only two options available. However, there may be other options such as moving department without having more contact with customers. They may even be able to do both, i.e. having more contact with customers while staying in the department.

Make sure the questions are asked clearly and all the options are made available when seeking a decision.

Some Top Tips

How do I know if I have the right balance between talking and listening?

The aim of questioning is for an informed understanding of the person's performance, morale, aspirations and how you might work together more effectively. The more experienced and accomplished the manager is, the more comfortable they are at questioning and listening rather than talking.

You have two ears and one mouth; use them in that proportion.

Your team member is likely to be reassured, if during the review, facts are regularly confirmed, reflected and summarised.

How can I prevent my well-intended questions sounding like an interrogation?

Ask questions in an inquisitive manner and not in a challenging way. Do not show approval or disapproval in your questions – show curiosity and a desire to learn about the person's position.

Allow your team member some thinking time before they respond – they may not have considered your question before and need time to gather their thoughts. Avoid jumping in to break the silence.

Their body language is telling a different story...

Observe and interpret the details of your team member's non-verbal signals

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(gestures, facial expressions, movement of limbs, blinking, coughing) and tone of voice, all of which can reveal their emotional state. Consider what they seem to be trying to communicate. What can be inferred from the way information is communicated and the words used?

Reflective questions can be helpful for exploring this in more detail.

Finally, remember your own non-verbal signals. Be aware that it is quite natural for us to unconsciously 'mirror' or copy another's body language. Instead, take a moment to check how you are sitting, how calm your hand movements are, your pace of voice, etc. Make a conscious effort to maintain an atmosphere of friendly neutrality.

9. How to Improve Your Listening Skills

Listening is at least half of the communication process, but sadly one that is seldom practised well. It means not just hearing what someone else says, but actively listening in order to understand what they mean and feel. Use these top tips to fine-tune your listening skills.

To really listen requires a number of things to happen

- decoding the language, both verbal and non-verbal
 - being on the alert for any hidden messages
 - asking questions to clarify points you do not understand and checking to see that you have interpreted the message correctly
 - following and supporting the speaker, e.g. by repeating key points in what they say to confirm that you have understood
 - reflecting understanding back to the speaker using verbal and non-verbal language
-

Maintaining Attention

If you find attention and concentration difficult, you can train yourself to become better:

- If you are well prepared, you stand a much better chance of concentrating on the speaker, instead of being distracted by how you are going to steer the discussion. You don't need a script; just a few carefully prepared open questions, perhaps supplemented with one or two probing questions.
- Tell yourself you are going to give the speaker your full attention and concentrate on their needs for the duration of the meeting.
- Take occasional notes at appropriate points. If you overdo this, you risk missing some of the detail, including observing their body language, a vital part of their overall message. The trick is to punctuate the discussion, pausing to take brief notes. The ideal time would be to conclude key points following on from summary questions.

Follow and support the speaker

- It helps to listen with your eyes as well as your ears. So, look at the speaker and make eye contact.
- Do not lean back in your chair with your arms crossed in front of you as if to say, "Come on then, interest me". Instead, adopt an open posture: lean forward, 'showing interest'.
- Encourage openness on the part of the speaker by saying things like, "Can you tell me more?", "Go on. . .", or using one or two of their last words to show that you were listening.

Reflective Listening

Reflective listening encourages the speaker to talk about more things in greater depth than they would be likely to do in simply responding to directive questions or suggestions.

Use reflective listening to:

- gain understanding and gather information
 - help people solve their own problems and get in touch with their own feelings
 - expose underlying problems, including ones the speaker had not recognised previously
 - focus on the speaker's real, specific issues and concerns, rather than what you think these are
 - stave off possible misunderstandings and provide a clearer picture of concerns
-

There are three different levels of reflective listening:

- Repeating or rephrasing – the listener stays close to what the speaker has said and may sometimes repeat or substitute synonyms or phrases. Some coaches would say that you should avoid substituting the coachee's words and metaphors with your own because you may be misdirecting them with your interpretation of what they are trying to communicate.
- Paraphrasing – the listener makes a major restatement in which the speaker's meaning is inferred.
- Reflection of feeling – the listener reflects feelings back to the speaker, e.g. "So you felt excited?", "You felt X because Y?", or "You felt devalued because the promotion went to someone with less experience?"

There are a few basic tips that, if followed, will help this technique along:

- Ask open questions such as: "How do you feel about work?", not: "Do you like it here?"
- Avoid filling the silence. Use silence to show that you are listening; it will prompt more thought and comment from the other person.
- When asked a direct question, respond to the feeling that lies behind it, not the question itself.
- Do not say, "I know how you feel", or tell the speaker about your experiences. Despite having shared similar/the same experience(s), do not ever assume that another person's feelings will be the same as yours with regard to that experience. Every person's experiences are unique to them.
- Focus on specifics rather than vague generalities. For instance, sometimes a person who has a problem will avoid painful feelings by being abstract or

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impersonal, using expressions like "Sometimes there are situations that are difficult..." (which is vague and abstract), or "Most people want..." (which substitutes others for oneself). If this happens, encourage team members to be more specific. For example, instead of agreeing with a statement like: "You just can't trust a manager. They care about themselves first and you second", you can ask about the specific incident to which they are referring.

Whatever form of communication you use, and whether you are 'officially' the giver or the receiver of the message, you are engaged in a two-way exchange with another person.

Focus your attention on the other person instead of yourself, and you will quickly become a much better communicator.

Active Listening Tips

In listening to another person, your body tells a lot about how much you are really hearing and understanding what the other person is saying. The body language of the listener speaks to the speaker about the communication. It can say "keep talking" or "shut up".

Below are some guideline about your body and what it can say. Learn these if you truly want people to know you are listening.

- Maintain eye contact.
- Lean slightly forward most of the time. You can also "mirror" the speakers body to a degree. For example, if they lean back more casually, you might do the same.
- Don't speak, just listen and put your agenda aside and put them as your total concentration. You can just nod most of the time to let them know you are hearing them. You may need to only occasionally add in a "I'm hearing you"
- You might smile or frown in accordance with what is being said or in what you observe in the other person, however, there is a case for remaining non-judgemental and give no sign of approval or disapproval.
- Use an open posture with your hands and arms and legs. Do not cross any of these.
- Let the person know you are hearing every word and what is NOT being said by how you hold your body and the concentration you give them. Let them feel they are being "held" by you even though you do not touch them or say a word. This may take practice but will be very effective as a listener.
- Avoid touching the other person because touch can often stop the person's process.

In coaching mode, try to avoid offering advice, even when it is asked for. In a case where you are asked for advice, try turning the question back to them and let them decide a solution. They are far more apt to follow what they come up with than anything you may say.

10. How to Give Feedback

Introduction

Feedback in a coaching-style performance review is a two-way process. It is a skill you will need in order to ensure your team members feel their efforts are recognised and appreciated, and their confidence is maximised. However, it is also quite likely that feedback will be offered to you by one of your team members. You might even invite it!

This section will help you to both give effective feedback and also to receive feedback positively and make effective use of it. You may want to give a copy of the receiving feedback section (below) to team members before any performance review meeting to help them prepare to receive feedback.

Giving feedback

Think of all your team members and how well they perform. The majority of them will probably fall in the middle of the spectrum. These are the people who care, who take pride in their work, who want to do well and who will often go the extra mile to get something done.

So, the likelihood is that your skills in giving praise will be called for much, much more than giving constructive criticism. And yet, you may well have reached for guidance first to help you prepare critical feedback.

So, let's start with this group of people who broadly perform well. After all, they will form the majority of your team.

Concentrate on the positives

Giving praise is the easy bit, isn't it? It's giving criticism that we all dread. After all, it's far more challenging. Actually, this is not necessarily so. In practice, managers will often underestimate the skills required to give praise effectively.

One of the main success indicators of an effective performance review is a motivated and inspired team member. Recognition is a basic human need and powerful motivator.

Praise can also get people to relax. So, in any feedback session, always begin with the positives.

Make sure that any praise you feed back is judicious, sincere and deserved. Take time to gather and prepare all the relevant information before you give praise so that you can be specific. Let the individual know how they have been successful, why it is you value that particular achievement and the impact it has had. Generalised statements will probably be perceived as resulting from a lack of real interest. If outstanding performance is brought to your attention by others, make sure you feed this back.

Spend the appropriate, proportionate amount of time preparing and feeding back praise as opposed to criticism. So, as a rough guide, if four out of five objectives have been achieved then 80% of the discussion should reflect this. If the fifth

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objective needs considerably more time to explore, then consider diarising a separate meeting to analyse the problems and solutions rather than letting it dominate your discussions. After all, you are reviewing the whole year and all their efforts and achievements in that time.

You can even create something positive out of problems. Try and think of the flipside of the situation, e.g. they are slow with the paperwork; yes, but they are accurate.

Focus feedback on observations

The temptation can sometimes be to feed back our interpretation or conclusion from what we observe, e.g. “Your work is slow”.

Instead, focus feedback on what you can see or hear in their behaviour. Keep it factual and objective.

For example, “In the last week you have produced around four reports a day. The average is around eight. Let’s look at how this target can be raised in line with the average”.

It can be valuable to share inferences or conclusions, but, when doing so, it is important to identify them appropriately, perhaps in the form of a question, and making sure you give the individual the opportunity to put forward his/her view, e.g. “do you think your work is slow?”

Keep feedback non-judgemental

- Word your feedback so that it is a description of what occurred, e.g. “the customer was left for 20 minutes before you dealt with their request”.
- Keep your feedback neutral and try not to be judgemental (i.e. make an evaluation in terms of good or bad, right or wrong, nice or not nice). For example, you should not say, “it is terrible that you left a customer unattended”.
- Leave out judgement-loaded words that imply blame, e.g. fault, mistake and incompetence, e.g. you should not say such things as, “you are the reason we lost that customer”.
- Avoid emotive or critical terminology that could be interpreted as a personal attack, e.g. avoid statements such as, “this just highlights your inability to deal with customer complaints”.

Make criticism constructive

- Treat the criticism as an abstract problem, not as a character defect. For example, “the quality of service delivery seems to be declining”, rather than “you are bad at service delivery”.
- Refer to what a person does rather than comment on what you imagine they do. You will then avoid jumping to conclusions such as, “well it must be you because ...”.
- Describe actions or behaviours rather than qualities. So, you might say a person, “talked a lot in the meeting” rather than say he/she is “a chatterbox”.
- Ensure you allow individuals to put their point of view across and take note of

explanations or mitigating circumstances.

- Above all, concentrate on what the individual can do about the criticism and how he/she can improve.

Think about the time and place

- Deliver feedback at an appropriate time (e.g. not when someone is in a hurry to meet a critical deadline).
- Present the feedback as soon as is practicable after the event; do not wait until their next performance review. There should be no surprises!
- Equally, it is sometimes better to allow an individual time to recover from the incident, particularly if he/she is upset or angry at the results of the error or omission.
- Ensure there is enough time to deliver the feedback in a relaxed way and without interruption.
- Whenever possible, deliver feedback in private, ensuring there are no interruptions.
- If you use your office, try to make it informal so that you are alongside the individual rather than facing them across a desk.

Focus feedback on the value it may have to the recipient

- Provide feedback that serves the recipient's needs rather than your own.
- Phrase any help or support as an offer, not an imposition.
- Whenever possible, treat mistakes as a learning opportunity.
- Focus feedback on the amount of information that the person receiving it can use.
- Thank your appraiser for their feedback and apologise, when appropriate.
- Quickly move the conversation on to how you can address/ resolve/improve on any area highlighted. This will help ensure you master this particular issue and develop. You may need to ask for some support, further guidance and/or training.
- Decide what action, if any, you will take.

You might want to close the loop at some point in the future. This means feeding back to your appraiser any action you may have taken following the critical feedback and/or progress you have made to address and resolve the problem. You may want to decide on a time when you more formally review the issue, or you may like to offer this information when you deem it appropriate.

11. Using the **BOOST** Feedback Model

Giving feedback is a crucial part of the coaching/mentoring process, and it's not only what you say that's important, but also how you say it. The language that you use when giving feedback can be highly influential in changing people's behaviour. Choose your words carefully to ensure positive reactions and outcomes to your feedback. We use negative constructions in our language all the time, and although we may not even be aware of it, it can have a major impact on the way that we or others behave.

Avoiding Negativity

Using negative constructions often causes us to think of the exact opposite. For example, if someone were to say to you: "Whatever you do, I don't want you to think about an elephant", what would you immediately think of? As illustrated, using negatives can be rather misleading. Using negative language can also unconsciously programme learners to expect failure. If you were told: "You'll find this very difficult" or "You'll get nowhere by doing it this way", you probably wouldn't have much confidence in your ability to succeed.

Focus on the Positives

If, on the other hand, you focus on positive outcomes and use language that reflects this, you are much more likely to be able to create a mindset for success in yourself and in the person you are coaching/mentoring. This applies to both you and your team – as well as choosing your own words carefully, look out for the language used by the person you are coaching/mentoring and encourage them to think positively.

You can use the '**BOOST**' feedback model (see below) to give positive and constructive feedback.

Balanced

Focus not only on areas for development, but also on strengths.

Observed

Provide feedback based only upon behaviours that you have observed.

Objective

Avoid judgements and relate your feedback to the observed behaviours, not personality.

Specific

Back up your comments with specific examples of the observed behaviour.

Timely:

Give feedback soon after the activity to allow the learner the opportunity to reflect on the learning.

12. How to Use the GROW Model of Coaching

Introduction

You want to coach someone but aren't sure how to structure your sessions. Use the GROW model of coaching¹³ as a framework and the person you're coaching will understand clearly what their development needs are and how they can achieve them.

The GROW model is based on the principle that everyone has the potential to develop and improve themselves, but just need help to unlock their potential. Coaching is the key to this. It encourages people to take responsibility for their own actions, which results in commitment, and therefore optimises performance. Another key principle of the theory is that **using questions** rather than instructions will foster change more readily.

The acronym GROW stands for Goal, Reality, Options and Will. It provides a relatively simple framework for structuring a coaching session, and has been adopted by many of the world's major organisations.

-
- **Goal.** After discussion, establish a realisable goal for the coaching assignment and if required, a target for progress in the session.
 - **Reality.** It is important that this session is grounded in reality. The person being coached should be able to assess their present situation, and give concrete examples of their performance to date. Feedback should be provided at this point.
 - **Options.** This stage offers the opportunity for the person being coached to suggest possible courses of action, and together with any that the coach puts forward, these should be evaluated and a choice arrived at.
 - **Will.** The final part of the process involves the person being coached making decisions and having the willpower to commit to them. Future steps to be taken should be confirmed and the coach should agree with the client how they will be supported throughout the ongoing development process.
-

Here are some examples of the types of question you could use to conduct the session as productively as possible.¹⁴

Goal

- What outcome do you want from this process?

¹³ Sir John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance: GROWing People, Performance and Purpose* (Nicholas Brealey, 2002).

¹⁴ Sir John Whitmore, as above.

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- How do you feel this process will help you?
- Will this session be sufficient to cover the points you need to cover?
- What would it take for this process to be a success?

Reality

- How do you see your style of management/leadership?
- How do you think others view your style of management/ leadership?
- Can you provide examples of this?

Options

- How could the situation change?
- How could you improve the situation?
- Can you provide some specific options for action?
- Are you aware of the possible downsides to those options?
- Which of these suggested options would you like to try?

Will

- How can you put appropriate options into action?
- Are you aware of any obstacles to these actions?
- What further support do you need from your coach?
- Does your organisation offer in-house support for change?
- If not, can you push for an in-house support system?
- Can you put this action plan into writing?

It is important to be aware that at all times in this process the person being coached is being helped to develop their own action plan rather than being directed down a certain route.

Coaching Session 'Grow' Template

Having a well planned and clear structure is essential for ensuring that both parties get the most from a coaching session. Use this framework, based on the GROW model of coaching,¹⁵ to structure your coaching sessions.

Remember, GROW is a question-based framework – help the person you are coaching to find the answers themselves rather than telling them what to do.

GROW Worksheet

Stage	Notes
Goal Agree on a goal for the coaching assignment and a target for progress in this session.	
Reality Assess the current situation, including constructive feedback and concrete examples of performance.	
Options Explore the various opportunities and courses of action that might solve the problem and achieve the overall goal.	
Will Gain commitment to a course of action and agree an implementation and review plan, including any support that will be given.	

¹⁵ Sir John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance: GROWing People, Performance and Purpose* (Nicholas Brealey, 2002).

Appendix I Are You and Effective Coach Questionnaire

Coaching and mentoring are useful methods of learning from day-to-day work situations as well as for acquiring long-term skills. Being able to coach or mentor others is a key management skill. This **self-assessment questionnaire** will help you to assess how effective you are as a coach or mentor to your team members and to identify any areas in which you might want to develop your skills further.

Task

Review each statement and decide on how well you perform against them in the context of coaching/mentoring. Mark yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being an indication that you perform very poorly in this area and 5 indicating that you perform very well.

Skill Statement	Score				
	1	2	3	4	5
I set aside time to support my individual team members.					
I listen actively and attentively and I am observant of peoples' progress.					
My questioning style is open and reflective.					
I can accurately identify individuals' learning needs.					
I plan each session, for example defining learning objectives.					
I take individual learning styles into consideration when deciding how to coach/mentor.					
I give praise and recognition for good achievements as a means of encouraging learning and development.					
I work at building rapport and trust.					
I challenge other people's views in a way that helps them to learn.					
When giving feedback, I am balanced, objective, specific, factual, accurate and constructive.					
I am effective at delegating and giving new responsibilities to individuals.					
I devote time to planning ahead and consider the future development of individuals.					
I am effective at spotting opportunities for individuals to apply their new knowledge or skills.					

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Skill Statement	Score				
	1	2	3	4	5
I give high priority to helping individuals to learn and develop.					

After completing the questionnaire, review the results. Reflect on your strengths and weaknesses as a coach/mentor. The areas of strength are likely to be the statements to which you have scored 4 or 5 and the areas of weakness are likely to be the statements which you have rated 1 or 2.

Decide on how you will develop your coaching/mentoring skills further. Use the results from this exercise to create an action plan, listing the areas you need to develop and how you will develop them. You will find a useful template on the following page.

To help you to work on your skills, you may wish to seek advice from an experienced coach/mentor.

Coaching/Mentoring Skills Action Plan

Area for further development	How can I achieve it (methods) and what support and resources do I require?	How will I measure success?	Date for completion/ review

Appendix II Coachee Feedback Sheet

Name:

Coach's Name:

Date:

Session Title/No.:

This questionnaire will help a coachee give feedback to the coach/mentor on his/her skills and the effectiveness of the session. Please specify the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements by putting a tick in the appropriate column.

Statement	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly	Comments
The coach/mentor identified my needs accurately.						
The coach/mentor remained focused on my agenda.						
I found my coach/mentor supportive and encouraging.						
The coach/mentor challenged me in a constructive way.						
The coach/mentor gave me useful feedback.						
The goals we set were clear, appropriate and achievable.						
We discussed the things that were important to me.						
The coach/mentor took my preferred style into consideration.						
The coach/mentor really listened to me.						
I felt that my coach/mentor was committed to helping me.						
I left the session feeling positive and motivated.						
Overall, I was satisfied with the session.						

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