Peer Coaching Quick Reference Tool

What is Peer Coaching?

Peer coaching occurs informally all the time between close colleagues and friends, and involves having conversations that are mutually beneficial and supportive.

As a peer coach you are not expected to be an experienced coach, but rather act as a confidential listening ear and sounding board. Unlike everyday conversations, Peer coaching conversations are more likely to happen in a semi-formal way and have a purpose, where you agree a time, appropriate meeting place and an ongoing way of working together.

Tips

• Meet in person or online
• Try and make sure you won’t be interrupted by others
• Switch off your mobile phones
• Allow enough time – at least 1 hour
• Be genuine and authentic
• Try and switch off thinking about other things--focus on the present
• Have an open mind--try not to be judgmental or make assumptions

Peer Coaching Agreement

The Peer Coaching agreement is simply a conversation about how the Peer coaching sessions can work for both of you, it helps to provide clarity and define expectations, and reinforce that what is discussed is confidential.

Tips

• Explore what each other’s personal objectives are (e.g., “What are you hoping to get out of our meetings?”)
• Agree between you that everything that is said is confidential between you
• Promise to be reliable and meet at agreed times
• Agree to an initial number of meetings
• Discuss what might happen if one of you wants to stop participating
Microskills of Peer Coaching

Active Listening

Building/Maintaining Self-Esteem

Encouraging Self-Awareness
Active Listening

Active listening is a process by which we make an effort to understand someone else. Effective coaches are active listeners. They strive to listen effectively and consciously manage the communication process. The active listening process involves:

- **Non-Verbal Communication:** Using all of your senses to take in information.
- **Interpreting:** Evaluating the meaning of the information.
- **Reflecting:** Summarizing what you have heard in an effort to gain a mutual understanding of the speaker’s intended message.

**Tips for Active Listening**

- Don’t interrupt.
- Test your understanding by paraphrasing or summarizing what you have heard *before* you respond.
- Ask open-ended questions to clarify or confirm your understanding.
- Acknowledge feelings. Use statements or questions such as “You seem frustrated about being overlooked for the task force”.
- Use silence. Refrain from talking every time there’s a lull in the conversation. This will encourage the employee to share more and allow you to learn more.
Building and Maintaining Self-Esteem

A key role of every manager and coach is to help the employee develop self-confidence, strive for challenging goals, try new ideas, learn from mistakes and discuss ways to improve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tips for Building and Maintaining Esteem</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ Be optimistic and enthusiastic. Expect success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Acknowledge the employee’s strengths, successes and past accomplishments. Say “Thank you” privately and publicly for a job well done.</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Acknowledge anxieties and concerns. Ask, “What’s the worst that can happen?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Accentuate the positive to instill resilience. Ask, “What’s right?” “What have we got going for us?”</td>
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<td>■ Don’t evaluate ideas you don’t like. Separate “idea discussion” from “idea evaluation.” Ask, “What’s another idea?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ Involve him/her more in planning, problem solving and decision making processes.</td>
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Encouraging Self-Awareness

Coaching facilitates self-insight and self-awareness. One goal is to minimize the “blind spot” of what the employee is unaware about his/her style or behavior. Effective coaching increases self-awareness of one’s strength’s and development areas.

The Johari Window, named after its creators Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, is a model used to depict aspects of interpersonal interaction. A four-paned “window,” as shown below, divides personal awareness into four categories. The Window shows what you know about yourself, and how much others know about you.
Johari Window Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Known to Self</th>
<th>Not Known to Self</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPEN</strong></td>
<td><strong>BLIND</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIDDEN</strong></td>
<td><strong>UNKNOWN</strong></td>
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Open

The *Open* pane in the window is things that you know about yourself, and others know about you. These tend to be available facts. For example, you know your name, and others tend to know it, too.

Hidden

The *Hidden* pane includes details about yourself that you keep private. As you get to know and trust other people more, you may choose to share information about yourself, such as your dreams and ambitions.

Blind

The *Blind* pane is information that others know about you, that is outside your awareness. A blind spot is generally considered a deficiency. For example, you think you have good communication skills, whereas others do not.

Unknown

The *Unknown* pane represents things that neither you nor others know about you. For example, you may have hidden talents that you have not yet discovered about yourself.
Encouraging Self-Awareness

The major purpose of coaching is to provide insights and ideas for development. It’s most effective when these insights and ideas are realized by the person being coached rather than when they are presented by the coach. What can you do to encourage self-awareness?

Tips to Encourage Self-Awareness

- Encourage self-reflective thinking and questions.  
  “What went well? How can I improve?”  
  “What learning or insights did I have?”

- Provide specific, concrete, constructive and timely feedback to help your employee have greater insight about his/her behavior—do not wait until the formal performance evaluation meeting.

- Use “feed forward” instead of feedback by focusing on what the employee can do more, less or differently in the future to be more effective.

- Encourage the use of “mini surveys” that are formal or informal to continuously gather confidential information from key internal and external stakeholders to help provide feedback.

- Give him/her time to think alone and reflect.
Introduction to the GROW Coach Model

To help facilitate the career and professional development of your employee, you will be acting in a coaching role. As “coach” you will typically help your talent to solve problems, make better decisions, and develop new skills or otherwise progress in their role or career. Some managers are fortunate enough to get formal training as coaches, many are not. To assist those with formal coaching training and those new to the role, we introduce a very useful model of developmental coaching that includes four steps and is called the GROW model.

WHAT IS THE GROW COACHING MODEL?

The GROW model (Goal, Restraining forces, Opportunities, Wrap-up) is an adapted version initially developed by Sir John Whitmore in the UK. It enables the leader as coach to structure a developmental conversation with their talent and facilitate developmental planning around one or more professional development competencies or skill areas. The model is a simple yet powerful framework for structuring a coaching session based on the key principles of motivational interviewing.
USING THE FOUR STEP GROW COACHING MODEL

Use the following steps to structure a performance coaching session:

1. Establish the performance **Goal**

   First, you must mutually define and agree upon the performance goal or outcome to be achieved. Useful coaching questions to define performance **goals** include:

   "What are you hoping, as a result of coaching, to be able to do more, less or differently?"

   “How will you be able to measure success on your performance goal?”

2. Examine Current **Restraining Forces**.

   Next, ask the coachee to describe their Current **Restraining Forces**. Too often, people try to define a future oriented goal or solve a problem without fully considering their starting point (current issues, challenges and perceived barriers), and often they are missing some key information they need to successfully complete their developmental goal. This step is important to “roll with resistance” and clarify all the potential reasons for not being successful in initiating and completing wellness goals.

   As your talent tells you about his or her Current **Restraining Forces**, the solution may start to emerge.

   Useful coaching questions to examine current **Restraining Forces** include:

   “Can you describe the current situation?”
   “What realistic barriers exist to successfully complete your goal?”
   “What previous experiences do you have in trying to change this behavior?”
   “What are the current “restraining forces” for successfully making a behavior change?”

3. Explore the future **Opportunities**.

   Once you and your talent have explored the Current **Restraining Forces**, it’s time to explore what is possible (i.e., all the positive outcomes and opportunities that exist in successfully completing the performance goal). This step is important for eliciting “change talk” which is a powerful tool in motivational interviewing.
In this step, it is important to allow your coachee to do more of the talking and try to elicit “change talk” talk to increase motivation, confidence and commitment to the specific behavioral change.

Useful coaching questions to explore **Opportunities** include:

“What are positive outcomes that you see for maintaining the behavior change?”
“What are the current “driving forces” for changing behavior?”
“What advantages will there be for successfully accomplishing your performance goal?”

4. **Wrap Up**

By examining current **Restraining Forces** and exploring the **Opportunities**, your talent will now have a good idea of how he or she can achieve their performance **Goal**. Your final step as lifestyle/wellness coach is to get commitment to specific actions and explore strategies to avoid relapse.

Useful coaching questions to facilitate the contracting and **Wrapping Up** step include:

“How ready are you to begin immediately?”
“So what specifically will you start doing more, less or differently?”
“What could stop you from continuing the behavioral commitment?”
“How will you overcome it?”
“What can you do to build in some reward for accomplishing your performance goal?”
“What can you do to build support at work and home to ensure success?”

**Four Principles of Motivational Interviewing**

*Motivational interviewing is a person-centered, directive method of communication for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence.*

Express Empathy
- Lower your “expert” shields and be more inquisitive
- Practice reflective listening
- Accept where the talent is at in a non-judgmental way

Develop Discrepancy
- Encourage the coachee to present arguments for change
- Work to elicit change talk to clarify perceived discrepancy between present behavior and important personal goals or values

Roll with Resistance
- Avoid arguing for change
- Avoid directly opposing the resistance
- Resistance on the part of the coachee is a signal to respond differently
Support Self-Efficacy
   Encourage a specific development plan
   Outline support system to encourage initiation and maintenance of the plan
   Devise a plan for preventing relapses

TIPS IN USING THE GROW COACHING MODEL

Tip 1: Clarify Your Role

The GROW model assumes that the manager is not an expert in the "talent’s" situation, and therefore must act as a supportive facilitator, helping the talent to select the best options on their own and trying to minimize offering too much advice or direction.

However, as a manager you will usually have some expert knowledge to offer either from your own personal or professional experience. Managers also should help to realistically provide feedback on talent’s strengths and development areas and future career opportunities within the organization.

Tip 2: Practice the GROW Model by Coaching Yourself

A great way to practice using the GROW model is to address your own professional development. By practicing on your own challenges and issues, you will learn how to ask the most helpful coaching questions.

Tip 3: Ask Open Ended Questions and Practice Active Listening

The two most important skills for a “coach” are the ability to ask open-ended questions and practicing active listening.

Avoid the use of closed-ended questions such as “Do you feel confident you can succeed with your performance goal?” Do ask open-ended questions such as “What barriers do you see that might get in the way of maintaining your goal over time?” Be prepared with a list of questions to for each stage of the GROW process.

Actively listen using summarizing, paraphrasing and re-stating what you have heard (e.g., “If I understand correctly, what you mean is…..”) and allow you talent to do most of the talking. Remember to feel comfortable with silence—you don’t always have to jump in to say something when there is a period of quiet. Just allow your talent to gather his/her thoughts and express them first.

As Stephen Covey, suggests, “Seek to understand before being understood.” Great coaches and managers tend to also be excellent at active listening. Active listening takes practice to focus on trying to become a better listener each day to enhance your coaching effectiveness.
APPLYING THE GROW COACHING MODEL

1. Establish the behavioral change goal.

2. Examine current restraining forces that are inhibiting the successful behavior change initiation and/or maintenance.

3. Explore the future opportunities for behavior change and facilitate the elicitation of “change talk” in the coachee.

4. Wrap Up by clarifying the agreed upon behavioral goal and express confidence in the coachee and maintain esteem.
Peer Coaching Sample Questions

To Clarify Focus
  - What do you want to focus on?
  - What would you like from us today?
  - What’s going on right now?
  - What are you currently experiencing?
  - What do you want or need to get out of this conversation?
  - How does what you are saying relate to this issue?
  - What is this conversation really about?
  - I’ve heard you mention different things – which one do you want to work on right now?
  - What’s most important out of everything you are saying?
  - How is this issue important?
  - What’s your role in this issue?
  - Where do you feel stuck?
  - What is the intent of what you’re saying?
  - What would you like us to ask?

To Identify the Goal
  - Where are you now in relation to what you need to achieve?
  - What is currently happening that you want to change?
  - What other perspectives could there be?
  - How would someone else see this situation?
  - What do you need to do to shift your perspective?
  - What could you not be seeing yet?
  - What is the desired end goal?
  - What does success look like?
  - What will change bring about?
  - What are you hoping to achieve? What impact do you desire?
  - Where are you really heading with this? What will it look like when you……………?
  - If you could set a goal around this, what would it be?
  - What is the end result that you are trying to get to?
  - What is the goal of this whole situation?
  - Have you experienced anything like this before?
  - What did you do?
  - How did it work out?

To Develop Solutions
  - Where must you start with this situation?
  - What needs to shift for something different to happen?
  - What have you not yet tried that might help?
  - What options can we look at?
  - Which option seems best right now?
  - How can you break that into manageable chunks?
  - What are the possibilities as you see them?
  - How do you see the path to where you want to go?
  - What are other ways to get there?
  - What must happen in order to get that/there/it?
How can you make this easy?
What support do you need from your manager, co-workers, family, and friends?
What are the obstacles in the path?
How will you move beyond the obstacles?
If you meet this goal, how will it benefit you, us, our organization?
What do you need more of: skills, information, resources, support, tools, or motivation?
What other paths could you take?
What information do you need?
How would someone you admire find his or her way to making this happen?
What would it look like if you moved slowly toward your goal?
Imagine a point in the future where your issue is resolved.
How did you get there?

To Create Accountability
What can you do before the next meeting?
What are you going to do? Who will do that action?
By when will you do this?
What will it look like when done?
How will we know it’s done?