



G.R.O.W. Model for Coaching

It is beneficial to use a simple framework for navigating through your mentoring sessions. The GROW Model (Whitmore 2002) is a well-established coaching framework and an excellent starter model to help mentors get used to the structure of coaching.

What is coaching?

- A goal oriented, solution focused process in which a coach facilitates workplace or personal growth in an individual.
- It is different to mentoring, but may be a process that a mentor uses.
- Coaching centres on the mentee to target knowledge and skill gaps, in contrast to mentoring where the mentor utilises their own experiences to explore and support mentees.
- It is about moving people through change – usually resulting in a change in behaviour.
- It supports learning and change with skilled questioning, rather than teaching or instruction
- The aim is to empower people to make their own change and achievements.
- It may involve: providing direction, resources and support; supporting someone to achieve their goals; encouraging learning; provision of feedback etc.

The GROW Model

The GROW Model (Whitmore, 2002) is a structured methodology to help set goals effectively and can be also used as a problem solving technique. It is based on the theory that using questions rather than instructions is more likely to foster change in individuals and organisations.

<u>G</u>oals	The goal is the end-point, where the mentee wants to be. Consider the goals of this individual mentoring session.
<u>R</u>eality	The current reality is where the mentee is now. Help them to tell their story.
<u>O</u>ptions	Explore various ways of dealing with the issues. Let the mentee choose which route they will take.
<u>W</u>ay forward	Options are transformed into specific steps that take the mentee towards the goal. Write an action plan and commit. Close and evaluate the mentoring session

Tips for using the GROW model

Mentors should be judicious in their use of the GROW Model, ensuring that they use it as it is appropriate to the mentoring session. For example, if your mentee has no clear goals in mind when you first meet, you may need to spend a good deal of time exploring the current situation (reality) before you agree on the goal to be worked towards.

The first goal for the mentee may be to set some clear goals!

It may take more than one conversation to work through all of the areas to discuss, but try to include each part of the GROW process during every session. Also, don't force a mentoring session to a close prematurely if you are still exploring a particular stage, for example, don't move to actions before all of the options have been discussed in appropriate detail.

You will become more proficient at using the GROW Model in your mentoring relationships the more you use it. **Be aware that in the early stage of using a coaching model, there may be a tendency for you to skip through the stages or explore them at a superficial level.** Not using the model effectively by taking the necessary time to explore each of the four stages in depth can result in:

- The development and acceptance of goals with little understanding of the reasons behind them.
- A lack of clarity and understanding of the gaps between the present situation and the desired outcomes.
- Inadequate exploration of options available meaning that the range of opportunities available is not fully considered.
- Not enough time spent on checking the motivation of the mentee to pursue and achieve their goals.

Understanding the **Reality** of the situation is critical to success. Otherwise you might jump too quickly into solutions that turn out to be a mismatch for the situation. Take time to explore the wider context of the current situation and unpack all the issues around a goal. Ensure a clear understanding of the gaps between the present situation and the desired outcomes.

Reality areas to explore may include:

- previous successes
- addressing assumptions
- barriers and potential roadblocks
- past failures
- risk taking
- external influences
- values and priorities
- uncertainty avoidance
- personal circumstances

A good way of thinking about the GROW Model is to think about how you'd plan a journey. First, you decide where you are going (the goal), and establish where you currently are (your current reality).

You then explore the various routes (the options) to your destination. In the final step (establishing the way forward), you ensure that you are committed to making the journey, and are prepared for the obstacles that you could meet on the way.