



The Coaching Manager - 5

Using the G.R.O.W model

The last four issues of The Coaching Manager have been aimed at preparing the manager to be in a position to start to coach. I talked about learning more about what specifically coaching is and what skills would be needed; I mentioned mindsets, beliefs and values. I highlighted the need to contract your role and how you were going to work best with people using behavioural analysis information to help you build rapport.

I am now going to give you a simple coaching model to get you started in using coaching skills to support the development of yourself and your people. This is the first of a number of models that I will give you over the remaining ten months or so of The Coaching Manager. There will be models of personal development, models of teams and team development and as I suggested in the first issue, I recommend that you go out and read more on the subjects and models because in order to be a good coach and to be aware of what is happening around you, you need the knowledge of models and systems. Get your own coach to help you through these – it was one of the many words of wisdom that my own coach gave me when I first started out!

So, on to the simple model that you can start to coach with. That model is the G.R.O.W model, where:

G – stands for GOAL

R – stands for REALITY

O – stands. for OPTIONS

W- stands for WRAP UP and/or WILL. (I will expand on this a bit later!)

Lets take each of the respective parts of the model in turn. But before I do – A HEALTH WARNING.

Using this coaching model is fine provided the manager or coach does not use the framework as just a means of asking a few questions! For example, I have heard of managers asking one or two questions per section:

What is your goal? What do you want to achieve?

Where are you now? What is the gap?

What options do you have to fill the gap?

When are you going to do the things you need to do?

FINISH. Quick coaching session! But no real depth and exploration as to what is really happening with the coachee! The secret of using GROW is to explore and to support the coachee explore specifically what they really want to achieve; to ensure they fully understand where they are at present and to check the reality of their goals and aims. Time must be taken to go through all the options available, to test the validity of each option and to test which option is the very best for the

coachee at that point in time. And finally, rather than just WRAP UP as one model of GROW suggests, the WILL of the coachee to carry out the actions needed must be tested and confirmed. No point having identified what the specific goal is, and then explored all the options to find a way forward, and then having no motivation to do the actions!!

Using GROW should take time! The point I am trying to get over here (probably quite long-windedly!) is that using GROW to get over a few quick questions is not what true coaching is about! I come back again to the issue that I raised in an earlier issue – that is – managers must be prepared to put time in to what I call “dedicated time coaching”. Taking a coachee through the GROW model should take time and should not be rushed through. Rushing through the model will not ensure the best results and could result in total demotivation.

So, how can we make the GROW model really work for the manager and the coachee.

1. Put time in – at least an hour. It could be that it could take less depending on the topic or issue being discussed.
2. G – GOAL. Take time to fully explore exactly what they are trying to achieve. Check the realism of their goal. If what they are trying to achieve is beyond their capabilities, or out-with budgets, then help them to think again about a more realistic target. You may have to work hard here to continue to motivate the individual and perhaps longer term their dreams and aims can become a reality! Make sure their objectives are SMART. Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and Time-bound.
3. R – REALITY. Check exactly where the coachee is at present in relation to their goals or objectives. Be prepared to challenge and give feedback where necessary here. I have worked with some people whose grasp of reality in relation to where they are exactly with an objective is suspect! Some people actually need to be told that they are maybe not as far ahead as they think they are. Having said that some people are actually further ahead than they think they are. The trick here is not to tell them outright where specifically they are but to enable them to realise that for themselves! We’ll look at giving and receiving feedback in a later issue.
4. O – OPTIONS. Don’t settle for the first option that comes into the coachee’s head. Explore, explore, explore. Support them to come up with a few options and then test each option by taking time to investigate the pros and cons of each. Then get the coachee to make a decision – THEIR decision – as to which is best for them. I add this in capitals because this is an area where managers can manipulate their people in that a manager can decide in their own head, which is the best way forward and they can “lead” the person to thinking that this option is best for them. Managers have to take risks here and let the person try the option out that they believe is the best way forward. Otherwise if you manipulate the person, in effect, to do the manager’s bidding, then is there the motivation to carry out that option? This is the area where I have seen potentially good coaching managers fall down. They explore and identify the goals well, they support their people to investigate the options, and then they “manipulate” in order to get the person to carry out the option the manager is most comfortable with. Don’t do it – take a risk. I have been coached in this way on occasion and, believe me, it is not the most motivational way forward.

5. W- WRAP UP and/or WILL. Some books say WRAP UP where you now summarise all. You would re-enforce the goal or objective, the steps necessary to achieve that goal and the timescales needed to achieve each step. I prefer WILL as I believe that you can WRAP-UP and go, but, just maybe, the coachee is not fully bought in to what they are going away to do. You must check this and here you must have the awareness to identify if the motivation is really what it should be. Be aware of body language, of voice tone. Is it what it should be? Ask them to tell you on a scale of 1 – 10, how motivated are they to go away and carry out the necessary steps that you have agreed. 1- not motivated at all, to 10 – really buzzing, can't wait to get started. Feel for where they are. Be prepared to challenge if your feelings are such that you detect a lack of motivation.

You can now go out and try to use GROW. Remember to contract with your coachee. Also keep reading and enlisting the support of your mentor or coach. Some coaches may have different ideas from the ones you are reading here. The more information, advice and practice you get the better.