

JST & Dr Eve Poole Leadership Development Series:

Coaching

For the former racing driver Sir John Whitmore, coaching others is about growing their awareness and responsibility. To promote these aims, he devised the famous GROW model. GROW stands for Goal, Reality, Options and Will. The coaching conversation may start with any of these items but needs to cover all of them to work well. First, Goal. This is the asking of lots of questions designed to set or clarify the goal for the learning project in general or for this particular conversation. Second, Reality, which involves lots of questions to solicit a really thorough awareness of the situation right now. Third, Options – the finding of alternative strategies, solutions and answers. Lastly, Will – the testing of your commitment to your goal, and the confirming of your concrete, realistic plans to reach it. Using a coaching style teaches colleagues to self-coach over time and prepares them for delegation. So next time colleagues raise problems with you, do not just offer your knee-jerk advice. Instead, ask them excellent questions. Could they say more about the problem? Could they say what they have already tried to do about it and what this has taught them? Who else might have solved a similar problem in the past? Where else might they go for help? Here is a short version of the tool so you can try it yourself.

GOAL	What exactly do you want to achieve? What measures could you use to track progress? How much of it is within your own control? How will you know you have achieved it? How well are you doing now, on a scale of 1-10?
REALITY	What have you done so far to move towards this goal? What have you learned from that? Are there any constraints, other than you, that stop you achieving it? How might you overcome them? What are the reasons for the score you gave yourself above? Are there any people or situations that affect this score either way? What is really stopping you?
OPTIONS	What could you do to move towards this goal? What else could you do? What else could you do? What else could you do? If time was not a factor, what could you do? If money was not a factor, what could you do? What will happen if you do nothing? Who does this well, and what do they do that you could try?
WILL	Which of the options will you choose? Who else needs to help and support you in your plan? What obstacles do you expect to meet? How will you overcome them? On what day and at what time will you take your first step? And what is your level of commitment to achieving this goal, out of 10? If it is less than 8, how could you improve this score?

Please email us if you have any questions: alumni@johnsmithtrust.org