Coaching conversations

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This morning’s session

By the end of this session we hope that you will

• have an understanding of what coaching is and when it can be used
• be able to use coaching skills in your conversations at work

There will be an opportunity to have a go at a coaching conversation
Introducing coaching

- Coaching is an approach to personal development and problem solving that assumes that those coached are responsible for their results and capable of finding their own solutions to problems.
- Types of coaching:
  - SPORT
  - PEER
  - LINE MANAGER
  - SELF
  - EXECUTIVE
  - CAREER

- Today: *how can you use coaching conversations in your working relationships?*
What is coaching?

- **for the individual**: A way to develop themselves and/or solve problems with the help of another person

- **for the coach**: A way of helping people develop themselves and/or solve problems

- **for the manager**: A way of approaching the management and development of people

A **coaching conversation**: A way of approaching a situation at work by helping people develop themselves and/or solve problems
What is coaching?

“Coaching is a human development process that involves structured, focussed interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the coachee’s benefit.”

Cox et al, 2014

A structured, purposeful conversation with a skilled listener, who uses questioning to enable an individual to identify their own next steps.
Why use coaching?

(i) Coaching in organisations

Coaching has been shown

• to benefit individuals, whether through personal or career development or through the improvement of their performance in work or elsewhere;
• to improve employee engagement, motivation and retention;
• to improve organisational performance through the higher productivity of staff and prevention of costly and time-consuming problems.
Why use coaching?

(ii) Coaching as an individual approach

Coaching “provides a kind of support distinct from any other. A coach will focus solely on an individual’s situation with the kind of attention and commitment that the individual will rarely experience elsewhere.” (Starr, 2011, p8)

Remember this: “Coaching is an approach to personal development and problem solving that assumes that those coached are responsible for their results and capable of finding their own solutions to problems.”

*We learn much better when we find out for ourselves.*
When would you not use coaching?

• Serious misconduct
• Depleted levels of trust – outright conflict between coach and coachee
• Too close relationship between coach and coachee
• When someone doesn’t want to be coached
• When someone needs counselling or therapy rather than coaching
• Any other?
Using the GROW model

GOALS: what are you trying to achieve?
REALITY: what’s happening?
OPTIONS: what could you do next?
WHAT/WILL: what will you do next?

• The GROW model is just one of many
• Use it flexibly; be ready to rearrange the order if necessary
Demonstrating the GROW model

Four volunteers, please!

The rest of you, please watch this demonstration.

What do you notice?
The Coaching Conversation involves:

**Principles**
- Positive
- Non-judgemental
- Confidential
- Safeguarding
  “The coachee holds the answers”

**Structure**
- The conversation has a clear structure and purpose – more than a ‘chat’

**Listening skills**
- Establishing rapport
- Using deep and active listening
- Looking out for clues

**Encouragement**
- Giving supportive and constructive feedback: the role of affirmation

**Good questions**
- Avoiding closed, leading or directive questions
- Asking ‘generative’ questions

**Challenge**
- Giving supportive and constructive feedback: the role of challenge
Coaching skills: active listening

• Stop talking!
• Eye contact
• Open posture
• Being attentive
• Suspending judgement
• Responding (nodding, saying “yes”, without interrupting)
• Make sure you’re not steering

“Are you listening, or waiting to speak?”
Coaching skills: questioning

We learn much better when we work things out for ourselves.

Make sure your questions aren’t directing the conversation.
Coaching skills: questioning

• **Avoid** closed and leading questions

  - When that happened did you feel threatened?
  - Have you tried X, Y, Z?

• **Instead**, use open and ‘generative’ questions

  - How did you feel when that happened?
  - What have you tried?

...and ‘probing’ questions

  - What else might you need to think about?
  - Can you tell me some more about...
Practise having a coaching conversation

In threes: select a coach, coachee and observer

Each of you will get to have a go at two of these roles

You have 12 minutes for each practice

1. Practise coaching conversation: 10 minutes max
2. Discussion: 2 minutes
   What did we notice? What worked well?

Swap roles and repeat

• Coachee: think of something you want to talk through
• Coach: practise the skills we have covered
• Observer: take notes, keep an eye on the time (and give a reminder after 7 minutes), manage the discussion
Any questions or comments?
THANK YOU!

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