

Coaching Skills For Leaders

Welcome to this interactive team session on developing essential coaching skills for leaders. Throughout our time together, you'll be actively participating in discussions, reflections, and hands-on practice opportunities.

This workshop isn't about passive learning—it's about engagement and application. You'll work collaboratively with your colleagues to explore effective coaching techniques that you can immediately implement with your teams.

Prepare to reflect on your current leadership approach, discuss new strategies, and practise these skills in a supportive environment.



Welcome & Warm-up



Icebreaker Activity

Let's begin by discussing in pairs: "What makes a great coach?" Share your experiences of exceptional coaching you've received or observed.



Self-Assessment

Take a moment to rate your own coaching ability on a scale of 1-5. Where do you see your strengths and opportunities for growth?



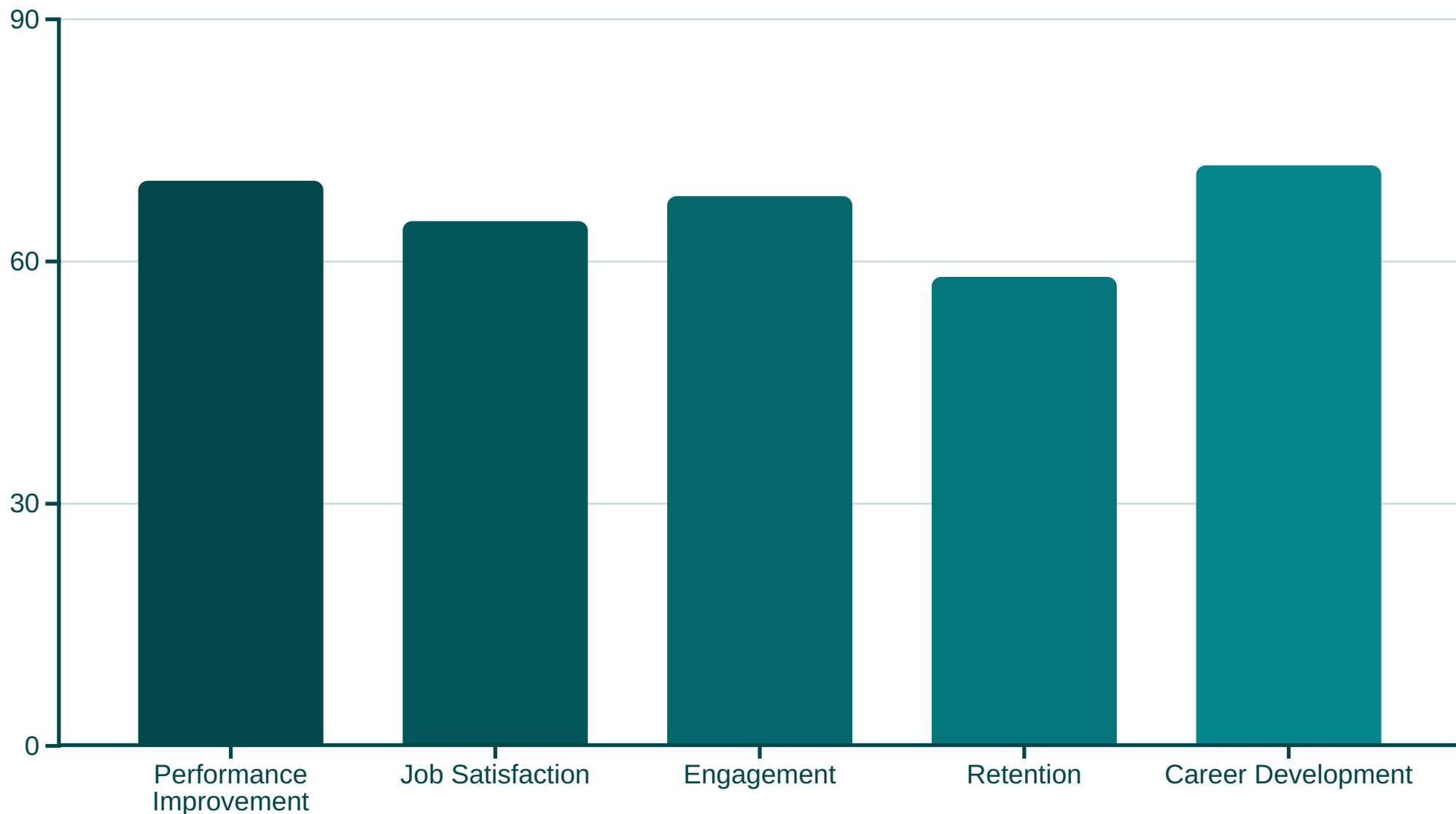
Set Your Intention

What specific coaching skill would you like to develop by the end of today's session? Share with your table group.

These initial activities will help establish our baseline understanding and create an open learning environment. Your honest reflections will guide our discussions throughout the day.



Why Coaching Matters



According to Gallup research, 70% of employees report significant performance improvements when receiving regular coaching from their leaders. Coaching creates a powerful ripple effect across teams and organisations.

Reflection question: Where do you currently see effective coaching at work in our organisation? What specific benefits have you observed? Take 2 minutes to discuss with a partner.

Today's Journey

-  **Exploring the Coaching Mindset**
Understanding the fundamental shift from managing to coaching and developing a growth-oriented approach.
-  **Building Essential Skills**
Mastering the GROW model and developing key coaching competencies for effective leadership.
-  **Hands-on Practice**
Applying techniques in real scenarios with immediate feedback and refinement.
-  **Creating Action Plans**
Developing concrete implementation strategies for your teams and establishing ongoing support.

Your active participation will shape our discussions throughout the day. We'll adapt based on your questions, challenges, and specific team contexts.

Coaching vs. Managing

Traditional Managing

- Directive approach
- Focuses on telling and instructing
- Manager provides solutions
- Emphasises task completion
- Short-term performance focus

Coaching Approach

- Collaborative approach
- Focuses on asking and listening
- Draws out team member's solutions
- Emphasises development
- Long-term capability building

Group Activity: At your tables, sort the example behaviours into "coaching" or "managing" categories. Discuss any behaviours that could fit in both contexts. What situations might call for each approach?



Leaders as Coaches

82%

High-Performing Companies

Percentage of top companies that train managers as coaches (BlessingWhite)

3.5x

Higher Engagement

Teams with coaching leaders show significantly higher engagement

67%

Innovation Impact

Increase in innovation when leaders use coaching approaches

Reflection Activity: Take 3 minutes to consider: What would shift in your team's performance, culture, and results if you adopted more coaching behaviours? What specific outcome might improve first? Share your thoughts with a partner.



Growth Mindset for Leaders

Fixed Mindset Leadership

- Views talent as static
- Avoids challenges to maintain image
- Sees feedback as criticism
- Threatened by team member success

Growth Mindset Leadership

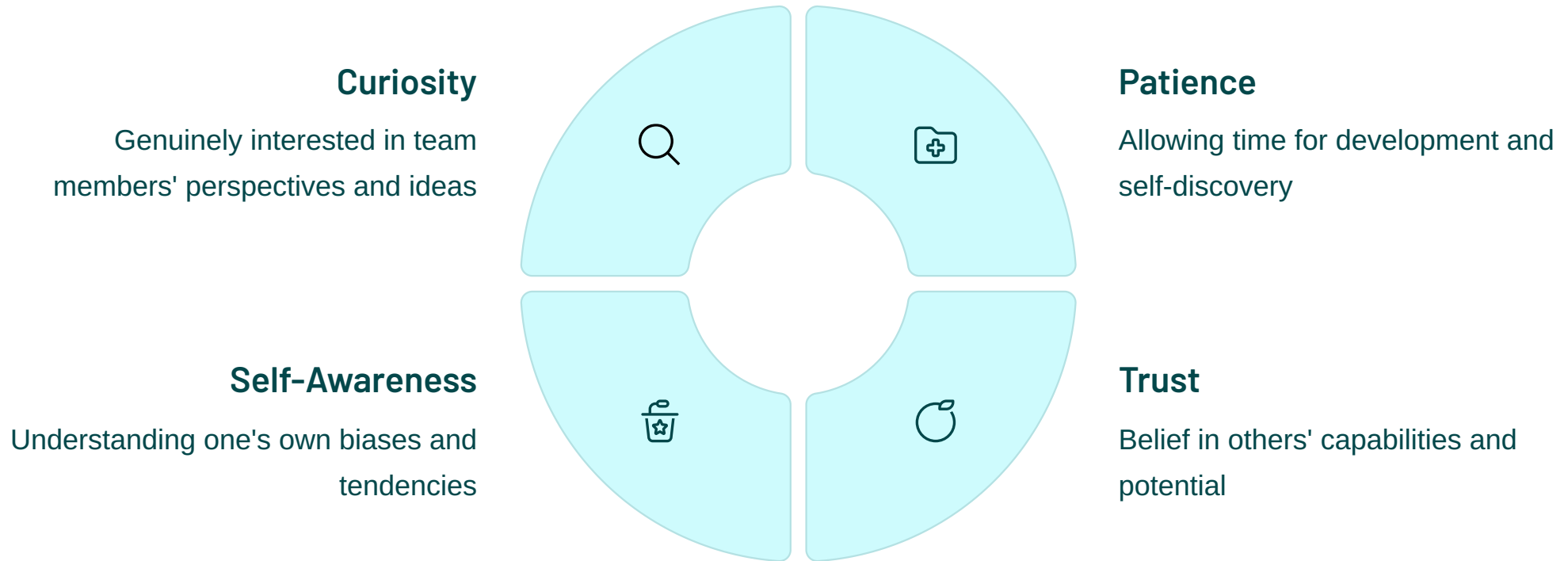
- Believes abilities can be developed
- Embraces challenges as learning
- Actively seeks feedback
- Inspired by others' achievements

Impact on Coaching

- Creates psychological safety
- Models continuous improvement
- Encourages experimentation
- Focuses on process, not just outcomes

Activity: Discuss where you currently fall on the mindset spectrum. Then discuss in pairs: Share an example of a recent growth moment in your leadership. What did you learn?

Breakout Discussion: The Coaching Mindset



Small Group Activity: Form groups of 4-5 people. Discuss: What attitudes and mindsets support great coaching? Create a mind map of essential coaching mindsets. Each group will share one key insight with everyone.

Barrier Busting

Key Barriers

- Time Constraints: 78% of leaders report this as a major barrier to effective coaching
- Confidence in Skills: 65% of leaders struggle with confidence in their coaching abilities
- Unclear Process: 52% report not having a clear coaching framework or process
- Team Resistance: 47% encounter resistance from team members when trying to coach
- Organisational Support: 43% feel they lack adequate support from their organisation

Actionable Insights

Individual Reflection: What's your number one obstacle to coaching more effectively? Is it time, skills, confidence, or something else? Write down your main barrier and one potential solution to overcome it.

Group Discussion: Share your barriers with your table. Work together to develop practical strategies for addressing the most common obstacles. We'll compile these for the whole team.

The GROW Coaching Model

Goal

Establish clear, specific outcomes for the coaching conversation. What does success look like?

Reality

Explore the current situation objectively. What's actually happening? What factors are at play?

Options

Generate possibilities and alternative approaches. What paths could lead to the goal?

Will

Determine specific actions and commitment to move forward. What will be done, by whom, and when?

Group Task: In teams of 3-4, create a simple visual representation of the GROW model that captures its essence. Use the materials provided. We'll share these with the whole group and discuss key insights.



G: Goal Setting

Specific

Clearly defined outcomes that provide direction and focus for the coaching conversation

Meaningful

Goals that connect to larger purpose and motivate genuine commitment

Measurable

Concrete ways to track progress and recognize achievement

Developmental

Focus on growth and learning, not just task completion

Pair Activity: Partner up and take turns helping each other set a "mini-goal" for this workshop session. Use open questions to help your partner identify something specific they want to achieve by the end of today. Apply the principles above.

R: Understanding Reality

A background image showing a business meeting. Three people in professional attire are gathered around a table. One person is holding a magnifying glass over a document that contains charts and the word "CRITERIA".

1

Ask Open Questions

"What's happening currently?" "What have you tried so far?"

2

Seek Evidence

"What specific examples have you observed?" "What data do we have?"

3

Explore Perspectives

"How do others view this situation?" "What other factors might be at play?"

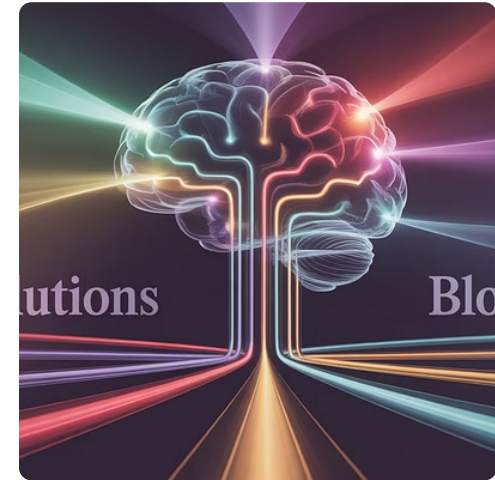
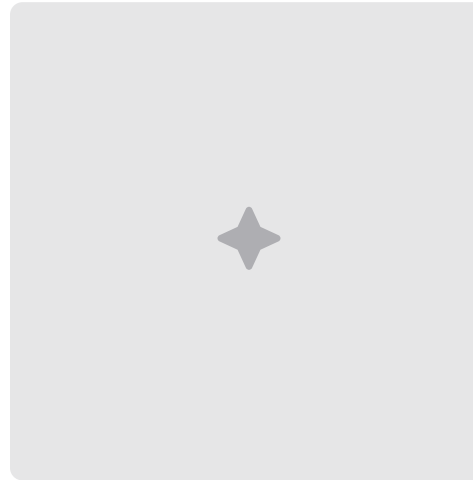
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Listen Deeply

"Tell me more about that." "I'm curious about what you mentioned..."

Practice Exercise: In groups of three, take turns asking "What's really happening?" about a current work challenge. The goal is to understand the situation fully before jumping to solutions. Notice how this changes your typical approach.

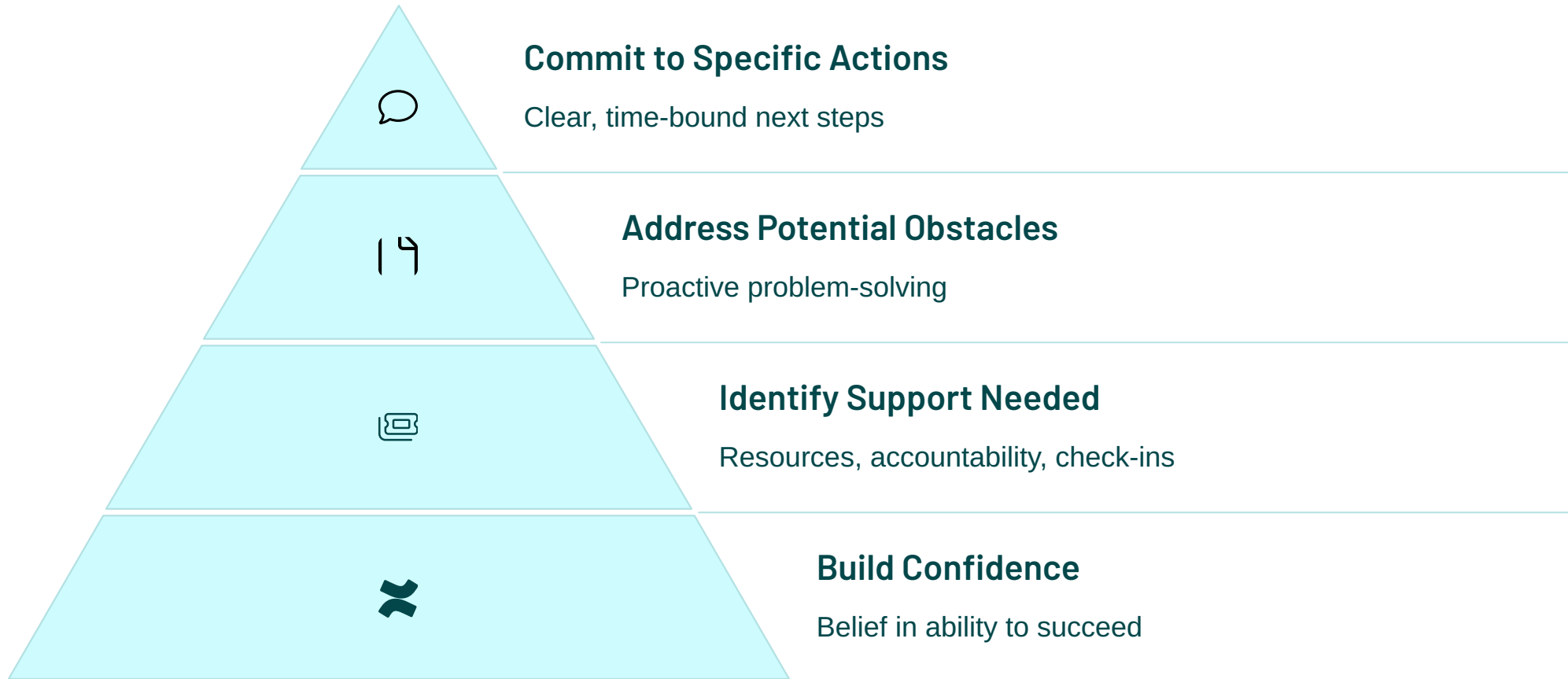
0: Exploring Options



Group Brainstorm Activity: As a table, select a common leadership challenge that many of you face. Using the "Options" phase of GROW, generate at least 5 fresh approaches to address this challenge. Push beyond obvious solutions.

Remember to suspend judgment during the brainstorming phase—all ideas are welcome. We'll evaluate the most promising options afterward.

W: The Will to Act



Poll & Reflection: Score yourself, "How confident are you in your ability to take new actions after being coached?" (1-10). Then consider: What helps you commit to action following a coaching conversation? What makes the difference between good intentions and actual change?

Live Practice: GROW in 5 Minutes



Set Goal (1 min)

Quickly identify focus area



Explore Reality (1 min)

Understand current situation



Generate Options (1 min)

Identify possible approaches



Commit to Action (1 min)

Decide on next steps

Pair Exercise: Find a partner and decide who will coach first. The "coachee" should bring a real (but not too complex) workplace challenge. Coach for 2 minutes using the abbreviated GROW model, then switch roles. Focus on brevity while maintaining the core structure.





Pause and Share



What Worked Well?

Which aspects of the GROW model felt most natural or effective in your brief practice?



What Was Challenging?

Where did you struggle or feel uncomfortable during the coaching conversation?



Surprising Insights

What unexpected learning or "aha" moments emerged from the exercise?



Adaptations Needed

How might you modify this approach for your specific team context?

Group Discussion: Let's hear from several pairs about your experience. What coaching breakthroughs did you experience, even in this brief practice? What questions arose about implementing the GROW model?

Key Coaching Skills Overview

Active Listening
Fully focusing on and understanding
the speaker

Comfortable Silence
Allowing space for reflection and
thought



Powerful Questions
Thought-provoking inquiries that
prompt insight

Effective Feedback
Constructive input that encourages
growth

Activity: Each table to discuss which skills you believe are most valuable and why. Prepare to make your case for why your chosen skill is the most valuable.

Deep Dive: Active Listening



What Active Listening Is

- Full attention on the speaker
- Understanding beyond words
- Noticing body language and tone
- Suspending judgment
- Seeking to understand first

What Active Listening Isn't

- Waiting for your turn to speak
- Formulating your response
- Interrupting with solutions
- Getting distracted
- Focusing only on facts

Group Demonstration: Let's practice active listening in pairs. One person will speak for 1 minute about a work challenge without interruption. The listener will focus completely on understanding, without preparing a response. We'll then reflect on how this feels compared to our usual conversations.

Listening Barriers



Activity: Review the images above and identify three major "listening blockers" they represent. What specific behaviors indicate poor listening in each scenario? How might these habits impact a coaching conversation?

Group Share: What tends to block your own listening effectiveness? Is it internal distractions, the urge to solve problems, or something else? Share one listening barrier you'd like to overcome.

Asking Powerful Questions

Closed Questions

- "Did you complete the project?"
- "Was the meeting successful?"
- "Do you agree with the plan?"
- "Have you tried solution X?"

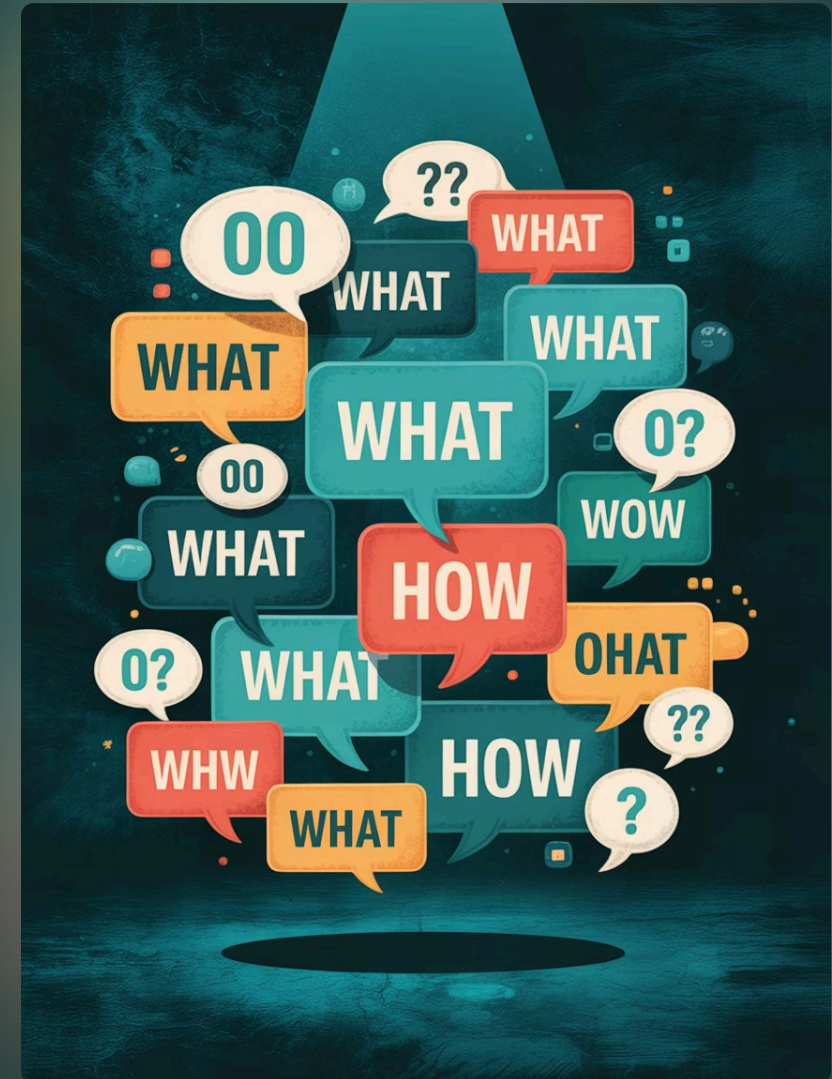
Open Questions

- "How is the project progressing?"
- "What made the meeting effective?"
- "What aspects of the plan work for you?"
- "What solutions have you considered?"

Powerful Questions

- "What would success look like?"
- "How might we approach this differently?"
- "What's the opportunity here?"
- "What are you learning from this?"

Breakout Exercise: In small groups, reword the "closed" questions on your handout to be open and empowering. Then reflect: How does the nature of your questions shape the quality of responses you receive?



Question Methods Exercise



Tell me about...

Invites narrative and perspective



Explain your thinking on...

Reveals reasoning and assumptions



Describe what happened when...

Elicits specific details and sequence

Practice Exercise: Form groups of three. Each person will practice using TED questions (Tell me, Explain, Describe) to explore a workplace scenario provided by the facilitator. Focus on how these question starters elicit different types of information and insight from the person being coached.

After each round, provide feedback on the effectiveness of the questions and discuss how they could be further improved.

Feedback That Fuels Growth



Correcting Feedback

Focuses primarily on fixing mistakes and addressing problems. Often backward-looking and creates defensiveness.

- Highlights errors
- Manager-directed
- Problem-focused
- Often generalized

Coaching Feedback

Concentrates on development and future improvement. Forward-looking and builds engagement.

- Builds on strengths
- Collaborative
- Growth-focused
- Specific and actionable

Discussion & Poll: Which feedback style do you currently use most often? Using your mobile device, vote on your predominant approach. Then discuss: How might shifting toward more coaching-oriented feedback impact your team's performance and development?

Giving Feedback: The BOOST Model



Brief

Concise and focused on key points



Observed

Based on direct observation, not hearsay



Objective

Factual, not interpretive or judgmental



Specific

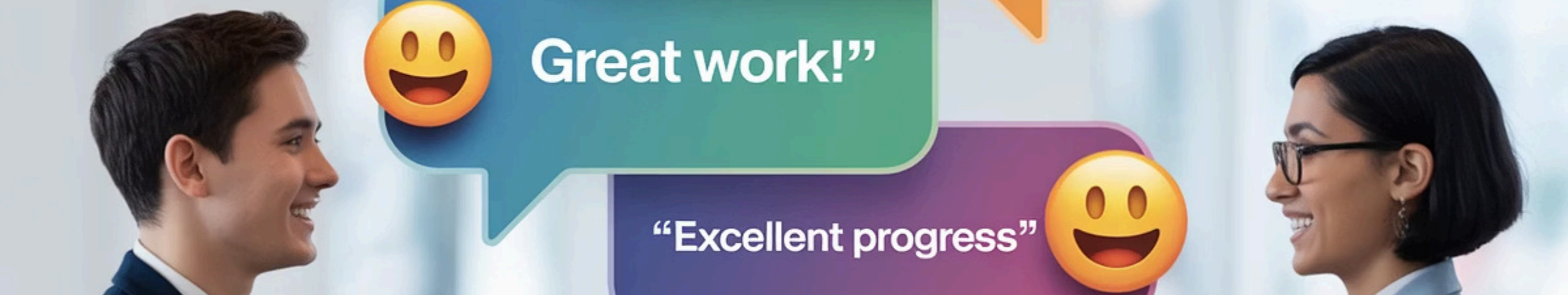
Detailed behaviours, not generalizations



Timely

Delivered when still relevant, not delayed

Group Activity: At your tables, draft one BOOST feedback statement each, addressing a common leadership scenario. Ensure your feedback follows all five elements of the model. We'll share examples with the larger group for constructive input.



Feedback Practice



Prepare Your Feedback

Structure feedback using the BOOST model. Focus on one specific behaviour or situation.



Deliver With Care

Present feedback in a supportive, growth-oriented manner. Monitor your tone and body language.



Discuss Collaboratively

Engage in dialogue about the feedback. Ask questions and listen to the recipient's perspective.



Focus Forward

Conclude with development opportunities and specific actions for improvement.

Paired Practice: With a partner, practise giving BOOST feedback on either a real situation or one of the scenarios provided. Take turns being the feedback giver and receiver. Afterward, discuss how the feedback felt and how it could be further improved.

Role Play: Coach in Action



Setup (2 min)

Form groups of 3. Assign roles: Coach, Team Member, Observer.



Coaching Conversation (5 min)

Coach conducts a mini coaching session using GROW and skills learned.



Observer Feedback (3 min)

Observer provides specific feedback on coaching techniques used.



Rotate Roles (10 min)

Switch roles so everyone experiences each position.

Group Debrief: After all rotations, discuss as a larger group: What coaching techniques did you try? Which were most effective? What will you incorporate into your leadership approach going forward?



Workplace Coaching Scenarios



Performance Challenge

A previously high-performing team member has missed deadlines on their last two projects. They seem disengaged in meetings and resistant to feedback.



Team Conflict

Two key team members have different working styles and frequently disagree on project approaches, creating tension that affects the entire team.



Career Development

A talented team member seems restless and unchallenged. You suspect they may be considering leaving for a new opportunity.

Small Group Activity: Select one scenario that resonates with your current leadership challenges. Discuss how you would approach coaching in this situation. What questions would you ask? What GROW elements would you emphasize? Share your top insight with the entire room.

Difficult Conversations



Prepare mentally

Adopt a growth mindset and coaching stance



State observations clearly

Focus on specific behaviours, not personality



Listen to understand

Seek their perspective without defensiveness



Explore solutions together

Co-create path forward with clear actions

Reflection & Breakout: Take a moment to consider: What types of conversations do you find most difficult to approach from a coaching perspective? In small groups, build a "difficult question script" with 3-5 powerful questions you could use to navigate challenging coaching scenarios.

Empathy and Curiosity



Coaching with Empathy

Connecting emotionally with the person being coached and demonstrating understanding of their experience.

- Validates feelings and experiences
- Creates psychological safety
- Builds trust and openness
- Demonstrates genuine care

Coaching with Curiosity

Approaching situations with genuine interest and a desire to explore new perspectives and possibilities.

- Asks thought-provoking questions
- Challenges assumptions
- Explores multiple possibilities
- Promotes creative thinking

Discussion Activity: In pairs, discuss whether you tend to lead more with empathy or curiosity in your coaching conversations. Share a specific example of when you used this approach and what impact it had. Then, consider how incorporating more of the other approach might enhance your coaching effectiveness.

Spot the Coaching Moment



Team Member Frustration

When someone expresses difficulty or challenge, resist solving it immediately. Instead, ask "What have you tried?" or "What options are you considering?"



New Project Kickoff

Rather than assigning tasks, ask "What part of this project would you like to lead?" or "How would you approach this challenge?"



After Achievements

Beyond congratulations, ask "What did you learn?" or "What was most effective about your approach?"



Performance Discussions

Instead of focusing only on metrics, ask "What growth opportunities do you see?" or "What would help you develop further?"

Group Activity: Think about your most recent team interactions from the past week. In pairs, identify at least three moments where you could have used a coaching approach instead of directing or problem-solving. What questions could you have asked? How might this have changed the outcome of the conversation?

Personal Insights Board



Interactive Gallery Walk: Take a moment to reflect on your biggest "aha" moment or insight from today's session. Write it on a sticky note and add it to our insights board under the appropriate category (Mindset, Skills, Application, or Questions).

Then, walk around the room to read others' insights. Add comments or "+1" to notes that resonate with you. We'll discuss patterns and common themes as a group afterward.

Changing Team Habits



Reflection & Share: Consider what one coaching habit would significantly change your team's performance or culture if consistently applied. What specific behaviour would you personally commit to practicing daily? Volunteers will have 1 minute each to pitch their chosen habit and its potential impact.

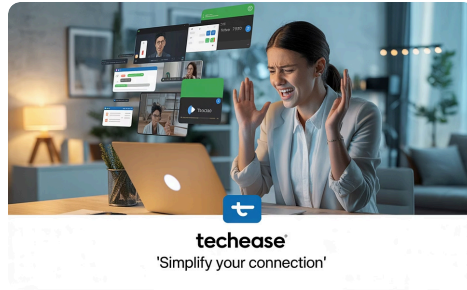
Coaching in Hybrid/Remote Teams

Exploring the unique challenges and opportunities of coaching in virtual environments



Limited Non-Verbal Cues

Missing body language and facial expressions makes reading responses more challenging



Technology Barriers

Connection issues and tech problems can interrupt meaningful coaching moments



Digital Collaboration Tools

Screen sharing and digital whiteboards create new opportunities for visual coaching



Greater Flexibility

Location-independent coaching allows for more frequent and convenient check-ins

Discussion & Brainstorm: In small groups, discuss what aspects of coaching are harder—and what's surprisingly easier—in remote or hybrid environments. Then, brainstorm your best virtual coaching techniques. What specific approaches have you found effective for maintaining connection and impact when coaching remotely?

Building a Coaching Culture

Leadership Modeling
Leaders consistently demonstrate coaching behaviours

Peer Coaching
Normalizing coaching across all levels



Skill Development
Ongoing training and practice opportunities

Recognition Systems
Celebrating effective coaching behaviours

Small Group Activity: Create a brief "Team Coaching Charter" that outlines 3-5 commitments your team can make to foster a coaching culture. Consider specific behaviours, meeting practices, and communication norms that would embed coaching in your team's daily operations. We'll share draft charters and vote on the most impactful ideas to implement.

What Will You Try First?



Daily 5-min coaching conversations

Brief, focused check-ins to build coaching momentum



GROW model in 1:1 meetings

Structured approach to guide developmental conversations



Asking vs. telling ratio improvement

Consciously increasing questions to empower team thinking



Active listening practice

Full presence and attention without interruption



Feedback using BOOST model

Structured, balanced feedback for growth



Peer coaching partnerships

Collaborative learning through reciprocal coaching

Reflection Question: Consider which of these coaching actions would have the greatest impact in your current role. Which approach aligns best with your strengths and your team's needs?

Group Discussion: Let's discuss: How might we support each other in implementing these changes? What obstacles might arise, and how can we help each other overcome them?

My Coaching Commitment

Specific Action

What precise coaching behaviour will you implement? Be concrete about what you'll do differently. For example: "I will ask three open questions before offering solutions in team discussions."

Implementation Plan

When and how will you practice this new behaviour? Create clear triggers and opportunities. For example: "I will begin each 1:1 meeting with a coaching approach rather than a status update."

Success Measures

How will you know you're making progress? Define observable evidence of change. For example: "Team members will be solving more problems independently within two weeks."

Silent Reflection & Partner Share: Take 3 minutes to write your specific coaching commitment for the next month. Be concrete and realistic. Then, turn to a neighbour and share your pledge. Ask your partner one question that helps strengthen your commitment.

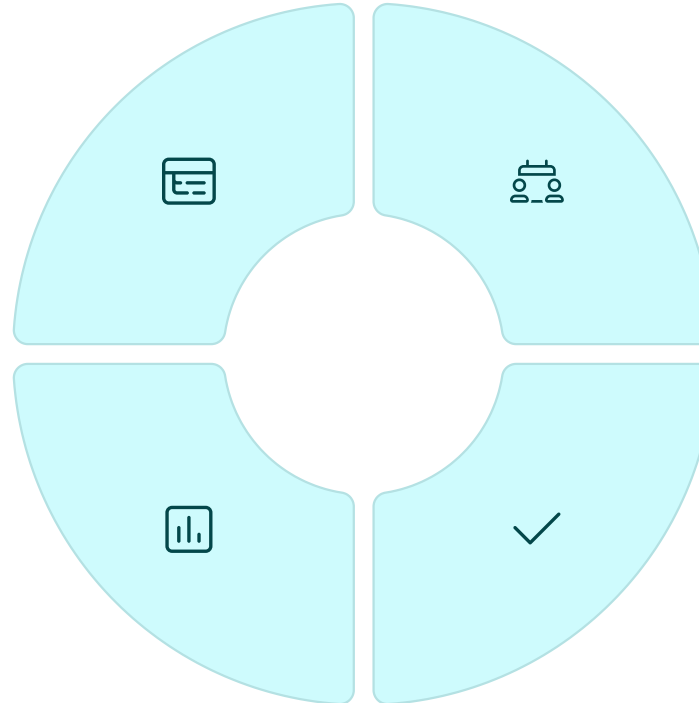
Peer Coaching Circles

Circle Structure

Groups of 3-4 peers meeting regularly to practice coaching and provide support

Expected Outcomes

Skill reinforcement, accountability, ongoing support network



Meeting Cadence

Monthly 45-60 minute sessions with rotating roles and focus areas

Session Format

Check-in, skill practice, real challenge coaching, commitment setting

Formation Activity: Let's establish peer coaching circles for continued practice and support. Form groups of 3-4 colleagues with complementary schedules and interests. Plan your first session date, time, and initial focus area. These circles will provide ongoing reinforcement of today's learning.

Coaching Success Metrics



Team Engagement

Regular pulse surveys measuring team energy, satisfaction, and connection



Development Progress

Skills advancement, increased responsibilities, and growth milestones

2

Performance Indicators

Changes in key productivity metrics, quality measures, and innovation

4

360° Feedback

Structured input on coaching effectiveness from multiple perspectives

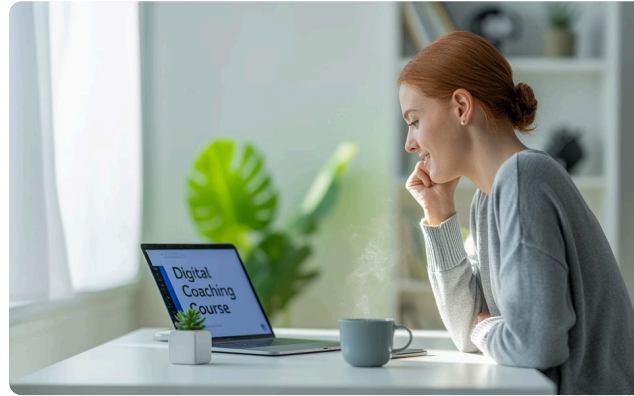
Team Activity: As a group, decide on 2-3 specific ways you'll measure the impact of improved coaching in your team. What indicators would show that your coaching efforts are making a difference? Then, agree on a review process—perhaps a quarterly check-in—to assess progress and refine your approach.

Resources for Continued Growth



Recommended Reading

- "Coaching for Performance" - John Whitmore
- "The Coaching Habit" - Michael Bungay Stanier
- "Mindset" - Carol Dweck
- "Crucial Conversations" - Patterson, Grenny, McMillan & Switzler



Digital Learning

- LinkedIn Learning: "Coaching and Developing Employees"
- Coursera: "Coaching Skills for Managers" specialization
- MindTools coaching resources
- Harvard Business Review coaching articles collection



Internal Support

- HR coaching programme contacts
- Mentor matching service
- Leadership development community
- Practice session scheduling tool

Q&A and Open Forum



Current Coaching Challenges

What specific situations are you finding difficult to approach with a coaching mindset?



Concept Clarification

Which coaching concepts or techniques would you like further explanation on?



Implementation Questions

What concerns do you have about applying these approaches in your specific team context?



Next Steps Support

What additional resources or assistance would help you become a more effective coach?

Open Forum: This is your opportunity to address any questions or concerns about implementing coaching in your leadership practice. We'll also use this time for a live group coaching moment—bring your real coaching challenges and we'll apply our collective wisdom to help find paths forward.



Thank You & Next Steps



Practice Your Commitment

Implement your chosen coaching behaviour consistently for the next two weeks. Use the triggers and opportunities you've identified.



Connect With Your Circle

Hold your first peer coaching circle within the next month. Use the session format we discussed to reinforce skills and provide support.



Share Your Progress

Document your coaching experiences and insights in our shared team space. Both successes and challenges provide valuable learning.

Congratulations on your active participation today! You've taken important steps toward transforming your leadership approach through coaching. Remember that developing these skills is a journey—be patient with yourself and celebrate small wins along the way.