



How to have a powerful coaching conversation

The GROW model and sample questions

There are four key stages:

- 1 What do you want? (Goal)
- 2 What is happening? (Reality)
- 3 What could you do? (Options)
- 4 What will you do? (Will)

Goal

Let the person talk about their issue whilst you listen.

You can ask questions and summarise the issue to help the person to clarify their goal.

Your aim is to help the person to state the goal very simply.

Questions you could ask

- What would you like to have achieved by the end of this coaching session?
- Let's imagine a year or so into the future. What would your ideal situation be?
- How important is each of these to you? (You could use a 1-10 scale.)
- By when would you want that to be the case?
- If that seems a bit of a stretch from where you are now, give me a couple of stepping stones along the way.
- From where you are now, what would be a first step that you could feel good about?

Reality

What is the reality? Your aim is to understand what is really happening at the moment.

Ask questions to investigate the reality. Stay in investigation and listening mode. Don't offer solutions at this stage.

Use descriptive terminology not judgmental (right/wrong etc). "What specific feedback did you receive on your presentation?" rather than "why was it bad?".

Questions you could ask

- Where are you now in relation to your goal?
- What do you think is stopping you?
- What do you think [someone else's] perception of the situation is?
- What have you already tried?

Options

What options does the person see?

Listen out for where you hear their enthusiasm. It will inform which option might suit them best.

You can ask the person if they would like to hear options that occur to you.

Questions you could ask

- How could you do it differently this time?
- What is something similar in which you did succeed?
- What resources do you already have which can help you achieve what you want?
- What else could you do? What else? Anything else?
- What advice would you give to a friend about that?
- What would you gain/lose by doing/saying that?

Will

Help the person to identify, and commit to, the way forward.

Questions you could ask

- What are you going to do?
- What obstacles might get in the way? How can you deal with those?
- Who needs to know?
- What support do you need? Who else might be able to help?
- When are you going to do it?
- What are you going to do as your first step? Identify specific actions.
- How will you measure your success?
- Rate on a 1-10 scale the degree of certainty you have that you will carry out the actions agreed. If you have rated yourself at less than eight, how can you reduce the size of the task or lengthen the time scale to enable you to raise the rating to eight or above? If your rating is still below eight, cross out the action step, as you are unlikely to take it.