

UNIVERSAL UNITS

UNIT 6

COACHING AND MENTORING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit is aimed at beginners in coaching and mentoring who may have been coached themselves, but have little experience as Coaches. At completion they will:

- Understand what coaching is, what it is not and how it can be of benefit
- Understand and experience five essential coaching skills
- Understand the coaching process and coaching models

ONLINE RESOURCES

The content and tasks throughout these PDFs are supported by online resources that are designed to facilitate and supplement your training experience.

Links to these are signposted where appropriate. The resources use graphics and interactive elements to:

- Highlight salient points
- Provide at-a-glance content summaries
- Introduce further points of interest
- Offer visual context
- Break down and clearly present the different stages and elements of processes, tasks, practices, and theories

The online resources offer great benefits, both for concurrent use alongside the PDFs, or as post-reading revision and planning aids.

Please note that the resources cannot be used in isolation without referencing the PDFs. Their purpose is to complement and support your training process, rather than lead it.

You should complete any learning or teaching tasks and additional reading detailed in this PDF to make full use of the Advanced training materials for autism; dyslexia; speech, language and communication; emotional, social and behavioural difficulties; moderate learning difficulties.

To find out more about the resources, how they work, and how they can enhance your training, visit the homepage at: www.education.gov.uk/lamb

The first resource for this unit can be found here:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/autism/coaching-mentoring/intro

CLARIFYING WHAT COACHING IS, WHAT IT IS NOT AND HOW IT CAN BENEFIT¹²

There are differences between coaching, counselling and psychotherapy, and there is also a lot of overlap. Very briefly, both counsellors and therapist generally deal with emotional or behavioural difficulties and/or past painful situations that prevent the client from coping with their everyday lives and that affect their wellbeing. Coaching, meanwhile, focuses more specifically on moving forward and actualising potential. If anxieties *persist* during coaching sessions, a Coach may refer clients to these professionals.

The differences between mentoring and coaching are summarized below:³

Mentor	Coach
Will have had role experience	Specific role experience optional
Focuses on whole role of mentee	Can focus on a narrow skill-set
Advisor	Thinking partner
Can give quick-fix solutions	Relies on skilled questions to move process forward
Freely gives hints and suggestions	Encourages own questions and own answers
More informal contact	Structured model and outcomes
Could be a long term assignment	Focused goal-orientated time limited process

EXPERIENCE⁴⁵

One of the key objectives of this unit is for the learner to experience the mentoring-coaching process. To achieve this you will need to establish a triad, with two other learners. If this is not possible then you should find a learning partner. ***You should not proceed with this learning module until you have established your triad or found your partner and agreed confidentiality.***

Activity in Triad or Pair [30 minutes]: Your mentoring-coaching experience.

Take 5 minutes to write down your responses to each of these questions and then 5 minutes per person to share with your triad and 10 minutes of group reflection to come up with a definition of mentoring and of coaching.

<i>If you have no prior mentoring-coaching experience please discuss the following:</i>	
In what context have you heard about mentoring-coaching?	
What do you think mentoring- coaching is?	
How do you think it could support you?	

¹ http://www.reframe.dk/Coaching_versus_therapy.pdf

² http://changingminds.org/disciplines/coaching/articles/coaching_therapy.htm

³ Tolhurst, J. (2010). The Essential Guide to Coaching and Mentoring. 2nd Ed. Harlow: Longman. p. 10

⁴ Passmore, J. (Ed.) (2006). Excellence in Coaching. Great Britain: Kogan Page. Chapter 1.

⁵ Pask, R. & Joy, B. (2007). Mentoring-Coaching. England: McGraw Hill. Chapter 1.

What do you think you need to find out about mentoring-coaching?	
<i>If you do have experienced mentoring-coaching:</i>	
What do you already know about mentoring-coaching?	
What more do you want to know about mentoring-coaching?	
Is your experience as a Coach or as a Coachee (being coached by someone)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If as a Coach, what type of issues have you coached? • If as Coachee, what issue were you coached on and how was the experience 	
What support or further information could have made your mentoring-coaching experience more effective?	

The Benefits of Mentoring-Coaching⁶⁷

- Development of a life skill that unlocks potential and improves personal and professional performance
- Greater staff commitment and renewed energy
- Staff show greater adaptability and more flexible and creative use of skills and resources
- Staff take greater responsibility and demonstrate accountability
- Improved quality of life for individuals, their learning and their relationships
- A culture change that increases motivation and morale

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/autism/coaching-mentoring/benefits

Activity in triad or pair [30 minutes]: Benefits of Mentoring-Coaching

Take 5 minutes to plan your responses and then 5 minutes per person to share and 10 minutes for group discussion.

If you have experienced mentoring-coaching before:

Share an experience of mentoring-coaching that highlights three benefits

If you have no previous mentoring-coaching experience:

Read the bullet points above. Can you now identify a situation in which you believe mentoring-coaching would be beneficial?

⁶ Whitmore, J. (2002). Coaching for Performance. 3rd Ed. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing

⁷ Tolhurst Ibid p. 3.

Key Learnings on what coaching is and is not and its benefits

What have you learned so far?	
How can you apply what you have learned in your school setting?	

IDENTIFYING AND EXPLORING FIVE ESSENTIAL COACHING SKILLS

In the following section five essential coaching skills are presented with examples of them. There are activities related to the teaching of pupils for SEN, for you to try.

(i) Building the relationship: Confidentiality and trust

Before mentoring-coaching can begin, the Coachee needs to feel comfortable and to know that they can trust the Coach and that confidentiality will be upheld. Open communication⁸ is at the heart of coaching and there are several strategies that the Coach employs. These are summarised in Tolhurst⁹ and include language, body language, listening, empathy and asking questions.

Activity in Triad or Pairs [45 minutes]: Building the relationship: Confidentiality and trust

Aim: The purpose of this activity is to have the early experience of 'building the relationship'.

Task: Coachee describes a recent successful outcome within your SEN practice. This could be with a member of your professional team or with a pupil.

Procedure: After a confidentiality reminder, one member of the triad takes on the role of Coach, another the role of Coachee while the third will observe the process. The Coach listens while the Coachee is speaking, and then reflects the main points of what has been said. The Observer observes the interaction and makes notes. Allow two minutes for the Coachee's presentation, two minutes for the Coach's reflections and two minutes for the Observer's reflections. After the first round, rotate the roles, so that by the end of the exercise each person has experienced being Coach, Coachee and Observer.

Questions for discussion:

- As Coachee:
 - How did the Coach make you feel and why?
- As Coach:
 - How did you experience the process and why?
- As Observer:
 - What did you learn about this interaction?

⁸ www.mindtools.com

⁹ Tolhurst. *Ibid.* Chapter 2

(ii) Empathy

Empathy is often confused with identification and sympathy and these three processes involving emotions can become tangled up in the mentoring-coaching relationship¹⁰.

- **Identification** occurs where a situation or feelings expressed by the Coachee, cause the Coach to identify strongly. Failing to recognise the process of identification can limit the process of mentoring-coaching.
- **Sympathy describes** 'feeling with' a person and may run the risk of the Coach appearing 'sorry for' the client. This too can limit the Coach's non-judgmental approach and ultimately the outcome of the mentoring-coaching process¹¹.
- **Empathy** is the ability to understand and imaginatively enter into another person's feelings without the limits of identification or sympathy. Empathy requires that we listen carefully to our own feelings, while listening and responding sensitively to the client. It is a form of communication that enables the Coach to explore the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of the Coachee while building a trusting and respectful coaching relationship.

(iii) Listening and Barriers to Listening

Active listening

We listen differently in different contexts. Sometimes we listen simply to gain information or to learn more. In a dialogue we might be sharing in someone's story, finding out about another's experiences and developing a relationship. On another level, we might listen to show attention and respect, or to gain insight.

Voice, tone, rate, the choice of words, and body language help us in understanding the speaker.

We show our interest in the speaker by maintaining eye contact, affirmative nodding, proximity and open posture. These gestures indicate support and acceptance. When we need clarification, we ask questions, paraphrase, check assumptions and aim to clear up any misconceptions.

Reflective Listening¹²

Reflective listening includes active listening but goes further in requiring the Coach to listen more than talk, to have a genuine interest in what is being said, to respond sensitively to the personal issues expressed, and to clarify what the Coachee has said by asking searching questions. There is an implicit commitment to trying to understand the feelings expressed by what is said, how it is said and what is not said. Throughout this process the Coach is sensitive to the speaker's frame of reference and always seeks to respond with empathy, openness and acceptance. In so doing the Coach allows pauses and silences that allow thoughts and feeling to be expressed.

The strengths of Reflective Listening

- the Coachee gains insights and information

¹⁰ Pask and Joy. *Ibid.* Chapter 12.

¹¹ Tolhurst. *Ibid.* p. 36

¹² Hill, P. (2004). *Concepts of Coaching*. UK:ILM. Pp. 23-31

- the relationship between Coach and Coachee strengthens, enabling a trusting relationship
- the process arouses a new energy: the Coach is an accepting and motivating partner encouraging new initiatives for the Coachee who is likely to discover new plans for action.

Barriers to Listening¹³:

Here are some barriers, which stop us being reflective listeners:

- **rehearsal**: thinking about how you are going to respond, without really listening to what is being said
- **identifying**: constantly attributing what is said to your situation or feeling, rather than listening to the feelings of the speaker
- **advising**: responding by telling rather than listening thoughtfully and questioning
- **being right**: point scoring, rather than listening respectfully to what is being expressed
- **being distracted, daydreaming, not paying attention**

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/autism/coaching-mentoring/listening

Activity in triad or pairs [45 minutes]: Spot the Barrier

Aim: To recognise barriers to listening.

Task

The Speaker makes the following statement: *I don't know what to do about Joe. He keeps making spelling errors on simple words.*

Below are different responses to the speaker. Indicate the barrier to listening in each.

	Barrier
I've given my class words to revise daily	
If I were you I would...	
The answer is to arrange an INSET	
Oh no. Not again. We discussed this last week	

Over the next week become aware of barriers to listening as they occur in the classroom and staffroom. Be responsive to yours and other 'barriers' and make notes of these to add to the list. Reflect on the impact of these on the listener and consider strategies to limit these barriers.

Activity in triad or pairs [30 minutes]: Develop reflective listening

Aim: The purpose of this activity is to focus on your own listening in a range of different school situations

¹³ Tolhurst. *Ibid.* p. 30,

Task: Over the next week keep a record of the time spent listening to others in the situations listed below. Afterwards, in your triad or pair, discuss your insights into the value of reflective listening.

Procedure:

At school:

- In a formal group meeting
- In an informal group meeting
- In a one-to-one conversation with a colleague
- In a one-to-one conversation with a pupil
- On the telephone

Outside of school:

- In any conversation

Question for Discussion:

- What level of listening were you using in these different situations
- What barriers to listening have you now become aware of?

(iv) Thought-provoking questions

Effective questions are one of the most valuable coaching tools. In our everyday lives we constantly ask questions. Some questions elicit “Yes / No” answers. These are termed “closed” questions, and are not particularly useful in the coaching context. “Open” questions are more enlightening. They invite a response beyond “Yes / No” but not all Open questions are good coaching questions.

Open questions are asked when we seek information, to clarify our understanding of a situation, to ensure that we have been understood, to seek support, and to gauge the opinion of others. Questions that start with “Why ...” (Why haven’t you done your homework?) should be used with caution because they can appear interrogating and aggressive and may cause the Coachee to respond defensively.

Good coaching questions do not have a right or a wrong answer. They provide information to the Coach while challenging the Coachee to think about their dilemma in a different way. For example, in the ‘*Barriers to Listening*’ exercise. What would the effect have been if the listener had responded to the speaker’s statement *I don’t know what to do about Joe. He keeps making spelling errors on simple words* with the following open question: *What are you not sure about?*

The following are examples of effective coaching questions:

- Focus on the current situation as well as the future: *So what are you thinking and feeling about the situation right now, and What needs to happen within the next week?*
- Goal-directed: *What could you do now to enable you to deal differently with Johnny’s challenging behavior?*
- Encourage the Coachee to take a different perspective, real or imaginary: *I’ve heard what you have already tried to do to support Mary in the Math lesson. I wonder if there is anything you could do differently?*

- Allow for the brainstorming of alternatives: *Let's brainstorm some options for reassuring his parents that we understand their concerns.*
- Focus on commitment to change: *With this new insight, when do you think you might initiate that conversation with your Head of Year?*
- Encourage the Coachee to commit to trying something new: *Which of the options that we have discussed are you most likely to try?*

Activity in Triad or Pair [30 minutes]: Identifying “Closed” and “Open” Questions

Aim: The purpose of this activity is to consolidate your understanding of different types of questions

Task 1. The Coachee is writing a report for which the deadline is 24 hours ahead. The Coach, in this instance the Coachee's Head of Year, asks the Coachee a Closed question relating to this issue.

Procedure: In your triad assume the roles of Coach, Coachee and Observer
Question for Discussion:

- As Coachee, what did you experience?
- As Coach, what did you experience?
- As Observer, reflect on the interaction.

Task 2. Repeat the scenario, but this time the Coach asks the Coachee an interrogative question starting with “Why...?”

Question for Discussion:

- As Coachee, what did you experience?
- As Coach, what did you experience?
- As Observer, reflect on the interaction.

Task 3. Repeat the scenario, but this time the Coach asks the Coachee a non-threatening Open Question.

Question for Discussion:

- As Coachee, what did you experience?
- As Coach, what did you experience?
- As Observer, reflect on the interaction.

The best coaching questions are probing. They challenge self-limiting beliefs while simultaneously supporting the Coachee and unlocking potential. They undermine the barriers that the Coachee experiences and highlight irrational beliefs. They encourage the imagination and empower the Coachee by focusing on the present situation and the future rather than on the sometimes demoralizing past.

New Coaches may not feel comfortable with this type of question. That is why it is essential to build the coaching relationship so that the Coachee trusts the Coach and understands the purpose of powerful coaching questions.

Activity in Triad or Pair [15 minutes]: Thought-provoking Questions

Aim: The purpose of this activity is to brainstorm thought-provoking questions.

Task: Each person in your triad is to come up with five powerful coaching questions. The questions must be open, probing, and imaginative. They should stimulate the Coachee to think about the situation in a different way.

Question for Discussion:

- What makes a powerful coaching question?

(v) Nonverbal communication

Our body language influences both how we listen and how we respond. Here are some typical gestures and how they impact on communication¹⁴.

- Nod head – agreement
- Yawn – boredom
- Clap and thumbs up - approval
- Extend hand – invite to join in
- Shrug shoulders – lack of interest
- Lean forward – show interest

Activity in Triad or Pair [30 minutes]: A mentoring-coaching conversation

Aim: The purpose of this activity is to explore what you now know about the essential coaching skills and which of these you need to develop further.

Task. In your triad, in turn, assume the roles of Coach, Coachee and Observer.

Procedure. The Coach facilitates the conversation about which coaching skills the Coachee has mastered and what their developmental needs are with respect to building trust, listening, and questioning. Together they brainstorm activities to practice these skills and come up with a plan to consolidate what has been learnt.

Questions for Discussion:

- As Coachee, what did you experience?
- As Coach, what did you experience?
- As Observer, reflect on the interaction.

Key Learnings on Essential Coaching Skills

What have you learned so far?	
How can you apply what you have learned at school?	

UNDERSTANDING THE COACHING PROCESS AND MODELS OF COACHING

Prior to the first formal meeting it is likely that the Mentor-Coach and the Coachee will have had an informal conversation to ensure that there is congruency and any concerns about confidentiality should be addressed.

¹⁴ Furnham, A. (2000). Body language at work. London: CIPD. p. 20

At the first meeting it is important that the expectations of both the Mentor-coach and the Coachee are clarified, that confidentiality is emphasized, and that mentoring-coaching contract is agreed and signed. The contract¹⁵ should contain information about the broad area of mentoring-coaching to be addressed as well as the location, frequency and duration of the coaching conversations. Sessions may range in duration from 30 minutes to 2 hours but shorter coaching sessions can be very beneficial, on specific issues, and it is up to the parties involved to discuss what works best for them. The concept of “homework” is introduced so that the Coachee expects to be given alternatives discussed at the session to try out between sessions. Agreement is also reached about who will take notes during the sessions. The Coach may describe the Coaching Process and the model of coaching to be used.

Key Learnings on Understanding the Coaching Process

What have you learned so far?	
How can you apply what you have learned at school?	

The Value of a Coaching Models

The value of a Coaching Model is that it provides a framework for the discussion between the Coach and Coachee. It helps to focus on the issues raised by the Coachee and leads from a goal to a way forward for the Coachee. Below is the framework for the GROW¹⁶ model one of the most frequently used. (Other useful Coaching models include: The Model of Mentoring-Coaching¹⁷ and LEAP¹⁸)

Goals – Reality – Options - Wrap Up

These topics form the basis of a coaching session. Each coaching session should work through each part of the **GROW** process.

Goals

Set goals, write them down, establish what Coachee wants out of the session

Typical questions at this stage are:

- What do you want to achieve out of this mentoring-coaching session/relationship?
- What are the goals you want to achieve?
- Why are you hoping to achieve this goal?
- What are the expectations of others?
- Who else needs to know about the plan? How will you inform them?

¹⁵ Tolhurst *Ibid* p. 53

¹⁶ There have been many claims to authorship of GROW While no one person can be clearly identified as the originator Graham Alexander, Alan Fine and Sir John Whitmore, who are well known in the world of coaching, made significant contributions. Max Landsberg also describes GROW in his book *The Tao of Coaching*

¹⁷ Pask and Joy. *Ibid* p.13

¹⁸ Tolhurst. *Ibid*. p. 57-72

Reality

Let them tell their story, invite self assessment, what's happening, when does this happen, what effect does it have, other factors

Typical questions at this stage are:

- What is the reality of the current situation?
- What is really stopping you?
- Do you know anyone who has achieved that goal?
- What can you learn from them?

Options

Brainstorm options, ask – don't tell, empower, ensure choice, how can you move toward the goal, what has worked in the past

Typical questions at this stage are:

- What's your responsibility for resolving it?
- What could you do as a first step?
- What else could you do?
- What would happen if you did nothing?

Wrap Up AND Way Forward

Identify specific steps and any obstacles, write action plan

Typical questions at this stage are:

- Where does this goal fit in with your personal priorities at the moment?
- What obstacles do you expect to meet? How will you overcome them?
- How committed are you to this goal?
- What steps do you need to take to achieve this?

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/autism/coaching-mentoring/grow

Activity on Triad or Pair [30 minutes]: Practice using GROW model

Aim: The purpose of this activity is for you to experience the GROW model either as a Coach or as a Coachee

Scenario. It is beneficial to use your own “live” issue as a coaching topic. The following is an example of a dilemma that is appropriate for coaching:

Parents have approached the class teacher who has been supporting a hearing impaired child who is moving from a special nursery into a mainstream primary school. They are asking for reassurance from the teacher who seeks coaching help to deal with her anxiety about giving appropriate, empowering but honest feedback to the parents about their child's likely future performance in the new school.

Procedure: In your triad assume the roles of Coach, Coachee and Observer. The worksheet for the Coach is below.

Topics for Discussion: Comment on the quality of the coaching relationship, the listening skills, the questions asked, the nonverbal communication, the level of trust and openness and the value of using a coaching framework.

Coaching Worksheet

Name	
Date of Birth	
Session Date	

Goals

(Set goals, write them down, and establish what person wants out of the session)

Reality

(Let them tell their story, invite self assessment, what's happening, when does this happen, what effect does it have, other factors)

Options

(Brainstorm options, ask – don't tell, empower, ensure choice, how can you move toward the goal, what has worked in the past)

Wrap Up and Way Forward

(Identify specific steps and any obstacles, write action plan)

Key Learnings on Coaching Models

What have you learned so far?	
How can you apply what you have learned at school?	