Coaching Guide

Coaching is partnering with colleagues in a lively process that empowers them and helps them think through a challenge. When done well, coaching helps the other person navigate immediate challenges and builds capacity for them to take on challenges effectively in the future. The coach is not required to have greater domain expertise in the area of coaching. For example, it’s possible for someone in marketing to provide coaching to a software developer on a software challenge.

**|| Key Coaching Skills ||**

1. *Connect.* “I don’t coach players, I relate to people.” Red Auerbach, Legendary Basketball Coach. Coaching is about connecting with your colleagues and seeking ways to support their success.
2. *Ask questions.* Pose open-ended questions, be curious and non-judgmental. Help them explore the challenge they are facing. Example questions:
   1. “What would be the main advantage for making this change?”
   2. “What has worked in the past?”
   3. “What options are you considering?”
   4. “On a scale of 1 to 10, how [motivated/confident] are you to...?”
3. *Listen.* Focus on the other person, reflect back, give space for silence, summarize and test your understanding, challenge their thinking where appropriate. “On one hand it sounds like… On the other hand you want…”
4. *Provide feedback and suggestions where appropriate.* Be specific, honest and also balanced and supportive. Check-in to get their response to what you shared.

**|| GROW Approach to Coaching ||**

1. Goal: What do you want?
2. Reality: What’s happening now? What challenges are you facing?
3. Options: What could you do? Generate multiple options for closing the gap from goal to reality.
4. Will: What will you do? Identify achievable steps to move from reality to goal. “What will you do? By when?” “What resources would be useful? What skills will help you get there?” “What advocacy would help? How can I provide more support towards your development?”

**|| Questions to Help Someone Explore a Challenge ||**

1. “How’s it going? Any challenges you’re facing?”
2. “What advice would you give yourself?”
3. “What options are you considering?”
4. “What has worked in the past?”
5. “What would be the main advantage for making this change?”
6. “On a scale of 1 to 10, how [motivated/confident] are you to...?”
7. “It sounds like it’s either one or the other. Is there a way to do both?”
8. “How are you thinking to proceed?”
9. “What's the first (or easiest) step you could take?”
10. “What challenges do you anticipate and how might you prepare for them?”

**|| Reflections to Help Someone Clarify Their Thinking ||**

1. “On one hand it seems…(you can’t find time in your day for strategic thinking.) On the other hand you need…(the team to have a coherent strategy to guide decision-making.)”
2. “It sounds like… (you don’t have the resources/time to do something that you think is important).”
3. “That must have taken a lot of time to get right.”