

The ARROW Model by Matt Somers

Matt Somers developed his ARROW model in 2006. It is closely based on the GROW model, but it renames ‘Goals’ as ‘Aims’ and adds a ‘Reflection’ stage following the ‘Reality’ stage. Somers says he developed the model “because I sensed many coaches were using GROW on autopilot and I wanted to make sure my readers would think about the model [they were using]”.



Step 1: Aims

As in Whitmore’s GROW model, in this first step the coach helps the learner identify a specific goal they want to achieve.

Step 2: Reality

In step 2, the coach prompts the learner to consider the reality of their current situation and to identify how it might help (or hinder) progress towards their aims.

Step 3: Reflection

In step 3, the ARROW model departs from the GROW model. According to Somers, “this stage provides an opportunity for the learner to reflect on what’s been uncovered so far. It is often in this part of the coaching process that true enlightenment happens; what some have described as ‘ah-ha’ moments”.

Somers advises coaches to encourage learners to reflect on how big a gap there is between their aims and their reality - that is, the distance from where they are now to where they want to get to. At this point, they may find they need to revise their aims - to make them more realistic or to make them more stretching. They may also need to revise any timeframes they had in mind, too.

Somers also suggests the reflection stage is a good time to challenge any assumptions the learner is making: “Comments like ‘I’ve tried that before and it didn’t work’, ‘senior management will never agree’ or ‘I’m just not able to do that’ need challenging because they are not facts. Just because something was unsuccessful previously does not render it impossible for ever more.”

Step 4: Options

Once the learner has taken some time to reflect on their aims and their reality, they can move on to the options stage. Here, the coach and learner work together to brainstorm different learning and development options that might help them achieve their goals.

Step 5: Way Forward

Finally, once the learner has chosen a development path, they can move to the final stage - which Somers terms the 'Way forward'. Here, the coach seeks a commitment from the learner to follow through on their development plans and seek to achieve their aims.

References

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