

Community of Practice for Mentors – January 2020

GROW Model refresher

What is the GROW model?

The GROW model is one of the foundational models in coaching/mentoring. It was first published in Coaching for Performance by Sir John Whitmore in the 1990s and has been used extensively since.

GROW stands for Goal, Reality, Options, Will, providing a structure for a collaborative conversation with a focus on positive action towards a desired goal/situation.



How to use the GROW model in mentoring

In mentoring, the long-term relationship of mentor with mentee is of greater value than the achievement of any specific outcome. Therefore, of key importance in mentoring is maintaining rapport, trust and supporting the mentee in their overall personal and professional growth. However, the GROW model can be a useful tool within that context for shaping the conversation and encouraging clarity of focus and positive direction.

The GROW model helps to provide structure that:

- Orientates the focus towards the positive
- Creates momentum towards action
- Builds awareness of the ecology of the situation
- Encourages natural solutions to emerge
- Closes with commitment.

The component parts – breaking the GROW model down

There are four parts to the GROW conversation. Below are example questions/phrases you may want to use in each segment.

Goals

Overall goals:

- What would you like to achieve?
- Where do you see this work/role taking you?
- What is most important to you?

Session goals:

- What would you like to get out of this session?
- We have around an hour, where would you like to have got to by then?
- What would be the most helpful thing for you to take away from this session?

Reality

- Let's have a look at things as they stand now.
- Where are you now in relation to X?
- Tell me more about that.
- Who else is involved in this goal?
- What progress have you made so far?
- What action have you taken on this so far?
- What were the effects of that action?

Options

- What could you do next?
- What else could you do?
- How long do you think it would take?
- If there was the budget/time/support, what would you do now?
- Who might be able to contribute?
- What else could you find out/what information might give insight?

Will

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel that you will take this action?
- Do you foresee any hitches/blocks?
- When do you plan to complete this by?
- How realistic does it feel?

Suggested resource: "Coaching for Performance" by John Whitmore

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah O'Malley: s.m.o-malley@sussex.ac.uk