

Coaching Conversations (Grow Model) – Sir John Whitmore

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GROW: The practical coaching model driven by a powerful coaching philosophy

The GROW Model is a coaching framework used in conversations, meetings and everyday leadership to unlock potential and possibilities. GROW was created by Sir John Whitmore and colleagues in the late 1980s. It has since become the world's most popular coaching model for problem solving, goal setting and performance improvement.

What is the GROW Model?

GROW is more than a coaching model loved by the coaching community. It is also a top leadership tool that works across all disciplines and cultures. With its four deceptively simple steps, GROW has proved successful all over the world. It forms the backbone of coaching in many organizations and universities globally, due to the outstanding results. It helps people to achieve success personally or as part of a team.



How does the GROW Model work?

As the GROW Model image above shows, the name is an acronym for the four key steps in GROW coaching: G-oals, R-eality, O-ptions and W-ill. With a few powerful coaching questions, a leader or coach can quickly raise awareness and responsibility in each area:

G: goals and aspirations

R: current situation, internal and external obstacles

O: possibilities, strengths and resources

W: actions and accountability

The key is to set a Goal which is inspiring and challenging, not just SMART (specific, measurable and achievable in a realistic time frame). Then move flexibly through the other stages, including revisiting the goal if necessary. The final Will element is the

barometer of success. It converts the initial desire and intention into successful action. The GROW approach promotes confidence and self-motivation, leading to increased productivity and personal satisfaction.

Self-coaching GROW exercise

The GROW coaching model is so effective that you can even use it to coach yourself. Give the following activity a try. First, think about something you would really like to achieve or perhaps resolve at work. Then write down your answers to each of these questions:

GOAL

1. What would you like to work on?
2. What would you like to have after answering this set of questions (eg, a first step/strategy/solution)?
3. What is your goal related to this issue?
4. When are you going to achieve it?
5. What are the benefits for you in achieving this goal?
6. Who else will benefit and in what way?
7. What will it be like if you achieve your goal?
8. What will you see/hear/feel?

REALITY

9. What action have you taken so far?
10. What is moving you toward your goal?
11. What is getting in the way?

OPTIONS

12. What different kind of options do you have to achieve your goal?
13. What else could you do?
14. What are the principal advantages and disadvantages of each option?

WILL

15. Which options will you choose to act on?
16. When are you going to start each action?
17. How committed are you, on a scale of 1–10, to taking each of these actions?
18. If it is not a 10, what would make it a 10?
19. What will you commit to doing? (Note: It is also an option to do nothing and review at a later date.)

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THE GROW MODEL
 SIR JOHN WHITMORE'S COACHING FRAMEWORK FOR LEADERS

GOAL
 There are different levels of goals depending on how far in the future you are looking.
 Identify the inspirational goal to drive success and keep energy and motivation high.

What are you looking to achieve?
 What do we want to get out of this meeting?
 What's the bigger picture?

REALITY
 Discuss the current situation and what barriers currently exist between now and achievement of the goal.
 Ask questions to help the individual or team find their strengths.

What is the current situation?
 What qualities/resources do you have to help you?
 What are the internal/external obstacles?

OPTIONS
 Explore the options for moving forward.
 The more imaginative your questions, the more likely the individual or team may have a breakthrough insight.

How would you tackle this if time wasn't a factor?
 What option appeals to you most right now?
 What else could you do?

WILL
 Agree specific actions and timeframe and set accountability and reporting.
 Check in on commitment level and revisit the earlier steps if it's lower than 8 out of 10!

What will you do now?
 When will you do it?
 How will I know when you've been successful?
 How committed are you on a scale between 1 and 10?

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