

Coaching vs Mentoring

Information origin

These notes are the result of a 6-months volunteer *mentoring* experience and a 2-days *Coaching* course attendance in 2018 by the editor, Maria Dimou. Thanks are due to:

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NB! Coach, Mentor, Manager, Leader, Advisor, Counsellor, Therapist are all different roles!

The Coach

- aims at helping the coachee to *become aware* of a situation and to *take responsibility* for doing something about it, i.e. becoming *autonomous*.
- asks **open questions**. **Probing** and **Relay** questions are fine because they encourage the coachee to clarify the situation. **Closed** or **Leading** questions are forbidden because they introduce new concepts and hide an opinion/recommendation by the coach.
- gives **NO advice**, **NO judgement**, **NO personal opinion**.
- does *Global listening*, i.e. stops his/her internal dialog and fully concentrates on the coachee's words, expressions, feelings and body language.
- shows and verbally expressed *empathy* for the coachee's situation by paraphrasing the coachee's words on the emotional level.
- helps the coachee to define the **Goal** of the session, the **Reality** s/he perceives, the **Options** s/he sees possible, her/his **Will** to take *Action* and the degree of her/his *Commitment* to the Action Plan. All these steps (the acronym is GROW, established by coach J. Whitmore) must be pronounced by the coachee.
- sometimes falls back into a Mentor's role, if this is more efficient for the issue or the person.
- speaks 20% of the time in a coaching session. The 80% is done by the coachee.
- keeps the flow and GROW structure of the discussion.
- paraphrases to show listening, empathy, understanding.
- asks the coachee to formulate the Goal *and* to list the Options.
- encourages more than one Option, as a unique option is like an Obligation.

The importance to select words carefully

- "I understand" or "I think" can be dangerous... They come from the brain, not from a position of empathy. The coach understanding the *Issue* doesn't mean [s]he also understands the coachee's *Goal*.
- "I observe" or "I hear" are ok for the coach, as his/her personality, values and ideas don't get in the play.
- "What success have you had?" enables the coach to disemblock the coachee from the rumination related to Reality.
- "Why...?" should not be used because it may generate *guilt* and it may anchor the coachee to the *past*.
- "What...?" and "How...?" are best ways to ask open questions.
- The best questions are **Follow-up** questions, e.g. "what do you need to prepare?", "do you have a Plan B?"... because they show the coach is *_listening!*

In brief: Coaching is helping people **without telling them what to do**. A coaching session is about **the coachee as a person** and not about **the coach as an expert**.

The Mentor

- is an **expert** in a given field.
- knows the Organisation well.
- *listens* to the mentee to understand what really matters for her/him.
- asks **open questions** to the mentee. "Why..." questions are fine in Mentoring, because the mentor is the person who *knows*.
- shows things through *a different angle*.
- establishes agreement with the mentee on mutual expectations, given that the mentor has **NO** formal responsibility for the mentee.
- shares experience, guides, orients, suggests, advises the mentee.

In brief: *A mentoring session is about the mentee for whom the Mentor is a role model.*

Some links

- The GROW model by John Whitmore <https://www.performanceconsultants.com/grow-model>
- Many other pages about J. Whitmore and coaching
- Differences between mentoring and coaching https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKQL_X5a8uk
- Guide for Mentors
<https://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/more-mentoring-guide-for-mentors.pdf>
- Another guide by the American Psychological Association (APA)
<https://www.apa.org/education/grad/mentoring.aspx>
- The power of mentoring - Lori Hunt at TED <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Atme26C015E>
- Funny Mentoring Video - How Bad Can a Mentoring Session Go?!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZo6GYBdirs>
- Mentoring Skits On How To DO Mentoring and How NOT to
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I16V7DrNj8M>
- The mentor's role
<https://www.thebalance.com/a-guide-to-understanding-the-role-of-a-mentor-2275318>
- CERN Women In Technology (WIT) web page on Mentoring with more links to articles
<https://women-in-technology.web.cern.ch/mentoring>

-- MariaDimou - 2018-02-22

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