

Coaching Conversation Guide

Effective coaching helps employees unlock potential, build confidence, and take ownership of their development. This guide provides a simple structure for conducting focused coaching conversations that drive reflection, clarity, and action.

1. Purpose of This Tool

- ☐ Support employees to think independently and find their own solutions.
- ☐ Build trust and strengthen communication between managers and staff.
- ☐ Encourage learning through reflection and accountability.
- ☐ Develop skills, confidence, and long-term capability.
- ☐ Turn conversations into measurable outcomes.

Tip: Coaching is about asking questions, not giving instructions. The aim is to guide, not direct.

2. The Coaching Mindset

- ☐ Listen actively and with curiosity.
- ☐ Create a safe, open environment.
- ☐ Focus on possibilities rather than problems.
- ☐ Avoid interrupting or rushing to give advice.
- ☐ Believe in the person's ability to find their own answers.

Tip: Coaching works best when the conversation feels like a partnership, not a performance review.

Notes

3. The GROW Model Framework

The GROW model is a simple and proven approach for structuring coaching conversations.

Stage	Focus	Key Questions
Goal	Clarify the purpose of the discussion and define success.	What do you want to achieve? What would success look like?
Reality	Explore the current situation honestly and objectively.	What is happening now? What have you already tried? What obstacles exist?
Options	Identify possible actions or approaches.	What could you do differently? What ideas come to mind? What resources are available?
Will	Agree on next steps, commitments, and timelines.	What will you do next? When will you do it? How will you measure success?

Tip: Let the coachee do most of the talking. The coach's job is to ask powerful questions that spark insight.

4. Coaching Conversation Template

Stage	Notes and Observations	Agreed Actions
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Goal

Reality

Options

Will

- ☐ Conversation follows the GROW structure naturally.
- ☐ Outcomes are specific and measurable.
- ☐ Both parties agree on accountability.

Tip: Capture notes discreetly during the session or immediately after to maintain focus and flow.

5. Example Coaching Questions

Goal

- What would you like to focus on today?
- How will you know you have achieved your goal?
- Why is this goal important to you?

Reality

- What is working well right now?
- What challenges are you facing?
- What assumptions might be influencing your approach?

Options

- What other approaches could you try?
- Who could support you with this?
- What would happen if you did nothing?

Will

- What is your next step?
- When will you take it?
- How will you hold yourself accountable?

Tip: Choose open-ended questions that invite reflection rather than yes-or-no answers.

6. Follow-Up and Accountability

- ☐ Schedule a follow-up date to review progress.
- ☐ Provide encouragement and recognition along the way.
- ☐ Help remove barriers that may prevent progress.
- ☐ Revisit and adjust goals if necessary.

Tip: Coaching is a journey, not a one-off event. Consistent follow-up keeps momentum and motivation alive.

7. Common Coaching Mistakes

- ☒ Giving advice instead of asking questions.
- ☒ Focusing on problems rather than outcomes.
- ☒ Talking more than listening.
- ☒ Treating coaching as correction rather than development.
- ☒ Failing to follow up on agreed actions.

Tip: Great coaches listen with intention, question with purpose, and trust others to take responsibility for their growth.

8. Reflection Notes (for Coach or Manager)

Date Key Insight from Conversation Progress Made Next Step

- ☐ Reflections captured after each session.
 - ☐ Insights used to shape future conversations.
 - ☐ Learning shared where appropriate.
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How to Use This Guide

Use this framework for coaching sessions, one-to-one meetings, or development discussions. Keep the focus on learning, ownership, and progress. When coaching becomes a regular part of management practice, teams grow stronger, engagement improves, and performance naturally follows.

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