

# The GROW Model of Coaching

See Whitmore, J. (2002) Coaching for performance: Growing People. Performance and Purpose. Oxford: Nicolas Brealey Publishing

The GROW model is one of the best known and widely used coaching models. GROW is an acronym for Goal, current Reality, Options and Will. It is a simple yet powerful framework to guide coaching sessions through asking a series of questions:

## The GROW Model of Coaching

**G – Goal.** First the session must have a clear Goal. The goal should be as specific as possible; and it must be possible to measure whether it has been achieved. So, once the goal has been identified, you can ask questions like:

- How will you know that you have achieved that goal?'
- What are the expectations of others?
- Who else needs to know about the plan? How will you inform them?

**R – Reality.** As well as knowing where you are trying to get to, you need to know where you are starting from: the current Reality. It is surprising how often this is the key part of a coaching session. Simply by seeing the situation clearly (rather than what was thought or imagined to be the situation), the resolution becomes obvious and straightforward. This can include asking:

- What has been really stopping you reaching your goal?
- Do you know anyone who has achieved that goal?
- What can you learn from them?

**O – Options.** Once you know where you are and where you want to go, the next step is to explore what Options you have for getting there. A useful metaphor for GROW is a map: once you know where you are going (the goal) and where you are (current reality), you can explore possible ways of making the journey (options) and choose the best way. Questions can include:

- What could you do as a first step?
- What else could you do?
- What would happen if you did nothing?

**W – Will.** But this in itself is not enough. You must also have the motivation, or Will, to make the journey. Some authors have the W standing for What, Where, Why, When and How. But whatever is emphasised, the desired outcome from this stage is a commitment to action. The following questions can guide this:

- Where does this goal fit in with your personal priorities at the moment?
- What obstacles do you expect to meet? How will you overcome them?
- How committed are you to this goal?
- What steps do you need to take to achieve this?