

## GROWing people, performance and purpose

### GROW is Not Coaching!

It is important to remember that GROW is not coaching in itself. As Sir John Whitmore warns, “*even dictators can use GROW!*” The model’s simplicity is its strength as long as it is used in conjunction with coaching skills and behaviours, as taught in Level 1 and Level 2 of Performance Consultants’ coaching training programme **Coaching for Performance**.

Coaching is unlocking people’s potential to maximize their own performance. It is about raising awareness and responsibility – helping them to learn rather than teaching them. The GROW Model is an elegantly simple way of structuring an effective coaching conversation and, as such, has become one of the best-loved models of coaching.

### The Key to GROW

The key to using GROW successfully is first to spend sufficient time exploring ‘G’ until the coachee sets a goal which is both inspirational and stretching for them, and then to move *flexibly* through the sequence, according to your intuition, including revisiting the goal if needed.

#### Step 1 of the GROW Model – What are your **G**oals?

- Identifies and clarifies the type of goal through an understanding of ultimate goals, performance goals and progress goals along the way.
- Provides understanding of principal aims and aspirations.
- Clarifies the desired result from the session.

#### Step 2 of the GROW Model – What is the **R**eality?

- Assesses the current situation in terms of the action taken so far.
- Clarifies the results and effects of previously taken actions.
- Provides understanding of internal obstacles and blocks currently preventing or limiting progression.

#### Step 3 of the GROW Model – What are your **O**ptions?

- Identifies the possibilities and alternatives.
- Outlines and questions a variety of strategies for progression.

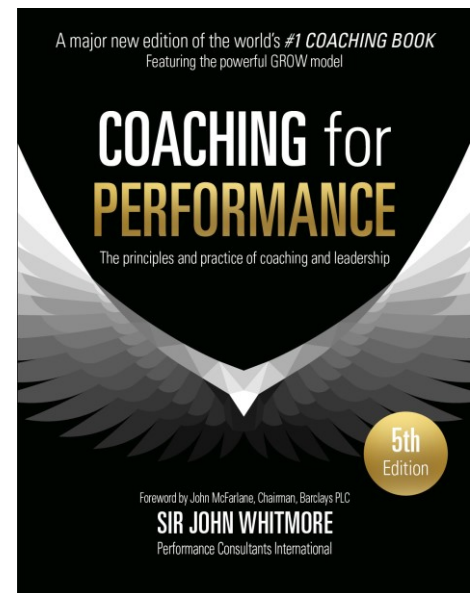
#### Step 4 of the GROW Model – What **W**ill you Do?

- Provides understanding of what has been learned and what can be changed to achieve the initial goals.
- Creates a summary and plan of action for implementation of the identified steps.
- Outlines possible future obstacles.
- Considers the continued achievement of the goals, and the support and development that may be required.
- Estimates the certainty of commitment to the agreed actions.
- Highlights how accountability and achievement of the goals will be ensured.

### Going Deeper

Revisiting each step as necessary and in any sequence (see diagram opposite) ensures that the coachee remains energized and motivated and that their goal fits with the goal of the company whilst also aligning with their individual purpose and personal values.

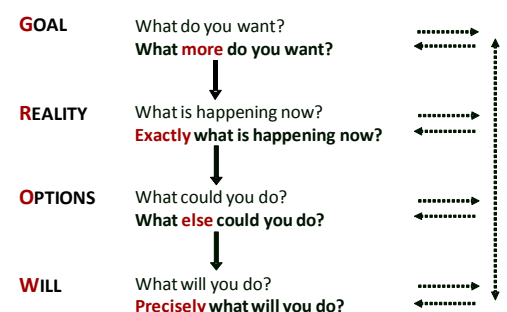
Managers can capitalize on employees knowing what they want for themselves by giving them increasing responsibility, trust and freedom.



Performance Consultants is at the forefront of leadership development, coach training and performance improvement for individuals and organizations. We work globally with leading multinational corporations to establish coaching cultures and leadership programmes.

Our Co-founder **Sir John Whitmore** was a pre-eminent thinker in leadership and organizational change and author of best-selling *Coaching for Performance*. Sir John and colleagues created the **GROW Model** with colleagues in the 1980s, now deservedly one of the most established and successful coaching models.

Our flagship training programme **Coaching for Performance** is a 3-level programme for coaches who want to develop their executive coaching skills and managers who want to develop a coaching-style of leadership for personal and professional excellence.



For more information about the GROW Model or our coaching programmes,  
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### Example Questions for an Effective Coaching Conversation

- Goal** *What do you want? What is the aim for this discussion?  
How would you like it to be?  
What does that look like?  
What will you be saying to yourself?  
What will that enable you to do?  
What will other people be saying to you?  
What will you have that you don't have now?  
Imagine 3 months from now, all obstacles are removed and you have achieved this:  
What do you see/hear/feel?  
What new elements are in place?  
What is different?*
- Reality** *What is happening at the moment?  
How important is this to you?  
On a scale of 1–10, if an ideal situation is 10, what number are you at now?  
What number would you like to be at?  
How do you feel about this?  
What impact is this having on you?  
What's on your shoulders?  
How does this impact other areas of your life?  
What are you doing that takes you towards your goal?  
What are you doing that is getting in the way of your goal?  
How much ...?  
How many ...?  
Who else does it affect?*
- Options** *What could you do?  
What ideas do you have?  
What alternatives do you have?  
Is there anything else?  
If there were anything else, what would it be?  
What has worked in the past?  
What steps could you take?  
Who could help you with this?  
Where could you find out the information?  
How could you do that?*
- Will** *What will you do?  
How will you do that?  
When will you do it?  
Who will you talk to?  
Where will you go?  
Is there anything you need to put in place before that?  
How committed are you to taking that action?  
What will it take for you to commit to that?*

#### Take Time to Explore the Goal

Aim for a goal which is **inspirational** to the coachee, **positively framed** and **challenging** – a real stretch to achieve the best they can.

Keep in mind the level of goal:

#### **Dream Goal (Desired Future):**

What's the bigger picture?  
How does this fit with your organization's goals?  
What are you building towards?  
What will you see/hear/feel?

#### **End Goal:**

What are you aiming to achieve (the concrete manifestation of the dream goal)?  
What are your set targets?  
What impact will this have on your team/customers?

#### **Performance Goals:**

What will you deliver?  
What are your milestones?

#### **Process Goals:**

What actions will you take? (SMART)

#### Stay Flexible

Move around the GROW sequence according to your intuition. Revisit each step as necessary, in any order, to ensure the coachee remains energized and motivated and that their goal fits with the organization's goal and also aligns with their individual purpose and personal values.

#### Active Listening

Listen with attention, curiosity and empathy  
Listen for potential, not problems  
Let go of filters and perceptions  
Focus on the coachee and their goal  
Listen at a deeper level – beyond the words  
Reflect, summarize, clarify, reframe

#### Powerful Questioning

Ask open and closed questions – start broad, then narrow to generate focus  
What? / Where? / Who? / How? / When?  
**Not leading or judgemental**  
**Create a feedback loop**  
**Raise awareness and responsibility**

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