



## G.R.O.W. Model: Four-Step Questioning Approach

The **G.R.O.W.** (Goal, Reality, Options, Wrap-Up) model was first introduced and made popular by Sir John Whitmore who based it on the original work of Graham Alexander. (See Whitmore's book *Coaching for Performance*, 3rd ed., 2002.) Asking effective questions is the key to non-directive coaching/mentoring. It helps the coachee identify and define his/her specific goals, and then organize a practical plan to attain these goals. The effective coach/mentor/manager can do this by developing skill at asking questions and guiding the coachee/mentee toward practical, workable solutions.

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### G.R.O.W. Model Example:

**Step #1: Goals** >> (*Objectives matching what coachee wishes to discuss*)

- What would you like to achieve?
- How realistic is your goal?
- How will you know when you have reached your goal?
- How committed are you to your goal?

**Step #2: Reality** >> (*The realistic starting point for achieving objectives*)

- What is your current situation?
- What have you tried so far?
- What barriers exist?
- What successes have you had so far?

**Step #3: Options** >> (*Coachee's feasible choices or options*)

- What options could you choose from to change your situation?
- What are the benefits of these options?
- What are the pitfalls of these options?
- Who might be able to help you?
- Which option would you most like to try first?

**Step #4: Wrap-Up** >> (*Coachee's commitment to an action plan*)

- What support do you need?
- How will you measure your progress?
- What is your first step?
- When will you take your first step?

## G.R.O.W. Model: Coaching Worksheet

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### **Goals** >>

(Set goals, record them and establish what the coachee/mentee wants out of the session)

### **Reality** >>

(Let the coachee/mentee tell their story, invite him/her to conduct a self-assessment, what's happening, when does this happen, what affects does it have, what other factors are at play?)

### **Options** >>

(Brainstorm various options, ask don't tell, empower the coachee, ensure choices, explore how he/she can move forward toward their goals, identify what has worked in the past)

### **Wrap-Up** >>

(Identify specific steps and any obstacles that may be present, write out an action plan)

## G.R.O.W. Model: Useful Questions

Below are a variety of useful questions for each stage of the **G.R.O.W.** model.

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### Step #1: **Goals** >> *(Objectives matching what coachee wishes to discuss)*

- What would you like to discuss?
- What would you like to achieve?
- What would you like from (to achieve in) this conversation?
- What would need to happen for you to walk away feeling that this time was well spent?
- If I could grant you a wish for this conversation, what would it be?
- What would you like to be different when you leave this conversation?
- What would you like to have happen that is not happening now; or what would you like not to happen?
- Is that realistic?
- Can we do that in the timeframe we have available?
- Will that be of real value to you?
- What is the challenge or opportunity?
- What is your goal?
- How will you know if you have reached your goal?
- How will you know that the problem is solved?
- What expectations do others hold?
- Who else needs to know about your plan and how will you inform them?

### Step #2: **Reality** >> *(The realistic starting point for achieving objectives)*

- What is happening at the moment?
- What is the current situation?
- How do you know that this is accurate?
- When does this happen?
- How often does this happen? Be precise if possible.
- What effect does this have?
- How have you verified, or how would you verify that that is so?
- What other factors are relevant?
- Who else is relevant?
- What is their perception of the situation?
- What have you tried so far?
- What is missing?
- What barriers exist?
- What might get in your way?
- What could stop you from moving forward and how will you overcome it?
- What will you do to overcome barriers?
- What is really stopping you?
- Do you know anyone who has achieved this goal? If so, what can you learn from them?

### Step #3: **Options** >> *(Coachee's feasible choices or options)*

- What could you do to change the situation?
- What alternatives are there to that approach?
- What possibilities for action do you see? (Don't worry whether the coachee/mentee is realistic at this stage.)
- What approach/actions have you seen used, or used yourself in similar circumstances?
- Who might be able to help?
- Would you like suggestions from me?

- What options exist?
- Which options do you like the most?
- What are the benefits and pitfalls of these options?
- Which options are of interest to you?
- Rate on a scale from 1-10 your interest level in/the practicality of each of these options with 1 being highly impractical and 10 being ideally practical.
- Would you like to choose an option to act on?
- Who might be able to help?
- Which option would you most like to act on?
- What are the pros/cons of each option?
- What factors should you weigh?
- Are there alternatives you might consider?
- What factors will you use to weigh your options?
- What could you do as a first step?
- What else could you do?
- What would happen if you did nothing?

**Step #4: Wrap-up** >> (*Coachee's commitment to an action plan*)

- What are the next steps?
- Precisely when will you take them?
- Do you need to log the steps in your journal?
- What support do you need?
- How and when will you enlist that support?
- When will you do what?
- When will you start?
- How will you measure your progress?
- What will you do now, and when will you do it?
- Will these actions address your goal?
- How likely is this option to succeed?
- What else will you do?
- Where does this goal fit with your personal priorities at the moment?
- How committed are you to this goal?

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## Tips

- Use more 'asking' than 'telling'
- Encourage the coachee to come up with his/her own solutions
- Use creativity instead of just systematically asking questions, especially in the options and wrap-up sections
- Check for understanding frequently by sharing your own real-life experiences or those of others in similar circumstances