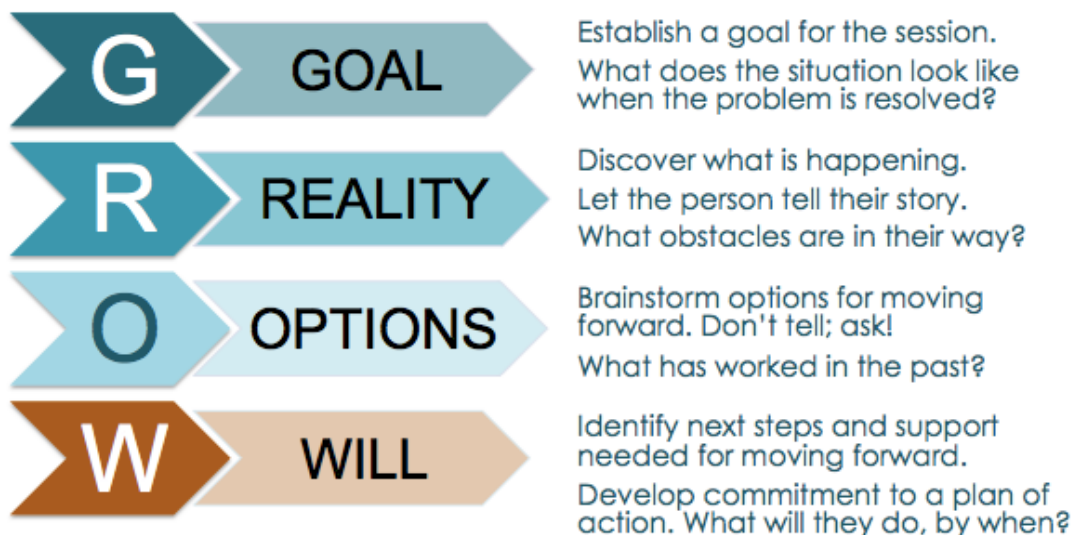# Coaching questions and the GROW model

The GROW model – which stands for *Goal, Reality, Options* and *Will do* – is a four-step framework for structuring a coaching conversation.

When you coach someone, the first step is to establish what the **goal** of the conversation is and what the coachee would like to achieve, either in the short or long term. Secondly you explore what is currently going on for the coachee and what the **reality** of the situation is. Most of the conversation is likely to focus on this step. Thirdly you help the coachee understand what she could do to move forward and brainstorm various routes, or **options,** to achieving the goal. In the final step, you establish next steps and what the coachee **will do** to move herself forward. This last step is about ensuring that the coachee is committing to taking action and is prepared for any obstacles that might arise on the way.

G GOAL	Establish a goal for the session. What does the situation look like when the problem is resolved?
R REALITY	Discover what is happening. Let the person tell their story. What obstacles are in their way?
O OPTIONS	Brainstorm options for moving forward. Don't tell; ask! What has worked in the past?
W WILL	Identify next steps and support needed for moving forward. Develop commitment to a plan of action. What will they do, by when?

Coaching tips

❖ Ask open questions. Ask "what" and "how" more than "why".
❖ Ask high gain questions: "tell me about.., describe a time when.."
❖ Give your coachee time to reflect on your questions.
❖ Listen with your entire body and use your intuition (level III listening).
❖ Notice what is being said between the lines.
❖ Notice how the coachee is feeling.
❖ Repeat and paraphrase: "what I hear you say is.."
❖ Ask into aspects that don't appear congruent.
❖ Avoid asking several questions at once.
❖ Avoid talking too much about yourself or giving advice.
❖ Show interest and empathy for the person you are coaching
❖ Finish off by asking the coachee what action they will take.
❖ Forget your own situation whilst you coach and be fully present.

Examples of questions to use at each stage of the GROW model

G - Establishing a GOAL
Tell me about the issue or what you feel is wrong?
What do you want to achieve?
How can you make that more specific?
How do you imagine the situation when it is resolved?
By when do you want to have achieved this goal / resolved this issue?
What will achieving this goal mean for you?
Which aspect is the most important for you to focus on right now?
Where would you say you are today in achieving this goal / resolving this issue?

R - Exploring REALITY
What is the situation at the moment?
What happening right now?
How do you know there is an issue?
Can you describe / explain that in more detail?
What are all the different elements you need to consider when tackling this?
What have you done so far to improve things?
What worked? What did not work?
What obstacles are in you way?
Which good things do you want to keep doing?
Which resources do you already have to help you achieve this?
Who will be able to help you?

O - Considering OPTIONS
What could you do to resolve this?
What steps can you take towards this goal?
What could you do to move yourself just one step forward?
What have you seen work in similar situations?
What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
If you could devote all your time to this one thing, what would you do then?
What else could you do?
Brainstorm your options to choose from / list all your ideas.
Which option would be fastest/easiest/preferred?
What are the pros and cons of each option?

W - WILL do / WAY forward
What are you ready to do to resolve this issue?
What are your next steps?
What will you commit to as action steps to move closer to your goal?
What are the benefits of choosing these options?
When are you going to start and complete each action?
Where are you recording these actions?
How committed are you to taking these actions?
What might stop you carrying them out?
What can you do to overcome this obstacle?
What additional support do you need? Who can help you?
Is there anything else you need to consider?
How are you going to reward yourself when you achieve this?