

Scottish Social Services Council

# Coaching Learning Resource





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## Who is the Coaching Learning Resource for?

There are three broad audiences for this Coaching Learning Resource.

1. People who want to understand more about how a coaching approach could be helpful to them, including people using social services and those who work in social services in Scotland.
2. People who are already using elements of a coaching approach and who are interested in developing themselves further as a coach, mainly individuals who work in social services.
3. People in Scotland's social services who are considering the development of a coaching approach across their organisation or leaders who are interested in finding out more about the potential of coaching.

## What is the Coaching Learning Resource for?

The purpose of the Coaching Learning Resource is to support individuals and organisations across Scotland's social services who are interested in developing a coaching approach. It aims to provide guidance about:

- why a coaching approach might be helpful to individuals, teams and organisations
- what is involved in a coaching approach, from informal coaching conversations to more formal one-to-one or team coaching
- how to develop a coaching approach.

We designed the resource with different audiences in mind. The intention is to provide a range of guidance around coaching to suit the needs of these different audiences. The resource does not set out or prescribe one specific approach to coaching in Scotland's social services.

The resource sits alongside a number of others available on our [Step into Leadership website](#) including guidance on mentoring and supervision.

## How can the learning resource be used?

If you are interested in understanding more about a coaching approach you may want to refer to the core content and use the resource mainly as a source of practical information.

If you are considering more formal development of your coaching skills and capacities, we have included learning outcomes at the start of each section and questions for self-reflection either throughout or at the end of each section. You can use the Coaching Learning Resource to support your learning and reflection on your coaching practice.

We developed these learning outcomes and self-reflection questions to reflect the characteristics set out at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 8.

Those interested in developing a coaching approach in their organisation can use the resource to support greater understanding of the potential of coaching as well as some practical options.

This resource can support commissioners and managers to develop an organisational culture of service and business improvement through a coaching approach. This may be particularly relevant for organisations that are undertaking and leading big transformation programmes. Business coaching is increasingly being seen by chief executive officers and senior managers as a tool to support teams achieve transformational change.

Business coaching can be used in several ways, for example enhancing performance and communication and supporting people to manage difficult relationships in the workforce.

There are examples of coaching practice from across social services throughout the resource to show what effective coaching looks and feels like. We would like to acknowledge the support provided by the contributors of these and thank them for agreeing to be in our resource.

Specific references to books or articles have the author's name and date of publication (in brackets) which refers to the list of references at the end.

Links to some online resources are in the main body of the text and are also in the list of references.





**SSSC**

# **1. What is coaching and how can it be used?**



In this section we cover:

1. what is coaching and why it is useful in social services
2. how a coaching approach can be used in different ways
3. what is involved in an informal coaching approach.

After reading this section you will be able to:

- describe what is involved in coaching and how it can be used
- show what coaching in practice looks like in the social service context
- consider what the potential roles in coaching might mean for your own practice.

## 1.1 What is coaching and why it is useful in social services

### What is coaching?

Coaching is a developmental approach to working and interacting with other people. It can help people develop their personal capabilities, interpersonal skills and capacity to understand and empathise with others. In turn, this can help people understand more about their own challenges and make informed choices about their future. It can strengthen their ability to use a range of influencing and leadership styles. Coaching can help people feel more empowered to make a difference and improve their own effectiveness.

'We believe that coaching is a practical strategy that helps someone achieve outcomes they identify themselves. The outcomes may be about perceptions and beliefs as well as about observable behaviour and concrete action. Coaching leads to insight, discovery and forward movement, in alignment with the uniqueness of the individual, their understanding of the world, values and preferences. Relationship is the foundation of its success.'

(Jenny Bird and Sarah Gornall, 2016, p13)

### Why is coaching useful in social services?

The vision for Scotland's social services is for:

... 'a socially just Scotland with excellent social services delivered by a skilled and valued workforce which works with others to empower, support and protect people, with a focus on prevention, early intervention and enablement.'

(Scottish Government, 2015, p7)

Delivering this vision means supporting people using services to develop their personal capabilities so they are able to exercise their citizen leadership to best effect (Scottish Government, 2008). It means having a workforce with the interpersonal skills and leadership capabilities to work with different people in different ways.



It means developing the culture across social services so people feel valued, empowered, enabled, inspired, motivated and able to see and take opportunities to do things differently. It means making sure the culture continues to be supported by the core social service values of:

- promoting enablement and participation
- understanding each individual in the context of family and community
- identifying and building on the strengths of individuals and communities.

(Scottish Government, 2015, p11)

If lots of people across social services are using a coaching approach more often this will start to have a broader impact on service and organisational culture. A culture in which people listen, demonstrate care and compassion, stay open to others' perspectives and new possibilities is consistent with the achievement of Social Services in Scotland – a shared vision and strategy 2015 – 2020 (Scottish Government, 2015). The development of a coaching culture will also enable individuals to develop their own capacity to self-coach.

'Organisations wishing to maximise the benefits of coaching should focus on increasing its scope and availability to create a coaching culture that permeates throughout their workforce. This means that coaching must be supported at the very top of the organisation, but not limited to senior executives, and that organisations need to devote resources to developing their internal coaching capability.'

(Institute of Leadership and Management, 2011, p2)

The typical benefits of coaching for individuals include:

- improvements in communication and interpersonal skills
- development of leadership and management capabilities
- finding sustainable solutions to personal and work-related issues
- enhanced capacity to resolve conflict
- positive changes in attitudes and motivation
- increased personal confidence
- improved management performance
- feeling more engaged, valued and supported
- feeling more prepared for a change in role or organisational change.

## 1.2 How a coaching approach can be used in different ways

A coaching approach can be used in different ways ranging from informal to more formal as shown in diagram A. It can take place between two people or in groups of people.

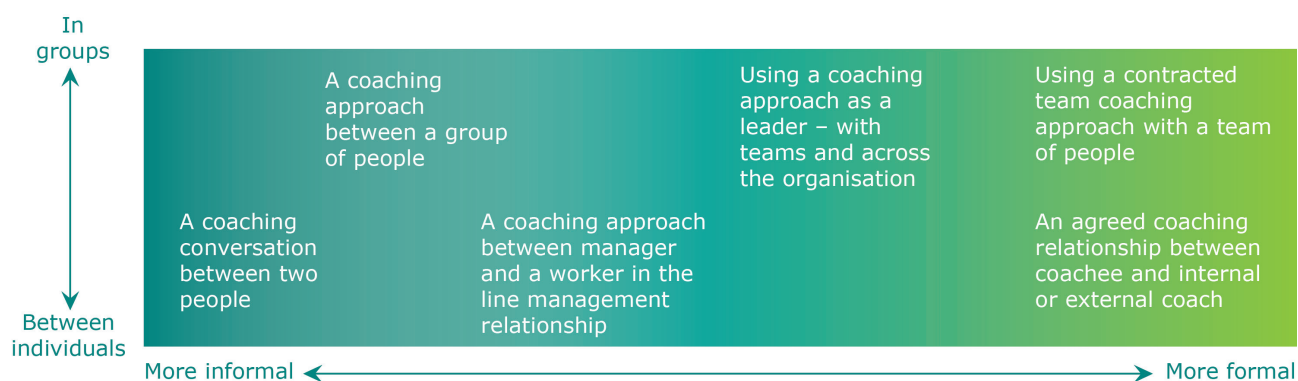


Diagram A: Range of uses of coaching

### An informal coaching conversation between two people or a group of people

We can use a coaching approach informally for better conversations between people using services and between colleagues who work in social services. If you want to support others and yourself to step back and see things differently, you might consider using a coaching conversation.

The purpose of a coaching conversation is to encourage thinking and reflection. It can create the opportunity for people to see things from a fresh perspective. This can help them develop their capabilities, make sense of their situation and make clear choices about what to do next.

A coaching conversation has different qualities to everyday social or work based conversations. It differs in the quality of the listening and the space it provides for those involved. The quality of this space can help people make sense of their situation and make clear choices about what to do next. It requires listening to each other more intently, using open questions and avoiding jumping too quickly to our own conclusions. In this way, you will help the other person see their situation more clearly.

It means staying open for longer to the possibilities being explored in the conversation rather than simply sticking to our own point of view. It means being able to recognise the difference between what is actually being said and our perceptions or assumptions about what is being said (or not). It can help groups of people work more collaboratively and come up with new approaches together.

### **Example of using informal coaching**

A group of people working in social services want to find new ways of managing and developing a particular service. They decide to use a number of group coaching conversations. Through their coaching conversations, the group is able to step back from their current situation and develop new insights. The space for reflection helps them to identify some improvements and make choices about new ways of working.

### **An informal coaching approach between line manager and worker**

Managers and workers in social services can make their working relationships more effective if they use a coaching approach. A line manager can enable a worker to identify their own issues and come up with their own solutions rather than imposing solutions on them by having coaching conversations. Central to a coaching approach is providing timely, clear and specific feedback.

'A coaching conversation is unlike most other discussions. It involves an unusually high level of trust and candour on both sides.'

(Jenny Rogers, 2004, p27)

### **Leaders at all levels of social services use coaching as one of a range of leadership styles**

A coaching approach to leadership means the leader's focus is on enabling other people to develop their capabilities and find their own solutions. It means listening more and trying to understand points of view rather than imposing your own views and approaches.

Coaching can also provide valuable support and challenge to people who are in formal and/or informal leadership roles by helping them explore their issues and concerns in a safe, supportive way.

There is a clear link between using a coaching approach in leadership and the leadership capabilities outlined in the Strategy for developing leadership capacity in Scotland's social services, 2013-2015 (Scottish Social Services Council, 2014).

### **Formal coaching**

Formal coaching can be used for learning, development or performance improvement. The purpose of the coaching is agreed between the person being coached (coachee) and their coach. The coach discusses and agrees a contract with the coachee, which includes the focus or purpose of the coaching, the coaching process and how the boundaries around the coaching will be managed.

It can be one-to-one between a coachee and an internal coach working in social services who has undertaken formal development as a coach. Alternatively, it can be one-to-one between a coachee and a coach who works external to the coachee's organisation and is formally qualified as a coach. It can also be with a team or group of people who are being facilitated by an internal or external team coach (or team of coaches).

See section 3 for a further explanation of the formal applications of coaching and how to practice as a formal coach.

## **1.3 What is involved in an informal coaching approach?**

### **Values and behaviours**

In an informal coaching approach, you have the positive intent to focus on the other person, on their strengths and their challenges and on the qualities they bring. Using a coaching approach is about providing the space in which you and others are able to reflect and understand more about each other's points of view. A genuine coaching approach is based on trust and mutual respect.

### **Core coaching skills**

For a coaching approach, you need to use a core set of coaching skills.

- Attending to the other person involved in a coaching conversation, building rapport with them and seeking to understand what is going on for them.
- Listening carefully to the other person and paying attention to what they are saying and how they are saying it.
- Summarising or paraphrasing what the other person has said as a way of helping them reflect on their own situation, rather than giving advice or adding in your own judgement.
- Using open questions which encourage the other person to say more, to reflect and understand more about their own situation.
- Being prepared to give honest, clear and specific feedback while making sure the relationship stays positive and open.

### **What are the roles in informal coaching?**

The people involved in a coaching conversation are equals. In an informal coaching approach, any or all of the people involved might take on the coach role at different points. The coach role involves supporting the other person (or people) by making skillful use of listening, summarising, open questions and feedback.

Everyone involved in a coaching conversation needs to pay attention to creating the right conditions of trust, mutual respect, and positive intent. They need to be aware of

the importance of the core skills for coaching and be willing to develop their ability to use these skills.

It is important to be clear about the purpose and nature of a coaching conversation and it is the choice for the person (or people) involved. At the start it is helpful for those involved to be clear about what they are hoping to get from the conversation. This clarity about expectations will help everyone make the most useful contribution.

The coach will not typically provide advice or solutions to the person (or people) being coached. This might feel strange at first and it is important to acknowledge the difference.

Being clear about the boundaries of a coaching conversation is particularly important when it is taking place between a line manager and a member of his or her team. Both people need to be clear about the purpose of the coaching. For example, if the coaching conversation is taking place as part of the performance management process, the line manager has a particular responsibility for assessing the performance of the individual and this will change the nature of the coaching conversation. On the other hand, it is possible for a line manager to have a coaching conversation with a member of his or her team which is purely developmental in focus.

For more practical information on the values and behaviours, core skills, and the process for an informal coaching approach see section 2.



# Using coaching skills informally: a practice case from Gowrie Care

## Background

Frontline workers in Gowrie Care were feeling challenged by having to explain the company's processes and ways of working to new recruits. They were keen to support their colleagues but the rate of staff turnover meant they were experiencing an almost constant pressure to solve practical problems for new team members. A high turnover of staff in social care is not uncommon and it is important for new workers to understand the care setting and ways of working.

## Approach

As Learning and Development Officer, I was asked to deliver a 'bite-sized' introduction to coaching skills course for this group of frontline workers. The group was made up of 23 assistant support workers and support workers and one assistant manager. During the three hour session, I introduced them to the concept of coaching and gave them a chance to practise their coaching skills through the application of a simple coaching model based on GROW (see note\*).

At first, some participants were nervous and not sure what to expect. Gradually during the session they began to relax and feel relieved when they realised they don't have to have all the answers. Many of them understood how similar coaching skills are to the caring skills they use in their daily work. By using a coaching approach, they are able to provide support while enabling their newer colleagues to understand more and find their own answers to the challenges they are facing. At its heart, a coaching approach is empowering for the new members of staff and supports them to take responsibility for their own learning and development. It also helps build rapport and positive working relationships between workers.

## Impact

The aim of the coaching skills course was to explain the potential value of a coaching approach for staff in their interactions with new workers. By the end of the course, participants understood this potential. Using a coaching approach may take more time at first but it has longer term positive impact for the learning of the individuals involved. Participants also realised the potential of using good listening and questioning skills in their day-to-day practice with people using services to help them address and solve their own issues in a self-directed and supported way. There are plans to run further introduction to coaching sessions open to workers at all levels in the organisation.

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\*Note: for more information on the GROW model see resource 1 and references in resource 2.

# What to expect from coaching: a practice case from Turning Point Scotland

## Background

Turning Point Scotland is a national social care organisation that provides care and support to adults with complex needs. There is a richness and diversity to our work extending across learning disability, substance misuse, homelessness, mental health and criminal justice. Our whole focus is about being person-centred and empowering people to live their lives to the best of their ability.

## Approach

Central to achieving high quality support with people is to make sure staff are equipped with the right values and supported with the right skill sets for their work. Coaching is key to achieving this across the organisation. It is part of our DNA to coach people, to support them, to enable them to achieve things or find solutions for themselves.

By promoting a coaching approach in our staff learning, we feel staff have the opportunity to show leadership capabilities and behaviours at all levels. Coaching lends itself to having a major impact on motivating, inspiring and empowering people.

Testimony to the organisation's top to bottom approach comes from one of our service managers.

'Being positive about coaching helps to underpin the values and principles we implement in social care. I see it day in and day out in the way staff support each other and how they support the people we work with. It just feels like the right way to do things'.

## Examples of coaching practice

1. In our courses for making the most of and offering effective supervision we have included sections on coaching to help develop and empower staff in how they approach working with colleagues. The vast majority of frontline and supervisory staff will attend these courses. We also run bespoke coaching workshops in some services.
2. Coaching is a key element of our Gateway to Leadership Programme for service managers and functional managers. This looks at learning styles, coaching questions, coaching models and encourages reflection on real examples that people bring to the course. There is also one-to-one coaching input from a highly respected external organisation which really gets people thinking about what they need to do next in their own development.

Head of Learning and Quality, Business Development and Improvement Team,  
Turning Point Scotland [www.turningpointscotland.com](http://www.turningpointscotland.com)

## **What to expect from coaching: experiences from coaches and coachees in the Scottish Coaching Collaborative (Workforce Scotland, 2014)**

The Scottish Coaching Collaborative interviewed some of their coaches and coachees and invited them to share what coaching means to them. Watch the interviews to learn a little bit more about how coaching is helping these individuals to develop insight.

You will hear Helen Carlin, Chief Executive and Kirstie McGregor, Coordinator of Rowan Alba, talk about their experiences of coaching and being coached in Rowan Alba.

You will hear Sharon Millar, Leadership Consultant in NHS Education for Scotland and Laurena Charles, Development Manager in Scottish Government, talk about the potential of coaching supported by the Scottish Coaching Collaborative.

You will also hear Jim Kerr, Governor of Shotts Prison, talk about his experience of being coached.

Scottish Coaching Collaborative developing insight [videos](#).





## **Questions for reflection at the end of section 1**

1. What do you understand about informal and more formal coaching approaches?
2. How do you think that having more coaching conversations might be helpful to you in your role?
3. What benefits do you think there might be if more people were having more coaching conversations?

For people using services

For people who work in social services

4. What more do you want to know about coaching?





## **2. How to use a coaching approach in practice**

In this section we cover in more detail what is involved in coaching in practice in social services.

1. The values and behaviours of all those involved in a coaching approach.
2. The core skills needed for a coaching approach.
3. The scope of an informal coaching conversation and how to manage it well.

Each of these elements is involved in the different applications of coaching from informal to more formal as outlined in table 1.

<b>Application of coaching approach</b>	An informal coaching conversation	Coaching in line management relationship	Coaching as leadership style	Formal coaching one-to-one	Formal coaching of a team
<b>Who is involved</b>	Two or more people	Individual worker and line manager	Leader, colleagues and stakeholders	Coachee and internal or external coach	Team or group and one or more coaches
<b>What is involved</b>	Positive intent, core values and behaviours				
	Core coaching skills				
	Clarity about purpose of conversation	Clarity about purpose of coaching in context of line management relationship	Alignment with principles of citizen and collaborative leadership	Application of core coaching model(s) or approaches	Application of team coaching model

Table 1: Who and what is involved in different types of coaching

There is more information about the practice of formal coaching and the application of different coaching models in section 3.

After reading this section you will be able to:

- describe the skills and knowledge needed to practise a coaching approach effectively
- analyse your own capabilities to identify areas of strength and areas for development in relation to developing an effective coaching approach
- name a number of different practical tools for coaching
- identify the most relevant tools for your own practice and show how they could be used.

## 2.1 Values and behaviours of all those involved in a coaching approach

The quality of the space created in a coaching conversation can help people make sense of their situation and clear choices about what to do next. The people involved in a coaching approach create this space through their behaviours and values.

These behaviours and values are described in a set of core principles. The principles are as relevant to those involved in informal coaching conversations as those taking part in a formal coaching relationship. There is a strong link between the core values of social services and these principles of the practice of coaching. The bold words below demonstrate the potential link with core social service values.

- The person being coached is **resourceful**. They have the potential resources and the capabilities within them to work on their own issues and resolve their own problems.
- The role of the coach is to **enable the person to draw on their own resources**. This means helping them develop their own awareness and insights, take responsibility and exercise choice in finding their own solutions.
- Coaching considers **the whole person** enabling them to **understand and appreciate their strengths** as well as their areas for development from all parts of their life and make sense of their past or current achievements and challenges.
- The person being coached sets the agenda **enabling them to focus** on what is concerning them within the context of the service or their area of work.
- The person coaching and the person being coached are **equals**. Coaching is non-directive, non-judgemental and it relies on mutual trust and respect between those involved in it.
- Coaching is about **change and action**. The person seeking coaching wants something to change and the role of the coach is to help them achieve this self-improvement or skills development. Ultimately coaching is about helping people develop their own ability to coach themselves.

(Jenny Rogers, 2004)

There is also a strong link between the principles of coaching and citizen leadership:

- taking responsibility
- being enabled to exercise choice
- realising your potential
- focusing on your own development
- being involved in understanding and resolving your own issues
- being person-centred.

### What do the values look like in practice?

- When you engage fully in a coaching approach you have a **positive intent** about the other person (or people).

- You have a belief in their **resourcefulness** and their potential to make sense of their own situation.
- You believe they can find their own solutions. Your intention is to **help them find their own solutions** and **make their own choices** about their course of action following the coaching conversation.
- Your relationship with others in a coaching approach is based on **trust and mutual respect**.
- You remain **curious** about their issues and concerns and **seek to understand** more about their perspective.
- You are **open and honest** in your interactions. If there is something which is not clear to you or you do not understand, you ask more about it rather than jumping to your own conclusions.
- You strive to be **non-judgemental** of the other people, their issues and concerns. You are prepared to see the situation from the other person's point of view. In other words, you demonstrate **empathy** rather than sympathy.

### What do the behaviours look like in practice?

- In a coaching approach, you **attend** to the other person (or people) involved. This means that you are fully present and not distracted by your own concerns or priorities.
- You **listen carefully** and you demonstrate openly that you are listening.
- You are committed to **building rapport**. You understand that building and maintaining rapport is a critical foundation for an effective coaching approach.
- You are **self-aware**. This means you are aware of the impact of a coaching conversation on you. You are able to manage your reactions carefully, remaining present in the conversation and attending to others in the coaching conversation.
- You are **supportive** to others involved in the coaching conversation. You create the space in which they can talk openly about their issues and concerns without fear of judgement or censure.
- While you are supportive, you resist the temptation to jump in and solve others' problems. In a coaching approach, it is not your responsibility to rescue the other person. You believe in the **resourcefulness** of the other person even though it may be tempting to make it better for them. You understand that when we are enabled to reach our own insights and find our own solutions, we are more likely to take action and the impact is more sustainable.
- You are able and prepared to **challenge constructively** with the positive intention of supporting the other person's own exploration of their issues and challenges. You do not shy away from **giving honest feedback** in the moment. But you are sensitive in how you provide this feedback consistent with the principles of coaching.
- You manage yourself carefully in a coaching approach. You are **honest and open about your own professional competence** and its boundaries. In other words, you recognise when there are issues beyond the scope of a coaching conversation and highlight this to everyone involved.

## 2.2 Core skills needed for a coaching approach

There is a core set of coaching skills whether it is as part of an informal coaching conversation or a formal coaching approach. The skills are built upon the foundation of the values and behaviours for coaching (described above).

- **Attending** to the other person involved in a coaching approach, building rapport with them and seeking to understand what is going on for them.
- **Listening** actively and carefully to the other person and paying attention to what they are saying and how they are saying it.
- **Summarising** or **paraphrasing** what the other person has said as a way of helping them reflect on their own situation, rather than giving advice or adding your own judgement.
- **Using open questions** which encourage the other person to say more, to reflect and understand more about their own situation.
- **Being prepared to give honest, clear and specific feedback** while making sure the relationship stays positive and open.

### Attending

Attending to the other person (or people) involved in a coaching approach means keeping your full attention on the other person. This is important for conveying genuine interest in them and their issues. It is an important foundation for building rapport and looking to understand what is going on from their point of view.

It can be challenging to attend to what someone else is saying and how they are feeling without being overtaken by our own thoughts and feelings.

Here are some guidelines on how you can stay present and attend to someone else during a coaching conversation so you are able to concentrate fully on what they are saying and not saying.

- Before a conversation spend a few minutes sitting quietly. Quieten your mind and your own issues and concerns so you feel ready for the conversation and fully attentive to the other person (people).
- During a conversation try to remain calm. If you notice your calmness slipping away, take some deep breaths and consider taking a pause in the conversation. This will help you regain your sense of calm and focus on the other person.
- Make sure you distinguish between your own reactions or emotions and those of the other person.
- Find a balance between being objective and showing empathy for the issues being expressed by the other person.
- Make it clear to the others involved that they are always in charge of choosing what they want to express.
- Avoid the temptation to make lots of notes. Notes can get in the way of being with the other person, really hearing what they are saying and our relationship with them.

- Notice if your mind is racing ahead to thinking of a solution or making a judgement. Jumping to your own conclusions or solutions will distort your listening. Ultimately you will be more helpful to others if you enable them to reach their own conclusions and find their own solutions.
- After a conversation notice what happened to you in the conversation. Listen to your own curiosity and intuition. Consider developing your ability to be as present as possible by cultivating a practice in mindfulness, yoga or some other approach that supports the ability to be more aware of what is happening in our minds and bodies. If you are interested in reading more about the use of mindfulness in coaching see Mindful Coaching by Liz Hall (Liz Hall, 2013).

### **Exercise for attending**

Find someone to have a coaching conversation with you. Be clear that you are using this conversation as a way of developing your own coaching skills.

Be aware of how you are as you start the conversation.

Write down your thoughts and feelings.

Note any barriers that prevent you from listening actively.

At the end of the conversation, discuss with your coachee how you both experienced your listening during the conversation.

How did the coachee experience your attending and listening to them?

Identify the moments when you thought there was a difference between what was being said and the feelings you were sensing from the coachee.

Check out your views with the coachee.

## **Listening**

All interactions with other people rely on listening. We all know that the quality of our listening can vary. Active listening is essential to an effective coaching approach.

**'To be listened to is a striking experience, partly because it is so rare. When another person is totally with you – leaning in, interested in every word, eager to empathise – you feel known and understood. People open up when they know they're really being listened to; they expand; they have more presence. They feel safer and more secure as well, and trust grows. That is why listening is so important to coaching...'**

**(Laura Whitworth et al, 2007, p31)**

Being committed to listening in a coaching conversation means you pay close attention to the verbal and the non-verbal cues of the person speaking. Our body language and voice convey a lot of meaning. When there is inconsistency between



the words someone is using and their body language and tone of voice, it is likely the real meaning is being conveyed in the non-verbal cues.

For example:

**A colleague says she is happy about taking on a new role in her team. But her facial expression and tone of voice seem to convey a different message. At that point, you might say: 'You said you're happy to take on this new role, but your face and voice seem sad. I'm wondering what you really think about it'. This gives the colleague a chance to share her real feelings if she chooses to do so.**

As a coach, you need to use all your senses when listening. You need to be prepared to offer observations about what you see as well as the discrepancies with what the coachee is actually saying. As a committed listener, you leave space for the other person to speak and to reflect on your question before speaking. You resist the temptation to jump in and give your opinion or piece of advice.

By noticing everything the coachee is saying and how they are saying it (or not saying it), you offer them the opportunity for a much deeper level of understanding and insight into what is going on. In this way, the skill of attending is closely linked to effective listening.

What can get in the way of active listening? We all have an inner voice that causes us to be distracted. Sometimes this inner voice is distracted by thinking about an event which has affected us. Sometimes it is throwing in our own fears, concerns or judgements. Whatever the inner voice is saying it can be an interruption to our ability to listen fully and actively to another person.

### **Exercise for listening**

Think about some of your own personal barriers to listening.

Practice noticing body language, facial expressions and tone of voice in others.

When you feel comfortable, try offering observations if you think that their body language, facial expressions or tone of voice are at odds with what they are actually saying.

There are different levels of listening. In their approach to coaching, Laura Whitworth and her colleagues describe three levels of listening (Laura Whitworth et al, 2007).

- At level 1 our awareness is on ourselves. The purpose of information gathering at this level is to meet our own needs. It informs us about ourselves and what is going on around us. In a coaching conversation, the coachee is mainly listening at level 1. The coach aims to listen mainly at levels 2 and 3 and needs to be careful about slipping back into level 1.

- At level 2 we have a sharp focus on the other person. In a coaching conversation the coach's awareness is totally on the coachee. The coach listens to their words, their expressions, their emotions. They notice what they are saying and how they are saying it. They notice what they are not saying. Listening at this level means you also need to be aware of how you respond to what you have heard and how you leave space for them to react to your response.
- At level 3 you are also listening to your intuition. It can be described as environmental listening. It means going beyond what you are hearing and trusting your senses.

### **Exercise for listening at levels 1 and 2**

- The aim of this exercise is to experience what it is like to listen completely at level 1 and then at level 2.
- It will allow you to compare and contrast the two levels of listening.
- It will provide a practical experience of the differences, advantages and disadvantages of these two levels of listening.

#### **Part one**

- Describe level 1 listening to someone.
- Ask them to describe a trip they have taken including stories about things that went well and things that did not go so well.
- As they tell you the story, your job is to listen to the words and interpret the story entirely in terms of your own experience. Make frequent comments which offer your opinion. Think about what you would have done differently or how you might improve their story.
- What is happening for you while the other person is talking? What are you thinking about and how are you feeling?
- What does the story remind you of in your own life?
- After 10 minutes, tell each other what it was like to listen and be listened to at level 1.

#### **Part two**

- Work with the same person and the same story for another 10 minutes but this time be curious (without describing level 2 listening), asking questions, clarifying and articulate what you see.
- Be alert for the other person expressing their values in the story. Stay completely focused on them by listening and responding at level 2.
- After 10 minutes, tell each other what it was like to listen at level 2 and what it was like to be listened to at level 2.
- How was the experience different from level 1 listening?

Source: Laura Whitworth et al, 2007, pages 47-48

A sign of good listening is that the coach picks up on the coachee's choice of words and uses them to reflect back. This is one of the simplest yet most profound skills in coaching. Reflecting means you replay some of the coachee's words back to them so they can add to them or explore further.

It can help by:

- letting the coachee know they have been heard
- confirming for the coach they have correctly understood what the coachee is saying
- challenging the coachee gently to explain further or say more about the issue.

It does not matter if the coach is inaccurate as long as the reflection is offered in a spirit of curiosity and a desire to understand. It simply enables the coachee to refine the reflection and it gives the coach a clear steer on what is important and significant for the coachee.

The skill of reflecting lies in the timing and choice of phrase to replay. It is best to wait for the coachee to pause and then reflect back the chosen words or phrase.

## **Summarising and paraphrasing**

Summarising is a skill that allows the coachee to pause for thought. A summary does not have to capture everything the coachee has said. It draws out the main themes in the conversation as those are what matter.

Summarising is a shared activity. The coach draws out the key themes for the coachee to verify and build upon. The skill in summarising is the time and method. It is best to wait for a natural break before offering a summary but sometimes, if information is coming thick and fast, it is helpful to interrupt gently and suggest a summary might be beneficial.

It is best if the coach indicates a summary is about to happen as shown in the following examples.

- 'Can I check what I think we have covered so far? You mentioned ...' (then summarise the key themes).
- 'I would like to make sure that I have heard what you have said so far. I believe you mentioned ...' (then summarise the key themes).
- 'I wonder if I could check in with you. Am I right in thinking that you have discussed ...' (then summarise the key themes).

Once the coach has offered a summary, it is crucial to leave space for the coachee to verify the summary and add to it if they want.

Summarising helps those who think aloud explore lots of points along the way by connecting them back to the key points of what they want to cover in coaching.

Summarising helps those who think first before speaking by showing they have been heard and understood. Summarising helps the coachee think further and deeper about what they are sharing in the coaching.

Sometimes people have a lot to say in a coaching conversation. It might be the first time they have been given the space to fully explore their issue. In this case it might be better to invite the coachee to do their own summary as shown in the following examples.

- 'There seems to be a lot in what you just said. What would be the main highlights for you?'
- 'You seem to have thought about this a lot. If you were to pick out the headlines, what would they be?'

It can also be helpful for the coach to add to the coachee's summary.

- 'I think I picked up another point in addition to your summary. I wonder whether I could check it out with you.'

Offering a summary or inviting the coachee to give a summary is helpful to the coachee. It remains the coachee's choice which key themes they spend more time on in the rest of the coaching conversation.

Paraphrasing is a short statement or summary of what another person is saying. It helps the coachee clarify their thinking. By doing this without giving advice or interrupting with your own judgement or story, the coach will deepen the level of trust. Paraphrasing actively demonstrates you are fully listening to the other person, you care about what they are saying and you are trying to understand their point of view.

### **Exercise for summarising**

Practice your skill of summarising by listening out for the key threads, elements or issues in what a colleague is saying.

At a suitable pause, ask their permission to provide a summary.

Mention the number of points you are summarising followed by your brief summary of these key points.

Check the summary represents a shared understanding of what your colleague has said. Leave space for your colleague to confirm the summary is accurate or to reframe your key points in a way which makes sense to them.

Watch this brief video Improve your listening skills with active listening by [MindTools on YouTube](#).

For a perspective on the importance of listening, especially within the context of negotiating and managing conflict, watch this TEDx Talk [‘The power of listening’](#) by William Ury (2015) on YouTube.

## Using open questions

A key skill for coaching is asking effective and open questions. The purpose of asking questions in a coaching conversation is to encourage the other person to say more, to reflect and understand more about their own situation.

Effective questions flow from your ability to listen actively. Sometimes the most effective way of enabling someone to explore their issue or concern is simply to encourage them to say more:

- ‘tell me more about that’
- ‘say more ...’
- ‘what else do you want to say about that?’.

There are some key points to remember about asking questions.

## Ask simple questions

Simple questions are short questions that usually start with what, how, where, who or when. Questions starting with what and how are most common, for example:

- what would success look like for you?
- how would you know that you have achieved your goal?
- where else in your life have you achieved something similar?
- who do you need support from to help you achieve your goal?
- when did you last celebrate your achievement?.

## Ask one question at a time

If you are part way through a question and start adding to it, it will become too complicated and confusing. Trust your original question and stick with it. If the other person does not understand the question, let them tell you and you will have the opportunity to rephrase it.

## **Ask fewer questions**

The fewer questions we ask, the more space we provide for the coachee to think and reflect on their answers. Think about the quality and purpose of each question rather than the number of questions. Sometimes it can be more powerful to leave space for the coachee to think before speaking. Staying quiet and leaving silence for the coachee to reflect can be a more powerful intervention than another question.

## **Ask questions to help the other person discover more**

In everyday conversations, we ask questions that help us understand better (to support our level 1 listening). In coaching conversations, we ask questions to help the coachee understand more about their own situation. The question should follow the interest of the coachee; it should emerge from what the coachee has just said. These questions help the coachee discover more about their own situation.

## **Ask questions that balance support and challenge**

For coaching conversations to be effective we need to find the right balance between support and challenge. Too much support and we might as well be having a good discussion with a friend or partner. Too much challenge and the coaching turns into an inquisition.

Supportive questions are asked in an understanding way and will help the coachee understand more about what is going on for them. Challenging questions are more probing. They look to get at what is going on behind the issue, verify the facts and enable the coachee to discover further options. Challenging questions need to be asked in a way that conveys possibility and the coach's belief in the resourcefulness of the coachee.

Watch this short [video](#) about powerful questions by Professor David Clutterbuck (shared on YouTube by Horizons Unlimited).

See resource 1 for practical tools and tips on the use of questions in coaching.

## **Questioning styles to avoid in coaching conversations**

There are no bad questions as long as the coach leaves space for the coachee to reframe the question.

However, there are some styles of questioning to avoid in coaching conversations.

## **Asking closed questions**

Closed questions typically produce a yes or no answer. In the main, closed questions are unhelpful in coaching as they do not move the issue forward. A coaching conversation aims to help the person understand more about their own situation and find their own solutions. Questions which are open and thought provoking are more likely to support this kind of exploration.

## **Leading questions**

Coaching is about helping the person understand more about their own situation in their own way. A question which leads the coachee to a particular point of view will not help their thinking. A leading question is one which contains a suggested answer, for example: 'How did you feel about that – upset?'

## **Rephrasing rather than re-using the coachee's own words**

A sign of good listening is that the coach picks up on the coachee's choice of words and uses these words to reflect back. But if the coach rephrases what the coachee has said rather than using their words, it can cause the coachee to lose their train of thought.

## **Questions that break rapport**

How a coach asks a question is as important as the question itself. For example, if a coach has been asking supportive questions and then suddenly uses a challenging question without any warning, this risks breaking the rapport between coach and coachee. In this case, it would be better to signal a move to a more challenging question: 'I wonder if I could ask you a more challenging question at this point?'

## **Too much of the why question**

The danger with questions which begin with the word why is that they can result in a defensive response. When asked why, the other person typically feels they have to find reasons to justify their action. Sometimes this is to do with the tone in which the question has been asked. In a coaching conversation it is usually best to change a why question to a what question.

- 'Why did you do that?' becomes 'What was your thinking behind that?'
- 'Why did you feel that way?' becomes 'What led you to feel that way?'

## **Being prepared to give honest, clear and specific feedback**

We all need feedback to grow and learn by understanding more about our impact on other people. Being prepared and able to give honest, clear and specific feedback is a core skill in coaching. It is important that feedback is given in a way which makes sure the relationship stays positive and open.

In the context of a coaching conversation, the coach provides feedback in the moment and in response to what they are experiencing about the coachee. This kind of feedback can be helpful to the coachee because it might reflect something about how others are experiencing them.

Watch Meg Wheatley talking about the importance for leaders of seeking and hearing honest feedback. [Let go and lead](#): Meg Wheatley – leaders need honest feedback (on YouTube).

## 2.3 The scope of a coaching conversation and how to manage it well

In an informal coaching conversation, you do not need to have an expert understanding of the other person's role or context. In fact, it can be helpful if the coach works in a different field or comes from a different perspective. If you do work in the same field or system, it is important to be open about what this might mean for how you engage in a coaching conversation.

In any kind of coaching conversation, it is important to be aware of the limitations of your own professional competence and the boundaries around the conversation. In formal coaching, the coach is bound by ethical practices which include knowing when to refer someone for other professional support (for example counselling) or developmental support.

In informal coaching conversations, there are some simple guidelines for preparing for and managing the conversation. See resource 1 for further tools and tips around managing coaching conversations well.

### Clarity of purpose

Make sure everyone involved in the coaching conversation is clear about its purpose. You could ask:

- 'what are we hoping to achieve by having this conversation?'
- 'what is the background and context for this conversation?'
- 'what would a good outcome from this conversation look like?'

### Clarity of scope

Make sure everyone is clear about the scope of the conversation. You could ask:

- 'who is involved in this conversation?'
- 'what are the roles of each person involved in the conversation, eg coach, coachee, co-coach?'
- 'what are the boundaries of this conversation and how will we collectively manage these boundaries?'



## **Manage the process**

Think about how you are going to manage the coaching conversation. You could use a simple framework such as: beginnings, middles and endings.

### **Begin the conversation clearly and well**

Make sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in the coaching conversation. Agree some ground rules about how you are going to work together in the coaching conversation, paying attention to the values and behaviours for coaching. Give the coachee space to set out the issue they wish to explore in the coaching conversation.

### **Pay attention to what the coachee needs from the conversation**

Manage the conversation carefully making sure the coachee has enough time and space to explore their coaching issue. Attend to the balance between support and constructive challenge. Notice and pay attention to the patterns in the conversation. Enable the coachee's insights and deeper awareness in line with what they wanted to get from the coaching conversation.

### **Manage the ending with care**

Make sure you leave enough time and space to manage the ending of the coaching conversation well. Provide support and constructive challenge around moving to action if this is what the coachee was looking for. Enable the coachee to take responsibility for the outcomes of the coaching conversation and to exercise choice about these outcomes.

See section 3 for more information about formal coaching and the range of different coaching models and tools.

## Using the Continuous Learning Framework as a coaching tool: Social Work Professional Development Team, Scottish Borders Council

### Background

The Continuous Learning Framework (CLF) (SSSC/IRISS, 2008) sets out the skills and behaviours that social service workers need to work well in social services. It describes personal capabilities needed for managing self and relationships. It supports self-assessment against each capability as a way of identifying strengths and areas for development. The CLF has been used as a coaching tool with individuals and teams working in social services in Scottish Borders Council to support their professional development.

### Approach

I was working in social work staff development when the CLF was launched and started using it as a coaching tool with individuals and groups of staff. In my current role in social work professional development I intend to use the CLF again in the wider context of enhancing the professional identity of social work and in alignment with the new national vision for social services (see figure 1).

Changes at the higher levels of the pyramid in figure 1 (above the orange line) significantly impact the lower levels. Traditionally training is about giving information to staff up to the middle (orange) line. Professional development starts above the middle line. Coaching can reach and engage all levels.



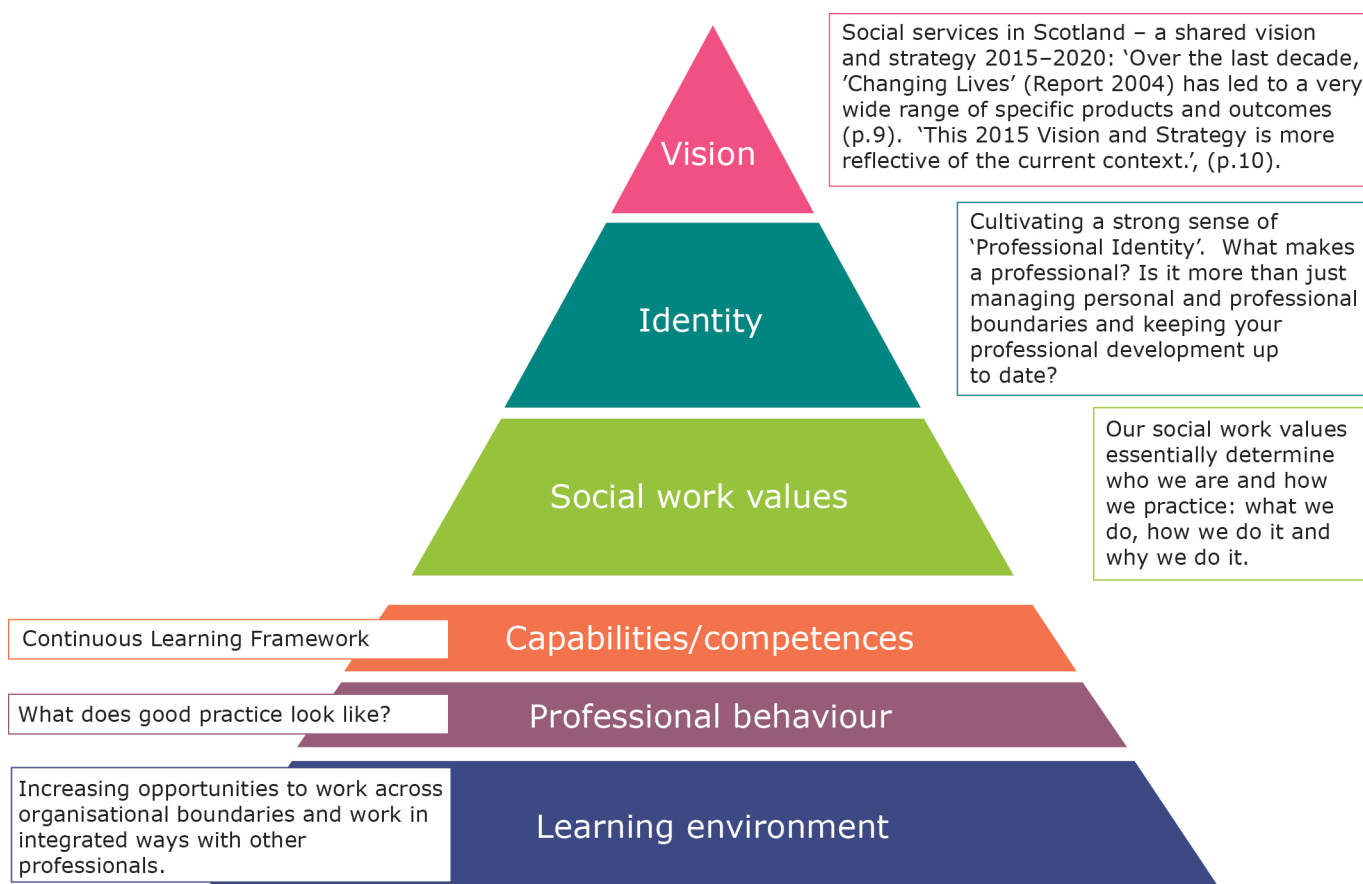


Figure 1: Adapted learning levels showing CLF in a wider context

## Uses of the CLF as a coaching tool

Two ways for using the CLF as a coaching tool with individuals, groups or teams are shown in figures 2 and 3.

**Figure 2: Using the CLF as a coaching tool with an individual**

Engaged				Established				Accomplished				Exemplary			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

**1. CLF as a coaching tool.** The Continuous Learning Framework lends itself to being easily adapted and used as a coaching tool.

**2. Stages of progression.** The four stages can be further divided into four, making a sliding scale from 1 to 16.

Engaged				Established				Accomplished				Exemplary			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

**3. Self-assessment.** In this example, an individual has self-assessed as established at point 7 (red circle).

**4. Coaching conversation.** Reflecting on the journey taken and what is working well at this stage of progression, identify future learning and development needs and options for the next step or stretch.

Engaged				Established				Accomplished				Exemplary			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

**5. Peer feedback.** In this example, the individual has asked for comment from two colleagues (shown by the green circles).

**6. Coaching conversation.** Discuss the different perspectives to update the individual's sense of self and perceived level of competence and any relational aspects.

In this example, there is a need to recognise the individual's progress, contribution and achievements.

**Figure 3: Using the CLF as a coaching tool with an individual, group or team**

Engaged				Established				Accomplished				Exemplary			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

**An alternative way of using the CLF as a coaching tool.** The markers can be used as a table top exercise or as floor markers to stand on. This more embodied application can be intense allowing more exploration of body sensations and feelings. It requires a clear contracting process or working agreement to be established with the individual, group or team.



Professional Development and Coaching Team  
Leader, Social Work Professional Development Team, Scottish Borders Council

## Questions for reflection at the end of section 2

1. What do think about the values and behaviours associated with a coaching approach?

Which of these values and behaviours come naturally to you?

Which of these values and behaviours do you need to focus on more?

2. How are you already using the core skills of coaching in your conversations?

Attending

Listening

Summarising

Questioning

Providing feedback

3. Which are your strengths?

How could you build further on these strengths?

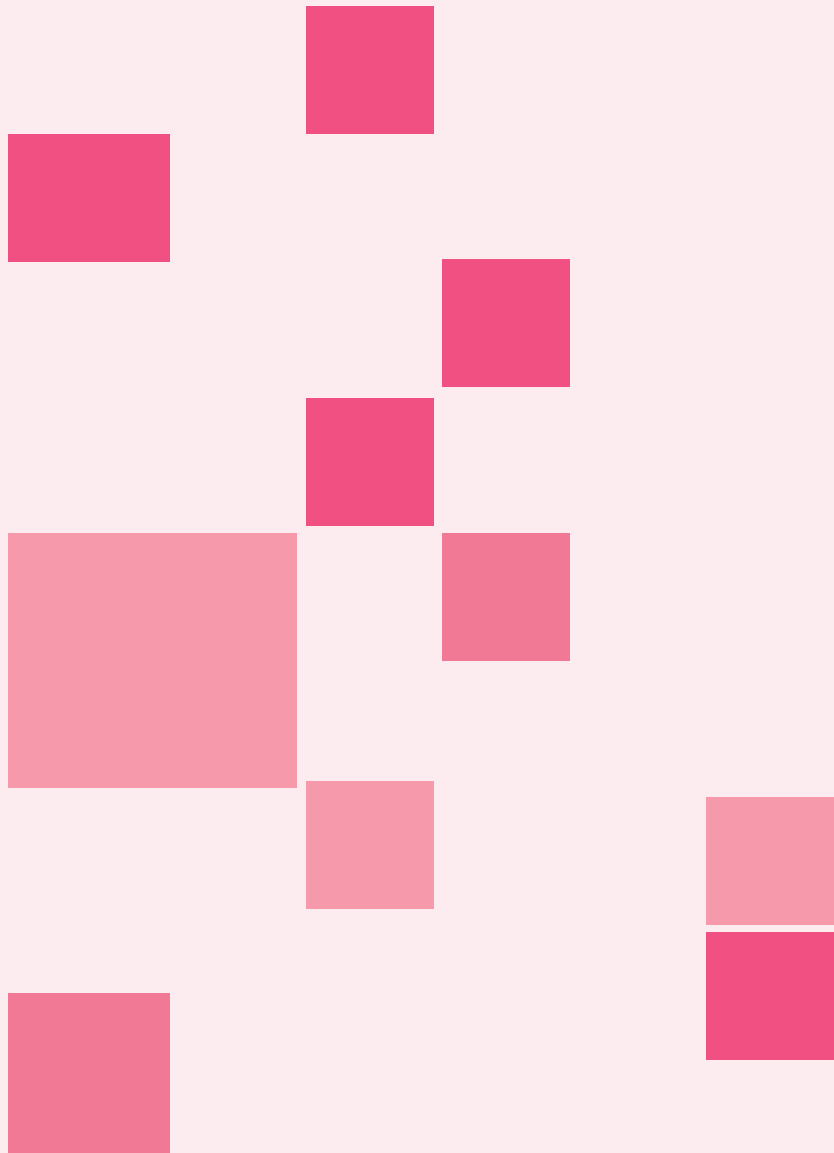
4. Which are your key areas for development in terms of the skills for coaching?

What support do you need to develop your skills in these areas?





### **3. Formal coaching and how to develop formal coaching in practice**



In this section we explore more about formal coaching and how you can develop your practice as a coach.

1. What is formal coaching?
2. How might we use formal coaching across social services?
3. What is involved in formal coaching?
4. Which developmental approach to use?

After reading this section you will be able to:

- describe the different applications of a formal coaching approach in a social service context and distinguish the purpose of a coaching approach in each of these different applications
- discuss how a coaching approach might be used within your own context and in general across social services
- identify what those involved in coaching can expect from it and some of the potential benefits of a coaching approach for individuals, teams and organisations
- name a number of the different coaching models, approaches and techniques
- identify the models, approaches and techniques which have most relevance to your own practice and illustrate how they could be applied.

## **1. What is formal coaching?**

As we have explored in section 1, coaching is a developmental approach to working and interacting with other people which can be informal or formal.

By formal we mean coaching between a coachee and a coach who has undertaken formal development as a coach. It can be one-to-one between a coachee and coach or with a team of people who are being facilitated by a team coach (or team of coaches).

Formal coaching can be used for a range of reasons and it may look and feel different in different contexts. In this section we share several perspectives of coaching to explain the richness of the potential of a coaching approach.

'Coaching is the facilitation of learning and development with the purpose of improving performance and enhancing effective action, goal achievement and personal satisfaction. It invariably involves growth and change, whether that is in perspective, attitude or behaviour.'

(Peter Bluckert, 2006, p3)



### 3.1 How might we use formal coaching across social services?

There are already many examples of coaching being used in social services in Scotland including formal one-to-one and team coaching (as shown in diagram A in section 1). There are different types of formal coaching, suited to different people depending on their circumstances as shown in Diagram B below.



Diagram B: Types of coaching (Elaine Cox and Peter Jackson in Elaine Cox et al, 2014, p216)

Being clear about the purpose and focus of the coaching will help you decide whether an informal or more formal coaching approach is appropriate.

Coaching can be for one or more of the following:

- performance improvement and skills development
- personal growth, learning and development – including leadership development
- change in terms of increasing self-insight, making choices, taking actions, innovating and being creative
- career development or handling changes effectively
- support, health and wellbeing, building resilience and increasing confidence
- team development and culture change.

#### For performance improvement

For some people, a shorter term skills coaching may be the appropriate approach. In this case, the focus is on enabling the individual to develop their capability to perform a particular task or to master a particular set of skills.

For others, performance coaching may be the right approach when the focus is on being able to use their particular skills and capabilities in a particular context and achieve improvement in their performance. The requirement for performance improvement may have been determined by others (for example, external performance requirements) but the coaching approach will be more effective if the coachee wants to learn or develop. In this way, coaching for performance improvement will be more successful if it helps 'shift coaches from a problem-solving to a strengths-building focus' (Bob Tschannen-Moran in Elaine Cox et al, 2014, pages 201-214).

Coaching is ‘... a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be successful a coach requires a knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place.’

(Eric Parsloe, 1999, p8)

‘Coaching is unlocking people’s potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn, rather than teaching them.’

(W. Timothy Gallwey quoted in John Whitmore, 2009, p10)

### **For learning and development**

Coaching for learning and development can be seen as a progression beyond short term skills and performance coaching. In this case, the coaching is more long term in focus. It is about enabling the individual to develop their own capacity to learn and their ability to identify and solve their own work and personal challenges.

‘Coaching is founded on an understanding of individuals as responsible for their own development (ie they are self-directed) and that their learning derives from tackling their own problems and solutions.’

(Elaine Cox and Peter Jackson in Elaine Cox et al, 2014, pages 215-228)

### **For change, improvement and creativity**

Formal coaching between two individuals or with a team can provide the space for people to stand back from their current situation and see new or different perspectives, think differently and explore how things could feel different. Coaching can support creativity by enabling people to raise their awareness of what helps or hinders them in being creative, to focus on the opportunities to experiment with new approaches, and to stay open to what emerges

### **For support, health and wellbeing**

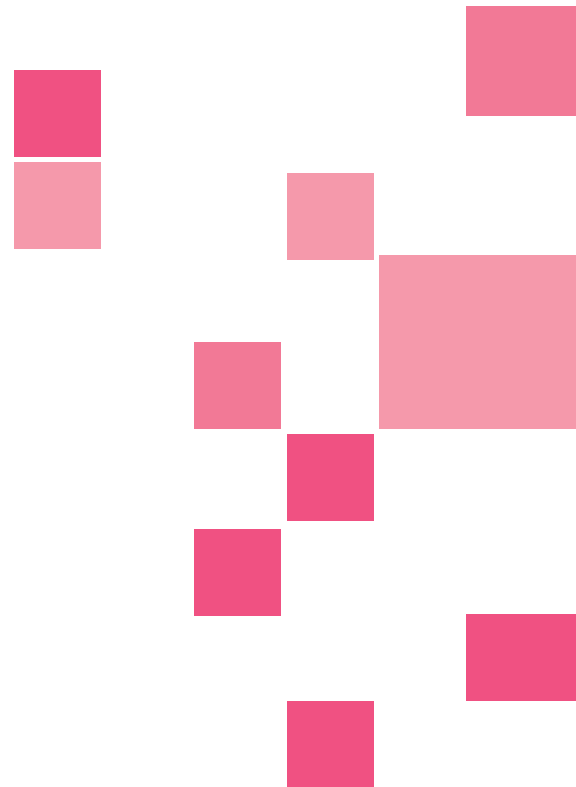
There is increasing interest in the potential of a coaching approach to provide support to people and fostering better health and wellbeing (Margaret Moore and Erika Jackson in Elaine Cox et al, 2014). By providing a safe, non-judgemental space in which an individual can explore their issues of concern, coaching is a supportive approach. Some people report the positive impact they experience from coaching in terms of their health and general wellbeing. In this case, the coach enables the coachee to remain open to what is happening to them and to make positive choices about their own situation.

In the coaching literature there is an increasing focus on the potential of enabling mindfulness or using a mindful approach.

'Coaching is about helping people to have more choice and mindfulness is a way for them to achieve this.'

(Liz Hall, 2013, p18)

There is a clear link between the potential of coaching for support, health and wellbeing and the development in social services of self-directed support and citizen leadership.



# **What to expect from coaching: the impact of one-to-one coaching for a Temporary Assessment Centre Manager in Angus Council**

## **Background**

I came into contact with coaching as some of my team were talking about it. They were enthusiastic about the impact it was having on them and how it was developing them. I didn't really know what it was about but had a sense this was something I should not miss out on. So when a coach in training asked for volunteers to do some work I jumped at the opportunity. After all I like to help folks out!

## **Approach**

I have to say the impact the first session had on me was life changing. My mantra to that point was 'everyone expects me to do everything' and I was exhausted trying and failing to get it all done. The coach introduced me to a model called the 'ego state' and talked about our own internalised messages and how they drive us. I did not have to control the whole of the planet. I had a choice. For the first time in my life I realised I did not have to do everything and it was OK to ask for help.

## **Impact**

It wasn't work that felt the immediate impact of my revelation, it was my family. I went home and life changed for them too forever. Even now, two years on, my children say 'what's for tea tonight?' and quickly add 'oh yeah, we need to help.' And more importantly, do so.

I think more clearly instead of rushing into fix. I even breathe differently. When I am feeling overwhelmed, instead of going at it like a train to a wall to sort it, I remove myself. I go for a walk, take some deep breaths (and remember to keep breathing!) to figure out what I can and can't do. Having made my choices, I don't undermine myself with those inner voices or as my coach called them 'gremlins', which I allowed in the past to unpick my limited resolve.

I now manage the team in which I worked. As I develop my management style coaching is at the heart of how I have developed myself as a manager. I attended the council's three-day Coaching Conversation Course where I learnt the power of open questions, clean feedback and how to create a culture where people feel able to take up their own authority. I then completed a diploma in business coaching. I use my coaching skills and knowledge in the team. Where in the past, I have no doubt, I would have explained to the team how we are going to do a piece of work and the standard I expect, I now make a conscious choice not to do that. I explain the outcome I am looking for and support the team with open questions, active listening and feedback to identify how they want to deliver.

When I see the team making choices and finding their own solution I realise just how much I have shifted from 'doing everything' to being an enabler. The impact of coaching on me, the team (and my family) has been profound.

Children and Learning Directorate, Angus Council

## 3.2 What is involved in formal coaching?

A formal coaching arrangement may have been agreed by an organisational sponsor, typically the coachee's line manager and/or a representative of human resources or learning and development. The specific purpose and focus of the coaching is agreed between the coachee and their coach.

Formal coaching may be one of a number of development activities tailored to the needs of the particular individuals involved or it may be done on a more structured basis across an organisation or system, typically through some kind of organisation-wide coaching scheme. Such schemes may involve both internal and/or external coaches.

For more information on the benefits of coaching for an organisation and what is involved in developing a coaching scheme see section 4.

There are core requirements for any coaching approach (see table 1 in section 2):

- **values and behaviours** (outlined in section 2)
- the **core coaching skills** of attending, listening, summarising, asking questions and providing feedback (outlined in section 2 and supplemented by resource 1).

In formal coaching, the coach needs further knowledge and skills for managing the coaching process.

### **Develop a contract**

Clarify the purpose and scope of the coaching relationship and develop a contract with the coachee.

### **Act ethically**

Act in accordance with a code of ethics for coaching practice including being honest and open about their professional competence and the boundaries of their competence.

### **Manage the relationship**

Manage the interface between them (as coach) and the coachee and the organisation sponsor (as appropriate). Manage the boundaries around the coaching contract.

### **Manage the process**

Manage the coaching process, such as the beginnings, middles and endings of each coaching session and the series of coaching sessions. In formal coaching, the

coach is likely to use a coaching model (or elements of several models), tools and techniques which align with the purpose of the coaching.

### **Models for coaching appropriate to the social service context**

As we have seen, the focus of formal coaching can range from short term performance improvement to long term learning and development.

There are lots of models and approaches to coaching which draw on a range of theories, tools and approaches from a broad base including organisational development, management consulting, learning, psychology and psychotherapy.

It is beyond the scope of this resource to provide the detail of these models. To support your further exploration see section 5 (references and links) and resource 2 in section 6.

Before looking at the detail of a particular coaching model, consider:

- the purpose of the coaching and how aspects of the model might be used in practice to support that purpose and the expected outcomes
- how applicable the particular model or approach is for use in a social service context.

For individual coaches considering their own approach, it is important they are able to account for what they are doing, such as their approach to coaching and the beliefs, values and theories underpinning their approach.

If you are specifically interested in understanding more about what is involved in formal development as a coach, see resource 3 in section 6.

## **3.3 Which developmental approach to use?**

It can be helpful to consider the overlaps as well as the differences between coaching and other developmental approaches so we can be clear about exactly what we mean by coaching or a coaching approach. Getting this clarity may help you decide whether coaching is the right approach to use and, if so, whether an informal or a more informal approach is more appropriate.

In the social service context other developmental approaches include:

- mentoring
- management
- psychotherapy and counselling
- supervision
- training, education and professional development
- consulting.

Thinking through a number of key questions (see table 2) may help you decide when coaching might be a useful approach. Importantly, it is also helpful to be clear about when coaching is not the right or suitable approach for a particular individual in a particular situation.

<b>Why</b> is the approach being used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>purpose</b> of the developmental approach.</li> <li>• The <b>context</b> for it.</li> <li>• The <b>choice</b> or <b>sponsorship</b> of the approach.</li> </ul>
<b>What</b> is involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>focus</b> and <b>scope</b> of the approach.</li> <li>• The <b>timeframe</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b> is involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>intent</b> of the person (or people) involved in facilitating the approach.</li> <li>• The <b>expertise, skills</b> and <b>capacities</b> required.</li> </ul>
<b>How</b> is it applied?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The boundaries to be managed around the approach.</li> <li>• The underpinning <b>beliefs, values</b> and underlying <b>theories</b>.</li> </ul>

Table 2: Key questions to address in choosing a developmental approach

## Mentoring

Mentoring is an approach widely used in social services. One of the most familiar definitions for mentoring is provided by David Megginson and David Clutterbuck.

'Mentoring is ...off-line help from one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.'

(David Megginson and David Clutterbuck, 2006, p4)

There are many similarities between mentoring and coaching in terms of the underpinning principles, behaviours and the core skills needed by the mentor or coach (see section 2).

One key difference between mentoring and coaching is in the choice of the individual who is able to fulfil the mentor role as Jenny Rogers explains.

'Typically, a mentor is a colleague in the same or a parallel organisation who is not in a line management relationship with the mentee. Mentoring has sometimes been described as "being a career friend", someone who knows the ropes in an organisation and can act as sponsor and patron.'

(Jenny Rogers, 2004, p23)

We have addressed the questions outlined in table 2 in relation to the choice of mentoring as a developmental approach. Table 3 addresses the questions in relation to mentoring. It can be appropriate for some individuals to be engaged in mentoring and coaching (with different individuals) at the same time. The two interventions are focused on different, though complementary, aspects of the individual's development.

<b>Why?</b>	<p>The purpose of mentoring is to support the individual through making particular transitions in their understanding, particular role or wider career.</p> <p>Typically the individual has chosen mentoring for themselves and chosen a mentor who has particular knowledge and/or experience relevant to their own field. In some cases, someone else may have recommended mentoring (or a particular mentor) to the individual.</p>
<b>What?</b>	<p>The focus of mentoring is developmental. It concerns the issues which the mentee wishes to bring to mentoring. It may take place over a time-limited or a longer period, depending on the individual's stage of development or career.</p>
<b>Who?</b>	<p>The intent of the mentor is to enable the mentee to explore the issues they have brought to the mentoring, using a coaching approach in their conversations. Given that the mentee has chosen the mentor for their particular knowledge and experience, the mentor will share aspects of both in support of the mentee's learning.</p>
<b>How?</b>	<p>The mentor agrees a contract for their work with the mentee, including confidentiality about the issues discussed. The beliefs and values underpinning mentoring are similar to coaching. The key difference is that the mentor has been chosen by the mentee for their particular areas of expertise, knowledge and experience and it is appropriate for the mentor to share aspects of these with the mentee.</p>

Table 3: Addressing the key questions in relation to mentoring

For more information on the purpose and applications of mentoring, see the mentoring guidance on the [Step into Leadership website](#).

## Management

Many people ask: can a line manager be a coach? If a coaching approach is used within the line management relationship, it is important for both the line manager and the member of the team to be clear about its purpose and scope. There are boundaries to be managed between the line manager's role as manager and their coaching approach.

The use of a coaching approach as part of the line management relationship in social services feels perfectly appropriate and indeed desirable. It can contribute to the development of the kind of behaviours and culture which will support the promotion of Social Services in Scotland – a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020 (Scottish Government, 2015). Managers who support their staff to develop their own resourcefulness will help them live social services values, practice the principles of leadership and deliver the vision.



'Here coaching is an approach to performance management which emphasises the manager's role as developer rather than as controller. Line managers use a coaching approach, encouraging team members to develop self-confidence, resourcefulness, skills, belief in the value of their own decision making and so on through a process of accelerated learning.'

(Jenny Rogers, 2004, p26)

Again there are similarities with formal coaching in terms of the purpose, skills and capacities employed in the coaching approach. However, there are some clear differences in terms of the scope, context and boundaries of the approach (see table 4 below).

<b>Why?</b>	<p>The purpose of a coaching approach as part of the line management relationship is to support the worker in developing particular skills or capacities and finding their own solutions.</p> <p>The worker may prefer to be engaged in a coaching approach with their line manager rather than a more traditional top-down line management relationship. Clearly they do not have a choice about the coach in this case and the coaching necessarily takes place within the context of the line management relationship.</p>
<b>What?</b>	<p>The focus of a coaching approach is developmental. It is taking place within the context of the line management relationship. So the manager retains their line management accountability for the individual's performance. Inevitably there will be times when the line manager may have to adopt different approaches (instead of a coaching approach).</p>
<b>Who?</b>	<p>The intent of the manager is to adopt a more developmental (rather than instructive or directive) approach to their management role. In using a coaching approach, a line manager draws on the core coaching skills and capacities. However, they will need to acknowledge the limitations of their role in respect of confidentiality and impartiality.</p>
<b>How?</b>	<p>This is the area of biggest difference between coaching and a coaching approach as part of the line management relationship. The manager needs to attend to the boundaries around the line management relationship and to acknowledge their limitations as a coach, such as it will be more difficult for them to promise complete confidentiality or to expect complete disclosure. While they may be able to adopt a coaching approach, they will also retain the ultimate managerial accountability in the line management relationship.</p>

Table 4: Addressing the key questions in relation to manager as coach

## **Psychotherapy and counselling**

There are different definitions and types of psychotherapy and counselling and it is well beyond the scope of this resource to explore these.

What is important is there are some significant boundary issues to be managed between psychotherapy or counselling and coaching. Practitioners in the field of coaching recognise that they draw broadly on approaches and underpinning theories from psychotherapy and/or counselling in their practice.

One way of considering the difference is that the primary focus of coaching is on improving the individual's effectiveness in their role within an organisational context. On the other hand, in psychotherapy and counselling the practitioner also addresses 'non-work aspects of an individual's life and may involve in-depth explorations of the client's history and their key relationships' (Peter Bluckert, 2005, p93).

The past, present and future focus of both therapy and coaching may depend on the particular needs of the individual and the approach. Any distinctions between therapy and coaching in terms of the psychological functioning of the client are potentially unhelpful. The dilemma is that the boundary is not necessarily nice and neat between those who may need and benefit from coaching and/or therapy.

Perhaps a more helpful view is that a coach is best prepared if they are aware of the possibility that an individual coachee may experience some psychological problems. The coach needs to know clearly if they can work with the individual or whether it is better to suggest a referral to a qualified therapist or counsellor. Peter Bluckert describes this as a coach being able to exercise their 'psychological-mindedness' (Peter Bluckert, 2006). The coach needs to understand which areas they will not and should not venture into and when to refer someone on to a GP or suitably qualified therapist. From an ethical perspective the coach must be scrupulously honest about their qualification to practice in particular areas.

It is possible that an individual may benefit from access to psychotherapy or counselling and at the same time be engaged in a coaching relationship with a different person. The different approaches overlap in some of their underpinning beliefs, values, capacities and theories. A key consideration is understanding who is qualified (and who is not) to provide formal therapy and how the boundaries around such support need to be carefully and confidentially managed.

## **Supervision (professional)**

Professional supervision is a formal requirement within social services. There is a distinct purpose and scope for supervision within the professional environment of social services. The role fulfilled by a supervisor in this context is set and bounded by clear sector and professional standards.

The overlap between supervision and coaching relates to the skills, capacities and underpinning beliefs of the supervisor and coach. The effectiveness of the supervisor in working with their supervisee can be enhanced by using some of the core coaching skills. However, there are some necessary limitations for the supervisor in adopting a coaching approach. Part of the supervisory role is around making sure there is governance and adherence to accepted standards of practice. When fulfilling this aspect of the supervisory role, a pure coaching approach may not be appropriate.

For more information about supervision in social services, see the supervision guidance on [Step into Leadership](#).

## **Training, education and professional development**

There have been significant shifts in theory and practice around training, education and professional development in the past couple of decades. It is now widely accepted that training is far more effective as a learning process when it is underpinned by the kind of coaching principles outlined in section 2. So, again, there are some potential overlaps between training, education and professional development with a coaching approach.

The biggest difference is that in most training, education or professional development programmes there is a set curriculum and the trainer or educator brings particular expertise in their subject area. A coach engaged in formal coaching may well have particular subject or process expertise. In the context of coaching, it is not the coach's role to pass on that expertise to the coachee.

## **Consulting**

Individuals in an internal or external consultancy role in an organisation are typically commissioned to bring particular skills or expertise to a particular project or in facilitating the work of a particular group. A consultant who brings more of a coaching approach in at least some of their interactions with their client is likely to be more effective in understanding and responding appropriately to their requirements. But the key difference is that the consultant has been employed to bring in particular expertise or capabilities for the benefit of the work and/or the commissioning organisation.

## **Deciding on a formal coaching approach**

As we have seen, it can be helpful to consider the similarities and differences between coaching and other developmental approaches in order to understand more about what coaching is for and what it is not.

Thinking through answers to the questions in table 2 can be helpful in scoping out a coaching approach which is relevant for a particular individual and their needs. A worked example for a formal one-to-one coaching relationship is provided in table 5.

Key questions	Example answers for a formal one-to-one coaching relationship
<p><b>Why</b> is the approach being used?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>purpose</b> of the coaching.</li> <li>• The <b>context</b> for it and the <b>choice</b> or <b>sponsorship</b> of the approach.</li> </ul>	<p>The purpose of the coaching is to facilitate the learning, behavioural change and personal development of the coachee in their current role.</p> <p>The coachee has chosen to participate in a formal coaching relationship with an internal qualified coach.</p> <p>The coachee's line manager is supportive of the coaching. The head of learning and development has matched the coachee with an experienced internal coach.</p>
<p><b>What</b> is involved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>focus</b> and <b>scope</b> of the coaching and the <b>timeframe</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The coach has agreed a contract with the coachee to work together for four to six two-hour coaching sessions over a six to nine month period.</p> <p>The content of the coaching sessions remains confidential between coachee and coach. It is the coachee's decision whether to share outputs from the coaching with their line manager.</p>
<p><b>Who</b> is involved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>intent</b> of the person (or people) involved in the coaching.</li> <li>• The <b>expertise, skills</b> and <b>capacities</b> required.</li> </ul>	<p>The coach's intent is to allow the coachee to raise their awareness, draw on their own resources and focus on their personal development.</p> <p>The coach is qualified as a coach (in accordance with the organisation's coaching standards) and regularly takes part in coaching supervision and continuing professional development.</p> <p>The coach has a proven track record as a coach within the organisation. In addition, they practice as an external coach as part of the Scottish Coaching Collaborative.</p> <p>They are in a professional expert role in the organisation. While their expertise informs their ability to practice as a coach, it is not their role to impart this expertise or advice to the coachee.</p>

<p><b>How</b> is it applied?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>boundaries</b> to be managed around the coaching.</li> <li>• The underpinning <b>beliefs, values</b> and underlying <b>theories</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The coach carefully manages the boundaries around their coaching relationship with the coachee including confidentiality, safety, trust and mutual respect. Even though the coach knows the coachee's line manager (through their professional role), they don't breach the confidentiality agreed with the coachee.</p> <p>The coach is not responsible for reaching any judgment about the performance of the coachee. They hold a core belief in the resourcefulness of the coachee and their ability to find their own solutions.</p>
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Table 5: A worked example for a formal coaching relationship

## What to expect: a practice case of team coaching in Angus Council

### Background

As a relatively new leader to an established team there were a number of challenges I wanted to address to support the team to work effectively. Team coaching was an offer made by the organisation and it appeared to give us the support we needed although it was new territory.

The team had a number of pressures on it, the greatest of which were the external pressure to change and adapt to its new environment. The change can be summarised as the need to:

- enable new relationships and partnerships
- think and act more strategically
- redefine the boundaries of the system, for example there is much less clarity between local government and the private or third sector.

All of this has to be done while remaining accountable and transparent to a degree unique to the public sector. Relationships within the team worked well on the surface but as a team there was a need to grow their learning, support each other through change and have clean and helpful communication that built relationships. The latter was particularly important when the pressure built and stress levels rose.

### Approach

The process offered was structured and clear. As team leader, I identified what I saw as the issues to the two team coaches. The coaches asked the team how they experienced working together. They fed back the outcome of these

discussions to everyone and the team then worked out what they wanted to focus on. The discussion formed the basis of the working agreement which would put boundaries around our work together.

The coaching started with the coaches attending our team meeting. The coaches gave a brief input at the start of the meeting where they got feedback from team members about what had shifted since the last session. At the end of the session they gave feedback on what they observed and used theoretical models, for example, 'life positions' model ('I'm OK, you're OK') or the 'drama and winners' triangle', to deepen people's understanding of the choices they have and can make. During the meeting the coaches gave brief feedback at the end of each agenda item. The focus was on behaviours, ie which were helpful and which were hindering the team being as effective as it could be. Relationships were also brought into the spotlight and individuals were encouraged to reflect on the impact they had on others. This structure meant that work and team development could happen simultaneously with only an additional 30-40 minutes added to each team meeting.

## **Impact**

Creating the safe space to do this work was essential and the coaches were skilled at building the contract that allowed everyone to agree how they would work together. At first the coaches held individuals to account when their behaviours strayed from what was agreed, as they inevitably did.

In time the team took on this role for themselves and began to challenge and speak up when they felt another team member was not 'living' the agreed behaviours.

The journey was not always straightforward and working at the deeper level at times required a sharp intake of breath and a leap into cold water. However, no-one drowned and the experience was both challenging and exhilarating at the same time. It began to shine a light on what is uncomfortable in the team interactions, uncovering some of the hidden messages; picking up on 'what is not said' and 'naming the elephant' in the room became the 'lingua franca' of the team meetings.

By the end of the process, the team reported they had a greater understanding of how each individual likes to work and this allowed them to consider how they work differently with external agencies. They observed that the 'elephants' had left the room and they were more open to understanding the motives of others rather than making assumptions. They reported that 'working with difference' was an opportunity for creativity and not conflict.

In the year since our team coaching, what I see in the team is we have been more attentive to completing tasks discussed in our team meetings and taking actions. We review the theory we have learnt, in particular the OK/OK (life positions) transactional analysis theory. We are clearer about what feedback means and are more skilled at giving it to each other. Direct communication is something we will need to work on but we see the value in it to ensure good communication and stronger relationships. As a result of the coaching we have a greater understanding of our communication needs, make space for each other in meetings and make sure we hear everyone's voice.

Team Leader, Angus Council

### **Questions for reflection at the end of section 3**

1. What do you understand by coaching? What is it? What is it not?
2. What do you now understand about the coaching from informal coaching conversations to formal coaching relationships?
3. What relevance do you think each of the possible uses of coaching (informal to formal) has in your own organisation – for the people who use services and for the people who work in social services?
4. Which type(s) of coaching are you interested in? How could each of these benefit you in your current role?
5. Which other development approaches have you experienced? What do you understand about the similarities and differences between these approaches and coaching?
6. What do you think might be some of the potential downfalls or limitations of a coaching approach?
7. How might the development of a coaching approach benefit you, people with whom you work and your organisation?
8. What more do you want to know about coaching?







## **4. How to develop coaching in your organisation**

In this section we cover issues relating the development of coaching in an organisation. Its purpose is to support those with a lead role for developing a coaching approach or who have a broader interest in how coaching might benefit social service organisations.

1. What are the drivers of developing a coaching approach in social services?
2. What is the potential impact of coaching for social services?
3. How is coaching used in other contexts and how might this be helpful for social services?
4. Making the case for a coaching approach.
5. Who and what is involved in developing a coaching approach?

After reading this section you will be able to:

- explain the rationale and drivers for developing a coaching approach in social services in Scotland
- describe the potential links between a coaching approach and the delivery of the vision and strategy for social services in Scotland
- demonstrate the rationale and drivers for developing a coaching approach and the potential links between a coaching approach and the delivery of the vision and strategy for your particular organisation
- make the business case for a coaching approach in your organisation
- explain the potential benefits of coaching for individuals, teams and the organisation
- identify who and what needs to be involved in the development of a coaching approach.

## **4.1 What are the drivers of developing a coaching approach in social services?**

Coaching has the potential to support the development of individuals, organisational culture and a collaborative approach to leadership – through empowering, enabling, fostering empathy, supporting, constructively challenging and seeking to understand others' perspectives.

'The structure and pace of work allows less and less time to think about what we are doing and why.... The antidote to this destructive cycle is the creation of reflective space. Coaching is an opportunity to call a halt to the frenetic pace of doing and to refocus on being. It enables people to challenge their routines, to take a critical look at what they are doing and why, to identify and commit to new performance goals and to work out how to overcome the barriers that prevent them being more effective in their work roles. It allows behaviours to be discussed, priorities to be established and mere busy-work to be laid down. Most of all, however, it brings performance to the fore.'

(David Clutterbuck and David Megginson, 2005, p7)

To deliver Social Services in Scotland – a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020 (Scottish Government, 2015) and embrace public sector reform, people who use and work in social services face opportunities and significant challenges. The opportunities are reflected in policies which focus on a strengths based approach and good conversation. Challenges include: the pressure of financial constraints and austerity; increasing expectations of services and for services to be delivered in new ways; and issues arising from the model of delivery and complexities in the market approach to care. Responding to these challenges will require strong leadership at all levels in social services. Expressing this leadership will encourage the use of creative, empowering and resilient skills and approaches.

The introduction of self-directed support is a core policy for social services in Scotland. Implementing self-directed support relies on enabling people using services, their carers and families to develop their own capacity to put leadership skills into practice. It relies on citizen leadership. This means people being able to express their needs and opinions about how services are delivered and developed. It means being able to influence decisions about things which affect them directly and taking responsibility for and exercising some control over their own services.

'Citizen Leadership is an activity... it happens when citizens have power and influence and responsibility to make decisions. Citizen Leadership happens when individuals have some control over their own services. It also happens when citizens take action for the benefit of other citizens.'

Principles and Standards of Citizen Leadership (Scottish Government, 2008, p8)

Social services are delivered by people in a diverse range of roles, working across many different organisations and collaboratively with others across the sector and beyond. With the integration of health and social care the need for effective collaborative working is even greater. Enabling self-directed support for people using services and working effectively with others across boundaries requires collaborative leadership from workers at all levels of social services.

The capabilities which are seen as fundamental to enabling this kind of leadership in Scottish social services are described in the Strategy for developing leadership capacity in Scotland's social services, 2013-2015 (Scottish Social Services Council, 2014):

- Vision
- Self-leadership
- Motivating and inspiring
- Empowering
- Collaborating and influencing
- Creativity and innovation.

A coaching approach can help individuals develop the personal capabilities to express citizen leadership, understand more about their challenges and make informed choices about their future. It can also help individuals develop their interpersonal skills,

capacity to understand and empathise with others and ability to draw on a range of influencing and leadership styles.

## 4.2 What is the potential impact of coaching for social service organisations?

As we have seen in section 2, there is strong alignment between the values of social services and the core principles of coaching. The focus on developing citizen leadership and more collaborative working could be supported by the development of a coaching approach at all levels across the sector. The development of a coaching approach could support the delivery of Social Services in Scotland – a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020 (Scottish Government, 2015).

*'The process of strategic alignment ultimately leads to the alignment of individual and organisational ambitions and drives to succeed. Coaching and mentoring are the two most powerful ways of helping people undertake the inner dialogue that brings these potentially conflicting dynamics together.'*

*(David Clutterbuck and David Megginson, 2005, p6)*

There is increasing use of coaching in social service organisations across Scotland. Typically, coaching is used as one way of supporting professional learning and development. In particular, it is used to support leadership and management development.

Investing in the development of coaching along the continuum from informal to formal (see Diagram A in section 1) does not only have benefits for those on the receiving end of coaching. Those who develop their capacity to use a coaching approach in their work or who develop as a coach will also find greater satisfaction and engagement in their work. Coaching and being coached are powerful forms of continuing professional development.

The Scottish Coaching Collaborative (one of the key work streams of Workforce Scotland) has a clear view about the opportunities and potential benefits for individuals who work with a coach. See the Scottish Coaching Collaborative Coaching Handbook (Workforce Scotland, 2014).

There is increasing recognition that developing a coaching culture is not only beneficial to individuals working in the organisation but that it can lead to improved organisational performance.

Gauging the impact of a coaching culture on the performance of an organisation will include important measures such as:

- levels of engagement and motivation
- workers' health and wellbeing
- increased capability and self-awareness
- increased confidence and resilience.

'A coaching culture exists in an organisation when a coaching approach is a key aspect of how the leaders, managers, and staff engage and develop all their people and engage their stakeholders, in ways that create increased individual, team, and organisational performance and shared value for all stakeholders'.

(Peter Hawkins, 2012, p21)

### 4.3 How is coaching used in other contexts and how might this be useful for social services?

There is evidence of widespread use of coaching across the public and private sectors in the UK and increasing use of internal and team coaching in particular (Ridler and Company, 2013). The nature of coaching and how it is used in different contexts varies widely.

There are some broad characteristics associated with the current use of coaching (Jenny Rogers, 2004).

- Coaching is typically used as an approach for **personal development**. It is focused on enabling performance improvement in a work context. It is definitely **not** a remedial measure or a formal performance management process.
- Formal coaching is still more commonly used for **people in middle and senior management positions**. There is evidence of increasing use of internal coaches who may work with a wider range of people at all levels of an organisation.
- While many organisations still make use of external coaches, especially for those at senior or executive levels of the organisation, many are now **developing more internal coaches**.
- The impact of coaching is still mainly identified at the level of the **individual's development**, rather than on organisation-wide performance or organisational development. However, there is increasing interest in considering the wider organisational impact of developing a coaching approach.

'Coaching is a particularly powerful tool in the modern workplace – one that has proven to be a highly effective way of developing individual and organisational performance by unlocking capability. At its best, this key management tool can deliver considerable benefits, helping managers get the most from their teams, boosting employee engagement and developing high performing workplaces.'

(Institute of Leadership and Management, 2011, p1)

## 4.4 Making the case for a coaching approach

For those considering the development of a coaching approach in their organisation, there are some key questions to start with (Peter Hawkins, 2012).

- How are we currently using coaching in the organisation and what impact does it have?
- What are we hoping to achieve through developing a coaching approach at individual, team, organisational levels?
- How will the development of a coaching approach support the organisation in delivering its vision and strategy?
- How could we build on our current coaching capability and capacity?
- What needs to be in place to support the development of a coaching approach?

You may find it helpful to review the readiness of your organisation for coaching. See the *Are we ready to coach?* resource on the SSSC Step into Leadership website.

In making the case for the development of a coaching approach, consider the following questions in relation to your organisation.

### **Purpose**

Coaching or developing a coaching culture is not the end in itself. But coaching will support people to think differently. It will help people realise the value of reflective practice. It will support the development of 'direct communication' and 'respectful challenge'. An informal coaching approach can support people to have different kinds of conversation.

What main purpose are you developing a coaching approach for?

- How does a coaching approach support the achievement of your organisation's strategy?
- How does a coaching approach support the development of leadership capacity and capability in your organisation?
- What are you looking to change or develop in the culture of your organisation and in what ways could coaching support the shift?

### **Need and measurement of impact**

What is the need for a coaching approach in the organisation?

- What are the common issues people are struggling with and how could coaching help them resolve these issues?
- How will a coaching approach benefit individuals at different levels of your organisation?

- How will a coaching approach benefit teams and collaborative team-based working across the organisation?
- What will the benefits of developing a coaching approach be for the organisation?
- What will your measures of impact, return on investment and value in relation to the implementation of a coaching approach be?

## **Sponsorship**

What is the authorising environment for a coaching approach?

- Who needs to sponsor the introduction or development of a coaching approach?
- What evidence will convince the sponsor(s) of the potential value and impact of a coaching approach?
- What resources do you think you will need to support the development and roll-out of a coaching approach?

## **Positioning**

What is the strategic context for coaching?

- Coaching releases an individual's capacity for choice and taking responsibility. In this way coaching can be counter-cultural and highly challenging in some organisations. How ready for coaching is your organisation in terms of the culture?
- How will people see the introduction of a coaching approach? How ready are they to engage in a coaching approach?
- What types of coaching will be included in your coaching approach: informal and formal? Are you intending coaching to be used in an inclusive way at all levels of the organisation? Or are you intending to use coaching in a more targeted way for groups or individuals at a particular level of the organisation?
- Who will be involved in coaching?
- Where will coaching sit alongside other developmental approaches such as mentoring, training and leadership development?
- How will coaching be positioned alongside the organisation's human resources and management processes including: line management; performance management; mediation?
- How do you need to summarise or present the positioning of a coaching approach in your organisation? Do you need to develop a coaching strategy or framework?

## **Scope**

What will be the scope of your coaching approach? How will you raise awareness about your coaching approach across the organisation?

## **Developing capability**

Where will you focus the development of coaching capability across the organisation? You could focus on the development of core coaching skills for a wide range of workers

across the organisation. Or, you could focus on the development of internal qualified coaches who are able to do formal coaching with individuals and teams. Or you could do both.

### **Managing demand**

- What is the demand for developing a coaching approach in conversations between individuals and groups of workers and with people using services?
- What is the demand for internal coaching provided by qualified coaches? What are the sources of this demand: workers; line managers; leaders?
- What is the need (if any) for external qualified coaches? Where could you source external coaches? From the Scottish Coaching Collaborative? From partner organisations in your area?

### **Building capacity**

- How far and quickly do you need to spread a coaching approach across the organisation?
- How will you spread the development of core coaching skills for use in coaching conversations?
- How will you spread the adoption of coaching as a leadership style used by leaders at all levels of the organisation?
- How will you identify and select potential internal coaches? How many internal coaches do you need to develop?

## **4.5 Who and what is involved in developing an organisational coaching approach?**

Having made the business case for coaching, there are a number of practical requirements involved in developing an organisational coaching approach. How formal the practical requirements need to be will depend on your chosen mix of informal and formal coaching.

### **Lead role**

It is advisable to nominate a lead for the development of a coaching approach who is supported by an advisory group including people from different parts of the organisation who have a keen interest in the potential of coaching.

### **Communication**

You will need to think about how you raise awareness of an informal and formal coaching approach. Your communications need to explain the intended purpose of coaching and its positioning alongside other developmental and management processes. If people are interested, how can they get involved?



## **Processes**

If you are planning to use internal coaches to undertake formal coaching one-to-one or with teams, then you will need to design a process for selecting and matching coaches with coachees and for managing the internal coach service. You will need to put a governance framework, set of standards and code of ethics in place for your coaching service.

Seek advice from other organisations with internal coach services about their paperwork and management processes. See the websites of the coaching professional bodies for examples of codes of ethics (see links in section 5).

## **Sourcing development**

If you are planning to spread the use of informal coaching, it is advisable to arrange training sessions to support the development of the values, behaviours and core skills for coaching. Your assessment of demand and readiness will help you decide how many training sessions will be required over what period.

If you are planning to use internal coaches, you will need to arrange formal coach development. Get advice from other social service organisations and the Scottish Coaching Collaborative about the kind of coach development programme, such as whether it needs to be accredited and what it should comprise.

## **Support and ongoing professional development**

Having invested in the development of a group of internal coaches, it is advisable to make sure you make the best use of their skills and capacities. You can do this by giving them regular coaching work. You could involve them in the development of coaching skills across other groups of workers as well as matching them with coachees for one-to-one coaching. Your internal coaches are also your ambassadors for the coaching approach.

It is advisable to provide continuing professional development and coaching supervision for internal coaches. By making these arrangements you will make sure that coaches are able to practice coaching safely and sustain their learning. Development sessions around coaching practice could be opened up to a wider audience so it helps you spread the word about the impact of coaching across the organisation.

## **Toolkits**

What resources will you put in place to support those who are using coaching skills in an informal way?

## Coaching framework

It is good practice for individuals who have undertaken formal development as a coach to use a clear framework to underpin their approach to coaching. The use of a coaching framework will be covered in any credible coach development programme. New and developing internal coaches should be encouraged to sustain their learning and development around their practice of coaching.

See resource 3 in section 6 for further information around the development of coaches.

### **An organisation practice case: developing a coaching approach in Angus Council**

#### **Background**

Angus Council has developed its approach to coaching over the past eight years and now has a framework and process for formal coaching and widespread use of informal coaching by people at all levels of the organisation. The need for new ways of working and interacting was the inspiration for introducing a coaching approach. Creating a coaching culture was not the end in itself. Inspiring people to have different kinds of conversations and find their own creative solutions was one sustainable way of enabling the organisation to achieve its strategic aims.

#### **Approach**

There have been three key elements involved in introducing and implementing coaching in Angus Council:

1. building support for a coaching approach and getting buy-in from a range of stakeholders
2. developing our coaching offering and developing coaches
3. developing coaching skills across the organisation.

#### **1. Building support for a coaching approach**

Our vision is for coaching to become the predominant style of leading, managing and working together and to create a culture in which people feel empowered. It represents a commitment to grow the organisation and the people in it by unleashing their creativity and energy.

Executive level sponsorship has been critical for the development of a coaching approach. We secured this by making clear the systemic purpose of coaching. Using a coaching approach helps break down the organisational silos and supports the Transforming Angus strategy. Coaching is clearly set in the context

of performance, how to help people to give more of their potential.

## **2. Developing our coaching offering and developing coaches**

In our approach to developing coaches we collaborated with our partners in Perth and Kinross Council, NHS Tayside and Tayside Police (collectively the Tayside Public Sector Coaching Alliance). Together we have developed our bank of internal coaches, our coaching processes and supporting paperwork and a joint code of ethics. Formal training for coaches has been provided and together we make sure we have robust processes in place to maintain and develop the standards of our internal coaching. We have developed supportive relationships across the coach community and continue to share our experiences and learning through regular continuing professional development and formal coaching supervision.

Credibility of coaching delivery has been crucial to the effective implementation of our coaching approach. We have achieved this by using high quality training for coaches and encouraging them to develop and consistently apply a robust coaching framework underpinned by psychological theory. We have provided opportunities for managers to see good quality coaching in action in support of their learning.

## **3. Developing coaching skills**

We support managers to develop coaching skills as a way of improving how they perform their line management role. We are clear about the boundaries between formal coaching, mentoring and a coaching approach within the line manager role.

### **What is involved?**

- A one-day coaching course for frontline managers.
- A three-day foundation course in coaching skills for managers.  
The course was based on a sound psychological framework which has supported the application of a consistent coaching framework by all coaches working in Angus Council. The course includes:
  - contracting
  - skills of coaching
  - a demonstration of coaching by an experienced qualified coach
  - lots of coaching practice
  - use of qualified internal coaches to provide high quality feedback on the trainees' coaching practice.
- Workshops held six months after the course to refresh participants' learning and revisit key principles.

## Impact

The spread of formal coaching provided by internal qualified coaches and informal coaching by line managers as part of their role is having a gradual positive impact on the culture of the organisation. There is now a community of 15 qualified and experienced coaches. The coach network meets once a quarter for continuing professional development and supervision. Each coach is typically working with three to four coachees over a year and in the past year there have been 50 one-to-one coaching relationships.

The use of coach training is contributing positively to the council's continuing professional development and talent management by providing a creative and sustainable way of developing and motivating managers.

Coaching releases people to exercise choice and responsibility. Coaching is supporting people at all levels of the organisation to have different kinds of conversations, develop better work relationships and more effective team-working. In this way the coaching approach is supporting the achievement of the council's Transforming Angus strategy.

Organisational Development Facilitator, Angus Council

## Questions for reflection at the end of section 4

1. What is your understanding of the reasons for developing a coaching approach in social services in Scotland?
2. What relevance do you think a coaching approach in social services has for the people who use services and for the people who work in social services?
3. What difference do you think developing a coaching approach could make in your organisation?
4. What is your own interest in coaching? As a coach? As someone seeking coaching? As someone who wants to develop more of a coaching approach in your organisation?
5. What more do you need to know about coaching?



## 5. References and links

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Scottish Government (2015) Social Services in Scotland – a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020.

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## Further resources

### Books

There are many books and articles on the practice, theories and models of coaching. This is not intended to be a complete list. The aim is to provide a current and comprehensive range of books which are categorised under key headings so that you can identify the ones most relevant for you.

### Coaching skills

1. Jenny Bird and Sarah Gornall (2015) *The Art of Coaching – a handbook of tips and tools*. Routledge.
2. David Clutterbuck (2013) *Powerful Questions for Coaches and Mentors: a practical guide for coaches and mentors*. Wordscape.



3. Gladeana McMahon and Anne Archer (editors) (2010), 101 Coaching Strategies and Techniques. Routledge.
4. Jenny Rogers (2004) Coaching Skills – a handbook. Open University Press. Later edition published in 2009.

### **Coaching models and approaches**

5. Elaine Cox, Tatiana Bachkirova and David Clutterbuck (2014) The Complete Handbook of Coaching (2nd edition). Sage.
6. Myles Downey (2003) Effective Coaching: lessons from the coach's coach. Cengage Learning.
7. Paul Z Jackson and Mark McKergow (2007) The Solutions Focus: Making coaching and change simple. Nicholas Brealey Publications.
8. Jonathan Passmore (editor) (2006) Excellence in Coaching – the Industry Guide. Association for Coaching. Kogan Page Ltd.
9. John Whitmore (2009) Coaching for Performance (4th edition). Nicholas Brealey Publishing Ltd.
10. Laura Whitworth, Karen Kimsey-House, Henry Kimsey-House and Philip Sandahl (2007) Co-active coaching: new skills for coaching people toward success in work and life (2nd edition). Davies-Black Publishing.

### **Coaching in health and social care**

11. Julia Foster-Turner (2005) Coaching and mentoring in health and social care: the essential manual for professionals and organisations. Radcliffe Publishing Limited.
12. Dilys Jones and Peter Murphy (2007) An introduction to coaching for the health and social care sectors. Pavilion Publishing.

### **Leadership coaching**

13. John Blakey and Ian Day (2012) Challenging Coaching: going beyond traditional coaching to face the FACTS. Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
14. Graham Lee (2003) Leadership Coaching: from personal insight to organisational performance. CIPD.
15. Lucy West and Mike Milan (2001) The Reflecting Glass: professional coaching for leadership development. Palgrave Macmillan.

### **Deepening awareness and insight**

16. Peter Bluckert (2006) Psychological Dimensions of Executive Coaching. Open University Press.
17. Erik de Haan (2008) Relational Coaching: journeys towards mastering one-to-one learning. John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
18. Liz Hall (2013) Mindful Coaching: how mindfulness can transform coaching practice. Kogan Page Ltd.
19. John Leary-Joyce (2014) Fertile Void: Gestalt coaching at work. Academy of Executive Coaching Press.

20. Mary Beth O'Neill (2007) *Coaching with Backbone and Heart: a systems approach to engaging leaders with their challenges*. Jossey-Bass, 2nd edition.
21. Bruce Peltier (2001) *The Psychology of Executive Coaching: theory and application*. Routledge.
22. Doug Silsbee (2008) *Presence-based Coaching: cultivating self-generative leaders through mind, body and spirit*. Jossey-Bass.
23. Richard Strozzi-Heckler (2014) *The Art of Somatic Coaching: embodying skillful action, wisdom and compassion*. North Atlantic Books.

### **Dialogue and meaningful conversations**

24. Nancy Kline (1999) *Time to Think: listening to ignite the human mind*. Ward Lock Cassell Illustrated.
25. Margaret J. Wheatley (2009) *Turning to one another: simple conversations to restore hope to the future*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers Inc. Expanded 2nd edition.

### **Coaching teams and coaching culture**

26. David Clutterbuck (2007) *Coaching the team at work*. Nicholas Brealey International.
27. David Clutterbuck and David Megginson (2005) *Making coaching work*. CIPD. You can freely download chapter 1, 'The business case for creating a coaching culture', from CIPD.
28. Liz Hall (2015) *Coaching in times of crisis and transformation: how to help individuals and organizations flourish*. Kogan Page.
29. Peter Hawkins (2012) *Creating a Coaching Culture: developing a coaching strategy for your organization*. Open University Press.
30. Peter Hawkins (2014) *Leadership Team Coaching: developing collective transformational leadership*. Kogan Page.
31. Jessica Jarvis (2006) *The case for coaching: making evidence-based decisions*. CIPD.

### **Coaching as a line manager's development tool**

32. Valerie Anderson (2009) *Coaching at the sharp end: the role of line managers in coaching at work*. CIPD.
33. Eric Parsloe and Monika Wray (2000) *Coaching and Mentoring*. Kogan Page.

## Websites

### Coaching Professional Organisations

#### Association for Coaching

[www.associationforcoaching.com](http://www.associationforcoaching.com)

The Association for Coaching (AC) is a leading independent and not-for-profit professional body dedicated to promoting best practice and raising the awareness and standards of coaching, worldwide. The organisation purpose is 'to inspire and champion coaching excellence, to advance the coaching profession, and make a sustainable difference to individuals, organisations, and in turn, society.'

#### European Mentoring and Coaching Council

[www.emccuk.org](http://www.emccuk.org)

European Mentoring and Coaching Council UK (EMCC UK) is part of the Europe-wide EMCC which exists to promote good practice and the expectation of good practice in mentoring and coaching across Europe. EMCC is an independent, impartial and non-profit making organisation.

#### International Coach Federation

[www.coachfederation.org](http://www.coachfederation.org)

The International Coach Federation (ICF) is the largest worldwide resource for professional coaches and for those who are seeking a coach. It is a non-profit organisation formed by individual members who practice coaching.

#### Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision

<https://apecs.org>

The Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS) is the top level professional membership body for executive coaching, supervision and advisory services to corporate organisations. It is a not-for-profit organisation providing accreditation for executive coaches and supervisors, professional standards, good practice guidance and information about executive coaching and supervision.

#### Association of Coaching Supervisors

[www.associationofcoachingsupervisors.com](http://www.associationofcoachingsupervisors.com)

The Association of Coaching Supervisors was formed by people who care passionately about coaching supervision. The association focuses on supervision to support the demand for, and current growth in, supervision. It provides a way of finding qualified coaching supervisors and a platform to enable coaches and buyers of coaching to understand supervision better and to connect quickly and easily.

## Coaching Networks

### Coaching and Mentoring Network

The Coaching and Mentoring Network website is a free information resource dedicated to the broad field of coaching and mentoring. Subscribers can join the coach and mentor referral service to promote their services as a coach and to find like-minded colleagues for peer consulting, supervision and networking.

### Scottish Coaching Collaborative

The Scottish Coaching Collaborative is part of Workforce Scotland, which is an initiative to develop, support and transform workers across all public service organisations in Scotland. Scottish Coaching Collaborative supports workers at all levels to access coaching developments. It provides an executive coaching service for senior leaders at a competitive rate, as well as a flexible coaching framework to help internally trained coaches work across organisations.

## Websites related to coaching

### Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) is the professional body for human resources (HR) and people development with a commitment to championing better work and working lives. CIPD provides expertise and research on a broad range of topics relating to work, including coaching and mentoring.

## Journals

### Coaching at Work

Coaching at Work is an independent publication targeted for all those involved in coaching. The magazine is published six times a year and each issue has a blend of coaching news, theory and practical features. Subscription includes access to the online resources.

### Coaching: an International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice

Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice is an international, peer reviewed journal with explicit focus on the theory, research and practice of coaching. The journal is dedicated to the advancement of coaching research and practice with an international perspective. Broad and interdisciplinary in focus, this publication includes original research, reviews, case studies and invited papers. All articles make an explicit link to coaching practice.

## **International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring**

The International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring is an open access, international peer reviewed journal which is published online twice a year in February and August. The aim of the journal is to: provide evidence-based, well-researched resources for students, professionals, corporate clients, managers and academic specialists who need to be at the forefront of developments in the field; offer an accessible yet powerful discussion platform for the growing number of coaching and mentoring practitioners seeking to validate their practice.

## **Training Journal**

Training Journal is an online resource and magazine aimed at learning and development professionals. The journal's aim is to deliver informative, timely and practical content of the highest quality to help anyone involved in workplace learning and development.





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## **6. Supporting resources**

## Resource 1 – Practical coaching tools

Here are four practical coaching tools to supplement the information on core coaching skills outlined in section 2. Additional practical coaching tools and tips can be found in the books listed under Coaching skills and Coaching models and approaches in section 5.

### 1. Using powerful questions

Jenny Rogers (Jenny Rogers, 2004) suggests a number of powerful questions which can be used to initiate and support a coaching conversation.

- What is the issue?
- What makes this an issue now?
- Who owns this issue?
  
- On a scale of 1-10, how important is this issue to you?
- On a scale of 1-10, how much energy do you have to find a solution?
- What are the implications of doing nothing?
  
- What have you already tried?
- Imagine this problem has been solved. What would you see, hear, feel?
- What is standing in the way of that outcome?
  
- What is your responsibility for what has been happening?
- What early signs are there that things might be getting better?
- Imagine you are at your most resourceful. What do you say to yourself about this issue?
  
- What are the options for action?
- What criteria will you use to judge the options?
- Which option seems the best one against those criteria?
- What is the next step?
- When will you take it?

### 2. Using open questions for different purposes in a coaching conversation

We have provided a list of possible open questions arranged under several headings which relate to aspects of a coaching conversation. Depending on the nature and stage of the coaching conversation, you may find it useful to draw on some of these questions.

This tool is based on notes on useful open coaching and mentoring questions in the Coaching and Mentoring Training Resource Pack written by Duncan Wallace and Joette Thomas of Animate Consulting for the Care Inspectorate and the SSSC. Many of these questions are based on questions published by David Clutterbuck. As an expert in



the field of mentoring and coaching, David Clutterbuck suggests that as they develop their own coaching practice, coaches add and develop their own powerful coaching questions (David Clutterbuck, 2013).

It is the coachee who decides the focus of a coaching conversation, areas for development or particular goals they want to achieve. As a coach, remember that it is not about asking the right question, it is more about asking a question which allows the coachee to reflect on their issue, gain insights and make their own choices.

Open questions can help the coachee explore their issue in the coaching conversation. Some questions will help the coachee to continue their reflections beyond the coaching conversation. Be open to the possibility that the coachee may not be ready for or may not want to answer some questions. Sometimes it can be more helpful to the coachee to leave space for them to reflect rather than asking another question right away.

### **Questions for focus**

- What is your biggest concern?
- What are you most proud of at the moment?
- What matters most to you at the moment?
- What have you been avoiding thinking about lately?
- What is frustrating you most right now?
- What issue do you think others would like you to resolve?
- What are you finding most difficult to resolve?
- What opportunities might you be missing?
- What would you feel better about if you could get it off your chest?
- If you could change one thing today, what would it be?

### **Questions for framing the issue**

- How would you summarise the issue in one sentence?
- Who and what is involved?
- What is the specific dilemma?
- What has prevented you sorting out this dilemma before now?
- What is stopping you getting on with something you know to be important?
- What is your gut instinct telling you to do about it?
- What is the main thing stopping you making progress?
- How frequently does this issue arise?
- What position have you adopted?
- What is your motivation?
- When is this an issue for you?
- How strongly do you feel about it?
- What is the pressure to resolve this issue? Or, what is the pressure to avoid dealing with this issue?
- What are the assumptions you are making?
- What are you trying to achieve?

## **Questions to analyse implications**

- How does this matter to you?
- What is the current impact (on you, on others)?
- What is at stake?
- How does this fit into the big picture?
- What happens if you don't resolve it?
- What are the forces at play in this issue?
- What lies behind each of these forces?
- Where is the issue leading?
- How might you have contributed to this issue?
- How does this fit with your values?
- What are you likely to regret?

## **Question to facilitate insight**

- What are your responsibilities in this?
- What have you been avoiding?
- What do you want to happen? For what reason?
- What would someone you trust and respect tell you to do?
- Where are the disconnections in this situation between what you say and what you do?
- What is the question no one wants to ask or be asked?
- How much do you really care?
- What do you know now?
- What patterns are familiar to you?

## **Questions to support reframing**

- How do you now see the issue differently?
- What precisely has changed in your perception of the issue?
- How does your new understanding change your attitudes towards your role/your motivations?
- Who do you now think owns this issue?
- Who has the power/responsibility to resolve it?
- What is important to you now?
- What if you did the opposite of what you do now?
- If you were working entirely to your own agenda, what would you do now?
- What do you now understand/not understand?
- What are the opportunities open to you?

## **Questions to stimulate creating options**

- If you had no limitations on you, what would you do?
- What would your role model do?
- What is the worst thing you could do?
- What is the best thing you could do?

- What would be most motivating for you?
- Which behavior or attitude needs to shift in you?
- Who else could help you resolve this issue?
- If you could focus all of your energy on this, what would you do first?
- Where could you start?
- What needs to be resolved and how quickly or completely?

### **Questions to stimulate action**

- What are you going to do about it?
- When do you want to achieve this?
- When and how will you get started?
- How committed are you to what needs to be done?
- How much courage do you need?
- Who can provide you with support and encouragement?
- How will you feel once you have resolved the issue?
- What needs to be said that has gone unsaid?
- What obstacles do you foresee and how will you overcome them?
- What one action or decision would free you up to get on with this?
- What deadlines do you want to set for yourself?
- How will you measure progress towards this goal?

## **3. Powerful questions for different stages of a coaching conversation**

This tool is based on a resource developed by the Kinharvie Institute and is used with their kind permission.

Asking powerful questions in the course of a coaching conversation invites the coachee to find their own clarity, action or insight. Below we have provided examples of powerful questions arranged under the three broad headings of beginnings, middles and endings.

### **Questions for beginnings**

You may find it helpful to use one, two or several of these questions to support your coaching conversation in the beginnings phase.

- To what extent are you here by choice?
- How are you choosing to be here today?
- What might block you in giving your best today?
- What do you do to energise yourself?
- What have you done recently that you are proud of?
- What is the most fun you have had recently?
- What is the positive feedback you receive that still surprises you?
- What is a risk you took in the last month?
- How do you make a difference at work?

- What words or phrases come to mind to describe your working style?
- What is the gift you have that you do not fully acknowledge?
- What is the crossroads you find yourself at this point in time?
- What is a question you are thinking about a lot at this point in your life?
- What is your question for today? Or: what is your learning question for today?
- What needs to happen in this conversation for it to be successful for you?
- How much energy do you have for resolving this issue?
- How would the situation look if there were no problem?
- How will you know if this coaching has been successful?
- If the issue was magically resolved tomorrow, what would the situation look like?

## Questions for middles

You may find it helpful to use one, two or several of these questions to support your coaching conversation in the middles phase.

- What is the story you tell yourself about being in this situation/this organisation?
- What are the 'pay-offs' you receive from holding onto this story?
- How does this story limit your possibilities?
- How does the story give meaning to your life (or the life of the organisation)?
- Recognising the limitation of this story, what could be a new story that is full of possibility, generosity and gifts?
- What have you done to create the very thing that you are most troubled by?
- What are you holding onto that the other person (people) still doesn't know about?
- What are you holding onto that it is now time for you to release?
- What forgiveness are you withholding?
- What resentment do you hold?
- What is the 'no' or refusal, that you keep postponing?
- What have you said 'yes' to that you no longer really mean?
- If I could wave a magic wand and give you all the courage and insight you needed, what would you do?
- What is the first step? When will you take it?
- What is the one thing you would like to do more of?
- What has past experience shown you?
- What are the pros, cons and interesting alternatives?
- How much do you care?
- What possibilities do you see now that weren't obvious to you before?
- What conditions will you need to create so that you can successfully implement the changes you want to make?
- What challenges may arise in following these steps? What do you need to do to overcome these?
- As you implement your decisions, what do you need to pay attention to?
- What is one thing you could do to support implementation of this approach?
- What is the commitment you are willing to make that constitutes a risk or major shift for you?
- How will you measure your progress?
- What early signs are there that things might be getting better for you?
- How can you celebrate what you have accomplished?

## Questions for endings

You may find it helpful to use one, two or several of these questions to support your coaching conversation in the endings phase.

- With respect to the coaching, what is working/not working? What needs to change?
- What one word describes how you are leaving the coaching conversation today?
- If asked tomorrow what happened in the coaching conversation today, what would you say?
- What happened today that surprised you?
- What will you start doing/stop doing/do more of as a result of today's coaching conversation?
- What stands out most in your mind about this conversation?

## 4. Working with the GROW coaching model

The GROW model of coaching provides a useful framework for an informal coaching conversation or a formal coaching session. For more information about the theoretical foundation and application of the GROW model see chapter 4 by Graham Alexander (in Jonathan Passmore, 2006) and 'Coaching for Performance' (John Whitmore, 2009).

The four elements in the model are below.

- Goal – what do you want to achieve in this session or in the longer term?
- Reality – tell me your story, where are you now?
- Options – what are the possibilities and choices you have?
- Will – what are you committing to as a way forward?

When you first use this model, it is best to work through these four elements in order. But as you become more experienced in your coaching practice, you will find the elements do not have to be used in order.

We have provided a list of possible questions which can be used for each element in the GROW model.

### Goal

- What is the aim of this conversation?
- What do you want to achieve in the long term?
- What does success look like?
- How much personal control or influence do you have over the goal?
- What is a short-term goal along the way?

### Reality

- What is happening now?
- Who is involved?

- What have you done about this so far?
- What is missing in this situation?
- What do you have that you are not using?

## **Options**

- What options do you have?
- Which option(s) will you choose?
- What else could you do?
- What if ... (time, authority, resources)?

## **Will/way forward**

- Which option(s) would you choose?
- How will this meet your objectives?
- When precisely are you going to start and finish each step?
- What could hinder you in taking your first steps?
- What support will you need and from whom?
- How committed are you on a scale of 1-10 to taking these agreed actions?
- What prevents this from being 10?

Remember that coaching relies on good listening. There is no point in asking good questions if you do not listen carefully to the answers.

- Pay attention to the coachee and hear what they say, their words and how they are speaking those words.
- Suspend your own judgement so you can remain focused on the coachee and be there for them.
- Do not distract yourself thinking of your next question. If, when the coachee has finished answering, you are not ready with your next question, do not panic. This leaves the coachee space and time to reflect and say more at greater depth if they wish.
- Let your next question flow from the coachee's answers and reflections.

## Resource 2 – References for coaching models

As noted in section 3, it is beyond the scope of this resource to advocate for any one type of coaching over any other or to provide the detail of any particular coaching model.

To support your exploration of a coaching approach which is suited to your purposes, we have provided a summary of **types of coaching** (in table A) and a list of current **theoretical approaches and coaching models** (table B) with suggested references for further reading. Numbers in brackets refer to resources listed as references in section 5. Also see the list of further resources in section 5.

**Table A: Types of coaching**

<b>Type of coaching (*see note)</b>	<b>Comments on theoretical approaches and models</b>	<b>Suggested reference and further resources</b>
1. Skills and performance coaching	<p>Skills and performance coaching is most closely related to the following theoretical approaches to coaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• solution-focused</li> <li>• person-centred</li> <li>• narrative</li> <li>• cognitive developmental</li> <li>• positive psychology</li> <li>• neuro-linguistic programming.</li> </ul>	Chapter 14 by Bob Tschannen-Moran in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
2. Developmental coaching	<p>Developmental coaching is most closely linked to the following theoretical approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• person-centred</li> <li>• cognitive-behavioural</li> <li>• narrative</li> <li>• cognitive developmental.</li> </ul>	Chapter 15 by Elaine Cox and Peter Jackson in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
3. Transformational coaching	<p>Links to the following theories and methodologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• psychodrama</li> <li>• Gestalt psychology</li> <li>• systemic family therapy</li> <li>• levels of learning.</li> </ul>	Chapter 16 by Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
4. Executive and leadership coaching	Links to a range of theories and methodologies.	Chapter 17 by Jon Stokes and Richard Jolly in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
5. Team coaching	<p>Team coaching relates to the following theories and approaches to coaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performance coaching</li> <li>• cognitive behavioural</li> <li>• solutions-focused coaching and positive psychology</li> <li>• developmental coaching.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 19 by David Clutterbuck in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)</p> <p>David Clutterbuck, 2007</p> <p>Peter Hawkins, 2014</p>

\*Note to table A: This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of types of coaching. We have featured those most relevant to coaching within the context of social services.



**Table B: Theoretical approaches and coaching models**

<b>Theoretical approach and coaching model</b> (*see note)	<b>Suggested reference and further resources</b>
1. Psychodynamic approach to coaching	Chapter 1 by Graham Lee in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
2. Cognitive behavioural coaching	Chapter 2 by Helen Williams, Stephen Palmer and Nick Edgerton in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)  Chapter 6 by Michael Neenan in Excellence in Coaching: the industry guide (Jonathan Passmore, 2006)
3. Solution-focused approach to coaching	Chapter 3 by Michael Cavanagh and Anthony Grant in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)  Chapter 5 by Anthony M Grant in Excellence in Coaching: the industry guide (Jonathan Passmore, 2006)  Paul Jackson and Mark McKergow, 2007
4. Person-centred approach to coaching	Chapter 4 by Stephen Joseph in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
5. Gestalt approach to coaching	Chapter 5 by Peter Bluckert in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)  John Leary-Joyce, 2014
6. Existential coaching	Chapter 6 by Ernesto Spinelli in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
7. Ontological coaching	Chapter 7 by Alan Sieler in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
8. Narrative coaching	Chapter 8 by David Drake in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
9. Psychological development in adulthood and coaching	Chapter 9 by Tatiana Bachkirova in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
10. Transpersonal coaching	Chapter 10 by John Rowan in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)  Chapter 8 by John Whitmore and Hetty Einzig in Excellence in Coaching: the industry guide (Jonathan Passmore, 2006)

<b>Theoretical approach and coaching model</b> (*see note)	<b>Suggested reference and further resources</b>
11. Behavioural coaching – the GROW model	Chapter 4 by Graham Alexander in Excellence in Coaching: the industry guide (Jonathan Passmore, 2006)  John Whitmore, 2009
12. Positive psychology approach to coaching	Chapter 11 by Ilona Boniwell, Carol Kauffman and Jordan Silberman in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
13. Transactional analysis and coaching	Chapter 12 by Rosemary Napper and Trudi Newton in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)
14. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) approach to coaching	Chapter 13 by Bruce Grimley in The Complete Handbook of Coaching (Elaine Cox et al, 2014)  Chapter 7 by Ian McDermott in Excellence in Coaching: the industry guide (Jonathan Passmore, 2006)
15. Co-active coaching	Laura Whitworth et al, 2007
16. Challenging coaching	John Blakey and Ian Day, 2012
17. Mindfulness and coaching	Liz Hall, 2013
18. Somatic coaching	Richard Strozzi-Heckler, 2014
19. Presence-based coaching	Doug Silsbee, 2008

\*Note to table B:

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of theories, models and approaches related to coaching. We have featured those most relevant to social services.

## Resource 3 - How to practise and develop as a coach

The resource provides those interested in practising as a coach with more information about what is required. This is informal guidance about what is required to practice as a coach within social services.

1. Capabilities and capacities.
2. Skills and knowledge.
3. Coaching competency frameworks.
4. Regular practice, reflective practice and feedback.
5. Alignment with the purpose of coaching.
6. Commitment to ongoing professional development.
7. Formal coaching qualification.
8. Individual coach accreditation.

Coaching is an emerging profession which means there are no hard-and-fast rules about the professional practice of coaching. While this allows flexibility, it also means the field of coaching can be a confusing one for practitioners.

To practice as a coach who is engaged more regularly in formal one-to-one or team based coaching there are some fundamental requirements.

### 1. Capabilities and capacities

The capabilities and capacities needed by a coach are largely captured in our description of the values, behaviours and principles which underpin a coaching approach (see section 2).

There is also a strong link between the capabilities required by a coach and the leadership capabilities outlined in the Strategy for developing leadership capacity in Scotland's social services, 2013-2015 (SSSC, 2014). In particular:

- self-leadership
- motivating and inspiring
- empowering.

### 2. Skills and knowledge

To be an effective coach, you need to be able to practice each of the core skills of attending, listening, summarising, questioning and giving feedback as explained in section 2.

You also need to be committed to your continuing development of these skills through regular practice, self-reflection and seeking feedback from others on the impact of your skills in practice.

While you do not need to have specific knowledge about the area of practice or expertise of your coachees, you do need to have knowledge about the process of coaching. You need to be aware of how to manage the boundaries around the coaching relationship with sensitivity and due attention to confidentiality.

### **3. Coaching competency frameworks**

Each of the three main professional bodies for coaching have developed coaching competency frameworks. These frameworks provide useful guidance about the range of capabilities, capacities, skills and knowledge required for practising effectively and safely as a coach.

- Core competencies published by the International Coaching Federation (ICF).
- Competence framework published by the European Coaching and Mentoring Council (EMCC).
- Competency framework published by the Association for Coaching (AC).

### **4. Regular practice, reflective practice and feedback**

To practise effectively as a coach, you need to be committed to reflective practice. This means you take the time to reflect on your practice as a coach before and after each coaching session. It means looking for opportunities to receive feedback from your coachees about your coaching practice and the impact of the coaching on their learning and development. You take account of your self-reflection and feedback from others in how you continue to develop your practice as a coach.

### **5. Alignment with the purpose of coaching**

If you practise as a coach who is internal to the organisation, it is important you are clear about how coaching is being used in your organisation. An internal coach needs to make sure they fulfil the role of coach in alignment with the stated purpose of coaching.

### **6. Commitment to ongoing professional development**

When you practice as a coach, it is important you make arrangements for regular coaching supervision. If you are one of several internal coaches, it is likely your organisation has made formal arrangements for coaching supervision. If there are no arrangements or you are practicing as a coach on your own, it is important you identify a coaching supervision arrangement which suits your needs and the level of your coaching practice.

See the International Coaching Federation, European Coaching and Mentoring Council and Association for Coaching websites for details and guidance about coaching supervision. You may also find the information about coaching supervision on the Association of Coaching Supervisors website helpful.

It is also advisable, if you are practicing regularly, that you take part in regular continuing professional development (CPD) to support your ongoing development as a coach. There are useful CPD ideas on the ICF, EMCC and AC websites.

You may find it helpful to subscribe to Coaching at Work, a practitioner journal for people who practice coaching. The Scottish Coaching Collaborative has details of networking and CPD events in Scotland for people practising as coaches.

## **7. Formal coaching qualification**

If you want to develop as a coach you also need to consider doing a formal coaching qualification or a qualification in a related discipline.

It is beyond the scope of this resource to provide the details of any particular coaching qualifications or to recommend any particular coach training provider. However the following questions will help you reflect on what you want from a coaching qualification and how you will choose a coach training provider.

### **What are you looking for in a coach training programme?**

What is your stage of development and experience as a coach?  
Are you simply looking for more practical experience of using coaching skills in informal coaching conversations? Or, are you hoping to develop as a coach who can work one-to-one or with teams in a more formal arrangement?

### **How much of the programme is allocated to providing you with direct experience of practice as a coach, of being coached and of observing others coaching?**

Coaching is a practical skill. It is really important that a programme supports you to get lots of practice in coaching and supports your ongoing practice development through the provision of high quality feedback.

### **What is the level of accreditation of the coach training provider?**

There is an increasing requirement for coach training providers to undergo a formal accreditation process with one of the coaching professional bodies. There are different levels of accreditation for these coaching qualifications.

If the formal accreditation of your coach training provider is important to you, ask them to explain which professional body has accredited their qualifications and at what level is their qualification recognised.

### **What are the core underpinning principles of the coach training provider's approach?**

How do these principles align with your own values and learning style?

## **How does the coach training provider support participants to develop their own approach to coaching?**

Some coach training providers will shape their qualifications around specific models of coaching. Ask them to be specific about the nature and scope of their qualification. If you are interested in exploring a range of approaches and developing your own approach to coaching, ask them how you will be supported to do this.

## **What do people who have completed the programme say about their experience?**

The best way to find out more about a coaching training programme is to ask people who have already done the programme. Ask the coach training provider to provide you with some links to alumni or ask around your network for recommendations.

## **8. Individual coach accreditation**

An increasing number of organisations which use external coaches and are developing internal coaches stipulate that they need to have individual coach accreditation. Achieving individual coach accreditation means you have submitted a portfolio of evidence to a particular coaching professional body that has been assessed to reach a certain standard.

The coaching professional bodies operate different processes for individual accreditation. Individual coach accreditation incorporates:

- evidence of a certain amount of coaching practice (coaching hours)
- achievement of a recognised coaching qualification (training hours)
- evidence of regular coaching supervision by a suitably experienced coaching supervisor
- evidence of regular continuing professional development as a coach
- evidence of self-reflective practice in relation to your coaching practice.

There are several levels of individual accreditation which are described differently by the different professional bodies. These are:

- practitioner or foundation level
- senior practitioner or advanced level
- master practitioner level.

As coaching is an emerging profession the approach to individual coaching accreditation is still changing. It is beyond the scope of this resource to provide detailed guidance about how to achieve individual coaching accreditation.

It is good practice as a coach to consider the areas covered in any one of the professional body's accreditation processes. For example, even if you decide you do

not want to seek individual coach accreditation, it is a good idea to maintain your own records of your coaching practice supported by self-reflective practice.

Be aware that completion of a coaching qualification does not mean you are an accredited coach. The achievement of a coaching qualification recognised by any one (or all) of the professional bodies is a good first step along the path to achieving individual coach accreditation.

For more information on individual coach accreditation, see the websites for each of the coaching professional bodies. Also see the website for the Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS).



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