

October 2014 Guidance on the GROW-ME Coaching Model

Appreciative Inquiry

Consider the evaluation that you completed this summer:

- ✓ What was one of the goals that you identified?
- ✓ If the ideal/perfect outcome is a 10, what number (on a scale of 1 to 10) are you at now?
- ✓ What do you see as the first action you need to take to get from where you are now to a 10?
- ✓ What could each person commit to this action/outcome?
- ✓ What will be your “story of success?”

Guidance

There are many different coaching methods that can be used to help Leagues reach their membership and leadership goals. It’s just a matter of deciding which method works best for your coaching relationship and the needs of the League involved. The GROW coaching model is arguably the most commonly used and known “formal” coaching model. Oxfam has adapted the GROW model by adding the “ME” component in a publication describing best practices to coach workplace peers/colleagues who are geographically-dispersed around the world. [This video](#) gives an overview of the Grow Model (as applied in a workplace setting) and the ways in which it can be effective.

GROW-ME Coaching Method

G = Goal...Exploring “What do you want?” This should be clear and as specific as possible.

R = Reality...Exploring “What is happening now?” Being honest about the starting point will ensure that we put our goals within reach

O = Options...Exploring “What could you do now/next time?” This is the time to think creatively and explore new and different possibilities. Coaches should encourage these ideas but not be the one making suggestions.

W = Will...Identifying “What will you do...and by when?” How can we make our preferred “option” into our “reality?” Note: Some coaches substitute or add a “W” at the end for *Wrap-Up* or *Way Forward* (as in the video above). The key is how do we move forward, get to action.

M = Monitor...Deciding “What progress (in real-time/at pre-designated benchmarks) are you making against the larger strategic outcomes and/or performance goal for the indicators you decide to monitor?”

E = Evaluate...Assessing values for “how you will know you have achieved success,” based on performance outcomes that align with and support accomplishment of the League’s goals. In short, how will you know that you achieved your goal? And, when you do, what comes next?

The success of the GROW ME model comes from the basic principle that asking great questions leads to great results. Traditionally, the GROW ME Model assumes that the coach is not an expert in the

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situation being discussed. The coach must try to act as a facilitator, helping the League select the best options rather than offering advice or direction. Thus questions are the best way for the coach to not only familiarize themselves with the scenario but it also forces the coachee to examine their own project through a new lens.

5 Reasons to consistently be asking open-ended questions:

1. **All the info is with the coachee.** The local League is the resident expert on that League. The coachee always knows far more about the situation than the coach.
2. **Asking creates buy-in.** People are more motivated to carry out their own ideas and solutions.
3. **Asking empowers.** Just asking can empower people to do things they couldn't do on their own. Asking = taking opinions and ideas seriously.
4. **Asking develops leadership capacity.** Asking builds the responsibility muscle and that develops leaders.
5. **Asking creates authenticity.** There is no greater relational gift than to have someone see the real you and value it.

Coaches should focus on asking open-ended questions that encourage the coachee to move beyond one word answers and into a space where they are brainstorming solutions to their challenges and working towards their goals.

A good way of thinking about the GROW ME Model is to think about how you'd plan a road trip. First, you decide where you are going (the goal), and where that is in relation to where you currently are (your current reality). Next you would explore various routes (the options) to your destination and then you would ensure that you're committed to making the journey, and are prepared for the obstacles that you could meet on the way (establishing the will). During your trip you would continue to check the map and ensure that you are going in the right direction (monitoring) and once the trip was over, you would probably discuss it with other and determine whether the route you chose was the best one possible for a variety of reasons (evaluation).

At the heart of the MLD program is the strong desire to build our membership base and a more systematic leadership ladder; one that ensures the League will be strong enough to carry out our democracy building and protecting work for years to come. From a practical stand point we need to be asking ourselves and the Leagues we coach 'What's the smallest change that we can make to have the biggest impact?' By asking questions that address capacity building in a strategic way, the coach can help Leagues to make the changes that they want to have the highest payoff possible.

Additional Resources:

- [70 Awesome Coaching Questions Using the GROW Model](#)
- [Better Coaching Using the GROW Model](#)
- [GROW ME webinar and slides](#)
- The Training Consortium: [Coaching Toolkit for the League of Women Voters](#)

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COACHING TIP

This is a new portion of the guidance FOR COACHES ONLY.

The FIVE OPTIONS Technique

This is a great technique that you can use when talking through the “options” portion of the GROW ME model or whenever brainstorming with Leagues about possible solutions. It is based on research that shows that we (as human beings) generally need to push ourselves to start thinking creatively or “outside the box.” The first 2-3 options that we generate to solve a problem are usually well within our comfort zone (i.e., things we know or have done). While in many situations one of those may be the “right” answer, it is sometimes useful to push ourselves into that creative zone to look at possible new options. This starts to happen when we look for 5 options to reach a goal or solve a problem. Those later options help to get us “unstuck” and move us to a creative space – a space where change is possible.

How do we get to that space? We need to ask questions. Here are some suggested questions for using the FIVE OPTIONS technique:

- *What are five options for how you could tackle this challenge?*
- *What else could you do?*
- *If you got really radical, what would you try?*
- *What have you done in similar situations?*
- *Who else could you bring into this?*
- *What is already being done? How does this fit?*
- *Which of these would you like to pursue?*