# ACTIVATE THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA USING COACHING CULTURE

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**Abstract:**
Organizations do a lot in order to apply the learning and development outcomes. The ultimate end for the development agenda is the learning and increase the capabilities level. Usually, the satisfaction results don't match the expectations. In some cases, blaming came that people don't apply what they learn in the development programs. The hardest phase to measure is the post development program. After delivering, application is the key. People usually unable to remember the most of content is a fact that everyone exposed to. Applying coaching culture is a key idea to assure the application of the learning and development program. Actually, it increases the probability of information retention. To do so, organizations need to create a coaching culture that help the progress to activate learning and assure the application. Coaching culture could be linked to achieve the overall organization aims and purpose.

**Keywords:** coaching, learning, development, training, information retention, knowledge application, learning ROI, capabilities, skills

## 1. Introduction

Organizations invest a lot in learning and development. Huge concern regarding the ROI and how to apply and activate the benefits of learning agenda. Coaching is one of key activation tool to encourage applying learning outcomes. Creating a coaching culture that be embedded commonly in the organization DNA is a key to build capabilities.

Coaching is part of the development tools to improve and empower individual skills in a specific area. It's about improving existing competencies rather than creating them from scratch. It helps individual and organisation, to achieve their goals and objectives by asking the individual not telling.

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Coaching application in work environment could be based on different models. All drive for more empowering and based on asking not telling and then paraphrasing. The following describes two of coaching models (GROW and OSKAR). "*Coaching is a way of managing, a way of treating people, a way of thinking, a way of being*" (Whitmore, 2009). Following one of such models will help to create sustainable style of coaching:

## A. GROW model

GROW model it's a model that base on 4 tactics that need to be followed in sequences. There is an overlap between them, however, the model works as per the following guideline:

| GROW model | Description | Questions Samples |
|---|---|---|
| **G**oal | Establishing the goal. Asking the questions that encourage the individual to identify his/her goal. | What is the aim of discussion? What do you want to achieve in long / short term? |
| **R**eality | Identifying the current situation by asking the questions that extract the exact situation in order to know what's happening. Clearly define the gap between the current situation (reality) and the desired situation (goal). | What is happening / involved now? What you have done so far? |
| **O**ptions | Finding the alternative solutions, choose and evaluate the best suitable one depending on the situation in order to close the gap between the reality and goal. Don't forget to consider 'do-nothing' as an option may exist in any solution. | What options do you have? What else could you do? What if? |
| **W**ill | Reach to the jointly agreed action plan that will be considered in the next period. Apply SMART for each item of that action plan. It answers the questions of want / what / where / when / how? Decide the next coaching meeting for the evaluation and constructive feedback purposes in order to measure the progress and decide the corrective processes. | What are you going to do? When you will do it? How will you overcome them? |



**Figure 1:** GROW Model

## B. OSKAR model

Like GROW model, OSKAR has its own tactics that focus on outcomes and escalate the results. Adding review to this model help the assurance of the coaching practises:

- **O**utcome: the desired achievement and how to reach it from current situation. Asking the questions that confirm the understanding of the ultimate outcome.
- **S**caling: evaluate the current situation by giving a rate level where we are now and where we want to be. Identify a clear gap by this measuring.
- **K**now how: the competency and knowledge that already acquired and currently available verses what the competencies that required in order to close the gap between the current situation and the desired outcome. Considering previous experience that came up with similar scenario may help.
- **A**ffirm and **A**ction: the jointly agreed action plan that need to be taken in order to reach the desired outcome by using the current and developed /acquired competencies.
- **R**eview: evaluate and monitoring the action plan. Determining if the change is headed to success path or there is a need to find alternative solutions to reach to the successful outcome.



**Figure 2:** OSKAR Model

Coaching has many benefits to individuals some of such benefits are:
1) **Skills development and improvement:** individual can identify and know the current skills and work in the areas that required more improvement.
2) **Support the positive relationship between the employee and line manager:** build the effective relationship, trust and rapport between the team member and leader and that will help to create a suitable atmosphere for a cooperative environment.
3) **Helps to achieve personal goals and objectives:** motivate and encourage people to achieve their desired goals and objectives. Support them to find the right path to achieve the success.

The benefits are not limited to the individuals; they are extending to the organization as well:
1) **Reduces the turnover rate:** by leveraging and identifying the issues from the beginning and at early stage then communicate and help other to explore the solutions
2) **Helps in succession plan:** build your future leader and let them being ready for the next career development.

3) **Keeps the organisation staff motivated and engaged:** by creating supportive environment and making the mistake as opportunity to learn not for blaming purposes, people will be more engaged, motivated and loyal.

Coaching is part of the learning and development types. However, there are differences between coaching and other learning and development methods. There are some similarities between them. In the other hand there are some differences as well. The following table illustrates some of these differences:

**Table 1:** Comparing different type of learning

| Coaching | Classroom | E-Learning |
|---|---|---|
| Almost face-to-face<br>One-to-one<br>Designed depending on the situation<br>More active interaction<br>Ability to challenge<br>Focused on the individual needs<br>Body language plays an important role | Conducted in the lecturing base<br>Usually it's one-to-many<br>It contains more telling (directive)<br>Designed to develop general/personal skills that match all participants levels<br>Pre-designed and pre-structured.<br>Scheduled with time and place that fit with most of participants.<br>Needs logistic requirements. | Accessible 24 hours<br>Needs a technology resources (Internet, PC, … etc).<br>Flexible in the time attend.<br>Can get back to the material.<br>Designed in general way to meet different needs.<br>Participants and audiences are worldwide.<br>The cost and fee are less than other development methods.<br>Lack of body language. |

Coaching can be used to meet organisational objectives using the following ways:

1) **Talent development:** Develops the talent pool that can support the succession plan by developing the skills and make them ready for the next roles and promotion. Transferring the knowledge from the expert to juniors and also train them to be coaches in the next future.

2) **Organization development:** Part of the development for individual in order to keep organisations' development in the competitive level. If coaching culture leveraged within the organization, individuals' skills will be development enhanced or may acquire new skills and this will affect the overall organization learning and organization development.

To have a climate and culture of coaching in the organization, need to apply the below approaches:

1) Linking the coaching goals and objectives to the overall organization aims. Keep it simple and understood by each individual in the organization, communicate it efficiently and effectively and the firm should confirm that the purpose and reason is reached to them in order to receive positive participation with initiative and ownership with strong interactive and positive relationship and outcomes.

2) The coaching system and map, who will coach? Who will be coached? Train the coaches in order to be capable to deliver the efficient coaching. Announce the approach, methodology and that system is very important in order to leverage a coaching culture and how that system will be linked to feed other HR functions

and activity or even going beyond to that to feed overall organization functions and operations in order to accept the change and build the flexibility.

Coaching could be in-house or outsourced. To create a coaching culture, need to advance the coaching skills in house the organization. Advantages and disadvantages of developing in-house coaching:

**Table 2:** Advantages and disadvantages of in-house coaching

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| Knowledge of the culture | Lack of time and commitment |
| Less direct cost | Hidden cost |
| Motivation aspect for managers | Varying ability of coaches |

From the table above, we find different areas both positive and negative to use the in coaching approach. It can be seen that there are less direct costs to use in house coaching. However, hidden costs usually are ignored or not considered. In house coaching gives motivations for managers to train themselves in order to deliver effectively.

## 2. Conclusion

Coaching in business is like sport coaching, improving and enhancing existing skills to employ them in the right path. It supports the business by leveraging its culture and should be supported from top management and executives by considering it as a tool for learning and development for a reward benefits to both individual and organization.

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