



WOMEN INTO LEADERSHIP COACHING PLEDGE

Coaching for Impact



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The West Country Teaching School Alliance and Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance are working together to deliver the desired outcomes of The Coaching Pledge. This work will support and complement the Women Leading in Education South West Network.



CONTENTS

- The Coaching Pledge
- About coaching
 - Why coach
 - What is coaching
 - Who coaches
 - When to coach, when not to coach
- The coaching session
 - The coaching conversation
 - The nature of the coaching conversation
 - Skills for the coaching conversation
- Coaching frameworks
- The NCTL online coaching and mentoring resources
- CEDAR: A coaching framework for education
 - **C**ontract
 - **E**xplore:
 - **D**eepen: What? So what? Now what?
 - **A**ct
 - **R**eview



THE COACHING PLEDGE

The West Country Teaching School Alliance and Dartmoor Teaching School Alliance are working together to deliver the desired outcomes of The Coaching Pledge. This work will support and complement the Women Leading in Education South West Network.

“If you’re a leader and want to help more women to become leaders in education, pledge to coach. Coaching has the potential to transform the leadership journey of women teachers”.

Desired outcomes

- Increase the number of volunteer coaches in each region.
- Increase the take-up of free coaching amongst women teachers in each region.
- Facilitate matching between volunteer coaches and women teachers (via calls, training and events) Ensure that coaching is tailored to support women teachers, including returners, part-time and flexible workers specifically into leadership. Improve the quality and consistency of coaching offered (via guidance or training)
- Evaluate and demonstrate the impact of coaching on women teachers looking to progress into leadership roles



ABOUT COACHING

Why coach?

Coaching is used to support individuals grow and perform at work. It can help coaches to set goals for their career or work towards specific work-related goals. It can be a very supportive process that helps the coachee to build confidence and resilience. It can help coaches find a way to overcome obstacles and find ways forward. Coaching is a developmental process.

Coaching is a unique process of human development, one that works to change a person's life for the better and help him/her achieve a number of specific objectives.

What is coaching?

A coaching session is a conversation between coach and coachee. It focuses on helping the coachee discover answers for themselves. This is because people are more likely to engage with solutions they have come up with themselves than those forced upon them. Coaching is best used as a positive approach for helping others explore goals and actions. Coaching is a useful way of developing other's skills and performance. It can also help tackle specific issues faced by or because of other's actions. Coaching involves:

- A relationship built on trust, open communication and confidentiality.
- The development of agreed goals and expectations.
- A mutual desire to explore, learn and find ways forward.

Who coaches?

Good managers use a coaching methodology to support their team members. If they stay within the scope of their skill set and maintain a structured approach manager can add value and help people build their skills and abilities. The key thing is to separate the manager role from the coaching role.

Sometimes organisations commission a professional coach to coach employees. These professionals draw on a wide range of coaching methods to practice their craft. They may specialise in certain types of coaching, e.g.

- Performance coaching
- Career coaching
- Life coaching

Some organisations have employees who have volunteered to coach others. It is important to recognise that this is often voluntary, at the same time a thorough knowledge of how to coach is crucial to avoid harming the coachee.



A note about mentoring

Like coaching, mentoring is a way of helping people to develop and involves the use of the similar skills to coaching. However, mentoring in the workplace has tended to describe a relationship in which a more experienced colleague transfers his or her greater knowledge and understanding of the work or workplace to support the development of a more junior or inexperienced member of staff.

Mentoring relationships are normally longer term than coaching arrangements e.g. in a succession planning scenario, an NQT might be mentored by a Head of Department over a lengthy period. Mentoring relationships work best when both parties learn from each other e.g. to encourage inclusive working practices. Mentoring is informal, and mentors can provide support in several ways such as:

Sounding board to test ideas and suggestions on

Facilitator to point to potential opportunities, arrange introductions

Advisor to provide objective advice on a range of issues e.g. career opportunities

Expert to act as a source of technical/professional knowledge

Source of organisational material e.g. to explain policies, values

Role model to encourage positive behaviour in others

Critical friend to provide feedback and constructive suggestions on development

Confidant to express fears and hopes to

Motivator to provide encourage towards achievement of goals

Challenger to prompt different thinking and approaches

It is important for the coach to understand the differences between mentoring and coaching. Sometime the coachee may have a coach and a mentor and it is unhelpful if these to sources of support duplicate or conflict in their work.

Mentoring	Coaching
Ongoing relationship, can last years	Set duration and short-term
Informal and meetings can take place as and when the mentee needs some advice, guidance or support	More structured in nature and meetings are scheduled on a regular basis
Takes a broader view of the 'mentee'	Focused on coachee's specific goals
Mentor is usually more experienced and qualified than the 'mentee'	Coach can be coachee's manager, an internal or external coach
Focus is on passing on knowledge and experience and opening doors to career and personal development	Focus is on coachee finding ways to move forward with career or professional development and/or issues at work



When to coach

Examples of situations where coaching is a suitable development tool include:

- Helping to build better interpersonal or managerial skills.
- Developing an individual's potential and providing career support.
- Developing a more strategic perspective after a promotion.
- Handling conflict situations so that they are resolved effectively.
- Tackling performance issues that are not addressed by other training or approaches
- SUPPORTING WOMEN WITH CAREER FACTORS RELATED TO GENDER

When NOT to coach

Sometimes it is not appropriate for a coach to enter a coaching relationship with a potential coachee. It is important to note that coaches are not counsellors or psychotherapists. The coaching conversation should be focussed on work matters and not stray inappropriately into the personal space. Coaches should refer the coachee to the appropriate person or process if:

- The coachee is potentially the victim of a crime.
- The coachee is expressing symptoms of severe distress or mental health issues.

Sometimes a coaching relationship does not work or becomes inappropriate e.g. if there is a personal connection between coach and coachee or organisational factors get in the way e.g. the coach is on the interview panel for a coachee. Under such circumstances, it is best not to enter or to cease the coaching relationship.

A note about coaching supervision

Coaching can be an emotionally draining and to coach effectively we need to be in a position where we are mentally healthy and able to provide complete focus on the coachee.

Sometimes, we may be feeling overwhelmed ourselves or we may find a coachee unlocks unresolved personal issues that we face ourselves and it is important that coaches monitor their capacity to coach.

It is best practice for coaches to be supervised by another coach who is trained coaching supervisor. Coaching supervision provides space for coaches to explore their practice, to reflect, to gain insight and support.



CONTRACTING IN COACHING

Many professional coaches say that their initial contracting session is the single most important meeting they have with the client. It sets the tone and establishes the foundation of the professional relationship upon which all future sessions are held.

At its simplest, contracting in coaching is an agreement regarding how the coach and coachee will work together and the overall goal. It also ensures an effective, problem-free relationship and, in the event of a dispute, will help resolve it. In principle, there are three aspects to contracting in coaching:

Administrative: number of session, how long, spacing.

Professional: Objectives of the coaching, data protection, bounds of confidentiality

Psychological: What coach and coachee expect outside of the contract e.g. full engagement, openness.

If the coach is external, there will also be an additional business contract between the organisation and the coach outlining fees, payment terms etc.

A note about confidentiality

The most straightforward relationship is two-way between the coach and coachee; however most coaching relationships are three-way: coach, coachee and sponsor (employer or line manager).

The coachee must feel comfortable with the bounds of confidentiality and it is important that all parties are clear on this e.g. reporting agreement by coach to sponsor/manager.



SAMPLE Coaching Contract	
Organisation: X School	
Coaching Client: A Client	Coachee's sponsor: Headteacher X
Coaching Objectives: To support the coachee to successfully return to work after maternity leave.	
Coaching Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEDAR coaching framework. • 6 coaching sessions, each lasting 1.5 hours over 6 months. • Data protection requirements in line with GDPR and school policy. 	
Progress reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review against objectives after 3 hours face to face coaching. • Final review after 6 hours coaching. 	
Assessment: Coachee and sponsor feedback at end of coaching period	
Cancellation: Where an individual session is cancelled by the coach or coachee with less than 48 hours' notice the coach or coachee will endeavour to provide another time within two weeks.	
Principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coach will abide by the Association for Coaching code of ethics. • The content of any conversation between the coachee and coach during the coaching will be confidential. The content of the coaching sessions will not be discussed by the coach outside of the coaching sessions. • The coach will report coachee's progress against the coaching objective to the coachee's headteacher at the end of the coaching contract. • The client is responsible for his or her own achievements and success. The coach cannot and does not promise that the client will take any specific action or attain specific goals. • The coach does not provide counselling or therapy. 	
Signed by the Coachee:	
Signed by the Coach:	
Date:	



THE COACHING SESSION

The coaching conversation

The coach needs to take on the role of a person who is genuinely there to support the coachee's development i.e. their focus is on the coachee.

In a coaching conversation, it's important that the coach does not:

- tend to offer advice.
- put forward solutions.
- ask leading question.
- try to bring the coachee around to the coach's way of thinking.

This is a proven way for the coachee to engage with the agreed way forward.

The coachee may need more than one coaching conversation e.g. it can take time to define goals and if this is not clear the coaching conversation may return to this point or not progress constructively. It is the role of the coach to move the coaching conversation on until the coachee commits to a way forward.

Skills for the coaching conversation

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is making a conscious effort to hear what the other person is really saying to you. To do this you need to pay attention to the other person very carefully and not become distracted by what you want to say or other things going on around you.

There are five key active listening techniques. They all help you ensure that you hear the coachee and that they know you are hearing what they say.

Pay Attention

Give the speaker your undivided attention and acknowledge the message. Recognise that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly.

- Look at the speaker directly.
- Put aside distracting thoughts.
- Don't mentally prepare a response.
- Avoid being distracted.
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
- Nod, smile and use other facial expressions.
- Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
- Encourage the coachee to continue with small verbal comments like "uh huh".



Defer Judgment

Interrupting is a waste of time. It can frustrate the coachee and limit full understanding of the message.

- Allow the coachee to finish each point before responding.
- Don't use counter arguments.

Respond Appropriately

Active listening is a model for respect and understanding.

- Be candid, open, and honest in your responses.
- Speak respectfully.

Open questions

Open questions begin with such as: *what, why, how, describe*. They have the following characteristics:

- They ask the coachee to *think* and reflect.
- They will give you opinions and feelings.
- They hand control of the conversation to the *coachee*.

This makes open questions useful as a follow-on from closed questions, to develop a conversation. Examples of open questions are:

*Tell me more about why you did that?
Why is that important to you?*

Using open questions seems to hand the control over to the coachee. However, well-placed questions do leave the coach in control to steer the coachee's interest and engage them.

Powerful questions

Powerful questions can halt evasion and confusion. By asking the powerful question, the coach invites the client to clarify, act and gain insight. The trick to asking powerful questions comes from being curious. Start by telling yourself, *I don't know the answer*. There are several golden rules to powerful questions:

- They are clear and succinct.
- They are impactful: Not every question in a conversation should be powerful. In a 30-minute conversation a coach should aim for 2-3 powerful questions.
- They happen in the moment to focus the coachee.

Examples of powerful questions are:

*What do you mean?
How does it look to you?
How do you feel about it?*

REFLECTING

Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. Reflecting is about reflecting back the words, thoughts and feelings that you have picked up from your coachee and serves both the purpose of showing that you are listening. This helps to build rapport with the coachee and helps them to hear what they have just said and prompt further exploration. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.

An example of a reflective question is:

What I'm hearing is you're apprehensive about the changes...tell me more?

CLARIFYING

Clarifying is about ensuring you have a clear understanding of what your coachee is saying and thinking. In doing so you are also ensuring that they too have a clear understanding of their own situation. An example of a clarifying question is:

If I understand you correctly, what you are saying is...

It takes a lot of concentration and determination to be an active listener. Be deliberate with your listening and remind yourself frequently that your goal is to truly hear what the other person is saying. Set aside all other thoughts and behaviours and concentrate on the message.

REFRAMING

Reframing is seeing the current situation from another perspective, which can be helpful in problem solving, decision making and learning.

For example, if the other person said:

I really doubt that I can do anything about this

you might respond:

What first step could you could take?



THE COACHING FRAMEWORK

A coaching framework

Coaches use many frameworks to move the coaching conversation on and the coachee



towards action. A simple model is:

G	Goal	The Goal is the end point, where the client wants to be. The goal must be defined in such a way that it is very clear to the client when they have achieved it.
R	Reality	The Current Reality is where the client is now. What are the issues, the challenges, how far are they away from their goal?
O	Obstacles	There will be Obstacles stopping the client getting from where they are now to where they want to go. If there were no Obstacles the client would already have reached their goal.
	Options	Once Obstacles have been identified, the client needs to find ways of dealing with them if they are to make progress. These are the Options.
W	Way Forward	The Options then need to be converted into action steps which will take the client to their goal. These are the Way Forward.

The coachee may need more than one coaching conversation e.g. it can take time to define goals and if this is not clear the coaching conversation may return to this point or not progress constructively. It is the role of the coach to move the coaching conversation forward through the stages of GROW until the coachee commits to a way forward. If they are reluctant to commit, then it might be appropriate to return to GR or O.

The coaching conversation may go through all stages of the framework in each coaching session or may be largely in one stage in more than one session.

It is the role of the coach to recognise when the coachee is ready to move to the next stage.



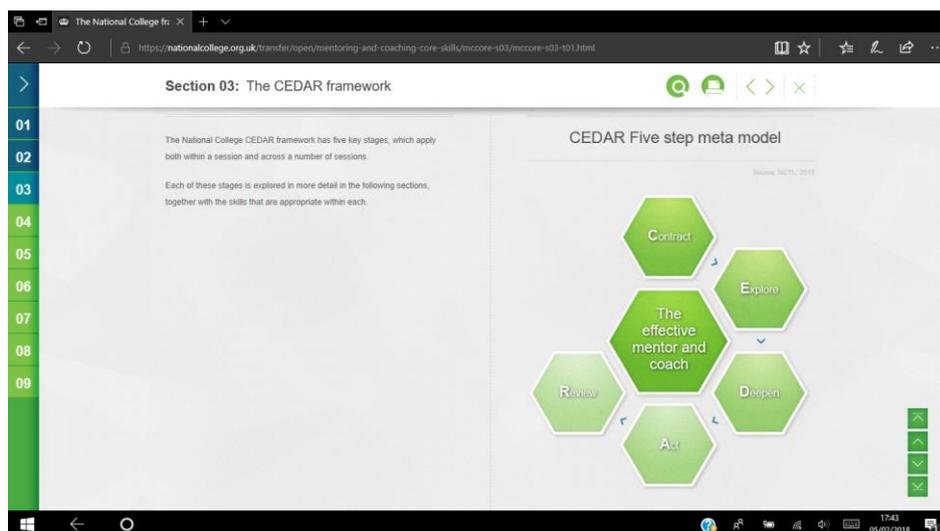
NCTL ONLINE COACHING & MENTORING RESOURCES

There are two online learning resources produced by the National College for Teaching and Learning to equip participants with core knowledge, understanding and skills of mentoring and coaching and their application within an educational context.

Mentoring and Coaching Core Skills:

<https://nationalcollege.org.uk/transfer/open/mentoring-and-coaching-core-skills/mccore-s01/mccore-s01-t01/front-cover.html>

The primary focus is on the development of an understanding of the individual as a mentor or coach and, as such, is particularly relevant for those with limited experience of mentoring or coaching or who want to refresh their skills. The learning resource includes resources and exercises to help participants develop their skills and at its core is the CEDAR coaching framework:



Contract, Explore, Deepen, Act, Review

Mentoring and Coaching Advanced Skills:

<https://nationalcollege.org.uk/transfer/open/mentoring-and-coaching-advanced-skills/mcadv-s01/mcadv-s01-t01/front-cover.html>

The advanced skills is for experienced coaches and looks at deepening coaching and mentoring skills and setting this in an organisational context.



CEDAR: A COACHING FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATION

Contract

The first step in the CEDAR process is contracting along the lines that we have already covered in the session.

Explore

CEDAR focusses on the specific communication skills we have covered of:

- Active listening
- Questioning

Deepen

We have covered the communication skills needed to coach effectively and at the Deepen stage the coach needs to use intuition to know when to coach the coachee to delve deeper into an aspect of the conversation. This is to enable insight and address deeper issues that are blocking progress. The CEDAR framework uses Rolfe's model:

*What?
So what?
What now?*

Act

The role of coaching is to enable the coachee to change in some way. This could be a change of attitude, aspiration or behaviour. This will require action. It is unlikely that the coaching objective will be achieved unless the coachee agrees a way forward and then commits to this. Typical questions for exploring ways forward are:

*What could you do next?
What do you need to stop doing in order to achieve this goal?
What obstacles stand in your way?*

The next step is to get the coachee to commit to specific actions to move forward towards the goal. This will help boost the coachee's motivation. Useful questions here include:

*What will you do first, and when?
What could stop you moving forward? How will you overcome this?
How can you keep yourself motivated?*

Finally, decide when you will review progress. This will provide accountability and allow your coachee to change their approach if the original plan isn't working.

When shall we review progress? At our next session?

Review

Just as the coaching contract has a beginning, it has an end. This should be explicit and managed by the coach. Revisit the contract. What were the agreements on reporting progress and impact? Has the coaching objective been achieved?

Leaving a coaching relationship can be difficult for coachee & coach and is best done face to face. Explore with the coachee *“what next?”* and gain commitment. End on a positive note.