



LEADERSHIP TOOL 005

COACHING QUESTION GUIDE

A practical coaching guide to structure purposeful conversations using the TGROW framework.



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INTRODUCTION

Coaching conversations are most effective when they help people think for themselves rather than simply receive advice. Without a clear structure, however, these conversations can lose focus, jump between topics or end without any meaningful commitment to action. Leaders may ask good questions, but if those questions come at the wrong time or without a clear purpose, the conversation can become unfocused and less productive.

A structured coaching conversation creates clarity for both people. It helps identify the issue that needs attention, establish a meaningful outcome, explore the current reality, consider possible ways forward and agree practical actions. The aim is not to direct someone's thinking, but to encourage reflection, increase ownership and support better decision making through purposeful questioning.

The TGROW framework provides a practical structure for coaching conversations by focusing on the **Topic**, the desired **Goal**, the current **Reality**, the available **Options** and the **Way Forward**. Each stage builds naturally on the previous one, helping the conversation move from understanding the issue towards identifying practical next steps.

The purpose of this guide is not to provide a script that must be followed word for word. Instead, it offers a collection of coaching questions that leaders can draw upon throughout each stage of the TGROW process. Used thoughtfully, these questions help create conversations that are focused, reflective and empowering, while allowing the flexibility and professional judgement that effective coaching requires.

TOPIC

Begin by agreeing what the conversation is really about. Avoid jumping into solutions before both people have a shared understanding of the issue. A clear focus provides direction for the rest of the coaching conversation.

- What would you like to explore today?
- What feels most important for us to discuss?
- What prompted this conversation?
- What is on your mind at the moment?
- What challenge are you currently facing?
- What would you most like to focus on today?
- If we could only discuss one issue, what would it be?
- What would make this conversation worthwhile for you?
- What has been occupying your thinking recently?
- What feels unresolved at the moment?
- What would you most like to gain from this conversation?
- What is the real issue beneath what you have described?
- Why is this important to you right now?
- What has changed that makes this the right time to discuss it?
- Which part of this situation concerns you most?
- What would you like to understand better by the end of our conversation?
- What conversation have you been avoiding?
- If you had complete freedom, what would you most like to talk about?
- What do you hope we will have achieved by the end of our time together?
- Before we begin, is there anything else that feels important to mention?

GOAL

Once the topic is clear, explore what success would look like. Encourage the other person to describe the outcome they are hoping to achieve rather than focusing solely on the problem they want to escape.

- What would success look like?
- What would you like to achieve?
- What outcome are you hoping for?
- How would you know you had been successful?
- What would be different if this was resolved?
- What does a good outcome look like to you?
- What are you ultimately trying to accomplish?
- What would you like to be true by the end of this?
- What would make you feel satisfied with the outcome?
- If everything went well, what would happen?
- How will this benefit you or others?
- What would achieving this allow you to do next?
- What is the most important result you want to achieve?
- How ambitious do you want this goal to be?
- What is within your control to achieve?
- What would success look like from someone else's perspective?
- How will you measure your progress?
- By when would you like to achieve this?
- How committed are you to achieving this goal?
- If you could achieve only one thing, what would it be?

REALITY

Develop an accurate understanding of the current situation. Explore the facts, experiences and influences that have shaped the issue, while remaining curious enough to challenge assumptions and uncover new perspectives.

- What is happening at the moment?
- What has led to this situation?
- What have you already tried?
- What is working well?
- What is not working as you would like?
- What evidence do you have?
- What facts do you know for certain?
- What assumptions might you be making?
- What challenges are you currently facing?
- What obstacles are preventing progress?
- Who else is involved in this situation?
- How are others affected?
- What resources do you already have available?
- What patterns have you noticed?
- What have you learnt from your experience so far?
- What is within your control?
- What is outside your control?
- What might you be overlooking?
- If someone else viewed this situation, what might they notice?
- What is the biggest barrier to moving forward?

OPTIONS

Generate a range of possible approaches before deciding what to do. Encourage creativity, consider different perspectives and resist evaluating ideas too early, allowing possibilities to emerge before narrowing the choices.

- What options do you have?
- What else could you do?
- What approaches have you not yet considered?
- If there were no barriers, what would you try?
- What is another possible solution?
- What advice would you give someone else in this situation?
- What are the advantages of each option?
- What are the disadvantages of each option?
- Which option feels most realistic?
- Which option would have the greatest impact?
- What small step could you take first?
- What resources could help you move forward?
- Who could support or advise you?
- What has worked in a similar situation before?
- What risks should you consider?
- What opportunities might this situation create?
- If you combined two ideas, what might that look like?
- Which option best aligns with your goal?
- What have you not yet considered?
- Which option are you most willing to commit to exploring?

WAY FORWARD

Turn reflection into commitment by agreeing clear next steps. Ensure actions are realistic, owned by the individual and supported by an appropriate timescale, helping the conversation lead to meaningful progress rather than good intentions.

- What will you do first?
- What is your next step?
- When will you take that action?
- What will you do differently as a result of this conversation?
- Which option have you decided to pursue?
- What is your plan from here?
- What support do you need?
- Who will help you stay accountable?
- What obstacles might get in the way?
- How will you overcome those obstacles?
- What resources will you need?
- How confident are you that you will follow through?
- What would increase your confidence?
- How will you measure your progress?
- How will you know you are making progress?
- When should we review how things are going?
- What commitment are you making to yourself today?
- What is the first action you will take after leaving this conversation?
- What will success look like over the coming days or weeks?
- What are you committing to before we next meet?