

Coaching environmental scan

Summary of selected
literature, models and current
practices

Hay Group - November 2013



Coaching

Contents

Executive summary	3
What is coaching?	4
Common themes emerging from this review	4
Coaching in the corporate sector	5
Hay Group Coaching Wheel	5
GROW model	6
Personnel Decisions International (PDI) Development Pipeline	6
Coaching in the education sector	7
Peer coaching – Beverly Showers and Bruce Joyce	7
Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education	8
Instructional coaching – Annenburg Institute for School Reform	9
In-class coaching – Institute for Professional Learning, Department of Education (WA)	9
Conclusion	10

Executive summary

School systems in Australia and around the world are aspiring to improve teacher quality as a critical lever to drive improved student outcomes. In support of this, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) has been established to promote excellence in the profession of teaching, including through fostering high quality learning experiences for teachers and school leaders. Coaching is a professional learning activity that offers opportunity to address development needs that may require additional support to identify and achieve.

The Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework recognises that schools with an effective approach to teacher performance and development have a commitment to ongoing formal and informal feedback and coaching built into their culture. Coaching relationships within schools can range from teacher-teacher, teacher-lead teacher and teacher-principal. In this context, AITSL has engaged Hay Group to provide advice and develop coaching resources specifically for teachers. The resources are in service of helping teachers to improve their professional practice. We recognise that teachers' needs will differ depending on their school context and whether existing coaching programs are in place. The resources will therefore aim to meet a range of teacher needs e.g. to provide support to establish a coaching relationship where a program has not yet been instigated in their school or to assist teachers to get the most out of existing coaching relationships.

This document provides a summary of selected literature, models and current practices in coaching for the purpose of developing an understanding of commonalities between good coaching models and practices. This summary is by no means exhaustive, however it considers a variety of models and practices some of which originated in the corporate sector as well as education-specific materials. The models selected are well referenced and/or have a recognised track record. This approach has been taken so that lessons can be taken from existing work in both the corporate and education sectors. Key themes have emerged from these cross-sector lessons which have been used to underpin the associated resources.

What is coaching?

The term “coaching” is used in a wide variety of contexts to describe an array of relationships. Consequently, there is no universal practice when it comes to coaching. Coaching relationships can and often do cross over with mentoring, teaching by instruction and counselling (see Figure 1). A number of definitions are discussed in the following sections in the context of the various models.

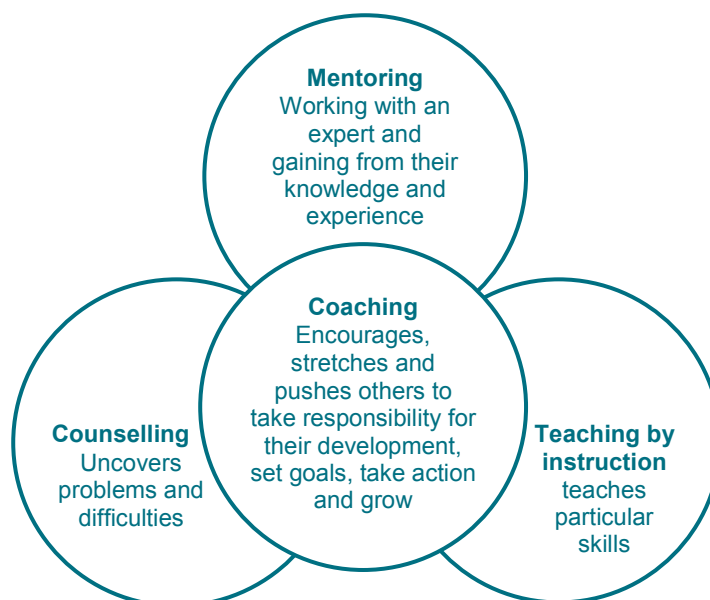


Figure 1

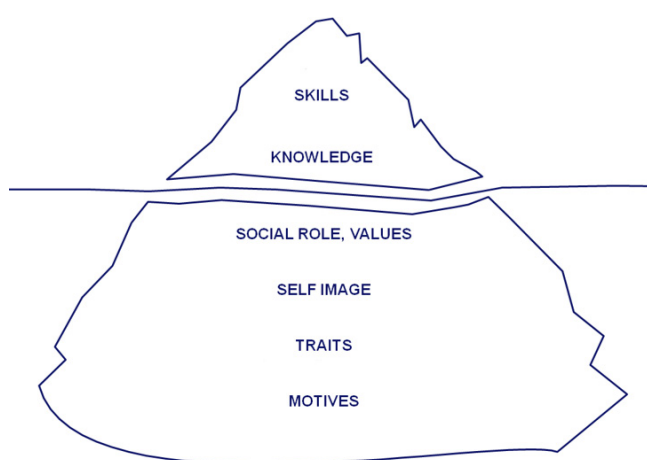


Figure 2

This scan and the resources focus on coaching to improve teacher effectiveness. Coaching can address a range of the characteristics which contribute to the effectiveness of a teacher. These characteristics can be represented by an iceberg, with certain characteristics being easily observable and therefore ‘above the water line’. Others are more deep-seated and ‘below the waterline’ (see Figure 2).

Common themes from successful coaching models and practices

Seven key themes emerged from the coaching models and practices summarised in this paper. These seven themes, contextualised for teachers, indicate that coaching programs in schools should:

1. Centre on the teacher as learner, in the broader context of ultimately improving student outcomes
2. Recognise that coaching involves a teacher going through a process of change
3. Integrate adult learning principles
4. Identify a goal or future state to move towards, which should be based on a shared understanding of what good teaching looks like
5. Proceed through learner-led exploration of issues to build capacity, rather than counselling, mentoring or teaching by instruction
6. Take a systematic approach which provides a frame for the conversation, while maintaining flexibility
7. Be seen as a continuous, collaborative process, not a one-off conversation

The remainder of this paper focuses on seven coaching models and practices.

Coaching in the corporate sector

Hay Group Coaching Wheel

Hay Group defines coaching as “achieving sustained behaviour change through influence with the intent of impacting positively on people’s ability to achieve success in their own terms.” This definition focuses in on two critical aspects of coaching.

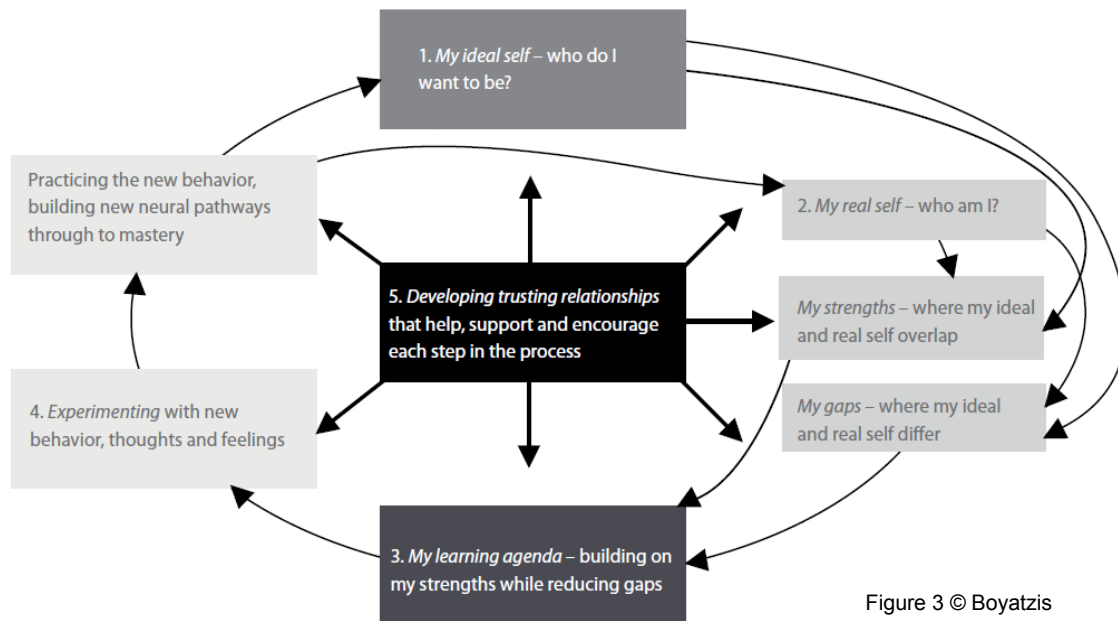


Figure 3 © Boyatzis

First, it puts the individual at the centre of the coaching engagement and secondly, it recognises that coaching is fundamentally about change. Because of this, a critical underpinning framework for the Hay Group approach is the Boyatzis model of self-directed change (see Figure 3).¹ This model is based on the notion that as adults, we only learn what we want to learn. The power of the Boyatzis model is that it describes the change journey in the coachee’s terms, rather than the coach’s. It describes five discoveries, being points where a moment of awareness can lead to sudden change. These are moments that a coach should look out for.

Hay Group’s approach recognises that there are a variety of different coaching conversations that can occur during a single coaching interaction. The coaching wheel² (see Figure 4) helps to distinguish what conversation is needed and helps to move smoothly from one to another. By conceptualising this tool as a wheel, Hay Group recognises that a coaching conversation is not a linear experience, but may move rapidly between different areas.

Based on the work of Carl Rogers, Hay Group sees accurate empathy, non-possessive warmth, genuineness³ and emotional awareness as important competencies in coaches.



Figure 4 © Hay Group

¹ Boyatzis, RE 2006, “An overview of intentional change from a complexity perspective”, *Journal of Management Development*, vol. 25, no. 7, pp 607-623.

² Adapted from Hargrove, Richard 2008, *Masterful Coaching*, 3rd ed, Jossey-Bass, USA.

³ Rogers, Carl R 1951, *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications and theory*, Houghton Mifflin, USA.

GROW model⁴ (John Whitmore)

The GROW model is frequently used in the corporate sector, however the work of its author, John Whitmore, has also been referenced by the education sector.⁵ Whitmore's approach recognises that coaching is as much about the way things are done, as it is about what is actually done in the relationship. He conceives coaching as being about "unlocking people's potential to maximise their own performance. It is helping them to learn, rather than teaching them".

Similar to the Hay Group approach, Whitmore does not require the coach to be an expert at the subject matter at hand. Rather, coaches should be experts in the art of coaching, founded in emotional intelligence. This is because the coaching process is about the coachee identifying options and actions, not from the coach but from within him or herself, as guided by the coach. The value a coach brings is to create awareness and responsibility through effective questioning, rather than subject matter expertise.

Whitmore devised the GROW framework (see Figure 5) to help structure a coaching conversation, however use of the GROW framework does not necessarily amount to coaching – the focus must still be on creating awareness and responsibility, rather than telling. As such, it is a way of interacting with people, rather than a technique to be rigidly applied.

Goal	Where do you want to go? What's your goal?
Reality	What's the reality? Where are you right now?
Options	What are your options to bridge the gap between your goal and reality?
Will	What will you do to plan your next steps?

Figure 5 © Whitmore

Personnel Decisions International (PDI) Development Pipeline⁶

PDI views coaching as a means by which coaches equip their coachees with the tools, knowledge and opportunities that each individual needs to develop themselves. Coaching is therefore about "cultivating capabilities" rather than fixing problems. The coach and coachee must be partners in this process.

The PDI approach recognises that change is at the heart of development. Their model, based on field research, looks at the conditions for development through the "PDI Development Pipeline" (see Figure 6).



Figure 6 © Personnel Decisions International

⁴ Whitmore, John 2009, *Coaching for Performance: Growing people, performance and purpose*, 4th ed, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, London.

⁵ Creasy, Jane & Paterson, Fred 2005, *Leading Coaching in Schools*, National College for School Leadership, Nottingham.

⁶ Gebelein, Susan H et. Al. 2004, *Successful Manager's Handbook*, 7th ed. Previsor, USA.

This model recognises that before people can change, they must have insight into what is expected of them and what they need to develop. They must also have the motivation to change, but motivation must be accompanied by the capabilities to change and opportunities to practice. Finally, people must take accountability for their own development. By viewing development as a pipeline, the coach and coachee can investigate together where there may be blockages or constrictions in the pipeline that may be hindering development.

While it is important to know what is required for development to occur, this should also be teamed with a systematic approach to coaching, with the coach needing to employ a style and skills aimed at forging a partnership, inspiring commitment, growing skills, promoting persistence, and shaping the environment.

Coaching in the education sector

The four models discussed below have been developed specifically in the education sector. Perhaps because of this specific sector focus, these models display a much greater focus on content than the corporate models. As such, depending on how they are implemented, these models could tend more to a traditional “teaching” relationship, rather than a coaching one.

Peer coaching – Beverly Showers and Bruce Joyce⁷

Peer coaching was first proposed as an onsite dimension of professional development by Showers and Joyce in 1980. Their proposal was based on research which showed that teachers who participated in coaching sessions implemented new skills and strategies more frequently and applied them more appropriately than teachers who did not participate in such sessions. They view peer coaching as neither an end in itself, nor by itself a school improvement initiative; peer coaching must occur within the context of training, implementation and general school improvement focused on teaching and curriculum.

Since this time, the practice and theory of peer coaching has continually expanded. Indeed one of the defining features of high performing schools seeking to improve the quality of teacher instruction, is that these schools provide opportunities for teachers to learn from each other.⁸ Categories of peer coaching have also emerged which reflect the use of different development strategies, however they have the common characteristic of using peers to achieve the goal of improving the teaching and learning process.⁹ A synthesis of the literature in this area concluded that there are four broad categories of practice associated with peer coaching:

- (1) establishing a culture of standards and expectations;
- (2) improving instructional capacity;
- (3) supporting a process of ongoing evaluation; and
- (4) connecting classroom practices to policy context.¹⁰

In addition, it is clear that a culture that is conducive to collaborative interactions is critical.¹¹

⁷ See e.g. Showers, Beverly & Joyce, Bruce 1982, ‘The Coaching of Teaching’, *Educational Leadership* vol. 40, no. 1, pp 4-8, 10; Showers, Beverly & Joyce, Bruce 1996, ‘The Evolution of Peer Coaching’, *Educational Leadership*, vol. 53, no. 6, pp 12-16.

⁸ Barber, M and Mourshed, M 2007, *How the world’s best performing school systems come out on top*, McKinsey & Company, viewed 11 November 2013, <http://www.smhc-cpre.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/how-the-worlds-best-performing-school-systems-come-out-on-top-sept-072.pdf>.

⁹ Wong, Kenneth & Nicotera, Anna 2003, *Enhancing Teacher Quality: Peer Coaching as a Professional Development Strategy: A Preliminary Synthesis of the Literature*, Vanderbilt University Publication Series No. 5.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) (UK)¹²

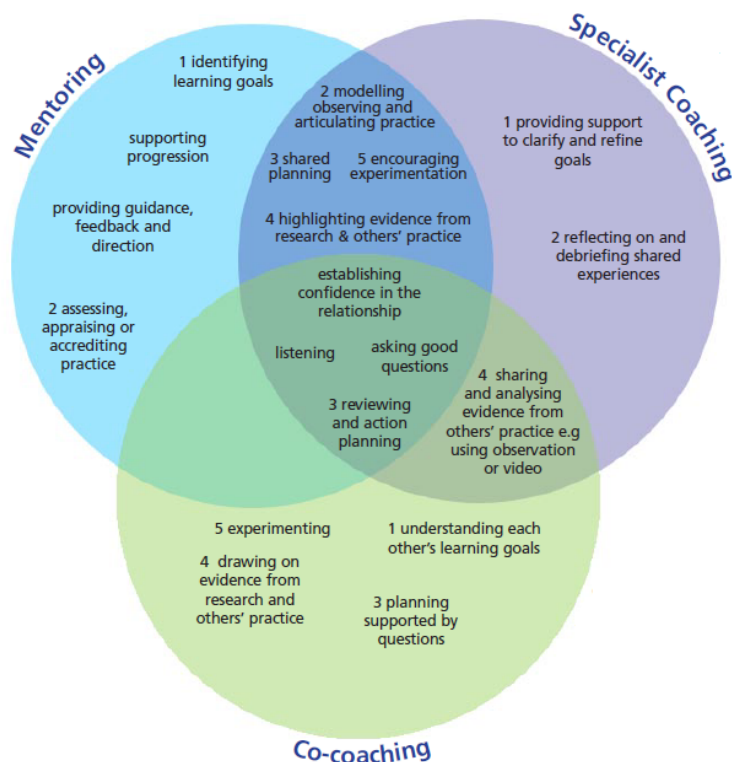


Figure 7 © CUREE

Work undertaken by CUREE led to the development of the National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching in the UK (see Figure 7). The Framework focuses on two types of coaching:

- **specialist coaching:** a structured, sustained process for enabling the development of a specific aspect of a professional learner's practice.
- **collaborative (co-) coaching:** a structured, sustained process between two or more professional learners to enable them to embed new knowledge and skills from specialist sources in day-to-day practice.

The Framework recognises mentoring separately as a structured, sustained process for supporting professional learners through significant career transitions. Through structuring the Framework as a series of overlapping circles, CUREE recognises that the activities undertaken in coaching and mentoring relationships are similar but may change emphasis in response to the context and purpose. Figure 7 demonstrates this, with key themes numbered the same.

The National Framework established 10 principles to inform mentoring and coaching programs in schools, to help increase the impact of coaching initiatives on student learning:

1. A learning conversation	2. Setting challenging and personal goals
3. A thoughtful relationship	4. Understanding why different approaches work
5. A learning agreement	6. Acknowledging the benefits to mentors and coaches
7. Combining support from fellow professional learners and specialists	8. Experimenting and observing
9. Growing self-direction	10. Using resources effectively

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Department for Education and Skills 2005, *National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching*, DfES, London.

Instructional coaching – Annenburg Institute for School Reform (Annenburg) (US)¹³

Annenburg supports and encourages the use of “instructional coaching”, defined as a “professional development practice in which teacher leaders serve as coaches to facilitate and guide content-focused professional learning for a school’s teachers”.

Instructional coaching involves school-based professional learning for groups of teachers in specific content areas. It specifically relies on coaches being knowledgeable, not only in the particular content area, but also in the broader sense of understanding district goals and adult learning principles.

The key features of the model identified by Annenburg are:

- structural conditions to support coaches, including district initiatives, a content focus and systematic measurement of work and impact;
- a guided, content-based focus on adult learning; and
- instructional leadership by coaches who for example, observe instruction and provide feedback, act as role-models and facilitate teacher meetings.

Annenburg considers that instructional coaching can:

- encourage collaborative, reflective practice;
- promote positive cultural change, when effectively embedded;
- encourage the use of data analysis to inform practice through focusing on content;
- promote the implementation of learning and reciprocal accountability; and
- support collective, interconnected leadership across a school.

In-class coaching – Institute for Professional Learning, Department of Education (WA)¹⁴

The Institute for Professional Learning, Department of Education Western Australia has developed a 12 month in-class coaching program specifically for their graduate teacher population. The program is designed to provide high quality, non-evaluative support for graduate teachers, tailored to the individual graduate’s context, by a dedicated “advocate”. Ultimately, this approach aims to accelerate the learning of graduates in order to build a cohort of confident early career teachers equipped to deliver improved student outcomes. The program is funded as part of the Department’s two-year Graduate Teacher Induction Program.

The program was developed based on research into coaching programs used in the United States and was refined after an initial pilot program in 2009. It uses a framework which integrates elements of coaching, collaboration and consultation. Using this approach, an advocate will adopt different stances depending on the needs of the individual graduate:

- in the coaching stance, the advocate will work through issues with the graduate using a learner-led model like the “GROWTH”¹⁵ model to explore an issue through questioning;

¹³ Annenburg Institute for School Reform 2004, *Instructional Coaching: Professional Development Strategies that Improve Instruction*, Brown University, Providence.

¹⁴ Department of Education, Western Australia, viewed 11 November 2013,

<http://det.wa.edu.au/professionallearning/detcms/navigation/category.jsp?categoryID=10850833&page=2&tab=Main#toc2>

¹⁵ Growth Coaching International, viewed 11 November 2013, <http://www.growthcoaching.com.au/>

- in the collaborative stance, the advocate may work together with the graduate to develop a lesson plan which has been explored through coaching;
- in the consultative stance, the advocate may respond directly to questions that the graduate asks about a particular aspect of teaching practice.

Classroom observation is a critical part of the Western Australian program. Graduates have provided feedback that they highly value this aspect of the program. They see it as an opportunity to engage in non-evaluative discussion with their advocate based on real data from the advocate's observation of their classroom practice.

Conclusion

Based on the models and practices considered above, we observe that those originating in the education sector have a much stronger focus on the content and practice aspects of teaching as the central focus of the coaching relationship. We have observed the teaching landscape globally and we see this theme emerging in a variety of contexts.

While we recognise the obvious importance of focusing on student learning, coaching is fundamentally about the coachee (in this case the teacher) as learner first. The learning outcomes in a coaching relationship are therefore led by the individual, acknowledging that the individual operates in a context. As such, we believe that coaching in schools, should begin with the individual, but that it should always be in the service of the work (in this case teaching) and context will always be critical. The seven key themes set out at the start of this document reflect this emphasis, while acknowledging the teacher context. The themes underpin the set of coaching resources that accompany this report.