

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS  
TO **GROW**  
YOUR TEAM



By Kathryn Jackson of  
[www.careerbalance.co.nz](http://www.careerbalance.co.nz)

“A vital guide to coaching conversations  
at work to deliver great business results”

Graham Alexander, founder of the Alexander Corporation, originator of  
the GROW model, and author of SuperCoaching and Tales from the Top

# Essential Questions to GROW Your Team – A Preview

Kathryn Jackson

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**Welcome to a sneak preview of my workbook;  
Essential Questions to GROW Your Team.**

This preview has been designed to share Conversation Guides for five of the most critical conversations in the workplace, which have been designed using the GROW Coaching framework.

In the complete workbook, you will find over 70 pages of Conversation Guides like this, along with many other practical tools and resources to support real coaching conversations at work.

You can use the Conversation Guides as a framework to design your own questions, you can use them as a training tool, to share with your team for their input or you can use them for your own self-coaching (like a reflective thinking framework).

Many of the conversations can take place in 10 minutes or less.

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# INTRODUCING ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

## – THE PREVIEW –

I'm really proud of my workbook; Essential Questions to GROW Your Team.

I am a full time coach, working in New Zealand and have been introducing leaders and managers to the impact of being more coach like since launching my business, careerbalance in 2006.

During this time, I noticed that although leaders and managers understood and embraced the idea of asking more questions and doing more listening in conversations at work, they were apprehensive about designing their own questions “in the moment” during those very conversations.

Some of them also got a bit tangled up in the difference between coaching questions and recruitment questions, resulting in a few tricky conversations where coaching practice felt more like an interview to the other person!

As a result, I designed a suite of Conversation Guides to help them.

During the training, we used these guides as a “safe” way to practice coaching. Leaders and managers simply chose the conversation they wanted to practice, and highlighted the questions they wanted to try out.

This helped to keep them focussed on using the world renowned GROW framework, and also gave them a place to start a more natural sounding coaching conversation.

Other ways that we have used the Conversation Guides in training include:

- Inviting the person they are coaching to choose the questions they want to be asked.
- Self-reflection by using the Conversation Guides to consider their own circumstances.
- A start place for designing their own coaching questions.
- A coaching tool that can be used by anybody in the company to support more coaching-style conversations when back at work.

The workbook began life as PDF resource to support my workshops but soon began to be used by companies outside those that I worked with. I was blown away when it became recommended reading on a number of “Manager as Coach” training programmes in Business Schools around the world.

Then in 2017 I was contacted by New Zealand Libraries who asked if I could turn my PDF into something “real” that they could have in their libraries, so I invested in creating a paperback and a Kindle version (designed for the “paperwhite” e-reader) of my workbook.

Both of them are available on Amazon in the USA and in the UK, along with other sources currently including Barnes & Noble, Mighty Ape and the Book Depository.

Prices will vary according to where you purchase a copy.

Personally, I think this workbook is an essential companion for leaders and managers who are learning to coach, but don’t just take my word for it!

## Here are some amazing reviews from Amazon

First, from one of the inventors of the GROW Coaching Framework:



Graham Alexander

★★★★★ **A vital guide to coaching conversations at work to deliver great business results**

December 1, 2017

Format: Kindle Edition

"A vital guide to coaching conversations at work to deliver great business results"

Graham Alexander, founder of the Alexander Corporation, originator of the GROW model and author of "SuperCoaching" and "Tales from the Top"



Alison Hardingham

★★★★★ **Packs a great punch**

14 December 2017

Format: Paperback

This little book is deceptively effective. It goes straight to the heart of what most of the managers I teach want to know: how can I use coaching skills in my daily life to realise the potential of my team? I have no hesitation in recommending this book as an invaluable guide.



bookworm

★★★★★ **A great resource**

January 8, 2018

Format: Kindle Edition | **Verified Purchase**

What a great wee book, written simply with plenty of practical nuggets to use when coaching others... I really enjoyed the down to earth approach, well worth purchasing!

I hope the example Conversation Guides in this preview will give you not only an idea of the value that this workbook might bring to you, or your team but also a practical tool for supporting more coach-like conversations at work immediately.

Check out the Conversation Guides and let me know what you think.

## CREATING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

It's typical to take some time each year to create personal objectives for your team which are aligned with the overall business objectives of the organisation. Often the two are considered very separately with the result that individuals don't clearly see how their own actions impact business success. Even more common is that performance objectives for individuals are 'set' by the leader, with very little consideration to what employees really want to achieve at work.



Coaching questions can help your team to consider how their own skills, knowledge and experience can contribute to achieving the organisation goals, and identify possible performance goals that are aligned.

It can be helpful to understand the personal values and motivators in your team for this discussion to support a more meaningful discussion about how they 'fit' into the organisation. It is essential that you are familiar with the latest business objectives, and that you have shared them with your team before this discussion.

<b>G GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does your overall focus at work need to be for you to meet the needs of the business, but also to really enjoy your job?</li> <li>• Which specific business targets interest you the <u>most</u>? Explore</li> <li>• Which specific business targets interest you the least? Explore</li> <li>• What will the achievement of this business objective mean to you personally?</li> <li>• How could achieving that business objective result in you having more XYZ at work (insert values, skills or motivators)?</li> <li>• Where do we as a team need to prioritise to ensure business success?</li> <li>• What are the top five priorities to you currently in your work?</li> </ul>
<b>R REALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does your current role or responsibilities directly contribute to the overall goals of the organisation?</li> <li>• What would need to change in your current role or responsibilities to enable you to contribute more directly to the achievement of this business goal?</li> <li>• To what extent does your role currently allow you to have XYZ (insert values, skills or motivators)</li> <li>• For the business targets that interest you the most, how does your current role enable you to contribute to them?</li> <li>• What stops you from contributing to the business targets that interest you the most?</li> <li>• Which of your top five priorities could have the biggest impact on our organisation?</li> </ul>
<b>O OPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What ideas do you have about knowledge, skills or abilities that you'd like to develop over the next 12 months to support the achievement of our business goals?</li> <li>• How could we formally record your personal performance objectives so that they are aligned to the formal business objectives of the business?</li> <li>• What different options would you have within the organisation to develop your knowledge, skills and abilities to contribute even further to the business goals?</li> <li>• Who has already contributed widely to this business goal or has the skills to provide you with some mentoring along the way?</li> </ul>
<b>W WILL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you chart your progress against achieving the performance goals that we have agreed today?</li> <li>• How will we measure your success against achieving those objectives?</li> <li>• What action do you need to take on a daily/weekly/monthly basis to achieve your goals?</li> <li>• What support do you need from me to achieve these goals?</li> </ul>

## CREATING CAREER GOALS

Having a regular discussion with each team member about their career goals is vital in any organisation. This can help to create a mutual understanding of their career values, motivators and the skills that they would like to use or develop while working with your business.

There is enormous power in these discussions, because they can help team members understand that you have a personal interest in supporting their career development. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that they must constantly climb the career ladder – stretching more and more each year.



People will look for different things from their career throughout their lives; perhaps cutting back on stress and responsibilities at work for a while for one reason or another. Or they might not. It's a very personal thing. Managing expectations realistically is one of the most important roles you can play in this discussion – ensuring that they have a reasonable understanding of the opportunities that could be available to them in your organisation, and their current ability to achieve in future roles – while encouraging and supporting their plans to get there.

<b>G GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your overall goal for your career?</li> <li>• When you think about what you'd like to be doing in 2/5/10yrs time, what does it look like?</li> <li>• How will you know when you've achieved your latest career goals?</li> <li>• What have been your proudest moments in your career so far?</li> <li>• What is the most important thing about work to you?</li> <li>• When you think back, how did you hope your career would work out for you?</li> <li>• What were some of the main reasons that you accepted this job?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>R REALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you really love about your job right now?</li> <li>• What would you like to change about your job right now?</li> <li>• How does your current job compare with your vision of what you'd like to be doing?</li> <li>• Are there any skills that you would like to use more often? Or less frequently?</li> <li>• Is there anything that you need to change to get where you'd like to go with your career?</li> <li>• What has been getting in the way of achieving your career goals so far?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>O OPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What ideas do you have for ways that you could change your job to make it more enjoyable?</li> <li>• What other roles or opportunities do you see in the organisation or industry that you would like to find out more about?</li> <li>• How could you develop your knowledge, skills and abilities to bring them more into line with the knowledge, skills and abilities that you will need in your future career?</li> <li>• Who do you know that's already doing that sort of job? What could you do to find out more about how they got there? What would you want to know from them?</li> <li>• What ideas do you have for how we could work together to ensure that you can use your XYZ skills more (or less)?</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>W WILL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would you like to achieve in the next 12 months to take you closer to this career goal?</li> <li>• Who could help you to achieve these things?</li> <li>• What might get in the way? How will you overcome it?</li> <li>• What are the consequences if you don't take steps towards achieving your career goals?</li> <li>• What support do you need, and from whom?</li> <li>• When would you like to have achieved your career goals?</li> <li>• What are you going to do first?</li> </ul>



## DEBRIEFING A PROJECT

When a significant piece of work has been delivered it can be useful to consider how things went. This can help to raise awareness around what went well and therefore could be continued, or taken into new projects. It can also help to identify what hasn't gone to plan, with a view to identifying lessons learned or exploring root causes that need addressing.



For projects that span a considerable length of time you could consider having this sort of conversation at regular intervals, rather than waiting until the end.

You should make an informed decision on whether you would like to hold this conversation with individuals or with the project team, depending on the circumstances.

<b>G GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'd like to review how the XYZ project went – what were our overall aims in delivering it?</li> <li>• In delivering phase two of this project, what were some of the main results we needed?</li> <li>• What were the key outcomes we were looking for?</li> <li>• What were the overall constraints that we wanted to overcome?</li> <li>• Who were the major competitors that we wanted to outperform?</li> <li>• Who were the main people we wanted to influence?</li> <li>• What outcomes had we committed to with our clients?</li> </ul>
<b>R REALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On reflection, to what extent did we meet our aims?</li> <li>• I'd like to share my own thoughts on how well we achieved against our deliverables – SHARE EXAMPLES</li> <li>• How well do we believe those outcomes were achieved?</li> <li>• I'd like you to share your ideas on how well we achieved that.</li> <li>• On a scale of 1-10, how well did we influence those people?</li> <li>• Was there anything that didn't go to plan?</li> <li>• What were some of the key lessons that we learned?</li> <li>• Were there any deadlines or milestones that we missed? What ideas do you have about why we missed them?</li> </ul>
<b>O OPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What ideas do you have for additional action we need to take to ensure that our overall aims are achieved or achieved next time?</li> <li>• How could we get things back on track?</li> <li>• If we were doing this project again, from the start – what would we do differently?</li> <li>• What do we need to change about this sort of project in the future?</li> <li>• What else could we include next time?</li> <li>• What action could we take in the future?</li> <li>• What are the really great things that we achieved that could be applied to other projects?</li> <li>• Are there any similar projects in the organisation that might benefit from our learning?</li> </ul>
<b>W WILL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are we specifically committing to do after this meeting?</li> <li>• Who is going to take ownership of XYZ actions?</li> <li>• When are we going to achieve this by?</li> <li>• What will we do to overcome obstacles?</li> <li>• Who else needs to be involved in our plans?</li> <li>• What support do you need from me as the overall leader of this project?</li> </ul>

## COACHING TO EMBED LEARNING

Teaching your employees new skills is one thing...getting them to apply what they have just learned is another – and that means potentially hundreds (or thousands) of dollars wasted.

A common outcome is for delegates to leave a training intervention all fired up and ready to make exceptional changes to the way that they work – only for their day job to get in the way when they return to the office. Coaching can help to reflect on the learning that has taken place, and ensure that a commitment is made to bring some of the learning back to work – whether the result of a conference, training workshop or reading a development book.



A recommendation would be to have this discussion within 10 days of the training intervention, and to repeat the discussion after 12 weeks and 6 months to understand how new skills/knowledge/capabilities are being embedded.

<b>G GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you signed up to do (insert training intervention) what was the main purpose of doing so?</li> <li>• When you decided to do (insert training intervention) what was the main driving force for choosing it?</li> <li>• What were some of the key things that you have learned because of (insert training intervention)?</li> <li>• If you had to summarise the main benefits that you have taken from attending (insert training intervention) what would they be?</li> <li>• Part of the reason that you attended the (insert training intervention) was to have a positive impact on (insert skill/knowledge/capability) because of feedback (possibly from 360 or performance review) – let's look at what you've learned together.</li> <li>• When was the last time that you attended a training programme and made significant (and positive) changes to how you work as a result?</li> </ul>
<b>R REALITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we look at how you currently perform using (insert skill/knowledge/capability), what would you say are some of the main differences compared with what you've learned during the training intervention?</li> <li>• Think about somebody in our organisation, or somebody that you know that already uses this new knowledge/skills/capability and is regarded as exceptional. What do you notice about how they do things differently? How might they be able to help or mentor you?</li> <li>• What was it about the training programme that resulted in significant (and positive) changes which encouraged you or enabled you to change the way that you work? How could we use this information to ensure that you can make the same positive changes this time?</li> </ul>
<b>O OPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What different options are there for you to adapt the way that you use the knowledge/skills/capabilities you've learned on the (insert training intervention) at work?</li> <li>• It sounds as though some things may be preventing you from being able to make the changes that you've learned during the training intervention. What ideas do you have for ways that we could work together to overcome these obstacles?</li> <li>• What ideas do you have because of taking part in (insert training intervention) that might be of particular benefit to our team/our organisation?</li> <li>• What lessons can you learn from changes that you have made previously because of attending training interventions? How might you apply them in these circumstances?</li> </ul>
<b>W WILL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are we going to measure the results/success of the changes that you are committing to make because of the training?</li> <li>• What specifically are you committing to change because of attending the training intervention?</li> <li>• What support do you need from me to be able to make the required changes to your knowledge/skills/capability as a result of the discussion we have had today?</li> <li>• When shall we get together again to talk about the changes that you have made because of the training, and the impact those changes are having on you at work?</li> <li>• As your manager, what can I do more of/less of to improve the embedding of the learning you have invested in doing?</li> </ul>

## GROW YOUR COACHING CULTURE

Over the last decade (and counting!) coaching as a tool for leaders and managers has become renowned as a driver for many desirable outcomes in business.

Professional accountability, improved work performance, better time management, increased team effectiveness, enriched relationships, greater self-confidence, enhanced communication skills...and even a positive impact on business management. These are all quoted benefits of using a coaching approach at work according to an ICF study in collaboration with PriceWaterhouse Coopers 2013.

Harvard Business Review's Pocket Mentor Series built on these suggestions by including even more business focused outcomes like: overcoming costly business issues (using the solution focus of coaching), strengthening employee's skills so they can grow at work (and therefore potentially step into your leadership shoes), improved retention and reducing the cost of training.



<b>G Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the overall driver for growing a coaching culture at YOUR workplace?</li> <li>• How will you know when you have a coaching culture? What will you see/hear/do/experience that's different?</li> <li>• How will your customers or stakeholders benefit from coaching?</li> <li>• How will your employees benefit from coaching?</li> <li>• How will the managers and leaders benefit from coaching?</li> <li>• What are the key conversations where you'd like more coaching to take place (e.g. at specific meetings? In career discussions? Resolving issues? Post project reviews?)</li> <li>• Are there specific groups that you'd like to target for coaching? (e.g. maternity returners? New managers?)</li> </ul>
<b>R Reality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right now, what are the conversations like at work? (e.g. directive vs coaching in style)</li> <li>• How would you describe the health of the culture you're hoping to influence (e.g. solution focused teams? Problem focused teams? Dependent on management?)</li> <li>• What do you already measure that might change as a result of introducing a coaching culture (e.g. engagement survey? Turnover? Absence? Career planning?)</li> <li>• What is likely to get in the way of growing a coaching culture at your workplace? Resistance from stakeholders? Employees? Managers &amp; leaders?</li> <li>• What has been the experience of coaching in other parts of your business/industry – and how could you access their learning?</li> <li>• What is the problem that you are hoping a coaching culture will help you to solve?</li> </ul>
<b>O Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What ideas do you have for highlighting the successes of coaching? (e.g. newsletters, profiles, role models)</li> <li>• What new metrics could you begin tracking right now so you can understand the impact that a coaching culture has on them (e.g. absence, turnover, retention, 360 of managers &amp; leaders who are going to coach)</li> <li>• How could you reward coaching at work so that it is a desirable skill or behaviour?</li> <li>• What could be implemented to support groups of managers and leaders who coach? (e.g. peer coaching forums, external executive coaching, coaching "buddies", coaching qualifications)</li> <li>• What are alternative ways of solving the problem you want coaching to solve?</li> <li>• What do other companies do to track the success of coaching at work?</li> </ul>
<b>W Will</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the quick measures of success that you can implement right now to understand the impact of coaching at work?</li> <li>• What will you need to design or implement over the next 12-24 months? (or longer)</li> <li>• What will you do to ensure that your coaching culture is directly linked to the vision and/or strategies of your company?</li> <li>• Who are the other stakeholders of coaching that could support you in understanding, measuring and championing the impact of a coaching culture?</li> <li>• What will you do to measure the specific impact of coaching on employees?</li> </ul>

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS TO GROW YOUR TEAM – THE MAIN EVENT –

If you've enjoyed working with these five Conversation Guides then you're going to love my complete workbook.

Please visit Amazon or your preferred retail outlet to purchase my complete workbook; Essential Questions to GROW Your Team and remember to write a review or recommend it to other people who might also like to use it...by doing so you will be supporting a hard-working coach who would love to contribute directly to making coaching conversations at work simpler to enjoy.



Thank you so much,

Kathryn

### CHAPTER ONE - ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

#### On Coaching

An introduction to the value of coaching at work.

#### Deciding who to coach

Coaching questions cannot necessarily be applied to every member of your team. Identify who might respond best to coaching and who to avoid coach.

#### The Essential Questions

1. Creating performance objectives (p16)
  2. Coaching under performance (P17)
  3. Creating career goals (P18)
  4. Debriefing a project (P19)
  5. Identifying motivators (P20)
  6. Creating better work-life balance (P21)
  7. Coaching over or under-utilisation (P22)
  8. Encouraging involvement (P23)
  9. Exploring talents (P24)
  10. Coaching for retirement (P25)
  11. Coaching a workplace returner (P26)
  12. Presentation skills coaching (P27)
  13. Coaching a sensitive personal issue (P28)
  14. Coaching to embed learning (P29)
  15. Coaching to explore sales outcomes (P30)
  16. Growing HR Business Partner skills (P31)
  17. Growing a Coaching Culture (P34)
  18. Backwards Coaching (P36)
  19. Event Planning (P37)
  20. Business Review (38)
  21. Solution focussed coaching questions (P39)
- BONUS ONE-MINUTE COACHING QUESTIONS (P40)

#### Great Coaching Questions

Create your own toolbox of great coaching questions for adapting into any conversation

**Christchurch Earthquake – Coaching in Traumatic Experiences**

**CHAPTER TWO - GROW YOUR TEAM**

**Context of the books**

Understand why the author has the skills and experience to create these resources and what prompted her to write them.

**Core Coaching Skills**

Identify your own coaching skills and make a plan to enhance them even more.

**Learning Styles**

Find out how different learning preferences can impact the effectiveness of personal development.

**Introducing GROW**

Everything you ever wanted to know about the GROW model for coaching

**Barriers to Coaching**

Learn about the main reasons that coaching is avoided at work, and put a plan in place to prevent it getting in your way.

**Kathryn Jackson**

Coaching profile and background

**Great Resources**

Recommended coaching resources to support YOUR coaching at work.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathryn Jackson is a Christchurch based coach with over 20 years of corporate HR, L&D and coaching experience.

Her employment in corporate UK included Andersen's, the Royal Bank of Scotland and Bank of Scotland...where she was responsible for many fundamentals of People Management; designing, delivering and leading initiatives including performance management, succession planning and employee engagement.

Kathryn's business careerbalance Ltd has been providing Executive and Leadership Coaching, Career and Outplacement services to NZ businesses for over 10yrs. She specialises in supporting professionals and leaders who want to build resilience, achieve career success and strive for excellence.

With a commitment to quality, Kathryn has a first-class honours degree specialising in HR – with a subsequent post graduate exploration of Motivation at Work. She trained with the Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring in 2005 and since moving to New Zealand has completed additional training as a Career Coach, was accepted as a Fellow with the CIPD in 2015 and awarded a Senior Practitioner Accreditation with the EMCC in 2017.

It is her continued commitment to CPD that resulted in her decision to research and publish a book about surviving redundancy (a unique journey using a coaching style of writing) in 2009. She has recently completed the manuscript for a book about resilience at work, which will be published by Routledge in 2018.

Committed to supporting others in a variety of ways, Kathryn has taken part in numerous sporting events to raise money for charity and was actively involved in establishing (and now coaching with) the KEA coaching trust providing coaching to NGO's in New Zealand.

She enjoys life in rural North Canterbury with her family, where she relishes time spent in the saddle of her beloved horses.



[www.careerbalance.co.nz](http://www.careerbalance.co.nz)

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## ADDITIONAL CONTENT

I wanted to design this short, sharp leadership workbook for you to try for yourself, but I've realised that to be able to share this sneak preview with you via Amazon's Create Space my workbook needs to be 25 pages or more.

So, instead of just a lot of blank pages...I've included another section from the book about Core Coaching Skills, which I've been told is super helpful to leaders who want to talk about development plans with their team or design development plans for themselves.

## CORE COACHING SKILLS

**"In an encounter with a good coach, you walk away impressed with the coach; in an encounter with a great coach, you walk away impressed with yourself".**

(Awesome quote, but unknown source:

Please contact me if it was you so I can fully attribute it)

Having the skills for great coaching discussions at work can be very different to the skills typically used in the 'command and control' approach that is often relied upon by leaders around the world.

- Listening to a challenge that a member of your team is facing and then offering a solution for them to try is not coaching.
- Encouraging a member of your team to develop their skills by attending a course that you recently enjoyed is not coaching.
- Setting deadlines for your team and then asking for regular updates on progress is not coaching.

*"At its simplest, coaching is a conversation where the employee talks and the manager listens and asks questions..."*

*...the conversation helps the employee to think and to decide to take action, in ways that might not have occurred to them if the conversation had not taken place".*

**Sir John Whitmore**





If you were to search the internet for a comprehensive list of the core skills required to have a coaching conversation you would be there for HOURS!

Every school of coaching has done countless hours of research into the personal attributes that make a coaching conversation successful, and I've included links to many of their websites in the Resources Section of this book so that you can find out more, and decide what works for you.

We all possess these skills to a greater or lesser extent, and we can all develop them if necessary so that we can become even better at coaching our team, or the individuals in our team to success.

Of course, we must choose to do this though 😊

From the work that I've done, I believe that the skills to be a good coach at work are the following seven key areas;

1. **Listening** – the ability to TRULY listen to what somebody else is telling you. No background interference from your inner voice telling you what you think the other person should do or waiting for the best moment to interrupt!
2. **Flexibility** – the ability to change how you work with somebody based on their natural learning style, their capabilities or their need for information. Not just applying a 'one size fits all' approach and sharing what you've tried before so the other person can copy what worked for you. And being open to changing the route that you take with them as they journey towards their work goals, or even changing the work goals along the way.
3. **Questioning** – your talent for having a good (or a great) question to help other people find their own answer, sticking with the conversation until somebody works something out for themselves or recognising when making a suggestion is appropriate. The What, When, Who, Where, How approach.
4. **Challenging** – your confidence in having tough coaching conversations if somebody isn't achieving what they committed to, if you don't believe their results are good enough or if the person's words and the actions just don't add up.

5. **Interest in Developing Others** – a genuine desire from you to develop all the others in your team - not just a desire to tell them what worked for you, or focus on coaching the ‘easy’ people. And a commitment to supporting what’s right for them as well as what’s right for your business, or your own team.
6. **Interest in Developing Yourself** – a genuine commitment to having a go at new skills yourself, making mistakes and learning from the experience along the way. This can be one of the hardest things about leaning into coaching skills, particularly if the approach is very different to how you normally hold conversations.
7. **Agreeing Goals** – the ability to REALLY nail what somebody is committing to achieve, by when and how it’s going to be when it’s achieved...in fact with coaching, sometimes all that is required is a clear goal and the rest of the requirements become obvious.

## TRUST

In addition to these skills, another element that is inherent for a great coaching conversation is Trust – the sense that your team really believes in you; has confidence that you have their best interests at heart and knows that they can bounce ideas without judgement.

My personal belief is that Trust is not really a skill, which is why it’s not included in the Skills for Coaching.

I believe it’s something that we earn through our words and our actions, and just like a bank account we can credit or debit our Trust account constantly (sometimes even on a daily basis!).

If you team trusts you, they will have the confidence to share their ideas or thoughts with you in the knowledge that you won’t laugh at them, or steal their thinking and call it your own.



Trust will give your team members the sense that you are on their side, and they can share what they hope to achieve at work – and then you will support them.

If they don't trust you, you may need to consciously build that into your time with them first, before you even attempt to have a coaching discussion with them.

Or you might even need to consider offering them the opportunity to be coached by another leader if you are having major trust issues.

**What other coaching skills will be important to you in your work situation?**

**Write them down here;**

**What other knowledge do you have about your leadership style which might complement your understanding of coaching? E.g. MBTI profile, DISC profile, Signature Strengths?**

## MEASURE YOUR CORE COACHING SKILLS

*“Being a good coach relies on being honest about your areas of strength and development from the start, checking your perception is correct and then continually reviewing and building your capability”.*

**Kathryn Jackson, careerbalance**



Consider the core coaching skills required, plus the level of Trust that your team has in you as a manager and then you can use this model to self-assess your own performance in the core skills for coaching.

Once you have identified the coaching skills that are your strengths or areas for development you can set yourself some goals to improve, or support other managers.

For each skill, give yourself a score out of 10 depending on how confident you would be in your capabilities.

Ask yourself honestly what evidence your team, your peers or your own manager would give to support the score that you choose? Have you done any psychometric assessments (e.g. MBTI, DISC) that might support your thinking?

For example, if you've scored yourself 9/10 for Interest in Developing Self then you should easily be able to write down all the personal development you've done in the last 12 months, right?

If you can't think what to write, maybe you should be honest that perhaps this isn't something you've really achieved – maybe it's more of a desire to be a 9/10!



## EXPLORING RESULTS

**What's your highest score?** This is likely to be your coaching strength.

How could you use this strength to support other managers or leaders in your business who would like to develop their coaching skills?

If it's over-extended, how might it influence your coaching? (for example, interest in "Challenging" over extended may result in you being a bit confronting with your conversations, "Questioning" over extended might result in your team being frustrated that you ask them all the time)

**What's your lowest score?** This is likely your coaching Achilles heel.

How might this low score impact your success in using coaching questions to GROW your team?

What ideas do you have to grow this core coaching skill?

**It's very likely that not all your scores will be a perfect 10/10....so what other ideas do you have to improve your scores across the Core Skills for Coaching?**

## **LEARNING PREFERENCES**

The next stage in developing a plan to improve your Core Skills for Coaching is to understand your own learning style.

Having a basic understanding of your learning preference will also help you appreciate why it's important to encourage members of your team to explore their own ideas for personal development, not just persuade them to read a book you enjoyed or attend a course you found useful...

## LEARNING PREFERENCES



Knowing your learning preference can help you to make better choices about how to develop your own skills, and can help you to encourage others in your team to do the same.

There are many different approaches to find out your learning style, but one that is widely used in the business is that of Honey and Mumford (1982).

The four learning styles that Honey and Mumford identified are;

### **Activist (DO)**

- Immerse themselves into new experiences
- Tend to act first, consequences later
- Open minded, flexible, enthusiastic
- Centre of attention
- Likely to be enthusiastic volunteers for role plays

### **Reflector (REVIEW)**

- Like to stand back and observe
- Collect and analyse data and slower to reach conclusions
- Cautious, takes a back seat
- Uses information from past and present to contribute to immediate observations
- Likely to need quiet break out time during training events to consolidate learning



### **Theorist (CONCLUDE)**

- Prefer to think through problems in a logical manner
- Value objectivity and rationality
- Like to place facts into coherent theories to understand them
- Prefer to understand through rational order of events
- Like theories, models and systems in structured learning events

### **Pragmatist (PLAN)**

- Keen to put new ideas and theories into practice
- Get impatient if there's too much discussion
- Confident to experiment with new ideas and techniques
- Tend to like getting straight to the point in training
- Likely to want to apply learning as soon as possible

I'm sure you can work out from the summaries that if your preferred style is that of Reflector (Review) then there will be little point in going on a training course where you must do lots of role plays and interactions...you will HATE it!

Similarly, if you're more of an Activist (Do) then choosing personal learning that is purely based on academic theories and information will drive you to distraction!

Having a basic idea of how we like to learn is vital before we jump in and book a course to develop our knowledge, skills or experience.

Most of us can learn by applying any of the learning styles, but we will all have a natural preference towards one or two styles.

If you'd like to be more scientific and take the test online to find out your preferred learning style then please visit **[www.peterhoney.com](http://www.peterhoney.com)** where you can purchase the assessment in a variety of formats.

So, what do you think is your primary learning style?

How will you use this knowledge to help develop your coaching skills?

## DEVELOPING YOUR CORE COACHING SKILLS

Now look at the scores you've identified for your Core Coaching Skills and focus on up to three that you would like to develop and improve upon.

Make a note of them here, and identify all the different ways that you could develop those skills – whether you are an Activist or a Reflector, a Pragmatist or a Theorist.

This will not only help you to work out how you might develop your own core coaching skills, it will also give you valuable experience in brainstorming Options for personal development that you can help your team to apply too, because they may not have the same learning style as you.

I've included an example so you can see what I mean.

<p><b>EXAMPLE</b></p> <p><b>Questioning</b> – I want to get better at asking powerful questions and identifying which questions will best help my team achieve their goals.</p>	<p><b>Activist</b> – I'm going to use the questions in this workbook, and just try them out – I'll get somebody to help me role play through them. Or I might go on a training course that lets me practice with feedback.</p> <p><b>Reflector</b> – I want to watch somebody who asks great questions, making a note of what they ask and the response they get, then create my own approach.</p> <p><b>Theorist</b> – I'm going to read some of the books from the resources section in this workbook, and then do some internet research to build a bank of great questions. Maybe I'll also take a short online course to help me understand how to structure questions</p> <p><b>Pragmatist</b> – I want to use the questions in this workbook right away to help me plan for real conversations that I need to have with my team next week. I'll add my own questions too.</p>
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YOUR TURN

1	
2	
3	

## REFLECTION AND SELF COACHING



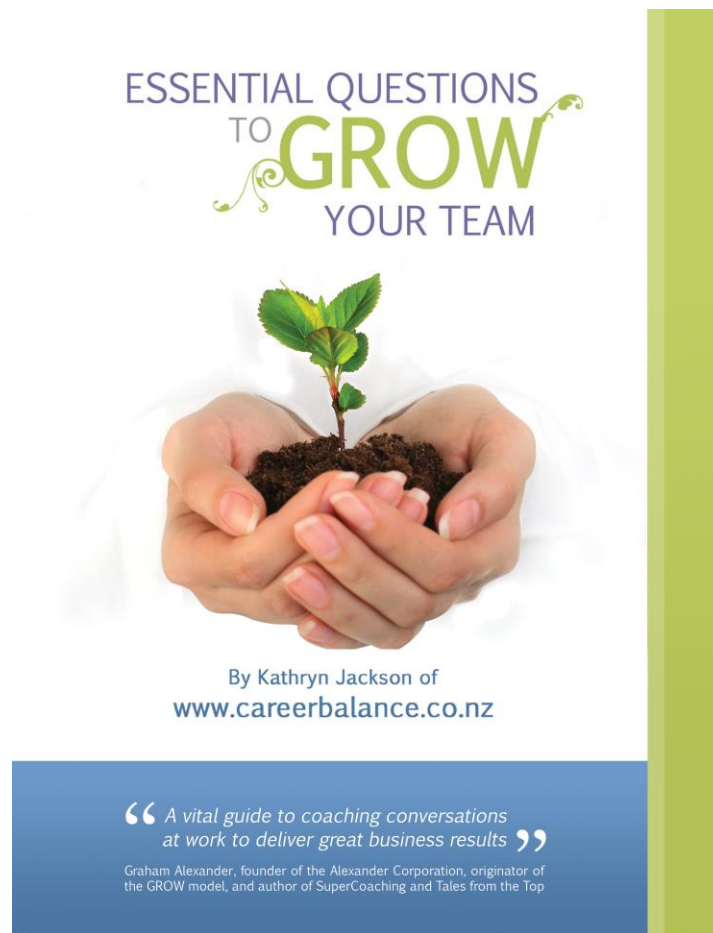
You've now created some ideas about how to develop your own skills in coaching, and to enable you to build on this at the end of this book you will find a blank GROW model so that you can make a personal commitment to the action using the framework.

You've done this with a reflective self-coaching approach, reflecting on your reality, your goal, some options and then a commitment to what you will do.

This self-coaching approach can be helpful for when you're having coaching discussions or creating learning plans for your team. Reflection can help us to pause and think about what we want to achieve, or consider what we already know. It can buy us time to make sure that what we do is better aligned with what we hope to achieve, and how we would like to achieve it.

If you're talking about learning plans, ask your team about their learning style and help them to ensure that any learning interventions are tailored to that personal style.

This will not only save your business money by tailoring personal development, it will speed up the learning process because your team will be using an intervention that best suits them – they will enjoy the learning!



**THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME ON MY ADVENTURE INTO THE WORLD OF CREATE SPACE.**

**I HAVE ENJOYED SHARING SOME OF THE CONTENTS FROM MY WORKBOOK WITH YOU AND HOPE THAT YOU WANT TO READ MORE...**

**IT IS AVAILABLE FROM MOST REPUTABLE SELLERS, INCLUDING AMAZON (UK, EUROPE, AUS, USA), BARNES & NOBLE AND BOOKTOPIA AT A VERY REASONABLE COST.**

**\*IN CHOOSING THE KINDLE, PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE A CURRENT VERSION (E.G. PAPERWHITE). IF IN DOUBT, PLEASE SELECT THE PAPERBACK.**

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS TO **GROW** YOUR TEAM

- ✓ Are you curious about using coaching at work, but unsure how to start?
- ✓ Have you seen awesome lists of coaching questions but you'd like to see how they might look in a REAL workplace conversation?
- ✓ Do you sometimes find it tough to decide when and who to coach at work?
- ✓ Are you an HR professional looking for a resource to support coach training for managers in your workplace?
- ✓ Ultimately - would you like access to one the most comprehensive lists of coaching questions currently available?

You're in luck!

Brought to you by Kathryn Jackson, author of *How to Keep Your Cool if You Lose Your Job* (Longacre Press, 2009) these eBooks contain over 500 coaching questions which have been designed to support the most common management discussions, including how to create performance objectives, debriefing a project, helping a team member prepare for retirement, creating career goals, exploring talents – plus MANY MORE!

“ A brisk, no nonsense style eBook which will be truly helpful to leaders who want to coach their team ”

Alison Hardingham – International Best Selling author,  
and Director of Business Psychology at Yellow Dog Consulting UK