

# LEARNING HANDBOOK

Guidance and tools to support systematic learning before, during and after project activity in health and care

## Coaching

'Coaching' is a form of workplace learning and development that aims to focus on learning from previous experiences to improve how things are done currently. As a task-based approach, 'coaching' differs from mentoring as it is not a continuous or ongoing activity.

| Tool     | Time  | Resources | Physicality | Interactivity |
|----------|-------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Coaching | ★★★★★ | ★★★★★     | ★★★★★       | ★★★★★         |

### When?

It is advised that 'coaching' happens from the beginning of any particular task, project or programme and continues until the task, project or programme has been completed.

### Who?

'Coaching' can be carried out by an individual that has previous experience within a similar field or with similar tasks, however many qualified coaches are also able to work outside topic specific areas. It is important to consider that it can be useful for a coach to be removed from a project team so they can remain objective.

Being open and honest with a coach will build trust and enable maximum impact. Confidentiality of the coach/coachee relationship is critically important.

### How?

'Coaching' is not about the more experienced member of staff passing on their knowledge, but about them encouraging the coachee to learn through their own experiences and develop their own knowledge.

### Coach

- Take time to build rapport to encourage open and honest communication
- Sometimes the coached person may feel too busy or overwhelmed to approach the coach for advice or information, or they may not realise they could be learning – sometimes it is useful for the coach to reach out to the coachee on an ad-hoc basis
- Sometimes, a coachee may go to a coach to vent their feelings about something and not for any particular assistance – make it clear both are acceptable, but for the coachee to make this clear from the start to ensure you're both on the same page
- Ask questions that will assist both yours and the other person's understanding of the issue – remember not to offer advice, but to encourage self-learning and self-realisation
- Ensure you can give your full attention to the person you are coaching and the conversation at hand. If you are concerned you may be distracted, you should rearrange your meeting
- Help the person to identify and evaluate their different options – use phrases such as "have you considered" rather than "I would have a look at" – this way, you are not advocating a particular approach

- Once the coachee has developed an outcome they can follow through, ask them to keep you updated on how it has gone or any other issues they may have had
- If they do not reach out to you – reach out to them!

### Coachee

- Attend coaching sessions prepared – understanding what you want from the session can greatly improve the amount of time spent on useful conversation
- Once you have a clear understanding of your needs, ensure you portray these to the coach and check and challenge if you feel the focus of the session is not remaining on track
- Turn off everything else, just for that hour! Coaching should be time for you to focus on your own learning and development and nothing else – it will benefit everyone in the long run, so don't feel guilty about not answering calls or emails
- Always ensure you understand any points or suggestions your coach is making – if you don't understand anything, ask the coach to clarify or explain their point in a different manner
- Be honest – the relationship between you and your coach should be non-judgemental and confidential. You will get more out of your time with your coach if you are honest about the things you find hard or the things you love to do
- Always take time to reflect on your learning experience – not only should you reflect on the topics discussed and the learning that took place within the meeting, but also on the meeting itself: is this the best way for you to learn, did the environment encourage productivity etc

### Further reading:

- CIPD – [Coaching and mentoring](#)
- KSToolkit – [Peer coaching](#)
- Training Zone – [How to be a good coachee](#)

