

Using GROW questions to support developmental conversations

The GROW model (often used in coaching) provides us with a guided structure for having developmental conversations, and is particularly useful when setting or revisiting goals.

In our online developmental conversations learning module, we introduce a range of facilitative questioning techniques to 'grow' and open up a two-way, honest dialogue about performance and expectations.

Here is the GROW model in summary:

Goal:

- What do you want to achieve that will be different this year?
- What would success really look like for you?
- When do you expect this to be fully achieved?

Reality:

- What is the current reality you're facing to achieve this?
- What's getting in the way... or helping?
- What aren't you doing that you could be doing?

Options:

- What are the options for delivering this at your best?
- Of these ideas, which one would get the best result?
- Have you tried anything like this before?

Way forward:

- Which option do you think would work best to start with?
- What could I/we do to support you?
- How (and when) might we evaluate if this is the right way forward?

By applying the GROW model, we go beyond the traditional SMART¹ rules for goal setting and review. GROW helps us make goal setting and review conversations even more realistic, achievable and timely as it pursues regular iteration, empowering us to take small steps in the right direction towards achieving our planned goal.

Through GROW, it is encouraged to:

- ✓ explore the barriers to performance, the *Reality*
- ✓ review and recognise there is *more than one Option* for delivering our goals
- ✓ highlight what will be the best option to start with, for the *Way forward*, to then evaluate and build on the next time we meet, getting closer and closer to the planned goal

¹ SMART is an approach UCL has applied previously when setting goals/objectives. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely