

[Coaching and Mentoring]



Lecture Title:

11. [Coaching and Mentoring – Distinct Levels]

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Date: 20 October 2025

9.00hrs-13.00hrs



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Learning Objectives

Following this session students will be able:

To adopt critical skills in coaching and mentoring of employees at distinct levels of responsibility and performance.

To enhance the ability to tailor coaching and mentoring approaches to diverse professional roles, cultural backgrounds, and organisational structures.



Learning Method

- **Lecture focused on learning objectives and core content** as a key instructional process.
- **Formative assessment through participative learning tools and activities** will be utilised evaluating students' comprehension and academic progress throughout - with respect to understanding and applying HRM concepts.



Coaching & Mentoring for Diverse Employee Needs

- *Building Capability Across
Responsibility and Performance Levels*



Why Coaching & Mentoring Matter

- Strategic benefits: engagement, retention, performance
- Cultural impact: trust, learning, psychological safety



The Coaching Continuum

- Directive → Non-directive spectrum
- Matching style to context and employee readiness



Employee Segmentation

- Entry-level / Early career
- Mid-level / Emerging leaders
- Senior leaders / Strategic roles



Duads Exercise: Discussion

How should your coaching style change?

- Underperformers vs High performers

Formative Assessment



Supporting Underperformers

- Focus: trust, accountability, mindset shift
- Tools: CLEAR model, feedback frameworks
- Example: coaching for performance turnaround



Mentoring High Performers

- Focus: stretch goals, visibility, succession
- Tools: sponsorship strategies, challenge mapping
- Example: mentoring for strategic impact



Organisation Structure -

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=organizational+structure+in+management



Coaching Entry-Level Employees

- Focus: confidence, clarity, skill-building
- Tools: GROW model, VAK learning styles
- Example: onboarding coaching plan



Coaching Mid-Level Employees

- Focus: autonomy, influence, career pathways
- Tools: CBC model, feedback loops
- Example: peer coaching circles



Coaching Senior Leaders

- Focus: strategic thinking, legacy, systems awareness
- Tools: Kegan & Lahey's Immunity to Change, Wheel of Change
- Example: reflective dialogue prompt



Core Coaching Skills

- Active listening
- Powerful questioning
- Goal setting
- Feedback & feedforward
- Emotional intelligence



Core Mentoring Skills

- Storytelling
- Perspective sharing
- Career navigation
- Sponsorship (strategic support) & advocacy (providing guidance)



Coaching Culture & Systems

- Embedding coaching in performance reviews
- Peer mentoring programmes
- Leadership modelling



Individual Self Assessment; Personal Coaching Style Audit

- Instructions:
- Reflect honestly on your current coaching practice.
- Use the prompts and scales to assess your preferences, strengths, and development areas.
- This audit is best used as a springboard for supervision, peer dialogue, or personal development planning.

Formative Assessment



1. Coaching Orientation

- Which best describes your default coaching stance?
(Select one or rank in order of preference)
- ☐ Directive (I offer advice, guidance, and solutions)
- ☐ Non-directive (I ask questions to help others find their own answers)
- ☐ Blended (I flex between both depending on context)



2. Preferred Coaching Models

- Which models or frameworks do you most frequently use?
(Check all that apply)
- ☐ GROW (Goal, Reality, Options, Will)
- ☐ CLEAR (Contracting, Listening, Exploring, Action, Review)
- ☐ CBC (Context, Behaviour, Consequence)
- ☐ Wheel of Change (Immunity to Change)
- ☐ Other: _____



3. Coaching Strengths

- Rate your confidence in the following core coaching skills
(1 = Low, 5 = High):

SKILL

Active listening

Powerful questioning

Building rapport

Goal setting & accountability

Feedback & feedforward (future actions)

Emotional intelligence

Holding space for reflection



4. Coaching Challenges

- **Which of the following do you find most challenging?**
(Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Managing silence or discomfort
 - ☐ Avoiding giving advice too quickly
 - ☐ Coaching underperformers
 - ☐ Coaching senior leaders
 - ☐ Maintaining boundaries
 - ☐ Measuring coaching impact



5. Coaching Preferences

- **Which coaching contexts energize you most?**
(Rank top 3)
 - ☐ One-to-one coaching
 - ☐ Group coaching
 - ☐ Peer coaching
 - ☐ Performance coaching
 - ☐ Developmental coaching
 - ☐ Executive coaching
 - ☐ Career mentoring



6. Feedback Style

- **How would you describe your feedback approach?**
(Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Direct and candid
 - ☐ Gentle and supportive
 - ☐ Balanced and evidence-based
 - ☐ Feedforward-focused
 - ☐ Situationally adaptive



7. Coaching Across Levels

- **How confident are you coaching the following groups?**
(1 = Not confident, 5 = Very confident)
- Entry-level employees
- Mid-level professionals
- Senior leaders
- High performers
- Underperformers



8. Development Priorities

- **What are your top 2–3 priorities for developing your coaching practice?**
(e.g., “Improve my use of silence,” “Develop confidence coaching senior leaders,” “Use more structured models”)





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- To enhance the ability to tailor coaching and mentoring approaches to diverse professional roles, cultural backgrounds, and organisational structures.

- Explore how professional roles, cultural backgrounds, and organizational structures shape coaching needs
- Identify adaptable strategies for diverse contexts
- Apply inclusive, context-sensitive coaching frameworks



Why Tailoring Matters

- One-size-fits-all coaching risks disengagement
- Tailored approaches foster trust, relevance, and transformation
- Supports equity, inclusion, and strategic alignment



Role-Based Coaching Needs

- Role Type: Entry-level
- Coaching Focus: Confidence, clarity, skill-building
- Common Pitfalls: Overwhelm, lack of autonomy



Role-Based Coaching Needs

- Role Type: Mid-level
- Coaching Focus: Influence, career navigation
- Common Pitfalls: Role ambiguity, burnout



Role-Based Coaching Needs

- Role Type: Senior leaders
- Coaching Focus: Strategy, legacy, systems thinking
- Common Pitfalls: Isolation, blind spots



Organizational Structures & Coaching

Structure Type

Coaching Implications

- Hierarchical
- Flat/Agile
- Matrix
- Start-up

Formality, power dynamics

Peer coaching, autonomy

Role clarity, stakeholder navigation

Rapid change, resilience coaching



Cultural Intelligence in Coaching

- Understand cultural dimensions (Hofstede, Trompenaars)
 - Respect communication styles (direct vs indirect, high vs low context)
 - Avoid assumptions; ask, don't infer
 - Use inclusive language and metaphors
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- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bac1wWSgQMs>



CBC and Culture: A Practical Synthesis

- Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC) can be meaningfully linked to culture, especially in organizational and cross-cultural contexts.
- Cultural Influences on Cognition and Behaviour

What Is Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (CBC)?

- CBC draws from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) but is adapted for non-clinical, developmental contexts like executive coaching, leadership development, and personal growth.
- CBC is grounded in the idea that our thoughts influence emotions and behaviours. But thoughts don't arise in a vacuum — they're shaped by cultural norms, values, and socialization.



Core Principles

- Thoughts → Feelings → Behaviours: CBC helps clients recognize how their internal dialogue shapes emotions and actions.
- Belief auditing: Clients examine limiting beliefs (e.g., “I must be perfect”) and reframe them.
- Goal-oriented: Focuses on present and future outcomes, not past trauma.
- Collaborative and structured: Uses Thought Records (Track automatic thoughts and evaluate their accuracy) and Socratic Questioning (Gently challenge assumptions through guided inquiry) and Behavioural Experiments (Test new behaviours to gather evidence against limiting beliefs).



CBC in Coaching Practice

- CBC is especially useful when coachees are:
 - Stuck due to fear, perfectionism, or imposter syndrome
 - Navigating change, uncertainty, or performance pressure
 - Seeking to build resilience, confidence, or emotional regulation
- It integrates well with models like GROW or CLEAR, especially during the “Reality” or “Explore” stages, where cognitive blocks often surface.



CBC Element

Cultural Consideration

- Beliefs
- Emotional Expression

Cultural narratives shape core beliefs (e.g., individualism vs collectivism).

Cultures differ in how emotions are expressed or suppressed, affecting how coachees report or process feelings.

Behavioural Goals

“Success” or “assertiveness” may be defined differently across cultures.



Culturally Responsive CBC Practice

To apply CBC effectively across cultures, coaches must:

- Explore cultural scripts: Help clients surface culturally embedded assumptions (e.g., “I must not question my manager”).
- Use culturally congruent metaphors: Swap Western CBT metaphors (e.g., “inner critic”) for culturally resonant ones.
- Adapt Socratic questioning: In high-context cultures, indirect questioning may be more effective than direct challenge.
- Respect emotional norms: Normalize emotional expression in culturally sensitive ways — e.g., using storytelling or metaphor.



Organizational Culture and CBC

- CBC is also a powerful tool for shaping and responding to organizational culture:
- Culture audits: Use CBC to help leaders identify unhelpful collective beliefs (e.g., “We can’t challenge the status quo”).
- Team coaching: Surface shared cognitive distortions that hinder collaboration (e.g., catastrophizing during change).
- Culture change: CBC supports mindset shifts aligned with new values (e.g., from risk-aversion to innovation).



Cognitive Behavioral Coaching – Psychological Safety Cycle

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdcLJ_SdhoM



8. Reflective Practice Prompts

- “How do my own cultural and structural biases show up in coaching?”
- “What assumptions do I make about roles or readiness?”
- “How do I adapt my questioning and feedback style across contexts?”



Case Study 1: Coaching Within the Lines of Authority

- Title: “Respecting the Ladder: Coaching in a Hierarchical Structure”
- Context:
- Rajiv is the Chief Operating Officer of a large infrastructure firm in India. The organization operates with a rigid hierarchical structure, where decisions flow top-down and deference to authority is deeply ingrained. Rajiv is a high-context communicator—he prefers indirect language, values relationships over transactions, and relies heavily on non-verbal cues and shared history to convey meaning.
- The company has recently partnered with a global consultancy to embed coaching into its leadership development strategy. Rajiv is assigned a coach, Elena, from Spain, who is trained in the GROW model and accustomed to flatter organizational cultures with open dialogue and direct feedback.

Formative Assessment



- Challenge:
- In their early sessions, Elena notices that Rajiv is courteous but reserved. He rarely challenges assumptions, avoids discussing internal politics, and often redirects questions to organizational norms rather than personal reflections.
- Elena's attempts to explore values, emotions, and personal goals are met with vague responses or polite deflections. She suspects that Rajiv sees coaching as a performance review rather than a developmental partnership.



Turning Point:

- Elena consults with a cultural advisor and adjusts her approach. She begins each session by acknowledging Rajiv's seniority and the organizational context.
- She uses the CLEAR model, emphasizing Contracting and Listening, and introduces metaphors and case examples to explore leadership dilemmas. She also frames coaching as a strategic dialogue aligned with Rajiv's role as a steward of organizational legacy.
- Gradually, Rajiv begins to share more openly—discussing succession planning, his concerns about middle management engagement, and his desire to mentor future leaders without disrupting the chain of command.



Outcome:

- Elena's culturally attuned approach fosters trust and psychological safety.
- Rajiv begins to use coaching techniques with his direct reports, embedding reflective dialogue.
- He also initiates a leadership roundtable to explore adaptive leadership within the firm's hierarchical boundaries.



Groups Questions

1. What are the key features of a hierarchical structure that impact coaching?
2. How does high-context communication influence coaching dynamics?
3. Why might Rajiv initially resist Elena's coaching style?
4. What adaptations did Elena make to build trust and effectiveness?
5. How can coaching be embedded within hierarchical organizations without disrupting authority?



Discussion Questions & Model Answers

1. What are the key features of a hierarchical structure that impact coaching?

Model Answer:

- Clear lines of authority and decision-making.
- Deference to seniority and rank.
- Limited upward feedback.
- Risk aversion and face-saving behaviors.
- Preference for formal communication channels.



2. How does high-context communication influence coaching dynamics?

- Model Answer:
- Meaning is conveyed through tone, silence, and shared history.
- Direct questioning may feel intrusive or disrespectful.
- Feedback is often implicit, requiring careful interpretation.
- Trust and relationship-building are prerequisites for openness.



3. Why might Rajiv initially resist Elena's coaching style?

Model Answer:

- Elena's direct, goal-oriented style may clash with Rajiv's relational and indirect preferences.
- Coaching may be perceived as evaluative rather than developmental.
- Cultural norms discourage personal disclosure and challenge to authority.
- Rajiv may fear loss of face or misalignment with organizational expectations.



4. What adaptations did Elena make to build trust and effectiveness?

Model Answer:

- Acknowledged Rajiv's status and organisational context.
 - Used culturally resonant tools (e.g., metaphors, storytelling).
 - Shifted from GROW to CLEAR to emphasize relational contracting.
 - Framed coaching as strategic dialogue, not personal critique.
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- **Coaching Demonstration of the CLEAR model**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97CMYjz0aA8>



5. How can coaching be embedded within hierarchical organizations without disrupting authority?

Model Answer:

- Position coaching as a leadership enhancement tool, not a challenge to hierarchy.
- Use coaching to strengthen succession planning and mentoring.
- Encourage reflective dialogue within formal structures (e.g., performance reviews).
- Train senior leaders to model coaching behaviours in top-down communication.



Bibliography

CIPD research on coaching and mentoring best practices

Clutterbuck D. 'Coaching and Mentoring: A Journey Through the Models, Theories, Frameworks and Narratives' (2022) Routledge

SHRM research on coaching and mentoring best practices





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