



# PROJECT MANAGEMENT CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

A.J. CLARK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING  
Civil & Environmental Engineering Department



# COACHING FOR SUCCESS

*Donna McCullough*

*2020 Project Management Symposium*

Partner & PM Leader, US Federal  
IBM Global Business Services

Partnering with Federal agencies to solve their  
toughest challenges for over 25 years

Currently lead a team of 250 PMs

PMI Certified PMP®

IBM Certified Senior Complex Program Manager

Scaled Agile Certified - SAFe 4 Government

IBM Certified Blue Core Coach



# **Coaching vs. Traditional Managing**

## **The Paradigm Shift**

Coaching is helping  
people unlock their  
potential to  
maximize their own  
performance



# Successful coaching relies on key concepts that empower your teams to succeed

## Key Coaching Concepts:



- Listening rather than speaking.



- Asking rather than telling.



- Empowering rather than directing.



- Focusing on future possibilities rather than past mistakes.



# Listening rather than speaking

How can we demonstrate effective listening?

**Practice Exercise:** Pick a partner and practice effective listening. Say a sentence, then your partner has to respond using the last word of your sentence as the first word of their sentence. Go back and forth for a few minutes.

- Keep focus on the conversation
- Limit distractions like phone and email
- Practice reflective listening
- Be open minded and not judgmental
- Be careful not to interrupt
- Ask powerful questions

# Asking rather than telling

What defines a powerful question?

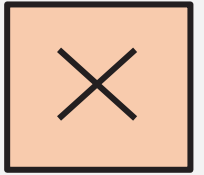
- Open-ended
- Clear
- Concise
- Direct
- Often starts with “what” or “how”, not “why”
- Comes from a place of curiosity

# Is this a powerful question?

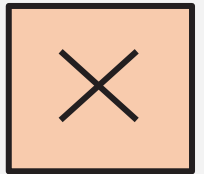
What would you do if there was no chance you would fail?



Have you done a demo of the technology?



Do you think it is possible that your client doesn't understand the technology in which case it might not be that they don't want to but more of an issue understanding the value?



What assumptions are you making?





# Introducing the GROW Model

G

## Goal

What do you want to discuss?

R

## Reality

Where are you now?

O

## Options

What could you do?

W

## Will:

What will you do?

*The GROW coaching model helps team members take responsibility for their work and career.*



# Empowering rather than directing

## Command and control style management hinders growth and performance

- Growth happens when people solve problems vs. being told what to do.
- Performance improves by unleashing potential vs. being put in a box.
- Empowering encourages self-awareness and ownership
- Requires trust and accountability
- Recognition of accomplishments is key to motivation and performance

# Coaching is successful when we:

Practice Active Listening  
Ask Powerful Questions  
Encourage Ownership  
Empower Others  
Recognize Success

**Reference:** *Coaching for Performance, 4th Edition* by John Whitmore.

# Questions