

CHANGE COACHING:

Setting Objectives

Transform your performance and create meaningful and successful change in your life and work

How to get clarity and focus

Transforming our performance is easy to understand but difficult to do. We simply have to learn how to do more of what matters and less of what doesn't. This is why we set objectives, to focus our energy and attention on shared priorities.

With so many competing demands on our time, the objectives we set ourselves need to serve the goals of the organisation (*top-down*), the demands of our customers (*outside-in*), the needs of our colleagues (*bottom-up*), as well as our personal aspirations (*inside-out*).

The introduction of the Team Service Improvement Workbook into the Social Care & Health Directorate is enabling teams to make sense of the objectives and targets coming from many different sources. These teams are learning how to get what they need to make informed decisions and prioritise their actions.

Thinking SMART

Let's talk about how we can work smarter. Good objectives should help us prioritise our thinking to be:

Specific

- What you will be able to observe, feel or measure that would indicate an improvement on current performance.

Measurable

- Contains an objective way of demonstrating improvement, through number, volume, scale, percentage

Achievable

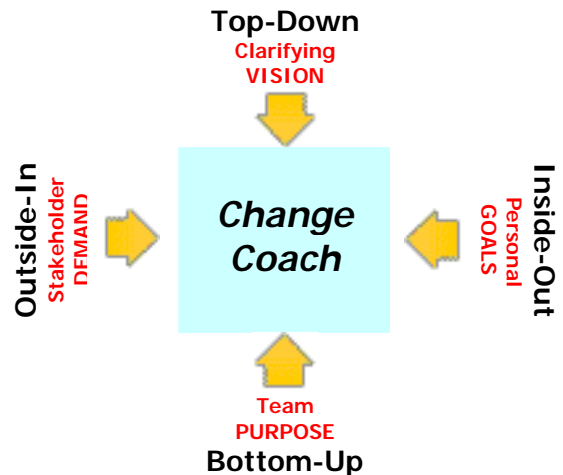
- The time and resources are available to achieve the objective, given sufficient energy, support or skill.

Recordable

- Milestones or targets that lead to the successful achievement of the objective enables progress to be assessed and adjustments to be made in good time

Timely

- Objectives need to have deadlines and be relevant to the overall project or goal being pursued and fit in with other complimentary objectives.



The Change Coach adopts a multi-dimensional view of objective setting that focuses on:

- clarifying vision (energy from direction)
- personal goals (energy from commitment)
- team targets (energy from focused action)
- stakeholder demand (energy from value added)

Getting things CLEAR

In order to get clarity into your coaching conversations, here are five key questions you can use to stimulate your thinking. Start with the end in mind, exploring expectations and results to be clear about what success will look and feel like. Then clarify contributions and links before thinking about the skills, knowledge or new behaviours that need to be developed.

Contributions

- What you can actually do that will help get the results you are after?

Links

- What you can do to help others and they do to help you achieve your goals?

Expectations

- What will a good result look like and feel like for you and your team?

Abilities

- What knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits do you need to develop?

Results

- How will you change your behaviour, measure success and monitor progress ?

Knowing what's expected and getting on with it

● Clarifying VISION

Drawing energy from the TOP-DOWN

Most of us have dreams, intentions and desires that we would like to realise. This is who or what we aspire to be. When compared with where we are now a gap emerges that has to be bridged if we are to get what we want. It's not about words, we have to imagine and feel what success will look like when it's achieved. This is what Eugene Gendlin calls your "felt sense". We refer to it as your 'desired future'. It provides the energy to overcome specific difficulties and setbacks by focusing on solutions, not problems. Much of this energy comes from what we stand for – our values and beliefs, and this influences how we go about achieving our vision.

● Personal GOALS

Drawing energy from the INSIDE-OUT

What's important to you about what you do ? What would you rather be doing ? How could you get more of what's important to you in what you are currently doing ? What problem do you need to solve ? What targets must you achieve ?

As a Change Coach you look for ways of tapping energy from the whole situation – hence the four dimensions outlined above. You are interested in your coachees as a person and an effective employee. Most of us like to feel that each day is a chance for a new start. We are motivated when we feel work supports our personal objectives. If we have no personal goals for ourselves we could not measure progress or success, so we need to turn problems into improvements that we can turn into personal targets. Even complaints or criticisms can be turned into 'how-to' statements that we can then work on.

Goals need to be specific though, with measures to assess when and why progress is being made. The Change Coach can help coachees think through what can realistically be achieved, and by when, at what cost and cope with what might be lost in the process. All change involves losses as well as gains.

● Stakeholder DEMANDS

Drawing energy from the OUTSIDE-IN

It is vitally important to check out what the people you are employed to serve really want from your services. The objective should be to the best possible value with the resources available. But how do you know? Much depends on how competent we are at our jobs and relationships, whether or not we have the capacity to respond to what's really wanted of us.

Complaints emerge when we fail to give our customers and stakeholders what they expect. This may not be what they are entitled to of course, which makes us feel unfairly judged. It is our choice how we decide to see things, but often the problem is in the system, the things that stop us getting things right the first time. For example, learning to listen at a deeper level helps reduce misunderstandings. The Change Coach must be sensitive to what the coachee is risking in the conversation at an emotional and intellectual level. Getting this right can make the coaching relationship special and enhance the desire to get on and make change happen despite the odds.

● Team PURPOSE

Drawing energy from the BOTTOM-UP

We achieve very little when we act alone. We need the encouragement, challenge, inspiration and practical support of those we work with to achieve the targets we set ourselves. Other people's opinions and ideas can help give us a fuller understanding of what's possible and what could help achieve our common purpose.

Getting results involves setting personal goals, but achieving them requires the direct and indirect support of colleagues. The Change Coach has a role in helping coachees see the way they are connected with others and therefore to look for 'win-win' solutions. Team success comes from mutually supportive activity and a shared responsibility for achieving team results. In practical terms this means setting targets with others, clarifying contributions and defining what will be done by whom, where and by when. A team purpose arises out of the work that people do together and for which they are prepared to be held jointly accountable.