

# Creating a Community of Practice: Building Capacity with the GROWTH Model

The GROW(TH) Model of coaching is one of the most established, time-tested, and effective frameworks for coaching employees about goal setting and performance. It was popularised by Sir John Whitmore in [Coaching for Performance](#) (1980) and the T and H have been added more recently - the [KennethMD website](#) offers the following information:

G = Goal setting. What do you want?

R = Reality. What is reality?

O = Options. What options do you have? What could you do?

W = Will. What will you do?

T = Team and Capabilities

H = Habits and Systems

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## G. Goal to achieve or problem to solve:

What's on your mind?\*

And what else?\*

What do we want to achieve? — ask this if they state a goal.

"Imagine everything going perfectly. What do things look like?" — ask this if they state a problem.

**Imagine a better future. Let's paint a picture of a better future.**

"If we did know, what would it be?" — Ask this if they can't imagine a perfect future without their problem. A coach I know doesn't accept, "I don't know" as an answer to the imagine question. When someone replies with, "I don't know", they follow up with, "if we did know..." (This approach usually gets people talking).

How would we know success or that we've achieved a goal or solved a problem? – **Define success.** The goal or problem needs to have the elements of a [SMART steps](#) checklist.

How could this goal or problem be broken down into more manageable chunks?

## R. Reality now / Responses already attempted

What is the reality?

What's the real challenge here?\*

What responses have we already tried?

Describe the current reality in specifics and details. What is happening? How long? What are the effects? Who is involved (stakeholders)? What do they think?

## O. Options / Obstacles

What options or possibilities for action (even *imperfect* ones) do you think we could try that may move the ball forward? **What else...?** Ask what else until enough options have been listed. Don't worry about how realistic the ideas are at this stage. We're just brainstorming.

Which of these options do you like the most? Why?

What obstacles do you see in the path? i.e. (What might get in the way? What seems to stand in the way of achieving this goal?) **What else...?** Ask what else until enough options have been presented.

What are the benefits and pitfalls of these options?

Rank each option on a scale of 1 to 10 how practical each one is. First go through a brainstorming session of sorts where we generate options. Then evaluate these options by looking at benefits and risks/obstacles to help choose the next step or way forward.

### **W. Will / Way forward (i.e. How to win)**

What will we **do** and what will we **stop doing**? Things we will do are just as important as the things we'll stop.

If we're saying yes to this, what are we saying no to?\*

What are our next steps?

Precisely when will we take them?

Agree on [NESA Standards](#), [Quality Teaching Framework](#) areas, or [SMART steps](#) to try to solve the problem or achieve goals. Set goals for today, this week, next week, etc until next visit. (No need yet to set yearly, 5 yearly, goals).

### **T. Team and capabilities**

Who might be able to help?

What capabilities will be needed?

How can I help?\*

### **H. Habits and systems**

What habits will our team need to develop to help us achieve these goal(s)?

What systems (e.g. management systems) will we need to help achieve our goals or solve the problem? We need these habits and systems to support our team and capabilities to get the job done.

### **References:**

Acha, K. (Md.) (n.d.) The GROWTH Model of Coaching.  
<https://www.kennethmd.com/the-growth-model-of-coaching/>

# Creating a Community of Practice: Professional Development Observations

## Introduction

Classroom observation is a critical component of improving and refining teaching practices. Best and Kahn (1993) have identified the following characteristics of successful observers and good observation:

- Observations are carefully planned, systematic and perceptive.
- Observers know what they are looking for and what is relevant in any given situation.
- Observers are aware of the wholeness of what is observed.
- Observers separate the facts from interpretation of the facts.
- Observations are carefully and expertly recorded.
- Observations are collected in such a way as to make sure that they are valid and reliable.

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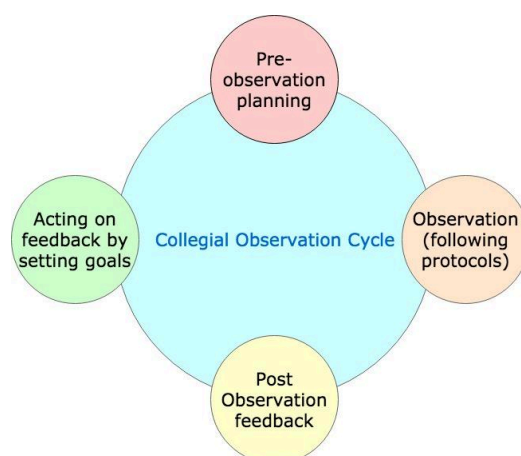
## How to be a successful observer

Anderson and Burns (1989) and Patton (1990) suggest the following are essential ingredients for successful observers:

- Understand the role of the observer (our role is not to be a supervisor. We are someone who can be an onlooker whilst the teacher goes about the business of teaching. It is not to report on everything we see. It is to focus on important and manageable components of the lesson).
- Negotiate the focus of the observations (The observer will need to negotiate with teachers prior to lesson observations about time, content and specific focus areas).
- Know how to separate detail from trivia (once the areas of focus have been predetermined, the observer should have clear direction about what information will be in the feedback. 3 areas of strength and 3 areas for growth is a good model)
- Ensure procedures for writing the data are clear.
- Know how to validate observations
- Utilise the observation cycle:

- **Pre-observation planning:** Hopkins (1993) identifies three essential skills for observers: a non-judgemental demeanour, a high level of interpersonal skills, and knowledge of how to gather and record data.

- **Observation:** Effective observation does much to enhance and enrich the teaching process. Wragg (1994) affirms this in the following terms:
  - If lessons are worth observing then they are also worth analysing properly, for little purpose is served if, after a lesson, observers simply exude goodwill, mumble vaguely, or appear uncertain why they are there or what they should talk about.
  - Skilfully handled, classroom observation can benefit both the observer and the person observed, serving to enhance the professional skill of both people. Badly handled,



however, it becomes counterproductive, at its worst arousing hostility, resistance and suspicion.

- Observers are required to ensure that they limit their activities to those negotiated with the teacher during the pre-observation phase.

■ **Post-observation feedback:** Providing feedback to the teacher is an important part of the observation and is best done as soon as practicable after the observation. Poor feedback is characterised by being 'rushed, judgmental, one-way and impressionistic' (Hopkins, 1993, p.80). Hopkins suggests that feedback works best if:

- It is given within 24 hours of the observation
- It is based on careful and systematic recording
- It is based on factual data
- It is given as part of a two-way discussion

## References

Anderson, L. W. & Burns, R. B. (1989). *Research in classrooms*, Pergamon Press, Oxford.

Best, J. W. & Kahn, J.V. (1993). *Research in education*, 2nd edition. Allyn & Bacon, Boston.

Hopkins, D. (1993). *A teacher's guide to classroom research*, 2nd edition. Open University Press, Buckingham.

Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*, 2nd edition. Sage, Newbury Park. University Press, Victoria.

Wragg, E.C. (1994). *An introduction to classroom observation*. Routledge, London.

## Checklist of Protocols for Collegial Lesson Observations



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Observation cycle item	Register
<b>Plan</b>		
	Meet with the teacher to negotiate the date and expected length of time the observer will be in the classroom. Make sure that enough time is given for the teacher to prepare prior to the observation, and afterwards for the observer to write up their notes. Also arrange a time within 24 hours to discuss the feedback.	
	Agree on the purpose of the visit. The observer or teacher might like to use the <a href="#">NESA Teacher Standards</a> , <a href="#">QT areas</a> , or the <a href="#">GROWTH</a> or <a href="#">SMART</a> models to create guiding questions on what will be observed.	
	Agree on what role the class teacher would like you to play during the observation, e.g. passive observer, active participant or teaching or modelling a particular aspect of the lesson.	
<b>Observe</b>		
	Most importantly: adopt a non-judgmental approach, being respectful and sensitive.	
	To maintain the distance between a supervisor model and a teaching observation, the observer is not permitted to take notes during the observation.	
	Stick to the agreed time and focus for the observation, barring unforeseen circumstances (e.g. fire drill).	
	Allow time to write up the notes as soon as possible after the observation so that information is not lost and time is not wasted attempting to recall details.	
<b>Feedback &amp; Reflect</b>		
	Use an agreed proforma (e.g. below) to record observations.	
	Record quotes if relevant and possible.	
	Meet at the agreed time (preferably within 24 hours) to discuss feedback	
	Start with a 2-way conversation. Encourage reflective practice, guided by NESA <a href="#">Teacher Standards</a> , <a href="#">QT areas</a> , or the <a href="#">GROWTH</a> or <a href="#">SMART</a> , by saying things like 'How do you think that went?...Tell me more about...What would you like to teach next?'	
	Feedback should be relevant and based on agreed guidelines	
<b>Act</b>		
	Arrange for another visit to observe how the teacher has acted upon the observer's feedback	
	Follow-up notes on actions:	

## Collegial Teaching Observation, Feedback & Action Proforma



Planning and checklist (using pg5) created with observer and teacher on date:	
Date / Time of observation:	
Name of teacher(s):	
Name of observer:	
Location:	
KLA / Topic:	
Stage / Year / # of students:	
Agreed focus (e.g. <a href="#">NESA</a> / <a href="#">QI</a> )	
Observer Feedback - Positive observations (at least 3):	
Observer Feedback - Possible aspects to consider (up to 3):	
Teacher Reflection:	
Teacher Action / Other notes / follow-up:	

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