

COACHING TOOLKIT

COACHING TECHNIQS FOR THE
PUBLIC SECTOR AS A TOOL TO
IMPROVEMENT OF THE PUBLIC
SERVICES

2022



Lech Kaczyński
National School
of Public Administration



Within the framework of the EU's Erasmus+ Programme, the Latvian School of Public Administration (LSPA), in partnership with KSAP – the Lech Kaczyński National School of Public Administration in Poland; SIP – Society in Progress in Greece and MetaCoach in Latvia, have designed an innovative Coaching Toolkit that contains interactive coaching techniques for the public sector employees as a tool to improve public services through improving work conditions.

The Project Team merged their knowledge and experience in creating this Coaching Toolkit and tested it in practice by training pilot groups in all three countries. The methods described in the Toolkit are selected to encourage self-growth and improve skills of middle and lower-level managers to design less stressful work environment.

Time period 2021-2022.

Coaching experts:

LSPA - Latvian School of Public Administration: Sandra Prince;

KSAP - the Lech Kaczyński National School of Public Administration: Anna Jaroń and Marcin Sakowicz;

SIP - Society in Progress: Efthalia-Natalia Tousiaki;

MetaCoach: Laila Snidzāne and Joanna Kristīne Golubeva.

Editor of the English Version of Coaching Toolkit: Sandra Prince, Latvian School of Public Administration.

Project Coordinators:

- Aleksandra Orłowska, KSAP – the Lech Kaczyński National School of Public Administration, Poland;
- Anastasia Gkouvatzki & Despoina Tousiaki, SIP – Society in Progress, Greece;
- Laila Snidzāne and Joanna Kristīne Golubeva, MetaCoach, Latvia.

Project Managers:

- Latvian School of Public Administration, Latvia;
- MetaCoach, Latvia.

Introduction



The Coaching Toolkit was created to help public administration employees to work more efficiently and communicate better.

It all started with an idea - how to help middle and lower-level managers design their workday to create less stress and more results.

This was followed by writing a project proposal and attracting partners from Poland and Greece who had similar challenges:

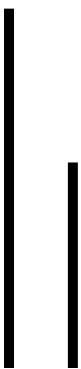
- Huge workload and unclear priorities,
- Different understanding of the roles in the team and what needs to be achieved,
- Misunderstandings and conflicts in communication,
- Too much talk, while too little effective work.

The Toolkit introduces and summarizes the coaching methods that have been tested in training pilot groups in the three partner countries. Thus this is not a theory, but a practical guide. All the techniques presented here have already been tested in practice by representatives of public authorities.


After the training the participants appreciated that the tools were now helping them work more effectively, for example, to be clearer, to correctly understand what the other person is saying, to convey information accurately, and to define goals according to their positions and responsibilities.

We, the team of authors, hope that everyone will be able to use this guide to try out coaching tools, get advice on solving various challenges, get inspired and try new tactics in their daily lives.

The main character of the handbook is a prototype manager in public administration who leads a small team and has to make a lot of decisions and solve challenges daily.




GOLDEN TIPS FOR COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR TEAM




FOCUS ON A SPEAKER - PUT HIM/HER IN A CENTRAL ROLE
STAY NON-JUDGMENTAL
SPEAK DIRECTLY AND NEUTRALLY
BUILD AND DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR SPEAKER

Active and attentive listening #6-11




Listen more than you speak
 Notice facts, try to hear emotions - holistic listening
 Check with the speaker if you have understood all well
 Practice attentive listening: nod, ask questions, look in the eyes

Open and empowering questions # 12-18




WHAT would you like to say?
 WHY do you choose this solution?
 HOW do you understand the tasks?
 Tell me more about what do you think?

Right Feedback #18




Ask micro questions
 Focus on achievements
 Focus on possible improvements
 Focus on next steps and support you need

DESK #19




DESCRIBE situation - use facts, actions, observations
 EXPLAIN your assessment
 SHOW what you expect
 COMMUNICATE and explain consequences
 KNOW and share consequences

FECE #20




FACTS - refer and describe the facts
 EMOTIONS - explain your emotions
 CONSEQUENCES - explain consequences
 EXPECTATIONS - state your expectations

Von Thun ears #8



FACTS - data, hard facts, verifiable information
 SELF-REVELATION - your motives, values, emotions
 RELATIONSHIP - what you believe about your relationship with the other person
 APPEAL - Call for action


SMART #21



Setting SMART goals or objectives and designing the right strategy to accomplish them is of fundamental importance for the success of an individual and a team

SPECIFIC - set specific goal
 MEASURABLE - criteria
 ACHIEVABLE - are you ready? is it real for you?
 RELEVANT - do you want this?
 TIME - set timeline and deadline


GROW #24



GROW is for higher productivity, improved communication, better interpersonal relationships and a better quality working environment

GOAL - establish goal
 REALITY - examine the current reality
 OPTIONS - explore options
 WAY FORWARD - state what will happen next


RACI #27



RACI model brings structure and clarity to describing the roles that stakeholders play within a project

REASONABLE - person - doer and completes the task
 ACCOUNTABLE - delegates works and review tasks
 CONSULTED - share information and gives comments
 INFORMED - needs to be kept in the loop on project progress

TEAM Dynamic #30



A group process is a framework that can be used by teams aiming at improving their long-term collaboration and work in order to accomplish more efficiently tasks and goals

FORMING - group members are getting to know each other and set rules
 STORMING - phase of identity search, conflicts, confusion
 NORMING - team's cohesion is set up
 PERFORMING - work is being done
 ADJOURNING - time to put an end to the work and sum it ups

Eva's story

Let's meet Eva



CV

Work experience in public sector: 7 years
Manager experience: 1 year
Team: 6 people

Education: Master's degree in Economics
Additional courses: time management, how to work efficiently, communication, coaching as a tool for leaders

Hobby: reading and travelling
Family: married, 2 children

Eva does her job with the best attitude and diligence. She is really proud of her team and the job they do, although on a daily basis they encounter some challenges, such as setting priorities to cope with the huge workload, efficiency of internal and external communication, difficulties in communication with some team members, etc.

Eva decided that she could help herself and her team to grow by starting to use coaching approach, instruments and methods as a fast and efficient way to build an effective team. Eva and her team are already on their way and this toolkit is a great guide to them.

You can get a guidance from this toolkit if you are a manager and some of your challenges are as follows:

- Sometimes you think that people do not understand you,
- You have difficulties in giving feedback,
- You have a large amount of tasks and it is difficult to set the right priorities,
- You think that there are too many conflicts in your team,
- It is difficult to manage your team,
- It is sometimes hard to set and agree upon goals in your team.

If you have caught yourself thinking “yes, it is about me or my team” for any of the points above, then open the relevant topic in the toolkit and find out:

- In what situations to use the technique or method,
- Description of the technique and delivery steps,
- Example how to use it,
- Tips and tricks.

We wish you and your team a great journey towards more effective internal cooperation, clarity in goals and processes, flexibility, wellbeing at the workplace and within your team, and best efficiency in work!

Active Listening

Active listening means fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively 'hearing' the message of the speaker. It involves listening with all senses.

Active listening clues:

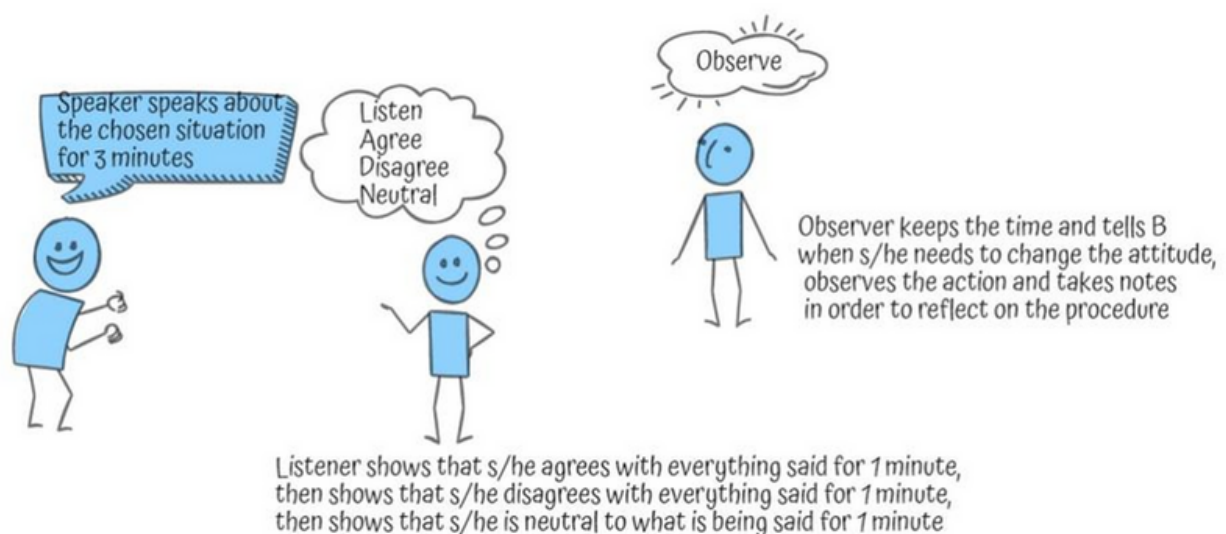
- Make sure you can hear the speaker well.
- Show that you are listening.
- Notice the speaker's speaking style.
- Try listening 75% of the time and talking only 25% of the time.
- Don't think about what to say while you're listening. Focus completely on the speaker and what is being said.
- Listen for central ideas, not only facts.
- Let the speaker finish the core message and then speak.
- Think over what was said and check if you got the message by asking questions.
- Ask supportive/guiding questions.

Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps

The following activities will help to practise active listening, try out and compare various listening clues and techniques. The activities should be done in groups of 3 persons where one person is a speaker, another is a listener and the third person is an observer.

Necessary resources and environment: a small quiet room without distractions, two chairs facing each other or side by side for speaker and listener, one chair a bit to the side for the observer. These activities can also be done online.

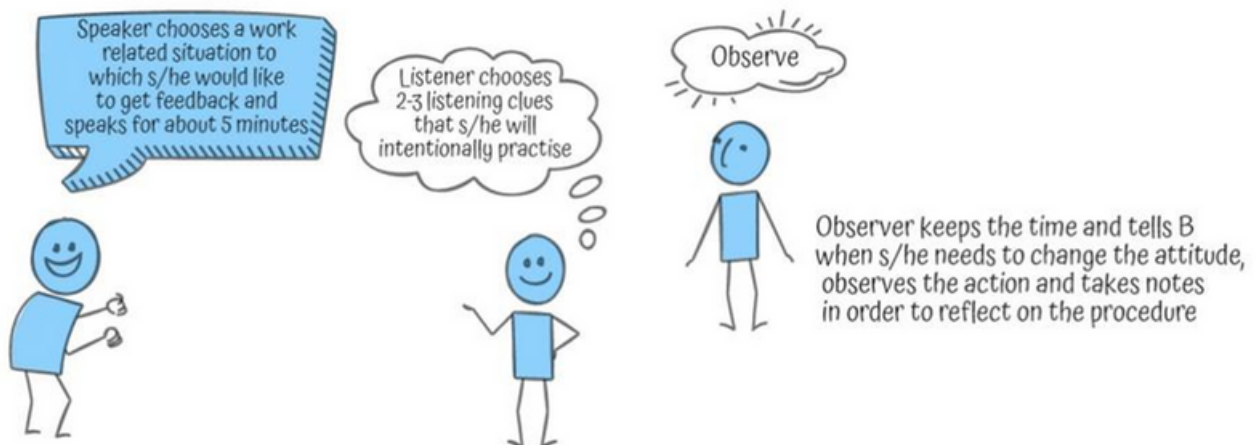
Activity 1



When the time is over, persons discuss the activity:
Speaker – how s/he felt, when it was easier to speak;
Listener – what happened with her/his listening during the 3 minutes;
Observer – common observations.

The roles can be changed and the same pattern repeated again for rounds 2 and 3 so that each person can practise speaking, listening and observing.

Activity 2



Once the time is over the persons discuss the following:

Speaker– how s/he felt when speaking, if there were any changes that s/he noticed in listener's behaviour;

Listener – which listening clues s/he used, how it went and did their listening change in any way;

Observer – common observations about speaker and listener.

The roles can be changed and the same pattern repeated again so that each person can practice speaking, listening and observing.



Eva's example:

Eva has noticed that there are some communication problems in her team. Colleagues do not pay enough attention to the opinions of others and oftentimes they are too busy to listen to their co-workers. There are some external obstacles and interventions as well, like noise which influences concentration and makes listening much more challenging. Thus Eva may use these activities to improve active listening skills within her team. Eva asks her colleagues to describe a problem - she listens with agreement, disagreement and tries to be neutral. This has helped her experience some new notions. When listening to a colleague, she includes an observer - as one sees the situation from the side-lines, it helps not to get involved emotionally. She shares these three listening roles with her colleagues and suggests topics for discussion. It helps them to hear and understand each other better.

Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

Listeners should remain neutral and non-judgmental. Listener is trying not to take sides or form opinions, especially at the beginning of the conversation. Active listening is also about patience - pauses and short periods of silence should be accepted to give time to explore their thoughts and feelings.

Von Thun Ears

or Four-sides Model of Communication

The main purpose of using the Von Thun ears is twofold:

1. On one hand it is to discover your predominant ear, i.e. predominant way of perception of what others communicate,
2. On the other hand, it helps to realise that one may and should try to use all of the ears in order to adapt his/her reaction to better communicate what he/she is hearing.

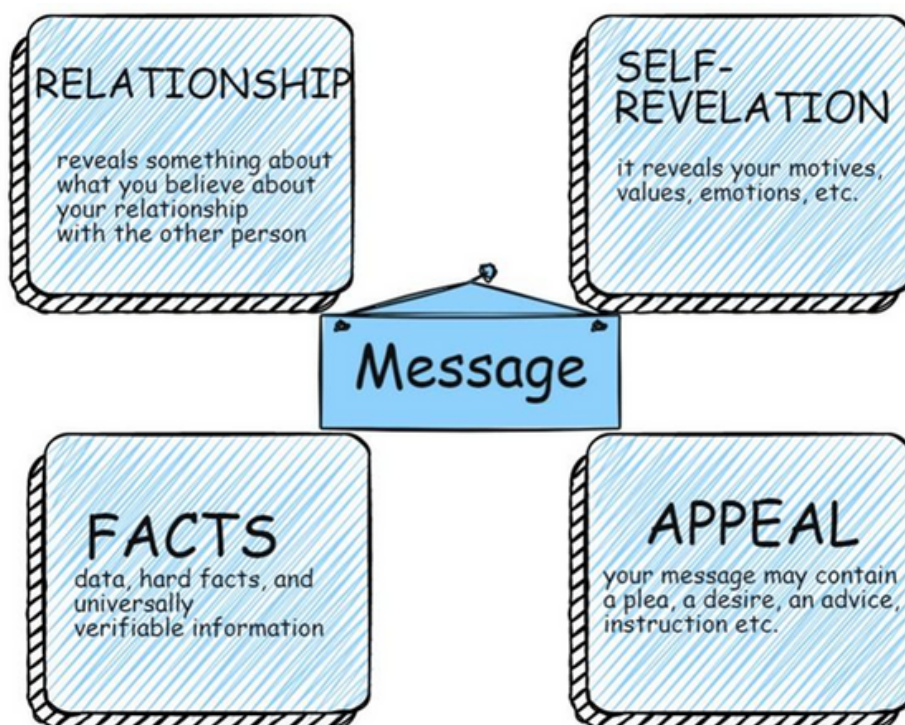
The following exercise aims at giving you a flavour of what your predominant Von Thun ear is and provokes you to reflect on what would be the predominant ear of your peer with an aim of adapting your communication to make it most suitable for that person.

Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps

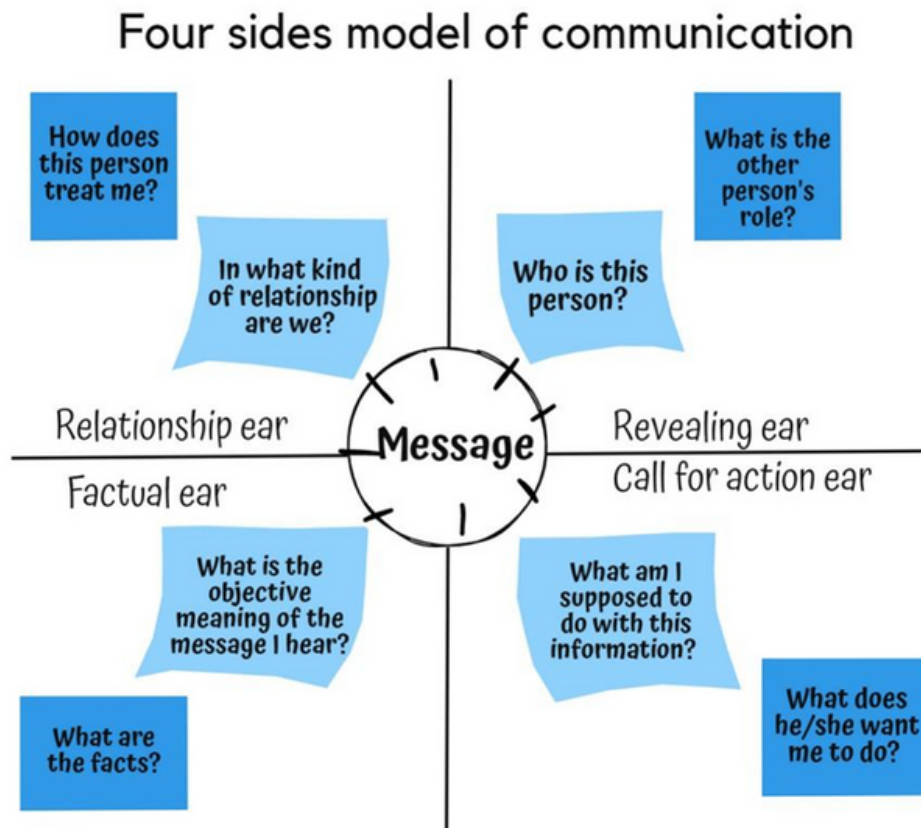
The Von Thun Ears metaphor is based on the four-sides model, also known as communication square (four-ears model), described by German psychologist Friedemann Schulz von Thun.

The Von Thun communication model shows the complexity of our statements in terms of what we intend to say, how we say it and what is heard or understood by the recipient of our communication. So, not only our message contains a content and relational aspects (connected with emotions, senses, etc.), but it is also what it says about us (speakers), what the receivers of our message get out of it (what filters they use to decode our message) and finally, what reactions they provoke, if any.

Therefore, there are four levels of our communication:



Here is how the communication squares translate to Von Thun's ears/ What do you hear with the respective Von Thun ears?



Step 1. Use active listening when receiving communication about any situation from your professional life. Use the '4 ears' one by one referring to the description of each layer and using the questions in the graph above.

Step 2. Answer and reflect upon the following questions:

- What would be your most natural reaction to the situation you are in?
- Which of the above is your predominant Von Thun Ear?
- Which one do you like/feel comfortable with?
- Which one do you not like/ do not agree with/ do not recognise at all?
- Would your reaction change, if this situation was described by someone else? Why?
- Which of the Von Thun Ears would you like to use more often? Why?

Based on the answers above, make a commitment to yourself that you will try using all of the Von Thun ears in situations when you receive a communication.

Try to figure out what the best responses to a communication are by referring to all levels of communication. Have your reactions changed?



Eva's example:

Eva has noticed that she extensively uses "factual" and "call for action" ear. She expects to receive clear and short messages from her teammates. Yet, she recognises that she wants to use the two other levels of communication to understand her teammates better. She has trouble with colleague John who comes late to work and has problems with keeping up with his deadlines. She asks for a meeting to talk the issue over. She hears that John refers to his difficult family situation and asks for more understanding. Eva gets annoyed. She has heard these stories many times as almost everybody has a complex family situation (ill parents, children and their school challenges, health problems, problems with the dog/car, etc.). She tells John that she will no longer tolerate him being late and expects him to arrive at work 5 minutes before the office hours.

What do you think Eva has heard by using the following ears?



The situation with John getting late to work has changed. He has stopped being late. The other day, Eva sees John shutting down his computer 10 minutes before working hours. She approaches John and says:

- I see that you are leaving.

John responds:

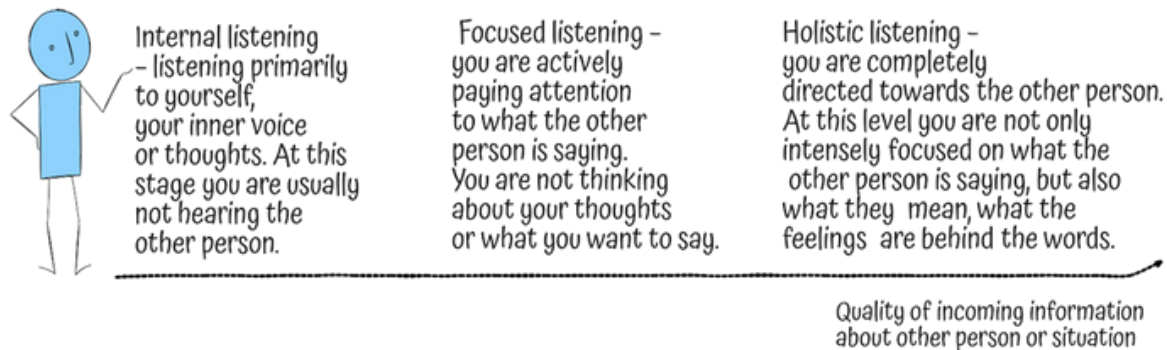
- Yes, I have just closed my laptop. I'm done for today.

Try to find another person who would answer the questions above. Then compare your answers.

It may happen that you have assigned different comments to the same situation. Discuss the differences.

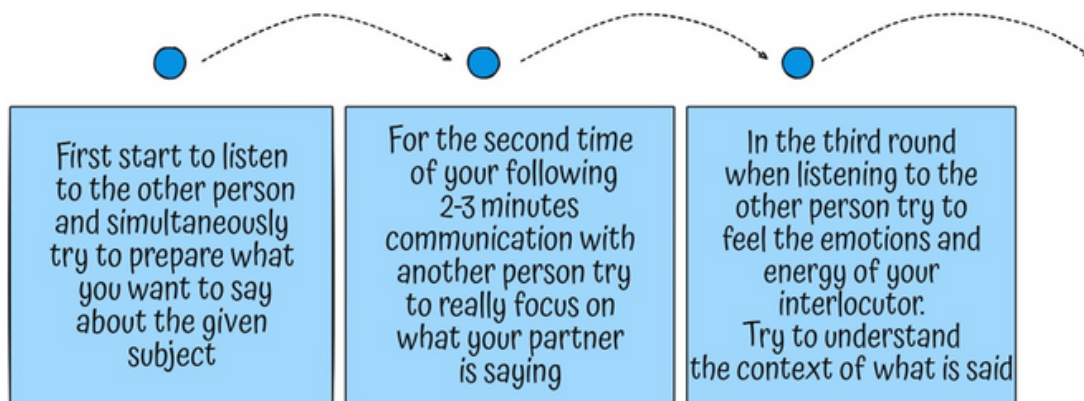
Levels of Listening: Internal, Focused and Holistic

This tool enables you to deepen the knowledge and practise skills of active listening. By intentionally practising it you may become a more effective listener.



The best way to understand and upgrade your level of listening skills is ‘practising by doing’ exercises.

You can experiment and practice three levels of listening by getting together with somebody else. In such an exercise, please be aware of these three levels by trying to focus on each level:



After listening to the other person, please take a moment for reflection.

Next try to rethink and respond to a few questions like:

- Which level of listening are you most motivated to practise?
- What difference could that make for your work communication and your relationships?



Eva's example:

Eva knows that one of her colleagues – John, has personal problems and he shows poor work performance. Eva invites John to discuss the problem. She starts by asking how she can help, then listens to what John says. At first Eva wants to comment and give him her perspective on the issue (Level 1), however, instead she uses her holistic listening skills and takes care to avoid interrupting while listening. During their conversation John uncovers the problem: a lot of pressure at work and taking care of ill parent at the same time. Eva is trying to be focused on the conversation with John (Level 2). Finally, she listens to what John says as well as what he does not say. She pays attention to John's body language, too. She understands the source of the problem better and provides support without judgement (Level 3).

Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

In the process of upgrading your more holistic and empathic listener, try to keep the speaker from feeling or becoming defensive. To do this, avoid asking direct questions, arguing with what is being said, or disputing facts.

Open Questions

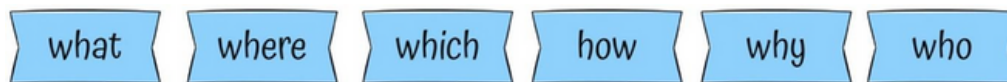
Open-ended questions are free-form questions that allow a person to answer in an open text format based on their complete knowledge, feeling and understanding. It means that the response to these questions is not limited to a set of options.

When to use this technique?

- When your team-mate does not answer your questions
- When you want your team to engage more in the tasks/activities
- When you don't get back what you have been asking for
- When you want to confirm that you have been understood correctly

Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps

Open – ended question starts with:

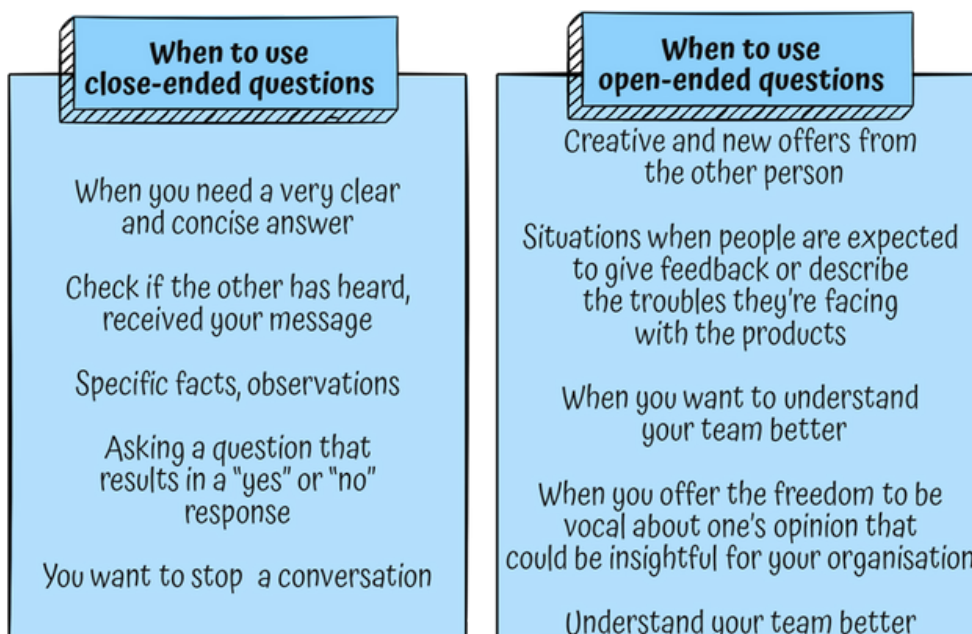


Respondents like open-ended questions as they get 100% control over what they want to respond to, and they don't feel restricted by the limited number of options. The open-ended questions require answers in the form of lists, sentences or something longer like speech/paragraph.

Any question that is worded in a way that it can be answered with a simple, direct response of one word or just a few words is close-ended.

Not all close-ended questions have to be answered with a "yes" or "no."

Both close-ended and open-ended questions serve important purposes in communication and can be used in a variety of scenarios. Close-ended questions should be used to elicit a short, quick response, while open-ended questions can be gateways to a conversation.

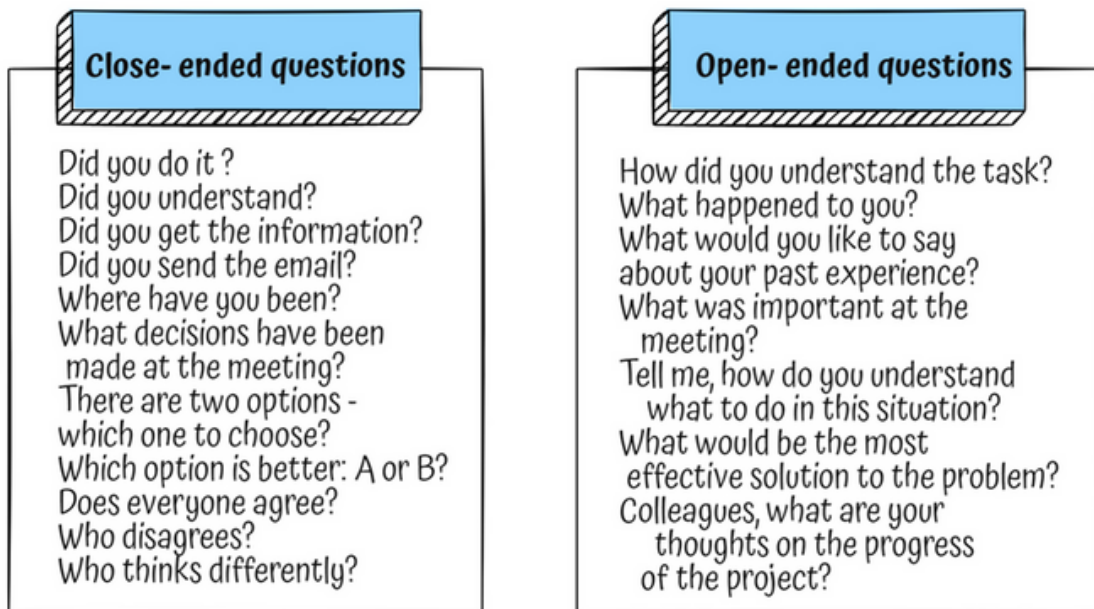




Eva's example

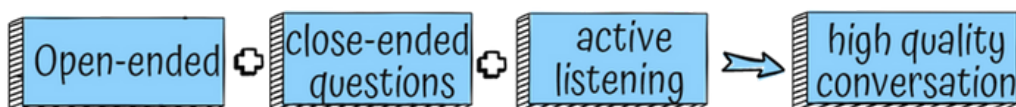
Eva is running a team meeting where she is presenting tasks and future activities to be performed by each team member. She has made sure that the general goal of tasks is well understood, she has also shown the context of their job. Suddenly, she realizes that some of her team-mates do not listen to her, others seem not to understand what to do next. Then she remembers that it is not the first time when she has explained the task, everybody has confirmed they have understood it and yet have performed the task in a completely different way from what was expected.

What should Eva do? Instead of seeking for confirmation by asking: do you all know what to do next? (close-ended question), she goes on with some open-ended questions.



Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

Expect the unexpected: be ready to hear whatever answer comes with open-ended questions.



Empowering Questions

Empowering questions are a more sophisticated and complex form of open-ended questions. Depending on the context of their usage and an intention of a speaker, open-ended questions may also have additional, empowering function.

Asking empowering questions to your employees or peers at work should help you in building sound relations and releasing yourself from directive management towards inspirational management. When asking a thought-provoking, open-ended and challenging question, you give the opportunity to your interlocutor to look for answers instead of seeking instructions and to search for new opportunities instead of following the same path all the time. Empowerment deriving from your questions would be a key (or decisive) to having more motivated team members, with stronger sense of purpose for their tasks and better control over their responsibilities.

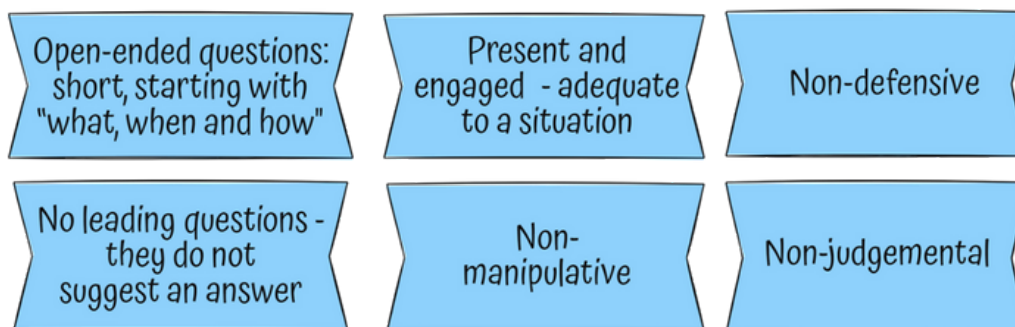


Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps.

Empowering questions have the ability to change your focus in an instant, transforming your state of mind from limiting to empowering. These questions force your brain to search for different information and as a result put you in a different and more resourceful state.

Empowering questions are not means by themselves, they are not tools that can be used blatantly to any situation. When asking a question to your colleague (peer or employee) you should make sure you take into consideration what is important to this person, what values are most important to him/her; what type of communicative personality he/she is; what arguments he/she would be ready to take and what messages will not work.

What makes a question empowering?



Eva's example:

Eva's team is engaged in preparation of one of the most important analyses for an upcoming Council of Ministers. She knows she has got little time. Still, she feels confident with deadlines because she leads an excellent team of specialists, most of them vibrant and with high self-esteem. Yet, there is Hugo in her team, who is very shy and avoids stressful situations. He is a good specialist, but it happens that he makes mistakes and is late with his work. Also this time Hugo is late in delivering his work. He comes to Eva giving her a brand new excuse for not doing his job and asking her to shift his task to somebody else. Eva knows that she cannot do it as other colleagues are overloaded with other tasks and they have already started to notice that they are getting more and more of Hugo's tasks.

She decides to empower Hugo and take over responsibility. She uses some of the empowering questions, but before doing so she describes the situation and her intention of asking some questions.

She uses the following arguments:

OK, Hugo, I can hear what you are saying, but the thing is that the whole team is very busy. Yet, this is not the first time you are coming to me and asking to shift your task to somebody else. Is there anything that stops you from performing your tasks on time? What kind of support do you really need? I cannot keep on delegating your tasks to others.

Here are some examples of empowering questions that Eva might have used.

Try using these questions to continue the conversation with Hugo:

- What's the way forward in this issue?
- What do you want to achieve by undertaking this action?
- Where are you in your career and where do you want to be?
- What do you want to accomplish by proposing that?
- What do you propose to do instead?
- If this situation happens again, what would you propose then?
- Why do you think is a good solution?

- What kind of support do you need to fulfil this task by yourself and/or on time?
- If you were (name a famous or interesting person that your team-mate Hugo knows), what would you do?
- What is this idea based on? What makes you think it is a good idea?
- Beyond help in this task, is there anything else you would like to tell me so that I can be of help to you?
- What would you do if such a situation happened constantly?

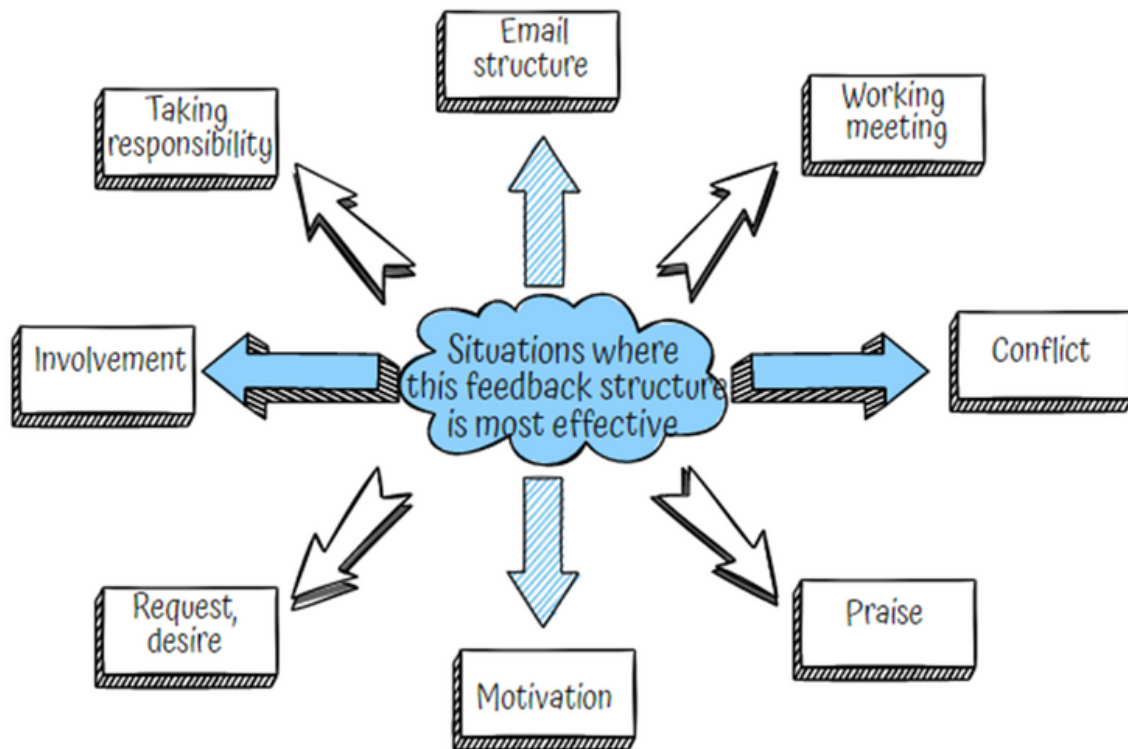
Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

Finding your way to empower others is a great skill, but also a privilege. It is by no means a situation of a master who asks a question to give an immediate answer. Empowering somebody by asking the right questions should be backed up by an established relation with that person. A relation that is based on mutual respect, understanding and security.

Asking empowering questions is a skill that you have to master throughout your life, and not the one you can learn once and for all.

Feedback

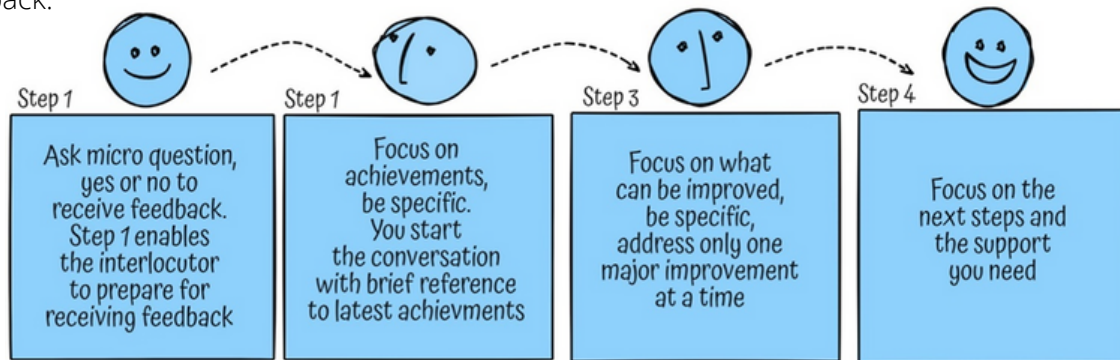
The main purpose of giving feedback is to provide relevant information on recipient's actions, behaviour and/or conduct without judgement in order to prevent or correct similar situations in the future, helping to achieve the required results.



Expected outcomes: A feedback designed in this way makes it easier for the person to whom it is addressed to fully understand consequences and impact of changing behaviour and also receive direct information about actions or behaviour could help achieve better results and make a positive effect on the discussed topic. This allows you to talk about the situation itself and your feelings resulting from the consequences without assessing the other person's character. It is an opening for a discussion on a better future, which is the main purpose of providing feedback, and creating closer relationships at work.

Right Feedback Information

The method enables managers to provide specific, actionable, constructive and positive feedback.



Using feedback sandwich method flies in the face of recommendations about how to provide effective, meaningful employee feedback that is less than positive.

In a feedback sandwich, the manager layers' constructive feedback between two instances of positive performance feedback. The formula looks like this: start the meeting with positive feedback, then provide constructive or negative feedback, and then, end the meeting with more positive feedback.

The problem is many people tend to overdo this and more positive feedback distorts the importance of the feedback about areas to improve. The employee can be confused about the importance of constructive feedback. Since sustained improvement is the basis for recommendations about raises and other organizational perks, this places the employee at a disadvantage.



Eva's story:

"Hugo, do you have some time to talk with me? (she waits for the answer) I have some ideas for how we can improve our communication with key stakeholders. Can I share them with you?"

Hugo gave a positive answer.

Eva continued: "I really appreciate your engagement in this project. I see all your work, but, you know, I would like you to pay more attention to the quality. I would love to see more accuracy in the reports. I am ready to support you if you need it. Do you have other ideas what could be done differently?"

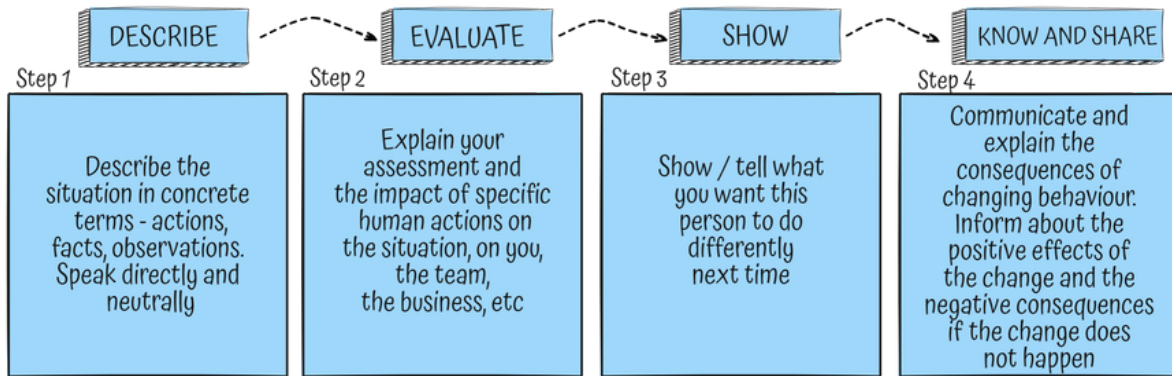
The outcome of the meeting should be an action plan with feedback sessions planned at regular intervals. The employee is more likely to improve if there are clear expectations, due dates, and your offered regular support.

Try to turn feedback into a two-way conversation using questions that check perception, and determine commitment and understanding. The conversation can be ended by asking some questions, like "What is your reaction to this?" or "Is this a fair representation of what happened?"

Depending on the situation the conversation may start with micro -yes question (step 0) and then focusing on areas to be improved (step 2).

DESK Feedback Structure

As the DESK feedback structure is based only on facts, this allows you to talk about the situation itself without referring to the recipient's character and reducing the likelihood that what will be said will be perceived personally or offensively.



Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps

- Try to keep feedback short, i.e. 1-2 sentences per step. Less is more!
- If necessary or if the emotions are too strong, prepare in advance (facts, evaluation, consequences and expected changes).
- Always give corrective feedback face to face. Try to do it orally and do not use writing.
- Make sure the other person can listen to you and focus on the issue at that moment.
- Strictly follow the steps and structure.
- Speak briefly and clearly.



Eva's example:

Eva noticed that one of the team members was making repetitive mistakes in the last report. This is how Eva used DESK:

Eva: "You've made mistakes in your reports 3 times already (DESCRIBE) and this has led to further mistakes in the work of your colleagues or required additional time for corrections, as a result of which I was dissatisfied with the results and quality of our work (EVALUATE). I would like to ask you to schedule the delivery of next reports 1-2 days before the deadline, so that you have the opportunity to check everything twice (SHOW). I am sure that the reports submitted in the best quality and time will delight colleagues and they will be extremely grateful to you for the time and nerves saved. Your completed work is the basis for any further work, so this is why your investment in making sure there are no mistakes is very important, especially if we want to provide our customers with truly high quality work (KNOW AND SHARE).

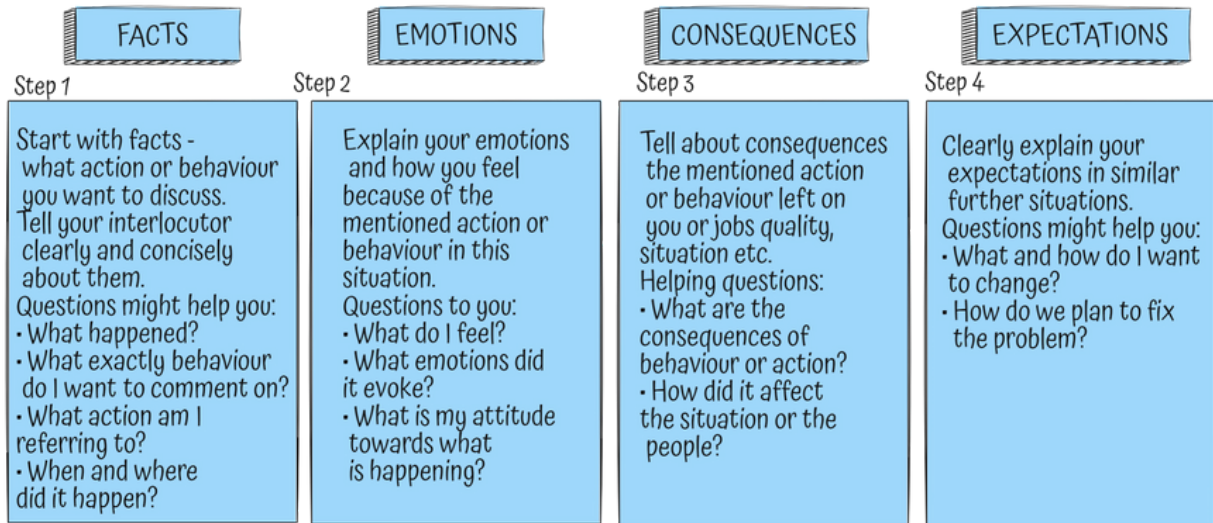
Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

- The message tends to be quite long and may require preparation in advance, which is not always easy.
- This feedback structure works well for providing feedback to teamwork, use it the same way - step by step - discussing with your team expected outcomes, positive impact, etc.

FECE

Feedback Structure

The FECE method is different from other methods with a touch to emotions, which is important in a fast changing environment as up to 90% of our decisions are made based on our feelings.



Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps

- If necessary or if the emotions are too strong, prepare your text (facts, emotions, consequences, expectations) in advance.
- Always give corrective feedback only face to face. Try to do it orally and do not use writing.
- Make sure the other person can listen to you and focus on the issue at that moment.
- Strictly follow the steps and structure.
- Speak briefly and clearly.



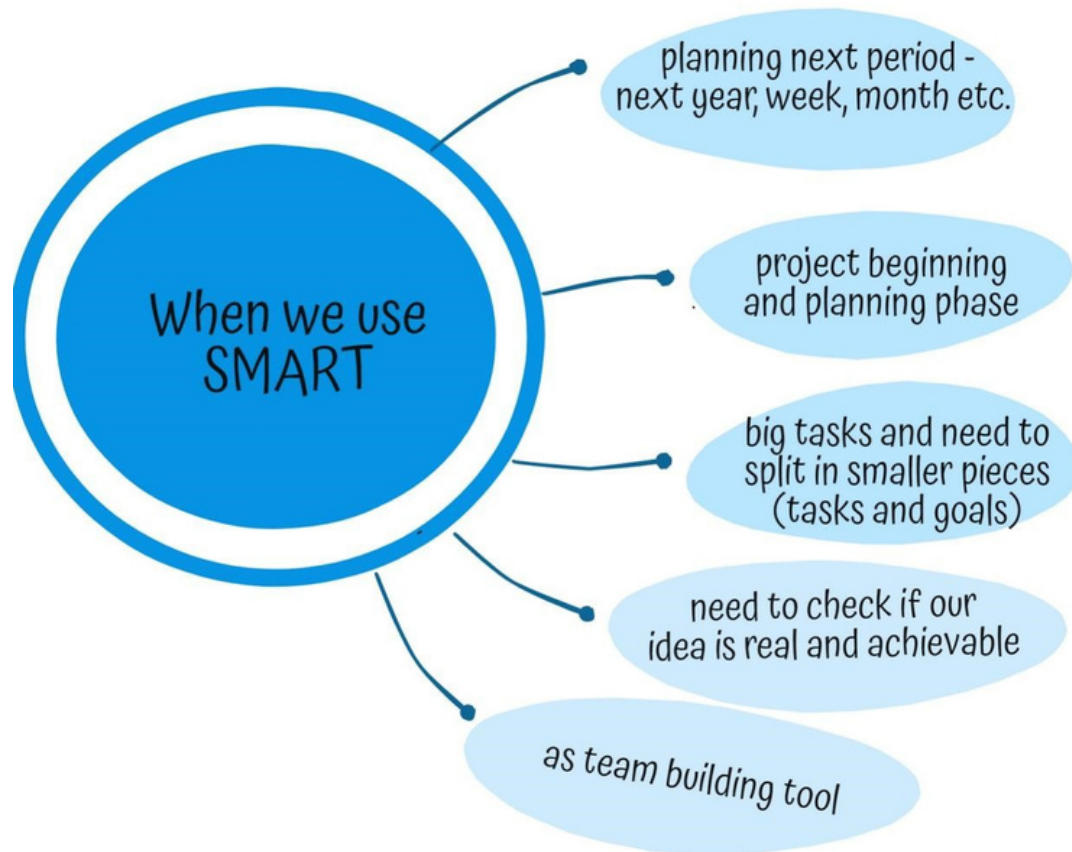
Eva's example:

"You did not come to yesterday's meeting. I hadn't received any message from you before the meeting that you wouldn't be able to attend (FACT), so I felt bad and upset about it (MY EMOTIONS). As a result, I will have to cover the travel expenses twice (CONSEQUENCES). In the future, please let me know in advance about such changes, or if you are unsure, so we may think of something else, for example, video conferencing (EXPECTATIONS)."

SMART

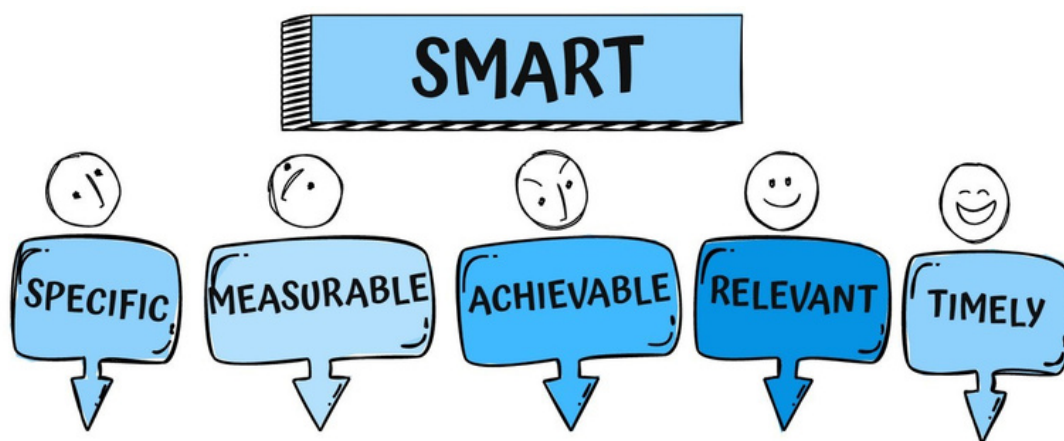
Method for Setting Goals

Setting goals or objectives and designing the right strategy to accomplish them is of fundamental importance for the success of an individual and a team.



What benefits does SMART method provide?

- Learn to set the right strategies and actions that would bring the team closer to fulfilling the goal.
- Prioritize the actions that would make a bigger impact in achieving the goal.
- The team will be able to define more accurately and efficiently the goals to be met in any future task.
- Substantially improve time management skills and goal-centred work plan.



1. Set Specific Goals

The goal to be achieved needs to be specific. A vague goal can rarely be fully achieved as there is no clear way to evaluate when and how it will be accomplished.

Questions to set specific goals

What do we want to achieve?
 Why do we want to achieve this specific goal?
 Where do we want to achieve it?
 How will we achieve it?
 With whom? Who is responsible for what task? (RACI)
 What are the limitations/challenges?

Eva's example:

To implement Erasmus+ project "Coaching Techniques".
 Why we are doing this? - to improve public services of middle level managers across Europe
 by providing a Coaching Toolkit
 In cooperation with partners from Latvia, Poland and Greece. Team of trainers and experts.
 To follow the schedule, to promote coaching techniques to attract public sector.

2. Set Measurable Goals

The team should elaborate on those measurable aspects of the goal, which will allow them to know when and whether they have achieved it or not. The team should be aware of these milestones/checkpoints and reflect on them throughout the working process.

Questions to set measurable goals

How will we know when we have achieved the goal?
 What is our goal in terms of numbers/finances/provided services?

Eva's example

To publish the Toolkit on all partner websites.
 To promote it during the conferences in partner countries and podcasts.
 To train the middle lever managers how to use coaching techniques.
 To fit in the given budget frame.

3. Set Achievable Goals

The team should make sure that the goal can be ultimately achievable and it is worth the time and effort to be invested.

Questions to set achievable goals

Can this actually be accomplished?

How realistic is this goal: in terms of team readiness - skills/time/ dedication/ motivation?

Is the team strategically organized to ensure work efficiency? (optional)

Eva's example

Yes or No (in Eva's example - it is YES) Avoid MAYBE!!!

Check your team's readiness.

4. Set Relevant Goals

The goals have to be relevant to the individual/team and the ultimate goal. The more relevant the goals the higher the motivation of the team to invest the effort and prioritize what is important for the achievement of the goal.

Questions to set achievable goals

Vai tiešām ir vērts to sasniegt?

Vai šis ir īstais laiks?

Vai komanda ir motivēta to darīt? Jūs varat novērtēt katra komandas locekļa motivāciju un centību.

Vai pūles atbilst atalgojumam?

Vai mērķis ir saistīts ar svarīgākajām vērtībām?

Eva's example

Her team is motivated and interested to achieve the goal - to create a "Coaching Toolkit" and publish it.

5. Set Timely Goals

Goals need to have a time limit or time dimension to them.

Questions to set timely goals

What is the deadline to complete the goal?
What is the deadline to complete the tasks that will lead to the goal?
What should be done by the end of the week/month/year?
Is the progress of completing this achievement following the initial plan?

Eva's example

Short term tasks and goals – days, weeks, a month.
Long term tasks and goals – weeks, months, years.
Schedule actions and plan steps.



Eva's big example:

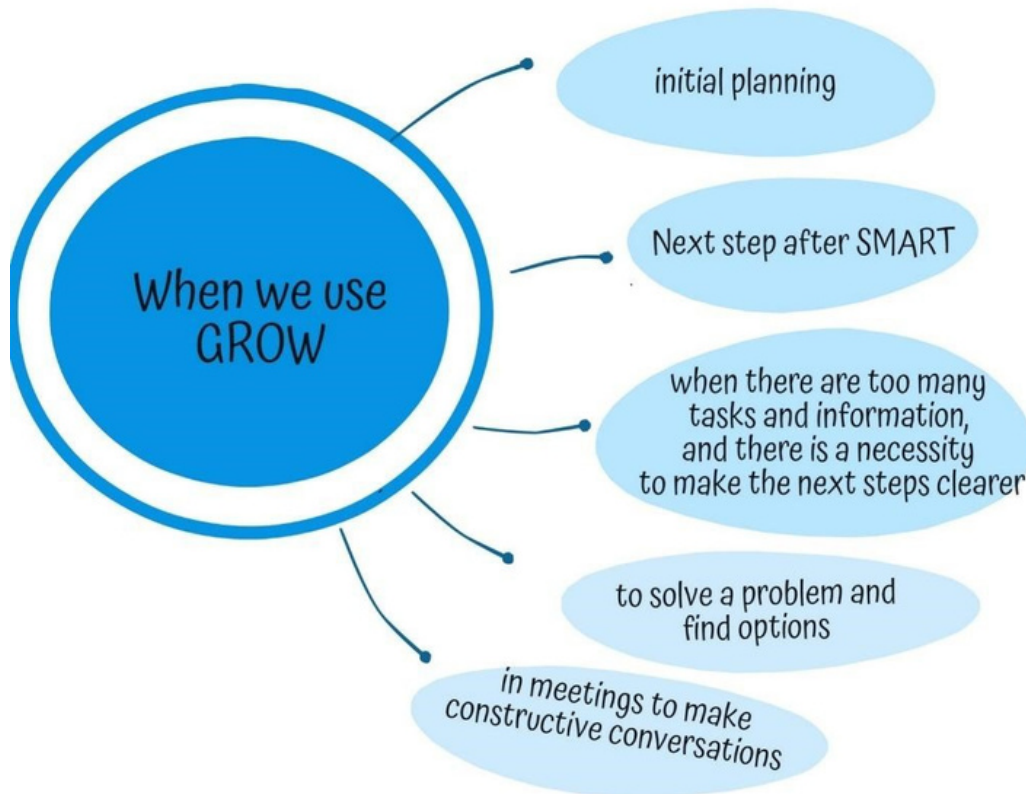
1. Complete the task (too general, doesn't say anything)
2. Complete task "x" - "to make a report about last year" (specific)
3. Complete task "x", which means: gathering all the data and making a final report according to the instructions of the manager (measurable)
4. Complete task "x" – it means: collect all the data and make a final report according to the manager's instructions and submit a report within 2 days from this date - check your schedule: is that real? (SMART)

Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

According to Parkinson's Law "a task will take as long as the allocated time given to achieve it", but it is generally noticed that people are overoptimistic about the time needed to complete a task and the feasibility of deadlines (Planning Fallacy). In order to use SMART model efficiently for complex and time-demanding tasks the individual/team should balance between Parkinson's Law and the Planning Fallacy in order to give the needed urgency, priority and time to any task.

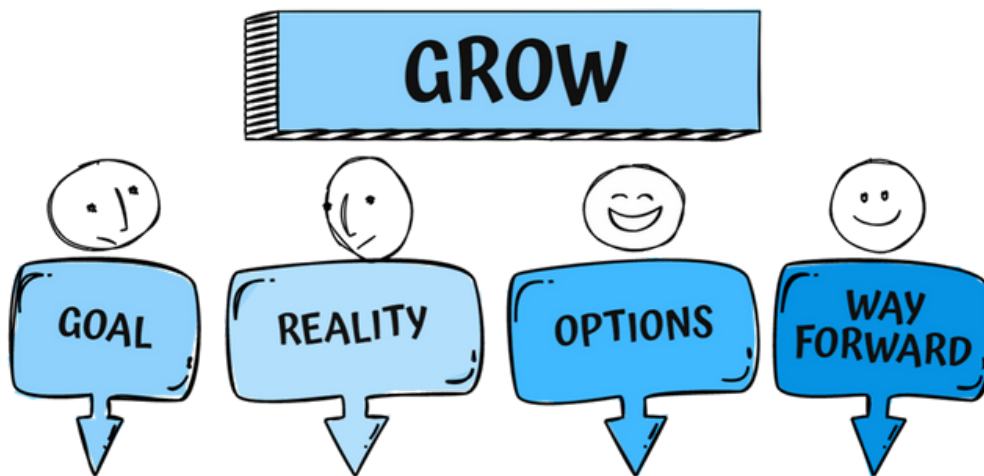
GROW Model

The GROW Model has been seen to yield higher productivity, improved communication, better interpersonal relationships and a better quality working environment.



What benefits does GROW model bring?

- Make the right strategies and actions that would bring the team closer to achieving the big goal.
- Exploring and improving the current situation in a rational way.
- Substantially improve time management skills and goal-centred work plan.
- Developing efficiency and productivity of the team.



Move step by step - do not go to the next part while the previous one is not clear or discussed enough so that everyone understands it equally well (if it is for the group).

Step 1. **Establish the Goal.**

First, you and your team member need to look at the behaviour that you want to change, and then structure this change as a goal that you want to achieve.

Spend enough time to set the goal so that it is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound! (See the section about SMART goal setting).

Step 2. **Examine the Current Reality.** The analysis of the reality regarding the goal.

This area of GROW allows for an invitation for self-assessment. See a situation from as many angles as possible.

- What do I already have (information, resources (finance, time), skills, beliefs)?
- What am I missing or my team is missing?
- What are the main obstacles (my or team, etc.) to achieving the goal?
- What are my or team skills and talents?
- What are the facts about reality?
- What are the emotions about reality?

Note. If you say that something is a reality check for someone, you mean that it makes them recognize the truth about a situation, especially about the difficulties involved in something they want to achieve.

Step 3. **Explore the Options.**

Looking for the possibilities and ideas - as much as possible (even extraordinary) - opens minds and offers new approaches. This is where you and your team can come up with the wildest ideas (brainstorm). Encourage yourself and your team to come up with as many ideas as you can - and remind yourselves that this doesn't mean you will have to do it, these are just ideas...

- What are the options (information, resources (finance, time), skills, beliefs, etc.)?
- What is completely impossible, but still an option?
- What resources do I need and where can I get them?
- How and in what way can I or my team member supplement the missing skills?
- What facts do I need to find out in order to achieve the goal?
- What support do I / my team / team member need?

Step 4. **Establish Way Forward/ What's Next/ Will.**

Who is the responsible person (name), is this person motivated enough and has s/he taken the responsibility fully? What is the plan for achieving the goal, milestones and the first step?

Key part of **W – Way Forward** is to ensure you or your team fully commit to the actions they choose. This portion of the framework helps to develop a commitment to goal achievement. Clarifying action steps and preparing a specific plan for forward movement is developed here.

- Where do I start? - The first step for me or the first step for my team.
- What actions should be taken?
- How long do I need or does my team need? Timetable, schedule, etc.
- How motivated do I feel or does my team feel?
- RACI: Responsibility assignment matrix - Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed. See the section on RACI.



Eva's example for individual conversations:

Eva thought about talking to the senior specialist Dora. The issue with the stuck project had to be resolved. Eva decided to use GROW.

The first question she asked herself was: what do I want from the conversation with Dora? Answer: Eva wants to understand what is going on with the project right now and how to move forward. The next point is what Eva herself currently knows about the project: facts, thoughts, intuitions, and dates, those responsible. Afterwards Eva thought about what should be done with the project. She prepared at least three options. And in the end, Eva figured out exactly what she could do in her area of expertise and what to offer Dora to do.

Eva felt prepared for a difficult conversation and went to meet Dora.

Example for a group discussion



What is the goal of the meeting?
If there are many points to be discussed in the meeting, which is the most crucial topic?

Reality check about each topic.
Only those who are really connected with the topic express their views (doers and responsibility holders)

Options - all ideas what to do next?
Everybody can tell and share.
Eva collects all ideas on a flipchart, for example

Make a plan, share tasks and responsibilities, roles, write time frame

Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

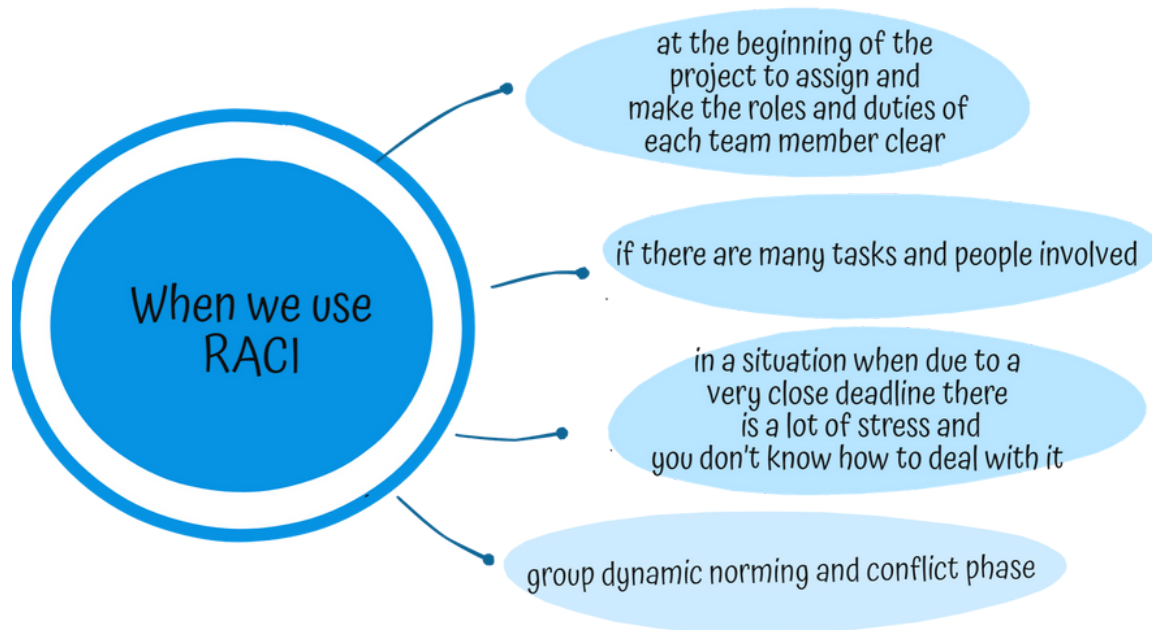
A great way to practice using the GROW model is to address your own challenges and issues. By practicing on your own and getting yourself "unstuck," you'll learn how to ask the most helpful questions. Then, write down some stock questions as prompts for future coaching sessions.

Think and then react. Consider how you emotionally react to a situation. Identify Obstacles. Think about how much emotion or feeling each situation truly requires. Notice themes and patterns in your life, and work toward adjusting how you react.

RACI

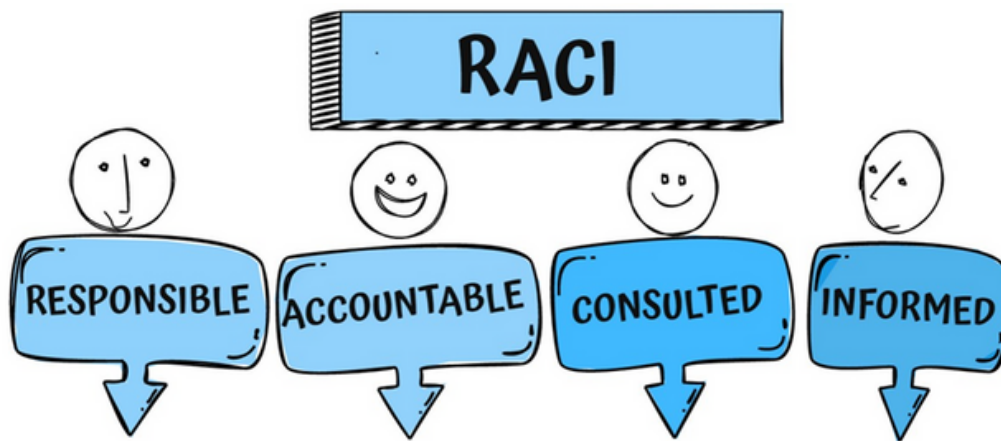
Matrix of Roles and Responsibilities

The RACI model brings structure and clarity to describing the roles that stakeholders play within a project. The RACI matrix clarifies responsibilities and ensures that everything that needs to be done is assigned to someone.



What are the benefits of the RACI model?

- Allows all team members to know who owns the project and each activity.
- Gives team an 'at a glance' confirmation of who is doing what.
- Enables employees to be more engaged.
- Decreases frustration with management.
- Helps save time in meetings and decision-making.
- Makes managing the team's work more efficient.
- Avoids blaming, as everyone is clear on their responsibility level for each of the tasks.
- Eliminates duplication of effort.



Responsible (Doer): This team member does the work to complete the task.

- Every task needs at least one Responsible party, but it is okay to assign more.
- Too many people assigned to the same task, and you have an excellent way to waste time.
- If you have a quick and simple task, the responsible could also be the accountable.

Accountable (Delegate): Accountable is an outcome-oriented designation that applies to a single person who reports on the work, whether in status updates or upon delivery.

- Just be sure you only have one Accountable person.
- This person delegates work and is the last one to review the task or deliverable before it is deemed complete.
- Being Accountable means you must answer for and/or sign off on the deliverable and deal with the consequences if it falls short of goals.

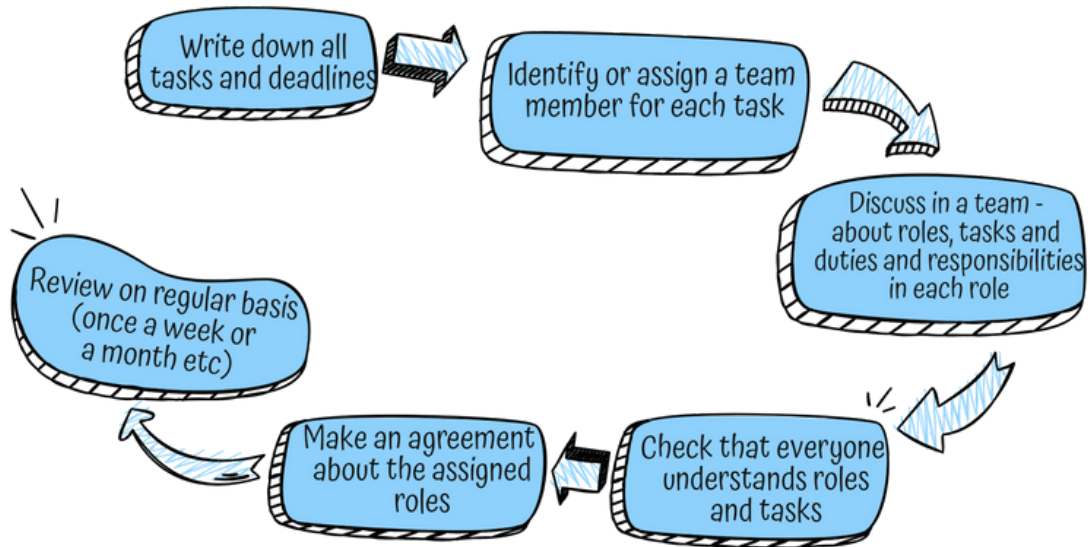
Consulted: Consulted parties are typically the people who provide input based on either how it will impact their future project work or their domain of expertise on the deliverable itself.

- Do not have too many consulted parties: it could slow the task completion. If you need to consult with several people before completing your task, you have yourself another time waster. Or, conflicting input on how to complete the task.
- Every deliverable is strengthened by review and consultation from more than one team member.

Informed: These team members simply need to know the project progress.

- It could be as simple as making sure everyone has access to your project plan so they can follow progress along the way on a regular basis (month/ week).
- If any changes are made during a project or process that are crucial, not daily routine.
- These individuals don't necessarily provide feedback, but they do have to stay up-to-date with developments throughout the process lifecycle.

RACI matrix steps:



Eva's example:

Task	Responsible (Doer)	Accountable (Delegate)	Consulted (Support)	Informed
To develop public sector strategy	Eva	Higher level managers	John	Dora
To calculate costs for the team training and find the best training company	Dora	Eva	Hugo	John
Organize an event (meeting)	Hugo	Higher level managers	Eva	John
Make an annual report	John	Eva	Hugo	Dora
Solve team member conflict	Eva	Eva	Dora	Other team members

Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

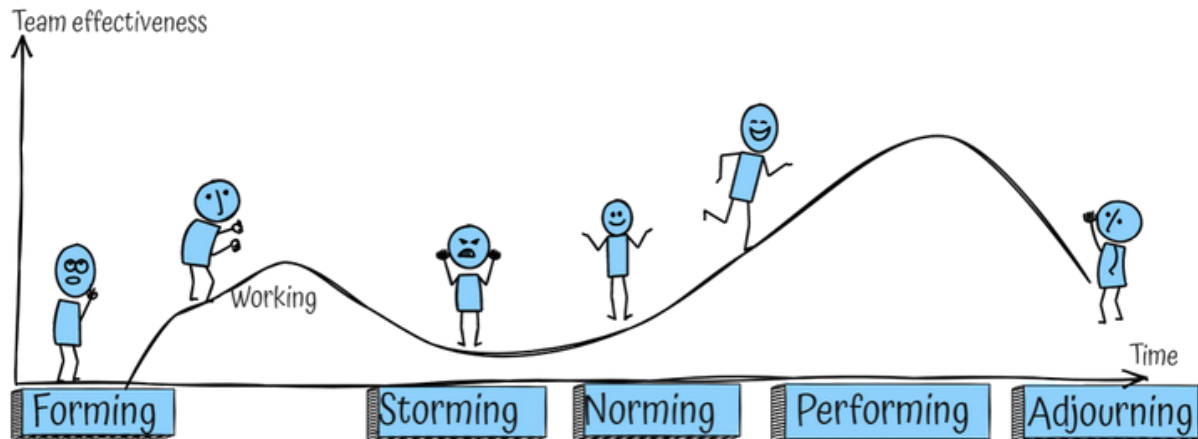
Make sure that no team members are overloaded with too many responsibilities and tasks.

It will not fix a dysfunctional team. The RACI matrix will not fix a team that has poor moral. Before RACI can be effective, you must have a team that has no issues. RACI is not a tool that fixes a dysfunctional team. RACI improves communication flow in a cohesive group.

GROUP PROCESSES

(Tuckman Stages of Group Development)

The group processes, or else known as the Tuckman stages of group development, is a framework that can be used by teams aiming at improving their long-term collaboration and work in order to accomplish more efficiently the set tasks and goals.



When to use this tool:

- initial phase of the project
- conflicts between team members
- when feeling that the manager is missing the control or over-controlling
- the team is not efficient and productive
- there is a repetitive pattern of this situation

What are the benefits?

- prepares the manager for the challenges arising in the teamwork
- increases understanding of the behaviour of the group members
- maximizes the productivity and creativity of the desired outcomes
- enhances the feeling of "team" to each one of the members

Description of the tool/method & Delivery steps

Forming

At this initial phase the team is formed, or there are changes (reforming, structural changes, changing goals or creating new goals and projects). Initial part of work, starting to work together.

How to recognize this stage?	The manager at this stage should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone shows their best behaviour. Usually, the atmosphere is positive, cautious and polite. • Team members are introduced to each other, they watch and evaluate each other (who are you? are you my friend?). • Team is observing their existing leaders. • Leaders can be challenged, tested. • Focusing on yourself (ignorance to others). • Person desires to be accepted and there is fear of exclusion. • Goal setting process and project beginning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposely and carefully select the team members. • Use ice-breaking activities to bring the members closer and make them feel more comfortable. • Enhance open discussions regarding the expectations, goals, fears with every individual and the team altogether. • Ensure that the members understand their roles and responsibilities properly. • Form the communication and conflict norms of the team.

Storming

When insufficient progress has occurred the feelings of frustration and conflicts increase. This is a very significant stage, after which many teams might fail to develop.

How to recognize this stage?	The manager at this stage should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People start to express their thoughts and opinions openly, and they are often critical. This can be dissatisfaction with working conditions, organisation, methods, etc. • People can blame each other a lot, individual competition. • Conflict arises between team and manager or team members. • The unconscious feelings of anxiety are manifested, it is a kind of desire to get rid of tension, and to discharge. • The existing rules are broken and reformed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively listen and try to comprehend emerging issues and concerns, and act towards their solutions. • Work along with the team to rethink and redistribute roles when needed to support the teamwork. • Enhance the workplace culture and educate the team members towards expressing their conflicts and frustrations openly. • Use conflict solving methods (pause, humour, mediator, supervisor, coach, open questions, active listening).

Norming

The cohesion of the team at this stage is developed. The members can discuss and resolve differences effectively, offer suggestions and constructive feedback to their colleagues for improvement. A balance has been achieved, and the focus and energy is set on achieving the task milestones.

How to recognize this stage?	The manager at this stage should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are becoming more aware of their positions and roles in the group. • The group is gradually approaching the level of self-control. • The role of the leader in the group is also changing. From a boss, the manager becomes a coordinator and colleague. • The manager becomes more democratic, uses collegial working methods. • The team accepts the inner rules about behaviour, values and attitude. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the team member roles and distribute them again like in the forming phase (Who is who? Why are we here? What do we want from the team?) • Brainstorm on the so far achieved results and ask for contributions from all the members. • Offer new ideas and suggestions, and utilise more resources. • When conflicts persist, encourage open communication. • Coach the group to use problem solving methods wisely. • Normalise receiving and giving feedback.

Performing

The results of the hard work start showing and feelings of excitement and fun are more prominent. The team is fully functional and confident, and it can reorganise itself fluidly. Members can now function perfectly in groups, sub-groups or independently and problems are prevented or solved as they pop up.

How to recognize this stage?	The manager at this stage should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team learns skills and uses them to discuss issues and make decisions quickly and effectively. • The team members use each other's strengths and talents. • This allows the team to quickly and efficiently achieve results based on the team's internal rules. • The influence of the leader is just as great as the ability of the team to organise and solve their own problems. • Team culture, ethics, interaction are realised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe, inquire and comment on what's going well or what needs to be improved. • Remember and be aware that he/she is a leader and become less active as a controller (boss). • Organise ceremonies, rituals or activities for the celebration of accomplishments. • Use or suggest inclusion activities that give new members a sense of acceptance and appreciation of their hard work and commitment.

Adjourning

The tasks are completed. It is important to celebrate the team's achievements and/or elaborate on its' failure.

How to recognize this stage?	The manager at this stage should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letting go of this group structure after the intensive team work can generate uncertainty and feelings of grief for the team members.• Everyone stays on his side/ place while the core of the team remains, and is supplemented by new team members who have their own skills, experience and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize and reward the efforts of the team and of the members individually.• Discuss this termination with members and encourage the discussion about their feelings and future career steps.• Listen and offer advice based on skills and competences.• End with a celebration that honours the group and its members.

Tips and Tricks (suggestions for users)

This method is connecting with all other methods in this toolkit.

After the initial cycle the team goes through all the stages again, but much faster, because the team already has experience and knowledge, and internal culture.

Manager should consider how ambitious the project is and how big the goal is for the project.

Manager should pay attention to the cultural background - diversity in the team.

Closing

Eva used one of the tools from the handbook every day.

Eva had a team meeting on Monday, when she listened with 'different ears' which allowed her to understand the team better, asked strong and effective questions to move the processes and tasks forward, and used the various feedback tools. This allowed Eva to both receive and deliver quality messages.

On Tuesday, there were leadership meetings that Eva was preparing for using GROW model: putting together all the facts about reality, figuring out what to do and the first three tasks to ask and/or start doing.

There was a lot of work on Wednesday, so Eva re-read about SMART goals and put together a daily plan based on the smart goals strategy. That allowed her not to get confused and overworked in the daily race.

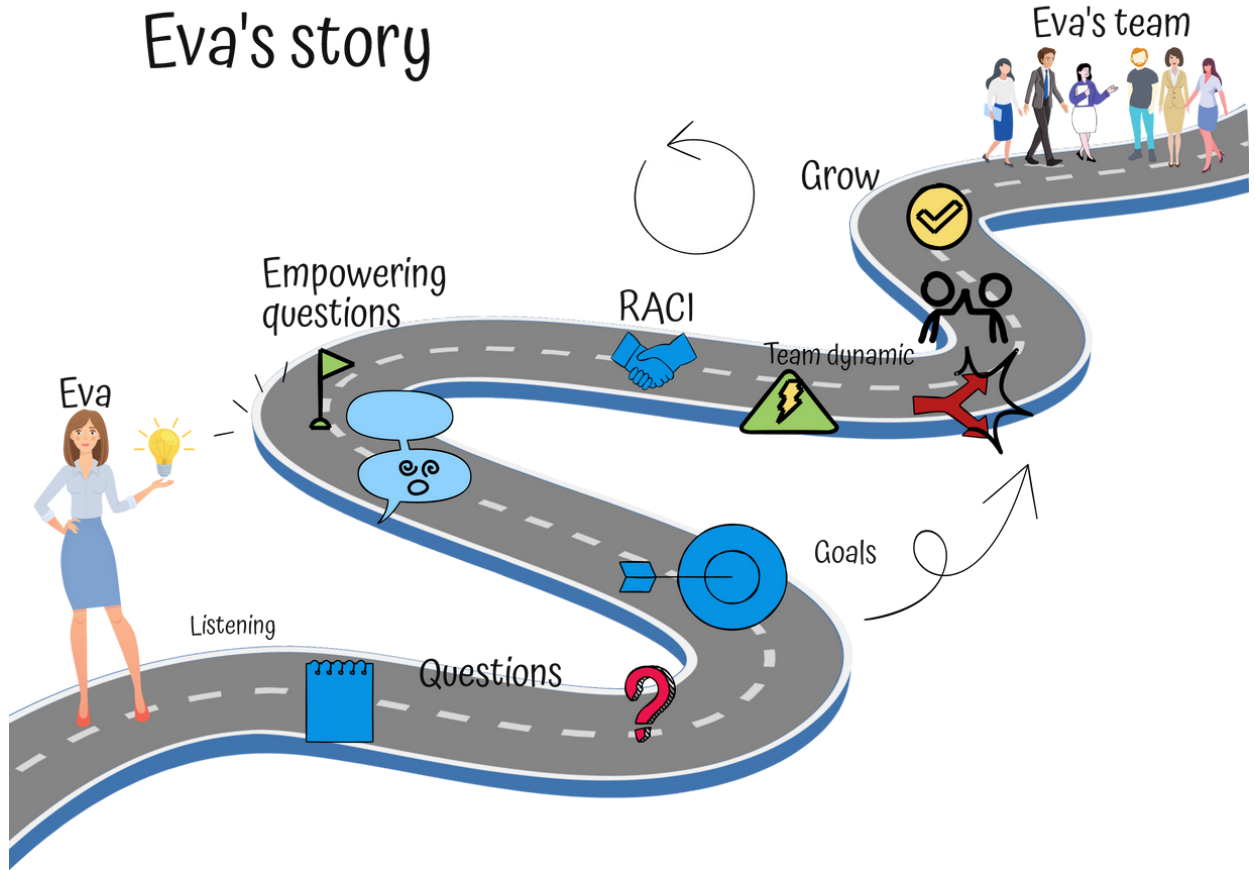
The team had to start thinking about the next week and workload on Thursday. The RACI model helped them to understand each team member's role, the amount of work, and distribute it equally among team members.

They were doing the day-to-day work on Friday before the weekend, when GROW and SMART models came to the rescue to evaluate and make the necessary improvements.

When sometimes Eva felt that she was not dealing effectively with the team or that nothing was working, then she sat down and read all about the team's dynamics. That way, she didn't miss the development of the team and the phase of the conflict where one can get stuck.

But most of all, Eva used active listening and questioning that ensured that it was not just an empty talk. The conversations were constructive, relevant, and to the point.

Eva's story



References (author) & Suggested further readings

- 1.21 Components of Effective Feedback. (n.d.). Retrieved from TalkDesk: <https://www.talkdesk.com/resources/infographics/21-components-of-effective-feedback/>
- 2.3 Levels of Listening. When to think, when to focus, when to step back. (n.d.). Retrieved from The People Piece: <https://www.peoplepiece.com/our-insights/levels-of-listening>
- 3.4 Sides Model of Communication. (2020). Retrieved from Project Management: <https://projectmanagement.guide/4-sides-model-of-communication/>
- 4.Active Listening. (2022). Retrieved from Skills You Need: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/active-listening.html>
- 5.Active Listening. Hear What People Are Really Saying. (2001). Retrieved from MindTools: <https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm>
- 6.Clutterbuck, D. (2020). Coaching the Team at Work 2: The definitive guide to team coaching. Nicholas Brealey; 4th edition.
- 7.Contributor, A. (2016, Oct 26). Better Questions Get Better Results. Retrieved from Forbes: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/aileron/2016/10/26/better-questions-get-better-results/?sh=963439b53b94>
- 8.Dana Miranda, Rob Watts. (2022, Marth 25). What Is A RACI Chart? How This Project Management Tool Can Boost Your Productivity. Retrieved from Forbes Advisor: <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/raci-chart/>
- 9.Daniel J. Levi, David A. Askay . (2020). Group Dynamics for Teams. SAGE Publications, Inc; 6th edition.
- 10.David Clutterbuck, David Megginson . (2009). Further Techniques for Coaching and Mentoring. taylor & francis; 1st edition.
- 11.David Clutterbuck,Tammy Turner, Colm Murphy. (2021). Ebook: The Team Coaching Casebook. Open University Press.
- 12.English, S. S. (2021). The four-sides model explained – Schulz von Thun’s communication square. Retrieved from YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqZNuV83fCg>
- 13.Erin Hueffner, Staff Writer. (2021, Dec 15). Feedback form examples, templates, and how to write your own. Retrieved from Zendesk Blog: <https://www.zendesk.com/blog/customer-feedback-forms/>
- 14.Four-sides model. (2014, Jun 9). Retrieved from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four-sides_model
- 15.Göke, N. (2020). The 4-ears model of communication. Retrieved from <https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/the-4-ears-model-of-communication>
- 16.Goldsmith, M. (2015, Aug 7). A 6-Part Structure for Giving Clear and Actionable Feedback. Retrieved from Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/2015/08/a-6-part-structure-for-giving-clear-and-actionable-feedback>
- 17.Helfand, H. (2020). Dynamic Reteaming: The Art and Wisdom of Changing Teams. O'Reilly Media; 2nd edition.
- 18.Hirsch, J. (2020, Jun 1). Good Feedback Is a Two-Way Conversation. Retrieved from Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/2020/06/good-feedback-is-a-two-way-conversation>

19. Jackson, K. (2017). Essential Questions to GROW Your Team: A Toolkit of Coaching Conversations for Managers & Leaders. Careerbalance Ltd.
20. Jackson, T. (2018, April 11). How [& Why] To Implement The Raci Matrix. Retrieved from ClearPoint Strategy: <https://www.clearpointstrategy.com/raci-matrix/>
21. Kahansky, N. (2021, Oct 7). Constructive feedback examples: 4-step guide. Retrieved from Hypercontext: <https://hypercontext.com/blog/communication/constructive-feedback-renninger>
22. Lister, M. (2021, Nov 10). The Three Levels of Listening. Retrieved from Co-Active Training Institute: <https://coactive.com/blog/levels-of-listening/>
23. Littlefield, C. (2017). Ask Powerful Questions: Create Conversations That Matter. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
24. Mull, J. (2018). No More Team Drama: Ending the Gossip, Cliques, & Other Crap That Damage Workplace Teams. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
25. Overcoming Barriers to Active Listening. (2022). Retrieved from Change Factory: <https://www.changefactory.com.au/our-thinking/articles/overcoming-barriers-to-active-listening/>
26. Q, S. (2004). USE DESK FOR DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS. Retrieved from Studer Education: <https://www.studereducation.com/use-d-e-s-k-for-difficult-conversations/>
27. Robinson, E. (2021, Dec 10). Why employee feedback is important + how to give and receive it. Retrieved from Hotjar: <https://www.hotjar.com/blog/employee-feedback/>
28. Russell, M. (2017, Nov 27). Strategic Leadership: The 3 Levels of Listening. Retrieved from The Startup: <https://medium.com/swlh/strategic-leadership-the-3-levels-of-listening-e3f0c27f8d01>
29. Sandy Ogg, Tero J. Kauppinen. (2019). Grow: The CEO's Master Playbook for Coaching Value into Existence. ForbesBooks.
30. SANTOS, J. M. (2021, April 15). Understanding Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RACI Matrix). Retrieved from The Ultimate References for Project Managers: <https://project-management.com/understanding-responsibility-assignment-matrix-raci-matrix/>
31. Schiffer, V. (2017, May 1). The Art of Misunderstanding & The 4 Sides Model of Communication. Retrieved from SEEK blog: <https://medium.com/seek-blog/the-art-of-misunderstanding-and-the-4-sides-model-of-communication-7188408457ba>
32. Stanier, M. B. (2016). The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More & Change the Way You Lead Forever. Ottawa: Two Books.
33. Stephanie, N. (2020). Asking In: Six empowering questions only you can answer. Both/ And Books.
34. Thun, F. S. (n.d.). The Communication Model by Schulz von Thun. Retrieved from Academy for Conflict Transformation: <https://laofutze.files.wordpress.com/2010/04/schulzvonthun.pdf>
35. Tony Stoltzfus. (2008). Coaching Questions: A Coach's Guide to Powerful Asking Skills. Coach22 Bookstore LLC.
36. Vilster, O. (2020, Jan 7). Empowering organisations: 20 questions for evaluating empowerment. Retrieved from LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/empowering-organisations-20-questions-evaluating-ole-vilster/>
37. Whitmore, J. (2009). Coaching for Performance. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.