

Coached UPDATE

OCTOBER 2021

Enhancing the quality of conversations in education communities



TIME TO READ: 3MINS+

IT'S A RELATIONAL WORLD

Our experience these last eighteen months has put a strain on many relationships. For many, almost all connections have been mediated via electronic devices. Of course, that has its challenges and frustrations. However, I wonder how different, and worse, the last eighteen months might have been if the pandemic had taken place in the 1980s without Zoom, Facebook, Email, WhatsApp, and Twitter. (Perhaps with no internet, we would have been less exposed to the steady flow of misinformation, but that's another story.)

Our human need for connection is in sharp focus. Families and friends are kept apart, communication is less frequent and less spontaneous, and we have become more guarded around strangers, who have been transformed from potential neighbours into aliens by the facemasks we have had to wear.

In the midst of all this, it's been worth revisiting some of the core foundations of healthy positive relationships. The work of the Relationships Foundation in the UK has been at the forefront of 'relational thinking' in recent years. When we think about relationships and how to enhance them, we often think about interpersonal communication skills, like listening and being present, which are undoubtedly important. (We give considerable attention to these skills in all of our coach training courses). However, the Relationships Foundation's framework brings a different and complementary perspective to relational thinking, emphasising five essential pre-conditions for healthy relationships.

These five pre-conditions are described as:

1. Directness: the quality of the communication process

This element covers the amount of face-to-face time, the level of access to each other, the levels of openness and honesty. The more of this, the better the quality of connection is likely to be.

2. Continuity: the amount of shared time over time

This element includes the history of the relationship, the anticipated future of the relationship, and the extent that it is more than a 'one-off' or short-term exchange. (This is one aspect of coaching that is particularly helpful. Coaching provides a development approach that offers much more continuity than single workshops with no follow-up support). This prospect of continuity in the relationship changes the dynamic considerably in positive ways.

3. Multiplexity: the breadth of knowledge of each other

This element refers to the various points of contact in any relationship. Greater breadth serves to enrich the connection and the level of understanding about what each person brings to the relationship. For example, suppose I work alongside someone, and I also come across this person in another context outside work - at our children's sporting events. In that case, the relationship has greater breadth because of this additional point of contact.

4. Parity: the use of power in the relationship

This is an important dimension in any coaching relationship and any supervisory relationship. For example, questions of power and how that is used (or misused) will critically influence how any coaching unfolds. This element also addresses concepts like fairness and the level of influence each party has in the relationship.

5. Commonality: the extent of common goals and purposes

Common sense would suggest that when two people in a relationship are looking forward in the same direction, sharing a common purpose and goals, then the quality of that relationship will be enhanced considerably. Of course, sometimes people can assume this 'commonality' or goals can change, so it usually helps to keep making these things explicit. However, this does not mean that high-quality relationships can only occur between people who share common goals and interests. It is, however, important to acknowledge where differences might occur, to see differences in a positive light, as things to be expected and welcomed, and to manage them in constructive ways.

Relationships are at the heart of good leadership, good coaching and, well, just about any context where people come to be together, or to work together. Of course, getting them 'right' is a never-ending journey, and the pathway is often tricky. However, these foundation elements can help provide a way to negotiate this pathway in helpful and positive ways.

Reference:

Schluter, M. and Lee, D. (2009). *The Relational Manager*. Lion Books.



Coaching in Education Podcast

Our featured resource is the latest episode of the GCI Coaching in Education podcast.

In this episode of the coaching in education podcast series we hear how Paul Bennett, Assistant Principal of Howick College in Auckland New Zealand, upscaled coaching in his school to a very impressive level. Paul shares how his initial attempts 'bombed' but with sheer determination and an eye on the research from schools around the world, he managed to turn things around. Howick College now boasts a coaching system where 12 specially trained coaches support an incredible 134 teachers on a fortnightly basis throughout the school year. Listen to Paul explain their 'Tracking Outcomes' programme, developed in collaboration with GCI, to regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of coaching at Howick. This is a truly inspiring example of what can happen when theory and good intentions meet reality.

[Listen to the Podcast here.](#)

COACHING FOR AGENCY: THE POWER OF PROFESSIONALLY RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE

In this book chapter by Jon Andrews and Chris Munro, the authors propose that coaching offers an opportunity for teachers and school leaders to support the dual aims of working towards continual development and refinement of practice, whilst positioning the experience, perspective, and voices of teachers in a place of respect and non-judgement. They argue that the goal of teacher coaching should be teacher agency.

[Download the full text here.](#)



As the pandemic continues to cause various levels of restriction and unpredictability in schools, our online courses and coaching provide an accessible, flexible and adaptable way to keep your professional learning going.

Here's what some recent participants have said about our online training:

"The clarity from the facilitators and the input from participants, it was comfortable to freely discuss ideas and opinions." - Aimee Campbell, *Leader of Learning, Glenfield Intermediate School, New Zealand*

"I just want to say, Thank you for such a powerful program! I feel equipped, energised and excited to coach staff in my new deputy head role this year!" - Vicky Kirby-Beach, *Assistant Head of Junior School, Oxley Christian College, VIC*

"I am extremely proud of the progress that I have made across the course. The online delivery has really suited me and given me the opportunity to deeply explore each concept at my own pace."

- Josh Bell, *Assistant Principal, NSW*

REGISTRATION FOR THE FOLLOWING ONLINE AND FACE-TO-FACE COURSES IS CLOSING SOON:

Online:

Introduction to Leadership Coaching

6 x 2hr online weekly workshops, 4:00pm – 6:00pm AEDT
Commencing 13 October 2021

Introduction to Leadership Coaching Intensive

6 sessions over 3 half-days during school vacation + implementation session - 12-14 January 2022

Solutions Focus Coaching Masterclass

2 day online course, 3 x 2hr online sessions each day
14 & 21 October 2021

Advanced Coaching Practice

3 x 2hr fortnightly online workshops,
5:30pm – 7:30pm AEDT, Commencing 2 November 2021

Coaching Accreditation Program

6 month course, Commencing 19 January 2022

Coaching and Supervision

Scheduled to suit you

Managing Challenging Conversations 1-day

1 day online workshop, 21 October 2021

[Click here for NZ courses](#)

In-person:

Coaching Accreditation Program Phase 1-3 (4-days)

Melbourne - Commencing Wednesday 16 February 2022
Sydney - Commencing Wednesday 16 February 2022

Hobart - Commencing Thursday 24 March 2022

Adelaide - Commencing Thursday 28 March 2022

Perth - Commencing Thursday 20 January 2022

Introduction to Leadership Coaching 2-day

Nov 8/9 Perth Nov 25/26 Geelong
Nov 25/26 Melbourne Feb 23/24 Melbourne

Feb 23/24 Sydney Mar 3/4 Darwin
Mar 14/15 Perth

The Impact Cycle Program 2-day

Oct 11/12 Brisbane Nov 1/2 Perth

Be sure to **click on the dates** to visit the registration pages!

Managing Challenging Conversations 1-day

Oct 25 Perth



Curious Convo: Coaching and Improv in Times of Covid.

In this unscripted conversation, our Global Director, Christian van Nieuwerburgh will be chatting to Alex Steele, a jazz pianist and composer who is also a consultant, coach and academic specialising in the field of organisational development. What is the value of improvisation during these times? What is the role of improvisation in coaching? How can improvisation support educators, learners and leaders? These (and maybe other questions) will be discussed and Chris and Alex will share their experiences and perspectives. Attendees will have an opportunity to share ideas or raise questions.

Tuesday 26th October, 2021

7pm Australian EDT

9am British Summer Time (UK)

[Register here.](#)



GCI supports research that contributes to the knowledge base of our field of coaching in education. With this in mind, we are always happy to connect with researchers and to do what we can to connect others with their work. This work is not affiliated with or sponsored by GCI.



CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Hello fellow educators! My name is Dawn Grant-Skiba, and I am a PhD candidate at Avondale University where I am examining the lived experiences of educators, like you, who receive coaching and then coach other teachers. As a busy full-time teacher, I am passionate about doing research that makes a difference to practice, particularly at the school and classroom level. This passion drives the current project, and I am eager to have you join me by answering this call and sharing your experiences. The impetus for this research is to improve student learning outcomes.

With a particular focus on the improvement of literacy outcomes, this study seeks to understand how you describe your coaching experience from input to output, from being on the receiving end and the implementation end. I am eager to explore your experiences and collect the findings, so they are useful for informing practice, but I need your help. I need you to answer the call below.

Who you are:

You are probably the designated literacy leader at your school and have one of these (or similar) titles - instructional leader/coach, literacy leader/coach, learning specialist, leading teacher for literacy, or leader of pedagogy.

I need you...

If so, I am interested in hearing about your experiences with performing your role. Would you like to participate in a questionnaire and interview, and provide any available documents on how you organise your work?

About the project

Please click, read the [Information Letter](#) to learn more about the project and exactly what is being asked of you.

Please click, read, and sign the [Consent Form](#) if you agree to participate in this research. Return by email.

Thank you for considering participating in this project!