



## RESULTS-based Coaching™, by Dr. Jon Warner

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There are many kinds of coaching in modern life. Just a few of these are:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Personal Coaching</b></li><li>• <b>Skill-based Coaching (sports/music etc)</b></li><li>• <b>Career Coaching</b></li><li>• <b>Life Coaching</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Performance Coaching</b></li><li>• <b>Business Coaching</b></li><li>• <b>Leadership Coaching</b></li><li>• <b>Executive Coaching</b></li></ul> |
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Although all of these kinds of coaching share the common feature of one individual offering support and guidance to another, at the detailed level they are quite different. For example, at a general level, the types of coaching on the left side of the table above focuses mainly on the individual's personal or career needs, while those on the right side are more concerned with the individual's outputs in terms of the wider organisation, or in terms of their impact on workplace people or processes.

When engaging in coaching of any kind, (on both sides of the table) an extremely common approach is to use a model or framework that can be followed by both the coach and the recipient of the coaching. Perhaps the most popular of these is the "GROW" model, with the "G" standing for the Goal, the "R" for Reality, the "O" for Options and the "W" for Will.

The G.R.O.W. model was developed by Alexander and Whitmore in the late 1980's to help managers to take the time to pause and reflect at each of the four stages. However, experience in using the approach suggests that there are 2 key problems with the model in practice. These are:

1. At an overall level, the "GROW" process can get "stymied" at the first 3 stages
2. Managers and coaches can tend to "skate over" each stage with not enough depth of discussion and without orientation towards the critical final action.

This can result in a number of problems including:

- Goals or Objectives are chosen too personally with not enough thought being given to the wider context or without reference to the broader team or organisation of which the individual being coached is a part.
- There is often a limited appreciation of the real performance gap between the present situation and the desired outcome (which means that current reality is not challenged sufficiently).
- A lack of in-depth debate can occur in the options phase, which means that too few forward paths are explored, and the more traditional "tried and tested" options are often too quickly selected.
- There is often not enough time spent making time and resources available to allow the individual being coached to move forward strongly (and to be supported when they do).

So, although the G.R.O.W model provides a reasonable structure to follow, if used properly, it can lack a results-orientation and a different or better approach, building on GROW's strengths, would help to overcome this.

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## The "RESULTS™" Coaching Model

The "RESULTS™" Coaching model, used by the Warner Results Coaching organisation on an international basis for almost 10 years now, was evolved to enable managers and executives at all levels to be coached on a more structured basis, with the key advantage being that the model is deliberately designed to overcome the shortfalls that can occur when using "GROW".

The "RESULTS™" Coaching model consists of seven sequential and iterative steps, which are as follows:

### **(R) Reflect -Take time to think, ask questions and re-frame**

Because today's senior managers are almost inevitably under a great deal of pressure to perform and to deal with a multitude of issues all at once, the chance to reflect and think about issues at a deeper level is often minimised and in some cases eliminated altogether. This first step is therefore used to encourage executives to reflect for longer and at a deeper level so as to commence a forward change journey with high levels of both personal and organisational awareness (and appreciating the wider context in which successful change always occurs).

For the coach, this step involves asking the person being coached as many "insightful" questions as necessary on what might have gone before, perceptions about the current reality, and identification of the highest priorities for future action. At this point, current thinking paradigms may be discarded and entirely new perspectives evolved.

### **(E) Evaluate -Carefully assess all the forward options**

Just as most managers often have too little time to reflect, they also don't always have the time to assess the many possible forward options which may exist (some of which are almost thrust upon them). This step therefore seeks to help an executive to both generate more options and to evaluate each one systematically.

For the coach, this step is one in which the general challenge is to encourage greater innovation in forward thinking and to "open-up" more diverse possible future options, without judging these, in terms of their validity, too quickly. For the most part, individuals can surprise themselves in realising that there are frequently many more options available than the one or two that they were thinking about, some of which may have much better pay-offs or returns.

### **(S) Strategise -Select the plan(s) with the best chance of succeeding**

Executives are often forced into pursuing the most apparently suitable strategy, well before it has been properly considered or assessed. In this step, the coach works with the executive to develop rigorous criteria against which several strategies can be assessed, allowing the plan(s) with the best chance of success to be selected, and pursued.

For the coach, this step is one in which considerable "confronting and challenging" of the executive can and should take place. This is not designed to undermine the individual's confidence, but to help ensure that the thinking that underpins the most apparently attractive forward option is robust and possible to communicate compellingly to others.

### **(U) Understand -Appreciate what resources will be needed to succeed**

Every strategy needs a robust tactical implementation plan, which includes an estimate concerning the resources that are likely to be needed (such as people, assets, finances etc). In this step therefore, the coach

works with an executive to better understand what is needed in practical implementation terms and in determining how to go about organising the resources needed to succeed.

For the coach, this step is one in which wider personal experience is often brought to bear in terms of helping the executive to appreciate which obstacles or resource limitations tend to be potentially the most problematic, in relation to particular goals and plans. These can be then be properly considered or assessed ahead of time and strategies developed to ensure that the resources that are needed are part of the overall forward plan.

### **(L) Listen - Pay attention to the input of employees and colleagues**

Once a strategy has been chosen and a resource plan is developed, human factors are often the most significant issue to have to manage well. In this step, the coach aims to help an executive to collect and listen carefully to internal feedback, and adjust plans according to the input.

For the coach, this step is one in which the executive is encouraged to actively engage in soliciting input from those internal colleagues and team members who will be actively engaged in making change happen successfully (or possibly hindering it, if they do not feel listened to or appropriately involved).

### **(T) Take Action - Implement plans and follow-through persistently**

Strategies and plans can only truly pay-off if they are implemented or executed strongly. However, successful execution also needs a step-by-step approach, as well as the ability and persistence to deal with obstacles as these arise. The coach therefore needs to lend his or her full support and experience to an executive at this stage, as he or she may be dealing with a range of obstacles or difficulties, which may threaten to slow or stop the change.

For the coach, this step is one in which the executive should be encouraged to “check-in” whenever his or her motivation or enthusiasm for the change diminishes, or some further idea generative input might help forward impetus.

### **(S) Systematise - Ensure that processes are permanently changed**

Once a strategy or plan has been executed, and a change for the better has been brought about, things can often slip backwards if processes and systems are not permanently changed. At this point, the coach therefore aims to help an executive to identify the key processes that have undergone change and, where necessary, directly assists in ensuring that these are designed to be strong or as stable as possible.

For the coach, this step is one in which the executive should be encouraged to tie up all the project or change related “loose-ends” that can be left, if strong follow-through does not occur.

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## Summary

Unlike many other progressive coaching processes, the RESULTS™ coaching system is designed to be highly action-focused at every step. It also allows both the coach and the person being coached to build and implement a strong forward plan, which is change-oriented and has the maximum chance of really sticking. As a result, this approach has enjoyed widespread success at many leadership levels, from middle managers to CEOs, and in organisations of all sizes and types.

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*This article was written by Dr. Jon Warner of Warner Results Coaching- an executive coaching business based in Kingston in Surrey. Jon is an experienced coach with over 20 years experience in assisting individuals at all levels of management. He is also a prolific author having published several books on leadership and coaching and has developed several assessment instruments including the Coaching Effectiveness Profile. Jon has an MBA and a PhD in Organisational Psychology. He can be reached at [jon@WarnerResultsCoaching.com](mailto:jon@WarnerResultsCoaching.com)*