



LI10: How to Work When You're Not Working: Coaching Effectively In Order to Develop Your Programming Team

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Introduction

- Often, programmers moving into leadership positions come from a technical or “doing” background
- Therefore, it can often feel strange to be detached from programming, and how to help your team
 - **As if you are not working at all!**
- Learning how to add value to programming functions without performing “hands-on” programming is critical in order to succeed as a manager or people leader
- A good way to do this is to implement coaching techniques



What Is Coaching?

- Oxford Dictionary definition:
 - “The process of training somebody to play a sport, to do a job better or to improve a skill”
- In practice for programmers...
 - Coaching is supporting your team members to think of solutions to the problems that they are facing
 - Asking questions of your programmers to generate their own ideas; not giving them the answers directly!



How to Approach Coaching



Coaching Styles – Ibarra/Scoular Matrix



Coaching Styles – Skill/Will Matrix

	Low Skill	High skill
High Will	Guide	Delegate
Low Will	Direct	Excite



Mentoring



Coaching Methodologies



Coaching Frameworks for Programming

GROW

BRIEF



The GROW Method



Case Study 1: Using the GROW method

- **Context:** Inexperienced lead, looking to get further experience with leading a team of programmers on a deliverable
- **Implementation:**

	Questions Asked	Outcomes Provided
GOALS	What do you wish to achieve? What does success in this area look like?	Build better rapport with programming team; improve quality of programming work
REALITY	What is the current situation? What challenges are preventing you from reaching your goal?	Successful delivery of milestones on study; team unresponsive during meetings; team composition unstable
OPTIONS	What can we do to move towards the goal? What is the ideal scenario, and how can we get there?	Additional check-ins with team members; Code review to give feedback to individuals;
WILL	How committed are you to achieving the goal? How will you feel if you meet your goal?	Would not rate commitment to improve, but agreed to report back in future meeting to comment on actions taken

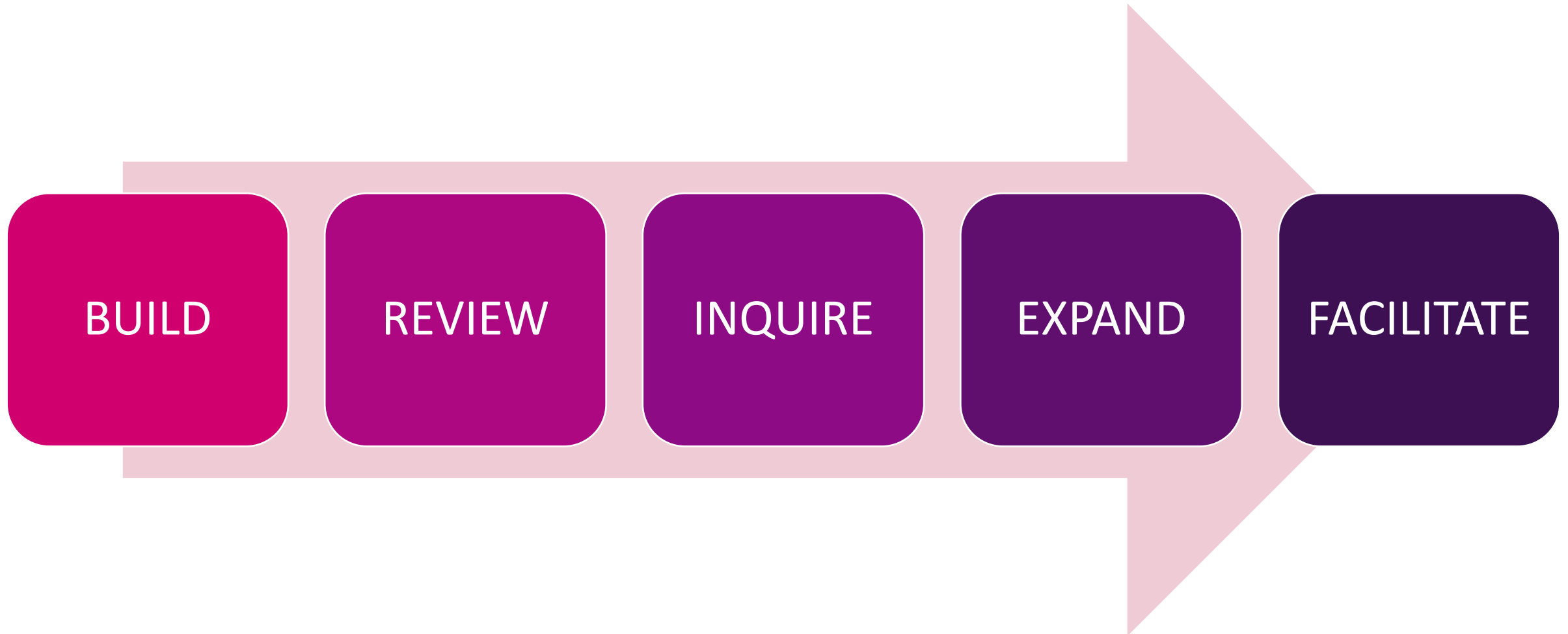


Case Study 1: Using the GROW method

- **Reflection**



The BRIEF Method



Case Study 2: Using the BRIEF method

- **Context:** Highly experienced lead, looking to build collaborative relationship with vendor partner
- **Implementation:**

Regular touchpoints ahead of coaching – asking thoughts on what went well, how I can help?

Explored current vendor situation, asking questions to test understanding

Understand lead's experience in dealing with vendors, focus on progress

Expand into solution – asking what steps lead could make to improve relationship

Guiding employee to understand when improvement is made – positive Lessons Learned



Case Study 2: Using the BRIEF method

- **Reflection**



Conclusion

- Coaching can be a really good way as a leader to support your staff
- You don't have to choose between coaching and mentoring, as they are complementary – but coaching may be a better fit for non-technical leaders
- You don't need to be a line manager in order to implement these methods!
- Limited experience implementing these methods, but my assessment is that it has helped the staff I work with
- Let your team know you'll be trying these methods out
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes – have fun with the methods!
- Let me know how you get on!



Any Questions?

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