



Coaching Tools 101 - The GROW Model Explained And Why It Always Works!

By [Emma-Louise Elsey](#)

Do you use the GROW model in your coaching? The chances are you probably do without even realizing it. There are many, many different coaching models and tools out there but I still haven't found anything that beats GROW or T-GROW for simplicity, effectiveness and results. The T-GROW model is outlined below:

- **T - Topic**
- **G - Goal**
- **R - Reality**
- **O - Options**
- **W - Will Do**

Now, it's quite likely that in some sessions we may use TROWG or TORGWOW or ORTGOW, but these 5 key elements ALWAYS work and here's how:

T - Topic. This is where we loosely discuss what's been going on for the client and find out if they have anything specific they want to work on. Establishing the Topic often blends into Goal and Reality parts of the model, but getting a topic up front - even a loose one - is the start point for any coaching session to unfold.

And if the client is unsure of their Topic, then it's time to explore. What has been working for them since the last session? What hasn't been working for them? What would put a smile on their face? What could you work on that would help them the most over the next few weeks?

G - Goal. This refers to the client's goal for the session and is essential. One of the things that makes coaching different from many other therapies is our focus on action and change. But, if you don't have a goal for a session - how do you keep your client on track? How can you make sure the client gets value from their session with you? A session goal allows us to keep the client focused, then if the session drifts it gives us the ability to say, "We seem to be heading in a different direction here, is this what you want?" This tactic can be especially helpful if you have a client that likes to tell stories or get into drama.

The session goal doesn't have to be specific or 'SMART', but it does need to be enough to give the session a purpose that is understood by both the client and the coach. For example, a session goal might be to establish a bigger goal or to gain some clarity in their lives and this is good enough to keep the client on track.

Finally, the goal doesn't have to be agreed right up front - it can be established and 'evolved' as the session unfolds. Occasionally the 'real' goal of the session doesn't come out until the end when we ask our clients what their biggest win of the session was. This is when the client realizes their 'goal' for the session was simply to feel truly heard, to commit to themselves or to feel challenged and/or supported.

In making sure the client understands 1) what they want to get out of the session or 2) what they got out of the session on reflection - we ensure the client knows they're receiving value from coaching, and that they continue to learn and grow.

R - Reality. This is about understanding the client's current situation. It's where we question, challenge, reframe and reflect back to our client what they've done so far, and where we examine what's worked and what hasn't. This is where we really get into where the client is right now and why. It should include talking about feelings and digging into emotions and intuition - often new or uncharted frontiers for our clients.

The Reality section is the 'meat' of any coaching session where you ask questions, reflect and raise your client's awareness around their priorities and limiting beliefs - so they have insights and learn about themselves.

O - Options. If the client could solve their problems alone they would have done. Often what they need from their coach is a push, or some support to take an action they have been putting off. Or they may need some help brainstorming or tweaking to find an action that truly works - something they can commit to 100 percent. This may mean challenging and inspiring them by taking an action and making it bigger! It could also mean shrinking an action to make it more achievable or palatable. Either way, a good dig around in the 'Options' to find actions that really work for our clients pays huge dividends in moving our clients forward.

W - Will Do. The essence of coaching is change - some sort of action - even if the action is to change the way they do something, to stop doing something or even do nothing! I make sure every client leaves their session committed to at least ONE action. Otherwise our session would simply be a conversation. And while a conversation can be helpful - nothing changes in our clients' lives unless they make some changes.

W - can also be WHAT do you need from me? Ask this question to find out what they need from you over the next week to support them.

W - also stands for WIN. As mentioned under 'Goal', always ask some variation of this question at the end of your sessions, "What was your biggest win of the session today?" By asking this, you not only reinforce the value of coaching but both you and your client will learn a lot about what's really important to them.

To summarise, GROW is coaching session essentials or basics - without any one of these elements, something would be missing. The great thing about GROW is that you can apply many other coaching tools or models over the top - but even if you just follow this simple structure, your client will always be learning and taking action to move forwards.

So, embrace the GROW model - it's your ultimate coaching tool! Your clients will love you and you'll never go off track in a coaching session again!

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