



# Course Manual

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## Cultivating Coaching Cultures

Metanoeo CIC

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May 2021

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# Introduction



## Session aim

By the end of this session:

- You will be able to define a coaching culture and why it is important.
- You will be challenged to become an organizational anthropologist.

We will introduce our programme by considering the three terms which make up the title of this course *coaching*, *culture* and *cultivating*. Determining the nature and implications of these terms will help us to establish a bigger picture of the context and application for our learning.

## Key definitions

### What is coaching?

At the heart of all coaching is the idea that the coachee has answers and agency. The coach's role is, therefore, not to direct or advise, but to create the conditions in which the coachee can access their own knowledge, ideas, motivation, and capability to address the challenge they face:

*"This speaks to the very heart of coaching: building self-awareness and enabling people to find the answers themselves through active listening and genuine inquiry."*<sup>1</sup>

So, whilst not training to become coaches specifically, developing a coaching approach takes place through conversation and relationship:

*"A conversation where the coach acts as the facilitator to the coachee, so that they learn, gain insight and take action toward a specific and agreed outcome."*<sup>2</sup>

*"Coaching aims to help release potential and to improve performance, primarily through a non-directive approach in a structured discussion."*<sup>3</sup>

These conversations do not need to be lengthy, like those a trained coach might have, but are structured:

*"...the major function of coaching is that it moves the client from one place to another in a purposeful, planned and motivating way ... coaching helps people cope with change because it*

<sup>1</sup> P.19, Steed, J (2013), 'Why the emphasis on coaching for organisations?', in Forman, D, Joyce, M and McMahon, G, *Creating a Coaching Culture for Managers in your Organisation*, London: Routledge

<sup>2</sup> P.13, Jones, G and Gorell, R (2018), *How to Create a Coaching Culture: A Practical Introduction*, London: Kogan-Page

<sup>3</sup> P.42, Hawkins, P (2012), *Creating a Coaching Culture*, Maidenhead: Open University Press

*teaches them mechanisms for how to mitigate uncertainty and creates self-direction to manage the unknown.”<sup>4</sup>*

The coach’s role is, therefore, not to have all the answers but to empower people who are ready willing and able to make progress to direct their own learning and make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

Perhaps one of the biggest differences between coaching and mentoring is that mentors are often people with more experience in an area in which the mentee is trying to grow. Coaching, however, does not require the coach to be an expert in the topic where the learning is taking place. In coaching there is a shift from an expert-led approach to one focused on encouraging choice, individualisation and responsabilisation.



### Question break

Using an example from your own context consider when might coaching not be the most appropriate approach?

## What is culture?

This course is about adopting a coaching culture rather than being trained as coaches, which leads to our second key definition, that of culture. Organisational culture can be considered as:

*“The deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken for granted’ fashion an organization’s view of itself and its environment.”<sup>5</sup>*

*“Culture is what you stop noticing and take for granted when you have worked somewhere for over three months”<sup>6</sup>*

*“What happens in reality; the practices that are common and visible which hint at the assumptions beneath.”<sup>7</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> P.56, Jones and Gorell (2018)

<sup>5</sup> P.11, Schein (1985) in Jones and Gorell (2018)

<sup>6</sup> P.35, Hawkins (2012)

<sup>7</sup> P.11, Jones and Gorell (2018)

So, throughout our course we will be looking beyond coaching as a role which can be undertaken by an individual to consider how core coaching principles can form the basis for your organisations practice paradigm.



## Question break

What might be the benefits and challenges of adopting a coaching culture in your workplace?

### Why cultivating?

We have spoken of cultivating rather than creating. This is to reflect the core coaching approach that a coaching culture is not something which can simply be implemented by managers but is one in which the organisation works together to encourage and empower.

This cultivation requires the organisation to be willing to shift to a new culture of minimal policing, moving from an ideology of top-down command and control to the 'new deal of the enabling state'<sup>8</sup>:

*"It's about creating an organisation that identifies success with the ability to learn, adapt and grow through the talents of its people."*<sup>9</sup>

*"...the power of the leader-coach, who explores and awakens possibilities rather than offers advice or gives solutions, and thus generates commitment and energy."*<sup>10</sup>

You might also be wondering why you should cultivate a coaching culture in the first place if it means giving away power and control. There are several responses:

- Is it possible to control other people's behaviours with any level of effectiveness, economy, or efficiency?
- We are living in a fast-changing world which requires people who can adapt quickly.
- When people are engaged, they are more likely to enable their own solutions and take responsibility.
- Individual creativity can contribute to a more rounded team.

<sup>8</sup> P.18, Steed in Foreman, Joyce and McMahon (2013)

<sup>9</sup> P.9, Jones and Gorell (2018)

<sup>10</sup> P.28, Steed in Foreman, Joyce and McMahon (2013)

- “There is also a social change in western societies towards less deference to authority and higher expectations of how individuals are related to at work.”<sup>11</sup>

Yet, more philosophically there is a far more fundamental reason to do with our humanity:

*“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our happiness.”<sup>12</sup>*



### Question break

Identify your own motivations for wanting to cultivate a coaching culture in your practice.

## Session summary

Cultivating a coaching culture will not be right for every organisation. It requires practitioners to have some control over how they go about their work and assumes service-users have the agency and resources required to make responsible decisions. It also recognises that it's about knowing when coaching is not appropriate, for example, a major crisis which requires direction and action.

In a coaching-culture, the manager's role becomes creating an empowering environment and context. The coach-leader is curious, has good rapport, asks questions, and engages people. A coaching culture asks how those being coached will live their shared values.

So, our first challenge is to become organisational anthropologists and explore the culture of our own organisation and how it might look different if that culture was cultivated to become a new coaching culture.

<sup>11</sup> P.13, Hawkins (2012)

<sup>12</sup> P.65, Covey, S, 'Forward' in Pattakos, A (2004), *Prisoners of our Thoughts: Viktor Frankl's Principles for Discovering Meaning in Life*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler



## Organisational anthropology

Consider and discuss your organisational culture. What are its key components and qualities?



# Module 1: Principles for Cultivating a Coaching Culture



## Session 1: Walking with, not doing for



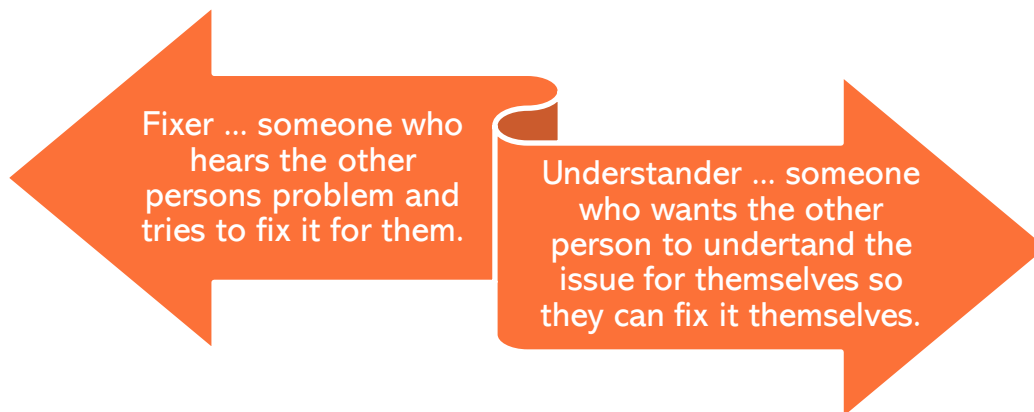
### Session aim

By the end of this session:

- You will be able to appreciate the disempowering nature of fixing and empowering nature of coaching.
- You will be challenged to become a vulnerable encourager of mastery.

Often when we see people struggling, we feel it is a compassionate response to help them. However, in this session we are going to be considering how help in the traditional sense can sometimes be damaging and disempowering for the individual. Sometimes in coaching this is referred to as being *fixer* or *understander*.

### Fixer or Understander?



Both fixer and understander have their place, but in coaching the balance is heavily weighted toward being an understander. Here's why:

- When we fix a problem for someone:
  - They don't get the opportunity to develop new knowledge and skills.
  - They are confirmed as someone unable to solve problems.
  - The individual becomes more and not less dependent on you for things going well.
- When we support someone to fix a problem for themselves:
  - We build their confidence that they can make good decisions.
  - We encourage people to become self-reliant and self-directing.
  - We become less needed for future issues.

In essence, being fixer or understander is often about empowerment. Are we giving away our power to empower someone else, or are we making a role for ourselves and empowering ourselves by disempowering others?



### Question break

Give some concrete examples from your own practice of when it might be appropriate to be understander and when fixer is most suited.

## Still doing, just not doing for

Being an understander is far from a passive role. Indeed, it is a role which can be more difficult for the understander or coach as they might feel they know the answer the person is seeking which can lead to frustration. Further, they often must let go of control or their feeling of knowledge so the coachee can discover solutions for themselves.



One of my coachees once put it like this: They had taken a picture they had painted to their counsellor. The picture was of a river and the coachee placed themselves beside the river. The counsellor looked at the picture and asked, '*what would it take for you to cross the bridge and join me over here on this side of the river?*' My coachee felt distressed at the suggestion as they perceived the comment as summarising the counsellor's position as being better than them. As we discussed the picture in our coaching session, we talked about walking along the water together and deciding together whether the bridge was a good crossing point.

The point is the role of the understander is to be there to equip the person to make decisions for themselves rather than to make the decisions for them. We walk with rather than do for.



### Question break

When someone offers you help does it always feel helpful? What other feelings might you have?

## So, what are we doing as we walk with?

Walking with someone is about supporting them to come to their own decision in their own way and in their own time. We become a resource for the person in their self-directed solutions. This implies:

- We become **vulnerable** as we are both giving away power and opening ourselves to the individual asking us questions that we might not want to answer.
- The individual might seek the view of others, including ours, but **sharing** is not about advising, rather **opening doors** for further exploration by the individual.
- Our role is to **encourage** the individual in the progress they are making and to help them make informed choices for which they can be **accountable**.
- We might prompt the person to look for a greater number of **alternatives** in coming to a solution or interpretation.
- We will act in a way which gives the individual **mastery** over their own situation and potentially mastery over new skills and ideas which they can share with others.
- Our **commitment** is to the individual rather than the resolution of a specific issue.

Our main tool learning to walk with people is that of communication. We will return to this in the second module. However, we might also encourage the person to use techniques such as:

- Alternative solution generation – encouraging the individual to think beyond their initial answers.
- Cost-benefit analysis – what will be the impact of their choices for self and others?

In doing this you will be engaged in hearing the individual's 'story' which is something we will consider in the next session.



### Question break

What will be the challenges for you in not offering advice and guidance?



## Organisational contextualisation

Using Hawkins (2012:22) five levels of a coaching culture what are the concrete changes that will need to be adopted in your role to walk with rather than do for?

1. Artefacts – key component of strategy, mission and training.
2. Behaviours – coaching approaches modelled in 1-2-1 and group meetings.
3. Mindsets – a commitment to engaging people to solve problems and that better solutions are created together.
4. Emotional ground –high challenge for personal engagement and responsibility, with high support.
5. Motivational roots – a commitment to life-long learning, dialogue and collective exploration.

## Session 2: Stories and good lives



### Session aim

By the end of this session:

- You will be able to appreciate the importance of an individual's story.
- You will be challenged to become narrators rather than authors.

We might think we live in a culture which is scientific and that we make informed objective decisions, but is this really the case? Can we really see anything with objectivity, or do we view the world with a lens? One of the core-principles of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is the phrase:

*The map is not the territory.*

That is to say that the representations and ideas we use to navigate our life by and the decisions we make do not necessarily come from an accurate representation or self-understanding of our life or context. To put this another way:

*“People do not in general have access to absolute knowledge of reality but in fact only have access to a set of beliefs they have built up over time, about reality.”<sup>13</sup>*

Failure can, therefore, often be seen to occur because we have the false notion of objectivity. We are in effect making decisions with flawed information which we consider true. So, in our role in working with people, we are to support them in developing self-awareness of what we might consider their take on their situation. Their story.



### Question break

What is your story, what has influenced it and how has it influenced you?

<sup>13</sup> P.91, Megson in Foreman, Joyce & McMahon (2013)

## Authors and narrators

One of the critical principles of a coaching culture is encouraging people to become self-authoring in their approach to life and its challenges. An author gets to draft the story rather than have the story written for them.

Often when we talk to people who need coaching, they talk in a passive manner in the sense that life is something that happens to them, rather than something they can authentically author. This is not to suggest that there are no limits to our power as our own life authors. We all have experiences where we have no control over what has happened, but critically, we can always author our own response. Taking a coaching approach engages the person in growing in their ability to self-author their responses.

So, what role does that place us in? In some ways it can be useful for us to consider ourselves a bit like the narrator of a story. One of the roles of the narrator is to highlight the bigger plot context when we are caught up in the detail of a particular scene. A good narrator can help identify the story's point of view. This role of reminder and challenge to contextualization is a significant role for anyone engaging in a coaching approach to practice. We need to make sure we are not becoming the author of the individual's story but are instead helping them to challenge the limiting narratives and creating new horizons in the narratives they live through.



### Question break

Identify how your role might be similar and different to that of the narrator of a story.

## Good lives

So, if we are working to nudge and focus self-authoring it is worth us knowing what a good story might look like to the individual with whom we are working. This idea of good lives and good stories leans heavily into positive psychology and taking a solution focused approach.

In the words of its founder, Martin Seligman, positive psychology can be defined as the:

*'Scientific study of optimal human functioning [that] aims to discover and promote the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive'.<sup>14</sup>*

In positive psychology there is a greater focus on what the features of thriving look like than there is on attributing blame for a situation. One of the most empowering aspects of a coaching approach is that we do not assume we know what is best for the person, indeed, we recognise that best for them is likely to mean something different to that which it means for us.

In the *Good Lives Model*, human dignity, human rights, and human agency are promoted through working with an individual to develop the primary goods which will help develop their good life story. Research by Ward, Brown, and Marshall<sup>15</sup> has highlighted eleven classes of primary goods:

1. life (including healthy living and functioning)
2. knowledge (how well informed one feels about things that are important to them)
3. excellence in play (hobbies and recreational pursuits)
4. excellence in work (including mastery experiences)
5. excellence in agency (autonomy, power, and self-directedness)
6. inner peace (freedom from emotional turmoil and stress)
7. relatedness (including intimate, romantic, and familial relationships)
8. community (connection to wider social groups)
9. spirituality (in the broad sense of finding meaning and purpose in life)
10. pleasure (feeling good in the here and now)
11. creativity (expressing oneself through alternative forms).

These classes each have a different level of importance to each individual and relevance to the situation in which you might be working with them.



### Question break

Which of the classes above seem most relevant to your work and to your own story?

<sup>14</sup> <http://positivepsychology.org.uk/what-is-positive-psychology>

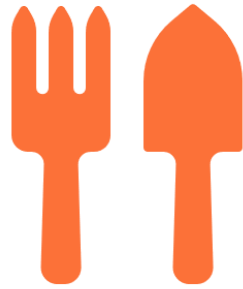
<sup>15</sup> <http://www.goodlivesmodel.com/information.shtml#General>



## Organisational application

Provide some concrete examples of how you will incorporate the principles of engaging stories and good lives into your practice.





## Module 2: Tools for Cultivating a Coaching Culture

# Session 1: The formative quality of communication



## Session aim

By the end of this session:

- You will be able to appreciate the multi-layered nature of empowering communication.
- You will be challenged to adopt motivational techniques.

In coaching approaches communication is the core tool for change. In this session we will think about using a complete approach to our communication with others to ensure a congruent and effective approach to cultivating a coaching culture.

## Congruency in communication

Think about receiving a text message. You get all the words the other person has said, but how often have you completely missed the point? Imagine you received the following text:

*I never said she stole my money.<sup>16</sup>*

What does it mean? Where does the meaning come from: the speaker or the listener?

The words we use to communicate are clearly important. They are the basic building block. Yet without congruence with self and others, the words can create confusion. So, what is congruence? Congruence is the act of different elements being in agreement. Returning to our phrase above, its meaning only comes through agreement between the words and our delivery of the words. This means, when we communicate with others, we should be aiming to ensure our whole demeanour displays and suggests what we intend our words to mean. That includes:

- Use of voice
- Body language
- Our location

Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, you can see that the point is we need to be planned to ensure we do not give any mixed message. This requires us to have integrity and be honest with ourselves when communicating with others.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.wired.com/story/one-sentence-with-7-meanings-unlocks-a-mystery-of-human-speech/>

Then there is congruency with the person with whom you are communicating. We also need our communication to resonate with the other person. In a way which demonstrates integrity to who we are we also need to have resonance with the other person in:

- Body language
- Choice of words
- Stories which connect and have shared meaning and importance.

When all aspects of our communication match with who we are and what we are trying to communicate, and this matches with the other person our communication potential to empower change is at its maximum.

*Congruent communication = integrity + connection*



### Question break

Consider some examples of when you have felt a real connection with someone, and when you have felt a complete absence of connection. What characterised what you did in each situation?

## Engagement through communication

Whilst effective communication skills are important, it is their motivation which is critical to coaching approaches. In coaching cultures, this motivation can be best characterised as engagement. Engagement is characterised by two-way processes which outcome in mutual benefit. In the case of coaching cultures, our skilful communication is not intended to cunningly convince the other person to do what we want, but instead is designed to help us engage them in a joint process which has maximum benefit for both parties.

Whether working with an employee or a service user, there are some shared principles which can support a sense of engagement<sup>17</sup>:

- Role modelling the importance of, and your response to, feedback.
- Giving people planned and constructive feedback.

<sup>17</sup> P.93, Jones and Gorell (2018)

- Sharing and demonstrating values with integrity.
- Role modelling personal accountability for mistakes as well as successes.
- Not only encouraging innovation, but also offering support for it to happen.
- Providing appropriate responsibility and authority to act independently.
- Linking personal and organisational / social / community goals.
- Providing recognition and reward.
- Cultivating and demonstrating a positive climate for experimentation and trust.

There are also behaviours and attitudes which disengage others<sup>18</sup>:

- Not feeling respected by the coach / being able to respect their coach.
- Not feeling valued.
- Having ideas discounted.
- Being unclear about goals and expectations.
- Lack of integrity with stated values.
- Lack of teamwork / encouragement.
- Personal expression not valued.
- Lack of empowerment.
- Lack of useful feedback.

These principles will take on different meaning in relation to whether you are a manager or practitioner, but their underlying philosophies are what count. These can be expressed as:

*Engaging communication = lived values + empowerment + relevance + personal validation*



## Question break

Working through each of the bullet points above look for examples of how you could implement these with someone you are working with.

<sup>18</sup> P.89, Jones and Gorell (2018)

## Direction through communication

One of the fundamental aspects to the direction of coaching style conversations is that they are characterised by the idea, *what do I do next*. As such, most coaching orientated questions avoid the use of *why*. This is because *why* is an interrogative question which tends to force the recipient to look back and investigate what they did rather than orientating them towards what they *can* do now. It is not that there is never a place for *why* in the coaching vocabulary, but it's just that it is used sparingly.

Often, in a work context, a coaching culture is one in which we will be engaging in ongoing learning. Jones and Gorell<sup>19</sup> provide a useful summary of questions which can aid in this regard:

- How did you feel that conversation / meeting / event went?
- What things surprised you?
- What did you learn?
- What might you do differently next time?
- A couple of things I noticed were ...
- What are your thoughts on this?
- How has this conversation helped you?
- What do you take away from this conversation?

You will notice that these questions are all about what the individual has learned from the past with a focus on encouragement and application for the future:

*Coaching questions = forward focused + appreciative + curious*



### Question break

Create your own list of questions which has resonance for you and your practice context.

<sup>19</sup> Pp.108-109 (2018)



## Individual application

Reconsidering your role and organisational responsibilities and opportunities, create an implementation plan as to how you can make all your interactions with others congruent, engaging and directional.

## Session 2: The architecture of a short intervention



### Session aim

By the end of this session:

- You will explore how to structure purposeful conversations.
- You will be equipped to structure and undertake corridor coaching.

As already stated, this course is not intended to train you as a coach (see [www.metanoeo.org.uk](http://www.metanoeo.org.uk) if you are interested in that!), but instead for you to be equipped to play your part in cultivating a coaching culture in your organisation. As such, so far, we have looked at the key principles and thought about achieving these through our communication. In this session we will now look at what Peter Hawkins terms corridor coaching.

### Corridor coaching

Hawkins has observed how in many organisations a manager is often approached with the question: *Can I have five minutes of your time?* What often proceeds is the individual sounding off about a situation they are facing imminently which feels uncomfortable and to which they need to find a solution.

Usually, the background to such a conversation is that something has / hasn't happened, and the individual is now in their own mind creating a story and is beginning to catastrophise the situation. Here's a typical scenario:

*Jane attempted to call Jim about the sales figures for April. She needs to get them for a meeting tomorrow and emailed requesting them urgently yesterday. Jim hasn't responded to the email or phone call, and she is now worried that she has upset him and that he is ignoring and that this will result in her not getting the data she needs and looking incompetent. Now she wants you to follow up the call for her.*

We all experience situations like this. Where there is silence our minds often to begin to draft stories and our emotions start to react to our stories and we begin to feel distress. Situations like this one offer a great opportunity to undertake a short three-minute technique developed by Hawkins<sup>20</sup> known as corridor coaching where we ask the individual a planned series of questions:

- What do you need from these three minutes?

<sup>20</sup> Pp.90-91, Hawkins (2012)

- Who do you need to relate to?
- What are you feeling right now?
- What do you think the other person is feeling / needing?
- How can you connect with what they need?
- What are you going to do?

If the person is coming with a more practical question Hawkins suggests including more practical questions such as:

- Who can best help you with that issue?
- What support do you need to work through the situation?
- How specifically can I help you most effectively in these three minutes?

You will notice that in each situation the focus is on the other persons challenges, emotions, and resolution. Your role is very much as the supporting actor, or narrator adding an outside the story perspective to their experience.



### Question break

How are the principles already discussed at work in this model?

## ACE coaching

If the person is wanting to make change in some way you might consider a model which again could be completed in just a few minutes such as ACE.

- **Achieve** – what does the person want to achieve; be specific and explore a clear picture of what a good life would look like in relation to this area of change using as much imagery and detail as possible.
- **Challenges** – what barriers will you come across as you move toward your intended achievement (note not what have you previously faced but effectively what will you overcome on route).
- **Execution** – what are the specific plans you are going to put in to place and when will you achieve each step?



Again, you will see that the components are heavily focused on what the possibilities are for moving forward rather than what has previously been attempted and not worked.

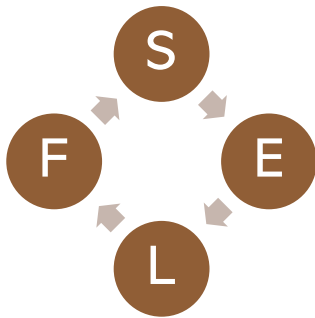


## Question break

How are the principles already discussed at work in this model?

## SELF Coaching

One final model we will explore is one which is designed to be used on yourself. The main difference between this and the ACE model is the addition of a final stage recognising for bigger visions we are often moving to a new interim closer state in our planning rather than planning a full solution. This is therefore a circular model in which after first steps are taken the cycle starts again.



- **State** of play – what is the situation you are wanting to address? What motivates change?
- **Envisioned** future – what would you like the outcome to achieve, look and feel like?
- **Look** for the route – how will you move forward? What bumps in the road might you expect?
- **First** steps – what is the smallest thing you can do now to make progress towards your future?



## Question break

How are the principles already discussed at work in this model?



## Individual experimentation

Try out each of the models. What do you learn about when and how you can best apply them?

## Conclusion session: Preparing for take-off



### Session aim

By the end of this session:

- You will have identified the challenges ahead in cultivating a coaching culture in your organisational role.
- You will have created a road map for your own application and learning.

This is a programme which is all about the application of principles. This session will therefore be about highlighting the specifics about how you will move forward.

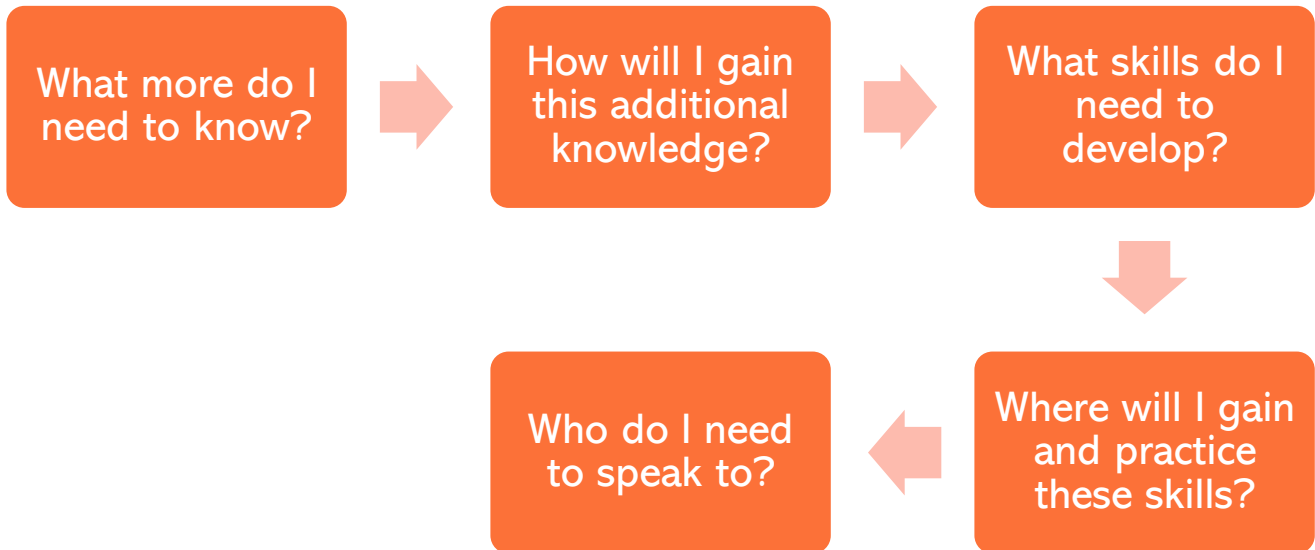
### Appreciative inquiry to future vision

Appreciative inquiry is about identifying what is already working. Returning to the earlier exercise, consider how your organisational culture and practice might already successfully use the principles we have discussed using the following process. Using three words to answer each question:



## Personal road map

Now, looking at the changes and challenges, identify the resources you will use to make the changes you can make:





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