

Please note the information contained in this document is confidential

Background

A is a GP partner based at a surgery in Bedfordshire. As well as his day to day role as a GP he is also the Chair of a group in the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). I had worked previously with A on a team coaching session commissioned from me by the CCG. During this team coaching A indicated a desire to strengthen his leadership role and improve his level of influence within the team and wider CCG management structure. We had a number of ad hoc and informal conversations about coaching and the benefit he may find from it.

My observations of A at this time were that he was keen to lead his team through a difficult and unstable period. He appeared to be feeling the pressure of external influences and demonstrated frustration at not being able to “get things done”. A was clearly well respected by his administration team although did not always display authority and was overly apologetic for previous mistakes in his approach.

I was able to develop good rapport with A and felt confident I could support him in any future coaching that might take place. My background in NHS management facilitated this and led to a sense of mutual respect. My inclination from his team’s behaviour was that they thought he could be more assertive and have a bigger presence as a leader.

As part of my course requirements with Coaching Mastery, I offered A four coaching sessions to take place over a four month period. We agreed a nominal fee of £75 plus travel expenses per session which I would invoice him for on completion of each session. I was keen to schedule the coaching at a location away from his place of work, however this was going to prove difficult due to A’s work commitments. We therefore agreed to use either his surgery room or an office room at a CCG location.

Pre Coaching Telephone Call and Pre Coaching Assessment Tool: Motivational Mapping

During our pre coaching telephone call I explained the practical elements of coaching with A (times, location, fees, confidentiality, a summary of my background). I also asked A to start thinking specifically about what he wanted to gain from coaching ahead of our first session. Motivational Mapping is an assessment tool that draws out workplace values and part of the coaching package I offer to clients. A had completed this tool at his previous team coaching session. I explained that we would use this as a starting point for our first coaching session. In addition to this I emailed my terms of business for A to read and sign.

I felt it was important for A’s coaching to take place at a different location to encourage him to step outside of his usual work environment, as this wasn’t possible I considered alternative approaches to using the space differently such as moving around.

I was comfortable in setting and asking for a nominal fee although in hindsight feel the agreed amount needed to be higher to reflect the level of work I committed.

Session 1

Session overview:

- Coaching agreement and plan
- My background and approach
- Commitment from client
- What do you want to gain from coaching
- Personal history
- Motivational Map profile
- Role within the CCG and GP practice
- Thoughts on leadership and management roles
- Homework

A's focus areas:

- Improve self awareness and own direction
- Understand my own development needs
- How do I add value as a clinician to the CCG
- Develop my strategic thinking and an organisational perspective for the CCG
- Improve my influence over others
- Develop confidence

Session 1 initial observations

Very practical, visual, seeks recognition, focused on adding value.

Anxiety towards change.

Anxiety of public speaking although gets a "buzz" from it and seeks opportunities for this work.

Proactive and wants to have an impact, frustrated at the organisation and system.

Nice and approachable, good communicator, anticipate A is well liked by patients. – Calm and softly spoken, listens well.

Could have a bigger presence

Respect seeking and externally referenced for praise – internalises criticism

My first coaching session with A focused on getting to know him and what he wanted to achieve.

Lots of "data" was available and it was challenging to absorb and process all the verbal and non verbal information available to me. I focused on the elements that stood out most to me and used back tracking to confirm with A as our discussion progressed.

During A's personal history he spoke a lot about his time at university and how he struggled with academic approaches to learning, preferring practical approaches. He failed exams and had to re-sit to pass. A spoke of his parents in a supportive and appreciative way, identifying high expectations and that they were proud of his achievements (wanted him to be a doctor)? A also referred to his family although not in great detail, focussing more on work and achievements. He regularly referred to wanting to add value as a clinician and explained that he had always looked for opportunities for further advancement leading him to his current role in the CCG.

In terms of where A is now my strongest observation is that he is in a position of power and wants to make an impact but just isn't quite achieving the impact he wants. A is frustrated with the system he is working in and the slowness of getting things done. He would greatly benefit from increased confidence and having a bigger presence. Being clearer on his own identity and his identity as a leader would enable him to articulate this better to others and improve his influence.

I finished the session with a brief summary of the things we had discussed and asked A to complete the following tasks before our next session:

1. For both the CCG and Practice roles list, skills, responsibilities and roles under the heading of leadership and management. The purpose of this was to enable A to think of the differences between leadership and management.
2. Develop four or five values for you as a leader. The purpose of this was to start A thinking about what was most important to him as a leader.
3. Identify a leader who inspires you, what do they do that makes them a good leader? The purpose of this was to enable A to start identifying key leadership attributes that he wants to model and to think about leadership at a deeper level.

Session 1 thoughts and ideas

A needs to be empowered and develop self confidence (praise for self rather than praise from others)

Focus coaching on "self" – identify core values to act as a permanent reference point and check list for decision making (are his decisions in line with his values?). Identity and first position work, enabling beliefs (possible resourceful timeline).

Stop apologising for mistakes from the past – move on. Use towards thinking.

Could be more assertive, sure of himself as opposed to pleasing others. Use perceptual positioning to gain different perspectives.

Firm up the direction A wants to move in – what are his goals/outcomes? Well formed outcomes or washing line exercise.

Enable A to identify patterns in others and how flexibility in his approach will improve his influence. Ask for examples of interactions when he feels he did not influence and examples of interactions where he did influence.

The seating arrangement we had was the same as a doctor/patient arrangement and I think this kept A in a "doctor" role, plan to change this at the next session and see if it has an effect.

Session 1: what went well?

Built good rapport, established areas to focus on during the coaching contract, observed verbal and non verbal cues to build a picture of A as an individual, use of back tracking to ensure we were in agreement with the coaching contract.

Session 1: what could have been better?

Had the opportunity to explore further during the personal history, particularly in terms of parents expectations and the pressures experienced at University.

Session 1: what would you do differently next time?

Change the seating arrangement to break the "doctor/patient" set up.

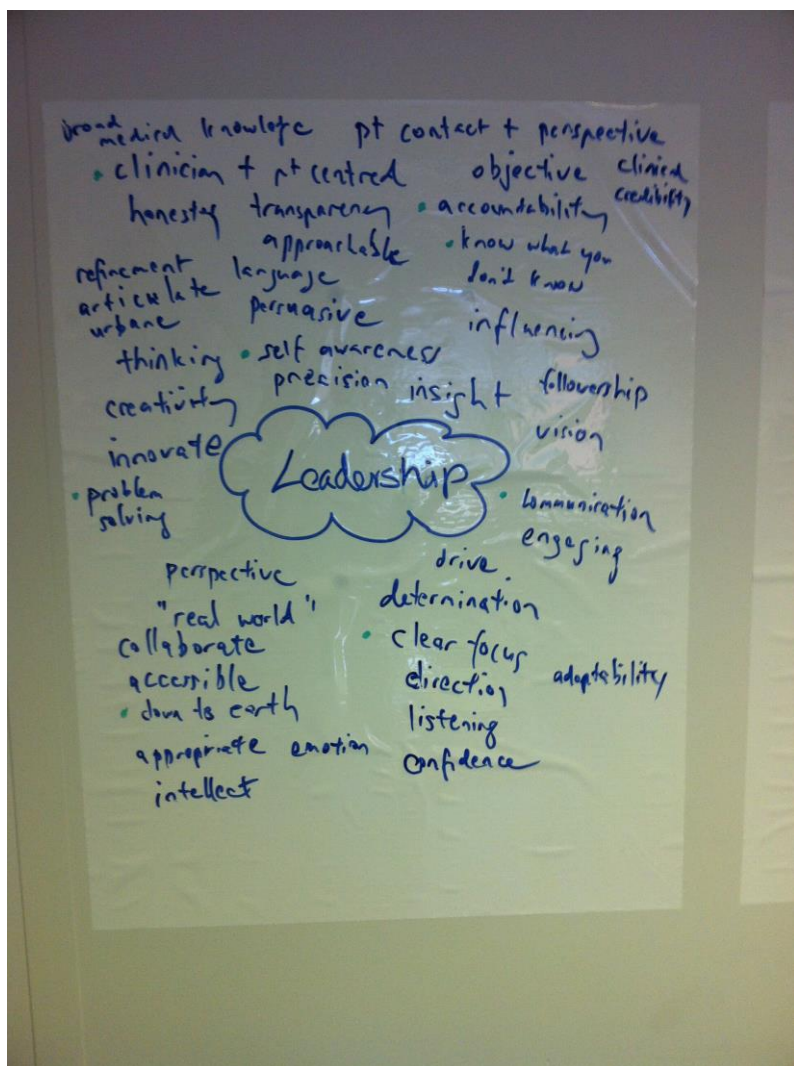
Probe a little further into some of the detail

Session 2

Session 2 overview:

- Open frame – how's it been going?
- Review homework
- Theme – self awareness
- Reflections on the difference between leadership and management
- Completed a leadership attributes brain storm
- Completed a leadership life pie
- Homework

A had spent a lot of time reflecting since session one and was keen to discuss his learning. The session was comfortable and rapportful, on an equal level. We discussed the homework from the past session and focussed more on leadership qualities. Barak Obama was identified by A as a leader he aspires to. A noted his ability to communicate and highlighted intellect as a core attribute. Following on from this A completed the leadership brainstorm below. This exercise was completed standing which change the dynamic of the session and seemed to shift A out of the “doctor” role to being himself. It took time to draw out the detail from A, he started with just four or five leadership qualities, I kept asking “anything else” and he began to develop further thoughts with his body language indicating thinking. As his idea progressed his thoughts become deeper (“appropriate emotion”) rather than surface level. The use of a visual tool worked well with A and he took time to stand back, look at what he had written and reflect.



I asked A to pick the top 8 leadership qualities that he had listed that he thought were most important to him and plotted them for him into the life pie below. Life pie is useful in terms of breaking this down and choosing areas to focus on. We then went through each one and A graded how stratified he was with achieving the quality.



This exercise altered the approach A had been taking so far. As he stood back and looked at the score he had given himself he said “they’re all quite high”, keeping quiet so not to interrupt his thinking I simply waited to see what would come next. A went on to say that he was achieving what he felt was most important and that the things he hadn’t prioritised were the things he needed to work on – he questioned his choices. At this point we could have gone much further but we were running out of time so I needed to find a way to capture the learning to pick up the next session. I set A with the task of reflecting on the life pie he had created and to make any changes he wanted prior to the next session. In addition to this I asked A to start thinking about what would need to happen for his scores to increase by a couple of points in each section. A is good at reflecting and I wanted to encourage him to turn these reflections into actions that will move him forward.

To explore further A’s relationship with external feedback and desire for praise from others I asked him to ask for feedback from someone in terms of his leadership.

Session 2 thoughts and ideas

A is starting to think more in-depth about the things we discuss and is starting to touch on the emotional elements of his identity. There is an opportunity to probe further into this with his “appropriate emotion” leadership attribute that he listed in the above exercise. What is appropriate emotion to A? I get the sense that A uses a professional image at work and wants to encourage him to show more of himself to develop his confidence and to not be overly apologetic. A is appropriately very associated into first position during our coaching, it would be interesting to see how the use of perceptual positions might help him disassociate as a way to examine his influence over others. I also want to continue to strengthen A’s growing surety of who he is as a leader by picking up on the life pie exercise at the next session.

Session 2: what went well?

Standing while coaching, use of visual aid and act of writing things down, enabled A to go more in depth with the things he was discussing, started to touch on the emotional elements of his identity.

Session 2: what could have been better?

Ran very short on time and the session ended at an opportunity to go further. Could have explored "appropriate emotion" there and then – in the moment it came to him.

Session 2: what would you do differently next time?

Probe further

Insights from Coaching Supervision

- Explore the relationship with parents in terms of reassurance – related to Transactional analysis – pattern of looking for recognition – where has this come from
- Give A a piece of feedback from me – speak from the heart
- Use the e-monitor to explore emotional responses – where is A at different times?
- Watch and discuss with A a Barak Obama speech focussing on how he connects with the audience
- Suggest observing a CCG meeting
- Use the energy and emotion grid

Session 3

Session 3 overview:

- Supervised by Jill
- Open frame: how's it been going?
- Recap from the last two sessions
- Review homework
- Looked again at the life pie, made changes
- Explored what needed to happen to increase scores in each section
- Discussed feedback from others
- Gave my feedback
- Summarised

Session 3 observations

A approached the session very energised and keen to discuss his reflection since last meeting. He was clear on the changes he wanted to make to the life pie exercise and required little encouragement to do this. I focused on holding the space and letting him do the work. I was also able to help A recognise that he is already doing a lot of what he is striving for but not always recognising it.

"Eureka" moment: A has until now struggled with his definition of intellect. Previously highlighting it as something he is striving for and observes in Barak Obama. He has related intellect to knowledge gained through academic study (something he has struggled with and found difficult). While discussing intellect A started to refer more to it in terms of flexibility and knowing how and when to use your knowledge and skills appropriately. I pressed him on this and said "that's quite a shift for you" to which he responded "yes, eureka".

The second part of the session was focused on feedback. A relayed the feedback he had been given and was pleased with the positive comments he had received. I also found the opportunity to give him my piece of feedback (to speak from the heart). A immediately recognised this and recognised

it as a quality that Barack Obama has, which I confirmed as an effective way of engaging with an audience.

Session 3 thoughts and ideas

A's self awareness and confidence has grown, he is much more aware of the type of leader he want to be and has given examples of asserting his values with colleagues. Ideas for next steps include using future pacing to cement his learning. As well as identifying individuals he wants to improve his influence with and enabling him to identify patterns that will aid this.

A further next step would be to use future choice points to firm up the direction that A wants to move in and the steps required to get him there, the washing line exercise would also aid this process. With one session left in the coaching contract firming up some goals and actions to take forward.

I sensed A was more himself during this session and that his professional image didn't get in the way.

Session 3: what went well?

The whole session was productive and insightful; observation didn't disrupt the flow of the coaching.

Session 3: what could have been better?

Nothing

Session 3: what would you do differently next time?

Set homework there and then rather than emailing later.

Insights from coaching supervision

- Applied a positive coaching approach, focussing on what A does well no reinforce empowering actions
- I could be more challenging e.g when A says "I'm not like that" tell me a time?.....and another?.....more examples? – add energy Or when "I feel I need to compromise" give me a time when you haven't compromised.....
- Calibrate in the moment and reinforce
- Use the comfort/stretch/panic model with A to identify situations and actions that will stretch him
- Use all the you's you are exercise to firm up identity further

Session 4

Session overview

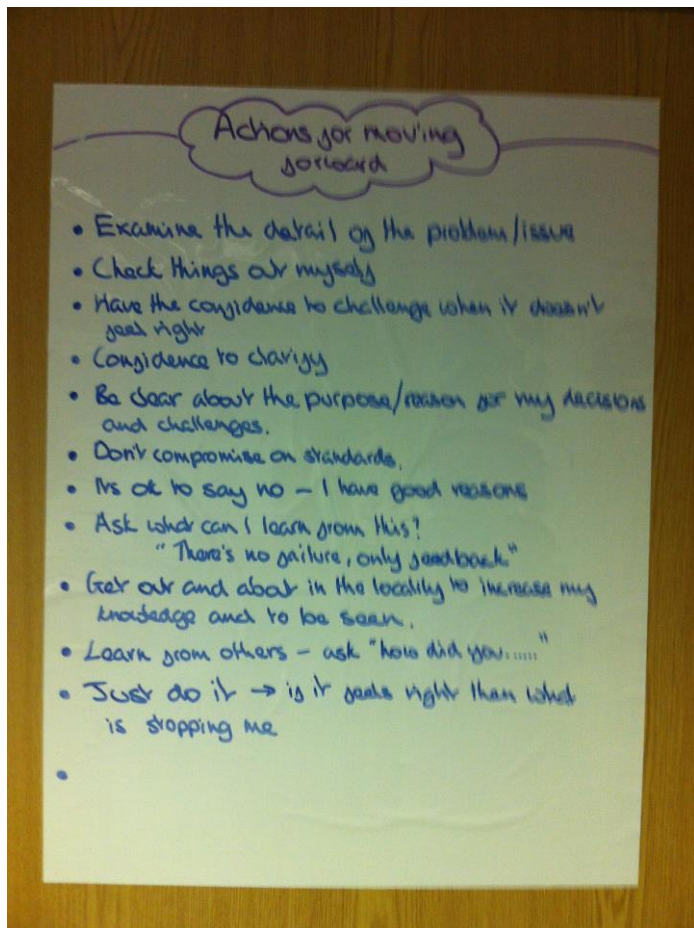
- Recap and summarise work to date
- Develop actions for moving forward
- Use of perceptual positioning to explore A's influence with a colleague
- Discussion for further coaching
- Appreciation and thanks

Session 3 observations

A's reflections and thinking has become much more focused. He comes across as more confident and sure about him self as a leader. A was easily able to come up with the actions below and needed very little encouragement. We used his updated life pie as a basis for areas to focus on which lead to the actions he has set for himself. During the next part of our session I used perceptual positioning with Alvin to explore how he can improve his influence, he used a recent telephone call with a colleague as an example. The process for A to second position and

disassociate in third position provided further insight for him on developing a better response inline with his values and also taking account of the view point of his colleague. He drew out a need to use his clinician role as a way to better connect with his colleague and also his CCG role as a way of ensuring he communicates the bigger picture in terms of the change he is implementing.

Finally we discussed the option for further coaching, which A is keen to explore and anticipates commissioning a further session in the next few weeks.



Session 4 thoughts and ideas

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Alvin and feel we developed a good and rapportful coaching relationship. I feel I have applied appropriate techniques, some thought of in advance and some in the moment. I am confident that Alvin is pleased with the progress he has made and that I have facilitated the process. There is much more that could be explored and achieved and I anticipate A will take up the opportunity for further coaching.