

Becoming a great coach!



As a Coach you are a leader and one of your most important roles is to teach the children in your class to do their best. By doing this, you will help them make better decisions, solve problems that are holding you back, learn new skills, and otherwise progress their careers in sport - no matter which sport it may be.

Gymnastics Australia provides formal training in coaching. However, this is only the start point! You need to arm yourself with some proven techniques, continually practice and also trust your instincts so you can become a great Coach.

The GROW Model can help you improve your coaching

GROW stands for:

- Goal.
- Current Reality.
- Options (or Obstacles).
- Will (or Way Forward).

A good way of thinking about using the GROW Model is to think about how you would plan a journey:

- First, you decide what skill or routine you need to teach (the goal);
- Second, you establish what your students can actually do right now (the current reality);
- Third, you then explore the route to the goal by analysing the various elements needed to teach the skill(s) to your students (the options); and
- Finally, in the final step, establishing the will, you ensure that you're committed to making the journey, that you are prepared for the obstacles that you could meet on the way and that you can include detours, if necessary.

1. Establish the Goal

You need to examine the routines for the Level you are going to teach and ensure you understand the skills that are going to be expected of the student(s) in your group. If this is a specific skill for a specific gymnast, you must ensure that the skill fits the gymnast's profile.

You also need to understand the time-frame that you have for teaching the skill(s). Is it by the end of Term or before the next competition?

Make sure that this is a **SMART goal**: one that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

How will you know that your team member has achieved this goal?

Does this goal fit with the overall skill mix of your gymnast?

2. Examine the Current Reality



This is an important step. Too often, people try to solve a problem or reach a goal without fully considering their starting point. As a result, they miss some vital information that is needed in order to reach their goal effectively.



As a coach, you need to review what the student can do now. You can do this by:

- looking at previous Levels of gymnastics that the student has completed;
- looking at any recent competition results for the student(s);
- talking to previous coaches of the student(s).

Next, look at the skills the gymnast can actually do and ask the gymnast to describe what he/she believes he/she can do and wants to achieve.

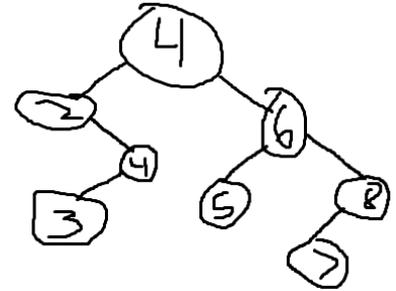
3. Explore the Options

Once you and your gymnast have explored the current reality, it is time to determine what is possible - meaning all of the possible options for reaching the goal.

Work with your gymnast to brainstorm as many good options as possible. Then, discuss these and help her decide on the best ones. It is important to guide them in the right direction, without you actually making decisions.

Typical questions that you can use to explore options are as follows:

- What other skill could you do?
- What if this or that constraint were removed? Would that change things?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?
- What factors or considerations will you use to weigh the options?
- What do you need to stop doing in order to achieve this goal?
- What obstacles stand in your way?



4. Establish the Will

By examining the current reality and exploring the options, both you and the gymnast will now have a good idea of how the goal can be achieved.

That's great - but in itself, this may not be enough. The final step is to get the gymnast to commit to specific actions in order to move forward towards the goal. In doing this, you will help establish the will and boost the motivation to succeed.

Useful questions to ask here include:

- So, what will you do now, and when?
- What else can you do?
- What could stop you moving forward?
- How will you overcome this?
- How can you keep you both motivated?
- When do you need to review progress? Daily, weekly, monthly?



Finally, decide on a date when you will both review progress. This will provide some accountability, and allow the approach to be changed if the original plan isn't working.

**FAILURE IS
NEVER AN
OPTION**