MEZZANA
partners

High Performing Teams

MODULE THREE

AZTEC
ACADEMY

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Participant Workbook

Module Overview

Session 1 Warm up

Session 2 Performance Coaching Mindset

Session 3 Performance Conversations – Increasing challenge

Lunch break

Session 4 Performance Conversations – Increasing support

Session 5 Applications and next steps

This module will help you to:

- **Develop** practical performance coaching skills to bring out the best in your team
- **Create** a coaching culture that helps people take responsibility, improves motivation, and makes a better place to work
- **Not just work hard**, but work differently
- **Tackle difficult conversations** with more confidence

Session 1: Warm Up

What does performance coaching mean to you?

How often do you do it?

What would help you feel more confident to do it more often?

Listening

In Pairs

Person A: Describe your best ever experienced of being coached

Person B: Listen without interruption for 2 minutes, then play back what you heard.

Reflect on the process: what was it like to really listen to your partner?

Swap and repeat

Session 2:
Performance Coaching Culture

Personal skills and mindset	Do well	Needs practice	Not sure
Assume the other person can learn and take responsibility			
Treat the other person as an adult			
Ask more than I tell			
Listen attentively			
Direct without being directive			
Balance challenge and support			
Stay curious and ‘above the line’			
Create psychological safety			
Share and invite honest feedback			
Use all opportunities, not just formal appraisals			

What are your current strengths?

What do you need to practice?

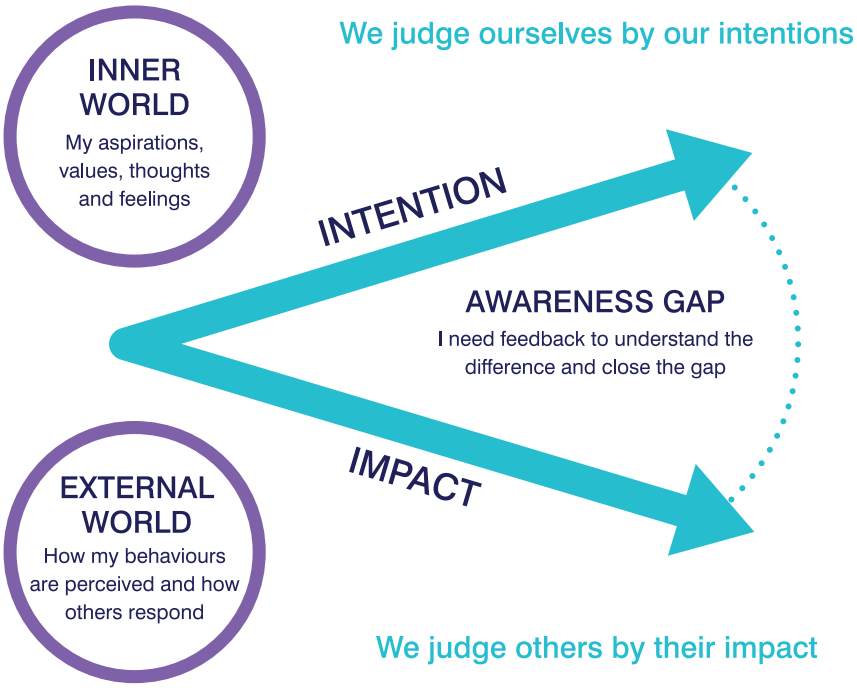
O > Open Questions

A > Affirm strengths to build confidence

R > Reflect– hearing their own words

S > Summarise – to grow understanding

Session 3: Performance Conversations – Increasing challenge



SITUATION

Describe the situation, be specific about when and where it occurred.

BEHAVIOUR

Describe the observable behaviour, don't interpret, or assume you know what the other person was thinking.

IMPACT

Describe what you thought or how you felt in reaction to the behaviour.

INTENT

Ask about the person's original intent. This enables you both to understand the gap between intent and impact.

When improvement is necessary, you can add:

ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIOUR

Describe the behaviour that would lead to more positive consequences.

ALTERNATIVE IMPACT

The impact you would expect to experience from the alternative behaviour.

Source - the Centre for Creative Leadership

Challenge Practice

You'll be working in trios to practice SBII. Choose who will give and who will receive feedback, putting yourselves into the following scenarios. Feel free to use your own examples too.

Missed deadlines

One of your team has missed deadlines several times over the past few weeks. This is starting to aggravate your client, who has been increasingly frustrated with you in a series of heated calls. You know that your team member has been working long hours, and up to now you've not raised the missed deadlines with them directly. You decide to speak to your team member – how would you use SBII to address the issue?

Not living up to values?

In a recent meeting one of your team sharply criticised a colleague. Their language left the colleague feeling upset and you are worried this behaviour sets a poor example that isn't in keeping with Aztec's values. You decide to speak to your team member about this incident – how would you use SBII?

Lack of support from your boss

You are about to have a 121 conversation with your boss. Normally you appreciate the time each week to check in, talk through your workload and get some moral support on how you're managing your own team. The last three meetings have been cancelled from your diary, with little or no explanation from your boss. You're feeling a bit worried about what this might mean, and also feeling frustrated because you've got a couple of important problems that you really need some help with. How could you use SBII to raise your concerns with your boss?

Not feeling safe

One of your colleagues often spends time complaining to you about others in your team. They feel resentful that others aren't pulling their weight, that the work is not distributed fairly and they feel they always end up doing more than their share. They are very dismissive about your mutual manager. Much of the time, their language is 'below the line.' At first you were happy to listen and be supportive, in the hope that your colleague just needed to 'let off steam',

but this behaviour is getting worse. Their complaints are getting more extreme and they are taking more and more of your time. To make matters worse, you are starting to suspect that they are also complaining about you to others in the team. You decide it's time put an end to this. How can you use SBII to make this as constructive as possible?

Undermining authority?

Jo is older than you and has worked with Aztec for nearly 10 years. Despite this experience Jo has been unsuccessful in gaining promotion. You have only been with Aztec two years but you are now Jo's line manager. You've become concerned in recent weeks about Jo's attitude and behaviour; in meetings Jo has been openly critical about your decisions and complained about a lack of direction and clear priorities. You are worried that Jo doesn't respect you and is undermining your authority in the team. How would you approach a 121 conversation with Jo?

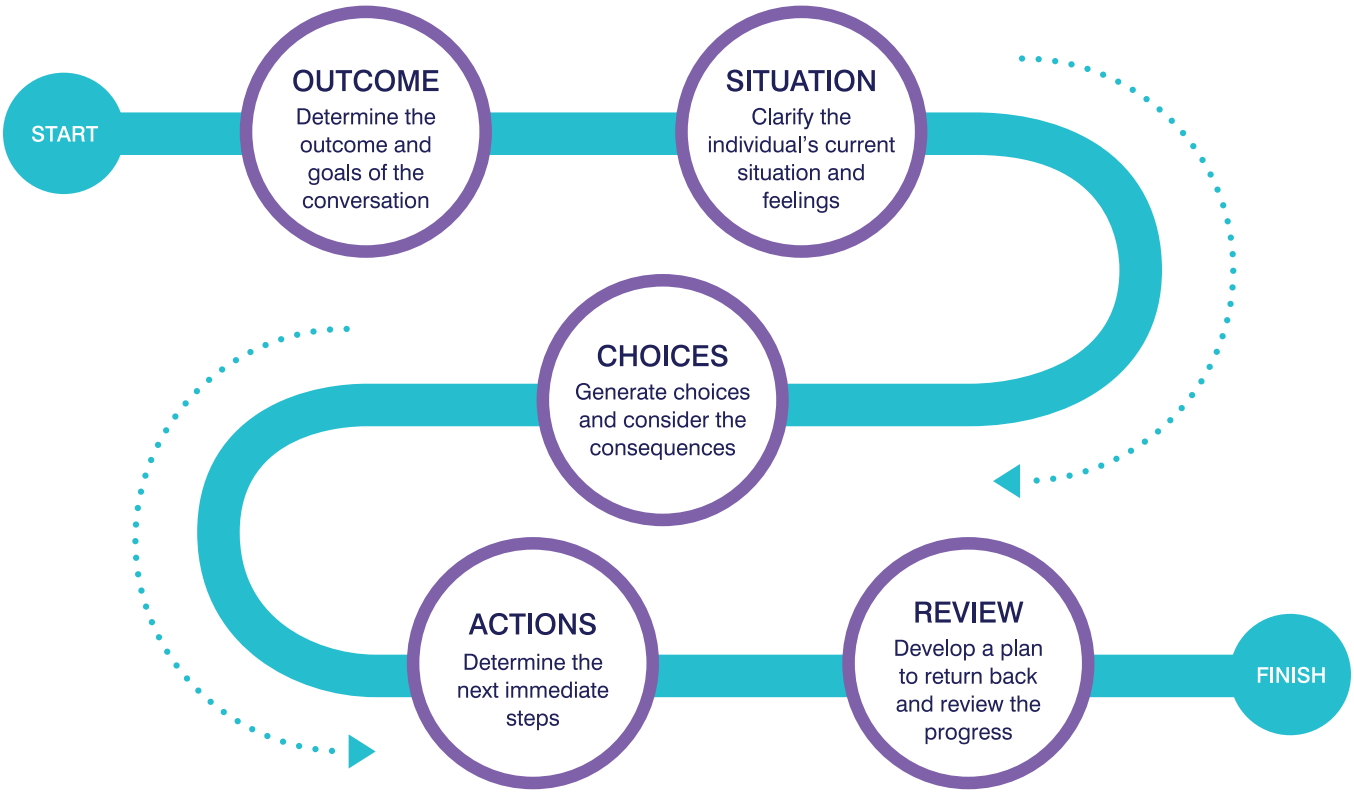
New team member

Sam is a new team member, and due to the pandemic has spent most of the time working at home with limited contact with other team members. You've been aware of this and have encouraged other team members to reach out and make contact with Sam, but you've only managed one face to face meeting with Sam yourself. When you've asked Sam how they are, you've only ever got 'fine thanks' - leaving you a bit unsure about what's really going on. Sam's work output has been OK, but not brilliant. What could you do differently in your next 121 with Sam?

Managing priorities

Your team has been very busy in recent weeks, and the overall workload has gone up as you take on a new client. Everyone is doing their best to provide superb service but the strains are starting to show. You've just been asked if your team can take on another project. You want to say yes, but at the same time you're worried that your team is already at full stretch. What conversation do you have with your boss?

Session 4: Performance Conversations – Increasing support



Source: Karen Whittleworth and Andrew Gilbert, 2002

2 starting points for the agenda:

1. Defined by Team Leader

- Delegating a task
- Dealing with under performance

2. Defined by Team Member

- Seeking help with a specific task
- Seeking help more broadly – e.g. career development, managing workload, pastoral care.

Coaching Practice

Person A (Team Leader)

Use OSCAR to guide the conversation and put your OARS in (open questions, affirm strengths, reflect back, and summarise).

Person B (Team Member)

Bring a topic you'd like to explore – best if this is NOT a role play, do it for real.

Person C (Observer)

You are the facilitator of the session: set it up and watch the time.
Silently observe the coach – what skills do they use? (SBII, OARS).

At the end facilitate the feedback as follows:

- Ask the Team Leader one thing they felt good about and one thing they found difficult
- Then ask the Team Member what they appreciated and one thing they found difficult or unhelpful
- Then give your feedback to the Team Leader

Please Note: all feedback is on the skills and the process not the content.

Your coaching feedback notes:

Session 5: Application and next steps

Pulling it all together

- I am developing a performance coaching attitude
- I practice and hone my questioning, listening and feedback skills
- I have a simple, powerful framework for increasing support - SBII
- I have a simple, powerful framework for increasing support - OSCAR
- I know when and how I am next going to apply these skills

What might get in the way of applying this approach?

How can you overcome these barriers?

When is your next opportunity to apply the skills that you've learned today in a real conversation?

Will this be about increasing challenge or support?

How and when will you prepare for this conversation?

Action Learning Group

My group members are:

We are meeting on:

My own coaching

Topics and questions I'd like to explore with my Mezzana Coach: