

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CARDS

This (updated) resource has been produced to support the work of Advanced Practitioners (APs). The first edition (2018) builds on an original set of cards used to develop the skills of teaching and learning coaches who, using a peer-to-peer coaching model, work with staff to improve specific aspects of their delivery. In 2022 the cards were updated to reflect new insights and evidence generated with, and by APs, as they developed a richer and deeper understanding of the AP-type role from pan organisational perspectives: see the new yellow cards.

APs can use these cards in a variety of ways, for example, to stimulate their own understanding and development, support their practice when working with others and to drive quality improvements in teaching, learning and assessment across the organisation and to support collaboration between organisations.

The cards are colour coded to provide an initial focus for their use and application. Although, cards can be used in different contexts. For example, a card that helps support self-development could also be used to help support the coaching and development of others.

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BLUE CARDS

PRIMARY FOCUS:
DEVELOPING SELF



GREEN CARDS

PRIMARY FOCUS:
DEVELOPING OTHERS



MAGENTA CARDS

PRIMARY FOCUS:
DEVELOPING ORGANISATIONS



YELLOW CARDS

PRIMARY FOCUS:
DEVELOPING PAN-ORGANISATIONAL
ARCHITECTURES

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CARDS

IDEAS FOR USING THE CARDS

The aim of these cards and the other resources that comprise the Advanced Practitioner toolkit is to enhance and embed continuous quality improvement across all aspects of provision. The toolkit can support Advanced Practitioners working one-to-one with colleagues as well as when working with small groups, departmental teams, delivering whole organisation interventions and working across the pan-organisational FE landscape. Many of the cards are also likely to be highly relevant to those working with colleagues in AP-type roles.

YOU COULD USE THESE CARDS TO:

- develop self-awareness, analyse personal strengths and development needs
- facilitate self assessment and improvement discussions with colleagues and others
- support the development of colleagues and teams that you have been asked to work with
- provide thought pieces to help colleagues reflect on and share their practise
- signpost to wider resources and evidence base to support the work of those in AP-type roles
- add value to other professional development initiatives, e.g. coaching and mentoring programmes
- give structure to development interventions
- support the influencing of senior colleagues and leadership teams
- support the implementation and teaching and learning approaches for new new curricula, e.g. T levels

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

ADVANCED PRACTITIONER TOOLKIT

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These cards belong to a wider AP toolkit developed as part of the Education and Training Foundation's Professional Development Programme for Advanced Practitioners (#APConnect) 2018-2022 by delivery partner touchconsulting Limited. The toolkit comprises these cards, Guides, AP practice-evidence and research reports i.e.

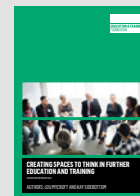
THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CARDS

(Updated March 2022)



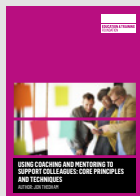
CREATING SPACES TO THINK IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

(Updated March 2022) by Lou Mycroft and Kay Sidebottom



USING COACHING AND MENTORING TO SUPPORT COLLEAGUES (2018)

by Jon Thedham



COACHING AND MENTORING IN ACTION (2018)

Additional Approaches, Tools and Techniques
by Jon Thedham



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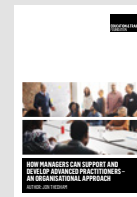
FACILITATING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAMS THROUGH SITUATED LEARNING (2018)

by Ian Grayling



HOW MANAGERS CAN SUPPORT AND DEVELOP ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS - AN ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH (2019)

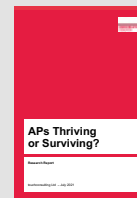
by Jon Thedham



ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS REFLECTIONS (2021)



ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS DURING COVID, THRIVING OR SURVIVING? RESEARCH REPORT (2022)



RE-THINKING THE ROLE OF THE ADVANCED PRACTITIONER: AP CONNECT YEAR 3 EVALUATION STRAND FINAL REPORT RESEARCH REPORT (2021)



The GROW model developed by John Whitmore (2003) provides a model of coaching that aims to unlock potential following a cycle that explores the **G**oals, **R**eality, **O**ptions and **W**ill to commit.

The model does not always follow a monocyclic route and you may find yourself moving between the different elements at various stages in a series of coaching conversations. One of the key elements is the effective use of questions, such as those below. You can use these questions to support your own self-development as well as when coaching individual colleagues or teams.

G

GOAL

What do you want to achieve?

What would achieving this lead to long term?

When would you like to achieve this by?

R

REALITY

What is the current position?

What have you done about this so far?

What is holding you back?

What is helping you move on?

O

OPTIONS

What could you do?

What could you do to change the situation?

Who might be able to help you?

What else could you do?

...and what else?

W

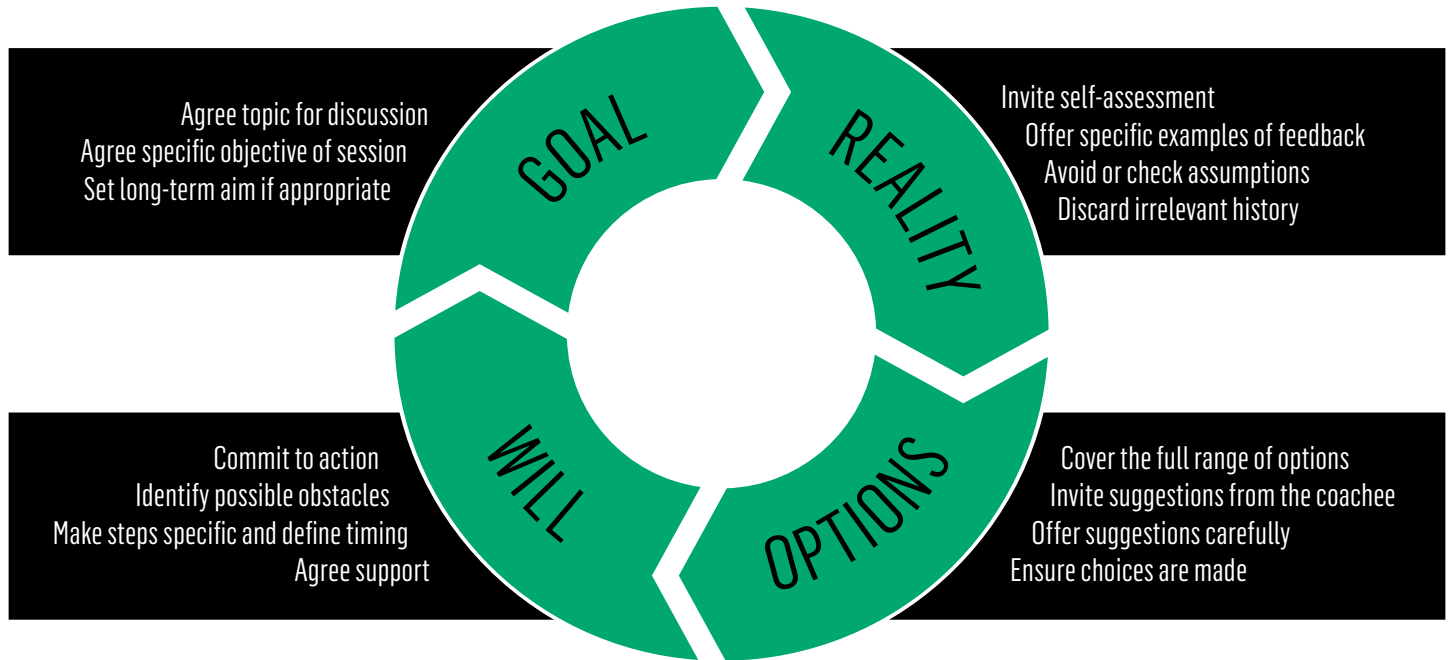
WILL

What will you do?

What will be your first step?

What support do you need and from whom?

What will you do to obtain support and when?



Source: Whitmore, J. (2009). 'Coaching for Performance: The Principles and Practices of Coaching and Leadership (People Skills for Professionals).'

BOYATZIS' MODEL OF INTENTIONAL CHANGE

Boyatzis' Model of Intentional Change focuses on the idea of five discoveries which when combined, provide a coherent and integrated model that supports reflection and a move towards action.

1. For sustainable change you need a vision of who and where you want to be. This is your ideal self.
2. You need an honest assessment of who and where you are now. This is your real self. If the real and the ideal are the same there is no incentive to change or develop. If they are too far apart, then some aspects need to be prioritised.
3. The comparison of the real and ideal allows strengths and gaps to be identified. The learning agenda can then be formulated to give the opportunity to build on strengths. Boyatzis proposes that 80% of the focus should be on strengths and the ideal.

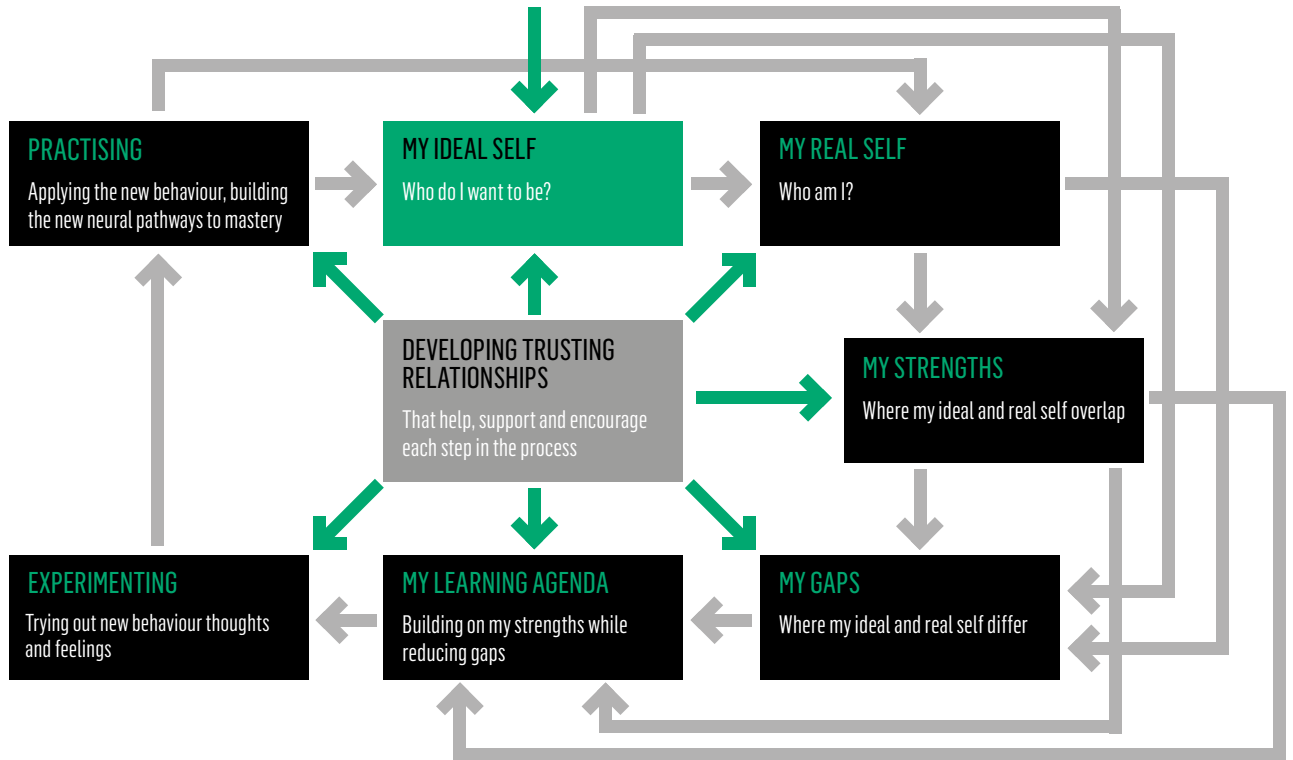
4. There needs to be the opportunity to experiment, to practise and to review progress. How can I change my behaviours, what actions can I take so that I change old habits into new habits?
5. At the heart of the model is developing trusting relationships that help support and encourage each step of the process – not just to support others but also to support you as an Advanced Practitioner.

Source: Boyatzis, R. & McKee, A. (2006). 'Intentional Change. Global Business and Organisational Excellence.' Volume 25, Issue 3 Pages 49-60.

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BOYATZIS' MODEL OF INTENTIONAL CHANGE

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DEVELOPING OTHERS

Bruce Joyce and Beverley Showers studied 200 in-service education and training programmes for tutors, all designed to change practice. They found that without the chance for teachers or trainers to experience peer observation and peer coaching there is no measurable impact on practice.

Coaching provides an opportunity to reflect on a session and consider, in a supportive climate, why an approach did or did not work and how it might be changed or refined.

Based on their research, Joyce and Showers assert that after attending a continuing professional development (CPD) event, there will be a positive impact on performance if a practitioner receives coaching on the new practice when they return to the workplace. However, where there is no coaching there will be much less impact.

There is also current thinking that the use of video recording can also support peer coaching and in many cases make it more effective than just observations.

For more information see 'The Evolution of Peer Coaching' (reprinted from Joyce, B. and B. Showers. *Educational Leadership*, 53 (6): 12–16).

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JOYCE AND SHOWERS

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A CPD model for coaching based on Joyce and Showers' research



DEVELOPING OTHERS

The Johari Window proposes four areas that make up our whole self: **public self**, **blind self**, **private self** and **unknown self** (undiscovered potential).

We can develop and expand our public self by inviting and receiving feedback about our blind self, and by disclosing appropriate areas of our private self. It is through this expansion that we develop our understanding of ourselves and others, so helping us to build relationships and begin to develop our potential. It is here that effective and trusting working relationships are formed and grown. The larger the public self the better the relationship.

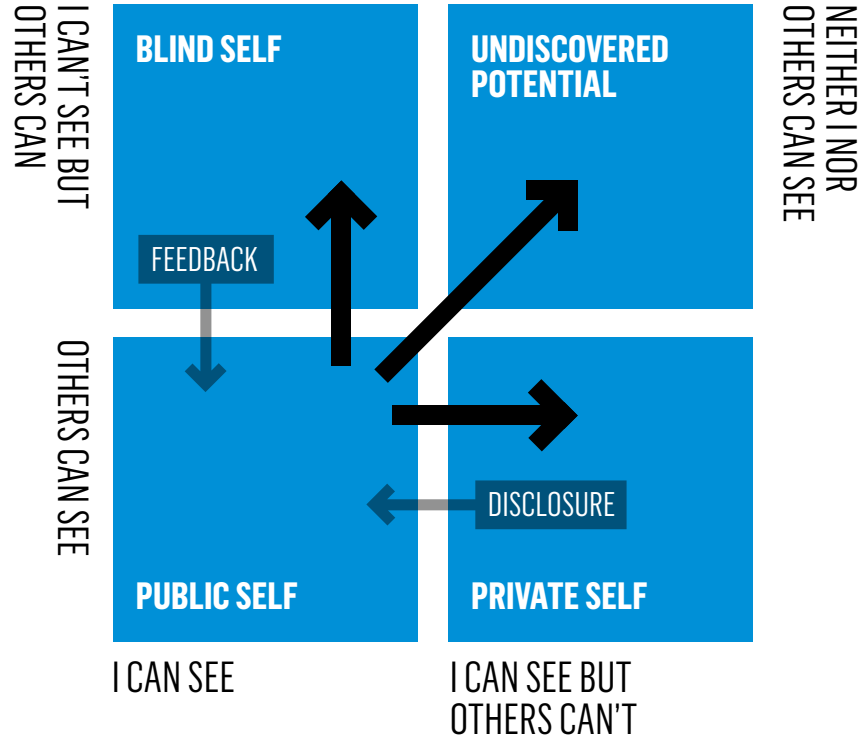
- **Public self** is the area with which we are most comfortable: I can see into this area and so can other people. It is also what I know about myself and what others know about me.
- **Blind self** is the area of my life where other people can see things about me to which I am blind.
These may be outstanding qualities or unhelpful qualities that are holding me back from growth and improvement. **Without feedback I will stay the way I am; with feedback I can choose to change behaviours.**
- **Unknown self** is sometimes referred to as the undiscovered, or hidden, or deeper self, and often as our undiscovered potential. This quadrant represents things that I have yet to discover about myself, and that others have yet to discover too.
- **Private self** is the area of my life that I choose to keep private, perhaps out of shyness, lack of confidence, or because I do not trust others enough to share it with them – yet. **It is worth considering whether some disclosure of this information might release growth within me.**

Source: Luft, J. (1969). 'Of Human Interaction: Johari Model.'

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THE JOHARI WINDOW

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DEVELOPING SELF

The Iceberg Model is one way of exploring our role, self-image, traits and behaviours, and how they affect people we come into contact with.

Based on a model originally developed by Freud, it helps us to explore the many different things that drive our behaviour. Just as with an iceberg, only a small proportion of these are visible.

ABOVE THE WATERLINE

The things that people and colleagues will see in us as we work with them as an Advanced Practitioner.

- **Skills** such as questioning, listening, summarising, reflecting, organisational skills, teaching skills.

- **Knowledge** of our subject, useful resources, coaching and mentoring, coaching models, our organisation, our colleagues.

BELOW THE WATERLINE

The things that others may not readily see but which underpin who we are and how we go about our role as an Advanced Practitioner.

- **Social and other roles:** how we project ourselves; our image; where we put our emphasis in performing our roles; the expectations others have of us, and whether those expectations and the roles people ascribe to us are legitimate or not!

- **Self-image:** the feelings we have about ourselves and the roles people ascribe to us are important to us as individuals – our inner self.

There may be issues of self-confidence, too, in that we may not see ourselves as having the capacity or capability to perform some of the roles of an Advanced Practitioner.

- **Traits and motives:** In exploring the deeper levels of the iceberg, we begin to learn things about ourselves – opening our 'blind self' to feedback and disclosing more about our 'private self'. We discover more about our 'hidden' or 'deeper' areas – our potential.

As you develop as an Advanced Practitioner you will begin to explore the deeper levels within the iceberg model. In particular you will reflect on which behaviours are helpful to you when supporting others and which may get in the way.

At a much deeper level you may begin to glimpse an understanding of why as individuals we do what we do, what drives our behaviours and motives.

Source: <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/competency-iceberg-model.htm>



Daniel Goleman defines emotional intelligence as:

'The capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.'

Effective Advanced Practitioners will show emotional self-awareness, self-confidence, empathy and self-control when supporting and developing others and building effective relationships with their colleagues and other stakeholders.

SELF-AWARENESS

- Emotional self-awareness
- Accurate self-assessment
- Self-confidence

SELF-MANAGEMENT

- Emotional self-control
- Transparency
- Adaptability
- Achievement orientation
- Initiative
- Optimism

SOCIAL AWARENESS

- Empathy
- Organisational awareness
- Service orientation

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

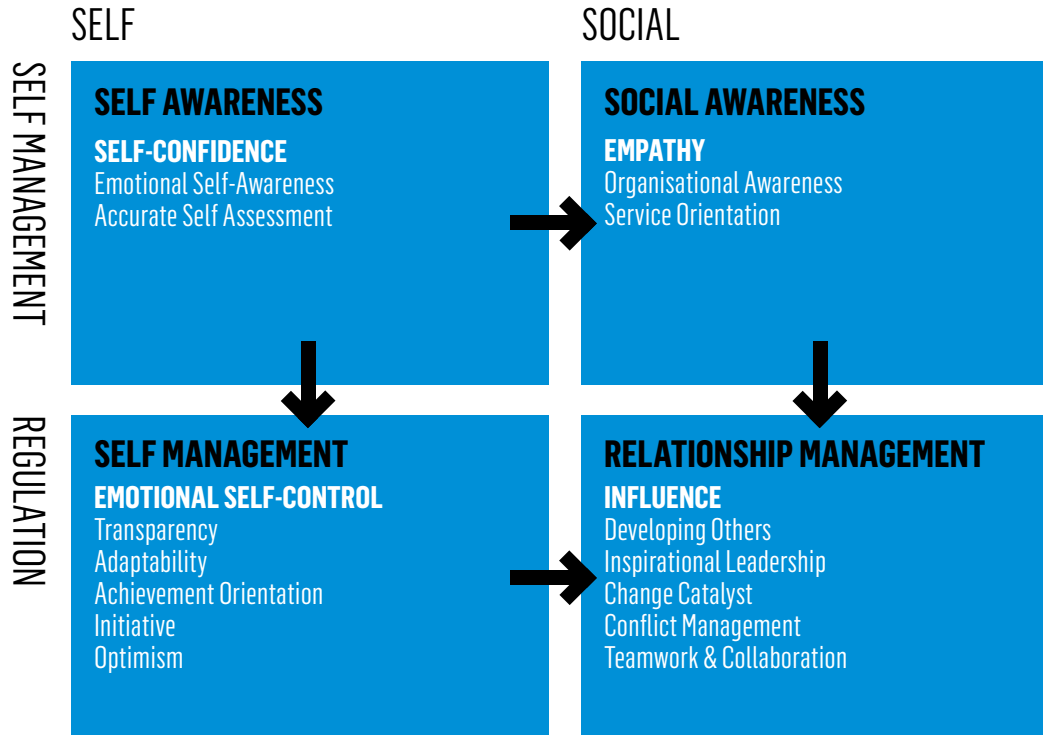
- Developing others
- Inspirational leadership
- Change catalyst
- Influence
- Conflict management
- Teamwork and collaboration

Source: Goleman, D. (2001). 'An EI-Based Theory of Performance' in *The emotionally intelligent workplace*. Chemiss and Goleman (ed.).

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**EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE**

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DEVELOPING SELF

WHAT...

- ...is the situation?
- ...am I trying to achieve?
- ...actions did I take?
- ...was the response of others?
- ...were the consequences?
- ...was good/bad about the experience?

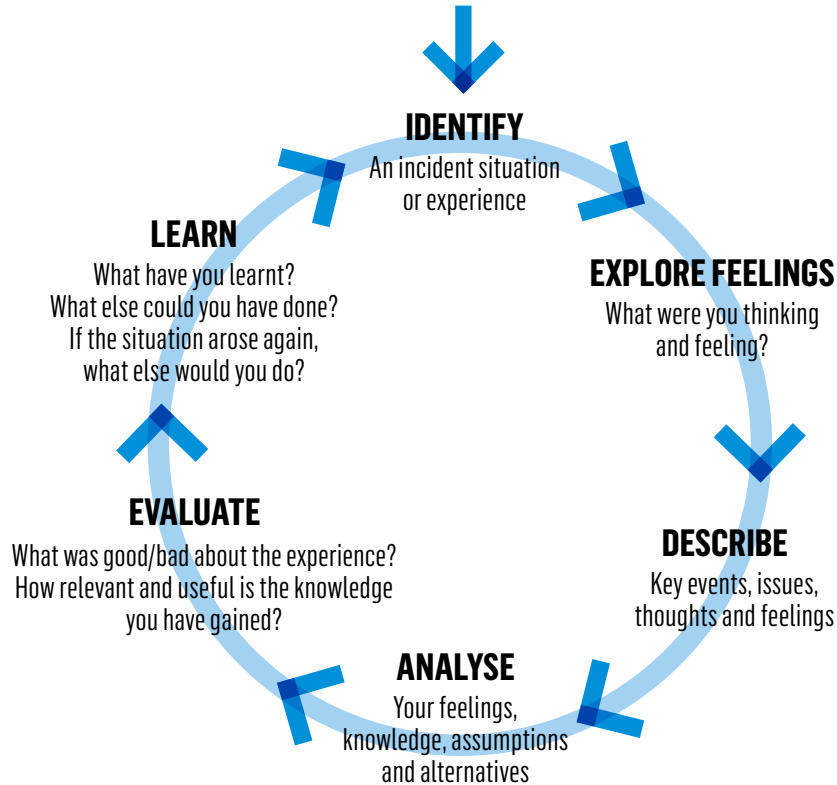
SO WHAT...

- ...does this tell me, teach me?
- ...was I thinking and feeling?
- ...other knowledge can I bring to the situation?
- ...is my understanding of the situation?
- ...did I base my actions on?

NOW WHAT...

- ...do I need to do to improve things?
- ...broader issues need to be considered if this action is to be successful?
- ...might I do differently in the future?
- ...might be the consequences of this action?

from Rolfe et al. (2001)



Reflective Cycle
amended from Gibbs
(1988) and Atkins
and Murphy (1994)

Bloom's taxonomy identifies six levels of learning, each requiring a different kind of thought process.

Applying Bloom's taxonomy involves use of a range of strategies, including questioning, to encourage learners to employ a variety of cognitive processes and improve their ability to learn at deeper levels.

KNOWLEDGE

The learner is challenged to describe or identify, often in terms that answer the question who, what, where or when.

COMPREHENSION

The learner is asked to translate or predict, involving them in selecting facts to describe, compare, contrast or explain something.

APPLICATION

This encourages learners to apply information they have learned to solve a problem or demonstrate a solution, often using terms such as solve, apply, classify or select.

ANALYSIS

The purpose is to help learners to organise information and analyse evidence to support statements. It involves inferential thinking, prediction and explanation, and may involve terms such as why, identify, conclude or determine.

SYNTHESIS

The learner is challenged to develop their creative thinking.

This differs from analysis and application because it allows for a variety of creative answers.

Terms such as plan, predict, compose or propose may be used.

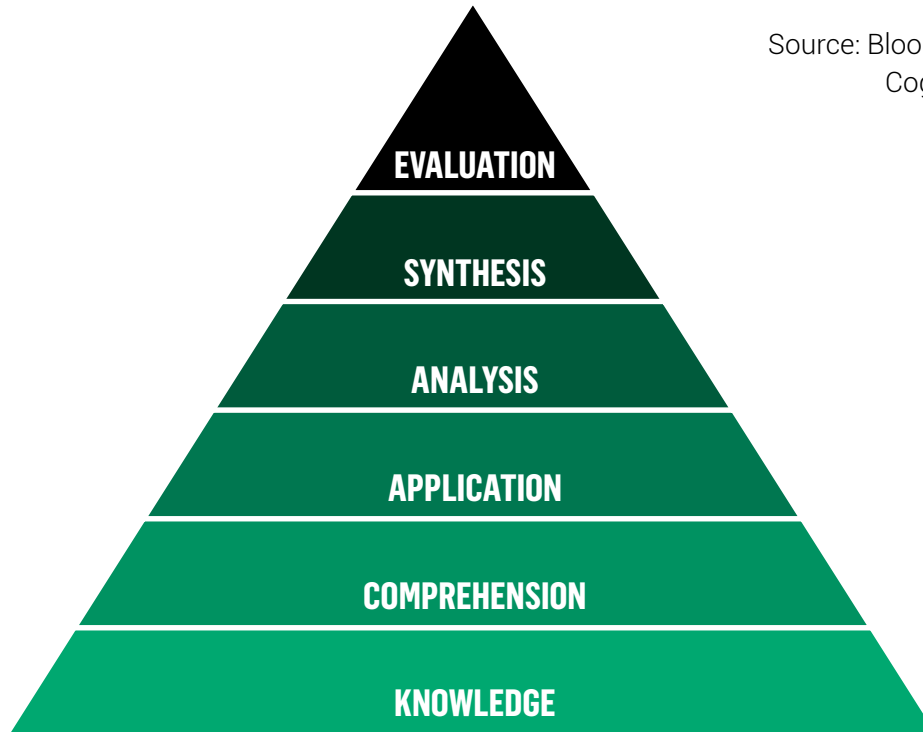
EVALUATION

Learners are asked to make assessments and judgements, using comparisons. This also elicits creative thinking and may involve terms such as judge, decide, assess and justify.

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BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

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Source: Bloom's Taxonomy for the
Cognitive Domain (1956)

DEVELOPING OTHERS

Professor John West Burnham's earlier work focussed on the different modes of learning which explored Shallow, Deep and Profound Learning. His more recent work focusses on the broader question of what makes effective learning.

He identifies that effective learning is most likely to occur when:

- There are high quality social relationships characterised by emotional intelligence, interdependence and high trust.
- The learner lives in an effective community in which there are shared values, high aspirations and security.
- The learner enjoys physical, psychological and emotional well-being underpinned by actions which ensure a healthy and balanced lifestyle.
- The learner understands herself/himself as a learner, i.e. is aware of their distinctive profile as a learner and is able to engage in Deep and Profound Learning activities.

- There is awareness of the need to maximise neurological effectiveness (e.g. attention span and concentration, motivation, emotions, memory, etc.).
- School, community and family focus on the social aspects of learning, e.g. ensuring access to mentoring and working in effective groups.
- There is a strategy to enhance the potential of each person in terms of a model of intelligence which reflects a scientific and humanistic approach rather than social prejudice.

Source: West-Burnham, J. & Coates, M. (2005). 'Personalizing Learning.'

DEVELOPING ADVANCED
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**UNDERSTANDING
LEARNING**

Professor John West Burnham's model describes the characteristics of the different modes of learning. It is not meant to be hierarchical or to reflect academic values. As he himself says, in some contexts shallow learning is entirely appropriate: 'my knowledge of how my car's engine works is shallow; but I hope that the mechanic's is deep if not profound.'

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SHALLOW LEARNING (... WHAT?)

is focused on the memorisation and replication of information and is the basis of teaching and assessment in many education systems.

DEEP LEARNING (... HOW?)

is concerned with the creation of knowledge, which the learner is able to relate to their own experience and use to understand new experiences and contexts. The deep learner is thus able to integrate theory and practice.

PROFOUND LEARNING (... WHY?)

is the way in which we develop personal wisdom and meaning, which allows us to be creative, to make moral judgements, to be an authentic human being who is able to accept responsibility for our own destinies.

Are you trying to **be perfect** or to **please people**? In a **hurry** to finish a task? **Trying hard**? Trying to **be strong**?

- Do you recognise parts of yourself in any of these trait types?
- How do you know that you have these traits?
- Would others agree?
- Which of the traits do you recognise in colleagues?
- How could you adapt the way you work to meet different needs?
- How might this affect your Advanced Practitioner role?

Traits are habits – long-established patterns of behaviour that have built up over time and of which we may be unaware. As you develop as an Advanced Practitioner you will explore some of these behaviours and reflect on those that are helpful when you are coaching others and those that may get in the way.

At a much deeper level you may begin to glimpse an understanding of why we do what we do and begin to understand more about our drivers of behaviour, or our motives.

How can you learn to manage your own traits and work with your colleagues' traits?
For example...

**TRYING TO
PLEASE PEOPLE?**

Learn basic assertiveness techniques, avoid accepting unrealistic requests and unimportant tasks and say 'No' skilfully.

If you are working with someone else who is trying to please, praise them for who they are rather than what they do.

A HURRY UP?

Plan work in stages and set interim target dates to give satisfaction and avoid rushing to completion.

If you are working with a hurry up praise them for taking time, and not for their speed or ability to do several things at once.

**TRYING TO BE
STRONG?**

Monitor your workload so that you do not take on too much work.

If you are working with someone else who is being strong praise them for consideration because they are often taken for granted.

**TRYING TO BE
PERFECT?**

You may need to learn to set realistic standards of performance and accuracy.

If you are working with someone else trying to be perfect do not discount their worries.

A TRY HARD?

Be willing to distinguish between the things you can change and those you cannot.

Avoid competing with a try hard.

The objective of an action learning set is to help a person achieve deeper understanding of a problem or issue and help them to see it differently so that they can find their own solutions.

As a member of an action learning set you should:

- listen openly and without prejudice
- give help, advice and assistance
- question positively to increase understanding
- support each other
- challenge the problem owner
- generate options for action.

'There is no action without learning and no learning without action' Reg Revans

KEY POINTS

- Issues need to be current.
- The owner of the problem must want to act to resolve it.
- Each member is helped by others to review in a way that allows new insights to develop and from which new ideas about solutions emerge.
- The process works from problems rather than puzzles.
- Listening and questioning by the group are focused on better understanding and insights, and on supporting the owner of the problem, rather than on solving the problem for them.
- The process supports different levels of learning about:
 - the problem
 - oneself
 - the process of learning.

HOW TO ORGANISE AN ACTION LEARNING SET

The protocol must be clearly established with the whole group before the set moves off into its own space. Group size can vary but all members must have equal 'airtime'.

Source: Revan, R. (2011). 'ABC of Action Learning.'

'I am part of the problem and the problem is part of me' Reg Revans

GROUND RULES

- Divide the available time equally among the set members.
- Ask the set to appoint a timekeeper or chair/facilitator to ensure that the set is managed fairly and as agreed.
- Start with a round robin – each person to have two minutes to say what they hope to get out of the session.
- Each person should use their airtime to explore a real and current issue.
- The person presents the problem and makes clear how much help they want and what sort of help.
- The group asks questions to help the person gain a different view of their problem.
- Close with a summary of learning. This is another round robin where each member has a further two minutes to reflect on their learning from the session, determine any key issues and review the process.

FACILITATING GROUP DISCUSSION

The role of a good facilitator should be based on the first three letters of that old phrase: 'IF A job is worth doing, it's worth doing well' ...

I = initiate get the discussion going

F = facilitate keep it going, make sure everyone has their say ... and all the other things on the list opposite

A = adjudicate there may be times when someone has to decide what the next step in the process is going to be, if, for example, people have lost focus or have been diverted from the main goal.

There are many different strategies for facilitating group discussion and information sharing using different sizes of groups, approaches and a variety of structures but they all share the same ground rules. See overleaf for two examples of approaches you could use.

GROUND RULES

Everyone should:

- be actively encouraged to contribute
- offer opinions and ideas
- provide reasons for their opinions and ideas
- share all relevant information
- feel free to disagree if they have a good reason
- ask other people for information and reasons
- treat other people's ideas with respect
- try to come to an agreement
and ...
- change their minds if they are persuaded by good reasoning.

SNOWBALL

An individual thinks about an issue then joins with one other person to find a statement both can agree with. (The statements should ideally be short – maximum 20 words.)

The pairs then double up to fours to continue the process, then into groups of eight.

Finally, the whole group draws together and spokespersons for each group of eight feed back ideas.

JIGSAW

The trainer divides the cohort into small groups consisting of four or six members. Each member individually studies different content related to the same topic. For example, if there are six members, they study six different areas of the topic (1-6). This group is known as the 'home' group.

Each 'home' group is then re-arranged into 'expert' groups, so each expert group is focusing on one topic only. Expert members take turns to discuss their key ideas, deepening their knowledge of the topic.

The 'home' group then re-forms and each member shares the information they have explored in depth so that all the pieces of the jigsaw fit together (1-6). The crucial element is ensuring that participants must draw on the combined 'wisdom' of the home group to complete the task successfully.

Appreciative Inquiry (developed by David Cooperrider in the mid-eighties) is a way of looking at organisational development and improvement which focuses on identifying and doing more of what is already working, rather than looking for problems and trying to fix them. It makes rapid change possible by focusing on the core strengths of an individual and/or team and then uses those strengths to reshape the future.

It is a participative learning process to share best practice. It is also a way of managing and working that encourages trust, reduces defensiveness and suspicion, and helps to establish strong working relationships quickly.

The appreciative eye apprehends 'what is' rather than 'what is not'

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

- The act of asking questions of an organisation, or group influences the group in some way.
- In everybody's organisation or group, something works.
- A positive approach helps to take things forward.
- It is important to set out a positive reality.
- People have more confidence to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
- If we carry forward parts of the past, they should be what is best about the past.
- It is important to value differences.
- The language we use when we talk about things creates our reality.

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APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative inquiry is a positive approach to focusing on things that go well to find solutions to problems. It can form the foundation for future development because it is appreciative, applicable, provocative (not everyone likes to focus on the positives) and, with any luck, collaborative.

Appreciative inquiry can help you to understand and describe your organisation when it is working at its best. You can then identify the gap between your ideal and your reality, and start to look for and develop potential solutions.

Source: Cooperrider, DL. et.al. (2008). 'The Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: For Leaders of Change.'

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SOME SIMPLE PROTOCOLS

- Focus on the positives – what is going well.
- Make it relevant and useful.
- Challenge existing thinking.
- Work collaboratively to develop ideas and thinking.
- Build on the positives identified – having identified what is working well think about how you can extend this.

TRY THESE QUESTIONS

- What has worked well previously?
- What is going well now?
- How and why is it going well?
- What would I like to do more of?
- What will the 'improved future' be like?

This protocol is based around the principles of awareness and responsibility.

Ideally a think piece should be used with published articles, research papers, extracts and summaries. It asks participants to re-structure their learning to create deeper understanding.

Good practice dictates that the piece should be provided to participants beforehand to support those who read or process text in different ways.

THERE ARE FOUR STAGES:

Stage 1 **preparation and set up**

Stage 2 **group activity**

Stage 3 **the learning exchange**

Stage 4 **learning**

STAGE 1 PREPARATION AND SET UP

A group of 3–5 people can undertake this protocol. Larger groups should be divided into smaller groups. Alternatively it could just be used by the Advanced Practitioner to support individuals and/or teams.

One person acts as a facilitator whose function is to ensure the protocols are followed – keeping to time, ensuring equity and keeping to task.

Choose a written piece that is relevant to the topic. There is a balance to be struck between long and difficult and short and light pieces – practice makes perfect here.

Divide the written piece into equal sections – three sections with three people works well. Explain that they are reading for understanding and to explain their section to others in the group.

STAGE 2 GROUP ACTIVITY

Each person is given equal time to speak about what they have read – five minutes maximum. The others remain silent and listen carefully. The listeners may wish to take notes, jot down questions to ask later or add their own reflections. This is a crucial part of the protocol.

At the end of each person's reflection and explanation the others can ask for questions for clarification. This is to establish understanding of the whole piece.

STAGE 3 THE LEARNING EXCHANGE

When all the group members have had their say, the facilitator opens up the group to further reflections that have emerged. The purpose here is to establish:

- the meaning of the piece
- any issues that emerge from the piece
- any implications for practice
- actions that may have been suggested.

A fixed amount of time up to a maximum of 10 minutes is recommended here.

STAGE 4 LEARNING

Finally, each participant reviews the process of learning by sharing their personal experience. This is a valuable source of information and helps to embed the learning.

The roundtable approach is a non-prescriptive way for you to build support and sponsorship for your work as an Advanced Practitioner throughout your organisation. It:

- combines a practical and strategic approach
- aids informed decision-making
- can support and influence your strategic goals
- allows the exchange of views, perspectives and knowledge among academic and support staff
- encourages empowerment and ownership to its members.

Before setting up a roundtable, you need to consider:

- how it will be managed and maintained
- what are realistic expectations
- the time commitment of key individuals
- how it can complement and support existing structures and not be seen as a threat.

You may wish to include colleagues from the following areas:

- senior management
- curriculum staff and managers
- e-learning
- administration and systems
- management information systems (MIS)
- human resources
- technical support
- learning resources
- CPD / ITT staff
- cross-curriculum co-ordinators.

It is crucial to the success of your roundtable that you have a senior management representative to champion your work as an Advanced Practitioner.

STEP 1

WHO SHOULD SIT AT YOUR ROUNDTABLE?

Consider:

- Who should join the roundtable (by role within the organisation)?
- What can they offer?

STEP 2

BUILDING EFFECTIVE STRUCTURES

Now that you have established who should join your roundtable, look at your current communication structures and see what improvements can be made.

- Draw a rough diagram showing the current flow of information relating to your role as an Advanced Practitioner within your organisation, between technical staff, curriculum / support staff and management.
- Using this diagram, try to identify any gaps or inefficiencies in this flow.
- If you identify any gaps or inefficiencies, try to work out methods of resolving the problems.
- Identify three things you would like the roundtable to have achieved within three months, six months and one year.

This exercise (in this context) is designed to help you make links between the various models used on the Professional Development Programme for Advanced Practitioners, such as GROW, Iceberg, emotional intelligence, Joyce and Showers and Boyatzis, as well as tools and approaches such as appreciative inquiry and triads.

The Happy Families protocol is designed to encourage equality of voice and ensure contributions from everyone. When you follow the approach exactly, everyone else should be listening as the contributing member of the group explains why this contribution matches the one already on the table. In this way, no one should dominate the discussion, everyone is listened to, all ideas can be brought to the table and learning is enriched.

WORKING IN GROUPS

Six would be the ideal number in the group.

Step 1 (5 minutes)

Reflect individually on any links you might make between models. Record each link on a separate slip of paper. Make as many links as you can.

Step 2 (20 minutes)

Share your links with the rest of the group, using the following protocol.

- Identify someone to start (person A) by placing a slip of paper on the table and explaining the link they are making.

Continued overleaf

- Going clockwise and keeping in turn, if the next person has the same link, then he/she can add it, and so on until all have had the opportunity to add to that link. As you seek to add your link, it is important to say why you think it is similar – as this helps to build meaning and understanding. (If you do not have a similar link, you say 'pass'.)
- When the circle has been completed, the person to the left of person A introduces a new link, and the process begins again until all the links have been placed on the table.

If any individual links remain at the end, the group may be able to agree where they might best fit with another link, or they may stay separate as singletons

Step 3 (10 minutes)

Take each pile in turn. Agree together why, as Advanced Practitioners, you think it is important to make this link.

This is a useful variation of action learning that develops questioning, facilitation and coaching skills and provides a powerful experience of learning from small pieces of information.

It is best conducted in groups of three or four people so that everyone can be a questioner and be questioned. It can, however, also be conducted in pairs. The process is managed using a clear set of protocols, as follows.

- The questioner is the initiator and controls the agenda but with the objective of helping the person being questioned to gain deeper understanding and insight into their own issue, problem or event.
- The questioner invites the questioned to share their story through careful, sensitive and insightful probing and supportive challenge. This should help the person being questioned to dig deeper to make meaning, gain more understanding and give consistency and coherence to their experience in relation to what they already know about themselves.

Continued overleaf

- The process ends with the person being questioned sharing reflections on their learning and the group sharing the learning relating to the development of questioning skills and the power of the methodology.
- This is not solution focused but uses the skills of questioning and answering to improve understanding – leading to better solution generation.

The aim is to use questioning and discussion to raise your awareness of how you might move forward and to facilitate wider impact of the Advanced Practitioner role in your organisation.

TRY THESE QUESTIONS

You may find it useful to think about what you are trying to achieve and focus on the following questions:

- What has been successful so far?
- What does success look like?
- Where am I now? What is my next step to develop this even further? What would I have to do to make an incremental improvement?
- Who could work with me to help that happen?
- How does this inform my thinking and future actions?

One of the key skills of an Advanced Practitioner is the ability to coach. Working in Triads is an effective way for you to practise listening, facilitation and coaching behaviours. It can improve your mentoring and coaching skills and boost your confidence.

You work in groups of three (triads) and take it in turns to adopt each of these roles:

- coach
- coachee
- observer (to give feedback to the coach on an aspect they want to develop, eg listening, questioning, use of GROW, empathy, self control ...).

Each coachee/mentee chooses a topic which is relevant to their professional life. Times needs to be allocated for this – it should be as real as possible. The coach should use questioning techniques to develop the session, probe the coachee and help to move them forward and come to some conclusions.

The observer feeds back to the coach only. They should listen and make notes on what the coach wants feedback on. When giving feedback the observer should be descriptive, specific, non-judgemental and refer to things that could be changed and improved. Practising descriptive rather than judgemental feedback is crucial as it mirrors the approach that Advanced Practitioners will take when engaging in professional dialogue with colleagues about peer observations.

HOW TO STRUCTURE A TRIAD

Consider the positioning of the triad. Sit in a triangle on chairs away from a table where the observer is slightly removed.

SUGGESTED TIMINGS

- 15 minutes when the coachee/mentee is reflecting and the coach/mentor is questioning and supporting the other's learning.
- 5 minutes reflection by the coach/mentor and coachee/mentee around the questions:
 - 'How was it for me?'
 - 'What did I learn about coaching/mentoring?'
- During this time the observer prepares some feedback about the process.
- 5 minutes for feedback from the observer to the coach.

Repeat the above 25-minute slot three times so that each person takes a turn at each role.

Teaching Squares provide a form of peer support, coaching/ mentoring and development. A Square consists of four teaching colleagues who:

- visit at least one session taught by each Square partner
- reflect on their observation experience
- share reflections with their Square partners
- share their experiences as a group and reflect on the overall experience.

Those involved can be from the same curriculum area or from different areas. Visiting a colleague from a different area can provide a richer experience but might be more difficult to organise.

Teaching Squares provide a safe and mutually supportive environment for you to:

- observe, reflect on and celebrate good teaching and learning
- increase your understanding and appreciation of the work of colleagues
- gather ideas for developing your teaching and learning 'repertoire'
- formulate a plan for trying out and developing new approaches.

The focus is on learning from observing, not on giving feedback.

PLANNING YOUR TEACHING SQUARE

Each Square can set its own ground rules and procedures but you may want to consider:

- how much notice you give of a visit
- the role of the visiting teacher
- what information is useful in advance of the visit
- how long the visit should last
- when each pair should share their reflections on the visit
- all Squares share – where the whole group reflects on the experience.

Some participants find that the Squares work best when paperwork is kept to a minimum but it is useful to make informal notes as a prompt for reflection and sharing. It takes several weeks to complete a Teaching Square so some planning is needed.

WEEK	ACTIVITY
Week 1 All Squares kick-off	Meet as group, agree Square partners, ground rules and arrangements for visits.
Week 2 Visit 1 Week 3 Visit 2 Week 4 Visit 3	Organise materials and information needed, carry out visit, note observations and reflections.
Week 5 Reflection and Square share	Review your notes and share positive reflections with Square partner.
Week 6 All Squares review and celebration	All four participants review and share their experience.

Some suggested prompts are given opposite.

Your group may prefer Square partners to share reflections immediately or soon after the visit if this can be timetabled.

SUGGESTED PROMPTS FOR ALL SQUARES REVIEW SESSION

- What did you observe that you might use to make your teaching more effective?
- What have you tried out as a result of your visit(s) and how did your learners respond?
- How did the experience give you a greater appreciation of:
 - your learners?
 - your colleagues?
- What specific things did you like about the Teaching Squares experience?
- Why?
- How could we improve the process?

VARIATIONS

Some teams have adapted the approach to form Teaching Triangles. This can help resolve logistical problems but reduces the range of observations.

REFERENCES

Further details of Teaching Squares can be found at: <http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/140801-little-acorns-taking-root-en.pdf>

DEVELOPING ADVANCED
PRACTITIONERS

SOLUTIONS-FOCUSED COACHING

ORIGINATING FROM A THERAPY-BASED APPLICATION DEvised BY STEVE DE SHAZER AND INSOO KIM BERG, SOLUTIONS-FOCUSED COACHING:

- sees problems as creating the path to the solution - there is no need to analyse the problem and investigate causes, just focus on the solution
- focuses on possible solutions that are hidden inside the problems
- involves asking useful questions to solve the problem rather than offering predetermined solutions
- seeks to 'free' the coachee from negative thought systems and beliefs
- achieves a more rapid generation of solutions and therefore success
- provides the coachee with the tools to adopt solutions-focused thinking to problem solving so that the coachee eventually takes ownership of reaching the solution and can adopt this same approach for future problem solving.

Source: McKergow, M. & Jackson, P.Z. (2006). 'The Solutions Focus: Making Coaching and Change Simple.'

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RATIONALE FOR SOLUTIONS-FOCUSED COACHING

- Non-directive, solutions-focused approach (de Shazer and Berg).
- Doing something different with a desire for a positive approach.
- Synergy between coaching and leadership styles.
- Structured set of principles and tools: OSKAR (*see overleaf*).

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**OSKAR COACHING
MODEL**

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The OSKAR coaching model creates the conditions for building a solution-focused mindset. OSKAR stands for:

OUTCOMES

Jointly define the coaching outcome – what does the perfect future look like?

What is happening and what are you doing?

SCALING

On a scale of 1–10 where are you now and what will it take to move up the scale?

KNOW-HOW

What relevant knowledge, resources, skills and attributes can you draw on? Who else can you involve?

AFFIRM AND ACTION

Compliment skills and resources, note the know-how – 'Fantastic. You know a lot more about this than you thought.

'That is a brilliant idea' – decide next small steps – 'So what steps will you take and what resources will you need?'

REVIEW

What is better?

What has helped?

What is next?

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PRACTITIONERS

**THINKING
ENVIRONMENT**

According to Thinking Environment founder, Nancy Kline, the quality of all that we do depends on the quality of the thinking we do first. The Thinking Environment takes the form of ten applications, each of which is facilitated in the presence of ten practice principles, or components (see overleaf).

When each of the components are in place and are supported and endorsed by those involved the Thinking Environment is created. Space is provided for individuals to be listened to with respect and genuine interest and to speak without interruption, so they can generate their own finest thinking.

The Thinking Environment can be used by Advanced Practitioners in a range of situations (see applications on the right) including one-to-one coaching sessions as well as with pairs or groups of colleagues.

For more information read:

Kline, N. (2009). 'More time to think: a way of being in the world.'

Burley-in-Wharfedale: Fisher King.

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THINKING ENVIRONMENT APPLICATIONS

FOR INDIVIDUALS: Thinking Partnership (coaching and peer-coaching), mentoring, interviews, tutorials

FOR PAIRS: Thinking Pairs, timed talk, dialogue

FOR GROUPS: Time to Think Council, The Diversity Process, presentations, Thinking Rounds

TEN COMPONENTS OF A THINKING ENVIRONMENT

Nancy Kline has identified ten principles that when in place free participants to think for themselves. These have become known as the 'Ten Components of a Thinking Environment' and are explored in more detail below.

As a Thinking Environment coach I will:

1. APPRECIATION

...offer a genuine acknowledgement of your qualities, practising an appropriate ratio of appreciation to challenge.

2. ATTENTION

...listen to you with respect, interest and without interruption.

3. DIVERSITY

...welcome divergent thinking and diverse group identities.

4. EASE

...be comfortable with the pace that you choose to set, will welcome silence and will not rush you.

5. ENCOURAGEMENT

...encourage you to go as far as you want to go with your thinking.

6. EQUALITY

...assume that you and I are equal as thinkers.

7. FEELINGS

...give you space to show your feelings and time to resume your thinking afterwards to find new solutions.

8. INCISIVE QUESTIONS

...ask you the questions that will enable your thinking to break free and that will encourage you to be brave and remove limiting assumptions.

9. INFORMATION

...encourage you to supply the facts when you are ready, formulating questions that will help you to dismantle denial.

10. PLACE

...create a physical environment that clearly says, "You matter."

Based on research conducted by the Institute of Employment Studies (See Tyler et al (2017) Understanding the role of Advanced Practitioners) we have created six role descriptors and seven values that underpin the work of effective Advanced Practitioners.

You can use these functions to evaluate your current role and to set targets for extending your reach and impact.

THE SIX FUNCTIONS OF THE AP ROLE

1. One-to-one support for the wider teaching workforce
2. Leading and facilitating professional development and quality improvement
3. Coaching and mentoring for colleagues experiencing challenges in their practice
4. Inductions and support of new staff
5. Supporting internally and externally set strategic objectives
6. Ensuring currency and effectiveness in the AP role and as a teaching practitioner, making good use of evidence-based approaches and peer-to-peer collaboration

(Adapted from — Tyler et al. Institute for Employment Studies (2017). Understanding the role of Advanced Practitioners. Education and Training Foundation)

The values listed below were found by the Institute of Employment Studies to underpin effective AP practice and to drive quality improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.

Some of these values may appear challenging in relation to the current practical and cultural 'fit' of the Advanced Practitioner role within your organisation. You can use them to begin important conversations with managers and senior leaders about the longer-term vision of your work and to set an agenda for development.

THE SEVEN VALUES OF THE AP ROLE

Advanced Practitioners value:

1. Developing others in non-judgemental ways
2. The interpersonal skills necessary for effective peer support
3. Linking individual development and organisational strategy
4. Evidence-based approaches and what works best 'in practice'
5. Support for all staff (not just those 'requiring improvement')
6. Observations that are not graded or linked to performance management
7. Effective use of mobile and digital technologies to support the AP role

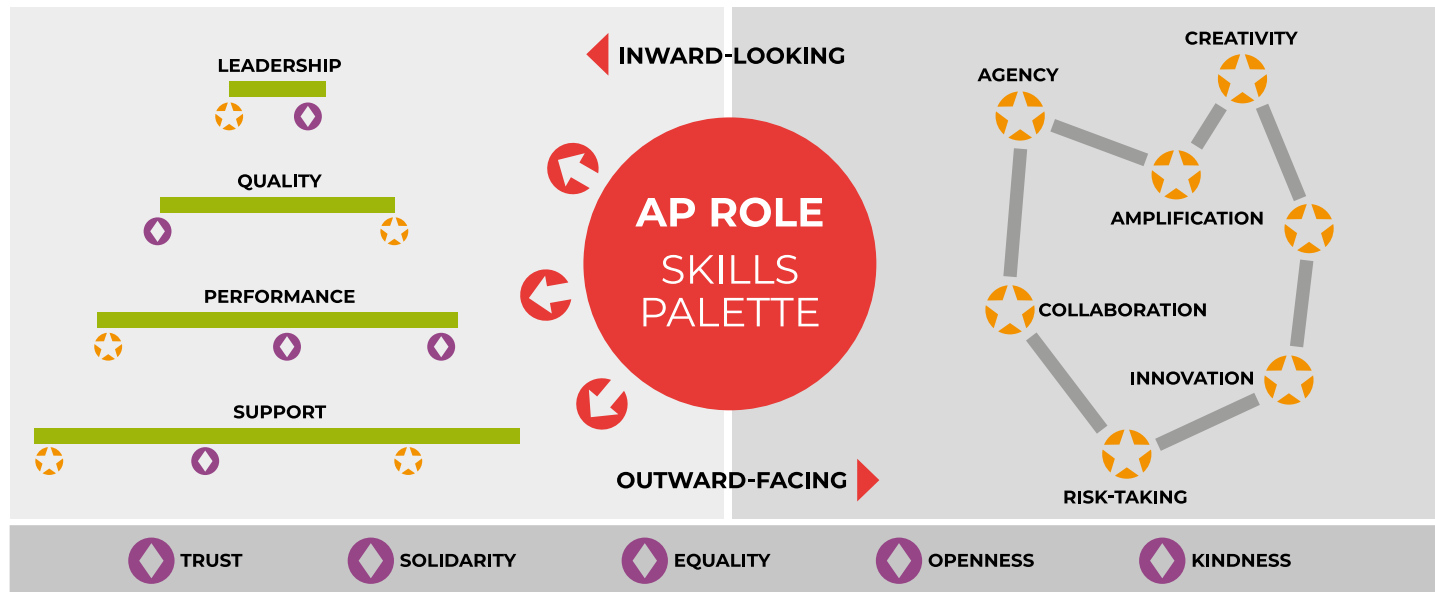
(Adapted from — Tyler et al. Institute for Employment Studies (2017). Understanding the role of Advanced Practitioners. Education and Training Foundation)

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

ADVANCED PRACTITIONER MODEL

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IMPULSES PRACTICES VALUES



Full Reference: touchconsulting (2021). Re-thinking the role of the Advanced Practitioner: AP Connect: Year 3 Evaluation Strand Final Report (2020-2021). Burton-on-Trent: touchconsulting Ltd, on behalf of the Education and Training Foundation. at <https://touchconsulting.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/AP-Connect-Y3-Evaluation-Report-Final.pdf>

PAN-ORGANISATIONAL

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

ADVANCED PRACTITIONER MODEL

The advanced practitioner model, originating from recent research (2021), shows the hybrid nature of the Advanced Practitioner role, as the AP moves between (outward-facing) communities of practice that inspire them to illuminate the work of their home organisation (inward-facing). Their skills palette builds from this insider/outsider perspective.

'Impulses' represent instinctive and authentic reflections of the increased agency felt by APs in their roles. In some cases this led to redevelopment of policies, or approaches to mentoring and coaching; in others, they led to cross-institutional collaborations to inform professional development.

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'Practices' promote collaboration and the positioning of APs as partners within their organisations, rather than as agents of quality improvement. To build this supportive culture, APs need to be rooted to a set of 'values' which not only support collaboration, but also innovation and risk-taking. The values on the diagram are those agreed by the APs who were part of the co-evaluation research.

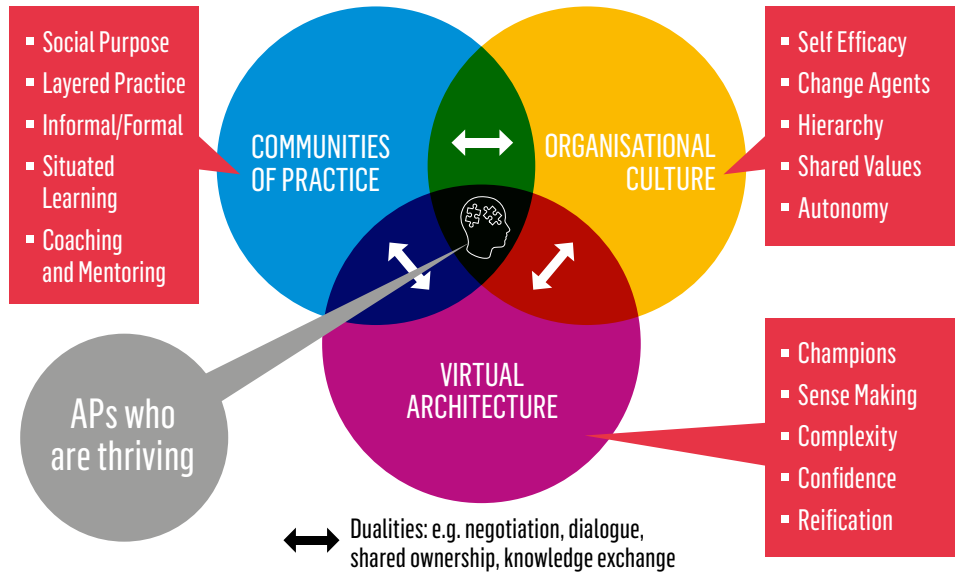
The co-evaluation revealed that APs' capacity to support change may be limited by the architectures they work within, which may be governed by an outcomes-orientated set of priorities which leave little room for flexibility (as illustrated by the 'tree-like' formation representing hierarchical organisational rigidity).

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

CONDITIONS THAT INFLUENCE APs: THRIVING OR SURVIVING

In 2021 touchconsulting Ltd was commissioned by the Education and Training Foundation to undertake research into the influence of the pandemic into how APs work and how they supported others. A model emerged that complemented findings of the co-evaluation research: Re-thinking the role of the Advanced Practitioner: AP Connect: Year 3 Evaluation Strand Final Report (2020-2021).

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CONDITIONS THAT INFLUENCE APs: THRIVING OR SURVIVING

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COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

A strong sense of shared purpose emerged from the research alongside the notion of layered dimensions of practice at the heart of the AP role. Thriving was enhanced through APs being seen as authentic teachers and also carrying sophisticated coaching and mentoring skills.

DUALITIES

Reflected the interplay between outside to inside trajectories and between the different organisational spaces where knowledge-exchange was enhanced. Examples included negotiation of practice, collective sense making, dialogue and shared ownership of the issues created by the pandemic.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Having to operate in a largely virtual world during the pandemic, strongly illuminated the middle space that APs occupy in their organisations. Their positioning on a surviving-thriving continuum may be influenced by tensions between their learning about practice in the external communities of practice and APs' experiences when attempting to bring this learning into their own organisation.

VIRTUAL ARCHITECTURES

APs were engaging with a very wide range of virtual platforms during the pandemic which was further enhanced through champions skilfully constructing virtual spaces using tools that quickly became transparent in exposing rich dialogue and debate. The tools became enablers that allowed AP interactions to be amplified and enriched rather than barriers to conversations.

touchconsulting (2022). Advanced Practitioners during COVID (2021). London. Education and Training Foundation <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ETF-AP-Thriving-Research-Report-31.01.22.pdf>

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

MODELS OF AP DEPLOYMENT

The underpinning research for the original #APConnect programme suggested three models of advanced practice: deficit, developmental and universal. Subsequent research by and with APs broadened their lived practice experience into a fourth model: pan-organisational, which reflects the emerging lived practice of APs, as it acknowledges their role in contributing to and benefiting from the professional learning tapestry of the wider FE sector.

Source 1: Tyler et al (2017) Understanding the Role of Advanced Practitioners in English Further Education

Source 2: touchconsulting (2022). Re-thinking the role of the Advanced Practitioner. AP Connect: Year 3 Evaluation Strand Final Report (2020-2021)

MODELS AFFECTING POSITIONING OF ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS (APs) WITHIN ORGANISATIONS

Deficit

- APs deployed by managers
- AP role linked to capability
- AP resources focus on teachers that require improvement

Developmental

- Access to AP initiated by teachers
- Peer-to-peer
- Non-judgmental approach

Universal

- APs accessible to all
- Capability still features within a capacity building approach
- Strong emphasis on coaching

Pan-Organisational

- APs work in teams and constellations
- Individuals are active in external constellations
- Strong emphasis on capacity building via professional learning
- Coaching is universal

DEVELOPING ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS

MODELS OF AP DEPLOYMENT

DEFICIT

Focuses on improving the provider's grade profile. AP resources are specifically targeted on teachers that have received 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' through performance management measures. This model emphasises the requirement to make improvements to professional practice. The research (2017) highlighted when AP-type roles are linked to performance management, or are focused on those individuals who have not met organisational standards, the AP role fails to have positive benefits.

DEVELOPMENTAL

APs support and develop all staff through peer-to-peer coaching, developmental (non-judgemental) observations and professional discussions. The research found this relationship is likely to be practitioner initiated, not linked to performance management processes, or part of any mandatory support structures. When AP-type roles are linked to this model, staff tend to have positive perceptions of the role.

UNIVERSAL

Supports staff that require improvement to achieve the level of quality desired by the organisation, as well as support and develop all other teaching staff to move from good to outstanding through peer-to-peer coaching. The emphasis is on support and enhancement rather than capability, which helps the role to be viewed as developmental rather than disciplinary. Perceptions are largely positive where the role is seen to be supportive and valuable when it is made available to all staff. However some tensions are evident, given the model is still linked to mandatory support structures.

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PAN-ORGANISATIONAL

APs work strategically as teams, in vocational areas but organised from the centre, to ensure cross-cutting priorities (e.g. maths, English, digital) maintain a consistent quality focus. Following individual strengths, APs participate in external constellations, supporting steady flows of research & practice evidence in and out of the organisation. APs have influence and their potential energy is often the driving force behind new initiatives whilst supporting individual staff improvement through coaching, professional development and research internally and externally.

PAN-ORGANISATIONAL