

Coaching Question Cards for Managers

15 original questions for each GROW stage: Goal, Reality, Options and Will. Pick one prompt at a time; listen, pause and follow the person's answer. GROW is a conversation structure, not a script.

GOAL • 15 QUESTIONS

Agree the outcome the person wants from this conversation.

1. What would make this conversation useful for you?

When to use: At the start of a one-to-one.

2. What outcome are you hoping for?

When to use: When the request is broad.

3. What would good look like in practice?

When to use: To turn an ambition into observable change.

4. Which part of this matters most to you?

When to use: When several goals compete.

5. What would you like to be different by next month?

When to use: For a near-term development goal.

6. How will you know you have made progress?

When to use: To define a useful signal.

7. What is within your influence here?

When to use: When the goal depends on others.

8. What would success mean for the people affected?

When to use: To include stakeholders.

9. If this went well, what would you notice first?

When to use: To make success concrete.

10. What is the smallest worthwhile outcome?

When to use: When the goal feels overwhelming.

11. Why does this matter now?

When to use: To establish urgency without pressure.

12. What do you want to learn, as well as achieve?

When to use: In a development conversation.

13. What would you like to leave with today?

When to use: To scope a short check-in.

14. How does this fit your wider priorities?

When to use: To test alignment.

15. Which goal would you choose if we could work on only one?

When to use: To focus the conversation.

REALITY · 15 QUESTIONS

Understand what is actually happening before trying to solve it.

1. What is happening at the moment? When to use: To establish the facts.	2. What have you already tried? When to use: To avoid repeating an unsuccessful step.	3. What worked, even a little? When to use: To identify useful evidence.
4. What has been harder than you expected? When to use: To surface a hidden obstacle.	5. What feedback have you heard from others? When to use: To widen the perspective.	6. What are you assuming is true? When to use: To examine an untested belief.
7. Which parts are facts, and which are interpretations? When to use: When emotions are running high.	8. When does this problem not occur? When to use: To find exceptions.	9. Who else is affected, and how? When to use: For a team issue.
10. What is taking most of your energy? When to use: In a wellbeing check-in.	11. What is currently helping you? When to use: To locate existing support.	12. Where do you get stuck in the process? When to use: To locate a workflow bottleneck.
13. What did you check before trusting the AI output? When to use: When reviewing AI-assisted work.	14. What might someone else say is happening? When to use: To invite another viewpoint.	15. What is the cost of leaving things as they are? When to use: To assess the status quo.

OPTIONS · 15 QUESTIONS

Explore alternatives without rushing to the manager's answer.

1. What could you try first?

When to use: To begin generating choices.

2. What else might work?

When to use: After the obvious answer.

3. If time were less constrained, what would you do?

When to use: To expand possibilities.

4. What could you do with the resources you already have?

When to use: When capacity is tight.

5. Who could help you think this through?

When to use: To identify support.

6. What would you advise a colleague in this situation?

When to use: To create distance from the problem.

7. What is a low-risk experiment you could run?

When to use: When uncertainty is high.

8. What could you stop doing to make space?

When to use: When the diary is full.

9. How might you approach this conversation differently?

When to use: For a difficult conversation.

10. What would happen if you asked the team?

When to use: When shared ownership is needed.

11. What can be simplified?

When to use: When a plan has become complex.

12. What would a partial solution look like?

When to use: When an ideal answer is unavailable.

13. Which option protects quality as well as speed?

When to use: When considering AI-assisted work.

14. What trade-off comes with each option?

When to use: To compare alternatives honestly.

15. Which possibility have you not considered yet?

When to use: To challenge a narrow shortlist.

WILL · 15 QUESTIONS

Turn insight into a realistic next step and follow-up.

1. Which option will you take forward?

When to use: To move from exploration to choice.

2. What is your first specific step?

When to use: To make the commitment actionable.

3. When will you take that step?

When to use: To set a time.

4. What will you say or do first?

When to use: Before a challenging conversation.

5. What might get in your way?

When to use: To anticipate obstacles.

6. What will you do if that happens?

When to use: To plan a response to a blocker.

7. Who needs to know about your plan?

When to use: When others depend on the action.

8. What support do you want from me?

When to use: To clarify the manager's role.

9. What will you measure or notice?

When to use: To track progress.

10. How confident are you that you will do this?

When to use: To test whether the plan is realistic.

11. What would raise your confidence?

When to use: If commitment feels tentative.

12. What will you decide if the first attempt fails?

When to use: To keep learning in view.

13. When should we check in again?

When to use: To agree follow-up.

14. What are you committing to in your own words?

When to use: To confirm ownership.

15. What is one thing you are taking from this conversation?

When to use: To close the session.

Adapt wording to the person and situation. If someone needs urgent practical support, give it rather than insisting on a coaching question.