

Program Name: Peer Coaching

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**Program Evaluation Template** - This template is to be used as an evaluation tool during our program investigation. The questions are designed to assist in determining what elements of each program we want to consider for incorporation into our programs. Feel free to add additional notes as you use the template. This template is the foundation for your presentation about the program you have researched. (Version #4)

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**Program or Concept Purpose or Mission Statement:**

Peer coaching is a confidential process through which two or more colleagues work together to reflect on current practices, habits, or behaviors; expand, refine, and build new skills; share new ideas; teach one another; conduct research; or solve problems together. In a coaching pair, one individual takes on the role of "coach" and the other the role of "coachee". The roles may be reversed within the pair to offer mutually beneficial support. Built around a cycle of pre-conference, data collection (or practice/implementation), and post-conferencing, peer coaching builds reflective skills aimed at improvement, skill building, and achievement of goals.

**Principles or Values:** (implicit or expressed)

Peer coaching is **not** intended as a remedial activity or strategy to "fix" people. Peer coaching offers a way to increase feedback and encourage risk-taking to try out new ideas and different approaches in life. Non-hierarchical in nature, peer coaching draws on the wisdom, communication, and listening skills of the coach to elicit reflection, goal setting, and action planning on the part of the coachee. Peer coaching reduces feelings of isolation and/or alienation by opening communication between persons who may be sharing a common vocation, responsibility, time of life, or goal.

**Program Structure or Key Points:**

The following guidelines help define the peer coaching process:

- Peer coaching is:
  1. Focused on specific behavior and consequences
  2. Characterized by stance of equality - "we're in this together". The coach should work just as hard in the coaching role as the coachee does in his/her role

3. Supportive rather than evaluative. The coach's function is to ask questions that encourage the coachee to reflect, analyze, and plan. Even when planned actions do not go as expected, it is the role of the coach to help the coachee compare what was expected with what happened and to analyze what might have contributed to the outcome.
  4. Confidential
  5. Focused on meeting the needs of the coachee
  6. Voluntary. Adult learning theory (as well as common sense) suggests that individuals will commit to activities that they perceive as realistic, important, and useful. Individuals enter into a peer coaching relationship in a trusting and mutually inviting environment.
- Peer coaching is not:
    1. Evaluative. The coaching conversations are built around needs identified by the coachee.
  - Peer coaching has different forms:
    1. Mirroring: the coach records but does not analyze or interpret coachee information
    2. Collaborative: the coach may co-plan or simply collect information specified by the coachee, which they later collaboratively analyze
    3. Expert: the coach has more expertise or experience with the topic at hand and serves as a consultant to help the coachee learn or refine particular skills.
  - Peer coaching must be approached carefully. Input should be solicited from interested adults to reflect the characteristics of the program culture that define the context of the peer coaching program.
  - Preconditions for change and cultural variables that will affect the success or failure of the peer coaching program must be identified. Three preconditions for successful peer coaching within an organization include:
    1. A perception of "good, but growing". The introduction of peer coaching does not mean that current practices are wrong or need to be examined, but that there is room for growth
    2. A reasonable level of trust. This speaks to a way of talking and acting which separates the question of practice or behavior and its consequences from the question of people and their competence, and which separates habits from self-esteem. Then, the practices and habits can be put on the table and dissected while the person who uses them remains intact. (Bird, 1985).
    3. A sense that people care for one another. If a culture already exists to promote collaborative work, peer coaching efforts are more likely to flourish. The degree to which experimentation and risk taking are valued, supported, and rewarded will also affect the potential success of peer coaching.

- Peer coaching needs organizational support - both expressive and symbolic (to include time for coaching, money for training, celebrations, and protection by those in leadership roles from outside interference and competing demands).

**How does the program define or measure success?** (What evidence does the program provide to show success?)

Peer coaching is successful if both parties involved feel that they are making satisfactory progress toward achievement of goals and if the success is at least partially attributed to peer coaching relationships.

**Describe a successful participant.**

A successful participant is one for whom peer coaching is:

- Relevant - a connection is seen between one's life and peer coaching activities. One's own self-confidence and competence are important factors for successful peer coaching.
- Feasible - one has sufficient time to participate on an ongoing basis, and views peer coaching as consistent with one's philosophy about how peers can and should relate to each other
- Involvement - one has been involved in deciding whether or not to become involved in peer coaching
- Trust - is one of the most fundamental variables in peer coaching relationships. If trust exists, peers will be more willing to take risks and trust the good intentions of peers.

**At what level would a participant enter the program?**

Peer coaching will be most successful with COTS Staff members (either staff member to staff member, or staff member to client) who are trained and committed to the process. COTS clients who are on a proven path to independence may find this a helpful tool on a client-to-client basis, but this requires a sophisticated level of communication, trust, and reflection. Perhaps as the multi-service center evolves, peer coaching may find a place with some of the clients who are longer-term residents.

Complete the table below.

<b>Program Approach</b> (Application)	<b>Method</b> (How it's used?)	<b>Outcome</b> (What would it look at COTS?)	<b>Measurement</b> (How do we measure success?)
Human Growth & Transformation	Peer coaching assumes that people have within them the answers and the ability to locate resources to solve problems and grow as an individual. Peers interact on a coach and coachee basis in structured conversations to solve problems and achieve goals.	Staff members could voluntarily engage in regular peer coaching as a strategy to increase communication, solve problems creatively, and grow personally and professionally. Peer coaching strategies could be adopted by the staff in staff to staff relationships first. With this as a backdrop, the next step would be to use staff to client peer coaching strategies on an ongoing basis.	Problems are solved, goals are reached, and peer coaching participants attribute at least part of the success to peer coaching interventions. Clients (and staff members) are empowered through deeper understanding of their own wisdom and the wisdom of peers.
Staff Interaction with Clients	Peer coaching provides a template for staff to client conversations. The template provides a way to heighten listening and understanding, and to empower the clients (coachees) to creatively solve their own problems/reach their own goals.	Staff members would all be trained in peer coaching strategies (such as "Listening to Empower").	Clients are empowered to solve problems and reach personal goals. Clients learn the power of clear communication within the template of a peer coaching strategy. This template is transportable to other relationships in a client's life.
Client-to-Client Interaction	As above, clients engage in peer coaching strategy on an ongoing basis to solve problems or plan and carry out steps to achieve personal goals.  Peer coaching may be a difficult strategy for many clients who are literally trying to get their lives on track.	Clients would be trained in and understand the peer coaching template. Time would be devoted on a regular and ongoing basis for client pairs to meet in a peer coaching environment.	As above.

Client Self-Help			<p><b>Clients are able to use peer coaching strategies to increase listening and communication skills with other people (not necessarily in a peer coaching relationship).</b></p> <p><b>Clients successfully implement action plans or plans for change as a result of peer coaching.</b></p>
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**Does this promote a responsible and accountable lifestyle? How?**

Yes, communication and listening skills are increased.

**What are the client decision points in this program? (Are they clear and identifiable?)**

Clients need to decide whether or not to participate, whether or not to commit to the process, and whether or not to take risks to follow through on decisions reached from peer coaching conversations.

**What would you change to make the program or concept more useful in our setting?**

With clients, I would recommend practicing peer coaching strategies using "hypothetical situations", rather than personal issues, for practice at first.

**Additional Issues:**

- **Staffing Requirements** (Any additional staff? Any staff training requirements?)  
No, current staff members could easily be trained in peer coaching strategies.
- **Aftercare**  
NA

- **Costs**

Training and weekly time for peer coaching meetings.

**Additional Comments** (Tell us what you really think.)

What makes you like this program or concept? What makes it appealing or motivating to the clients? How would you sell this to the clients?  
How would community support be generated for this program?

Peer coaching is a strategy that is easily learned and practiced. It's empowering for clients. It feels good to be listened to in an attentive manner by another person. Clients would be brought on board carefully as trust between peer coaching participants needs to be very much in place.

What makes you feel uneasy about this program or concept?

Peer coaching may be too risky, unproductive, or difficult for clients who are dealing with substance abuse, mental or physical illness, or other life issues which mask the ability to be genuine, confidential, and trustworthy with oneself and other people.

**Don't forget to email a copy of this completed form out to team members prior to your presentation. Please include sources for your research.**

**Sources:** (There are a multitude of sources and websites in the area of peer coaching. A few are listed below):

"How to Plan and Implement A Peer Coaching Program" - Pam Robbins, ASCD, Alexandria, Virginia, 1991.

[www.BrandeFoundation.org](http://www.BrandeFoundation.org)

[www.Lifecoach.org](http://www.Lifecoach.org)

[www.FallingAwake.com](http://www.FallingAwake.com)

[www.cesnorthwest.org/critical\\_friends\\_groups.htm](http://www.cesnorthwest.org/critical_friends_groups.htm)

COGNITIVE COACHING, Arthur Costa and Robert J. Garmston, Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc., Norwood, MA, 1994.

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING, Carl D. Glickman, ASCD, January 2002