

Coaching Pillars

John Whitmore viewed awareness and responsibility as the foundation of coaching, believing that increasing both in an individual unlocks their potential for higher performance. Awareness involves understanding one's own situation, thoughts, and feelings, while responsibility is the commitment to take ownership of one's actions and choices. By fostering awareness and responsibility, coaching helps individuals set their own goals and find their own solutions, rather than relying on advice.

Awareness

- **Definition:**
Gaining clarity on your current reality, including your thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. Whitmore stated, "I am able to control only that which I am aware of. That which I am unaware of controls me".
- **Purpose:**
Awareness empowers individuals by showing them what they can and cannot control, enabling them to identify areas for improvement and recognize their own strengths.
- **How it's raised:**
Through questioning techniques used in models like the GROW model, which encourage a deep dive into the individual's situation and their perception of it.

Responsibility

- **Definition:**
Taking ownership of your actions, thoughts, and decisions, and developing a commitment to them.
- **Purpose:**
Responsibility allows individuals to move from a position of being controlled to one of personal choice and control. This leads to setting meaningful goals and developing action plans.
- **Connection to awareness:**
Awareness creates the opportunity for responsibility. Once an individual is aware of their situation, they are better positioned to take responsibility for what they do next. Whitmore cautioned against giving advice, stating, "If I give you my advice and it fails, you will blame me. I have traded my advice for your responsibility and that is seldom a good deal,"

The link between awareness and responsibility

- The two are intrinsically linked: Awareness creates the potential for change, and responsibility is the engine for that change.
- The coaching process, particularly through the GROW model, facilitates this cycle: a person's awareness of their situation (Reality) allows them to take responsibility for identifying options and a will to act, leading to performance improvements.

John Whitmore : Coaching For Performance