

# Four Coaching Conversations

Contra Costa County Local Government Leadership Academy  
October 2024 through April 2025

*This document serves as a GUIDELINE for coaching using the F.U.E.L. model. Coaching is always best when there is some structure AND the conversation is allowed to flow organically.*

## **Conversation #1 - Information Interview**

Schedule: **Complete by December 11, 2024**

Who leads: **Participant**

Goals:

- Exchange information about each other
- Establish rapport
- Understand coach's career journey
- Gain insight into the high points, low points and turning points of the coach's career journey
- Stimulate reflection on the part of the participant regarding his/her own career journey
- Set the ground rules for your coaching conversations

Some potential questions (*from the coach*):

- ✓ Help me understand the seriousness of these coaching sessions to you.
- ✓ This is your process and I am committed to your success. As a result, are you willing to take full responsibility for scheduling our meetings according to the Academy schedule?
- ✓ Let's discuss the issue of confidentiality of our conversations. What is your commitment? My commitment to you is that I will ....

Some potential questions (*from the participant*):

- ✓ Can you describe your career journey?
- ✓ Looking back, what have been some high points and low points in your career journey?
- ✓ What was a "crucible experience" (an experience of great challenge and adversity) that tested your leadership? How did the experience transform you as a leader and person?
- ✓ Who was a coach or other person who supported your growth and development? What made that relationship so powerful?
- ✓ What are some current leadership challenges that you must address?
- ✓ What is your career journey going forward?
- ✓ What is one big take-away from your public service career up to this point?

*Follow-up by participant:* Reflect upon what you learned from the informational interview and any potential implications for your career development.

## **Conversation #2 - Initial Development Conversation / Understand the Current State**

Schedule: **Complete by February 12, 2025**

Who leads: **Coach**

Goals:

- Help the participant identify their current state
- Help the participant identify what they would like to accomplish in this coaching relationship
- Help the participant start to identify their hopes and dreams for the future
- Focus the participant on learning and development going forward
- Provide support, encouragement and resources for career development and advancement

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Some potential questions (*from the coach*):

- ✓ How do you see your current situation? What is happening?
- ✓ What is working well?
- ✓ What is challenging about it?
- ✓ If you could identify the three most significant factors contributing to these challenges, what would they be? How would you rank them?
- ✓ How might have you contributed to this situation?
- ✓ How might others see the situation?
- ✓ How are you feeling right now about the current situation?
- ✓ How does this influence what you are trying to accomplish?
- ✓ Is there anything else you'd like to share with me that would enhance my understanding of your current situation?
- ✓ *If appropriate*, could I share some observations I have made / some other consequences to consider?

Let's explore what you like to see happen.

- ✓ What are your hopes and dreams for the future? What would you like to create for yourself?
- ✓ To achieve your hopes and dreams, what might be some approaches you could take? What choices or options do you see for action? What else might work? What else?
- ✓ What are the major barriers preventing you from realizing your hopes and dreams? Where would the biggest resistance come from?
- ✓ What is a bold vision for your future?
- ✓ Who is part of your "dream team"? Who else could serve on your dream team of coaches and advisors?
- ✓ May I share a personal experience?
- ✓ Please give some thought for our next meeting as to what you might consider in terms of concrete, specific actions (goals) going forward. We'll explore those at our next meeting.

See handout "F.U.E.L.: A Coaching Framework" for the sequence of steps in conducting a development conversation.

*Follow-up by participant:* Reflect upon the initial development conversation; further think about your hopes and dreams, issues to be addressed and options for action; identify some practical and do-able steps in moving forward.

## **Conversation #3 - Follow-Up Development Conversation / Laying Out a Success Plan**

Schedule: **Complete by April 1, 2025**

Who leads: **Coach**

Goals:

- Follow up on initial development conversation
- Help the participant gain clarity about action steps to promote career development
- Assist participant's focus on some tangible steps in the short and mid-term moving forward
- Provide support and resources (for example, introductions to others)

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Some potential questions (*from the coach*):

- ✓ In reflecting upon our initial development conversation, what were some take-a-ways, conclusions or learnings for you?
- ✓ Tell me what concrete, specific actions (goals) you could consider in your career development.
- ✓ Of all these possible actions, what makes most sense to you given the positive impact, time available and your other personal and work priorities?
- ✓ What bold steps would you take if you could guarantee success?
- ✓ What are you committed to achieving? How could you quantify what you are hoping to achieve?
- ✓ What would be a goal for that? When will you start?
- ✓ What are the biggest risks or barriers to pursuing that option? What can you do to mitigate those risks?
- ✓ What resources or support do you need to effectively proceed?
- ✓ How will you stay focused? Who might help you in completing your specific action step? Who can help hold you accountable?
- ✓ How can I support you?

*Follow-up by participant:* Begin to take action steps to further your learning and development.

## **Conversation #4 - Post-Graduation Conversation / Follow-up and Accountability**

Schedule: **Complete by April 29, 2025**

Who leads: **Coach**

Goals:

- Assist the participant in reflecting upon key learnings from the Academy
- Help the participant think about seeking and securing opportunities to leverage the Academy experience and use his/her enhanced leadership capabilities
- Explore how the coach and the participant can continue the relationship (if desired)

Some potential questions (*from the coach*):

- ✓ Following up on our last conversation, what did you achieve? What action(s) did you take?
- ✓ What got in the way? Have you experienced that before in your life? What will you do differently next time?
- ✓ What were several key learnings from the Academy?
- ✓ In order to leverage the Academy experience, what kind of *new* leadership opportunities do you desire?
- ✓ How do you plan to secure these new leadership opportunities?
- ✓ Who will provide guidance and feedback as you proceed?
- ✓ What would you like from me in terms of accountability and support?

*Follow-up by participant:* Actively seek and secure new opportunities to use enhanced leadership capabilities.