

Facilitator Guide

Coaching Conversations for Managers — Module 2: The C.O.A.C.H. Framework

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This Facilitator Guide provides complete session scripting, timing guidance, facilitation notes, debrief questions, and activity instructions for Module 2 of the Coaching Conversations for Managers program. Facilitators should read this guide in full at least 48 hours before delivery and complete the pre-session preparation checklist.

This module runs approximately 120 minutes. It is the core skill-building session of the program and relies heavily on participant practice and peer feedback. Strong facilitation of the role play segment is critical — this is where the learning happens.

Module Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Name and sequence all five steps of the C.O.A.C.H. conversation framework
2. Apply each step using appropriate language, tone, and intent
3. Conduct a full practice coaching conversation using the framework
4. Give and receive structured peer feedback on coaching conversation quality

Materials Checklist

- Participant workbooks (one per learner — pre-distributed or placed on tables)
- C.O.A.C.H. framework reference cards (laminated preferred)
- Role play scenario deck (print and cut — one set per pair)
- Observer feedback forms (2 per participant — they observe twice)
- Timer or visible countdown clock
- Flip chart or whiteboard + markers
- Slide deck: Module 2 (loaded and tested before session)
- Optional: small bell or chime for activity transitions

Room Setup

- Preferred: round tables of 4 — encourages peer discussion and role play pairing
- Alternative: U-shape for groups under 16
- Avoid theater-style seating — this session requires participant movement and pairing
- Virtual delivery: use breakout rooms for all paired activities; test breakout room assignments before session begins

SESSION TIMING AT A GLANCE

Time	Activity	Facilitator Notes
0:00–0:10	Welcome, objectives, agenda review	<i>Energy check-in; connect to Module 1</i>
0:10–0:25	Framework introduction: C.O.A.C.H. model overview	<i>Use slide + whiteboard; pause for questions</i>
0:25–0:50	Deep-dive each step with annotated example	<i>Debrief after each step before moving on</i>
0:50–1:00	BREAK	<i>Remind participants to review reference cards</i>
1:00–1:05	Role play instructions + scenario assignment	<i>Critical: explain observer role clearly</i>
1:05–1:35	Role play pairs — Round 1 + feedback	<i>Circulate; do not intervene unless stuck</i>
1:35–1:45	Large group debrief — what worked, what shifted	<i>Use prepared debrief questions</i>
1:45–1:55	Reflection: personal application planning	<i>Workbook p. 14 — individual writing time</i>
1:55–2:00	Close + preview Module 3	<i>Preview listening and questioning skills</i>

SECTION 1: OPENING (0:00 – 0:10)

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** Start exactly on time. Late starts signal that the facilitator doesn't value participant time. If the group is settling, begin with a warm welcome and the energy check-in activity below.

Energy Check-In (5 minutes)

SAY: Before we get started — I want to know where everyone is today. On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being fully energized and ready, and 1 being 'I really wish I was somewhere else right now' — what number are you? Go ahead and just call it out.

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** Allow participants to call out numbers. Don't judge low numbers — acknowledge them. This builds psychological safety and gives you a read on the room energy.

SAY: I appreciate the honesty. Wherever you are, I'm glad you're here. My job today is to make this worth your time. By the end of this session, you'll have a tool you can use in a real conversation this week — not someday, not after more practice. This week.

Objectives & Agenda Review (5 minutes)

SAY: Today is Module 2 — and if Module 1 was about the mindset of coaching, today is about the moves. We're going to learn a five-step framework called C.O.A.C.H., and we're going to practice using it before we leave this room. Here's what we'll cover today.

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** Advance to objectives slide. Read each objective aloud or ask a participant to read them. Check for questions before advancing.

ASK: Any questions about what we're doing today before we start? Good. Let's go.

SECTION 2: FRAMEWORK INTRODUCTION (0:10 – 0:50)

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** This section is content-heavy but should not be lecture-only. Use frequent check-ins, pauses, and questions to keep the group engaged. The annotated example conversation is the most important tool here — walk through it slowly.

Introducing the C.O.A.C.H. Framework

SAY: The C.O.A.C.H. framework is a five-step structure for coaching conversations. It gives you a roadmap so you're not improvising in the moment. It works for performance conversations, development conversations, and even recognition conversations. Let's walk through each step.

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** Write each letter on the whiteboard as you introduce it. This helps visual learners and creates a running reference for the rest of the session.

C — CONNECT

SAY: The first step is Connect. This is how you open the conversation. Your goal is to create psychological safety — so the employee knows this is a conversation, not an ambush. A simple, direct opener works best.

EXAMPLE: "Hey, Marcus — do you have a few minutes? I wanted to catch up on how things are going with the new intake process. I've got some observations I'd like to share, and I also want to hear your perspective."

- ▶ *What makes that opener feel safe rather than threatening?*
- ▶ *What would happen if you skipped this step and led with your observation?*

O — OBSERVE

SAY: Step two is Observe — and this is where most managers struggle. The key is to share a specific, behavioral observation. Not an interpretation. Not a judgment. What you actually saw or heard.

EXAMPLE: "In the last three QA reviews, I noticed the initial empathy statement was missing in each call. The calls were correct procedurally — but that opening piece wasn't there."

NOT THIS: "You don't seem to care about the customer experience." — that's an interpretation, not an observation.

- ▶ *What's the difference between an observation and a judgment?*

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** If time permits, ask participants to pair with a neighbor and practice converting a judgment into an observation. Give them 60 seconds. This is a quick but high-value micro-practice.

A — ASK

SAY: Step three is Ask — and this is the heart of coaching. Instead of telling the employee what to do, you ask a question that invites them to think. The best coaching questions start with "What" and "How."

EXAMPLE: "What's your sense of how those calls went?" or "What do you think gets in the way of using the empathy statement consistently?"

NOT THIS: "You need to use the empathy statement every time." — that's directing, not coaching.

- ▶ *Why does asking instead of telling change the employee's experience of the conversation?*
- ▶ *What happens to ownership and accountability when the employee generates the answer?*

C — COLLABORATE

SAY: Step four is Collaborate. You've asked, they've reflected — now you work together on a plan. This is not you handing them the answer. It's a joint conversation about what they'll do differently.

EXAMPLE: "So based on what you just shared — what's one thing you want to try differently starting tomorrow?" Then listen. Offer your perspective only after they've shared theirs.

- ▶ *What's the risk of skipping collaboration and going straight to 'here's what you should do'?*

H — HOLD ACCOUNTABLE

SAY: The final step is Hold Accountable — and this is what separates a coaching conversation from a nice chat. You close by naming what was agreed, confirming the follow-up, and scheduling the next check-in.

EXAMPLE: "So the plan is: starting Monday, you're going to focus on that empathy statement in the first 30 seconds of every call. Let's check in next Thursday at our 1:1 and you can tell me how it went. Sound good?"

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** Emphasize that holding accountable is an act of care, not surveillance. You're showing the employee that you believe they can do it and that you'll be there to support them.

SECTION 3: ROLE PLAY PRACTICE (1:00 – 1:35)

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** *This is the most important part of the module. Protect this time at all costs. If the content section ran long, compress the debrief questions — do not cut the role play.*

Role Play Instructions — Read Aloud to Group

SAY: We're going to practice the C.O.A.C.H. framework in pairs. Here's how it works. Each pair will get a scenario card. One person plays the manager, one plays the employee. The manager's job is to run the conversation using the framework. The employee's job is to respond naturally — don't make it too easy, but don't be deliberately difficult.

SAY: The third person at your table — if you have one — is the Observer. Your job is to track what you see using the observer feedback form. Circle each step when you hear it. Note any moments that stood out. You'll share feedback after the conversation.

SAY: You have 8 minutes for the conversation. I'll give you a one-minute warning. After the conversation, observers share feedback for 3 minutes, then the manager shares one thing they'd do differently. Any questions?

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** *Circulate during role plays. Listen without interrupting. If a pair gets completely stuck, you may ask: 'What step of the framework are you on?' — but do not take over the conversation. Note 1–2 specific moments to highlight in the large group debrief.*

SECTION 4: LARGE GROUP DEBRIEF (1:35 – 1:45)

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** *Use these questions to drive a reflective, generative debrief. Don't just ask what was hard — push for insight about WHY it was hard and what it means for their real work.*

- ▶ *What step felt most natural? Which step felt most uncomfortable?*
- ▶ *When you were in the employee role — what made the conversation feel like coaching vs. being managed?*
- ▶ *Where did you find yourself wanting to skip a step or rush? What was pulling you there?*
- ▶ *What would change in a real conversation on your team if you used this framework consistently?*

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** *Close the debrief with this: 'The framework only works if you use it. And you only get comfortable with it by using it in real conversations — starting this week. Which leads us to the last part of our time together.'*

SECTION 5: REFLECTION & CLOSE (1:45 – 2:00)

Individual Reflection — Workbook Page 14

SAY: Turn to page 14 in your workbook. You have 8 minutes to write your responses to the three reflection questions. This is personal — you won't be asked to share unless you want to.

✦ **FACILITATOR NOTE:** *The three workbook questions are: (1) Which step of C.O.A.C.H. do I need to practice most? (2) Who on my team would benefit from a coaching conversation this week? (3) What is my commitment for the next 7 days? Walk the room quietly during this time.*

Module Close

SAY: Before we close — the most important thing I want you to take away from today is this: coaching is not a special event. It's not a meeting you schedule once a quarter. It's a way of having the conversations you're already having — just with a different intent. The C.O.A.C.H. framework is your guide. The more you use it, the less you'll need it. Because it'll just be how you talk with your team.

SAY: In Module 3, we go deeper on the 'A' step — asking. Because the quality of your questions determines the quality of your coaching. See you then.

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