

TOOL

Transformational Coaching Rubric



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Transformational Coaching Rubric

A rubric guides you towards mastering a complex set of skills. In *Arise*, I offer a mini version of this Transformational Coaching Rubric which includes the essential competencies. This longer version contains all of the competencies and indicators required for enacting Transformational Coaching with fidelity.

How this Rubric is Organized

This rubric contains three sections:

- I. A Transformational Coach's **Beliefs**: Why We Do What We Do
- II. A Transformational Coach's **Ways Of Being**: How We Show Up
- III. A Transformational Coach's **Behaviors**: What We Do

How to Use the Rubric

This rubric is not designed as a tool for evaluation. Rather, it is meant as a guide for development—to point you toward the highest-leverage coaching skills and to the critical beliefs, ways of being, and behaviors of a Transformational Coach.

Ways to use the rubric:

- As a tool for personal reflection. In the “Self-Assessment” column, rate yourself using the following numbers:
 - **1: Foundational.** You have no knowledge or skill in this area, or just a little. You may struggle to use the skill, or forget to use it.
 - **2: Developing.** You have some knowledge or skill in this area, but it's not consistent or reliable. You don't always see the impact you want to see when using the skill.
 - **3: Strong.** Your knowledge or skill in this area is strong and accessible in any context. You feel fluent in the skill. You see the impact you want to see when you use the skill or apply the knowledge.
- As a tool for practice: Role play with a colleague and focus on demonstrating certain indicators. An observer could also provide feedback on indicators you identify as focal skills.
- As an organizing structure for PD sessions: Specific PD sessions could focus on a single domain, competency, or set of indicators.

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D) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BELIEFS: Why We Do What We Do			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
A. Beliefs about Self	1. I deserve to thrive.	a. I act from a sense of my own inherent worth.	
		b. I work to make sure my core human needs are met.	
	2. I have to start with myself.	a. I attend to, reflect on, and develop my own behaviors, beliefs and ways of being.	
		b. I prioritize meeting my core human needs and caring for myself.	
	3. I have agency.	a. I take ownership of how I experience my life and the actions I take.	
		b. I have many choices in life.	
	4. I can be effective.	a. I engage intentionally to learn, grow, develop, and change.	
		b. I work to be highly effective in this current role or in another role.	
B. Beliefs about Client	1. My client deserves to thrive.	a. I offer my clients support, care, and kindness because they are inherently worthy of these things.	
		b. I identify which core human needs my client might not yet be getting met.	
	2. My client has agency.	a. My client can facilitate their own development when they access their agency.	
		b. My client can solve many of their own problems given the right conditions.	
	3. My client can be effective.	a. I create the conditions for my client to learn, grow, develop, and transform. I guide clients to access the knowledge and wisdom within them.	
		b. I help my client be effective in their current role or help them discover another role in which they could be effective.	

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D) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BELIEFS: Why We Do What We Do

Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
C. Beliefs about Transformational Coaching (TC)	1. Transformational Coaching serves a mission to ensure that all students thrive.	a. Transformational Coaching is a structure and process through which to create equitable schools in which every child's needs are met, every day.	
	2. Transformational Coaching is a model that creates the conditions for change.	a. People change when the conditions are right; those conditions can be created.	
	3. Transformational Coaching honors emotions.	a. Emotions help us confront inequities and become more resilient.	
	4. Transformational Coaching centers relationships.	a. Our core human need is for belonging and connection.	
		b. Trust is essential for people to change.	
	5. Transformational Coaching focuses on equity.	a. Equity issues are present in every situation.	
		b. Sociopolitical identity experiences show up in our lives and work all the time.	
		c. Power and privilege must be explored for change to happen.	

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II) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S WAYS OF BEING: How We Show Up			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
A. Emotional Intelligence	1. Emotional Self-Awareness	a. I recognize the physical sensations and thoughts that indicate that I'm experiencing an emotion.	
		b. I can name the emotions I experience in the moment, or in reflection.	
		c. I am aware of how the way I express emotions affects others.	
	2. Emotional Self-Management	a. I practice strategies to regulate my emotions when I experience a strong uncomfortable emotion.	
		b. I engage in processes to understand my emotions and engage with them in a healthy way.	
		c. I'm adaptable when things happen that I didn't expect.	
		d. I engage in practices to cultivate pleasant states, including optimism and self-acceptance.	
	3. Social Awareness	a. I am able to accurately read my client's emotions, including how they feel about me.	
		b. I practice taking different perspectives, including the perspective of my client.	
		c. I can anticipate how my client might react to something I say or do.	
		d. I perceive power dynamics between people.	
		e. I refrain from making assumptions about what my client thinks or feels.	

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II) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S WAYS OF BEING: How We Show Up

Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
A. Emotional Intelligence	4. Relationship Management	a. I am intentional about building, maintaining, and repairing trust.	
		b. I communicate empathy and appreciation for my client.	
		c. I am transparent about my motives; I take responsibility for mistakes; I apologize and repair the relationship when I've caused harm.	
		d. I build relationships across lines of difference.	
		e. I navigate power dynamics.	
		f. I respond to other people's needs.	
		g. I set appropriate boundaries.	
		h. I engage in healthy conflict and respond to unhealthy conflict.	
B. Dispositions	1. Compassion	a. I hold unconditional positive regard for others.	
		b. I believe that everyone is doing the best they can, given their abilities and the cards they were dealt. I know that compassion for someone is not synonymous with condoning their behaviors.	
		c. I cultivate compassion for myself.	
	2. Curiosity	a. I am insatiably curious about others, about what is possible, and about myself.	
		b. I feel energized by my curiosity and recognize it as a source of power.	
		c. I befriend my fear so that I can cultivate my curiosity.	
	3. Courage	a. I work with my fear so that I can access and act on my courage.	
		b. I appreciate the role that my courage plays in coaching and enjoy opportunities to use it.	
		c. I take risks in coaching and in conversations, and doing so energizes me.	

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II) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S WAYS OF BEING: How We Show Up

Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
B. Dispositions	4. Trust in the process	a. I build trust in the process by building trust in my own abilities.	
		b. I recognize that I can't know everything about what's going on for a client, and that my role is to partner with them to figure out a path forward.	
		c. I understand that although I may not see indicators of change in my client, change may be underway.	
	5. Humility	a. I know that I have flaws and that I am developing as a human; I'm not afraid of making mistakes in front of others.	
		b. I admit when I've made mistakes, apologize, and take responsibility for repairing harm I've inflicted on others.	
		c. I acknowledge and appreciate my strengths and talents.	

III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do

Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
A. Foundational Abilities	1. Building Trust	a. I demonstrate care for a client and maintain confidentiality.	
		b. I am consistent in my actions and I honor my agreements.	
		c. I demonstrate congruence between what I think and feel and how I behave.	
		d. I possess the foundational skills needed for my role, and actively work to refine those skills.	
		e. In a coaching conversation, I attune to levels of trust, and I intentionally engage in many coaching strategies to build, maintain, and repair trust when necessary.	

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III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
A. Foundational Abilities	2. Cultivating Agency	a. I invite a client's input into the focus or goals for coaching.	
		b. I provide options for a client to take the lead in directing the conversation.	
		c. I use strategies to coach emotions and beliefs to help a client process and release fear.	
		d. I invite a client to consider all the possible options for action.	
		e. I stay out of fix-it mode and communicate confidence that a client can solve their own problems.	
		f. I ensure that when a client agrees to enact new behaviors, they feel like they are doing so willingly.	
	3. Navigating Power Dynamics	a. I cultivate acute awareness of the power dynamics between a client and myself and of how a client might perceive my authority, or grant me credibility.	
		b. I position myself not as an expert, but as the facilitator in a process whose role is to provide guidance on a learning journey.	
		c. I am transparent with a client about where I am positioned in terms of the larger power structure that I'm a part of. I am clear about what it means for me to be positioned in this place.	
		d. I primarily source from relational power and I leverage power-with and power-to.	
		e. I name the power dynamics to a client when appropriate, and engage them in discussing these dynamics. If or when I sense a breakdown in trust because of power dynamics, I raise this with the client.	

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III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
B. Listening	1. Transformational Listening	a. I cultivate awareness of where my mind goes when I'm listening and use strategies to return to presence when I wander.	
		b. I cultivate awareness of my feelings and have strategies to manage my emotions as they arise.	
		c. I listen expansively as a way to connect to my compassion, curiosity, and trust in the process, and to connect with my client's potential and inherent worthiness.	
		d. I listen without clinging to my agenda; I hold lightly to outcome.	
	2. Meta-communication	a. I use metacommunication (body language, eye contact, facial expressions, pitch, pace, tone and volume) to communicate that I am listening deeply.	
		b. I pay close attention to my client's words and metacommunication to gain insight into their experiences and feelings.	
c. I understand common interpretations of nonverbal communication, and I'm also cautious about drawing conclusions about what my client might be feeling based on their body language.			
C. Responding	1. Intention to Make Every Conversation Count	a. I know that every conversation is an opportunity to create a more just and equitable world.	
		b. I know that every conversation is an opportunity for connection, to cultivate compassion, and to activate curiosity.	
	2. Thinking	a. I think through different coaching tools to select a response to what my client says.	
		b. I use the Thinking Tools intentionally to determine my responses.	

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III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
C. Responding	3. Language	a. I ask one clear question at a time, and don't ask rambling or leading questions.	
		b. I rarely interrupt a client, and if I do, it's intentional.	
		c. I use a wide variety of coaching stems with my client.	
		d. I mostly ask questions that begin with "what" or "how" and I ask questions that can have multiple responses.	
	4. Use of Silence	a. I allow for pauses in a conversation.	
		b. I am comfortable holding silence in a conversation.	
		c. I speak for less than a third of the conversation.	
	5. Active Listening	a. I paraphrase what a client says and am able to preserve their essential meaning.	
		b. I use active listening throughout a conversation and when it may provide my client with an opportunity to more deeply understand themselves.	
		c. I use my words, affirmations, and metacommunication to demonstrate active listening.	
		d. I ask for confirmation that I understood what the client said and invite the client to check their own thinking.	
	6. Coaching Stances	a. I use a variety of approaches in a conversation with comfort and ease.	
		b. I track how my client responds to different approaches to inform my decision-making in a conversation.	
		c. I primarily use facilitative coaching stems.	
		d. I use the confrontational approach skillfully as a way to interrupt thoughts.	

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III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do

Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
D. Coaching the Three Bs	1. Coaching Ways of Being	a. I identify which of my client's core human needs might be at play when they are distressed.	
		b. I guide my client to identify and explore how their core human needs are or are not being met.	
		c. I coach my client to align their behaviors, beliefs, and ways of being to their core values and to enact their core values.	
		d. I guide my client to acknowledge and accept their emotions, cultivate compassion for themselves and others, and expand the stories they tell.	
		e. I help clients use the <i>Spheres of Influence</i> to make decisions when they feel disempowered.	
		f. I guide my client to identify their own strengths.	
		g. If I am concerned about a client's emotional well-being, I invite them to get help from a mental health professional.	
		h. I incorporate trauma-informed practices and can appropriately respond to a client if they become activated.	
		i. I recognize when fear is at play. When it is, I invite my client to explore their fear.	
		j. When I encounter what I perceive as resistance in a client, I look inward at myself, ground in curiosity and compassion, and anchor in who I want to be.	
		k. I coach a client towards resilience at any opportunity and through a variety of methods.	
l. I coach the person and not their problem.			

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III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
D. Coaching the Three Bs	2. Coaching Beliefs	a. I connect a client's harmful beliefs to their problematic behavior and inequitable practices for children, especially for children from marginalized communities.	
		b. I motivate a client to explore their beliefs and can create a safe-enough space for them to do so.	
		c. I identify when a client is telling a victim story, or when they are on the Drama Triangle, and I can coach them to shift these stories.	
		d. I guide a client through the <i>Exploring Beliefs Framework</i> and the <i>Ladder of Influence</i> to recognize and explore current beliefs and help them create new beliefs.	
		e. I coach towards identity awareness by using the <i>Wheel of Power and Privilege</i> and a range of coaching strategies and stances.	
		f. I look and listen through an equity lens and consider my client's identity markers, how the "problem" is defined, and my client's skills in engaging around equity.	
		g. When I hear beliefs expressed that dehumanize any group of marginalized people, I respond in a way that aligns to my values and to my school/organization's values and mission.	

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III) A TRANSFORMATIONAL COACH'S BEHAVIORS: What We Do			
Domain	Competency	Indicators	Self-Assess 1-3
D. Coaching the Three Bs	3. Coaching Behaviors	a. I use the <i>Gaps Framework</i> to inform my coaching decisions and with my client for their self-awareness.	
		b. I can identify the areas in which my client may have gaps and I can identify common indicators of gaps in each area.	
		c. I use the <i>Adult Learning Principles</i> to make decisions about how to guide and sequence my client's learning.	
		d. I use the <i>Coaching Lenses</i> to plan for conversations, to reflect on conversations, and identify next steps.	
		e. I scaffold my client's learning into achievable chunks of skill and knowledge.	
		f. I cultivate awareness of my client's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and coach within it.	
		g. I plan for a gradual release of responsibility when guiding my client through acquiring new skills and constantly assess their readiness for moving to greater responsibility.	

WHAT'S NEXT

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