WORKSHEET + WORKED EXAMPLE

A FUEL Coaching Conversation

A practical route from the current situation to a chosen future, with support and a check-in.

25 minutes | FUEL coaching model

Use it in three moves

1. Frame the conversation together, then understand the current situation through their examples and constraints.

2. Explore the future they want and more than one way to reach it. Ask what each option would require.

3. Lay out a plan they choose: action, support, evidence, and a follow-up. Check what might prevent it before closing.

Frame · Agree the purpose

Name the topic and desired use of the conversation together.

Understand · What is happening now?

Invite their account, examples, and constraints before offering an interpretation.

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YOUR WORKING NOTES / CONTINUED

Explore · What would a useful future look like?

Ask for outcomes, options, and trade-offs. Keep the person's agency visible.

Lay out · Agree a success plan

Record their chosen action, support, evidence, and follow-up.

Check the agreement

Ask what might prevent the plan and whether the conversation helped.

A question for me

Am I leaving room for an answer I did not have in mind?

See one way through

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE / NOT THE ANSWER TO YOUR SITUATION

Frame · Agree the purpose

We will explore how to make the colleague's weekly planning less reactive; this is not a performance verdict.

Understand · What is happening now?

Three urgent requests displaced planned work. They had no clear route to negotiate priority.

Explore · What would a useful future look like?

They want to know which requests can wait and who can decide. Explore a shared priority rule and a short escalation route.

Lay out · Agree a success plan

They draft two priority rules; I confirm the decision owner. Trial for one week and review displaced work.

Check the agreement

If the owner is unavailable, use the named backup. Ask next week whether the boundary actually reduced uncertainty.

The thinking behind it

A plan becomes useful when the person can shape it and has the means to act. Ask what time, authority, or access you need to help make available.

John Zenger and Kathleen Stinnett describe FUEL: Frame the conversation, Understand the current state, Explore the desired state, and Lay out a success plan. This original practice uses new prompts and examples; it is not a certification or a substitute for professional coaching competence.

Zenger Folkman · Coaching skills

Read You Have a Culture Problem by Nic Payne