



EXECUTIVE COACHING
CONNECTIONS

ECC Introspection Tools

Mental Models Worksheet

Instructions:

Below, are examples of 'self-talk' that you might encounter for each type of Mental Model. Using the 1-5 rating scale below, indicate how often you find yourself using each of the following 'self-talk' examples: **1=Never/ 2=Infrequently/ 3=Sometimes/ 4=Frequently/ 5=Most of the time**

'Success/Work' Mental Models

1. Failure is a sign of weakness.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I've got to get it right.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I just don't want to get found out.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I must never give up/ giving up is not an option.	1	2	3	4	5
5. If I don't work harder, I'll fail. I'm not good enough.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I'm not where I should be.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am my work.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Only losers give up.	1	2	3	4	5

'People and Relationship' Mental Models

1. It's important to please others.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I want people to think the best of me.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Conflict leads to hard feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Asking for help means I'm incompetent.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I can accomplish more, if people like me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. If I sacrifice, people know I care.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Being loyal is what matters.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have to be there for the people I love/Don't let others down.	1	2	3	4	5

'Leadership/Authority' Mental Models

1. If I want something done right, I've got to do it myself	1	2	3	4	5
2. I should be able to handle things myself.	1	2	3	4	5
3. There's no excuse for being wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I need to know everything.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I'm expected to always be on top of my game.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The leader has to do it best.	1	2	3	4	5
7. It's better to lead than to follow.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I just feel better, if I'm in control.	1	2	3	4	5
9. You can't trust people. They will let you down.	1	2	3	4	5

'Problems and Possibilities' Mental Models

1. Avoid embarrassment no matter what.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Criticism means I'm not 'cutting it'.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I should always have a "can do" attitude.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I need to solve problems on my own.	1	2	3	4	5
5. If I'm all over it, mistakes don't happen.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I can't let this happen.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I need to fix this.	1	2	3	4	5
8. There are no problems, only opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5

Look at those areas that you scored 4s and 5s. Could any of that 'self-talk' benefit from being reframed?

Examining Your Scripts Exercise

Instructions:

Mental Models constantly influence the inner monologue (or “self-talk”) that you privately experience as you confront certain situations. This self-talk affects the way we react to situations and may limit our ability to respond in a way that would best accomplish our objectives. If you have ever found yourself in a situation in which you responded poorly, but couldn’t seem to stop yourself, your mental models were probably at work.

We have found that increasing awareness to mental models will help leaders lead and manage more consciously, and effectively so we have designed an approach to help you do just that.

To increase your awareness of your mental models, we’d like you to examine your self- talk for the filters, assumptions and patterned ways of looking at the world.

This exercise presents you with six situations that typically provoke self-talk. Some may feel familiar. As you look at each situation, you can either ...

- Reconstruct a recent situation that closely resembled the target situation we have provided and record the self -talk you experienced.
- Visualize potential situation and create the self-talk you would have in that type of situation.

Either way, once you read about the situation, close your eyes and take a deep breath. Spend a few minutes capturing the situation in your mind’s eye. Then notice the stream of thoughts and feelings that show up as you imagine moving through the situation. Write that down in the space provided. Be sure to type in all the “inner voices/ self-talk” that come up – even if they don’t seem relevant at the time.

Remember – your focus should be on the self-talk.
You would have in each situation, not the external actions you would take.

Examining Your Scripts Exercise

Situation 1: A new job & meeting new people.

It's your first day at a new job. You've been in orientation the first part of the day and are now walking over to meet with your new team of co-workers.

Situation 2: A situation in which you have made a mistake.

You are sitting in a project status meeting with several business partners and people of all levels. The project is of high importance to the business and you have had major involvement with it. A debate begins about some information that has been presented. As the energy behind the debate increases, it becomes clear that you have made a significant mistake in the work you've done.

Situation 3: A situation in which you feel criticized or put on the defensive.

Take Situation 2 further. You have called the group's attention to the mistake and explained what you will do to address it. A business partner becomes very angry about the additional time required from his area because of your mistake. He begins publicly questioning your ability to get the job done and your overall value to the project.

Situation 4: Working through a difficult relationship.

You have a relationship that has meant a lot to you over the years; however, lately you are finding that your discussions with this person seem tense. It feels like something is wrong. You are walking to meet this person.

Examining Your Scripts Exercise

Situation 5: Making a tough decision.

Think through a tough decision that is now facing you or one you have made recently. Without getting into the content of the decision itself, recreate your inner dialogue (self-talk) as you consider(ed) the decision and the need to make it.

Situation 6: Working globally and with a virtual team.

Your role has expanded and you are now working with people from different countries that you have not met face to face. In your interactions over the last few months, you have often thought you all agreed to a decision and had their commitment to action; however, the actions you were expecting haven't occurred, and you are missing the deadlines you have given your boss.

*******END VISUALIZATION*******

1. Read through the self-talk you noted. What strikes you about what you see there?
2. What pieces of self-talk seem to come up across situations? What patterns of thought, feeling and/or perception (Mental Models) do you notice?

Reframing Mental Models Exercise

Mental Models

This worksheet will help you evaluate the specific positive and/or negative results associated with the 3-5 mental models you have selected and then reframe them. Reframing is a process that allows you to consciously challenge and replace some of your underlying filters or ways of looking at the world. In a sense, reframing helps you “unlearn” patterns of perception, thought or feeling that either no longer serve the original purpose they served or have always been problematic. Reframing is a tool that gives you more freedom to create the individual and leadership effectiveness you desire.

The Reframing Process

1. Identify the current mental model that needs to be reframed.
2. State the positive and/negative results that the given mental model generally delivers as you use it day-to-day.
 - Consider the rewards or positive outcomes you have received in the past as you used the mental model. Is the model generally useful or useful? only in certain situations or when used in a specific way? Identify the boundaries within which the current model serves your effectiveness.
 - Assess the negative outcomes you have encountered and identify the situations within which a specific mental model no longer serves your effectiveness or ways you use it that decreased alignment with your core self.
 - Some models may seem to have only negative results (e.g. I see myself as incompetent and a fake). Don't be fooled. Many times, we use “negative” mental models to motivate us. In this example, I may use a model of myself as incompetent to work harder and in a more disciplined way than I think I might otherwise. The goal here would be to replace the original model with a new model that captures my ability to work hard and in a disciplined fashion without needing to resort to negative self-talk.

Reframing Mental Models Exercise

- Find a new statement or several statements that capture or even increase the positive impact of the mental model while minimizing or eliminating the negative.

The reframed statements may be built by:

- Restating the current mental model as its opposite.
- Finding the positive or facilitative aspect of a model you might otherwise consider as purely negative or ineffective (e.g. being stubborn – how can being stubborn work in service of my effectiveness in certain situations?).
- Building a statement that acknowledges a previously unaccepted mental model as an aspect of your whole self e.g. I can be stubborn like my mother. This is something to accept as a part of being human. (I need to be more aware of this as I act it out and acknowledge it with others.)
- Creating a statement that acknowledges the limits of the positive aspects of a mental model before it becomes “a strength overplayed.”

Try to keep the reframed statements short and direct. Here is an example of the full reframing process:

Original Mental Model Statement	Positive Results	Negative Results	Reframed Mental Model
I must get everything right.	High standards, never gives up, usually finishes near the top.	New opportunities create undo stress, anxiety about making mistakes, may stay in comfort zone.	I'll learn as much as possible and do my best.
I'm the best person to handle problems in my areas of expertise.	Proactive in addressing problems, confident about finding a solution, doesn't waste time of others, gets quick resolution.	Can't get everything done, brings limited perspective, others feel left out, may make poorly informed decisions.	I will involve the right people in developing solutions and utilize all our time effectively.
I should always play to my strengths.	Gives people confidence to go to me for things; gives people confidence to follow my decisions, opportunity for success both personally and professionally.	Strengths may be less relevant to role, limit opportunity to develop new skills.	I will keep an open mind about where and how I can contribute.
I only trust a few people to give me advice.	Build long term, trusted colleagues, colleagues know me well and have my best interests at heart.	Don't access perspectives from experts who I know less well, keep to a closed inner circle, miss information and insight.	I will keep trusted advisors but be open to others with different experiences.

Reframing Mental Models Exercise

Reframing: Your Turn!

Using the three to five mental models you selected, use the blank matrix below, to do your own reframing.

Original Mental Model Statement	Positive Results	Negative Results	Reframed Mental Model