



# CLEAR Coaching Framework

## What is it?

The CLEAR Coaching<sup>1</sup> framework is a structured, supportive, and empowering framework designed to coach and mentor youth. CLEAR stands for connect, listen, explore, action, and review. This framework guides the coach to help youth develop essential skills, explore career pathways, and achieve their full potential in the workforce and beyond.

## What are the benefits?

The CLEAR Coaching framework is ideal for coaching youth because it aligns with the C2L-PHL model and addresses various aspects of youth development, including personal growth, skill-building, and goal achievement, ensuring a comprehensive and holistic experience. The CLEAR framework also provides an opportunity for employers to establish youth-centered practices.

This framework emphasizes the importance of:

1. Connecting with youth
2. Listening to their needs and aspirations, and
3. Empowering them to take ownership of their learning and career development journey.

It recognizes the unique perspectives, interests, and challenges that youth face, and tailors coaching approaches to meet their individual needs and preferences. The CLEAR framework provides a roadmap for coaching sessions that elicits clarity, stronger connections, ease of setting and achieving goals, and comprehensive growth and self-discovery, while being flexible and adaptable. It provides an opportunity for transformative work.

## How does it work?

An effective coach fosters awareness through powerful questioning and assists youth in seeing their true potential. It is important that employers establish opportunities for youth to self-reflect and evaluate their options at each step. Transitioning through the steps of the CLEAR framework may take more than one session. Each session should last between 30 and 60 minutes. The frequency of the sessions will vary; they can be once a week or every other week, depending on the goal. Below you will find a description of each area along with how to implement it, along with sample questions and tips for transitioning between the steps.

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<sup>1</sup> Hawkins, P., & Smith, N. (2013). Coaching, Mentoring and Organizational Consultancy 2E (2 edition).



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## CONNECT

Description	Implementation	Sample Questions to Ask Youth
Establish a connection and clarify expectations between coach and youth through an initial agreement.	Define the purpose and goals of the coaching relationship, outlining roles, responsibilities, and boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine you have a magic wand that could help you achieve anything you want, no matter how big or small. What would you choose to achieve with it?</li> <li>• If you could design the perfect mentor or coach, like creating a character in a video game, what qualities would they have?</li> <li>• What do you hope to get out of our coaching sessions?</li> <li>• If you could picture what success looks like when we finish, how would it look?</li> <li>• Let's create a countdown starting today, when do you want to wrap up, and what steps do you need to take to get there?</li> </ul>

### Tip for this phase to move from theory to practice

Guide the youth in setting clear, specific goals, such as enhancing confidence through monthly public speaking engagements, and ensure these goals are measurable with quantifiable metrics, like completing tasks before deadlines for improved time management. Focus on attainable objectives that match the youth's current skill set, promoting gradual progress in skill acquisition.

## LISTEN

Description	Implementation	Sample Questions to Ask Youth
Practice active listening, empathy, and non-judgmental communication to understand the needs, concerns, and aspirations of youth.	Reflect back what the youth is saying to ensure understanding and validate their perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is most important for you to discuss or explore in our coaching sessions?</li> <li>• If your current challenge was a video game level, how would you describe it: easy, challenging, or expert?</li> <li>• To help us understand and navigate through this together, could you share the main emotions or thoughts you're experiencing about this topic?</li> <li>• Do you have any thoughts or discoveries about yourself related to this topic? I'd really like to hear your insights or any moments of self-reflection you've had. Feel free to share!</li> <li>• What support do you need from me as your coach to navigate this topic effectively?</li> </ul>

### Tip for this phase to move from theory to practice



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To support youth effectively, fully engage by minimizing distractions, making eye contact, and using open body language to show attentiveness and receptiveness. Validate their emotions without judgment and ask open-ended questions to foster deeper reflection. Allow them to express themselves without interruption, listening closely to both verbal and nonverbal cues for a comprehensive understanding of their feelings and perspectives.

## EXPLORE

Description	Implementation	Sample Questions to Ask Youth
Encourage exploration and self-discovery through open-ended questions, reflection, and brainstorming activities.	Support youth in identifying potential barriers, challenges, and opportunities for growth and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What values or beliefs are guiding your actions in this situation?</li> <li>• What alternative viewpoints or perspective could you consider?</li> <li>• What are some potential solutions or options that you have not explored yet?</li> <li>• How does this situation align with your future vision and aspiration?</li> </ul>

### Tip for this phase to move from theory to practice

Encourage the use of journaling and mind mapping as tools for youth to reflect on their experiences, aspirations, and personal development paths, alongside guided questions for deeper insight into their skills and passions. Promote the creation of gratitude lists to foster a positive outlook, and reflection on role models to identify traits and values for growth.

## ACTION

Description	Implementation	Sample Questions to Ask Youth
Collaboratively develop an action plan with concrete steps and timeliness to help youth achieve their goals and aspirations.	Provide guidance, resources, and support to help youth implement their action plan and overcome obstacles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What specific steps or actions can you take to get closer to your goal?</li> <li>• How will you hold yourself accountable for these actions?</li> <li>• What potential obstacles or challenges might arise during the implementation phase?</li> <li>• How can you break down your actions into smaller more manageable tasks?</li> <li>• How will you know when you successfully completed an action or achieved a milestone?</li> </ul>

### Tip for this phase to move from theory to practice

CareerOneStop, My Next Move, and Youth.gov offer comprehensive resources for career exploration, education, and skill development, tailored to align personal interests with career paths through tools like the O\*NET Interest Profiler.



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## REVIEW

Description	Implementation	Sample Questions to Ask Youth
Regularly reflect on what has been discussed, assess outcomes, and review the coaching process to identify successes and areas for improvement.	Celebrate achievements, acknowledging the efforts and growth of youth participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since our last session, what steps have you taken or progress have you made towards your goals?</li> <li>• What strengths or skills have you developed or discovered throughout this journey?</li> <li>• What obstacles did you have and how did you overcome them?</li> <li>• What lessons have you learned from actions you have taken?</li> <li>• How might you adjust your approach moving forward based on your progress and insights?</li> </ul>

### Tip for this phase to move from theory to practice

Host reflection sessions for youth to discuss their learning progress, achievements, and challenges, using a structured template for deep insights. Celebrate milestones with ceremonies, awarding certificates or personalized accolades to recognize their achievements. Encourage them to document and share their success stories and future ambitions, potentially on social media with their consent.

### Transitioning between steps

- 1. Connect to Listen:** After setting goals, expectations, and timelines, transition to the Listen step to dive deeper into the youth’s experiences and aspirations.
- 2. Listen to Explore:** Transition to the Explore step when the youth has completely expressed their thoughts and feelings, and the coach has gained an understanding of the youth’s situation. The youth should be ready to explore alternative perspectives, beliefs, and values.
- 3. Explore to Action:** When the youth has gained clarity, insights and a sense of direction, transition to the Action step. The youth should understand what steps they need to take and be motivated to implement them.
- 4. Action to Review:** Regularly review progress during the Action step to assess strategy effectiveness and celebrate milestones. Transition to the review step when it’s time to reflect, evaluate outcomes, and make necessary adjustments.
- 5. Review to Connect (or Next Cycle):** Evaluate progress and outcomes to determine if you need to continue with a renewed agreement or transition toward completion. Transition back to the connect step to set new goals for continued coaching. For completion, guide the youth through closure and ensure a smooth transition.