Applying the CREAM Strategy for Coaching Teaching Practices

Marine Milad

Abstract

Monitoring and evaluating staff tutors necessitates constant follow-up to ensure that they are in line with the University's mission and vision. This has raised a fundamental educational question: how to coach rather than monitor the tutors. To answer this question, Cottrell's (2008) CREAM (Creative, Reflective, Effective, Active, Motivated) strategy was applied to coach these tutors following the GROW Model (Goal, Reality, Options, Will way forward) as a framework for structuring both team and individual coaching sessions. Cottrell's strategy was initially developed for enhancing the learner's self-directed/autonomous learning. For the purpose of this implementation, the researchers applied the CREAM strategy as a self-assessment and observation tool. Being pragmatic leaders, they conducted three team coaching sessions and one-to-one individual sessions throughout the academic semester following the GROW Model to: establish SMART Goals, examine the current Reality, explore possible Options/Obstacles, and establish the Will. A checklist was developed to measure the staff tutors' self-assessment of their Creative, Reflective, Effective, Active, and Motivated teaching practices and the same checklist was used by the head of the program as an observation checklist to evaluate these practices. The two tools were statistically analysed and a correlation was found.

Keywords: CREAM strategy; coaching; pragmatic leaders.

Introduction

Developing one's skills is not an easy task whether done by oneself or other individuals. The true leader tries to be pragmatic rather than dogmatic (Geiger, 2011). Pragmatic leaders have their feet on the ground. They are realistic and practical. A pragmatic approach to something is the sensible one. A pragmatic way to fix a bike is to use the tools you have rather than the ones you wish you had (Biesta & Burbules, 2003). In an attempt to be pragmatic leaders, the researchers reasoned that they should coach the staff tutors to enhance their teaching practices. Wade (1997) specified that coaching is a process that enables individuals to achieve their full potential. It helps them in making real, lasting changes and facilitating the exploration of their needs, motivations, desires, skills and thought processes. Parsloe (1999, p. 32) defines coaching as "a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be successful, a coach requires knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place." Through observation, listening and questioning techniques, a coach can help individuals understand the current situation and identify needed solutions and actions rather than adopting a wholly dictated method. Whitmore (2002, p. 19) stated that "getting better performance from any group or individual, yourself included, means permanent change in the way you think [coach]. Change of this kind is not a single transaction but a journey, and the journey has a specific starting point [reality] and a clear destination [goal]." Coaching guides individuals to set appropriate goals and methods of assessing their progress in relation to these goals. Coaching can be done individually or in groups, taking many forms and applying a variety of techniques which may include one-to-one training, facilitating, counselling and networking (Shermon & Shermon, 2016). Thus, the researchers adapted the C.R.E.A.M. (Creative, Reflective, Effective, Active, Motivated) strategy, which was initially developed for enhancing self-directed autonomous learning, to help the tutors assess their teaching practices following the GROW model of performance coaching (Goal, Reality, Options, Will way forward).

Coaching and Performance

Gallwey (2000, p. 40) defines effective coaching as "…unlocking a person's potential to maximize their own performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them." Whitmore (2002, p. 23) describes coaching as "…the essential management style or tool for optimizing people's potential and performance. Commanding, demanding, instructing, persuading with threats, overt or covert, cannot produce sustainable optimal performance, even though they may get the job done." Thus, coaching is not just meant for enhancing poor performance, it can also be used to help project team members or staff tutors develop and achieve their goals, while producing better results on their projects or enhancing their teaching practices. Whitmore (2002, p. 28) highlighted the importance of coaching to enhance performance: "if either the quality of a performance or learning from the experience is important, coaching is a must." This importance of a coach suggests that effective coaching is necessary for progression of performance.

Coaching offers a vehicle for analysis, reflection and action that ultimately enables individuals to achieve success in one or more areas of their life or work. It also encourages a commitment to action and the development of lasting personal growth and change. Moreover, it maintains unconditional positive esteem in that the coach is at all times supportive and non-judgmental of the individuals; their views, lifestyle and aspirations. The role of the coach is to encourage individuals to work within their area of personal competencies; continually improve these

competencies and develop new developmental associations where necessary to achieve their goals in light of their qualifications and experience with high performance (Knight et al., 2015; Shermon & Shermon, 2016). The coach should make sure that individuals are working on developing their own competencies, not on developing unhealthy dependencies on the coaching relationship. Individuals will be able to evaluate the outcomes of the coaching process and use objective measures wherever possible to ensure that the relationship with their coach is successful and that they are achieving their personal goals and maximizing their performance.

GROW Model of Performance Coaching

In the 1980s, Sir John Whitmore and his team of performance consultants developed the GROW model which is now firmly embedded in the world of business coaching (Whitmore, 2009). GROW stands for: Goal, Reality, Options, and Will way forward. For establishing the *Goal*, the coach should prepare individuals to set their Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timed (SMART) goals and examine if these goals fit with the overall career objectives and the team's objectives. Then, the coach should set an observation checklist to follow up the individuals' accomplishment of these goals. After that, the coach should guide the individuals towards examining the current *Reality* by evaluating what is happening now and what sort of obstacles stand in the way, setting milestones to take the necessary steps towards the target goals, picturing the effect of this on the long run, and identifying any potential conflict of their goals with other goals or objectives. Thus, individuals should be guided to explore different available *Options* to solve a present problem or to perform a given task better out of their understanding of the current reality. Then, the individuals should evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each option. They should be guided to consider the weight of each option and what should be done to achieve it. Finally, the coach helps individuals to set the *Will* by deciding what they will do next within a certain timeframe keeping in mind what type of obstacles might hinder their progress and how to overcome them as shown in Figure 1 below (Whitmore, 2009).

Figure 1: GROW Model of Performance Coaching

Adapted from Coaching for Performance by John Whitmore, 4th Edition, 2009. Source: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/ten-powerful-coaching-questions-ask-performance-choo-gaicd

A good example of the GROW Model of Performance Coaching is driving a car. Before driving, a *Goal* should be identified by specifying the destination of the desired location and target. Then the driver should explore the current *Reality,* such as checking the car tires, oil level and petrol. Then, the driver should choose from different *Options* the most effective route that would save time, effort and money to reach the chosen destination. Finally, s/he *Will* start driving using his/her competence as a licensed driver to get to the desired destination. While driving the role of the coach is highlighted. The coach should guide the driver to mind the

mirror's blind spot, announcing that there is another car approaching. Similarly, a coach can also guide tutors to plan their teaching and improve their performance by highlighting their strengths and overcoming their flaws.

Characteristics of an Effective Coach

A good coach should promote an individual's self-evaluation and reflection of his/her own performances. In sports, "a coach who is other than consistently enthusiastic, whatever the team's results or mood is in the wrong job" (Wade, 1997, p. 22). Thus, an effective coach "…applies intelligence to leadership and can involve persuasion and compelling players to go along with them" (Wade, 1997, p. 30). In such a field, if players or athletes are not led or steered properly through training, they may feel unsure of what the coach is trying to achieve and reluctant to change their training or technique. Similarly, if tutors are not inducted or guided appropriately towards the best teaching methods for achieving the target learning outcomes, they might lose track of what should be delivered and how to help learners reach these desired outcomes. Wade (1997) believes that in order for coaching to be effective the coach must exhibit a number of qualities such as: leadership and intelligence, analytical ability, confidence and decisiveness, integrity and reliability, vision and imagination, coping with unpleasantness, organization and administration, and enthusiasm. An effective coach should provide formative evaluation and constructive reflection on individuals' performance including both areas of good execution and areas which need improvement and should suggest suitable models for each one.

A Coach as a Pragmatic Leader

Adopting the pragmatic leadership approach, the researchers acted as thoughtful leaders, sensitive to the organizational environment, and willing to modify goals or strategies periodically. Pragmatic leadership means to develop a leadership competence that balances the best elements of efficiency and context.

> In order to meet the needs of stakeholders, clients or customers, you may need to be flexible to ensure that the day-to-day priorities of your team – and the over-arching priorities of the organization – can adjust to remain responsive, relevant and competitive……the pragmatic leader is able to deal with the day-to-day issues and challenges in a straight forward, practical manner…….pragmatic leadership is made up to two essential components: principles and experience (Bedell-Avers et al., 2009, p. 301).

In pragmatic leadership, one of the most important roles is to coach your team members to do their best. By doing this, you get them to be better decision makers, problem solvers, continuous learners for new skills, and career oriented. For the purpose of this study, the researchers adopted concepts like honesty, integrity, fairness and transparency to coach their staff tutors as pragmatic leaders (Biesta & Burbules, 2003). They followed an open-door policy with their staff tutors and started coaching and leading with examples. In addition, they worked hard on building trust and gaining their tutors' confidence through establishing a friendly atmosphere, empowering their staff, killing rumours/gossips, acknowledging efforts and providing financial and/or moral incentives. Once the leaders' values are aligned with principles and built on experience, they could be confident that their chosen approach was the correct, defensible and sustainable one (Bedell-Avers et al., 2009). Therefore, the researchers adapted Cottrell's C.R.E.A.M. strategy to coach their team's teaching practices.

C.R.E.A.M. Strategy

Cottrell (2008) recommends the C.R.E.A.M strategy for learning. She focuses on developing self-learning skills and equipping learners with the necessary study skills to pursue their academic major at a university level. In the project described here, the researchers worked on applying the C.R.E.A.M strategy to coach their staff tutors' teaching by highlighting their strengths and helping them to discover their areas of improvement.

To promote *Creativity*, the researchers coached their team to increase their confidence in using their own individual strategies and styles that work best for them. In addition, the tutors were encouraged to apply their imagination to their teaching practices. As for being *Reflective*, the researchers guided their team to reflect on and evaluate their own performance identifying their strengths, areas of improvement and what is missing in their class. They were also encouraged to pay class visits to their colleagues' classes to learn from each other.

Moreover, the tutors were also encouraged to make their teaching practices *Effective* by understanding their students' needs and having their state of mind, space, time and materials organized in the ways that best suit their way of teaching. Consequently, with enough planning and preparation, the tutors will make their teaching effective, saving time, effort and money.

Being *Active* is one of the important dimensions in Cottrell's strategy (2008). Active teaching exists when tutors are involved in what they are teaching and constantly looking for ways of getting their students be more involved in and responsible for what they are learning through using games, debates, role plays, simulations, field trips, etc. The tutors should set short-term goals and involve their students in setting these goals. They should be aware that their level of *Motivation* will affect their success and their students' success as well. Thus, tutors should be coached that motivation is the key for pursuing goals, reaching success, and that attitude is everything. If students feel that their tutors are not motivated, they will not be motivated. To sum up, the C.R.E.A.M strategy is a general principle which encourages individuals to constantly stop, think and reflect on ways of improving the way they teach and learn.

Methodology

Statement of the Problem

Based on a review of the literature, the researchers' observations, and the lack of a deliberate model/strategy for training and coaching the staff tutors at Arab Open University (AOU), Kuwait Branch, the educational question raised was how to coach rather than monitor AOU tutors. To answer this question, Cottrell's (2008) C.R.E.A.M. strategy was applied to coach these tutors and to help them to discover and develop their teaching performance following the GROW Model as a framework for structuring both team and individual coaching sessions.

Participants

The implementation of this study involved a sample of 19 staff tutors, 7 of whom were female and the rest male. The age group of the participants ranged from 24 to 53 years old. These tutors were teaching the general English language courses at the Foundation Program, English Language Unit (ELU), Arab Open University (AOU), Kuwait Branch for not less than two academic semesters.

Duration

The duration of the project was one academic semester. It started in the fall/first semester of the academic year 2015/2016 and continued till the end of the academic semester.

Hypothesis

The project aimed to investigate the effect of Cottrell's C.R.E.A.M. strategy on improving the staff tutors' teaching performance following the GROW Model of performance coaching. Cottrell's strategy was initially developed for enhancing the learner's self-directed/autonomous learning. For the purpose of this project, the researchers applied C.R.E.A.M. strategy as a self-assessment and observation tool to coach their tutors to discover their teaching potentials and maximize them so as to be able to coach their students towards being self-directed learners.

Measures

Data for this study were collected through fifteen items developed for observing and assessing the staff tutors' performance in teaching general English language at the Foundation Program (appendix A). The Observation/Self-Assessment Checklist was designed to test the five dimensions of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy (Creativity, Reflective, Effective, Active, and Motivation). The checklist was developed by the researchers based on the five dimensions of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy. The tool was verified by an external assessor the number of the checklist items was reduced from twenty-three to fifteen to avoid repetition of some items and to give equal weight to each dimension. For the purposes of this study, the checklist was used by the tutors as a self-assessment tool and by the head of the Foundation Program as a general summative assessment tool for teaching performance. The tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program's observation response for each tutor were statistically analysed and a correlation was explored using SPSS.

Research Design

A descriptive design was adopted to review and survey previous literature and studies related to the variables (C.R.E.A.M. strategy and GROW model of performance coaching). One group design with pre-post measure was adopted to assess the tutors' teaching performance using the observation/self-assessment checklist.

Setting/Delivery

A two-day coaching/training session was conducted at the beginning of the fall semester of the academic year 2015/2016 to coach the staff tutors of general English language courses at the Foundation Program. The session also aimed to maximize the tutors' teaching potentials by familiarizing them with the course aims, intended learning outcomes, materials, and assessment tools, in addition to sharing best teaching practices. This coaching session was to help them develop the learners' general English language skills and equip these learners with the necessary study skills to pursue their academic major at a university level. After that, two induction sessions were presented to familiarize the same staff tutors with the teaching methods, study calendars, assessment rubrics and group/double marking. This is in addition to conducting a 360-evaluation cycle based on student and peer feedback and the head of the Foundation Program feedback.

Instruments/Assessment Tools

One instrument was used twice to measure the variables of the study. An observation/self-assessment checklist was developed to be used by the tutors to assess their Creative, Reflective, Effective, Active, and Motivated teaching practices at the beginning of the semester. Then, the same checklist was used by the head of the foundation program as an observation checklist to evaluate these practices at the end of the same semester. The results were statistically analysed and a correlation was explored.

Results and Discussion

The 19 tutors responded to the fifteen questions of the self-assessment checklist at the beginning of the fall semester of the academic year 2015/2016 to assess their Creative, Reflective, Effective, Active, and Motivated teaching practices. They were asked to provide a brief description of their experience after responding to the questions and analysing their own data. They were asked to share their findings regarding what they learned about themselves and how far they were applying the C.R.E.A.M. strategy in their teaching practices. They were also asked to share their future plans to improve their teaching practices in light of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy. The tutors' responses to each dimension of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy and the observation for each one was statistically analysed and a correlation between each tutor's self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program (Rater) observation were explored as indicated below.
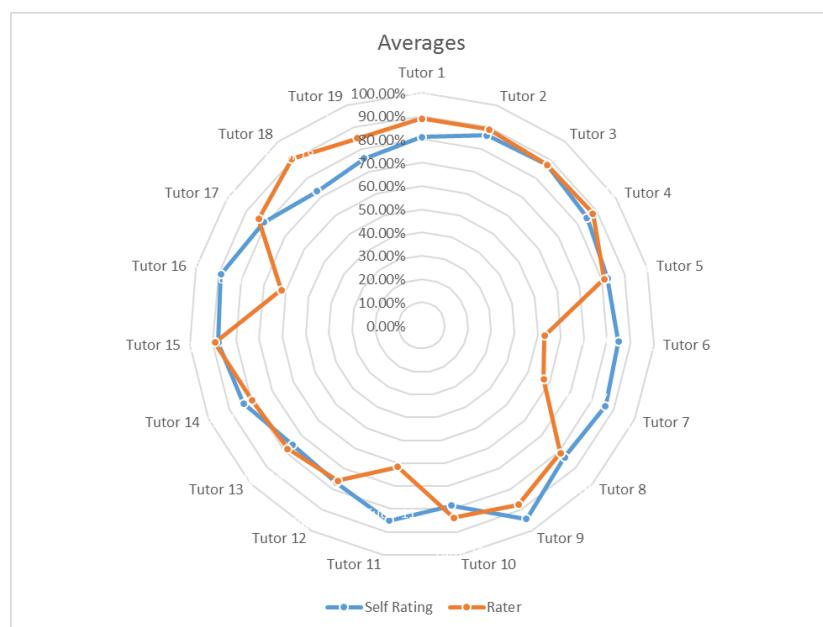

Figure 2: The Overall Correlation Averages between Tutors' Self-Assessment Responses and head of the Foundation Program (Rater) Observation on C.R.E.A.M. Strategy

The above radar chart (Figure 2) helped in detecting the correspondence between the two sets of data. It demonstrated the similarities and discrepancies across individuals. As shown in the above graph (Figure 2), there were a few discrepancies between some of the tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program observation. As a result, the head of the Foundation Program held an individual one-to-one coaching session with each tutor. During this coaching session, the head of the Foundation Program discussed each dimention

of the CREAM starategy to make sure that the concept was clear to this tutor and provided relevant field examples to clarify each dimension and how to implement it in teaching.
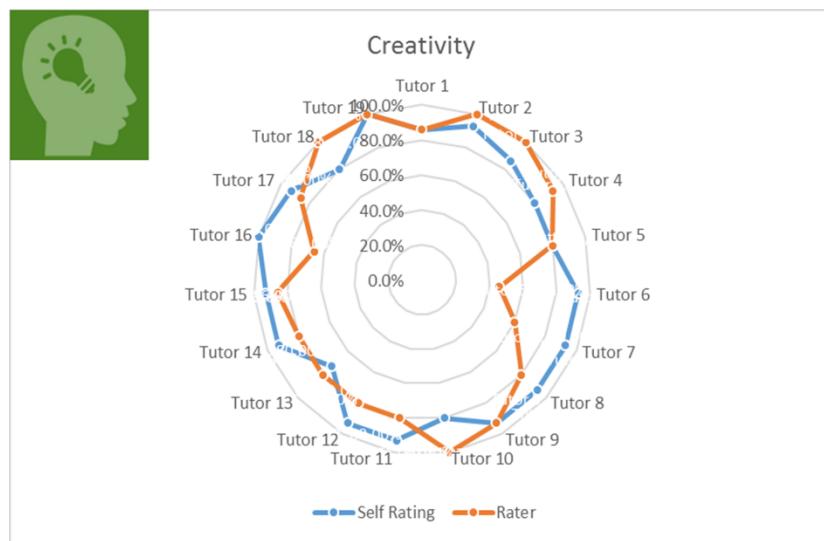

Figure 3: The Correlation between Tutors' Self-Assessment Responses and head of the Foundation Program (Rater) Observation on the Creativity Dimension

As shown in the above graph (Figure 3), there were a few discrepancies between some of the tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program observation on the creativity dimension. Thus, the head of the Foundation Program provided a relevant example that occurred during teaching the Oral and Presentation course. She explained that when teaching a speaking course, a tutor must be extremely creative to encourage students to come at the front of the class and speak up for two minutes. In one of the speaking classes, the chapter was about healthy food, so the head of the Foundation Program came to class wearing a chef's hat and an apron. She displayed toy cooking equipment and started the lesson teaching the students a funny recipe as to how to cook fried eggs. Then, the students were given five minutes to prepare a recipe of their own and come to the front of the class to present it. The students reported that this activity was so much fun for them and created a very comfortable atmosphere where all students had the courage to participate in the class discussion and speak up. Another creative example was in a speaking course. The chapter discussed practising sports, so the head of the Foundation Program arrived in class wearing sports clothes and holding a volley ball. Then she and the students did an aerobics session before they started passing the volleyball and discussing the target topic.
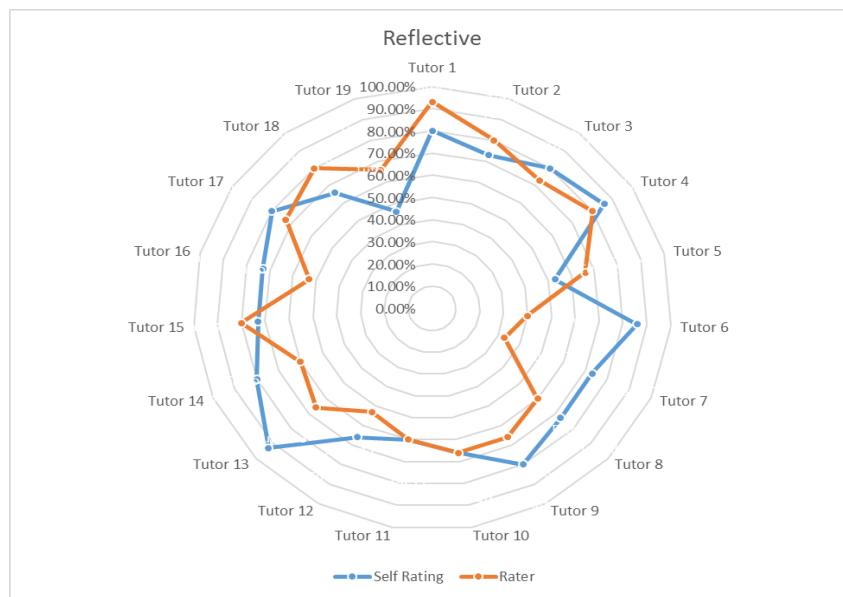
Figure 4: The Correlation between Tutors' Self-Assessment Responses and head of the Foundation Program (Rater) Observation on the Reflective Dimension

As shown in the above graph (Figure 4), there were a few discrepancies between some of the tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program observation on the reflective dimension. Accordingly, the head of the Foundation Program provided the following example discussing the importance of being reflective on one's own teaching practices. She stated that going into a lecture without being ready is very bad and does not sound professional at all. She shared an authentic experience when she was asked to teach a writing course for business studies with a very short notice to prepare the course. After finishing the first lecture, she left the class and started crying because she reflected on her teaching practice and discovered that the lecture went so bad thus she gave herself a zero-satisfaction degree. She advised the tutors that they should frequently reflect on their teaching practices. Thus, educators should evaluate and ask themselves every time they finish a lecture: "How did I do? Did I deliver the information in a suitable/right way? Did the students receive and assimilate the information I delivered well?" By asking these reflective questions, educators can detect the areas that need improvement by themselves.

Figure 5: The Correlation between Tutors' Self-Assessment Responses and head of the Foundation Program (Rater) Observation on the Effective Dimension

As shown in the above graph (Figure 5), there were a few discrepancies between some of the tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program observation on the effective dimension. Therefore, the head of the Foundation Program provided the following example discussing how organizing and managing one's own time can lead to effective teaching practices that would help the tutors reach the target learning outcomes. Being an effective tutor means that you should be highly productive- saving time, effort and money while performing any task. You need to know what your students' needs are. You have to plan your lecture well. Even though you might be teaching the same subject for more than one semester using the same course guide, calendar and material, you need to have a clear lesson plan for each session that might require few adjustments based on your students' needs. Moreover, you should realize that you set an ideal example to your students, you cannot ask them to be on time if you are not.
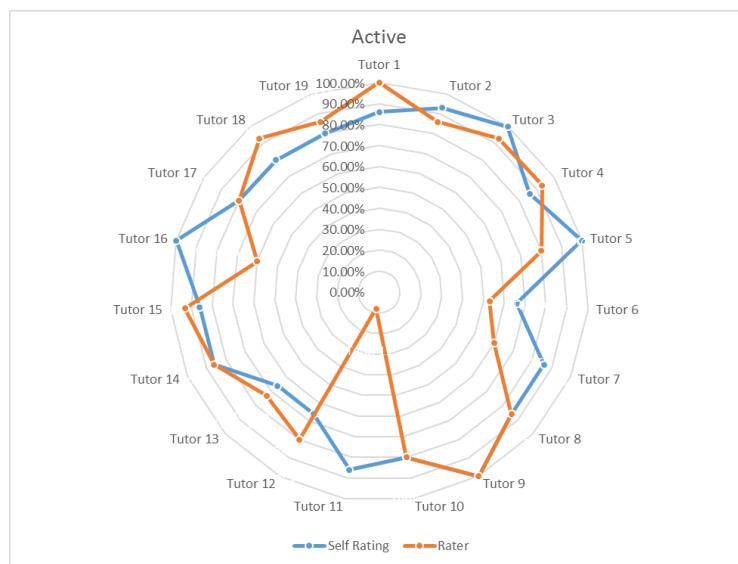

Figure 6: The Correlation between Tutors' Self-Assessment Responses and head of the Foundation Program (Rater) Observation on the Active Dimension

As shown in the above graph (Figure 6), there were a few discrepancies between some of the tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program observation on the active dimension. Consequently, the head of the Foundation Program provided the following example regarding the level of students' involvement in setting goals and class interaction. The head of the Foundation Program stated that in all classes tutors must make sure that their students are involved in all sorts of activities. The tutors should divide their students into groups and ask them to write a short script on a given topic to perform a role-play using their own words and ideas. Tutors can ask students to use their mobile phones because they like the idea of using them in class and at the same time, they will be involved in doing something that is common among all. Students can use their mobile phones to google a topic or even a word.
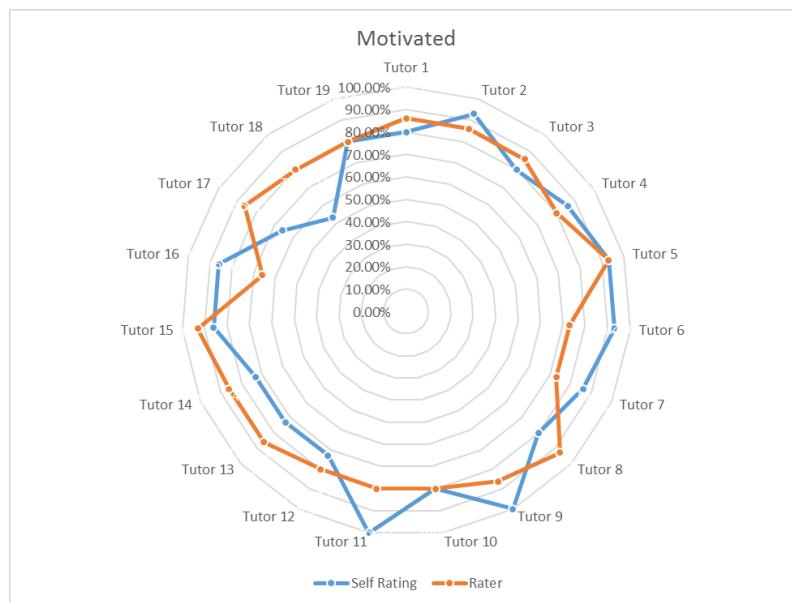

Figure 7: The Correlation between Tutors' Self-Assessment Responses and head of the Foundation Program (Rater) Observation on the Motivation Dimension

As shown in the above graph (Figure 7), there were a few discrepancies between some of the tutors' self-assessment responses and the head of the Foundation Program observation on the motivation dimension. As a result, the head of the Foundation Program provided the following example. As a coach, you need to be motivated first, then, you can ask your staff tutors to be motivated; same applies for your students. You should be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically so as to be able to get your students motivated. Your staff tutors should see and feel that you are motivated, thus they will reflect this motivational attitude on their students. They will reward them since they have been rewarded by their coach/leader. The head of the Foundation Program used a variety of motivational techniques such as sharing motivational stories, awarding distinguished performance, empowering with needed authority, delegating tasks and leading with examples. For example, she held an end of semester meeting to acknowledge each tutor's effort and share good practices. She bought gifts and rewards to distinguished tutors, group leaders and coordinators to encourage them to keep high teaching performance and encourage others to do their best so as to be awarded the following semester. There are many ways of motivating staff tutors and students and encouraging creativity.

After detecting the above discrepancies, a two-day coaching/training session was conducted at the beginning of the semester to maximize the benefits of the foundation tutors' potentials by

familiarizing them with the course material, teaching methods, study calendars, and sharing best teaching practices. The aim of this training session was to help them develop the learners' general English language skills and equip these learners with the necessary study skills to pursue their academic major at a university level. After the midterm exams, two induction sessions were presented to familiarize the tutors with the assessment rubrics and group/double marking. This is in addition to conducting a 360-evaluation cycle based on students' feedback, peers' feedback and head of the program feedback.

At the end of the project, the tutors were asked to respond to the questionnaire again. They were encouraged to give detailed feedback on what changed in their teaching practice. The mean scores of the tutors' self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation in the five dimensions of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy was statistically analysed and Pearson coefficient was calculated to measure if there was a significant difference between the tutors' assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation at the end of the project. The statistical results presented in table (1) below show the mean scores of the tutors' self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation in the five dimensions of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy. There is small difference between the tutors' self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation, p 0.027 (p> 0.05).

Table 1: Mean scores of tutors' self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program (Rater) observation

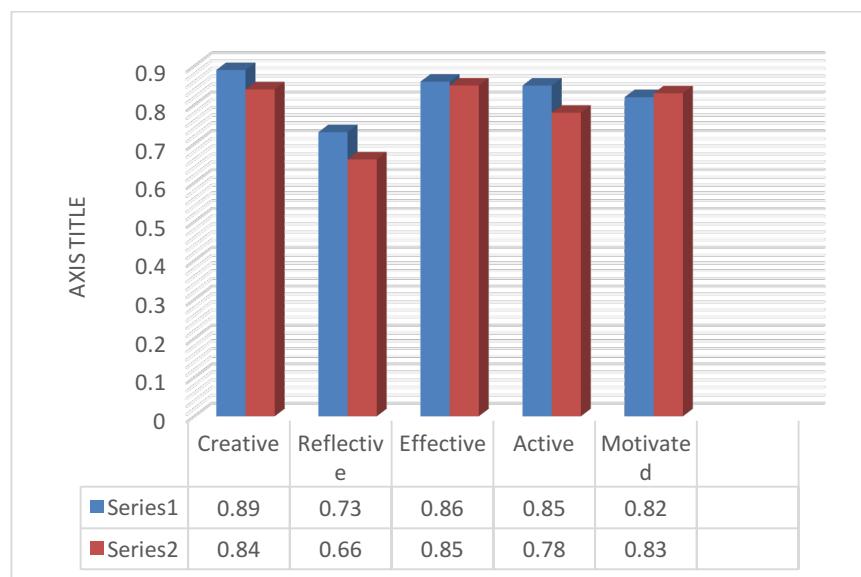| Items analyzed	Particip ants #	Creative Mean	Reflective Mean	Effective Mean	Active Mean	Motivated Mean	Pearson Coeffici ent r
Tutors' self-assessment	19	0.89	0.73	0.86	0.85	0.82	0.0.027
Rater's observation	19	0.84	0.66	0.85	0.78	0.83	

Figure 8: The mean score of tutors' self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation

The findings show between .01 and .07 discrepancies between the mean sores of the tutor's self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation. This indicates that the majority of the staff tutors exhibited distinguished performance in the five dimensions of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy by the end of the project especially after following GROW model to coach their teaching practices. All the 19 tutors received group coaching sessions and only three tutors received individual on-to-one coaching sessions based on the discrepancies detected from the radar charts.

Conclusion

The findings of this study can be summarized as follows. Factors that contribute to the success of coaching teaching practices using the C.R.E.A.M. strategy are leading with examples, adopting open door policy, building trust and gaining confidence through establishing a friendly atmosphere, empowering staff, killing rumours/gossip, acknowledging effort and providing incentives whether financial or moral incentives. The most important success factor was showing empathy and tolerance because we are all human being and we can learn from our mistakes. In addition, the slight difference in the mean score of the tutor's self-assessment and the head of the Foundation Program observation at the end of the project confirms the role of the GROW model in improving these tutors' teaching practices.

However, there were a few challenges that have acted as obstacles in front of the success of this study. These failure factors should be avoided to be able to coach tutors successfully such as resistance of some tutors to accept change and move out of their comfort zone, emergence of personal issues that could make the tutors distrust their coach/leader, unconvincing goals and visions, unclear tasks and instructions, impractical methods, insufficient tools, and unprofessional assessment techniques whether formative and/or summative assessment.

Recommendations

In light of the previous data analysis and the coaching with examples technique, the following can be recommended. It is advisable to encourage adoption of the C.R.E.A.M. strategy across AOU branches in the following ways: general course coordinators to coach branch course coordinators, branch course coordinators to coach their teams, and team leaders to coach tutors. Finally, it is highly recommended to self assess your own teaching in the light of C.R.E.A.M. strategy.

References

Bedell-Avers, K., Hunter, S. T., Angie, A. D., Eubanks, D. L., & Mumford, M. D. (2009).

Charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic leaders: An examination of leader-leader interactions. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(3), 299-315.

Biesta, G. J. J. & Burbules, N. (2003). *Pragmatism and educational research.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Clarke, A. (2008). *E-learning skills*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cottrell, S. (2008). *The study skills handbook.* UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gallwey, W. T. (2000). *The inner game of work.* New York: Random House.

Geiger, R.L, (2011). *Iconic leaders in higher education: Perspectives on the history of higher education.* Rutgers, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Knight, J., Elford, M. D., Hock, M. F., Dunekack, D., Bradley, B., Deshler, D. D., & Knight, D.S., (2015). Three steps to great coaching: A simple but powerful instructional coaching cycle nets results. *Journal of Staff Development, 36*(1), 10-18.

Knight, J. (2013). High-impact instruction: A framework for great teaching. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Parsloe, E. (1999). The Manager as a coach and mentor. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development.

Shermon, G., & Shermon, K. (2016). *Business of staffing: A talent agenda.* Lulu Publishing Services.

Wade, A. (1997). *Principles of effective coaching.* Spring City, PA: Reedswain Books & Videos.

Whitmore, J. (2009). *Coaching for performance.* London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Corresponding author: Marine Milad
Email: marinemilad@yahoo.com

Appendix A

Observation / Self-Assessment Checklist

Applying CREAM Strategy

Tutor's Name: _____

Course (s): _____   Date: _____

CREAM strategy was developed by Stella Cottrell, an international bestselling author, to promote self-directive/autonomous learning. The aim of this self-assessment tool is to measure how far you apply CREAM strategy on your teaching.

Read each statement carefully and indicate how frequently it applies to your teaching style (always, often, sometimes, rarely or never) by Putting ☑ in the box that best describes your teaching.

Statement	Likert Scale				
	Always 5	**Often 4**	**Sometimes 3**	**Rarely 2**	**Never 1**
1. I have the confidence to use my own individual strategies and styles that work best for teaching.					
2. I challenge myself to be creative and apply my imagination to my teaching.					
3. I am a curious person. I ask my students some questions to get to know them well and discover their needs.					
4. I reflect and evaluate my own teaching performance through identifying my strengths and weaknesses.					
5. I ask myself what is missing in my class.					
6. I do peer class visits and I make use of the feedback I receive from other tutors.					
7. I set realistic, measurable mini-goals and take things one step at a time.					
8. I organize and manage my time properly and be in class on time.					
9. I put myself into an extremely teaching mood and make my classes as enjoyable as possible.					
10. I involve my students in my teaching by participating in					

setting intended goals to take responsibility of learning.					
11. I look for links between different things to facilitate my students' constructive learning.					
12. I take charge of my class and manage it like a project.					
13. I see difficulties as challenges and opportunities for progress because every problem has a solution.					
14. I believe that my level of motivation will affect my success.					
15. When I meet my goals, I reward myself and set more challenging goals.					

Write your score below:

Creative	Reflective	Effective	Active	Motivated
1. ------	4. -----	7. -----	10. -----	13. -----
2. ------	5. -----	8. -----	11. -----	14. -----
3. ------	6. -----	9. -----	12. -----	15. -----
-----/15	-----/15	-----/15	-----/15	-----/15

Percentage of CREAM Strategy = Total sum of all columns × 100/75

------ × 100÷75 = --------%

Reflection on the checklist:

1. **What did you learn about yourself?**

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. **What do you plan to do to improve your teaching style in the light of CREAM strategy?**

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____