



# Coole Insight Ltd

COACHING, MENTORING & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICES

Steve Coole | Director & Founder | Since 2018

## About Coole Insight Ltd

Steve Coole is the former Director of the National Union of Students in Wales and has experience of working directly with well over 100 different students' unions across the UK and it's four nations over the course of his career. Steve's breadth and depth of experience in the students' union sector is second to none when it comes to people and organisational development, specialising in strategy, culture, governance and democracy. In addition, Steve has supported international students' union projects, including a programme to support the development of students' unions as organisations within the Commonwealth.

Steve established Coole Insight in December 2018 and the company has gone from strength to strength, growing substantially since its foundation. This is reflected in the sheer volume of [clients](#) that have enquired about or used the services of Coole Insight which demonstrates Steve's credibility, reputation, and [the high regard in which he is held](#). Steve is also a registered associate for Advance HE, who use Steve specifically for his governance knowledge and expertise. In addition to his organisational development work, Steve runs an annual coaching programme for elected student leaders and full-time permanent staff within education, young leaders in charities, as well as those involved with community-based projects. Steve also provides a mentoring service for new Chief Executive Officers, senior managers, and first-time managers.

## Our overall offer

Established in 2018, Coole Insight Ltd has built a substantial and diverse client base, supporting organisations to improve their overall performance. Whilst coaching and mentoring is our primary service offer, we also have the capacity, experience and client recommendations for our work on:

- Trustee Board Development
  - Skills Audits
  - Role and Function training
  - Self-assessment reviews and thematic report
  - Board observation and report
- Governance & Democracy Reviews
- Conflict Resolution and Mediation
- Providing interim senior management support & additional capacity
- Organisational reviews including strategy, team performance and funding bids
- Specialist research and investigative projects
- Workplace Culture Reviews

We provide a free consultation meeting for all prospective clients via telephone, online meetings and where possible, by travelling to meet the client face to face to start building a rapport, and to learn more about you and the organisation\*. Our quotes are tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each client. Our prices are very competitive, and this is purely because we enjoy what we do, we believe in getting the right thing done, and we genuinely care about playing our part in helping to improve the world, through people. Our track record, experience and quality speaks for itself through the testimonials and recommendations that we have received.

For more information please do get in touch with Steve:

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Telephone: 07811 305 376.

\*For face to face consultations we ask for reasonable travel costs to be covered.

### **Additional Capacity**

We have put together longer-term packages for clients that have used multiple parts of our service offer, and we tailor our quotes based on the volume of services requested, timescales and budget. Packages can range from different interventions staggered throughout the year or continuous week-to-week support for the organisation, for example providing additional leadership and management capacity during interim or transitional periods.

### **Services**

We know that our experience coupled with the access to our network means that clients will receive excellent value for money. However, we also put our money where our mouth is when we say that we genuinely enjoy what we do and are passionate about the impact we want to create. We want to create impact on the widest possible scale, which is why we operate across the UK and with an ambition to go further. In practice this means we will use the free consultations to negotiate an appropriate package with the client which best suits their budget and the priorities that they require support with.

Clients can therefore pick and choose from the following list of interventions that can be discussed with Coole Insight at the free consultation:

- Students' Union Officer Support Programme
  - 3 onsite visits to plan the year, mid-year review and a 360-degree survey and feedback session
  - Access to an advice line for all officers over a 12-month period
  - CV Development, self-brand and future career planning
  - Personal and wellbeing plan for managing your year in office
- Chief Executive Officer / Senior Staff Mentoring
  - Up to 3 face to face meetings a year (additional meetings are charged for)
  - Access to Steve via email and telephone over a 12-month period
- Action Learning Sets for Chief Executive Officers and Senior Managers
  - Externally facilitated problem solving using the action learning method for groups of 6-8
  - We source the venue and negotiate discounts with any service providers where possible (for example hotels, restaurants and evening entertainment)
  - Access to the wider Coole Insight Network
  - Access to Steve via email and telephone over a 12-month period
- Student Officer Induction and Handover
  - 1-day training on leadership, and the role and function of student officers
  - 1-day facilitated handover session between outgoing and incoming student officers
  - 1-day training on the role and function of a Trustee
  - 1-day team building facilitation
- Team coaching, mediation and conflict resolution
  - 1-day interviews and group session to assess team performance and the creation of team contracts
- One off interventional support
  - Any additional time to the above services will be charged based on our lowest day-rate.

## Student Officer Support

*"I have been able to confidently highlight areas of concern and action these in a positive way through a method that I wouldn't have used without Steve's help"*



*"During induction for my second year, he (Steve) helped the team to become more cohesive, supported us in refining our workloads and aided our personal development"*



## Coaching & Mentoring - What our clients say

"Wrexham Glyndwr SU sought out Steve Coole to assist the elected Sabbatical Officers in their roles for the 2019/20 academic year. This was so that the officers had an external mentor that would help plan out their goals, working load and map out the year ahead. Steve came highly recommended which was the reason for asking him to come on board. During my contact time I have been able to confidently highlight areas of concern and action these in a positive way through a method that I wouldn't have used without Steve's help. As well as this, you can talk to Steve in a causal manner where he offers insight into potential thinking for the future whilst also managing your current expectations. Steve has a large network of people who may be able to offer extra assistance both presently and for your future. Also, part of this service is that Steve is always at the end of the phone should anything crop up and is happy to help outside of the face to face contact time. I was extremely happy with Steve's help and professionalism." **Kieran Irwin, SU President, Wrexham Glyndwr Students' Union, January 2020**

"Entering a new job is always nerve wrecking and sometimes intimidating, especially when entering a world as diverse and varied as that of Student Unions. Working with Steve has given me the confidence to thrive within my role, always knowing that I have help and support on hand at any time. Steve is an incredibly hard working and caring individual whose passion comes across strongly in his day to day activities. He is incredibly insightful due to his own experiences in this field of work. With Steve you will always be known as a person which is extremely comforting especially when discussing any worries or concerns. This personal touch is one of my favourite things about the way Steve works as I know he is not only my coach but also a friend and confidante." **Ebony Banks, SU Vice President, Wrexham Glyndwr Students' Union, January 2020**

"Steve's support and guidance has been incredibly helpful to me as a second-year sabbatical officer. During induction for my second year, he helped the team to become more cohesive, supported us in refining our workloads and aided our personal development. From helping me navigate challenging situations in my day-to-day job, to offering advice on maintaining string stakeholder relationships, to guidance as I plan my next career move into SU's, I have greatly valued his experience and expertise"

**Sarah Redman, President Student Experience, Falmouth & Exeter Students' Union, September 2019**

## Student Officer Support

***"Having Steve as a coach has really helped me with problem solving and my own personal development. I would definitely recommend working with him"***



***"I have found Steve's advice essential in my development as an officer. He has aided me in my prioritisation of meetings, how to effectively ask questions and I thank him for this. The SU has been a happier and more productive place with Steve here"***



"It's a pleasure to work with Steve, he is very understanding, reflective and supportive in problem-solving. He helped to give me a greater understanding of professional and personal values within a workplace and the staff relationship, as it's my first job as a sabbatical officer. Having Steve as a coach has really helped me with problem solving and my own personal development. I would definitely recommend working with him." **Ismahan Nur, Vice President Post-Graduate Education, University of Westminster Students' Union, January 2020**

"Steve's depth and breadth of knowledge and experience has been invaluable to The SU and is always 'Coole' and collected when aiding conflict. Steve has made our team healthier, happier and more effective at representing students and The SU to both universities and FX Plus. Steve has also formed very effective working relationships with both universities, and I have found Steve's advice essential in my development as an officer. He has aided me in my prioritisation of meetings, how to effectively ask questions and I thank him for this. The SU has been a happier and more productive place with Steve here". **Joe Rigby, President Exeter, Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union, September 2019**

"As a sabbatical officer I've had a few one to one's with Steve to help with our progression and our sabbatical life. He has greatly given advice with my current challenges at work and how to tackle them effectively. More positively it is very helpful that he has worked in Students' Unions and is able to understand how to positively help me to progress with my work and my future career. I hope future organisations I work for has someone like him!" **Jamilla Torres, Vice President Undergraduate Education, University of Westminster, January 2020**

"From Cornwall College Students' Union to Vice President Further Education, to National President of NUS, Steve gave me consistent strategic and operational advice and support. At Cornwall Steve supported me in delivering a governance review of my college students' union, and organised officer training for me and my team. Steve continued to support me in the National Union of Students, giving me personal coaching and support that ultimately gave me the confidence to stand for national president. Steve is a conscientious, strategic leader who understands and respects student leadership. His support to me, as well as the staff and officers I have worked with has been invaluable in making difficult and important decisions." **Toni Pearce, CCSU President, NUS Vice President Further Education & NUS President 2009-15 Head of Government Relations - Oxfam**

Further student officer testimonials are available [here](#).

Senior Staff Support

*"To have the opportunity to gain insight from Steve's reflections and analysis has been invaluable. This approach has helped me to feel supported by the organisation to help both myself and the Union to succeed, as opposed to being set up to fail"*



*"I knew that Steve understood my organisation, our challenges and the journey that we have travelled on"*



"I have found the approach that Steve has taken to be extremely helpful and supportive. Steve has made such a difference to my experience of on boarding, providing opportunities to begin to connect with the organisation and to understand some of the challenges ahead before beginning in my role has helped me to make the psychological transition from one organisation and role to another. To have the opportunity to gain insight from Steve's reflections and analysis has been invaluable. This approach has helped me to feel supported by the organisation to help both myself and the Union to succeed, as opposed to being set up to fail. To know the extent of the challenges ahead has been a gift which has accelerated my learning."

**Sarah Davey, Chief Executive Officer, Falmouth & Exeter Students' Union, September 2019**

"It's always a pleasure to work with Steve. He knows his subject and can be relied upon to bring insight and understanding to any situation. But above all he truly walks the walk and embodies his professional and personal values in his work. In my role as CEO of Wales' post 16 education charity I was fortunate enough to work with Steve on a regular basis and would have no second thoughts in working with him again."

**Iestyn Davies, Chief Executive Officer, Colleges Wales, July 2018**

"As a Students' Union CEO I am accountable to a Trustee Board which meets a number of times a year. Whilst myself and my Board are confident that I am delivering excellent work and we develop well strategically; it can sometimes be harder to positively reflect and develop or to support myself to be ready for a range of challenges that I may come up against. Having been in my role as CEO at Aberystwyth Students' Union for 3 years I was looking for a mentor to spend one on one time with me to explore those reflections, opportunities and challenges and to help navigate through the day to day, to zoom out, and focus on key priorities for myself and our organisation. Having worked with Steve in his role as Director of NUS Wales I knew that Steve understood my organisation, our challenges and the journey that we have travelled on. I was also aware that he knew my own personal journey and felt that he would be able to be honestly explore my strengths and development considerations in a way that would create a supportive but challenging relationship for me to grow and achieve the best for myself and my Students' Union"

**Trish Sadler-McGrath, Chief Executive Officer, Aberystwyth Students' Union, February 2020**

## Coaching & Mentoring: What's the difference?

Coaching and mentoring are sometimes categorised as the same thing, and we are often required to explain the difference when potential clients make an enquiry. As a result, we thought it might be helpful to include a short description as to how we approach both services, as well as our methodology.

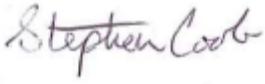
**Coaching:** Coaching is more about specific issues, tasks, opportunities or problems, and enabling somebody to go from A to B through a structured framework that is adopted by the Coach. For example, at Coole Insight we use the **GROW model** because it is a simple and effective way of assessing a situation and provides a series of simple steps that can be taken to try and improve, progress or find resolutions within a certain timeframe. The GROW model is an acronym for **G**oal – What are you trying to achieve, what's the aim? **R**eality – What are the current circumstances, barriers and opportunities that directly or indirectly impact on you achieving the goal? **O**ptions – What can be done, in practical terms to try and address the situation, what are the different scenarios that will influence your decision making? What are the risks and rewards of pursuing each option? **W**ay forward – What are you going to do? Commit to a course of action and do it! Then it is about reflection, measuring success and if needs be reevaluating the approach by going through the cycle again. The late [Sir John Whitmore](#) of Southampton University designed this approach, and it is now used extensively across the UK as an effective and simple approach to coaching. The framework is underpinned by our belief that future success is rooted in developing your own vision, personal brand, understanding the benefits of your network and managing your wellbeing whilst navigating short, medium- and longer-term courses of action.

**Mentoring:** Where coaching is based around structure, mentoring is the opposite in that there is no set path, framework or structure to the relationship between mentor and mentee. Aside from anything that the two people may agree to put in place for themselves in terms of boundaries or approach, mentoring is often solely **based on the relationship** in terms of how the relationship came to be, and how the relationship has the potential to provide benefit to both parties. Broadly speaking, a mentor is somebody who has experience or knowledge of a subject that the mentee wants to develop, learn or refine. Interestingly, when people think of 'mentors' it is often imagined that the mentor will be 'older' than the mentee and therefore have substantially more life and work experience than that of their subject. However, to simply impart knowledge and experience aligns itself more to 'teaching', which is quite different to the relationship of a mentor and a mentee. To emphasise this point, surely there is an argument to say that anybody can be a mentor if we are basing it on learning from somebody else's experience? For example:

- a) A student can mentor a college Principal about the student experience in 2020, when that Principal's experience of being a student was in 1988.
- b) A grandchild sharing how they learnt to communicate with others using a tablet, with their grandparents, who in return share their experiences around the importance of good communication
- c) An aspiring woman leader highlighting equality issues in the workplace to their male CEO, and enabling them to better understand how to improve organisational culture

The mentoring relationship will become one that blossoms into an equal and shared space for mutual learning, perspective and insight. Therefore, it is the strength of the relationship that will dictate the value and benefit that is then received by both parties.

**Contact**



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