

ACTIVITY 2.3 - Coaching Stances and Mentor Language

Purpose

To introduce mentors to the different mentoring stances and specific language stems that can support mentors in their collaborative coaching conversations with beginning teachers.

Materials

Slides #10-14

Video- [Overview of 3C's](#) (2:05) 1.5.a. Mentoring Stances 1.5.b. Mentor Language Stems

Vignettes on index cards

Facilitator Notes

This activity introduces a continuum for mentoring/coaching that encourages cooperating teachers to be flexible in using stances in response to candidates' needs. In their book *Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships*, Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman describe a practical framework for mentors to consider. The chart in packet and on slide # 10 provide an at a glance guide to the 3Cs adapted with permission by TeachOntario, Canada from their work. While these 3Cs are helpful as a frame, effective mentors demonstrate flexibility of stance and role based on the needs of the people they support. Mentoring relationships that flourish are reciprocal – all parties learn and grow!

Process/Steps

1. Introduce the Mentoring Stances (3C's) with video clip and handout in packet.
2. Emphasize effective mentors demonstrate flexibility of stance and role based on the needs of the people they support. Mentoring relationships that flourish are reciprocal – all parties learn and grow! Questions?
3. Mentor Language STEMS: This is a tool that can help you in your conversations/interactions with your candidates. The stems will help you with using collaborative coaching language in your work. See slides 12-13
4. Take a few minutes to look them over in your packet.
5. As we strengthen our skill of using the mentoring language, it will get easier for us to know what mentor stance/role we need to put on, and how to tailor our support. Let's quickly review the different types of Mentoring Language and when to use each (5 min.)
 - o *Paraphrasing*: communicates that the listener has heard what the speaker said, understood what was said and cares. Involves either restating in your own words or summarizing
 - o *Clarifying*: communicates that the listener has heard what the speaker said, but does not fully understand what was said; involves asking a question (direct or implied) to gather more information, discover the meaning of the language used, get clarity about the speaker's reasoning, seek connections between ideas, develop or maintain a focus; WHY tends to elicit a defensive response

- *Mediational Questions*: help the colleague hypothesize what might happen, analyze what worked and what didn't, imagine possibilities, compare and contrast what was planned with what ensued
 - *Suggestions*: teachable moments or spontaneous opportunities that offer the mentor a chance to fill in the instructional gaps, help the teacher make good choices, help the teacher to take the next step.
- Star the one or two stems you feel comfortable implementing (Slide 14)
6. Practice: Form pairs, take turns assuming the role of candidate or mentor. Choose a Vignette from the six in your participant packet and have a short conversation. The Mentor should practice incorporating the Mentor Language Stems.
 7. Afterward, decide which Mentoring Stance(s) the mentor used and why. (10 min. each role, 5 min debrief)
 8. Ask the whole group to reflect: How comfortable were you as the mentor using Mentor language? Which stance did you take and why? Ask how they felt when in candidate role in relation to the stance and language the mentor used.

Time

25-20 min.

Adapted from and based on [TeachOntario Canada](#)

Supporting Resources for New Teacher Mentor 101 Workshop

Portions excerpted from Mentoring New Teachers through Collaborative Coaching: Facilitation and Training Guide- WestEd

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Ministry of Education

MENTORING MOMENTS: ROLES & STANCES OF AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

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Consulting / Collaborating / Coaching (The 3Cs) at a Glance

In their book *Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships* Laura Lipton & Bruce Wellman provide a practical framework for mentors to consider as they work with (and learn from) beginning teachers. The chart below provides an at a glance guide to the 3Cs of mentorship adapted with permission from their work. While these 3Cs are helpful as a frame, effective mentors demonstrate **flexibility of stance and role** based on the needs of the beginning teacher. Mentoring relationships that flourish are reciprocal – all parties learn and grow!

Consultant

Offering Support and Providing Resources



CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentor shares key information about logistics, school culture, students, curriculum, and teaching practices
- Beyond simple advice, a consultant provides the “why,” “what,” and “how” of their thinking

CUES

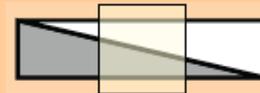
- Credible voice / Use of pronoun “I” / Phrases like “it’s important to”.... “keep in mind that”

CAUTIONS

- We tend to default to this stance / Overuse can build dependency on the Mentor

Collaborator

Creating Challenge and Encouraging Growth



CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentor and beginning teacher “co-develop” strategies and approaches
- 50/50 pattern of interaction and idea production

CUES

- Confident, approachable voice / Use of pronoun “we” / Phrases like “let’s think about”.... “how might we”

CAUTIONS

- Mentors need to ensure collaboration is authentic and they don’t take over and assume the consultant stance

Coach

Facilitating Professional Vision



CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentor supports the beginning teacher’s internal idea production through inquiry and paraphrase
- Ultimate aim is to develop the beginning teacher’s internal resources for self-coaching and independence

CUES

- Approachable voice, attending fully / Use of pronoun “you”
- Questions like “what might be some ways to?”.... “given all that you know, what options are you considering?”

CAUTIONS

- Stance can cause frustration if beginning teacher lacks internal resources for idea generation



MENTORING MOMENTS: ROLES & STANCES OF AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

Consulting / Collaborating / Coaching in Action

Below are some “illustrative examples” of what each of the 3Cs could look like in action. For additional mentoring resources, including month by month ideas for mentors, please visit and join our online [Mentoring Moments NING](http://mentoringmoments.ning.com) at: <http://mentoringmoments.ning.com>

Consultant

Offering Support and Providing Resources



THINK ALOUD

- In addition to giving a suggestion or providing a solution, add the thinking that led to it, the considerations that were taken into account and the reasons for the final choice

OFFER A MENU

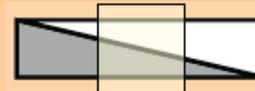
- Support the beginning teacher’s capacity for decision-making by explicitly offering a menu of possible solutions or choices, and discussing each

PRODUCE AN IDEA BANK

- Create an idea bank the beginning teacher can refer to, such as a series of tips on classroom management

Collaborator

Creating Challenge and Encouraging Growth



CO-PLAN / CO-TEACH

- Work with the beginning teacher to create a lesson or unit of study and extend the collaboration by teaching together

BECOME STUDY PARTNERS

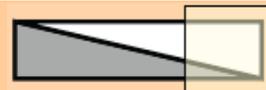
- Learn together with the beginning teacher about a new instructional methodology or engage in article or book study, followed by a sharing of experiences in the classroom

EXPLORE CASE STUDIES

- Use case studies as a context for dialogue about professional practice, to provide a meaningful learning experience for both the mentor and the beginning teacher

Coach

Facilitating Professional Vision



REMAIN NON-JUDGMENTAL

- Maintain an effective coaching practice by ensuring that judgements are made only by the beginning teacher as he or she plans, reflects, problem-solves and makes choices

INQUIRE

- Ask the beginning teacher about successes, concerns or issues he or she wants to discuss, using open-ended questions designed to encourage thinking and invite choice

REFLECT ON GOALS

- Engage in conversations focusing on the beginning teacher’s learning interests and goals, balancing support and challenge by marking successes and articulating new arenas for learning

Supporting Resources for New Teacher Mentor 101 Workshop
Mentoring Language Chart

Paraphrasing	Clarifying	Mediational Questions
<p>Paraphrasing communicates that the listener has...</p> <p>HEARD what the speaker said UNDERSTOOD what was said CARES</p> <p>Paraphrasing involves either: RESTATING in your own words SUMMARIZING</p> <p><u>Some possible paraphrasing stems include the following:</u> So, ...</p> <p>In other words, ... What I'm hearing then, ... What I hear you saying, ... From what I hear you say, ... I'm hearing many things, ... As I listen to you I'm hearing, ...</p>	<p>NOTE: WHY tends to elicit a defensive response</p> <p>Clarifying communicates that the listener has... HEARD what the speaker said BUT does NOT fully UNDERSTAND what was said</p> <p>Clarifying involves ASKING A QUESTION to: Gather more information Discover the meaning of the language used Get clarity about the speaker's reasoning Seek connections between ideas Develop or maintain focus</p> <p><u>Some possible clarifying stems include the following:</u> Would you tell me a little more about ...? Let me see if I understand ... I'd be interested in hearing more about ... It'd help me understand if you'd give me an example of... So, are you saying/suggesting ...? Tell me how that ideas is like (different from) To what extent ...? I'm curious to know more about ... I'm intrigued by .../I'm interested in.../I wonder...</p>	<p>Mediational questions help the colleague: HYPOTHESIZE what might happen, ANALYZE what worked or didn't IMAGINE possibilities COMPARE & CONTRAST what was planned with what ensued</p> <p><u>Some Mediational question stems include:</u> What's another way you might ...? What would it look like if ...? What do you think would happen if ...? How was...different from (like) ...? What sort of an impact do you think ...? What criteria do you use to ...? When have you done something like ... before? What do you think ...? How did you decide ... (come to that conclusion?) What might you see happening in your classroom if ...?</p>

Suggestions	Teachable Moments	Non-Judgmental Responses
<p>“OPEN” suggestions... Are expressed with invitational, positive language and voice tone Offer choices to encourage ownership Are often expressed as a question (or include a “tag question”) to invite further thinking Are achievable: enough to encourage, but not to overwhelm May provide information about the mentor’s thinking and decision-making</p> <p><u>Suggestion Stems:</u> One thing I’ve learned/noticed is ... A couple of things to keep in mind ... From our experience, one thing we’ve noticed Several/some teachers I know have tried a couple of different things in this sort of situation and maybe one might work for you</p> <p>What I know about _____ is ... Something/some things to keep in mind when dealing with... Something you might consider trying is ... There are a number of approaches ... Sometimes it’s helpful if ...</p> <p><i>Try following suggestion with a question that invites the teacher to imagine/hypothesize how the idea might work in his/her context.</i> How might this look in your classroom? To what extent might that work in your situation/with your students? What do you imagine might happen if you were to try something like that with your class? Which of these ideas might work best in your classroom?</p>	<p><i>Teachable moments are spontaneous opportunities that offer the mentor a chance to:</i></p> <p>Fill in instructional gaps Help the teacher make good choices/decisions Help the teacher to take “the next step”</p> <p><i>When taking advantage of a teachable moment, it’s important to:</i></p> <p>Share in the spirit of support Be brief: focus on the essential Be strategic Avoid using jargon or sounding pedantic (not talking down to them)</p> <p><u>Some possible stems include the following:</u></p> <p>One thing to keep in mind is ... If you’re interested in ____, it’s important to ... What I know about _____ is ... It’s sometimes/usually helpful to __ when ...</p>	<p><i>Non-Judgmental Responses help to:</i></p> <p>Build trust Promote an internal locus of control Encourage self-assessment Develop beginning teacher autonomy Foster risk-taking</p> <p><u>Possible examples:</u></p> <p>Identify what worked and why <i>I noticed how when you _____ the students really _____</i></p> <p>Encourage <i>It sounds like you have a number of ideas to try out! It’ll be exciting/interesting/great to see which works best for you!</i></p> <p>Ask the teacher to self-assess How do you think the lesson went and why?</p> <p>Ask the teacher to identify her/his role <i>What did you do to make the lesson so successful?</i></p> <p>Listen Ask sincere questions Show enthusiasm for and interest in the teacher’s work and thinking <i>I’m interested in learning/hearing more about ...</i> <i>I’m really looking forward to ...</i></p> <p><u>DANGER: Too much praise is detrimental</u></p>

Mentoring Conversation Vignettes

1. You are a nth grade elementary teacher questioning the effectiveness of your classroom management skills when your students are asked to work in small groups. You are struggling to attend to each group's needs, keep them on task, and ensure they are meeting learning goals.
2. You are a middle school science teacher feeling pressured that you don't have enough time in the classroom to engage the students in hands-on activities that would cement their understanding of new concepts. You want to use some cooperative learning and even include some content area reading strategies, but you just seem to run out of time, and the students don't manage themselves well.
3. You are a high school English teacher feeling you have all of the students' attention at the beginning of a lesson, but halfway through a lesson some of the students in the back have lost their focus and are doing other things. Yesterday, a student in the back row misunderstood the directions and incorrectly completed most of the assignment.
4. You are a special education teacher who has a couple of students who raise their hand for absolutely everything. You don't want to discourage them, but they end up dominating the discussion. They get really upset when you don't call on them.
5. You are an elementary grade teacher who loves when your students are learning through hands on activities, and you want to do more. However, you feel you end up with chaos and a ton of questions about how they are supposed to do the task. The noise level is also really hard for you.
6. You are a kindergarten teacher having trouble with Josh. He often refuses to do the task at hand, challenges Stacy when she tries to redirect him, and many times screams to get the other students' attention. Stacy says the other children don't like to play or work with Josh because he is bossy. At times, he has pinched or pushed classmates to get his way.