

13th Annual

# Thinking & Learning Conference

**BRUCE WELLMAN**

Saturday 21 May

**Being Growth Agents,  
NOT Change Agents**

Session 2

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**MELBOURNE**

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# BRUCE WELLMAN

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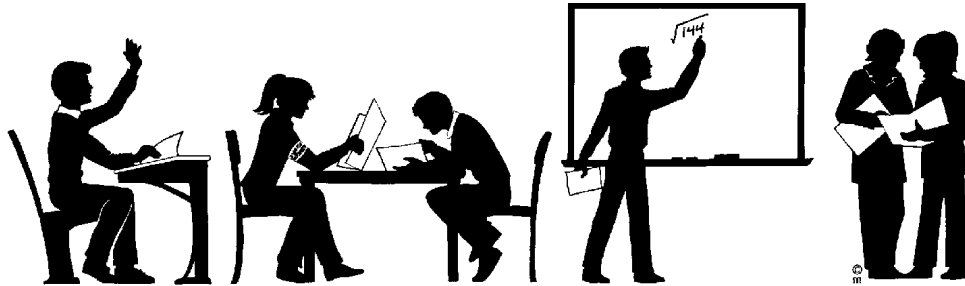


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# Being Growth Agents, NOT Change Agents

Developed by

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## The Mentor's Role

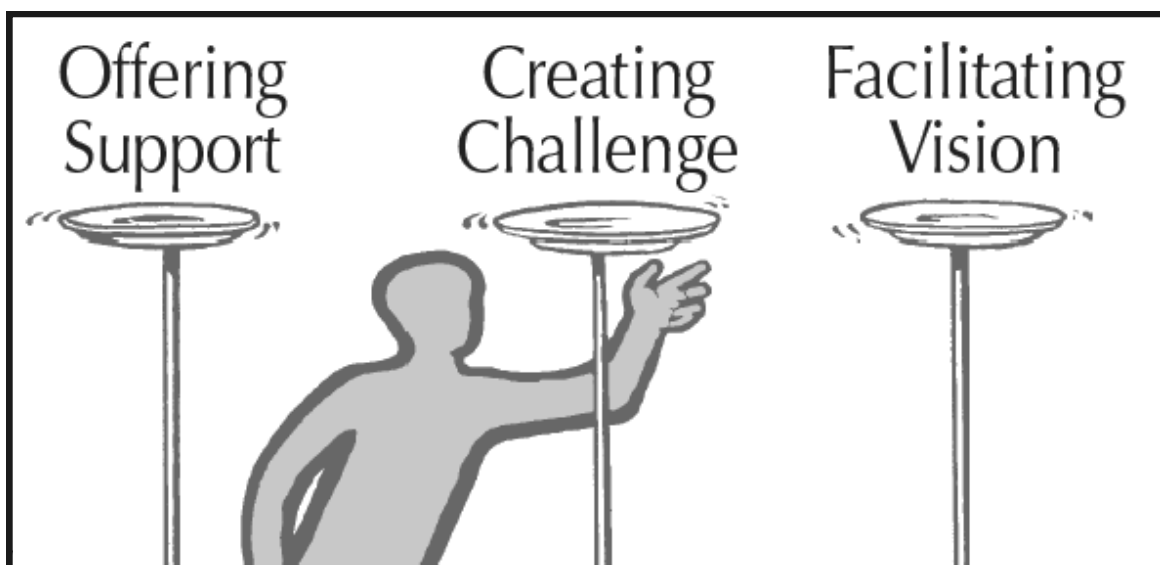
LEARNING-FOCUSED relationships make a significant emotional and intellectual difference in the growth experiences for novice colleagues as well as in their continuing professional practice. Clearly structured professional learning opportunities and interactions frame the journey from novice to expert practice. Employees benefiting from skilled mentoring are more likely to:

- Increase their efficacy as problem-solvers and decision-makers
- Engage in collaborative professional exchanges regarding improving practice
- Remain and grow in their jobs

Who we are as mentors, how we mentor and what we mentor about are essential to meeting the current needs of beginning employees. A central component in a learning-focused mentoring program is a clear understanding of the respective role and responsibilities of each participant. Framing a professional identity as one who builds capacity in others is a necessary first step. The most important function for mentors is to embrace a growth orientation, understanding that the work is to increase our colleague's effectiveness as professional problem-solvers and decision-makers. This process begins with establishing and maintaining a learning focus within the relationship. In this way, each party shapes and understands the nature and expectations of mentoring interactions. We build on the work of Laurent Daloz (1998), suggesting that a mentor's role within such a relationship is to balance three functions:

- Offering support
- Creating challenge
- Facilitating a professional vision

These functions can operate independently in specific situations, but in the greater context of the relationship they must be connected. Balancing these three elements energizes growth and learning. Support alone will provide comfort but may encourage complacency. Challenge without support may increase anxiety and fear of failure. Support and challenge without vision may leave us wandering on a journey looking only at the ground beneath us but not the road ahead.



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## Offering Support

Support for colleagues occurs in four distinct categories: emotional, physical, technical and institutional. Sometimes the colleague needs a shoulder to cry on, a pat on the back rewarding an especially exhilarating success and every range of emotional support in between. The support may be physical—perhaps tackling the room arrangement, moving desks and setting up meeting space, or creating a special wall displays, or support with technology -- both hardware and software. Institutional support includes guidelines for applying procedures and policies, or expert advice on certain processes. On the other hand, technical support includes resource materials and practical professional suggestions based on current research and years of rich experience.

In a learning-focused relationship, mentors offer support by:

- Attending fully—respectfully listening when our partner needs to share concerns, frustrations, experiences and new ideas.
- Responding empathetically—acknowledging feelings and perhaps a sharing of concerns, frustrations and experiences.
- Creating a ‘safe’ space—attending to the verbal and nonverbal communications that establish rapport and support thinking.
- Reviewing schedules—coordinating pockets of time that may be devoted to addressing pressing personal or professional concerns.
- Offering resources—providing time, energy and materials to ease the difficult challenges beginners often face.
- Providing information—about the practices and policies of the school and district to facilitate the colleague's participation in the work community; and about the craft of leading to support the development of sound professional practice.

### Support

- Emotional
- Physical
- Technical
- Institutional

### Technical Support includes:

- Time management tips
- Technology strategies
- Assessment strategies
- Ideas for establishing management routines
- Project design
- Project planning

### Institutional Support includes:

- Staff evaluation procedures
- Resource acquisition procedures
- Discipline policies for staff
- Current local initiatives
- Leave or attendance policies

## Creating Challenge

### Challenge

- Goal-driven
- Data-focused
- Thought-provoking

In our experience, mentors devote most of their time to providing support, such as that described in the previous section. However, unless support is balanced with challenge, we rob colleagues of the opportunity to grow and learn. If our goal is to nurture independent, effective practitioners, then it is critical that employees take responsibility for their own practice.

Growth requires that professionals develop the capacity to apply and adapt expert information within the context of their own work setting. This development includes making meaning of new information and experiences. This learning enables colleagues to apply, refine and create alternative strategies based on organization and project needs, work team readiness and local values.

Skillful mentors balance the supportive aspects of the relationship with challenges that promote continual attention to improvement in practice. In a learning-focused relationship, challenge is created by:

- Structuring rigorous examination and analysis of practice by applying Planning and Reflecting Templates.
- Engaging in goal-setting, and continuing to have goal-driven conversations.
- Maintaining a focus on employee learning, including assistance in analyzing performance information and determining cause-effect relationships.
- Exploring samples of employee work, considering the related decisions and experiences and discussing both positive and negative results of work group and supervisory practice.
- Actively engaging protégés in problem-solving and decision-making by forming problem-solving partnerships, brainstorming options and generating solutions.
- Assisting in the identification and articulation of criteria for choices and consequences with think alouds and coaching sessions.
- Building connections between current theory and board and work group practice.
- Constructing and conducting action research projects, building norms of experimentation and reflective practice.

### Facilitating Professional Vision

*We don't learn to teach;  
We learn from our teaching.*

Facilitating a professional vision creates a lifelong learner engaged in continuous improvement. It creates a picture of sound professional practice and high expectations. It suggests that a colleague is also a learner and reminds us that we don't learn to work; rather we learn from our working. Facilitating vision is cumulative and developmental.

In a learning-focused relationship, facilitating a professional vision is achieved by:

#### Facilitating vision

- High expectations for self and colleagues
- Lifelong learning
- Professional identity
- Setting high, yet achievable, expectations for colleagues, considering sources such as provincial or local professional standards that define what effective employees should know and be able to do.
- Assisting in the identification of project outcomes and organizational development that are broader than one activity or event
- Painting the bigger picture of project integration; connecting related efforts and work groups
- Developing action plans, prioritizing tasks and identifying resources for achieving goals.
- Encouraging collaborative opportunities with colleagues, and within work groups (e.g., committee work, interdisciplinary projects, and department level planning).
- Modeling a professional identity that exemplifies the best we know how to be.

Again, our continual attention to balancing support with challenge, with a vision that embodies the values of high expectations and lifelong learning, develops a colleague who can exceed the rigorous standards and meet the demands of organizational life.

Learning-focused Relationships: The Continuum of Interaction

Mentor driven		Information, analysis, goals				Teacher-driven	
		Calibrating	Consulting	Collaborating	Coaching		
<b>Guiding question for the mentor</b>	What are the gaps/growth areas indicated for this teacher based on present performance levels and the standards?	What information, ideas and technical resources will be most useful to this teacher at this time?	What are some ways to balance my contributions with this teacher's experiences and expertise?	What mental and emotional resources might be most useful for this teacher at this time?			
<b>Mentoring function</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulating standards</li> <li>• Using data to identify gaps between expected standards and present results</li> <li>• Defining problems</li> <li>• Prescribing results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifying standards</li> <li>• Using data to analyze gaps between expected standards and present results</li> <li>• Offering information and ideas</li> <li>• Providing problem analysis and perspectives</li> <li>• Naming principles of practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jointly clarifying standards</li> <li>• Using data to co-analyze gaps between expected standards and present results</li> <li>• Co-generating information and ideas</li> <li>• Co-analyzing problems</li> <li>• Expanding perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referencing standards as a focal point</li> <li>• Using data to explore gaps between expected standards and present results</li> <li>• Facilitating teacher idea production</li> <li>• Mediating teacher problem-framing and analysis</li> <li>• Enhancing teacher capacities for planning, reflecting, problem solving and decision making</li> </ul>			
<b>Mentor role in planning for action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining teacher actions/goals</li> <li>• Naming success criteria</li> <li>• Establishing timelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposing teacher actions/goals</li> <li>• Defining success criteria</li> <li>• Confirming timelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-constructing teacher actions/goals</li> <li>• Co-developing success criteria</li> <li>• Agreeing on timelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring teacher actions/goals</li> <li>• Eliciting success criteria</li> <li>• Clarifying timelines</li> </ul>			
<b>Cues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credible voice</li> <li>• Using neutral language, as in <i>"These data ..."</i> <i>"This example ..."</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credible voice</li> <li>• Using neutral language or personal pronouns, as in <i>"I think that ..."</i> <i>"It is important to ..."</i> <i>"Here is one way to think about that"</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approachable voice</li> <li>• Collective pronouns, as in <i>"Let's think about ..."</i> <i>"How might we ..."</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approachable voice</li> <li>• Second person pronouns, as in <i>"What are some of your ...?"</i> <i>"How might you ...?"</i></li> </ul>			
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take care not to let personal preferences become prescriptions. Judgments must be supported by clear, external criteria.</li> <li>• Use literal observation notes, classroom artifacts and assessment data to avoid subjectivity or bias.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and manage the impulse to help or rescue. Stay learning-focused and don't let personal passion overcome patience with the developmental process.</li> <li>• Be aware that overuse of the consulting stance may build dependency on the supervisor for problem solving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resist the impulse to dominate the conversation and provide the bulk of the analysis and thinking.</li> <li>• Monitor for balance in idea production. Don't allow personal enthusiasm or preferences to override the intention to co-create ideas and options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce potential frustration by posing developmentally appropriate questions. Questions should stretch not strain thinking.</li> <li>• Be sure that questions allow for multiple responses and do not signal that there is a preferred answer.</li> </ul>			



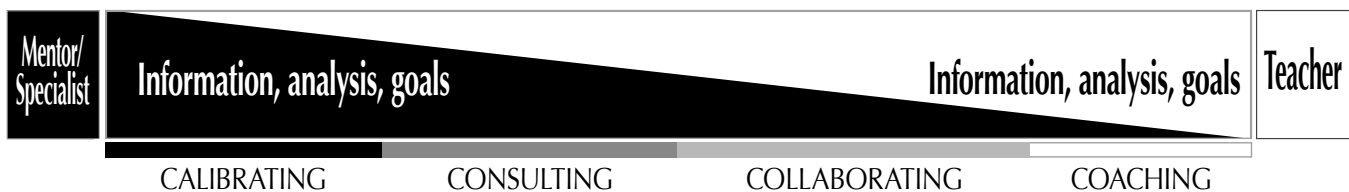
## Four Stances: A Continuum of Learning-focused Interaction

### Introduction

HOW mentors interact with colleagues is as important as what they interact about. In learning-focused conversations, accomplished mentors shift between four stances, calibrating, consulting, collaborating, and coaching to develop teachers' capacities to reflect upon data, to generate ideas and options, and to increase personal and professional awareness and skill. Versatility across this continuum of interaction supports practices that are developmentally and contextually appropriate for serving the learning needs of teachers across a range of skill and experience. The ultimate aim of each of these stances and their cumulative effect is to support continuous learning on the part of teachers and to enhance their capacity to engage in productive collegial relationships.

Three attributes ultimately define the mentor's stance in any learning-focused conversation. One defining trait is the way that information emerges during the interaction. The second defining trait is the source of problem definition and gap analysis related to differences between planned goals and actual results, or learning standards and student performance. The third defining trait is the source of goals for teacher growth.

### The Continuum of Learning-focused Interaction



### Three Mentoring Capacities: Fluency, Flexibility and Fluidity

The skillful learning-focused mentor draws upon three important capacities when navigating the continuum; fluency, flexibility, fluidity.

**Fluency of interaction:** Fluent mentors recognize that they have choices in their approach to mentoring conversations. They are clear about the definition and purpose of each of the four stances and are able to operate across them, with a repertoire of strategies for each.

**Flexibility of interaction:** Flexible mentors understand that different individuals and different contexts require different approaches. These mentors have internalized criteria for choosing a given stance in a given situation and are able to be responsive to the teacher's immediate cognitive and emotional needs while being mindful of the ultimate goal of development over time.

**Fluidity of interaction:** Fluid mentors are able to skillfully apply the continuum, seamlessly shifting stances as needed. They attend to both verbal and nonverbal cues from colleagues; listening and responding strategically. These mentors have a level of automaticity that supports their ability to attend and respond to complexities and nuances, drawing upon a wide repertoire of knowledge and skill to make the match that produces the most learning.

There is a sequence to the development of these capacities as they build upon one another. Fluent mentors become flexible as they expand their skill sets to include differentiated practice and the ability to monitor goals for teachers' development over time. As their integrated skill set becomes more sophisticated and nuanced, flexible mentors can pay attention and construct responses with increased fluidity.

### The Four Stances

In professional conversations, mentors apply standards and communicate expectations as they support teachers in using data to determine performance gaps and establish goals for improving practice. Learning-focused mentors operate across a continuum of interaction to accomplish these responsibilities.

In each stance, the approach to these functions differs, as does the internal question mentors consider when determining which stance to apply.

### Calibrating

In the calibrating stance, the guiding question is, "What are the gaps/growth areas indicated for this teacher based on present performance levels and the standards?"

In a learning-focused relationship, the calibrating stance is the stance of judgment. Based on a variety of data sources, the mentor determines a level of performance and organizes the data and the conversation to inform and discuss this assessment with the teacher. It is the part of the conversation when the mentor presents and explains his or her thinking about the teacher's level of performance and student learning outcomes. This stance is necessary when a teacher is unable to analyze his or her own practice and any gap between current performance and desired standards. For example, a mentor might provide data and highlight examples of distinguished practice to motivate and clarify goals for a developing or proficient teacher who lacks a vision for professional growth.

In the most extreme cases, the calibrating stance becomes the dominant stance in the conversation, with the greater percentage of time spent there. Some triggers for this choice include: teaching behaviors that create an unsafe or harmful environment physically or emotionally, teacher responses that are inappropriate, classroom management that is non-existent, student performance that is consistently below expectations and instructional planning and delivery that is ineffective. Calibrating is also an effective stance for motivating effective teachers to set goals for achieving higher levels of performance.

#### *Mentoring Functions*

In the calibrating stance, the mentor defines and reinforces teaching standards and expectations. The verb to calibrate means an active process of matching an object or performance to an agreed upon value. Simplistically, that value might be a shoe size or the diameter of a section of tubing. In contemporary educational discourse such values are expressed as standards. Important standards include creating a learning environment of respect and rapport, managing classroom procedures and student behaviors, communicating effectively with students, parents and colleagues, engaging students in meaningful learning and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness based on assessment of student performance.

To operate with integrity within a calibrating stance the conversation must be driven by data. These data are used to identify gaps between expected standards and the present results. Clearly articulating the standards and accessing available resource materials the learning-focused supervisors define and illuminate problems. They present models and examples of such standards in action that are content and grade level specific and explicitly name expectations. In planning for action, skillful mentors determine achievable goals, success criteria and timelines for completion.

In most cases, the calibrating stance then leads to a rich conversation, shifting among the other stances. When used with chronically low-performing teachers or teachers who appear not to be "getting it," this stance is the most prescriptive of the four. Follow-up and follow through on the part of the mentor are vital

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to ensure standards are being interpreted appropriately, performance targets are clear and student progress is occurring. Taking this stance may be necessary when other approaches are not producing the evidence of the transfer of the teacher's learning into improved classroom practices that produce positive changes in student actions and outcomes.

#### *Cautions*

For each stance there are potential pitfalls. In the calibrating stance, it is easy for our personal preferences to become prescriptions. It is critical then, that any judgments are data based and standards driven, supported by clear, external criteria and evidence.

Avoid subjectivity or bias by using literal observation notes, specific classroom artifacts and assessment data. Mentors' inferences or interpretations can increase the teachers' potential perceptions of personal attack.

### **Consulting**

In the consulting stance, the guiding question is, "What information, ideas and technical resources will be most useful to this teacher at this time?"

Based on the teacher's responses to initial inquiries, the mentor recognizes gaps in content knowledge, student knowledge, or instructional repertoire. In some cases the teacher's problem frame is narrow, or potentially inaccurate or the range of strategies is limited. As a result, the mentor shifts to the consulting stance.

#### *Mentoring Functions*

From the consulting stance, the mentor clarifies standards by offering context specific examples to ensure that the teacher understands expectations. The consulting mentor offers perspectives on present concerns, by naming possible causes and possible approaches to improve performance. Beyond this gap analysis, a thoughtful mentor also shares essential information about learning and learners and curriculum and content as they relate to existing issues, principles of practice, connections to expected performance standards and relevant craft knowledge. By offering, "Here's what you should pay attention to" and "Here's why that matters" and "Here are some options," learning-focused mentors make their thinking transparent. As teachers internalize principles of learning and teaching, these understandings become resources for more generating their own approaches and solutions.

In planning for action, skillful mentors propose a menu of teacher goals to promote student achievement and professional growth, and provide opportunities for the teacher to choose and prioritize. Defining indicators of success and confirming timelines for completion are essential parts of the planning process.

#### *Cautions*

The verb to consult comes from the Latin 'consultare' meaning to give or take counsel. It is important to distinguish learning-focused consultation from simply fixing or telling. For many mentors, the pressing needs they observe in classrooms triggers the impulse to help, by providing information and offering advice. While in the short-term this inclination may reduce the burdens of busy teachers or temporarily resolve an urgent issue, context-rich learning opportunities may be missed if advice is the only resource offered. Further, advice without explanation of the underlying choice points and guiding principles rarely develops teachers' abilities to transfer learning to new settings or to generate novel solutions on their own.

If overused, the consulting stance builds dependency on the mentor for problem solving. Consultation that is learning-focused within a professional relationship offers the teacher both immediate support and the resources for tackling future problems with increasing independence, whatever that teacher's level of performance. Learning-focused mentors do not allow their personal passion or organizational pressures to overcome patience with a teacher's developmental process.

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### Collaboration

In the collaborating stance the guiding question is, “What are some ways to balance my contributions with this teacher’s experiences and expertise?”

The collaborative stance creates a shared platform for the co-construction of knowledge. In this stance, either participant can offer ideas, solutions, analysis, and so on. In many cases the learning-focused mentor shifts to a collaborative stance to increase the teacher’s confidence in their own ability to analyze data, frame problems, develop strategies. Much like the gradual release concept in classroom practice, it works towards greater ownership of the information and actions generated.

In this stance this mentors provides support for idea generation balanced with respect for the teacher’s ability to generate ideas and solutions. A rich, inquiry-driven collaboration creates permission for the supervisor to add ideas and perspectives without dominating the conversation.

#### *Supervisory Functions*

From the collaborative stance, the mentor and teacher jointly clarify standards to ensure shared understanding. Together, they use data to analyze gaps between expectations and current practice. In partnership, they analyze problems, generate potential causal theories, develop ideas and produce strategies for action. Shared perspectives lead to greater insights for both teacher and supervisor.

Each stance is in large part defined by which participant in the conversation is producing the information and/or analysis at a given moment. The collaborative stance has the widest range of participation. In this stance, both parties are contributing, however, the mentor might lean more towards consulting by suggesting criteria or offering a principle of practice upon which to base the ideas. Or the mentor might lead with a completely open-ended inquiry which leans more towards coaching.

#### *Cautions*

To collaborate with integrity, mentors need to resist their own impulses to dominate and provide the bulk of the analysis and thinking. It is important to purposefully invite and create a space for teacher contributions. Pausing to allow the teacher time to think and prompting and encouraging idea production communicates a belief in their personal and professional capacities.

Learning-focused mentors need to be especially careful to monitor for balance in the collaborative stance. Personal enthusiasm and interest in a topic, or a strong preference for a specific solution may override the intention to co-create ideas and actions. False collaboration then becomes disguised consultation or tacit calibration.

## Coaching

In the coaching stance the guiding question is, “What mental and emotional resources might be most useful for this teacher at this time?”

The coaching stance assumes that the teacher has the resources necessary to engage in data-centered reflection on practice and modify and manage personal learning. Operating from this stance conveys the mentor's respect for the teacher's expertise and potential regarding these capacities.

### *Mentoring Functions*

In the coaching stance, the mentor references teaching and learning standards and a variety of data as focal points for the conversation. The mentor inquires into the teacher's thinking about each of these resources as they relate to existing issues. In this stance, the teacher is the primary source of problem frames, gap analysis, potential solutions and strategies. Through an inquiry process, the mentor's role is to enhance teacher's capacities for planning, reflecting, problem solving and decision-making. The coaching stance is one of inquiry. This means that there are multiple appropriate responses, and that the mentor has not predetermined a correct answer.

The value of these questions is that they influence the teacher's underlying thought processes. By inquiring, pausing, and probing for details as data are explored, the mentor supports both idea production and the exploration of the “whys” and “hows” of choices, possibilities, and connections. This nonjudgmental approach applied over time, enlarges the frame, developing the teacher's ever-increasing capacity for expert thinking and practice. The ultimate aim of the coaching stance is to develop a teacher's internal resources for self-coaching so that with time and practice, an increasingly sophisticated inner voice guides professional self-talk.

In planning for action, mentor questions guide the teacher's exploration of goals, success criteria and reasonable timelines for action.

### *Cautions*

In a coaching stance, mentors reduce potential frustration by posing developmentally appropriate questions. These questions should stretch, not strain, thinking. Questions that require more knowledge or experience than is presently available to the teacher create anxiety and feelings of inadequacy. In such cases, it is more effective to offer information from a consultative stance and then shift to a coaching stance to explore that information.

Effective questions should invite teachers' thinking. The syntax and intonation of these inquiries welcomes multiple possible responses and does not signal that there is a preferred or correct answer. Mentors should take care that their own preferences don't influence their listening or direct their questions.

Except for calibrating, stance is not predetermined and best practice suggests both entering the conversation from a coaching stance with an initial inquiry and ending the conversation with an inquiry to clarify next steps. Both mentors and teachers must be clear that the intention of the mentoring process is to support learning and growth. Without this clarity, a potential “learning moment” might be lost, or the teacher might misinterpret the mentor's intent.

The calibrating stance is unique in that it focuses on what needs to be learned; that is, it names gaps between present practice and expected standards. This stance does not produce the learning, it names the learning targets for the teacher.

Once learning goals have been established, flexible mentors navigate strategically across the continuum, choosing the most appropriate stances for promoting a teacher's growth.

## Nine Strategies for Learning-focused Consultation

## EXAMPLES

### Offer a Menu

If one idea is useful, several are even more effective. Suggesting multiple options when planning or problem-solving (we suggest at least three) provides information and support while leaving the choice making, and the responsibility for making that choice, with your colleague. This might sound like: *“Given your concerns about developing meaningful homework assignments, here are three options to consider....”*

### Think Aloud

Just as in instructional problem solving or modeling strategic reading strategies for students, sharing the thought process along with a solution or idea enhances the learning and maximizes the likelihood of transfer to future applications. This might sound like: *“When I encounter student confusions like this I first search for the underlying knowledge gaps and thinking patterns that might be contributing to those confusions. Then I try to figure out the instructional building blocks that will help develop essential understandings. So, in this case, you might look at ways to scaffold your students’ understandings of these objectives.”*

### Share What, Why and How

When sharing expertise, an effective verbal pattern is describing the ‘what, why and how of an idea or suggestion. This might sound like: *“Here is a strategy for addressing that issue (what); which is likely to be effective because (why); and this is how you might apply it (how).”*

### Refer to Research

Referring to specific research-based best practices is often a productive consultation strategy. This approach offers expert advice drawn from credible sources that can be applied to the current situation. This might sound like: *“The research on having students create graphic representations has been very consistent across grade levels and content areas. One application of those ideas to consider here would be to teach your students how to develop cause and effect diagrams to illustrate the important relationships in this history lesson.”*

### State A Principle of Practice

Connecting a specific strategy or solution to the broader principles of effective practice provides an opportunity to learn and apply the principle, as well as the individual idea, in other situations. This might sound like: *“An important principle of practice related to giving directions is to make sure you have students’ full attention before you give directions -- the big idea here is ‘Attention First’.”*

### Generate Categories

Ideas or solutions as categories provide a wider range of choice and a richer opportunity for learning than discrete strategies or applications. For example, a category such as ‘grouping students’ is broader than ‘putting students in pairs’ or suggesting a specific partnering strategy. This approach is especially effective when categories are offered as a menu. This might sound like: *“Several broad categories of successful classroom management include attention moves, establishing routines, maintaining momentum and developing effective transitions between activities.”*

### Name Causal Factors

Rather than suggesting potential solutions, it can be very productive to offer several factors that might be producing the problem. This option is particularly effective when working with experienced teachers. This might sound like: *“There are several things that typically would produce that behavior (or result); for example \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.”* Followed by a shift to a coaching stance to add: *“Given what you know about your situation, what’s your hunch about which of these, if any, might be an influence?”*

### Examples

### Consider an Alternative Point of View

Effective problem solving can be stimulated by an exploration of multiple perspectives. When idea generation bogs down, surfacing additional points of view can re-energize the conversation. For example offering thoughts on how parents might consider the issue, or administrators, or the students, and so on. This might sound like: *“It is possible that your students are not perceiving the purposes of the new reward system in the ways that you had intended. It might be effective to consider their beliefs about motivational rewards.”*

### Reframe the Problem or Issue

Expert problem solvers spend a greater amount of time defining a problem than they do strategizing solutions. Novel approaches to the problem definition not only release new energy and ideas, but often lead to a more effective solution. Related to considering alternative perspectives, reframing is changing the context or representation of a problem; including positive or useful aspects of the issue and alternative descriptions of the goal or approach to the problem. This might sound like: *“There are several ways to think about classroom climate and culture. Typically teachers search for simple rules and fair consequences to apply equally. Another approach might be to work from the inside out and support students in developing the self-management skills to be productive classroom citizens and contributing group members.”*

# Learning-focused Conversations

## A Template for Planning

### ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

#### CONTEXT

- What are some things about your students' readiness (social skills, routines, self-management) that are influencing your lesson (unit) design?
- What are some of the skills/ knowledge students will need to bring to this lesson (unit) to be successful?

#### PRESENTING ISSUES

- What are some special areas/ student needs you will need to address?
- What are some issues you anticipate might influence student learning?

### EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

#### GOALS AND OUTCOMES

- As you think about what you know about your students, and the content, what are some key learning goals?
- What are some ways that these goals integrate with other content learning?
- What are some thinking skills students will need to apply?

#### INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Given these goals, what are some things you expect to see/hear as students are achieving them?
- Given these goals, how will you monitor student learning?
- What kinds of assessments will you use to determine student success?

#### APPROACHES, STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES

- What are some strategies you're planning that will both challenge students and support their success?
- What are some ways you'll ensure high engagement for all students?
- What are some resources or materials you/your students will need to support and extend student learning?

#### POTENTIAL CHOICE POINTS AND CONCERNS

- As you anticipate teaching the lesson, what are some points where students might struggle?
- What are some options for supporting struggling students and enriching those who need greater challenge?
- Should you notice that students' attention is drifting, what are some possibilities for reengaging them?

### ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

#### PERSONAL LEARNING

- What are some ways that this lesson provides opportunities to pursue your own learning goals?
- What new learning/skills will you try or exercise in this lesson?

#### NEXT STEPS

- As a result of this conversation, what are some next steps?



# Learning-focused Conversations

## A Template for Reflecting

### ACTIVATING AND ENGAGING

#### RECOLLECTIONS

- As you reflect on this lesson/unit, what are some things that come to mind?
- Given your recollections, what are some things that captured your attention?

#### PERSPECTIVES AND PERCEPTIONS

- In this lesson/unit, what was particularly satisfying?
- In this lesson/unit, what were some things that concerned you?

### EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

#### WEIGHING EVIDENCE

- What is some of the evidence that supports your impressions/ judgments?
- What are some examples that stand out for you (student responses, work samples, interaction patterns)?

#### SEARCH FOR PATTERNS

- Given what occurred, how typical are these results?
- What percentage of the time does this (behavior, learning, response patterns . . .) tend to happen?

#### COMPARE/CONTRAST

- How similar or different is what you anticipated from what occurred?
- How might you compare students who were successful to those who were less so?

#### ANALYZE CAUSE-EFFECT

- What are some factors that influenced what happened?
- Given (specific success/concern), what's your hunch about what may have it produced it?

### ORGANIZING AND INTEGRATING

#### GENERALIZATIONS

- What are some big ideas that you are taking away from this conversation?
- Based on this experience, what are some new connections (about students, curriculum, instruction) that you are making?

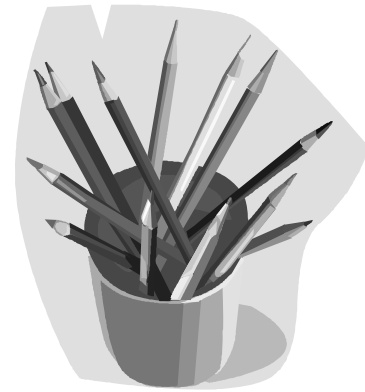
#### APPLICATIONS

- What are some things that you are taking away from this experience that will influence your practice in the future?
- As a result of new learning, what are some goals you're setting (for yourself, for your students, curriculum, this unit)?



# Learning Partners

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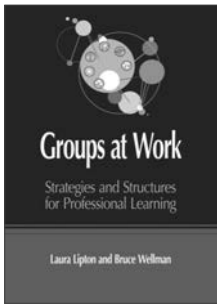




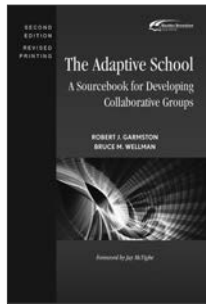
# RELATED RESOURCES

Available from Hawker Brownlow Education

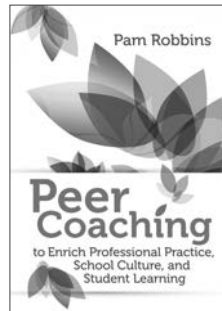
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	CFAS5053	Adaptive Schools Foundation Seminar Learning Guide, Second Revised Edition	\$44.95
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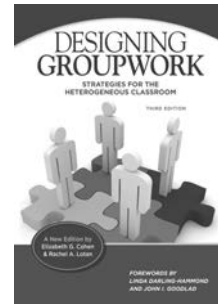
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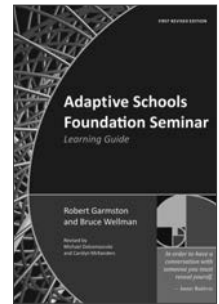
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