The Principal as Instructional Leader
Coaching Teachers to Higher Levels of Performance

Lisa Lawrence and Peter Prichard
ClearView Consulting
Our Goals for the Session

- Understand the foundational components of effective coaching
- Deepen understanding of the importance of trust in professional relationships
- Extend your awareness of how speaking and listening affect dialogue and action
- Understand the value of powerful questions in the coaching conversation
- Learn about and experiment with a coaching dialogue tool
Norms

- Contribute to your learning and the learning of others through participating fully.
- Create and hold a respectful space for people to speak and to be heard.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Be on time.
Coaching is a confidential, professional relationship designed to facilitate and assist an educator to accomplish breakthroughs and achieve goals that are beyond the norm.
A Coaching Approach

• IS NOT…
  – Judgmental
  – Advice-giving by the coach
  – About creating dependency
  – An unfocused casual conversation without structure
  – Limiting or designed to foster dependence on the coach
  – A reliance on external resources

• IS…
  – Neutral
  – Directed by recipient
  – Self-directed learning
  – Self-mediating
  – An intentional skillful application of tools for planning, reflecting, or problem solving
  – Capacity building
  – Developing and building internal resources

Adapted from the work of Carolyn McKanders, *Improving Instruction through Collegial Dialogue*
The more successful an individual is, the less you can tell them what to do, and the more you can only help them think better for themselves.

David Rock
There is a story inside all of us.

- Our stories are the “why” of our organizing – the art of translating our values into action; it’s a way we construct our identity, make choices, inspire action.

- Each of us has a story that can move others.

- As leaders, we employ both the head and the heart in order to mobilize others to act effectively on behalf of shared values.
"To say that a person feels listened to means a lot more than just their ideas get heard. It's a sign of respect. It makes people feel valued."

— Deborah Tannen
Author and Professor of Linguistics, Georgetown University
Listening Example: Natural Habits

Teacher: Okay, thanks. (I think?)

Principal: Oh no, you don't need to do anything. I was just curious. I'm sure it will get here. Well, hang in there with your kids. You can do it!
Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.

-Stephen Covey
Listening *is not*...

A vocal competition in which the one who is catching his breath is called the listener.
Listening is…

“…paying close attention to what is being said beneath the words. You listen not only to the 'music,' but to the essence of the person speaking.

You listen not only for what someone knows, but for who he or she is.”

— Peter Senge
Avoiding Our Default Listening Roles

The Fixer

The Relator

The Inquirer
“Long before I wrote stories, I listened for stories. Listening for them is something more acute than listening to them. I suppose it’s an early form of participation in what goes on. Listening children know stories are there. When their elders sit and begin, children are just waiting and hoping for one to come out, like a mouse from its hole.”

-Eudora Welty, One Writer’s Beginnings
Exercise: The Story of the Future

Based on all you’ve learned and experienced in the last few years of your leadership, what’s your focus this year?
Successful coaches do a critical thing…

They listen for people’s potential.
Committing to a New Way of Being

Let go of your attachment to being right - and suddenly, your mind is more open. You're able to benefit from the unique viewpoints of others, without being crippled by your own judgment.

– Ralph Marston
Defining Trust

Trust is one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another. It is built on a firm belief in the other’s reliability, truthfulness, ability, and/or strength over time.
About Trust

- The role of the coach is granted by the individual based on trust.

- Without trust there can be no coaching.

- Trust will always be at stake during the process of coaching.
The investment of time to be able to have a different kind of conversation that builds capacity in others’ beliefs they can solve their own problems.
What does this mean for leadership development?
Significant Conversations

Try elevating the conversation from surface to significance. Instead of routinely asking, “How are you?” or “What’s new with you these days?” and getting the standard replies, take a risk and ask about something you really care about.

Keep a growth mindset – always.
Coaching for Development

One reason significant conversations are so powerful is that they bring structure to the process of thinking, planning, deciding, and doing.
Where do I begin the conversation?

The Continuum of Conversation

Coaching                Collaborating                Consulting

Least Directive      Most Directive
Ask powerful questions.

*Questions are creative acts of intelligence.*

-Frank Kingdon
Choosing Great Questions

People will answer what we ask.

VISION
MAKING CONNECTIONS
IMPLEMENTATION
PLANNING
TAKING ACTION
Common Asking Mistakes

- CLOSED QUESTIONS - *Do you have any ideas?*
- SOLUTION-ORIENTED QUESTIONS - *Could you do your walk-throughs first thing in the morning?*
- LEADING QUESTIONS - *Don’t you want to stay in this role since you have so much invested in it?*
- NEGLECTING TO INTERRUPT
- INTERRUPTING/TALKING OVER
- “WHY” QUESTIONS - “*Why did you decide to set up your schedule that way?*”
So given this situation, what do you hope to achieve?

Tell me more. What would that look like specifically?

What ideas do you have to move yourself closer to this goal? What else?

Of all the ideas you’ve generated, what stands out as most important? What seems to make the most sense?

What step(s) are you thinking you could take this week that would move you closer to what you want?

Adapted from the work of Tony Stoltzfus, 2008.
Coaching Demonstration
Coaching Debrief

What are your insights?
Coaching Practice

The Coaching Funnel
Coaching Partners

Round 1:

A ➔ B

10 minutes

Round 2:

B ➔ A

10 minutes
At some point if we are not careful, we begin to make decisions based off distractions rather than vision. We make decisions out of fatigue instead of life.

-Clark Mitchell
So, how does a leader balance support and accountability through coaching?
I am able to control only that of which I am aware.

That of which I am unaware controls me.

Awareness leads to skill.

From what to what?
The Continuum of Conversation

**Coaching**

- Least Directive

**ASSESSING…**

What are your impressions or thoughts about the lesson? Tell me a little about what led you to that conclusion.

**Collaborating**

- Most Directive

**ASSESSING…**

Turn to data. Share with the teacher.

As you look at this, tell me what are you noticing. Then, I will share some of what I’m noticing, too, and we’ll go from there.

**Consulting**

- Least Directive

**TEACHING.**

Let’s talk a little about what we specifically want for your students. I know we both want the kids to…. So, as we move into this conversation, know two things: This is not about a lack of value – I value you immensely. And second, I believe you can do this. So, if we know we want the kids to…., let’s start with a look at what’s happening now…
Conversation Tool: Closing the Gap

First, in your own mind, get clear on what expectation needs to be communicated.

- **Describe the gap.** Describe past performance *and* future potential.
  - *The goal is to have students performing at...level. Currently, they are here. What do you think might be contributing to that difference?*

- **Generate options.**
  - *Okay, let’s generate as many strategies as possible that might bring us closer to this goal. And, since you’re closest to the situation, let’s start with your ideas. What would it take to...? Great, what else?*

- **Define the action.**
  - *Thinking about all of the possibilities you generated, what ideas deserve your attention? What steps will you take next?*
  - *By when do you think you could take those steps?*
  - *What support do you need to make this happen?*
  - *Anything standing in your way?*

- **Follow up.**
  - *Let’s meet again next Friday. We can re-evaluate your action plan and see how it’s working for you. We will keep trying until we get it right.*
Results Speak Louder than Words

The key to long-term organizational and leadership success is moving employees to action.

Vengal, A. 20 Minutes to a Top Performer, 2007
Then, do it!

Novelist Sinclair Lewis was supposed to deliver an hour-long lecture to a group of college students who planned to be writers. Lewis opened his talk with a question:

"How many of you really intend to be writers?"

All hands went up.

"In that case," said Lewis, "my advice to you is to go home and write."

With that, he left.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you want to accomplish?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By when do you want to have accomplished this goal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What ideas could you generate that would give you what you want? What else?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the ideas you’ve generated, what stands out as a priority?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s the timeline?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who are your primary partners?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What resources do you need to make this happen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your next steps?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there anything standing in your way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you commit to this?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The BEI Competency Clusters

- Driving for Results
- Influencing for Results
- Problem-Solving
- Showing Confidence to Lead
Achievement
Initiative and Persistence
Monitoring and Directiveness
Planning Ahead

- Achieving outstanding results quickly
- Setting ambitious goals
- Persistence in the face of numerous obstacles
- Prioritizing and planning activities to get highest benefit relative to inputs
- Clarifying expectations of others and checking to ensure follow-through
- Exceptional drive to succeed
Competencies in Influencing for Results

Impact and Influence
Team Leadership
Developing Others

- Effectively influencing the perceptions, thinking and actions of others to help the organization get better results
- Building and managing effective teams
- Increasing the effectiveness of other people
- Getting the support of key influencers
- Working through others to influence opinion and get things done
Personalizing the Use of Coaching

- What role might coaching play as you guide your school leaders to further excellence? Be specific.

- How will you keep these coaching plans and practices alive?
"The task of leadership is not to put greatness into people, but to elicit it, for the greatness is there already."

- John Buchan