

How do coaching conversations work?



Coaching



Coaching toolkit overview

Planning



Resources:

- > What does the coaching process look like?

Coach and coachee have different perspectives on planning



Resources for Coaches

- > How can I grow as a coach?
- > How do I prepare as a coach?
- > What techniques do coaches use?



Resources for Coachees

- > How do I reflect on my coaching needs?
- > How do I select a coach?

Contracting



Resources:

- > What does a coaching contract cover?

Coaching



Resources:

- > How do coaching conversations work?
- > How do I build momentum for change?
- > What does an action plan look like?

Evaluating



Resources:

- > How do we evaluate the effectiveness of the coaching process?
- > How do we reflect on the coaching relationship?



How do coaching conversations work?



- > Coaching is about the use of ongoing conversations and questioning to support an individual teacher through a process of change
- > The coachee is encouraged to identify prospective changes to their practice that are appropriately challenging and therefore would benefit from additional support to achieve.
- > This resource looks at the key stages of the coaching conversation. The following resources will also assist coaches and coachees in conducting coaching conversations:
 - [What techniques do coaches use?](#)
 - [How do I build momentum for change?](#)
 - [What does an action plan look like?](#)



Features of good coaching models

- > There are many different coaching models, frameworks and practices for holding coaching conversations. The coaching [environmental scan](#) discusses a number of these
- > Effective coaching models, tend to include the following features:

> Centres on the teacher as learner, in the broader context of ultimately improving student outcomes

> Recognises that coaching involves a teacher going through a process of change

> Integrates adult learning principles

> Identifies a goal or future state to move towards, which should be based on a shared understanding of what good teaching looks like

> Proceeds through learner-led exploration of issues to build capacity, rather than counselling, mentoring or teaching by instruction

> Takes a systematic approach which provides a frame for the conversation, while maintaining flexibility

> Is seen as a continuous, collaborative process, not a one-off conversation



Elements of a coaching conversation

- > Different models will provide different frameworks for guiding a coaching conversation
- > The different frameworks typically cover four key elements:

**Change
readiness**

**Developing
goals**

**Action
Planning**

**Feedback
and
support**



Change readiness

- > This step is about guiding the coachee through a process of facilitated reflection to help them:
 - Identify the opportunity for change
 - Build energy to undertake the work necessary to achieve the change
 - Galvanise their commitment to realise the change.
- > [How do I build momentum for change?](#) provides some additional information that is helpful in identifying the opportunity for change through exploring the gap between the coachee's 'ideal self' and their 'real self'

Possible starting points for the conversation:

- > What kind of teacher do you want to be?
- > How do you want your students to remember you and the learning experience in your classroom?
 - How would that make you feel?
- > Can you tell me about your best teacher... are there aspects of their practice that you would like to integrate into your own practice?
 - What would that mean for your students?



Developing goals

- > This step is about summarising and re-framing the coachee's challenge
- > Goals with personal relevance and meaning for the coachee are more likely to be achieved and bring them fulfilment in the long term
- > When working on developing goals, consider the following tips:
 - Goals should be SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, **T**ime-phased) ([Goal setting guide](#))
 - Goals should challenge and stretch the coachee
 - The coach may need to revisit the goal over time and help the coachee to reformulate it until it is really right for them

Possible questions for the coach to ask:

- > When you think about the kind of teacher you want to be, what do you need to do to get there?
- > What is currently happening in your teaching practice that you would like to either further develop or not continue? What might this change look like?
- > Tell me about the possibilities for action that you can see?



Action planning

- > Coaches engage coachees in conversations that inspire action
- > This stage is about creating a sense of urgency and commitment, through linking the action plan back to the change that the coachee has identified as critical
 - The actions should be specifically designed to help the coachee bring that change to life and it should be very clear how each step will help to achieve the change
 - These steps could be anything from trialling new practices in the classroom through to identifying specific colleagues who can support the coachee
- > [What does an action plan look like?](#)

Possible questions for the coach to ask:

- > What actions do you need to take to reach your goal?
- > What will be the impact of completing that action for your teaching practice?
- > Which action has the most clarity and energy for you?
- > Can we break it down into steps?
- > What support do you need?
- > Who might be able to help?
- > What might get in the way?
- > What success indicators will you look for to know you have achieved your goal?



Feedback and support

- > Feedback and support are critical for creating sustainable change
- > Coaches can offer feedback to coachee's based on observable behaviour:
 - Coaches who are also principals or lead teachers may offer feedback between sessions based on changes they observe
 - Coach and coachee may agree to engage in classroom observation
 - Where agreed between the coach and coachee, the coach may also seek feedback from colleagues, students and parents to share with the coachee
- > Coachees can also bring along feedback they have received from their school leader, colleagues, students and parents to discuss with the coach
- > [Ongoing feedback, reflection and review](#)

Possible questions for the coach to ask:

- > What do you see as your main strengths and areas for development?
- > What feedback have other teachers shared with you?
- > Would you be open to me giving you some feedback?
- > How would you like me to frame my feedback?
- > What further support do you need from me?



Coaches: Practicing a coaching conversation

- > Role-play a coaching conversation with a trusted colleague, based on an upcoming coaching opportunity
- > Run a 15 minute coaching conversation with your colleague acting as coachee (observing confidentiality)
- > Aim to work through each of the four key stages of coaching conversations
- > After the role play, reflect on the conversation:
 - How did it feel?
 - What do you think worked well?
 - What do you think you could have done better?
- > Ask your colleague for feedback (you can use the three reflection questions to obtain a different point of view)