

OLi⁴ Performance Coaching Practices

Introduction

Grounded in the work defined by OIP-OLAC, performance coaching (see Key Words) helps OLi⁴ principals develop inclusive leadership practices (see Key Words). Performance coaching offers non-directive, non-judgmental support based in questioning, active listening, encouraging focused goal-setting, and enacting follow-through. Coaching requires a strong confidential and collegial relationship between the coach and the principal—a bond established explicitly through practices associated with building trust. The list below illustrates the sequence of practices leading to effective performance coaching.

1. Build Trust and Relationships
2. Use Effective Communication
 - a. Questioning
 - b. Active Listening
3. Support the Right Work
 - a. Encourage Goal-Setting
 - b. Enacting Follow Through

Coaching Rubric: Building Trust and Relationships

Practices	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging
<p>Building Trust and Relationships: The coach builds a trusting relationship with the principal by exhibiting trustworthiness. [Allison, Killion]</p>	<p>The coach directs his or her intentions, thoughts, and emotions in ways that promote effective on-going support to the principal; promises only what he or she can deliver; follows through on promises; communicates honestly; exhibits dependability by being timely, productive, and attentive to detail; treats the principal as an equal; demonstrates empathy; welcomes feedback from the principal; and maintains confidentiality as appropriate.</p>	<p>The coach is aware of how his or her intentions, thoughts, and emotions influence his or her efforts to provide on-going support to the principal; honors promises almost all the time; communicates honestly; always exhibits dependability by being productive and timely; demonstrates empathy; accepts feedback from the principal; and maintains confidentiality as appropriate.</p>	<p>The coach reflects on ways that his or her intentions, thoughts, and emotions can influence his or her relationship with the principal; honors promises most of the time; communicates honestly; typically exhibits dependability by being productive and timely; demonstrates empathy; is open to two-way communication with the principal; and maintains confidentiality appropriately (i.e., within the limits of professional ethics).</p>

Reflection and Planning Tool: Building Trust

Goals:

Identify areas of current practice that you wish to strength or reflect upon.

Action Steps:

Identify actions for strengthening identified areas of current practice.

Barriers to Progress:

List any barriers you will need to remove in order to strengthen areas of current practice and how you plan to remove the barriers.

Coaching Rubric: Questioning

Practices	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging
<p>Questioning: The coach uses questioning as the primary method of supporting the principal's development. [Allison, Killion]</p>	<p>The coach uses different types of non-judgmental, nondirective, open-ended questions (see Key Words) to prompt principals to engage in different thought processes as well as to make decisions and take action; the questions are appropriate to the situation, challenge unexamined assumptions, activate core commitments, align with nonnegotiables, and scaffold intended outcomes; questions that (1) are always divergent and substantive and (2) facilitate principals' reflection, discovery, and professional growth.</p>	<p>The coach mostly uses nonjudgmental, non-directive, open-ended questions that are appropriate to the situation and that encourage principals to think about leadership issues in different ways and to take actions that align with nonnegotiables and lead to intended outcomes; the coach often uses questions (see Key Words) that (1) are divergent and substantive and (2) facilitate principals' reflection, discovery, and professional growth.</p>	<p>The coach asks a combination of open-ended and convergent questions that are appropriate to the situation and that encourage principals to think about their work, the challenges that confront them, and possible decisions and actions that align with nonnegotiables and lead to intended outcomes; the coach occasionally uses less effective questions (see Key Words).</p>

Reflection and Planning Tool: Questioning

Goals:

Identify areas of current practice that you wish to strengthen or reflect upon.

Action Steps:

Identify actions for strengthening identified areas of current practice.

Barriers to Progress:

List any barriers you will need to remove in order to strengthen areas of current practice and how you plan to remove the barriers.

Coaching Rubric: Using Active Listening

Practices	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging
Using Active Listening: The coach uses active listening. [Allison, Killion]	The coach listens attentively and with interest to the principal, acknowledges the views of the principal, uses paraphrasing to ensure understanding of the views of the principal, follows each question with sufficient waittime; the coach listens appreciatively by presuming the positive intent of the speaker; the coach uses body language in effective ways to communicate interest by maintaining eye contact, facing the principal, keeping an open demeanor, and nodding; the coach restrains (see Key Words) certain behaviors typical of informal social interactions.	The coach listens attentively to the principal, acknowledges the views of the principal, uses paraphrasing most of the time to ensure understanding of the views of the principal, follows questions with sufficient wait time; the coach uses body language that fits with an attentive stance (e.g., maintaining eye contact, facing the principal, keeping an open demeanor, and nodding); the coach restrains (see Key Words) certain behaviors typical of informal social interactions.	The coach spends more time listening than talking, occasionally acknowledges the views of the principal by paraphrasing, and uses body language to communicate interest (e.g., by maintaining eye contact most of the time, facing the principal, and nodding).

Reflection and Planning Tool: Using Active Listening

Goals:

Identify areas of current practice that you wish to strengthen or reflect upon.

Action Steps:

Identify actions for strengthening identified areas of current practice.

Barriers to Progress:

List any barriers you will need to remove in order to strengthen areas of current practice and how you plan to remove the barriers.

Coaching Rubric: Encouraging Focused Goal-Setting

Practices	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging
<p>Encouraging Focused Goal-Setting: The coach prompts the principal to establish a focused set of meaningful and attainable school goals. [Allison]</p>	<p>The coach ensures that the principal defines meaningful school-wide goals by asking thought-provoking questions about district goals and strategies, student performance, teacher capacity, and community priorities; the coach ensures the principal sets attainable goals by asking thought-provoking questions about school-level data and previous improvement efforts; the coach ensures the principal focuses a limited set of goals by asking thought-provoking questions about strategic priorities and the coherence of district and school improvement strategies.</p>	<p>The coach guides the principal to consider what might be meaningful school-wide goals by asking questions about district goals and strategies, student performance, teacher capacity, and community priorities; the coach helps the principal assess goals that might be attainable goals by asking questions about schoollevel data and previous improvement efforts.</p>	<p>The coach talks with the principal about goal-setting, considering topics such as the alignment between district and school goals, school performance indicators, past improvement efforts, teacher capacity, and community priorities.</p>

Reflection and Planning Tool: Encouraging Focused Goal-Setting

Goals:

Identify areas of current practice that you wish to strengthen or reflect upon.

Action Steps:

Identify actions for strengthening identified areas of current practice.

Barriers to Progress:

List any barriers you will need to remove in order to strengthen areas of current practice and how you plan to remove the barriers.

Coaching Rubric: Enacting Follow-Through

Practices	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging
Enacting Follow-Through: The coach demonstrates follow-through and elicits follow-through from the principal.	The coach demonstrates follow-through by routinely communicating expectations verbally and in writing in concise but specific messages; the coach develops and uses conversation protocols (see Key Words) that predictably result in the principal's self-disclosure about his or her efforts to accomplish agreed-upon goals; the coach asks questions that enable the principal to identify and remove barriers that prevent goal attainment.	The coach demonstrates follow-through by communicating expectations verbally or in writing; the coach develops and uses conversation protocols (see Key Words) that often result in the principal's self-disclosure about his or her efforts to accomplish agreed-upon goals; the coach asks questions that enable the principal to identify barriers that prevent goal attainment.	The coach occasionally demonstrates follow-through by sharing expectations verbally or in writing; the coach asks the principal about his or her progress in meeting agreed-upon goals; the coach occasionally uses probing questions to help the principal identify barriers that prevent goal attainment.

Reflection and Planning Tool: Monitoring Follow-Through

Goals:

Identify areas of current practice that you wish to strengthen or reflect upon.

Action Steps:

Identify actions for strengthening identified areas of current practice.

Barriers to Progress:

List any barriers you will need to remove in order to strengthen areas of current practice and how you plan to remove the barriers.

Coaching Rubric: Key Words

Inclusive Instructional Leadership:

Fostering inclusive instructional leadership is the purpose of OLi⁴ and of OLi⁴ coaching. This form of leadership builds on the Ohio Improvement Process and its leadership teams: TBTs, BLTs, and DLTs. It helps schools develop instructional practices responsive to the needs of every student in a school (for instance: students of all races and ethnicities, students with disabilities, students living in poverty, and English learners).

Performance Coaching:

OLi⁴ coaching enacts a collegial, confidential, and non-judgmental helping relationship. The role exists to help principals become more inclusive instructional leaders.

Confidentiality:

OLi⁴ coaching depends on a confidential and collegial relationship. Exceptional events may require abridgment of confidentiality: but such a requirement would be extremely uncommon.

Conversation Protocols:

Sequences of questions or prompts that structure an educative conversation, such as a conversation between a principal and his or her OLi⁴ coach.

Compliance Mentality:

Not mentioned in the rubric, but common in the reality of improvement practice. Instead of compliance, OLi⁴ seeks to cultivate a reflective approach to inclusive instructional leadership based on trust, collaboration, and inquiry.

Questioning Strategies:

Asking principals (for instance) to: reflect on experiences, clarify ideas, imagine alternative outlooks, propose competing explanations, consider a range of options, infer the effect of actions for varied stakeholders, examine assumptions, and deconstruct conventional practice. Questioning for OLi⁴ performance coaching recognizes that leading questions, rhetorical questions, convergent questions, questions intended to elicit one-word answers (e.g., “yes” or “no”), and questions that imply judgments are very seldom appropriate to the coaching role.

Restraint:

Restraint is a classical virtue that implies holding back certain behaviors or engagements for the good of an unfolding process or event. The natural impulses to share personal experience, inquire about personal matters, and offer advice require this virtue for successful OLi⁴ coaching. The influence of active listening and reflective questioning can be undone otherwise.

Rubric:

The OLi⁴ rubric distinguishes three levels of practice. Standard or mature practice is described as “exemplary.” The rubric entry for this sort of practice is intended to be the one to which coaches orient as they work to improve in their OLi⁴ coaching role.