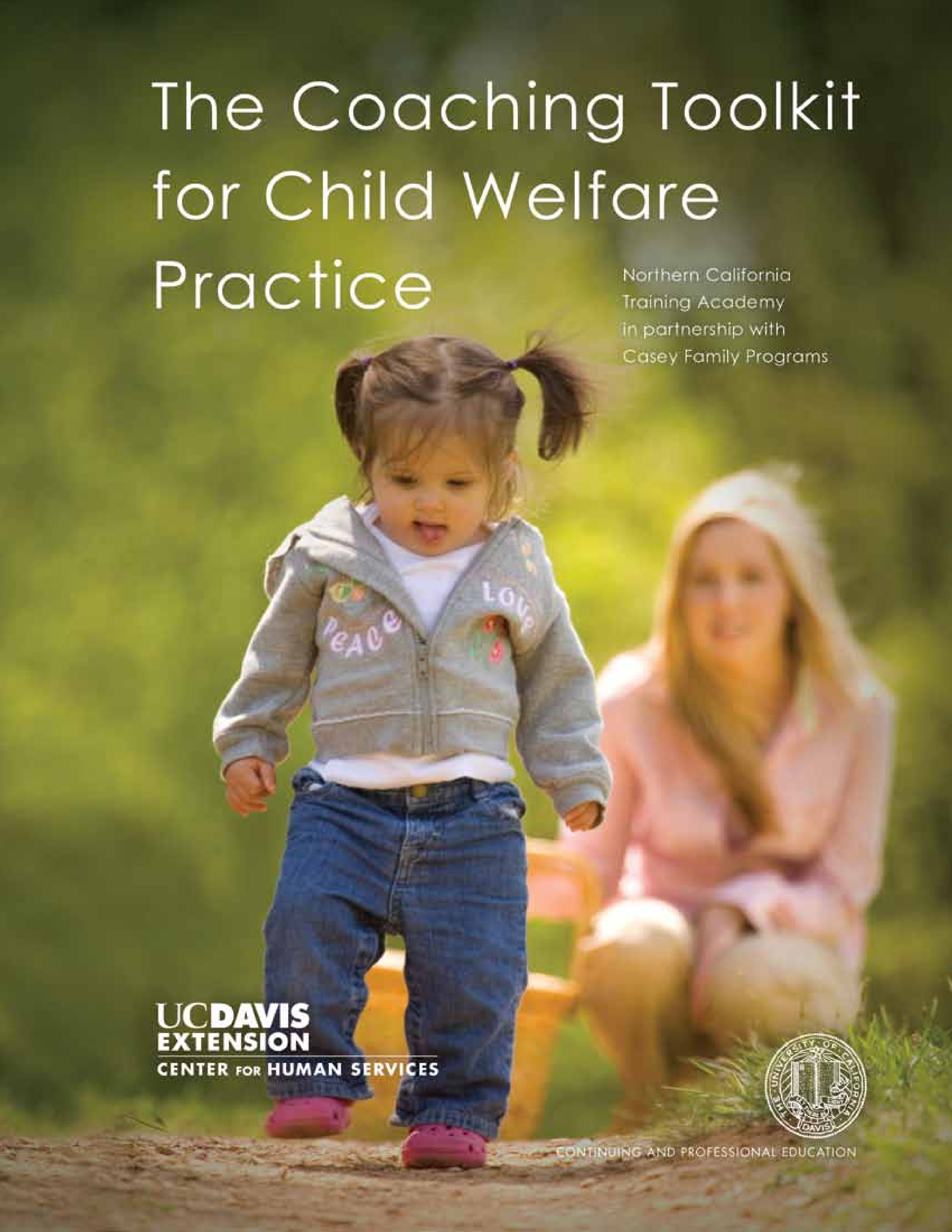

# The Coaching Toolkit for Child Welfare Practice

Northern California Training Academy
in partnership with
Casey Family Programs

UC DAVIS EXTENSION
CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES

CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

# The Coaching Toolkit for Child Welfare Practice

Northern California Training Academy
Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension

*in partnership with*
Casey Family Programs

This *project was made as part of a child welfare initiative with Casey Family Programs, whose mission is to provide, improve—and ultimately prevent the need for—foster care. The findings and conclusions presented in this publication are those of the author(s) alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Casey Family Programs.*

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## Video Guide

Five videos accompany the Coaching Toolkit for Child Welfare Practice to provide additional learning opportunities for those wishing to implement coaching.

# Welcome

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## About the Academy

As part of the Center for Human Services at UC Davis Extension, the Northern California Training Academy provides training, technical assistance, and consultation to 28 Northern California counties. These rural and urban counties face various training challenges for child welfare staff. The Academy recognizes the priority need for integrated training across disciplines in the region and is committed to delivering exceptional training and other professional services to meet counties' needs.

# Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1

# Introduction

# Introduction

The *Coaching Toolkit for Child Welfare Practice* is designed to help guide the development and implementation of formal, professional coaching within the child welfare context. Recently, the use of coaching in child welfare organizations has received a great deal of attention — and for good reason. Coaching helps individuals learn new skills faster and more efficiently and effectively, and coaching can support organizations in implementing new practices and strategies.

**Key Terms**

*Learner:* The *learner* is the person who *receives* coaching. This person can be a social worker, supervisor, manager, or director.

*Coach:* The *coach* is the person who *provides* coaching. The coach may be an outside consultant (external coach) or a staff member within the organization (internal coach) such as a dedicated coach or trainer, social worker, supervisor, manager, or director.

*Practice:* The term *practice*, also known as coaching intervention, can be specific to social worker skills, such as forensic interviewing; or it can relate to supervision or leadership strategies, such as group supervision or general leadership.

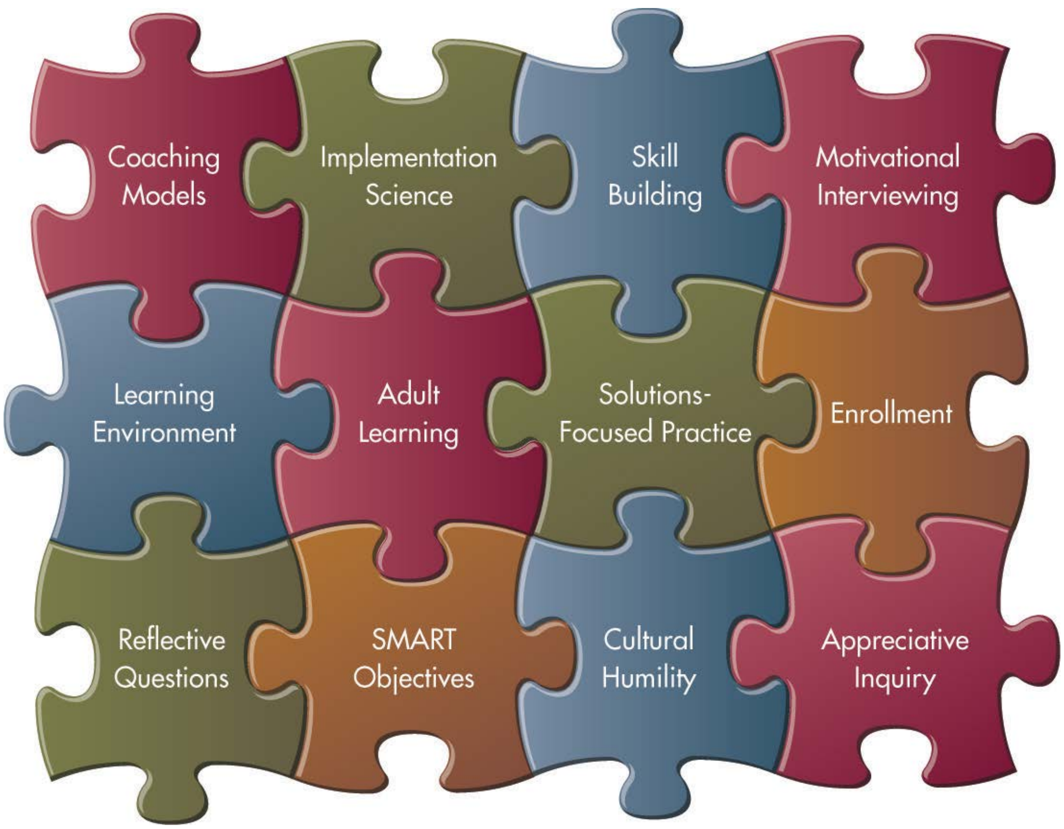
This toolkit presents many examples and scenarios specific to child welfare settings. The toolkit provides structure and guidance on the *who, what, when, where, why,* and *how* of coaching methods and techniques.

## Definition of Coaching

> Coaching is a process by which the coach creates structured, focused interaction with learners and uses appropriate strategies, tools, and techniques to promote desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the learner, making a positive impact on the organization.
>
> ~ adapted from Mink, Owen, & Mink, 1993; Cox, Bachkirova, & Clutterbuck, 2010

This content draws from the work of many concepts and theories: evidence-based coaching, appreciative inquiry, cultural humility and adult learning principles. This Toolkit provides a guide for putting together the best research, methods and models, including common sense and experience, to create a comprehensive coaching program. The integration of evidence-based theories and practices allows child welfare organizations to embed professional development in order to maximize outcomes for children and families. This Toolkit is set forth to help the field of child welfare move forward via the integration of these best practices and to create an optimal learning experience for all staff. Most professionals in the field of child welfare are familiar with best practices in a variety of fields; by the end of this toolkit the reader will understand how these pieces fit together (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1. The Coaching Puzzle




This toolkit describes many concepts, some of which may overlap in the description of coaching foundational theories, approaches, and models and, as a result, some text may seem repetitive.

# Purpose of the Toolkit

The *Coaching Toolkit* provides solid, practical information on coaching in the child welfare organization.

Professional development coaching leads to improvements in practice, quality of work, and the agency's success in working with children and families by

- improving systemic implementation of a practice;
- creating positive changes in behavior; and
- embedding professional development.

**Key Terms**

*Formal coaching* is a contracted process between learner and coach with clear goals, scheduled meetings, and an end date.

*Informal coaching* occurs outside of a formal model — usually spontaneously — with a staff member, co-worker, or direct report.

Coaching nurtures goal-focused, self-directed learners and draws on their reservoir of previous experience with a view to solving real-life dilemmas (Ives, 2008).

The coaching described in this toolkit is formal; it is focused, goal-oriented, and performance-driven.

The toolkit describes coaching approaches and models that can be used for the following purposes:

- Newly employed staff learning county protocol and procedures.
- Career practitioners who want to improve current practice or learn new skills.
- Agency leadership who seek organizational growth.

## The need for coaching in child welfare services

Social workers must constantly use critical decision-making skills as they face a multiplicity of needs and issues when working with families. Implementation science researchers claim that "human services are far more complex than any other industry" (Fixsen, Blasé, Naoom, & Wallace, 2009, p. 531). When making a program or practice change in the field of child welfare, all practitioners must adopt the change. The practitioner *is* the focus of the change itself (Fixsen, et al., 2009). Child welfare staff need advanced critical decision-making skills that cannot be taught in a one-time training.

> The coaching process mirrors the synergistic family–professional relationships promoted in early intervention and encourages staff to adopt a self-correcting perspective, which promotes continued learning and improvement in professional practices by fostering the perspective that an individual's skills should be examined, discussed, and refined because they are tools of the early intervention profession.
> ~ Gallacher, 1997, p. 203

In this toolkit, coaching incorporates a systems approach to working with staff, which is similar to the practitioner's approach to working with families.

## Tenets of Coaching

Coaching thrives when all parties involved understand and follow a core set of principles. These tenets, adapted from the work of Kathleen Gallacher (1997), guide and ground the parameters of what is useful and appropriate in a shifting set of relationships and circumstances:

- Coaching is most successful when it is voluntary.
- Enrollment is a process (for details see Chapter 6: Coaching Models). Enrollment occurs when the coach and learner create and agree upon clear outcomes, identify potential challenges to the coaching process, and mutually express commitment.
- Coaching flourishes best when it is separated from supervision and/or performance evaluation.
- Coaching is an ongoing process that requires time; learners must be able to spend time in the learning process.
- Coaching requires an atmosphere of trust and experimentation and a strengths-based learning environment that encourages growth.
- Coaching is individualized to each unique learner.
- Coaching is most successful when it is evidence-based. Evidence-based coaching, a term first used by Grant (2003), refers to "the intelligent and conscientious use of best current knowledge integrated with practitioner expertise in making decisions about how to deliver coaching" (Stober & Grant, 2006, p. 6).
- Coaching increases success in the organization. Coaching an individual social worker improves job performance and development while profoundly impacting the success of the child welfare organization.

# Dimensions of Coaching

Coaching varies along several dimensions (Gallacher, 1997). The following questions are important in identifying relationships prior to coaching as they drive individualized coaching strategies:

- Will coaching occur between an expert and a novice?
- Will coaching occur between peers in a reciprocal relationship?
- Will coaching occur between individuals or among members of a team of learners?
- Will coaching focus on the improvement and integration of pre-identified specific skills or on a process by which the coach and learner together identify the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the coaching process?

> The most obvious characteristic of formal business coaching is that it is being used explicitly – during the session both parties are clear that they are engaged in 'coaching' and are committed to this process as well as the outcome.
>
> ~ McGuinness, 2008

# Putting Together the Pieces

This toolkit is designed with four audiences in mind: agency leadership, learners, coaches, and supervisors.

## This toolkit provides CWS agency leadership with…

- Background and research on coaching (Chapter 2: Value of Coaching).
- Methods to assess where an agency exists on the learning culture continuum (Chapter 8: Readiness).
- Tools and strategies to implement a comprehensive learning environment (Chapter 7: Implementation and Chapter 8: Readiness).
- Planning tools and strategies for implementing coaching (Chapter 7: Implementation).

## This toolkit provides learners with…

- Strategies for getting the most out of a coaching experience (Chapter 4: Capacity Building).
- Understanding of how coaching serves as a vehicle for career enhancement (Chapter 2: Value of Coaching).
- Information about the organizational learning environment (Chapter 8: Readiness).

## This toolkit provides coaches with…

- A framework and foundation for coaching (Chapter 3: Framework and Foundation)
- Skills and techniques to work with learners and agency leadership from the beginning stages of the coaching contract to the closure of the coaching process. This includes practical information in inquiry, providing feedback, and setting goals (Chapter 4: Capacity Building).
- Approaches to coaching (Chapter 5: Approaches).
- Models of coaching to frame coaching sessions as well as the coaching process as a whole (Chapters 6: Models).

## This toolkit provides supervisors with…

- Tools and strategies to integrate into everyday supervision of staff (Chapter 4: Capacity Building).
- Tips to adopt a coaching-based supervision style (Chapter 9: The Coach).
- Coaching approaches and models to implement with staff on a more formal basis (Chapters 5 and 6, Approaches and Models).
- Background and research on coaching (Chapter 2: Value of Coaching).

## Coaching Examples

Examples presented throughout the toolkit are based on coaching experiences led by the Northern California Training, but are fictitious. In addition, several videos accompany the toolkit, providing more thorough scenarios of coaching strategies.

Many of the examples are based on coaching safety organized practice (term first coined by Andrew Turnell, 2004). The SOP methodology is informed by a variety of best- and evidence-informed practices, including group supervision (Shulman, 1993; Lohrbach & Sawyer 2004), Signs of Safety (Turnell & Edwards, 1999), motivational interviewing (Rolnick and Miller, 1995), and solution-focused treatment (DeShazer, Berg, Lipchik, Nunnally, Molar, Gingerich, & Weiner-Davis, 1986). Safety-organized practice brings a common language and framework for enhanced critical thinking and judgment on the part of all involved with a family in the pursuit of a balanced, complete picture of child welfare issues.

Safety-organized practices are both practice strategies and concrete tools for "on-the-ground" child welfare workers, supervisors and managers to enhance family participation and foster equitable decision making. The main objectives consist of:

- Strategies for the creation of effective working relationships and a shared focus to guide casework among all stakeholders (including the child, family, worker, supervisor, and extended community). These strategies include facilitated family meeting, the development of family safety networks, group supervision and family finding.

- Enhancing critical inquiry and minimizing the potential for bias by workers through a rigorous "mapping" of the safety, danger and risk undertaken collaboratively by all stakeholders.
- The development of a joint understanding by workers, families and extended community as to what the attendant dangers, risks, protective capacities and family strengths are, and what clear, meaningful, behavioral changes and goals are needed to create safety.
- Application of research based tools to enhance consistency, validity, and equity in the key case decisions that child welfare practitioners have to make every day.

## Key Terms

*Approach* is the overall philosophy or style of setting about the task of coaching.

*Coach* refers to the person who *provides* coaching. The coach may be an outside consultant (external coach) or a staff member within the organization (internal coach) such as a dedicated coach or trainer, social worker, supervisor, manager, or director.

*Coaching* is a process using structured, focused interaction. With appropriate strategies, tools, and techniques coaching promotes desirable and sustainable change for the benefit of the learner; and in turn positively impacts the organization (Mink, Owen, & Mink, 1993; Cox, Bachkirova, & Clutterbuck, 2010).

*Coaching modality* is the form of coaching, for example, peer coaching.

*External coach* is an outside consultant who is not a staff member of the organization in which he or she is coaching.

*Formal coaching* occurs when both parties are clear they are engaged in coaching and are committed to the process as well as the outcome (McGuinness, 2008).

*Implementation science* is the study of the process of implementing evidence-based programs and practices (Fixsen Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005).

*Informal coaching* occurs outside of a formal model, typically between a supervisor and staff members. This type of coaching is often *serendipitous*, happening spontaneously.

*Internal coach* is a dedicated staff member who provides formal coaching for other staff.

*Learner* is the person who *receives* coaching. This person can be a social worker, supervisor, manager, or director.

*Model* comprises examples or standards for how to structure the overall coaching process (a model is not a set of instructions).

*Practice,* also known as coaching intervention, can be specific to social worker skills, such as forensic interviewing; or it can relate to supervision or leadership strategies, such as group supervision or general leadership.

*Skill/skill set* is needed to accomplish a specified task or perform a given function well.

*Strategy* is a plan, method, or series of steps for achieving a goal.

*Technique* encompasses procedures or methods coaches may employ to achieve coaching goals.

# Pause and Reflect

- In what capacity(ies) are you reading this Toolkit: agency leadership, coach, supervisor, or learner?
- What do you hope to learn in reading this Toolkit?
- Think of times when you received either informal or formal coaching, what were the impacts?
- What worked well and what could have been improved?
- On a scale of 1-10, 10 considered in full agreement, how much do you, at first glance, agree with the tenets of coaching presented in this chapter? Why?
- What concepts presented in this chapter do you most look forward to learning?

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Chapter 2

# The Value of Coaching

# The Value of Coaching

It is not a surprise that adults learn best and improve skills more effectively and efficiently when they receive follow-up support and ongoing performance feedback after they participate in a training event (Guskey, 2000).

**Core concepts**

- Coaching improves systemic implementation of a practice.
- Coaching involves a change in behavior.
- Coaching embeds professional development.

Sustained professional development that provide opportunities for hands-on learning and day-to-day practice are significantly more effective than traditional models of professional development such as a one-day workshop on a single topic (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001).

Training alone has not been shown to result in changes in practitioner behavior or improvements in client outcomes (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). Classroom training rarely results in positive, long-term changes in learners' professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Researchers have noted that workshops comprising most traditional staff development methodologies provide little of the time, activities, or content necessary to promote meaningful change (Garet, et al., 2001). The problem with traditional approaches to training for professional development is that staff often do not know how to implement what they learn in these workshops and have no way to receive support or feedback when they do attempt to apply what they have learned in actual work situations.

## Coaching Pays

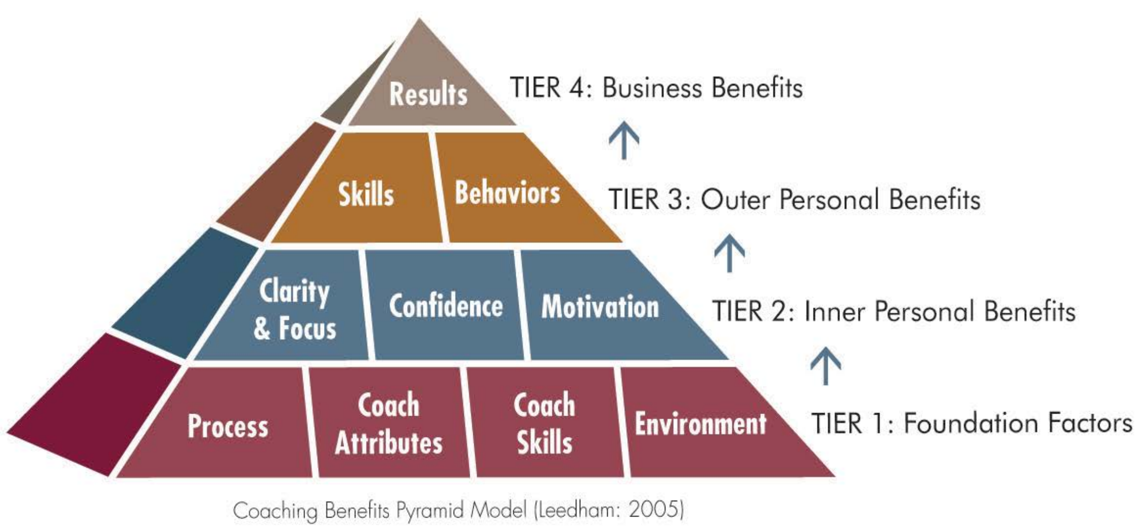
The potential social return on investment (SROI) that coaching can provide to the learner and the child welfare organization is significant. The concept of return on investment may be difficult to fully quantify in social services as it is usually directly linked to fiscal outcomes. Return on investment (ROI) is typically examined as the net benefits derived from the purchase divided by cost, expressed as a percentage. This essentially details the profit gained by investments. This hard profit line can be difficult, if not impossible, to apply in child welfare; however, the *social* ROI can be defined. Positive social gains are brought to the organization by implementing coaching. For example, by increasing social worker confidence and abilities to engage families, rates of timely reunification may increase.

If coaching leads to workers with enhanced skills, then organizations will be more effective as a whole, which translates into more *effective* use of fiscal resources as measured by improved outcomes — and improved outcomes for children and families.

## The Coaching Pyramid

One way to conceptualize the value of coaching and social return on investment in child welfare agencies is to visualize the Coaching Pyramid (see Figure 2.1). Leedham (2005) developed the Coaching Pyramid from three primary sources of information: an analysis of the literature on ROI, the results of a survey provided to more than 200 executives who received coaching, and a small case study of six business executives who invested in coaching to improve the performance of employees.

Figure 2.1. The Coaching Benefits Pyramid




The foundation of the Coaching Pyramid (tier 1) consists of (a) a *skillful* coach who provides clear feedback, listens, and builds trust with the learner; (b) a *qualified* coach who has the necessary knowledge, qualifications, and effective abilities to coach; (c) a *structured* coaching process by which both parties understand and agree upon the coaching goals; and (d) a *safe and supportive* coaching environment that provides a place to reflect and think.

Once the foundation is in place, the learner will reap primary benefits (tier 2) including (a) clarity and focus, which provide a sense of clear direction and purpose; (b) self-confidence, which leads to improved competence and success in working with families; and (c) motivation to achieve, which fosters greater accountability and an enhanced desire for the learner to succeed.

Tier 3 shows how the primary benefits of tier one lead to the enhancement of skills, knowledge, and understanding and improvement in working relationships. Tier 4 of the pyramid, Results, represents the ultimate improved organizational accountability and ROI.

Organizations that encourage authentic learning, set clear expectations and measurable performance objectives, and provide expert help and emotional support will perform more effectively and efficiently than those who do not (Nissly, Mor Barak, & Levin, 2004; Scannapieco & Connell-Carrick, 2007). These factors are more important to retaining staff and decreasing turnover than workloads, salary, and worker characteristics (Douglas, 1997). Ultimately, collaborative learning organizations have better outcomes, which benefit all workers and clients served by the organization.

## Why Coaching Works

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning evaluated a group of 87 teachers from different schools. The results of the study indicate that 85%of those teachers who received ongoing support from instructional coaches implemented newly learned instructional methods. In another study conducted by the same group, research indicates that teachers who did not receive such support implemented newly learned strategies at a rate of only 10% (Joyce & Showers, 2002). Interestingly, learners can demonstrate new skills in the artificial classroom training exercises, but to transfer learning to everyday work remains low without follow-up coaching (see Table 2.1).

*Angelique Du Toit (2006) suggests coaches are able to ask questions without the fear of judgment or criticism that may be felt when supervisors or managers do the asking. The value of coaches is in their ability to provide open and honest feedback within a supportive environment.*

***Table 2.1.*** Professional development outcomes describing the estimated percentage of change learners achieve (Joyce and Showers, 2002).

| **Professional Development Elements** | **Knowledge Level**<br><br>Percentage of teachers understanding contents | **Skill Level**<br><br>Percentage of teachers demonstrating proficiency in the instructional practices | **Transfer to Practice**<br><br>Percentage of teachers regularly implementing instructional practices in the classroom |
|---|---|---|---|
| Theory (presenter explains content - what it is, why it is important and how to teach it) | 10% | 5% | 0% |
| Demonstration (presenter models instructional practices) | 30% | 30% | 0% |
| Practice (teachers implement instructional practices during the session) | 60% | 60% | 5% |
| Coaching (teachers receive ongoin support and guidance when they return to the classroom) | 95% | 95% | 95% |

In her synthesis of coaching research, Gallacher (1997) describes aspects that lead to authentic learning:

- Support and encouragement through the opportunity to review experiences, discuss feelings, describe frustrations and check perceptions with a partner.
- Opportunity to fine-tune skills or strategies through technical feedback and technical assistance from a coaching partner.
- Time and encouragement to analyze practices and decision making at a conscious level.
- Ability to adapt or generalize skills or strategies by considering what is needed to facilitate particular outcomes, how to modify the skill or practice to better fit interactions with specific families or practitioners, or what results may occur from using the skill or practice in different ways.
- Opportunities to reflect on what learners perceive or how they make decisions, which help improve their knowledge and understanding of professional practices and activities.

Ziskin (1970) likened clinical practice (one-shot training) to learning how to play golf in a dense fog. Hitting the ball has some feeling and immediate effect, but there is no reliable information to help correct the drive. One could labor for years on a fog-bound driving range without demonstrating any improvement in actual golfing skill.

The chart below shows the learning trajectories of both John and Elizabeth, new child welfare social workers in Pretend County, USA.

| **Elizabeth** – receives no coaching | **John** – receives formal coaching |
|---|---|
| Registers for a two-day training without reviewing any pre-training materials. | Receives book on Forensic Interviewing prior to training with a request that he simply browse it prior to the training. |
| Attends two-day workshop on Forensic Interviewing. | Attends two-day workshop on Forensic Interviewing. |
| | Two weeks post-training—meets with supervisor who reviews Forensic Interviewing information. |
| | Three weeks post-training—practices Forensic Interviewing in a mock interview with supervisor. |
| | Four weeks post-training—supervisor goes with him on a forensic interview in the field and offers follow-up suggestions and feedback after the interview. |

Clearly, John will have a much higher likelihood of becoming proficient in forensic interviewing. As noted, there is little empirical reason to believe that a one-shot training will be sufficient to achieve lasting changes in practice behaviors, especially those that are durable.

Jarvis (2004) describes the individual benefits of coaching that result in greater outcomes for children and families (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2. The Benefits of Coaching

## Summary

By purposefully creating a comprehensive coaching system within an organization, chances increase dramatically that overall outcomes will improve (see Table 2.2).

***Table 2.2.*** Coaching outcomes for both the learner and the organization.

| For the Learner | For the Organization |
|---|---|
| ▪ Develops self-awareness. | ▪ Increases creativity and learning. |
| ▪ Increases openness to learning. | ▪ Increases organizational performance. |
| ▪ Instills greater clarity of roles and responsibilities. | ▪ Creates an intrinsically motivating environment. |
| ▪ Enhances ability to identify solutions. | ▪ Improves relationships among workers. |
| ▪ Improves performance and goals. | ▪ Fosters greater use of learner's potential and talents. |
| ▪ Improves skills and behaviors. | ▪ Improves outcomes and return on investment |
| ▪ Provides opportunities for accountability to the organization. | ▪ Provides opportunities for accountability to the learner. |
| ▪ Provides a safe environment for the learner to take risks and make mistakes. | ▪ Supports the organization in adopting a learning philosophy that is not punitive. |

# Pause and Reflect

- Think of a time when you received coaching, how did it help you?
- When have you attended a workshop and really wanted to integrate the information into practice but felt like you needed something more to do so successfully? What was your experience?
- What skills, professional or personal, would you like to receive further support in learning?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 considered fully committed, how committed are you, or your agency, to integrate coaching into professional development?
- What is one new piece of information you learned after reading this chapter?

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Chapter 3

# Framework and Foundation

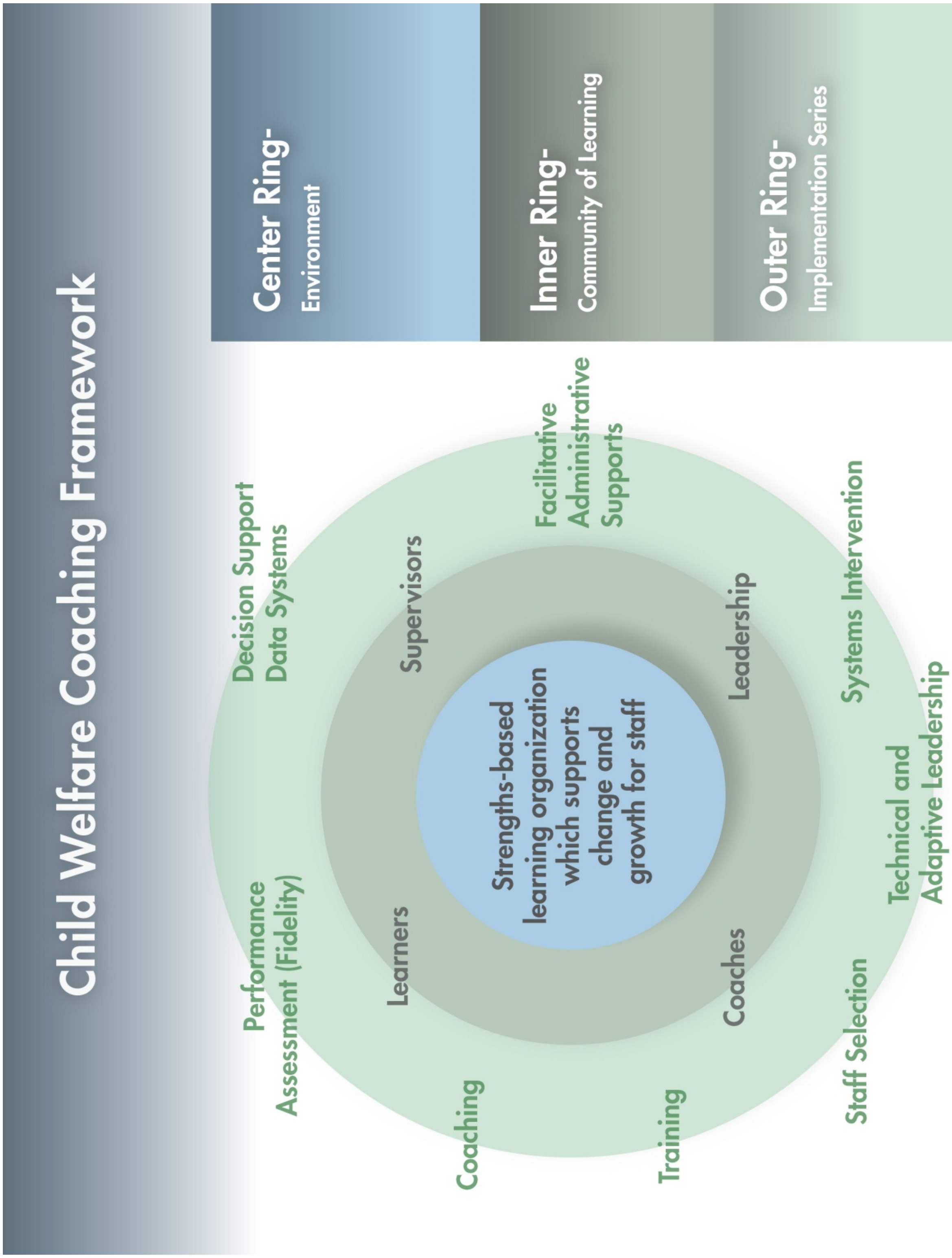
# Framework and Foundation

The *Coaching Toolkit* is built upon a conceptual framework comprised of implementation science features and key coaching foundational theories. The framework provides a structure for the integration of these key features upon which a comprehensive, embedded professional development can be successfully implemented.

## A Child Welfare Coaching Framework

The Child Welfare Coaching framework comprises three key components necessary to build *a strengths-based learning organization that supports change and growth for staff* (see Figure 3.1). Each of the child welfare coaching framework component builds on the other to provide an integrated and dynamic learning st

Figure 3.1.  Child Welfare Coaching Framework



## Center of the framework: environment

The center of the child welfare coaching framework is a strengths-based learning organization. In this environment, learners feel challenged and supported to try new skills and techniques while feeling safe enough to be vulnerable and to receive direct feedback on skills.

The only person who likes change is a wet baby.

~ Mark Twain

A safe environment that allows for change to occur does not necessarily mean comfortable; in fact, change may be highly uncomfortable (Whitworth, Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, & Sandahl, 2007). All parties must come to grips with the notion that coaching leads to change, and change is uncomfortable. A trusting, secure work environment allows learners to work through feelings of discomfort and embrace change. For tips and tools for creating a learning environment, see Chapter 8: Readiness.

## Inner ring of the framework: community of learning

The inner (middle) ring of the child welfare coaching framework is composed of the people who ensure the success of coaching—the coach, learner, supervisor, and agency leadership — a *community of learning*. This is essential in the social work field where time is scarce, demands abound, and the environment is fast paced and high pressure. Each member has special skill sets and techniques essential to creating a culture of learning.

> Willingness and good chemistry were by far the most frequently cited ingredients of a successful coaching relationship.
> ~ Scoular, 2009, p.96

### Roles of each member in the community of learning

*Learners:* Learners will benefit from remaining open to the coaching process. While learners may need some time to adjust, they must eventually commit to the coaching process. From this commitment, learners will discover they can take risks to learn new skills and be actively prepared for coaching sessions.

*Supervisors:* The role of supervisors is two-fold: (a) to support staff who are being coached by an external coach or by a peer or other staff member or (b) to actively coach the staff, either informally or formally. In either scenario, supervisors must provide staff with time to attend coaching sessions, ensure learners' goals are aligned with agency policy, and provide additional resources and support as needed.

*Agency leadership:* Leadership sets the stage for a successful learning environment by working to provide an environment where staff feels safe to take risks and make mistakes. This includes understanding myriad factors that influence the learning environment and consciously working to mitigate barriers or challenges. Leaders must ensure coaching is not done by "name only"; time and resources must be allocated to staff who are learning and for coaches.

*Coaches:* Coaches support the learner in meeting a specified learning goal. They must allow for the coaching process to be learner-led and provide resources and support as needed. If the coach is not the individual learner's supervisor, he or she must ensure a communication system is in place to keep all parties informed and involved in the coaching process. Coaches also create a coaching agreement with leadership, supervisor, and learner to ensure all key players have appropriate expectations and a clear understanding of the coaching process.

## Outer ring of the framework: implementation

In moving to the outer part of the framework — implementation — the community of learning works together to ensure success and sustainability of the practice or intervention being implemented. At this point the goal is to build capacity: "an ongoing, thoughtfully planned effort by all members of an organization to improve how that organization operates, serves its stakeholders, fulfills its mission, and approaches its vision" (Stephens & Russell, 2004, p. 241).

The outer ring represents Fixsen and colleagues' (2005) core components of implementation science (also known as implementation drivers). The following components work together in a multifaceted process to promote successful program or intervention implementation. (For a more detailed description of these components, see Chapter 7: Implementation.)

*Staff selection:* Hiring and sustaining qualified and effective staff is of utmost importance in implementing best practices.

*Training:* Learners, supervisors and other staff are given background information on the practices and skills that will be coached. These individuals must understand the vision of the practice and the relevance of what they will be learning in the upcoming coaching sessions.

*Caching:* The learner and other involved staff must receive support and resources via clear communication; feedback mechanisms and other behavior change strategies must be in place to ensure they are learning the new practice and skills.

*Performance Assessment/Fidelity:* Quality improvement measures provide assurance for the continuous implementation of the core components which support the learners' skills and behaviors.

*Systems interventions:* These interventions are designed to cooperate with external systems to ensure that financial, organizational, and human resources are available to support the work of the practitioners.

*Facilitative administration supports:* Strong leadership provided to staff at an organizational level will support practice and maintain focus on the goal.

*Decision Support Data Systems:* systems or sources of information the organization can utilize to support decision making and implementation.

*Technical and Adaptive Leadership:* both leadership styles are important to the implementation process. Adaptive leadership responds to complex change by reducing conflict while seeking organizational growth.  Technical leadership responds quickly to help solve problems, typically in situations without a great deal of ambiguity.

# Coaching Foundational Theories

Three major theories form the basis for coaching in child welfare: appreciative inquiry, cultural humility and adult learning. Both appreciative inquiry and cultural humility are based on inquiry and a respect for the others — the other learners, staff members, families, clients, and even organizations. Adult learning provides the setting and structure for a positive learning experience.

## Appreciative inquiry

*Definition:* Appreciative inquiry (AI) is "the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them.

It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system 'life' when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential. It mobilizes inquiry through crafting an 'unconditional positive question' often involving hundreds or sometimes thousands of people" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999, p. 12).

Appreciative inquiry is often noted as the theoretical underpinning of strength-based theory, practices, and research. Founders David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva define AI as a paradigm based on the premise that "organizations change in the direction in which they inquire." The driving principle is that an organization [or individual] that investigates problems keeps finding problems whereas an organization [or individual] that investigates what there is to appreciate in itself will discover what success is (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 19 87).

### Assumptions of appreciative inquiry (adapted from Hammond, 1998)

- In every society, organization, or group something works.
- What we focus on becomes our reality.
- Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
- The act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way.

- People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
- If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past.
- It is important to value differences.
- The language we use creates our reality.

> Dreams are not necessarily born or nurtured by our successes, and failure even in its most dramatic form does not necessarily knock a person out. It is how that experience is reflected upon, talked about, defined, and the reality we co-create that ultimately makes it positive or negative.
>
> ~ Hammond, 1998, p. 6

The appreciative inquiry paradigm moves from theory to practice by using the "Four Ds": discover, dream, design, and destiny (see Figure 3.2). Emphasis is placed on *how* questions are asked—the words chosen when asking questions will impact the answers provided, reaffirming the quality of our language and how we talk about our work, our relationships, and ourselves with others. Central to appreciative inquiry is the *Affirmative Topic*. This is what begins appreciative inquiry. During this time, the topic of the inquiry is decided, for example, "to develop authentic partnerships with families" as opposed "to increase use of motivational interviewing."

Figure 3.2. Appreciative Inquiry Four D's (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999)

### The four D tasks

*Discovery:* Appreciate *what is*. Find the positive stories that exist in every individual and organization.

*Dream:* Articulate the dream, the clear vision of what *can be*."
Clarify what you want!

*Design:* Brainstorm possibilities based on the creativity and energy generated during the discovery and dream process.

*Destiny:* Build hope and momentum for change by creating processes for learning, adjustment, and improvisation.

**Example: Appreciative inquiry in action**

During Lisa's (coach) first meeting with Jim (supervisor) she uses appreciative inquiry principles to find out what his *hoped-for outcomes* are in the coaching process. She asks Jim to tell her a story about (a) someone in his life whose career was influenced by his insight and leadership ability and (b) when he thinks he has been his best as a leader. These questions can be considered part of the *discovery* stage, which will help Jim identify his core leadership values and the passion he has for his work. Lisa also asks Jim to fast-forward 6 months and tell her about how he has been recognized and applauded for his efforts and how he has seen evidence of change across his agency because of the success of the coaching process. She asks him what he sees: how things are different and what resources and support he received to make all of it happen.

These questions can be considered part of the *dream* stage in which Lisa and Jim gain clarity about what the desired change is. During the *design* stage Lisa and Jim will brainstorm steps, so Jim can start. Jim wants to interview the supervisors he most admires to find their stories of hope and passion. Jim is excited about the coaching process and starts to think of ways to bring out the change within himself. They are well on their way to the *destiny* stage!

> Appreciation, it appears, draws our eye toward life, but stirs our feelings, sets in motion our curiosity, and provides inspiration to the envisioning mind.
> ~ Cooperrider &Whitney, 1999, p. 6

## Cultural humility

*Definition:* "Cultural humility is an acknowledgement of one's own barriers to true intercultural understanding. It is the difference between intellectually knowing another culture and being able to truly relate to it" (Unite for Sight, 2011).

Cultural humility is an alternative approach to that of cultural competency. It "requires humility as individuals continually engage in self-reflection and self-critique as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners" (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998, p. 118). Through cultural humility individuals engage in a process of mutual understanding and awareness of self in relationship to others. When coaches embrace cultural humility it precludes them from operating under the assumption that they are "culturally competent," and they learn about those with whom they interact.

> Humility is not to be confused with meekness, but the "ability to acknowledge gaps in one's knowledge, and openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice."
> ~ Tangney, 2000, p. 73

By working from a perspective of cultural humility each individual, especially the coach, will (a) declare his or her own lifelong commitment to learning, (b) recognize when potential power imbalances are present, and (c) be flexible and humble enough to "let go of the false sense of security that their training and experiences have afforded them" (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998, p. 119).

> Engaging in a process of self-awareness and self-reflection will ideally awaken the coach to the power imbalance of coaches and learners, which may influence their response to the coaching they provide.

Coaches, learners, supervisors, and agency leadership are encouraged to be *flexible and humble enough* to know that the process of coaching will be dynamic and potentially complicated. They must acknowledge what they do not know and search for and access resources to help.

### **Principles of cultural humility** (adapted from Ortega and Faller, 1997)

*Embrace the complexity of diversity:* In day-to-day existence each individual occupies multiple positions with related identities and statuses. These identities operate together, or intersect, to distinguish each of us as individuals.

*Be open to individual differences and the social experiences resulting from these differences:* Intersecting group memberships affect people's expectations, quality of life, capacities as individuals and parents, and life choices.

*Reserve judgment:* Place value on the learner's cultural expressions of concern and perspective.

*"Know thyself" and how coaches' biases interfere with the ability to listen objectively and work with learners:* Coaches must engage simultaneously in a process of realistic, ongoing self-appraisal of biases and stereotypes.

*Critically challenge one's "openness" to learn from others:* Coaches should assess how their own attitudes and behaviors create a barrier to learning from others.

*Build organizational support that demonstrates cultural humility:* Implementing cultural humility includes an assessment of the organizational environment, policies, procedures, knowledge, and skills connected to learner practices. Effort must be made to identify ways in which a cultural humility perspective is embraced and promoted. Likewise, effort must be made to uncover barriers and obstacles within the organization that inhibit cultural humility.

> By engaging in a process of realistic, ongoing self-appraisal of biases and stereotypes, coaches are encouraged to assess the ways in which their own attitudes and behaviors prevent them from learning from others.
>
> ~ Tervalon & Murray Garcia, 1998

**Cultural humility promotes the following efforts:**

- Continuous engagement in self-reflection and self-critique as lifelong learners and reflective coaches.
- Checking power imbalances that exist in the coach-learner relationship.
- Mutual respect, partnership, and advocacy with communities on behalf of the clients served and in which clients are embedded.

We do not see things as they are,

we see things as we are.

~ Anais Nin

## Adult learning or andragogy

*Definition:* Andragogy is based on the Greek word aner (with the stem andr-), meaning "man" and is "the art and science of helping adults learn" (Knowles, 1980, p.37).

Adult learning research has made it clear how adults learn new information and integrate learning into practice. The formal coaching process provides an avenue for an enhanced adult-learning experience. Elaine Cox (2006) asserts that "andragogy [adult learning] has reached its zenith with the advent of coaching as a learning approach" (p. 195).

Coaches must ensure adult learning elements are addressed throughout the coaching process. By doing so, the coach creates the opportunity to "pull the learning from the experience and plan how to do things differently in the wake of the new understandings" (Cox, 2006, p. 201).

**Adult learners** (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998, pp. 64-68):

*Have a need to know:* Adult learners must be helped to recognize the value or benefit of the learning to be undertaken before it begins.

*Have an identified self-concept and thrive when learning is self-directed:* Adult learners have a need to direct their learning. Learning itself cannot be mandated by a supervisor.

*Have prior experience:* By the very nature of reaching adulthood, adult learners have a great number of life experiences that will ipact their learning.

*Have a readiness to learn:* Adults will learn, but it should be self-driven. They become ready to learn when they recognize the need in order to deal with real-life situations.

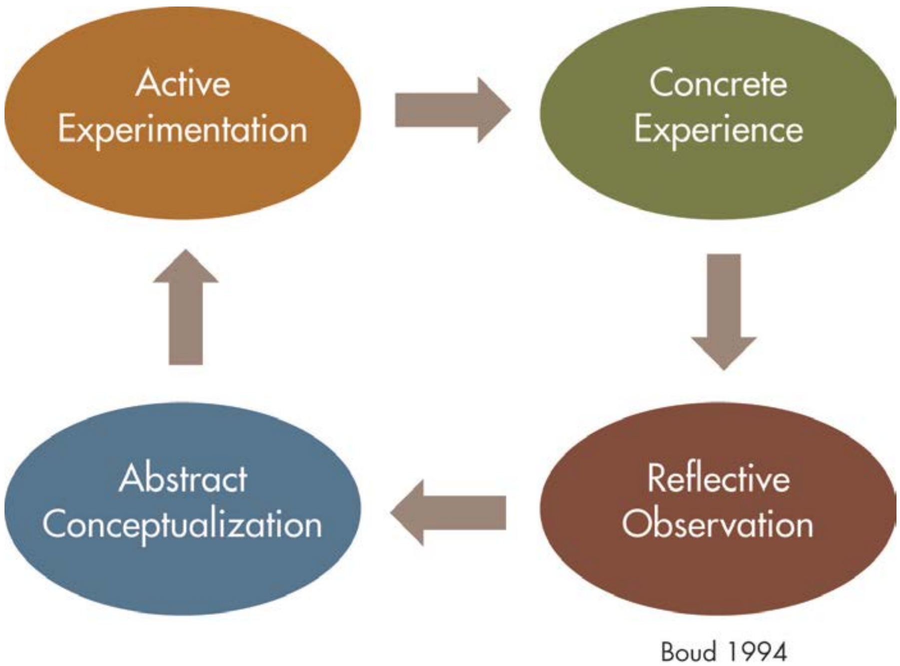
*Have an orientation to learning:* Adult learners are life- or task-centered rather than subject-centered. Their learning is focused on gaining the knowledge or skill necessary for real-life situations.

*Are internally motivated:* Coaches must tap into internal motivation to [promote] learn[ing]. Adults will simply not have a meaningful learning experience if they do not internally find a motivation to learn.

**Additional adult learning key terms**

*Experiential learning:* Adults learn through experience, a learning process that "builds on and flows from experience: no matter what external prompts to learning there might be" (Boud, Cohen, & Walker, 1994, p. 8). The phases of this process are seen as cyclical (Figure 3.3). Because it is unknown exactly what will be discovered during the coaching process, the coach must play the role of a guide as learners question perspectives and practices, which includes learning from mistakes and exploring successes. Coaches are also responsible for constructing learning environments that allow learners to challenge assumptions, take risks, and generate new ideas.

Figure 3.3. The Experiential Learning Process




*Constructivism:* Learning is an active process where experience is used by learners to construct new learning based on their previous understandings. Adults construct meaning from experience. Learners will create meaning of the world through a series of individual constructs, which are essentially different filters through which we view our reality.

*Transformative learning:* This occurs when what we learn changes the way we perceive our contexts and ourselves, often combined with a new sense of personal responsibility.

## Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?
- How does the child welfare coaching framework align with your agency values or framework?
- How do the foundational theories align with your own foundational belief about your work with learners or others?
- Does your agency integrate these foundational theories already? If so, how?

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Chapter 4

# Capacity Building

# Capacity Building

This chapter highlights and provides information on the expertise coaches need when working with learners. Coaches must master many skills to facilitate the learning process (see Table 4.1), and this Toolkit provides many tools which can be used with individual learners. The following chapters (Chapter 5: Coaching Approaches and Chapter 6: Coaching Models) will provide instruction on how to integrate these skills into a coherent learning process.

***Table 4.1*** Coaching Strategies and Mastery Abilities

| Strategy | Mastery Ability |
|---|---|
| Ability to Set Goals | ▪ Develop realistic and challenging coaching goals.<br>▪ Evaluate readiness of the learner for coaching.<br>▪ Identify an appropriate ending point in the formal coaching process.<br>▪ Understand organizational system dynamics to identify appropriate goals. |
| Observe and Assess Skill Level | ▪ Design assignments that encourage experimentation, reflection, and learning.<br>▪ Identify strategies for engaging the learner.<br>▪ Observe and understand the learner's strengths, progress, and areas needing improvement. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Provide Feedback and Facilitate Reflection and Transformation | ▪ Help the learner appreciate his or her strengths and ability to overcome barriers.<br>▪ Work with the learner to identify ongoing developmental supports and resources in his or her environment and to establish a transition or ending plan<br>▪ Practice active listening: attentiveness, clarifying, reflecting, synthesizing, giving feedback, and summarizing.<br>▪ Maintain an objective, nonjudgmental stance.<br>▪ Offer support and encouragement.<br>▪ Help learner imagine new possibilities.<br>▪ Adeptly challenge values, assumptions, and business practices.<br>▪ Identify and manage resistance. |
| Embed Principles of Adult Learning Into all Work With Learners | ▪ Use specialized techniques to encourage learner independence and self-direction.<br>▪ Build trust.<br>▪ Complement learner's learning style.<br>▪ Maintain well-honed communication. |

> Coaches must be tactful, patient, flexible, diplomatic, committed, sensitive, respectful, enthusiastic, humble, and self-aware.

To underscore the importance of cultural humility, the coaching community of learning should take time to reflect on the principles of cultural humility (Ortega & Faller, 2011):

- Embrace the complexity of diversity.
- Be open to individual differences and the social experiences due to these differences.
- Reserve judgment.
- "Know thyself" and the ways in which biases interfere with the ability to objectively listen to and work with children and families.
- Critically challenge one's "openness" to learn from others.
- Build organizational support that demonstrates cultural humility as an important and ongoing aspect of the work itself.

## Goal Setting

Writing down goals and objectives is an integral process to coaching and perhaps one of the more commonly over looked steps. Often the goals may seem obvious, and the time spent writing them may feel unwisely spent. However, by taking the time to discuss, agree upon, and write down goals, the coach and learner will be well on their way to a successful coaching process. Benefits to writing goals in the coaching process will lead to (a) enhanced coaching sessions as both parties will be clear about purpose and outcomes desired, (b) enhanced relationships between the coach and the learner, and (c) the ability to document successes achieved during the coaching process.

> *General goal:* Learn motivational interviewing (MI).
>
> *Specific goal:* When interviewing clients I will use the MI skill of "rolling with resistance" (MI skill).

Two methods for writing goals and objectives are presented in this chapter, the SMART criteria and the Goal Attainment Rating Scale.

## SMART Criteria

The SMART acronym, developed by Paul Meyer, 2003, provides a mnemonic device for remembering the qualities of a well-stated objective.

> SMART objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, result focused, and time limited.
>
> ~ Meyer, 2003

An objective is a statement of a behavior that must be achieved and maintained in order for the goal to be accomplished (Meyer, 2003).

### Specific

The goal must be clear and unambiguous without vagaries and platitudes. Specific goals describe exactly what is expected, why it is important, who's involved, where it is going to happen, and which attributes are important.

- Who: Who is involved?
- What: What do I want to accomplish?
- Where: Identify a location.
- When: Establish a time frame.
- Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- Why: Specific reasons, purpose, or benefits of accomplishing the goal.
- How: How the learner and coach will know progress is being made.

### Measurable

If a goal is not measurable, it is not possible to know whether a learner is making progress toward successful completion of that goal. Measuring progress is supposed to help learners stay on track, reach target dates, and most importantly, feel successful.

To determine if the goal is measurable, ask questions such as

- How much? How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?
- Is it a measurement that is reasonable (what sort of time and resources is it going to take to do the measurement)?

### Achievable

Attainable goals are neither out of reach nor below standard performance, as these may be considered meaningless. When goals are meaningful, they are significantly easier to accomplish; learners will find ways to succeed if it matters to them. Attainable goals may cause goal-setters to identify previously overlooked opportunities to bring themselves closer to the achievement of their goals.

Unattainable goals are those dependent upon someone else or can only be measured after many years. For example, the learner will *always* use motivational interviewing with clients. This goal is simply not measurable since there is no end date. In another example regarding learner's clients, a family is scheduled to reunify with their child in 6 months, but perhaps the family will not follow through on their case plan and reunification will not be possible. As such, this goal is not directly related to the work of the learner, so it may not be attainable.

Setting realistic but challenging goals is difficult, even for people who do it regularly. Goals should be

- "Not too easy" – Too easy means there are no levels that could realistically be "less than expected" or "much less than expected."
- "Not too hard" – If it is too hard, there is no room for a better than expected achievement level or the "much better than expected" level.

### Result focused

Choose goals that matter. A social worker's goal to "walk three miles per day, four times per week, starting immediately" may be specific, measurable, attainable and time-bound but lacks relevance. Relevant goals can increase work morale and move the child welfare organization forward.

To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which the coach and learner are both willing and able to work. A goal can be both high and realistic; the learner is the only one who can decide just how high the goal should be, but be sure that every goal represents substantial progress. A relevant goal can answer yes to these questions:

- Does this seem worthwhile?
- Is this the right time?
- Does this match our other efforts and needs?

- Am I the right person?

### Time limited

Grounding goals within a time frame and giving them a target date of completion (committing to a deadline) helps learners focus efforts on completion of the goal on or before the due date. This part of the S.M.A.R.T. goal criteria is intended to prevent goals from being overtaken by the day-to-day crises that invariably arise in an organization. A time-bound goal is intended to establish a sense of urgency. A time-bound goal will usually answer the following questions:

- When?
- What can I do 6 months from now?
- What can I do 6 weeks from now?
- What can I do today?

Example: S.M.A.R.T. objectives

Supervisor Eileen agrees to use solution-focused questions 75% of the time when she does formal case staffings or conferences with her staff. After each staffing, she will write in her calendar what solution-focused question she used and report her progress to her coach once a month. She will reach the goal of 75% by July, 2012.

## Goal Attainment Rating Scale

A goal attainment rating scale (GARS) can be used to develop coaching goals, as well as a way to measure progress or success of achieving those goals (Kiresuk, Smith & Cardillo, 1994). GARS is a strengths-based way to measure and document incremental change for individuals. Progress is tracked on a measurement scale where each scale point has been described by a behavioral "anchor" statement that clarifies the meaning of a given rating. GARS are most frequently used by individual learners, but can be used for teams as well (Kloseck, 2007).

### The basics of GARS

Learners develop a series of scales based on where *they* expect to be within a specified time frame in regard to integration of new skills. Creating these scales can be an impactful way to build excitement and enrollment for the learning process.

GARS are five-point rating scales. The middle point on the scale corresponds to the expected learning outcome (SMART objective). For example, "By the end of 6 months I will be writing harm and danger statements for at least half of my case load." This is what the learner thinks would be the "most realistic/likely" level of implementation in relation to a plan objective. The higher and lower points on the scale simply indicate if the learner achieved more success than expected, or less.

### Constructing the scale

The coaching conversation to create the GARS can take some time, depending upon how many goals are discussed and how detailed the learner is in describing the goals. The scale is developed using two stages (Kloseck, 2007; HCN, 2009).

*Stage One:* Using SMART criteria, write the scale in terms of the behavior or skill that is targeted. Anchors such as "use motivational interviewing skills in 75% of cases" are not specific enough, because it is not clear what motivational interviewing skills are being looked for. This type of scale anchor would be hard to rate and might not be rated consistently. Quantify the change so that progress can clearly be seen and tracked. Think in terms of "how much," "how often," or "how long." Focus on only one behavior per scale. Double-barreled descriptions lead to confusion about how to rate progress because an individual might be doing one thing and not the other or doing both but at different levels.

- Example: "Use family team meetings and safe measures in five cases each month." The scale related to use of family team meetings needs to focus on one separate single behavior. This scale would be impossible to rate if the learner met the criterion of five cases for use in family team meetings, but not for use of safe measures.

*Stage Two:* Describe levels that are better or worse than expected. With the learner, think about what would be "somewhat better than expected" and "much better than expected," and develop specific measurable descriptions of behavior at those levels as was done for the "expected level" point.  Consider the following:

- Make sure that all levels have plausible outcomes.
- Try not to overlap each point or leave any gaps — you need to be able to see clearly where on the scale progress will occur.

Think about what would be "less than expected" and "much less than expected" and develop descriptions for each of those points. "Much less than expected" does not indicate failure or complete lack of progress, and in fact, should still indicate some progress toward the goal. Consider possible barriers and strategize if appropriate.

### Finalizing the GARS

To ensure the GARS are meaningful and appropriate, ask the following questions:

- Has only one behavior or skill been included per scale?
- Have all possibilities been considered?
- Do any levels overlap?
- Are there any gaps between the levels?
- Have any abbreviations or special terms been used? (It is alright to include a definition of terms or what you might mean by something so everyone understands what is being measured.)
- Does the scale have measureable items?
- Is the middle measurement realistic for the learner to accomplish?
- Does the lowest level still show improvement?

## GARS Chart

The following chart is provided as a template when developing a GARS. Describe the overall learning goals; space is provided for two goals, use more charts as necessary (Parry, Hatton and Brooks 2010, adapted from HCN, 2009).

| | Goal 1: | Goal 2: |
|---|---|---|
| Scale Value | **Description of Level Rating** | **Description of Level Rating** |
| Much less than expected | | |
| Somewhat less than expected | | |
| Expected level of outcome | | |
| Somewhat more than expected | | |
| Much more than expected | | |

### Example: Scale Development Process

Social worker Natalie developed the following GARS with her coach.

| Goal: Natalie will write harm and danger statements with families on her case load. Statements will have the family's worries listed in their own words. The child's voice will be used and extended family will be engaged. | |
|---|---|
| **Scale Value** | **Description of Level Rating** |
| Much less than expected | Natalie did not engage families in writing the harm and danger statements. Their words are used minimally or not at all. Voice of the child and extended family are absent. |
| Somewhat less than expected | Natalie engaged some family members in writing the harm and danger statements but important people are missing. Child's voices are not used. |
| Expected level of outcome | Natalie met the overall goal. |
| Somewhat more than expected | Natalie engages family members to write the harm and danger statements, but may be missing statements from the extended family. |
| Much more than expected | Natalie wrote the harm and danger statements using words from the parents, child, and extended family. Supervisor and agency counsel agree with proposed next steps. |

Natalie discusses where she is currently at on the scale and believes she is somewhere between "much less than expected" and "less than expected" which is right where she should be. She is apprehensive and a bit nervous about undertaking this goal, but feels really excited and is looking forward to the next coaching session to discuss her progress. For a more thorough video example of the GARS session, please see Coaching DVD, "GARS".

## Observation

In order to provide substantive feedback on progress, coaches must observe learners practicing new skills. The coach must have a rubric for the observation itself. This rubric identifies what discreet skills are to be assessed and the corresponding skill level.

Sometimes coaches will have a pre-identified rubric, for example, when implementing an evidence-based practice such as motivational interviewing, but oftentimes coaches will need to develop a form. Observation forms can be formal (see Table 4.2) or informal (Table 4.3) which should be considered more of a guide for note-taking.

***Table 4.2.*** Formal Observation Form: Family Engagement and Solution-Focused Observation Form, (Georgia Department of Human Services: Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 2010)

| **Skills** | **Describe how often the learner demonstrated the skills** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Almost never | Occasionally | Often | Almost always | Examples: |
| Genuineness, empathy, respect | | | | | |
| Asked questions related to priorities | | | | | |
| Used solution-focused questions | | | | | |
| Family engagement strategy | | | | | |

| | Almost never | Occasionally | Often | Almost always | Examples: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Body language | | | | | |
| Tone of voice | | | | | |
| Language was age appropriate and family friendly | | | | | |
| Other comments | | | | | |

Observation rubrics can be less formal, but must provide coaches with some kind of guide upon which to measure the skill level of the learner. Using even an informal rubric ensures the coach will focus on the key skills and strategies under observation.

***Table 4.3.*** Sample Informal Observation Form used in assessing a social worker who facilitated a safety mapping session

| |
|---|
| **Safety Mapping Skill Observation Form** |
| Please jot down the strategies and skills you observed to address each aspect of the Safety Mapping session: |
| Is learner prepared for the session? |
| Is it clear if the family has been prepared for the meeting? How so? |
| How were the introduction, purpose and opening facilitated? |
| How did the learner establish working agreements with all members? |
| What was identified as working well and what are the worries? |

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| What is the differentiation of danger from complicating factors and safety from supporting strengths? |
| What are the danger and safety statements? Are they simple and clear? |
| Did they develop a safety plan, including utilization of safety networks and circles? |
| How was safety mapping documented? |
| How was the meeting summarized? |

## Reflection

A key adult learning strategy is the act of reflection. Reflection or self-inquiry is based on the belief that learners can improve by consciously and systematically reflecting on their work performance. Richards (1990) suggests self-inquiry can "help [learners] move from a level where they may be guided largely by impulse, intuition, or routine, to a level where their actions are guided by reflection and crucial thinking" (p. 5). Coaches can encourage the act of reflection by asking learners to keep a coaching journal. Keeping a journal provides a dedicated space to reflect upon learning and essentially ensures this integral step of coaching is not minimized or dismissed completely.

Cox (2005) suggests reflective practice can be operationalized by using the Johns Model of Structured Reflection (MSR), which employs a series of cue questions. The Johns Model uses the following categories of experiences from which to draw reflections:

- *Aesthetics*: What were the concrete actions? Describe what happened.
- *Personal*: Look inward and identify your own reactions and drivers.
- *Ethics*: Were your actions consistent with how you think or want to act? If no, why not?
- *Empirics*: Identify how your experience is growing, how your knowledge base is increasing, and how you may use the experience or learning in the future.

The first phase of reflective practice is for learners to spend time independently reviewing their experiences. It is imperative to have a formalized method for reflection. Most often this is accomplished through writing down reflections in a journal or log, which requires the learner to spend quality time. The coach provides time and opportunity for debriefing and challenges learners to take risks and to discover and learn new behaviors. Farrell (2007) suggests writing regularly in a journal helps learners clarify their own thinking, explore their own styles, and be better able to monitor their own practices.

Coaches should provide learners with a series of cue prompts *prior* to each coaching session (see Table 4.4, Cox, 2005 ). For example, after the learner demonstrates a practiced skill of testifying in the courtroom, he or she reflects upon the experience by writing down the answers to the cue prompts in their learner's journal. This provides an independent review of the experience, based on the premise, "What information do I need access to in order to learn through this experience?" (Cox, 2005, p. 464).

After answering these questions, learners will be much better prepared for the ensuing coaching session where the coach will facilitate reflection and provide feedback.

***Table 4.4.*** Reflective Cue Prompts (Cox, 2005)

| Purpose | Cue Prompts |
|---|---|
| Facilitate Learning | ▪ Please describe the experience.<br>▪ Please describe the phenomenon (observable occurrence); describe the "here and now" experience.<br>▪ What are the key issues to pay attention to within this description? |
| Reflection | ▪ What was I trying to achieve?<br>▪ Why did I intervene or react as I did?<br>▪ What were the consequences of my actions for me, my customers or clients, and the people with whom I work?<br>▪ How did I feel about this experience when it was happening?<br>▪ How did the other person or people feel?<br>▪ How do I know how the other person or people felt? |
| Influencing Factors | ▪ What internal factors influenced my reactions?<br>▪ What external factors influenced my reaction?<br>▪ What sources of knowledge did or should have influenced my reaction? |

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| Continued Learning | ▪ What other choices did I have?<br>▪ What would be the consequences of these choices?<br>▪ How do I feel about the experience now?<br>▪ How have I made sense of this experience in light of past experiences and future practice?<br>▪ How has this experience changed my ways of knowing:<br>*Practically:* How have my skills or contextual knowledge been affected?<br>*Aesthetically:* How has my understanding of appropriate responses been changed?<br>*Ethically:* Has there been any internal conflict or negotiation of my values?<br>*Personally:* Has my self-awareness or self-esteem been altered?<br>*Empirically:* What data have I seen or been given? |

# Methods of Questioning

By asking good questions, coaches steer learners toward reflection, envisioning the future, brainstorming solutions, and transformative learning. Coaches facilitate the learning process not by giving learners the answer, but by helping guide them in the direction of self-learning.

A question not asked is a door not opened
~ Marilee Goldberg, 1999

There are a variety of questions coaches may ask learners, depending upon the stage and purpose of the coaching conversation (see Table 4.5). The following list is not exhaustive, and coaches should use this list to adapt or create new questions

***Table 4.5***. Questions to generate conversation based on purpose. (Adapted with permission from Vogt, E., Brown, J., Isaacs, D., 2003, and Santone, 2000)

| Desired outcome | Helpful questions |
|---|---|
| Create purpose for coaching session | ▪ Tell a story about the most energizing moment of your professional life and your profession. What made it possible? What were the circumstances?<br>▪ Without being humble, describe what you value the most about yourself and your profession.<br>▪ Describe how you stay professionally affirmed, |

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| | renewed, energized, enthusiastic, and inspired?<br>▪ If it were totally up to you, what three wishes do you have for the future of your profession? What would "ideal" look like?<br>▪ What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of your specific situation?<br>▪ What's important to you about your specific situation, and why do you care?<br>▪ What's our intention here? What's the deeper purpose (the big "why") that is worthy of our best effort?<br>▪ What opportunities can you see in your specific situation?<br>▪ What do we know so far or still need to learn about your specific situation?<br>▪ What are the dilemmas and opportunities in your specific situation?<br>▪ What assumptions do we need to test or challenge here in thinking about your specific situation?<br>▪ What would someone who had a very different set of beliefs than we do say about your specific situation? |
| Define or describe the experience. | ▪ What else did you observe or experience?<br>▪ Please be more specific.<br>▪ Would you try to say that in another way? |

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| | ▪ Can you provide some more details about (X)?<br>▪ Who else had the same reaction? Who had a different reaction?<br>▪ What's missing from this picture so far? What are we not seeing? What needs more clarity? |
| Draw meaning from experiences; identify significant connections, patterns, or trends. These types of questions often spark reflective conversations. | ▪ What's emerging here for you? What new connections are you making?<br>▪ What had real meaning for you from what you've heard? What surprised you?<br>▪ What challenged you?<br>▪ What's been your (our) major learning, insight, or discovery so far?<br>▪ What's the next level of thinking we need?<br>▪ If there was one thing that has not yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding or clarity, what would that be?<br>▪ Do you see a pattern here?<br>▪ How do you account for (X)?<br>▪ What was significant about (X)?<br>▪ What connections do you see?<br>▪ What does (X) suggest to you? |
| Generalize information about other experiences and understand how overarching principles apply to | ▪ What can we infer or conclude from (X)?<br>▪ Does (X) remind you of anything?<br>▪ What principle do you see operating here? |

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| different situations (transformation). | ▪ What does this help you explain?<br>▪ How does this relate to other experiences or things you already knew? |
| Apply new learning to real-world situations (thus continuing your transformation, leading to change and inspiring the future). | ▪ How can you use that information?<br>▪ What does this new information say about your own actions and professional practice?<br>▪ What are the consequences of doing or not doing (X)?<br>▪ How can you adapt this information to make it applicable to you or applicable in this situation?<br>▪ What would it take to create change on this issue?<br>▪ What could happen that would enable you to feel fully engaged and energized about your specific situation?<br>▪ What's possible here, and who cares? (As opposed to "What's wrong here, and who's responsible?")<br>▪ What would need to change in order for the ideal to become reality? What would be in the best interests of the children? Of the system? Of your peers?<br>▪ What needs your immediate attention going forward?<br>▪ If success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might you choose?<br>▪ What challenges might come your way, and how might you meet them? |

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| | ▪ What are you ready to do to help implement these changes? With whom will you collaborate? What steps need to be taken to move in the direction you have dreamed and designed for your profession? Another way to think about destiny is to reframe the term as delivery, that is, how will the change be enacted or carried forward?<br>▪ What conversation, if begun today, could ripple out in a way that creates new possibilities for the future of your situation? What seed might we plant together today that could make the most difference to the future or your situation? |

If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper questions to ask…

~ Albert Einstein

## Scaling questions

Scaling questions, similar to those described in the section on GARS, are particularly helpful during the change learning process. Scaling questions provide learners the opportunity to rate their own perceptions about any number of things, but most commonly their progress in goal attainment. Generally simplistic questions, the power of them often lies in the follow-up questions that are asked, such as, "tell me what would help you get to the next level". Scaling questions, since they ask the learner to appraise themselves, put the put the locus of control with the learner. Table 4.6 presents the basic steps for creating a scaling question.

***Table 4.6.*** How to Ask Scaling Questions (adapted from Visser, 2009)

| **Basic step** | **Example** |
|---|---|
| Explain the scale to the learner. | Imagine a scale from 0 – 10. The 10 represents how you would like things to turn out. The 0 represents the situation before anything has been realized. |
| Ask where the learner is currently on the scale. | "Where are you now on the scale?" |
| Focus on how the learner achieved his or her current place on the scale. | How did you manage to get where you are now? What has been working well? |
| Ask about earlier successes. | What is the highest position you have been on the scale? What worked well? |
| Visualize what the scale looks like closer to the desired state. | How would things look if you were at a 9? |
| Ask what small steps might be made to move forward or upward on the scale. | What would a small step forward look like? |

### Scaling questions are variable and appropriate for many types of situations.

*To find success:* On this scale, 10 is the desired situation and 0 is the situation in which nothing has been accomplished yet.

*To measure improvement:* On this scale, 10 is "I am consistently implementing the new skill," and 0 is "I am not ready to implement the new skill." The same scaling question can be asked during every coaching session to measure improvement throughout the process. For example, during every coaching session a coach may ask, "On a scale of 1–10 how confident are you feeling in engaging the biological parents?" By using the same question in every coaching session, the coach and learner can gauge improvement.

*To determine motivation:* Scaling questions can be used to strengthen motivation. Here the 10 may be "I am prepared to do a lot to achieve the goal," and 0 may be "I am not willing to do anything for it." This type of scaling question helps learners to gain clarity and acknowledge what is hindering the coaching process. A positive outcome may be that the learner becomes more engaged and empowered to increase motivation.

*To understand confidence:* Especially important in coaching new skills, this scale provides opportunity to discuss and strengthen the learner's confidence in using or learning the new skill.

### Some scaling issues

*What does the 10 represent?* The 10 on the scale should represent something attainable. If 10 represents an ideal situation, it could be a setup for feeling unsuccessful. The 10 should be something that at some point the learner will achieve. If it's too high, there is a risk of losing meaningful engagement in the process.

*What if the learner is at a 0?* The 0 on the scale generally represents feelings of a rather desperate situation. If this is the case, coaches should provide empathy for the learner and acknowledge his or her feelings. Depending on the situation, coaches may be able to help the learner move up the scale. For example, if the learner is at a 0 in confidence in performing the new skill but is at an 8 in desire to take a risk and try the presentation, then you can work with the learner to increase confidence. Much of this depends on the learner's state of mind. If the learner is at 0 and is clearly feeling desperation in the situation, it will be up to the coach to refer the learner to other resources or to take a step back in the coaching process to work through challenges and barriers.

## Example

The following scaling questions were developed when coaching social workers through the implementation of safety organized practice (Table 4.7).

***Table 4.7.*** Sample Scaling Questions for coaching safety-organized practice

| Purpose | Question | Follow-up |
|---|---|---|
| To assess the social worker's view about current safety or worry meter about risk (likelihood of future harm) | If this case were closed today, how would you rank the current safety?<br><br>0 = the child would very likely get hurt again.<br><br>10 = the child would be very safe with the parents, and it's highly unlikely the child would be hurt again. | What specific caregiver actions have you observed that allowed you to rate safety as high as you did?<br><br>What would it take to move your rating up by one?<br><br>How would the parents rate this? |

| Purpose | Question | Follow-up |
|---|---|---|
| To assess the level of shared understanding about why the family is involved with the agency | On a scale of 0 – 10, how would you rate the caregivers' understanding of the department's worries about their family? | How could we make the danger statement clearer to the family to move your rating up by one?<br><br>Is the family clear about what the day-to-day safety needs look like? |
| To assess the social worker's understanding of the children's perspective | On a scale of 0 – 10, how safe do you think the child would feel if they went home tomorrow? | What rules would the child need to see the adults follow to feel safe enough to return home?<br><br>How can we find out for sure what the child is feeling? |
| To assess the parent's level of informal support | On a scale of 0 –10, how would you rate your effort to help the family engage a support network of safe people who will be there for them even after the child welfare agency is gone? | Before your next visit, what else could you do to move your number up by one? |
| To assess the parent's willingness and capacity to ask their support network for help | On a scale of 0 – 10, how convinced are you the parents will follow their safety plans and contact their support network and ask for help? | What would you need to see happen to feel more confident? |

| Purpose | Question | Follow-up |
|---|---|---|
| To assess the social worker's understanding of the level of connection with the family | On a scale of 0 – 10, how would you rate your level of engagement with this family and their network? | What is getting in the way of moving that engagement rating up by one?<br><br>Have you asked the family what might help them enhance their partnership with you? |
| To assess the social worker's ability to pause and self-reflect on what they do well | On a scale of 0 – 10, how would you rate your work with this family over the past X weeks or months? | What specifically did you do that you will continue to do with other families to reach a successful outcome? |

# Building Motivation

Motivation for coaching, for learning, and for change plays a large role in the success of the coaching process. In fact, if learners are not motivated to actively learn the coaching process, the coaching process will most likely not succeed. Coaches who possess a nuanced understanding of motivational processes can help learners explore issues related to their ambivalence toward change and goal ownership in ways that build readiness for change and generate energy for goal striving. From a practical standpoint, motivation is not a prerequisite for coaching, but it certainly can enhance the experience and increase the benefit to the learner.

An overview of motivational interviewing (MI) is provided for two purposes:

1. MI is a powerful technique when working with someone going through a change process, and MI may assist the coaching process.
2. MI is evidence-based and as a result is gaining significant popularity in the field of child welfare. Staff within the child welfare agency may well be versed in MI, or MI may be a learning goal or objective in a coaching program.

Learners may demonstrate a lack of motivation by having (a) low tolerance for client fallibility; (b) poor relationships with clients, other staff, and the coach and/or supervisor; and (c) lack of follow through on assignments and tasks they have done successfully in the past.

## Motivational interviewing

A recent definition of motivational interviewing is “a collaborative, person-centered form of guiding to elicit and strengthen motivation for change” (Miller & Rollnick, 2009, p. 137). The initial description of motivational interviewing was developed through the groundbreaking research of Miller and Rollnick (1995) on clients seeking substance abuse treatment. They continue to adapt and refine the model, and have applied and tested the fundamental principles and methodologies of MI in a variety of settings.

MI focuses on exploring and resolving ambivalence and centers on motivational processes within the individual that facilitate change. The method differs from more "coercive" or externally driven methods for motivating change as it does not *impose* change (which may be inconsistent with the person's own values, beliefs or wishes), but rather *supports* change in a manner congruent with the person's own values and concerns (Miller & Rollnick, 2009).

### Principles of motivational interviewing

A central concept of MI is the identification, examination, and resolution of ambivalence about changing behavior. Ambivalence — feeling two ways about behavioral change — is a natural part of the change process. The coach is attuned to client ambivalence and "readiness for change" and thoughtfully uses techniques and strategies responsive to the learner.

> The four principles of motivational interviewing are (a) expressing empathy, (b) supporting self-efficacy, (c) rolling with resistance, and (d) developing discrepancy.

*Expressing empathy:* Empathy involves seeing the world through the learner's eyes, thinking about things as the learner thinks about them, feeling things as the learner feels them, and sharing in the learner's experiences. This approach provides the basis for learners to be heard and understood, and in turn, they are more likely to honestly share their experiences in depth.

*Supporting self-efficacy:* MI is a strengths-based approach that asserts learners have within themselves the capability to successfully change. Learners may have previously tried and been unable to achieve or maintain the desired change, which created doubt about their ability to succeed. In using MI, coaches support self-efficacy by focusing on previous successes and highlighting skills and strengths learners already have.

*Rolling with resistance:* From an MI perspective, resistance may occur when a learner experiences a conflict between his or her view of the “problem” or the “solution” and the coach's view, or when a learner experiences his or her freedom or autonomy being impinged upon. These experiences are often based on the learner's ambivalence about change. In MI, coaches avoid eliciting resistance by not confronting learners when resistance occurs. They typically work to de-escalate and avoid a negative interaction — instead they "roll with it." Actions and statements that demonstrate resistance remain unchallenged, especially early in the coaching relationship. Rolling with resistance disrupts any “struggle” that may occur and prevents the session from resembling an argument or prevents the learner from playing devil's advocate or responding “yes, but ...” to the coach's suggestions. The MI value of having learners define the scope of work and develop their own solutions leaves little for learners to resist. A frequently used metaphor is “dancing” rather than “wrestling.” In exploring concerns, coaches will invite learners to examine new points of view and will be careful not to impose their own ways of thinking.

*Developing discrepancy:* Motivation for change occurs when people perceive a mismatch between “where they are and where they want to be.” A coach who practices MI works to develop motivation by helping learners examine the discrepancies between their current circumstances or behavior and their values and future goals. When learners recognize that their current behaviors may place them in conflict with their values or interfere with accomplishing their self-identified goals, they are more likely to experience increased motivation to make important life changes. It is important not to rush this process, but to gradually help learners become aware of how current behaviors may lead them away from, rather than toward, their important goals.

### Listening for change talk

Change talk statements reveal consideration of, motivation for, or commitment to change. In MI, coaches hope to guide learners to expressions of change talk as the pathway to change. Research indicates a clear correlation between statements about change and outcomes. The more someone talks about change, the more likely that person is to change.

### Strategies for evoking change talk

The following strategies are likely to elicit and support change talk in MI:

*Ask evocative questions:* Ask an open question and the learner's answer is likely to be change talk.

*Explore decisional balance:* Ask for the pros and cons of both changing and staying the same.

*Ask about good things and not-so-good things:* Ask about the positives and negatives of the target behavior.

*Ask for elaboration and examples:* When a change talk theme emerges, ask for more details. “In what ways?” “Tell me more?” “What does that look like?” “When was the last time that happened?”

*Look back:* Ask about a time before the target behavior emerged. “How were things better, different?”

*Look forward:* Ask what may happen if things continue as they are (status quo). Try the miracle question, “If you were 100% successful in making the changes you want, what would be different?” “How would you like your life to be 5 years from now?”

*Query extremes:* “What are the worst things that might happen if you do not make this change?” “What are the best things that might happen if you do make this change?”

*Use change rulers:* Ask, "On a scale of 1–10, how important is it to you to change [the specific target behavior] where 1 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important? Follow up with "And why are you at ___and not ___ [a lower number than stated]?" "What might happen that could move you from ___ to [a higher number]?" Alternatively, you could also ask "How confident are you that you could make the change if you decided to do it?"

*Explore goals and values:* Ask what the learner's guiding values are. "What do you want in life?" Using a *values card sort* activity can be helpful here. Ask how the continuation of target behavior fits in with the learner's goals or values. Does the target behavior help realize an important goal or value, does it interfere with a goal or value, or is it irrelevant?

*Come alongside:* Explicitly side with the negative (status quo) side of ambivalence. "Perhaps _______ is so important to you that you won't give it up, no matter what the cost."

Coaches should listen for 7 types of language which indicate learners progress in making the desired change. These can be remembered by using the DARN CAT mnemonic.

**DARN CAT!**

**Preparatory Change Talk (DARN)**

**D - Desire** (I want to change.)

**A - Ability** (I can change.)

**R - Reason** (It's important to change.)

**N - Need** (I should change.)

**Implementing Change Talk (CAT)**

**C - Commitment** (I will make changes.)

**A - Activation** (I am ready, prepared, and willing to change.)

**T - Taking Steps** (I am taking specific actions to change.)

### Some additional tips for building motivation

Coaches need to support learners in taking responsibility for their own motivation. The worst way to support a learner who is not motivated is to give advice on how to get the work done. Learners will tend to react to advice with reasons why it can't be done, sometimes referred to as the "yes, but…" game. Coaches offer advice and the learner says, "yes, but... [fill in the answer]." Rather, coaches should ask what, when, and how questions which will push learners to give increasingly greater detail in her or his answers. Here are examples of what, when, and how questions:

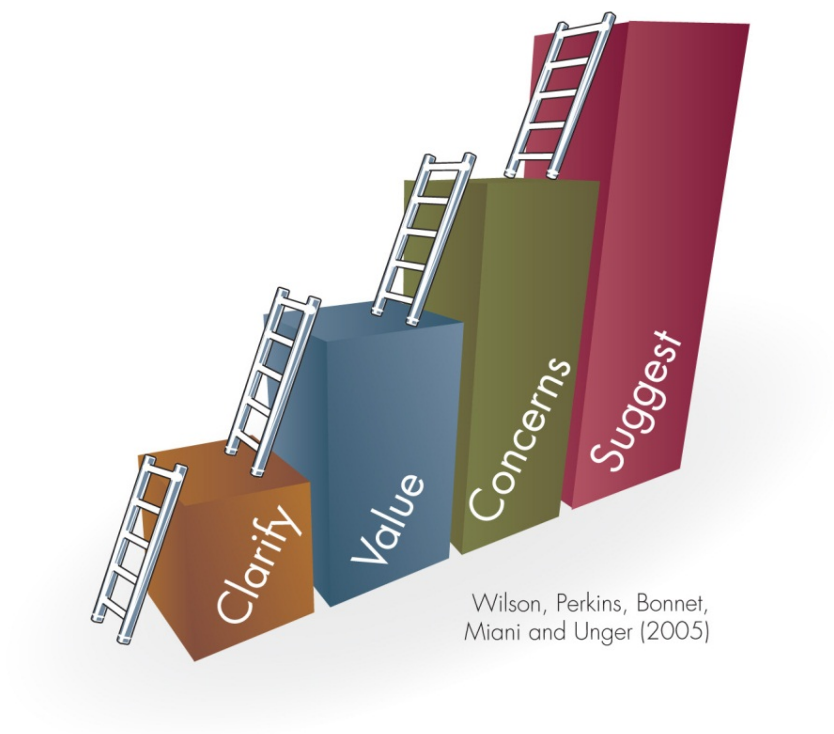
- How is what you are doing now hurting or helping you?
- What can you do about [identified barriers]?
- How can you make it better?
- What can you change in your approach?
- How are you going to get it done?
- What do you need to do differently?
- When can you do it?
- When will you get it done?

Use significant caution when asking why questions. They may simply give learners an opportunity to give excuses for not meeting the required performance standard. Sometimes, coaches might need to use assertive talking skills, especially if the learner attempts to manipulate the coach to feel angry, frustrated, or guilty rather than staying focused on problem solving to improve excellence in practice.

## Giving Feedback

Coaches must master the timeliness of providing feedback. If they have appropriately facilitated reflection it is possible the feedback stage will be quite natural; those who master feedback will use an organic conversation which flows from the learner's self-reflection. Feedback is most appropriate and best received when it is timely; provide feedback as soon as possible and avoid "storing up" feedback to give all at one time. Small and consistent doses of feedback may be the best medicine. The Ladder of Feedback, proposed by Wilson, Perkins, Bonnet, Miani and Unger (2005), offers a valuable and direct method of providing feedback (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Feedback Ladder




Step 1: Clarify Coaches must check for understanding, ensuring they understand the idea or the behavior well. Avoid questions that imply criticism. For example, "Did you really not look at your calendar before planning your week?"

- State assumptions. For example, “I wasn’t sure if you meant to suggest the mother is not ready to get her kids back, but that’s what I assumed. Now you can understand where my feedback is coming from.”
- Coaches must tell the learners if they approached the observation from any one particular frame or perspective. For example, “I listened to the audio tape of your interview with the biological mother, specifically listening for your use of motivational interviewing skills.”

## Step 2: Value

- Be clear and up front about what went well in the observation. What did you appreciate or value in the behavior or comments of the learner? What did the learner do that impressed you?
- Be a role model for identifying strengths. Remember appreciative inquiry; first appreciate to ensure the positive parts “stick.”

## Step 3: Concerns

- Coaches must voice concerns in a concrete, clear manner. Avoid speaking in absolute and accusing terms. Make clear that what you say is subjective. Do you detect some potential problems or challenges within the work? Do you disagree with some part of the work? Vagueness will lead to anxiety in the learner and you will not be understood.

- Share your concerns as honest thoughts and questions — not as criticisms or absolute judgments of right and wrong.
    - "It might be interesting to explore . . ."
    - "I wonder what would happen if . . ."
    - "Perhaps you have already thought about this, but . . ."
    - "A question this raised for me was . . ."
    - "One of the things this had me thinking about was . . ."
    - "A concern raised for me was . . ."

## Step 4: Suggest

- Offer suggestions. Be clear. Avoid ambiguity. Ask learners if they have ideas on how to improve or revise the work.

## Step 5: Thank

- Offer learners gratitude for the experience; coaching is a two-way street. Describe as serving as the coach has enhanced your own understanding and knowledge of families in the child welfare system. The learner should know what *coaches have learned* from the coaching experience.

"This lesson has made me [the coach] think more about how I might…"

# Building Confidence

Confidence is a critically important factor in child welfare practice — confidence in knowing one's skills, knowledge, and abilities to be effective in a high-risk situation. Some sports psychologists believe self-confidence or self-efficacy to be an important determinant of athletic success and recommend various coaching strategies targeted at directly improving self-efficacy (Leedham, 2005).

> The higher the confidence
> the more the ability to enact critical
> decision-making skills.
> ~ Benner, Hughes, & Sutphen (2008)

If learners demonstrate skills needed to carry out the standard, but is hesitant to demonstrate them in their practice, then other coaching strategies may be needed. If the learner lacks confidence in his or her ability to master the necessary skills and abilities to meet the performance standard, the coach will need to provide coaching in the following ways.

The first step is to identify a lack of confidence by cueing into key indicators (Brenner et al., 2008). For examples, the learner might say, "I'm not sure that I'll ever be able to do this well" or the learner will exhibit non-verbal cues that indicate a lack of confidence, such as hesitation in voice and action or avoidance of eye contact when responding to requests to demonstrate necessary skills. Often learners will hide their true feelings for fear of the consequences. Coaches should ask "observation questions" to be sure this is a barrier to desired performance. This skill requires asking the questions tentatively to allow the learner to agree or modify how they are feeling. For example, say, "I have a feeling you are not totally confident in your ability to do this well, am I right?"

## Techniques for building confidence

Once a lack of confidence is identified, and it is agreed this is a problem, the second step is to enhance the learner's confidence using the following techniques:

- Reassure the learner these feelings are normal in these types of situations. The coach should share any similar personal experiences with the learner.
- If possible, challenge the learner's perception. Remind the learner of a similar experience in which he or she used similar skills and achieved excellence in practice. Sometimes the learner feels there will be significant negative consequences if he or she fails to execute the standard successfully. At these times the coach should ask, "What is the worst thing that could happen if you fail?" Reassure the learner, when possible, that you will be there to provide help and support.

- Offer specific ways you can help the learner begin implementing the standard. Be sure to commit to providing only those things you are able and willing to do.

## Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder

Secondary traumatic stress is defined as "natural consequent behaviors resulting from knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other; it is the stress resulting from wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person" (Figley 1995, p. 7). Traumatic stress disorder should not be confused with burnout; burnout is emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion and is a process that occurs gradually over time.Coaches in the child welfare organization must understand the impacts of secondary traumatic stress disorder so that they can (a) set appropriate boundaries and (b) provide resources and referrals to appropriate services if necessary.

### Maintaining boundaries when dealing with STSD

In a formal coaching model, the coach is not the mentor, counselor, or therapeutic coach although the lines between these roles can be murky. Most critically, these roles operate under different constraints and with different motivations from coaching. Therapy, or counseling, is a practice delivered by a licensed clinical practitioner or a therapeutic life coach, almost always separate from the work setting.

It *is* recommended that staff share and process with each other to help heal from STSD, and some of this is to be expected between the coach and the learner; however, it should not consume the partnership. Coaches with backgrounds in human services often attend to the emotional aspects of professional development. While this can be helpful in the model of reflective coaching, it can also become a barrier to skill improvement in practice.

If symptoms of STSD (eating problems, sleeping difficulties, feelings of defeat and being less enthusiastic) persist for more than a month, the coach should encourage the learner to seek professional counseling. If learners need support outside of the agreed coaching partnership, it is best to refer them to services that address those concerns: their supervisor, employee assistance programs, family and friends.

## Self-Care

Common sense and research has provided clear suggestions for navigating stress, both work and life, and achieving a healthy lifestyle (Skovholt, 2001). Table 4.8 provides an easy reference on ideas for assisting learners with the stress inherent in child welfare.

***Table 4.8.*** Effective Self-Care Strategies (Skovholt, 2001)

| **Top 10 Helpful Self-Care Activities**<br><br>Gamble, Pearlman, Lucca, and Allen. (1995). Cited by Pearlman, 1995. | **10 Important Themes of those who Engage in Self-Care**<br><br>Coster and Schwebel (1997, pp. 28, 2-13). | **Top 10 Activities Contributing to Well-Functioning**<br><br>Coster and Schwebel (1997, pp. 28, 5-13). |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ Takes vacations<br>▪ Participates in social activities<br>▪ Has emotional support from colleagues<br>▪ Pleasure reads<br>▪ Seeks consultation on difficult cases<br>▪ Reads relevant professional literature<br>▪ Takes breaks during the work day<br>▪ Has emotional support from friends or family<br>▪ Spends time with children<br>▪ Listens to music | ▪ Receives support from peers<br>▪ Has stable personal relationships<br>▪ Has adequate supervision<br>▪ Has a balanced life<br>▪ Affiliates with a graduate training program<br>▪ Receives personal psychotherapy<br>▪ Participates in continuing education<br>▪ Understands the negative costs of professional impairment<br>▪ Understands the benefits of positive coping mechanisms (for example, vacations, rest, relaxation, exercise, evening with friends, spirituality) | ▪ Is self-aware and self-monitoring<br>▪ Has personal values<br>▪ Preserves balance between personal and professional lives<br>▪ Good relationship with spouse, partner, or family<br>▪ Personal therapy<br>▪ Good relationship with friends<br>▪ Takes vacations<br>▪ Has a professional identity<br>▪ Has informal peer support<br>▪ Has a mentor |

## The Coach's Journal

It is important for the coach to keep adequate notes on each coaching session. Coaches should keep a journal to: (a) track progress of the coaching process for each individual learner, including documenting goals, next steps, and barriers; and (b) improve their own skills as a coach through self-reflection.

The following chart is a simple tool that allows for both documenting the coaching session and for self-reflection and growth on the part of the coach.

| | |
|---|---|
| Learner's Name:<br>Date:<br>Coaching goal or topic of discussion: | |
| Describe the coaching meeting and experience: | |
| What did you do? | Why? |
| What went well? | What could have been better? |

| |
|---|
| What would you do differently if you were in the same situation now? |
| Describe what you (the coach) learned from this experience: |
| Next steps:<br>Due dates:<br>New goals: |

# Troubleshooting Coaching Challenges

A number of challenges may impede the coaching process. This section outlines possible pitfalls that can occur with coaching and examines possible strategies to address these stumbling blocks.

## Common barriers to coaching

### Enrollment

When encountering blocks to coaching, the process of enrollment is especially important. At the first signs the process seems to become stagnant or is not proceeding at the rate or fashion agreed upon during the contracting phase, review the process of enrollment and attempt to understand and engage the learner.

Here are some additional points to consider:

- Is there enough contact with the learner?
- Would the learner benefit from shorter or longer time in between sessions?
- Does the learner feel judged or poorly regarded during feedback?
- Does the learner not follow through on agreed upon actions or miss appointments?
- Is the learner being supported by his supervisor to allocate time for the coaching and learning process?
- What other systemic barriers need to be checked?

### Agency politics and performance concerns

It is important that coaches remain neutral, and they must be available to support skills development with the learner. There are times within agencies — or in the triad of the supervisor, learner and coach — that information is sought from the coach to inform performance evaluations. For a coach, the key to success is to be goal-oriented and to stay focused on the agreements made.

Some tips to consider when addressing agency politics or performance concerns:

- Make agreement early between supervisor, learner, and yourself.

- Clarify roles, method of communication, and expectations.

- Avoid conversations regarding the learner's relationships with his or her supervisor, co-workers, and others.
- Avoid side conversations about the learner's progress with the supervisor and others within the agency.
- Do not comment on, get involved in, or share opinions about agency politics, personalities, or leadership.
- Treat the coaching sessions as confidential, unless the learner or client is at risk or regulations require reporting an incident.
- Debrief with the learner and supervisor on progress, skill improvements, and gaps in progress using inquiry.
    - Example: "On a scale of 0 –10, 10 being fully competent in the skill and 0 no competency in the skill, where would you rate yourself?" (For details on scaling, see Chapter 4: Capacity Building.)

## The dark side of coaching

Most often coaches start out with the best of intentions, but personalities, environment, agency politics, and the challenges of working in the field of child welfare can hinder or redirect the coaching process. Table 4.9 summarizes what Jonathan Gravells (2006) describes as actions on the part of the coach which can lead to a "dark side."

***Table 4.9.*** Dark side of coaching (Gravells, 2006)

| The best intentions… | …can lead to a dark side |
|---|---|
| Desire to help people out. | Too many learners – poor attention. |
| Self-disclosure – sharing insight. | Talking about self – ego trip. |
| Establishing credibility. | Inhibiting learner confiding. |
| Helping learner improve. | Judging – applying own standards. |
| Wanting learner to succeed. | Applying own success measures with the learner. |
| Maintaining some objectivity. | Bringing your own bias or past work experience unintentionally – becoming too involved. |
| Using experience to help learning. | Learner dependent on coach's skills. |
| Supporting learner's work and decision making. | Living vicariously through learner's work. |
| Coaching all parties in the enterprise. | Colluding with one party to manipulate others. |
| Sharing knowledge and expertise | Telling learner how to do the work or providing "the" answer vs. exploring options and developing skills. |

Evidence [exists] of mentors applying their own standards and success measures to the goals and ways of conducting business, often inappropriately.

~ Gravells, 2006, p. 13

## Traps that limit learning

Hawkins and Smith (2006) identified the following learning traps—all limit the ability of the learner to transform learning into identifiable change.

### Firefighting or compulsive pragmatic activity

There is much to be said for the risk-taker who will not hesitate to try something new. However, this can lead to the "plan-do-plan-do" trap. Here if the plan doesn't work, do something differently. Done overboard, this level of learning will simply stay at the level of trial and error.

### Postmortem-*izing*

Too much reflection can lead to overthinking "what went wrong." Resist the urge to simply use reflection as a time to provide correction. The point of reflection is to heighten meaningful learning.

### Navel-gazing and theorizing

Just as the challenge of risk-takers is over "doing," the challenge of the careful planner is over "planning." Reflecting and theorizing can lead to a cyclical trap, and without action true learning will not occur.

### Paralysis by analysis

This is connected to the above trap, which is more of an "analyze-plan-analyze some more" trap. Learning here is limited by the fear of not doing things correctly.

## Common issues and challenges

The following list identifies common issues and challenges to the coaching process and the corresponding toolkit section that describes strategies that may remedy these problems.

| **For this situation:** | **Consider the following:** |
|---|---|
| The agency mandates coaching, but learners are resistant and attempt to sabotage the coaching process. | ▪ Enrollment (Chapter 6: Coaching Models)<br>▪ Motivation (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Learner readiness (Chapter 8: Readiness)<br>▪ Stages of implementation and change agents (Chapter 7: Implementation) |
| The agency, not the learner, sets the goals of the coaching relationship (what skills must be learned). | ▪ Enrollment (Chapter 6: Coaching Models)<br>▪ Motivation (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Goal-setting and contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Adult learning (Chapter 3: Framework and Foundation) |
| You notice and report concerns regarding child welfare safety or ethical issues. | ▪ Contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Ethics (Chapter 11: Ethics of Coaching) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Challenges in the relationship between coaches and/or supervisors and management (internal and external coaching units) | ▪ Contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ The Coach-Learner-Supervisor relationship (Chapter 6: Coaching Models)<br>▪ Supervisors as coach (Chapter 9: The Coach)<br>▪ Ethics (Chapter 11: Ethics of Coaching |
| The use of information for performance reviews or disciplinary actions obtained through coaching. | ▪ Contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Liability and ethics (Chapter 11: Ethics of Coaching)<br>▪ Supervisors as coach (Chapter 9: The Coach) |
| Learner pushes coach to “do the work.” "Can you show me how to do that again?" What decision would you make? | ▪ Reflective practice (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Confidence (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Motivation (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Enrollment (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building) |
| Coach-learner-supervisor relationship becomes tense. Learner feels “in the middle.” | ▪ Contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building) |
| The agency or learner is resistant to participate in quality improvement or evaluation activities. | ▪ Continuous quality improvement and evaluation (Chapter 10) |
| The culture of the agency and that of the learner must be understood. | ▪ Cultural humility (Chapter 3: Framework and Foundation) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Management supports coaching but line supervisor and staff does not. | ▪ Enrollment (Chapter 6: Coaching Models)<br>▪ Tenets of coaching (Chapter 1: Introduction)<br>▪ Coach-learner-supervisor relationship (Chapter 6: Coaching Models)<br>▪ Implementation science (Chapter 7: Implementation)<br>▪ Learner and organizational readiness (Chapter 8: Readiness) |
| The agency asks coach to do something that is not in the coaching contract. | ▪ Contracting (Chapter 4: Capacity Building)<br>▪ Ethics (Chapter 11: The Ethics of Coaching |

## Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?
- How did the skills and techniques presented in this chapter resonate with you?
- Which of these skills do you already possess? What are some of the more positive experiences you have had that use these skills?
- Which skills would you like to learn more about?

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Chapter 5

# Coaching Approaches

# Coaching Approaches

Solution-focused practice and reflective practice are two approaches coaches should consider prior to working with learners. Both approaches provide a comprehensive framework to implement a coaching process and have tremendous potential to positively impact the adult learner.

**Key Terms**

*Approach* is the overall philosophy or style of setting about a task.

*Model* comprises examples or standards for how to structure the overall coaching process (a model is *not* a set of instructions).

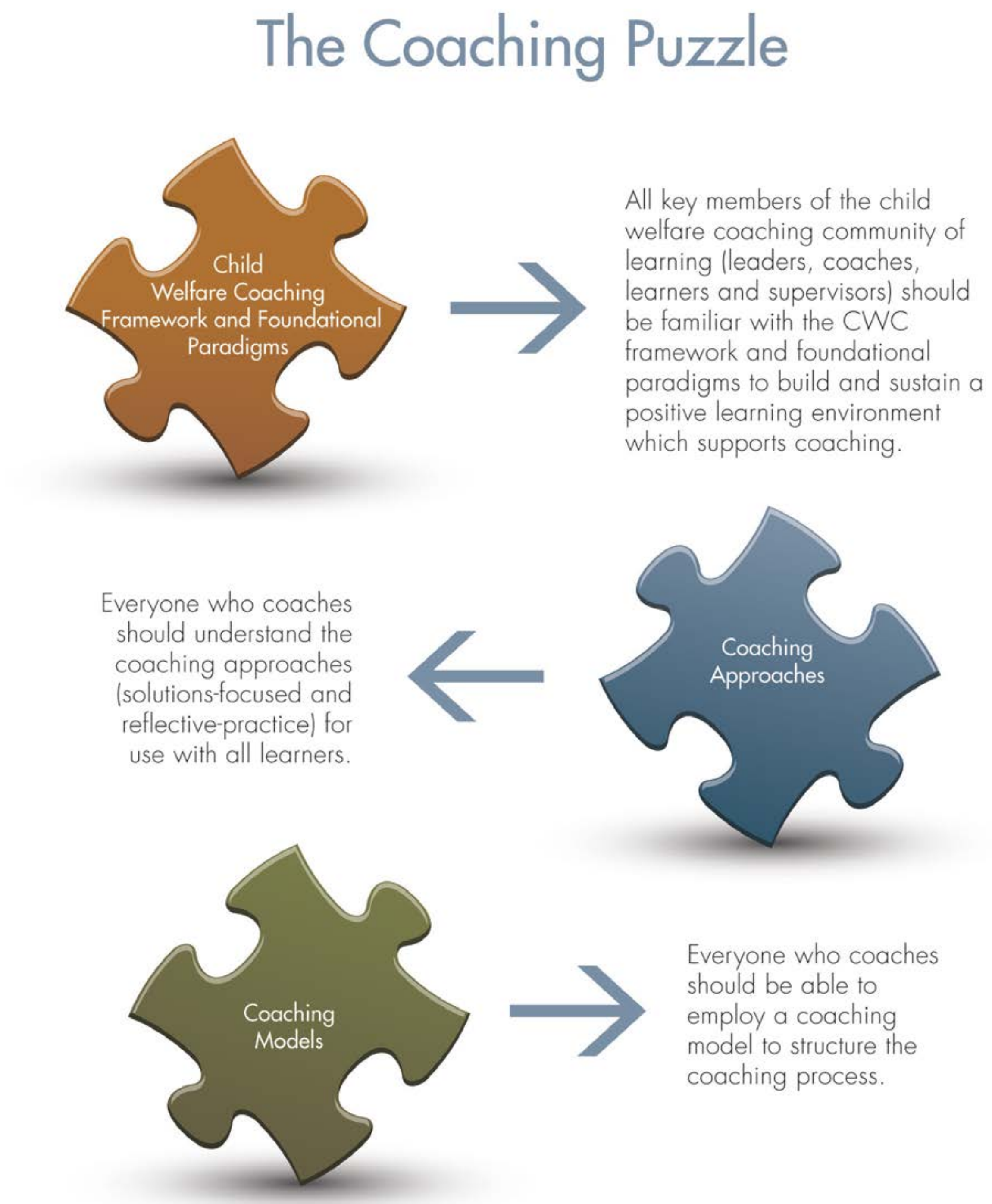
*Skill/skill set* is needed to accomplish a specified task or perform a given function well.

*Strategy* is a plan, method, or series of steps for achieving a goal.

*Technique:* Encompasses procedures or methods (interviewing styles) coaches may employ to achieve coaching goals.

Approaches differ from models: *approaches* provide a holistic or overall philosophy for coaching and *models* provide structure for coaching sessions. For examples of coaching models, see Chapter 6.

**Figure 5.1**. The Coaching Puzzle



## Solution-Focused Approach

The solution-focused approach to coaching intends to facilitate purposeful, positive change by emphasizing resources and personal resilience (Grant, 2011). This approach is

- based on solution building vs. problem solving;
- non-confrontational and non-judgmental;
- focused on the learner's desired future rather than on past problems or current conflicts;
- led by the learner — the learner identifies and increases the frequency of current useful behaviors;
- focused on looking for exceptions to the problems identified (when the problem could have happened but did not); and
- built on the belief that small increments of change lead to large increments of change.

Grant (2011) suggests the solution-focused approach can be translated to the coaching field using the following three themes:

*Goal-orientation* is an orientation toward constructing solutions through the articulating and use of *approach* goals and active self-regulation.

*Resource activation* focuses on acknowledging, identifying, and activating a wide range of personal and contextual resources and personal strengths.

*Problem disengagement* is an explicit disengagement from problems, which is vital for *full engagement* in the pursuit of goals and central to the solution-focused endeavor.

POWERS is a handy mnemonic tool for coaches to remember the steps of the solution-focused approach (Visser & Bodien, 2003).

**P - Problems are acknowledged but not analyzed.**

**O - Outcomes desired are specified.**

**W - Where are you now on the scale?**

**E - Exceptions to the problem are keys to solutions.**

**R - Relationships are enhanced and made productive.**

**S - Small steps forward lead to larger change.**

Coaches can adopt a solution-focused approach by asking the following types of questions:

*Coping questions* are used with empathy and compassion to acknowledge the situation the learner may be experiencing.

*Scaling questions* are used to rate or rank the level of importance, motivation, or confidence in a specific situation. Scaling questions help gauge where a situation is and how one might change that situation.

*Miracle questions* are used to generate the first small steps of solution states. Ask the learner to give details and to visualize a better situation.

> Solution-focused coaching assumes that the learner already possesses “specific individualized solutions for problems that work best and that any person is competent to solve his or her own problems. These solutions emerge by asking useful questions.”
> ~ Visser, 2007

## Reflective Practice Approach

As described in Chapter 4: Capacity Building, reflection is a strategy that should be used by every coach. However, it should also be considered as an overall approach — something that drives coaching.

Dewey (1933) called for teachers to take reflective action that entails “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further consequences to which it leads” (p. 9). Dewey identified three attributes of reflective individuals: open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness. Thomas Farrell describes (2008) open-mindedness as is a desire to listen to more than one side of an issue and to give attention to alternative views. Responsibility involves careful consideration of the consequences to which an action leads. Wholeheartedness implies that teachers can overcome fears and uncertainties to critically evaluate their practice in order to make meaningful change (Farrell, 2008 p. 1).

Telling stories is a significant way for individuals to give meaning to and express their understanding of their experience.

~ Mishler, 1986, p. 75

Reflective practice is based on the belief that learners can improve by consciously and systematically reflecting on their work performance (Farrell, 2008). Richards (1990) suggests self-inquiry and critical thinking can "help learners move from a level where they may be guided largely by impulse, intuition, or routine, to a level where their actions are guided by reflection and crucial thinking" (p. 5).

As an overall approach to coaching, reflective practice enables the learner to drive their own learning process. Coaching child welfare learners focuses on improving advanced critical decision-making skills, which requires introspection, reflection, and personal meaning applied to distinct settings.

For learners to change their ‘meaning schemes’ (specific beliefs, attitudes and emotional reactions) they must engage in critical reflection on their experiences, which in turn leads to a perspective transformation

~ Mezirow, 1991, p. 167

# Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?
- Which of the approaches make more sense to you? Why?
- How are you already integrating these approaches into your coaching practice?
- How will you integrate these approaches into your coaching process?

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Chapter 6

# Coaching Models

# Coaching Models

Models provide specific stages or steps for coaches to use when coaching individual learners; models provide structure to the coaching process. Four coaching models are discussed in this chapter; each includes distinct steps and sessions designed to help coaches achieve their goals (see Table 6.1 for an overview of each).

## Why Present Four Models?

The models presented in this chapter are all widely accepted and discussed in coaching literature. Many child welfare organizations have already sanctioned one of these approaches and/or models.

All of the models provide sound structure for coaches and learners to work together successfully; however, each coach may have a personal preference and select a model accordingly. These models are similar in many ways, and some may say the differences are nuanced —it's about finding a good fit.

***Table 6.1.*** Comparison of the Four Coaching Models.

| Model | Child Welfare Skills-Based Coaching Model | GROW Model | CLEAR Model | Flow Model |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Purpose | Skills-based coaching | Performance or Development coaching | Performance or Development coaching | Performance or Development coaching |
| Stages | 1. Initial interest<br>2. Joint planning<br>3. Demonstration, observation and action<br>4. Individual analysis and self-reflection<br>5. Facilitated reflection and feedback<br>6. Evaluation | 1. Goal setting<br>2. Reality<br>3. Options<br>4. Wrap –up | 1. Contracting<br>2. Listening<br>3. Exploring<br>4. Action<br>5. Review | 1. Establish relationship<br>2. Recognize opening<br>3. Observe and assess<br>4. Enroll<br>5. Coaching conversation |
| Key Feature | Established, evidence-based system for skill development (purposeful) | High importance on goal setting and coaching conversation | High importance on the coaching discussions | High importance on enrollment |

*When learning the various coaching models, refer to the tenets and dimensions of coaching in Chapter 1.*

Coaches can integrate the proposed models into their overall strategy and individualize it for each learner. The needs of learners must be taken into account; there is no one-size-fits-all model or approach to coaching (Grant, 2011). For video examples of coaching sessions, please see Coaching DVD, "Performance or Development Coaching" and "The Coaching Session, Putting Together the Pieces."

## Overall coaching purposes

Professional coaching is typically used with three different purposes in mind (Potter & Brittain, 2009):

*Skills-based* coaching focuses on the acquisition of specific skills such as forensic interviewing.

*Performance* coaching focuses on goal setting and family engagement.

*Development* coaching concentrates on defining a personal approach to leadership.

# How to Use Coaching Models

Coaching can be thought of as a continuum of "hands-on" to "hands-off" (Parsloe, 1999). Coaching inexperienced staff may require a more "hands-on" style whereas experienced staff will benefit from a more "hands-off" style. As Parsloe notes, in the world of modern coaching and mentoring, "the context absolutely defines what needs to happen" (1999, p. 3), see Table 6.2 for examples.

***Table 6.2.*** Continuum of Coaching, from Hands-On to Hands-Off.

| Hands on ← | → Hands off |
|---|---|
| ▪ Early goal setting may be led by the coach or agency | ▪ Learner develops goals |
| ▪ Coach assigns observation and demonstration assignments. | ▪ Learning is learner-led |
| ▪ Reflection is led by coach | ▪ Reflection is key learning strategy, and is often learner led. |
| ▪ Coach may need to spend time on motivation | ▪ Learner is self-motivated |
| ▪ More trust building | ▪ Learner and coach have trust in the coaching process |

Experience shows that the more rapidly a coach can move from a 'hands-on' to a 'hands-off' style, the faster improvement in performance will be achieved…as you move along the continuum towards 'hands-off', the more control and responsibility are transferred from the coach to the learner.

~ Parsloe, 1999, p. 15

Experience as a coach will impact the structure of the process. Obviously, more experienced coaches will be able to access a broader variety of strategies and techniques as opposed to inexperienced coaches. Peterson (2011) outlines the levels of coaching expertise that give some guidance about how to use the following approaches and models (see Table 6.3).

***Table 6.3.*** Focus of Coaching Sessions by Coach's Level of Expertise (adapted from Peterson, 2011)

| **Coach's Level of Expertise** | **Characteristics** |
|---|---|
| Novice | ▪ Focuses on immediate tasks.<br>▪ Follows clear rules and may have difficulty dealing with complex coaching issues.<br>▪ Benefits from following session models step-by-step. |
| Advanced Beginner | ▪ Finds it hard to handle exceptions to 'normal' coaching practice issues, even though rules of models are guidelines and not prescriptions. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Advanced Beginner (Cont'd) | ▪ Relies on a model, but not always as rigidly as novices.<br>▪ Reverts to basic rules when feeling under pressure in a coaching session. |
| Competent Performer | ▪ Based on experience with a wide range of coaching situations. Sees the big picture, and interprets underlying principles and adjusts behavior to suit relatively novel coaching situations.<br>▪ Uses models in a very flexible manner.<br>▪ Develop own conceptually coherent and meaningful models to suit novel situation.<br>▪ Enjoys the challenge of coaching difficult issues. |
| Expert | ▪ Possesses significant face-to-face coaching experience.<br>▪ Identifies and solves problems with little explicit analysis.<br>▪ Extrapolates solutions from principles even in very complex or highly novel situations. |

# Enrollment

Enrollment signifies the learner's level of commitment or buy-in. It may occur throughout the coaching process and is a phase of the Flow coaching model discussed later in this chapter (Flaherty, 2010). However, since enrollment is a key tenet of this *Coaching Toolkit*, special attention is given to it here. Coaches should consider the enrollment concept regardless of which coaching model they select.

**Key Concept**

Coaches must have true enrollment on behalf of the learner, that is, they must have intrinsic motivation to receive coaching assistance. If they are forced into coaching by supervisors, mandate, or HR [human resource] issues, then the coach will need to work on achieving learner enrollment or buy-in (Flaherty, 2010).

Both coaches and learners must make explicit their commitment level to the coaching process (Flaherty, 2010). To achieve enrollment, the coach and learner must discuss potential barriers or challenges to attaining coaching outcomes. Challenges may include lack of time, poor support from supervisor or colleagues, or feelings of distrust. Without confronting potential challenges directly, honestly, and as completely as possible, the most sincere-sounding commitment will turn hollow and groundless. Dealing with challenges helps clarify appropriate outcomes of the coaching process.

# Coaching Agreements

Prior to coaching — regardless of what model is used — a coaching agreement must be written between agency leadership, supervisors, learners, and coaches. Each person must understand the scope and boundaries of the coaching process. An agreement for an external coach will differ from an agreement for a coach who is already an employee. For details on coaching ethics and liability, see Chapter 11.

The purpose of the Coaching Agreement is to detail the scope, boundaries, and roles of each member in the coaching relationship. During the conversation to create the agreement, coaches should be prepared to foster a working alliance with partners and provide background information on coaching as needed.

## Formulating the partnership agreement

The first step to developing a partnership agreement coaches and agency representatives must answer key questions.  Table 6.4 provides a sampling of questions that can be used to start the contracting process (adapted from the National Staff Development Council, 2008).

*Table 6.4.* Creating a Contract Agreement, (adapted from the National Staff Development Council, 2008)

| Contract Agreements Topics | Key questions |
| --- | --- |
| Clarifying expected results (the agency, learner, and coach should be clear about expected results) | ▪ What results does the agency expect by implementing coaching? Over the next month? Over the next year?<br>▪ What results does the learner expect by implementing coaching? Over the next month? Over the next year?<br>▪ What results does the coach expect by implementing coaching? Over the next month? Over the next year?<br>▪ What are the agency's improvement goals?<br>▪ How will success be measured? |
| Setting expectations of roles and boundaries | ▪ What does each member of the learning community (leadership, supervisors, and learners) expect of the coach and the work the coach will do?<br>▪ What are the boundaries of the coach's work?<br>▪ Should the coach attend staff meetings?<br>▪ What are the defined responsibilities of the coach's role? |
| Identifying the learners | ▪ Will the coach be working with specific units (for example, Adoption Agency or Emergency Response) or with various units throughout the agency?<br>▪ Is it predetermined who will receive coaching and who will not?<br>▪ Is this coaching voluntary or mandated? |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ Will coaching be provided to learners in stages? |
| Scheduling sessions | ▪ When will the coaching take place? How will meetings be arranged — scheduled at the end of each coaching session or scheduled a month or more in advance? |
| Meeting procedures and processes | ▪ What modality of coaching will be used? Email? Telephone? In person? Webinar? Is it appropriate for the learner to contact the coach to share ideas or thoughts between sessions? How much time does the coach have to dedicate to this coaching process, in other words, do financial resources limit the amount of time the coach can spend on this process?<br>▪ What is the best way for the coach to spend the majority of his or her time?<br>▪ How will the coach log the work? What evidence does the coach need to provide?<br>▪ How will the agency and learner demonstrate how they use the coaching services? |
| Identifying supports and resources (how the agency will support the coach) | ▪ Are there special considerations for how the coach will be supported within the agency, will he or she be introduced at staff meetings?<br>▪ What resources are available for the coach? Technology? Space? Office supplies? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Canceling meetings or missing calls | ▪ What is the cancellation policy?<br>▪ Who needs to be notified if either the coach or learner cancels or misses a meeting? Supervisors? |
| Maintaining confidentiality | ▪ What are the terms for our coaching sessions in terms of confidentiality?<br>▪ How will confidentiality be maintained if ethical issues arise in coaching?<br>▪ What is the coach required to disclose to the supervisor or management?<br>▪ If there are ethical concerns about the coach, who will address the issue? Management? A supervisor?<br>▪ If the coach is external, how will he or she be involved in observing the learner when working with families? |
| Handling misunder-standings or ethical considerations | ▪ How will disagreements be handled if any party has concerns? Does the learner feel that the learning environment is open and safe, and if not, what can be done to help the learner feel confident in the coaching process?<br>▪ What will be the required action if there are concerns?<br>▪ What will be the proper action if the coach observes unethical conduct by the learner? Supervisor? Management? These should be explicitly addressed at the beginning of the coaching relationship.<br>▪ What about systemic or procedural requirements or barriers that increase the risk of unethical conduct by staff? Or what if the coach observes the learner making |

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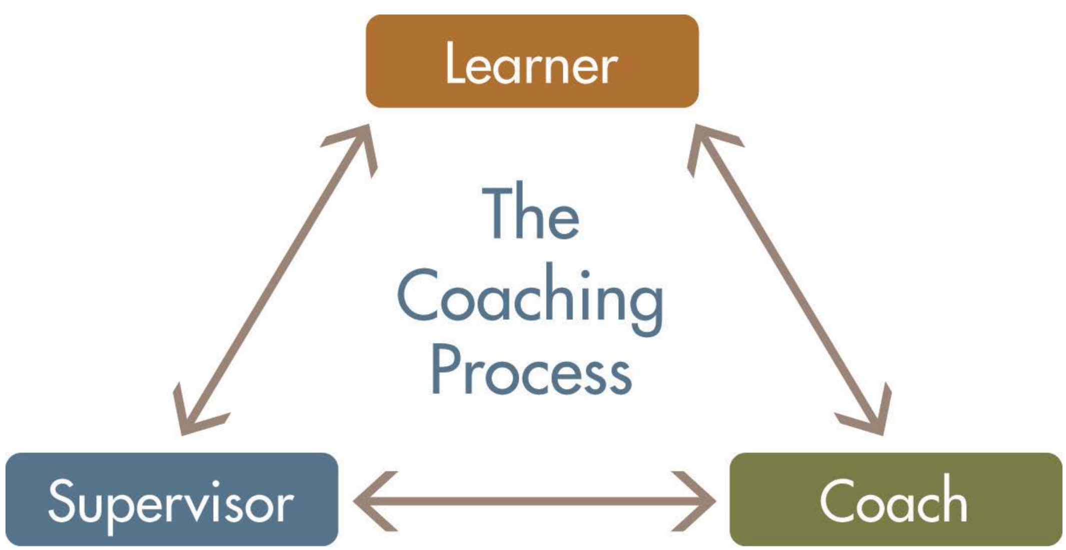
| | decisions or taking actions that could place a client at risk of harm?<br>▪ What is the appropriate or legally required degree of information sharing (that is, how involved can and should the coach be in actual cases)?<br>▪ What if there is disagreement between the coach's ethical standards and the learner's?<br>▪ What if the coach is requesting or requiring action the learner considers unethical?<br>▪ What if the coach requests an action that is considered unethical by the agency? |
| Addressing boundaries of relationship | ▪ A coaching relationship is not intended as counseling or therapy.<br>▪ If the need arises for counseling or therapy services, how will we address these needs? What about referrals? |

## Clarifying coach-learner-supervisor relationship

The coach must clarify his or her role in relationship to the learner's supervisor. This triangular relationship is important to consider during the contracting phase since it will profoundly impact success (see Figure 6.1. Ideally, the supervisor will support the coaching process by allowing time to attend coaching session(s) and time to prepare for and reflect upon sessions. Coaches and learners are responsible for communicating goals and benchmarks in learning or success. For a video example please refer to the Coaching DVD, "The Intro Meeting," and "The Coaching Process Debrief."

Figure 6.1. The learning triangle




Furthermore, when creating the coaching agreement an additional sustainability plan must also be written. The sustainability plan outlines how supervisors will support the learning and encourage it post-coaching. If supervisors are not proficient in the learning topic, it must be decided how supervision will be provided or if supervisors themselves should undergo coaching. A clear agreement regarding communication between supervisors, learners, and coaches is a priority.

## Summary

At the end of the coaching agreement process, coaches should be able to answer the following questions (adapted from Kretzschmar, 2010):

- Is the learner clear about what coaching is and what it is not? What does the learner know about coaching already? What expectations does the learner have?
- As a coach have I clearly communicated my approach to coaching?
- Is agency leadership clear about why coaching is being offered to their employees, what the process involves, and what the expected outcomes are?
- What, if anything should occur prior to coaching? Do learners need pre-coaching information or training?

# Child Welfare Skills-Based Coaching Model

The child welfare skills-based coaching model should be used when the learning goal is the attainment of a specific pre-identified skill. In this situation the coach is typically an expert in the skill being learned. Druckman & Bjork (1991, p. 61) suggest that "[skills coaching] consists of observing students and offering hints, feedback, reminders, new tasks or redirecting a student's attention to a salient feature — all with the goal of making the student's performance approximate the expert's performance as closely as possible."

## Examples of skills-based coaching goals

- Basic interviewing skills
- Forensic interviewing
- Group supervision
- Family meeting facilitation
- Testifying in court hearings
- Case plan development
- Court report writing

The child welfare skills-based coaching model is a seven-step process based on a series of observations and demonstrations (adapted from Rush & Sheldon, 2007 and Gallacher, 1997; see Table

6.5). The learner is provided with time to observe an expert using the desired skills; then the learner has the opportunity to demonstrate his or her use of the skill. This model is cyclical in nature — a process of learning and engaging to help the learner integrate and implement a discrete skill. The coach using this model is "hands-on" and purposeful.

There is no time limit imposed on these seven steps; indeed, sometimes these steps may occur almost simultaneously.

***Table 6.5.*** Child Welfare Skills-Based Coaching Model (adapted from Rush & Sheldon, 2007 and Gallacher, 1997)

| **Steps** | **Description** |
|---|---|
| Step 1:<br><br>Initial interest | Learners either identify a need for coaching or are offered coaching as a result of an agency initiative or directive. The overall purpose of coaching is clarified, with or without the coach present. Learning contracts should be developed between coaches and learners and with the agency leadership if appropriate. Supervisors must be involved in the contracting phase. |
| Step 2:<br><br>Joint planning | Learners and coaches build rapport and trust and discuss concerns and apprehensions. Expectations are shared through the development of goals and objectives, either using the Goal Attainment Rating Scale or using SMART criteria (see Chapter 4: Capacity Building). Sometimes the supervisor takes part in this session or at least is debriefed about the goals of the coaching process.<br><br>The coach and learner agree upon process specifics: where, |

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| | when, how often, and how the coaching will occur (observations and demonstrations). |
| Step 3:<br><br>Demonstration, observation, and action | This step occurs in at least two distinct settings:<br>• Learners watch the coach or another expert demonstrate the desired skill or practice.<br>• Coaches observe the learner using the skill or practice. |
| | ***Demonstration***<br><br>By watching a demonstration of the desired skill, learners gain a deeper understanding of their learning goals and are more able to assess their own learning needs.<br><br>Coaches may demonstrate the skill for learners, ideally in a natural setting (an interview with a client, home visit, unit meeting, stakeholder meeting, etc.). Depending on the role of the coach within the agency, the client may need to consent to the participation of the coach. (For information on organizational liability, see Chapter 10: Ethics .) |
| | ***Observation***<br><br>Coaches also must observe learners practicing the new skill either through a role-play, a tape, audio recording, or a real-time event. Coaches gather information during this time to analyze use of the skill, noticing details that reflect the effect of skill, practice, or behavior of the participants in the session.<br>Coaches must use or develop a rubric on which to base feedback. |

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| Step 4:<br><br>Individual analysis and self-reflection | Learners reflect on the demonstration and observation by writing in their learning journal. Additionally, learners should do the following:<br>▪ Plan the issues they will discuss with the coach during conferencing.<br>▪ Consider incidental information and determine whether to discuss it with the coach.<br>▪ Consider what they might do differently the next time.<br>Coaches should spend this time organizing information to accurately describe and discuss the learning event in Step 5 of the coaching model. Coaches should do the following to prepare:<br>▪ Identify possible factors that have influenced the event.<br>▪ Look for patterns and themes, specifically as they relate to the learner's focus for the coaching partnership.<br>▪ Consider incidental information and determine whether it was significant enough to mention.<br>▪ Decide whether the information was consistent with what the learner intended.<br>▪ Think about recommendations or suggestions for the learner. |
| Step 5:<br><br>Facilitated reflection and feedback | Coaches and learners engage in a formal coaching conversation and reflect and provide feedback on the observation and demonstration. Coaches facilitate reflection prior to offering feedback to ensure the learner's reflection is not overly influenced by the coach's feedback. During this session the coach will provide support, |

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| Step 5 (Cont'd) | encouragement, and affirmation regarding the learner's competencies and effective behaviors. Additionally, coaches must provide honest feedback. |
| Step 6: <br><br> Evaluation | Throughout the coaching process, coaches and learners should assess their working relationship, communication, and learner's progress toward coaching goals. Additionally, coaches should seek ways to improve the coaching relationship:<br>▪ Identify what went well and what has been difficult.<br>▪ Consider how each person has contributed to the successes and difficulties of the coaching cycle.<br>▪ Decide whether this coaching cycle has achieved the learner's goals for the coaching partnership.<br>▪ Review descriptive feedback regarding what the learner perceives he or she might do to make the coaching process more productive and effective.<br>▪ Contemplate whether the coaching process could be altered in some way to make it more effective.<br>▪ Identify barriers to completing the coaching process.<br>▪ Suggest changes that will make the coaching process more productive and effective. |
| Step 6 Cont'd: <br><br> Evaluation | Here are some questions coaches should ask during this phase:<br>▪ Do I need to make changes in the coaching process?<br>▪ Am I helping to achieve the intended outcomes?<br>▪ Should I continue as the coach, or is there someone else whose skills to coach the learner might be a better fit at this time? |

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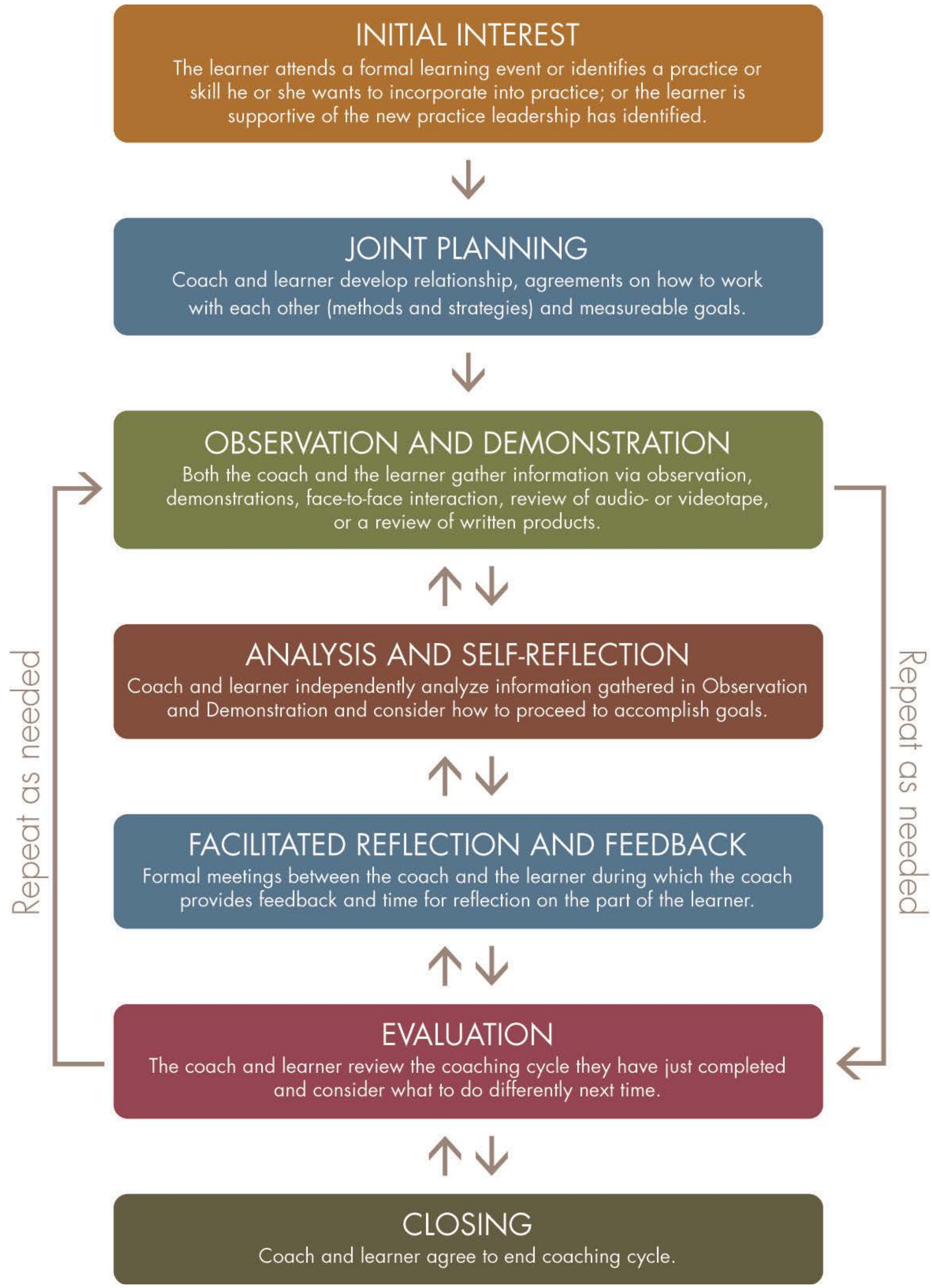
| Step 7:<br><br>Closing | Closing occurs when the coach and/or learner formally end their coaching relationship. The coach should meet with the learner's supervisor to share progress and allow the supervisor and learner to move forward independently to, if desired, develop and implement an Individual Professional Development Plan. |

Figure 6.2 is provided as a more simplistic and easily accessible representation of the child welfare skills-based coaching model.

**Figure 6.2.** Child Welfare Skills-Based Coaching Model (adapted from Rush & Sheldon, 2007 and Gallacher, 1997)



### Example: Coaching to Improve Case Plans

*Background:* Leadership of a Northern California county child welfare agency (20 social workers and three supervisors) contracted with external coaches for assistance with writing child welfare case plans. Agency management and county counsel identified several challenges facing child welfare and decided to first focus on improving case plans to make the plans more tailored and less vague and "cookie cutter."

The agency wanted to increase family engagement in case planning, however, families reported that they felt lost in the system, did not understand the case plan goals, and complained about too many different meetings and appointments. The coach was to work with social workers to write case plans in such a way that family outcomes would improve due to more concrete and applicable case requirements.

*Setting Goals:* Coaches first met with child welfare leadership and agreed on an implementation plan. Prior to offering individualized coaching with staff, the coach worked with leadership to ensure appropriate conditions were in place before asking staff to make changes. After two meetings between the coach and agency, a plan was finalized with these key goals:

- The coach would work with all social workers to ensure full and consistent implementation of the new practice. Social workers and supervisors were mandated to participate in the coaching.

- The coach would work with supervisors to ensure their ability to provide ongoing training and quality assurance of case planning after the coaching process was completed.

*Coaching Sessions:* The coach facilitated half-day training sessions to present the basics of the desired case plan, social workers and supervisors were mandated to attend:

- Social work units, including the supervisor, received coaching as a group.
- After the group sessions, the coach provided individualized coaching to each learner.

*Model:* The coach used the child welfare skills-based coaching model, repeating the demonstration and observation phases as necessary. The coach provided all staff with several examples of case plans using the new model. Staff practiced writing case plans in the new format. Between sessions, social workers reflected on the new case plan process.

*Challenge:* Knowing most of the workers were being coached only because of an agency mandate, the coach knew the relationship building phase would be of utmost importance. The coach relied heavily on the strategies of motivational interviewing while working with social workers who were resistant to the change. The coach understood if she pushed too hard for change she would only create more resistance to the change.

The coach was persistent in communicating this challenge to leadership, who wanted to change the case plans in a very short time frame. The coach provided informal coaching to county leadership regarding implementation science and the change process. The coach did notice leadership begin to relax and adjust their expected time line.

*Action and outcome:* The coach, leadership, and social workers all met together to set guidelines for the process, noting that only information deemed a safety risk to children would be brought to the attention of a supervisor. All other information discussed in the coaching process was to be confidential between the coach and the social workers.

In this model, the early adopters (for a full description of early adopters, see Chapter 7: Implementation) only required three or four coaching sessions before they began full integration of the new model, the late majority and very late majority required up to twelve sessions. Full implementation of this new case plan took almost one full year.

# Performance and Development Coaching Models

Performance and/or development coaching uses insight-oriented and learner led inquiry-based models. The three performance and development coaching models, CLEAR, Flow and GROW, are presented in this section. These flexible models allow coaches and learners to (a) identify areas for improvement in performance or growth and (b) set a system in place to meet specific goals and objectives.

Coaches serve as facilitators and collaborative problem solvers in helping learners reach their goals. Development coaching in particular is described as "less directive than the other types, and is aimed at challenging and stimulating growth and areas of excellence. Coaches challenge learners to develop deeper levels of critical thinking to assimilate theory, research and practice" (Potter & Brittain, 2009). Development coaching can be used to identify goals to improve professional performance or the effectiveness of the organization. Performance coaching is not to be confused with coaching that addresses personnel issues, although the strategies may be helpful if using coaching as a corrective action.

## Uses for performance coaching

- Organizational skills
- Human resource skills

- Writing skills
- Court report writing
- Case management skills

### Uses for development coaching

- Leadership style
- Organizational development
- Working with families (in broad sense)

As a result of performance or development coaching, learners may choose to engage in a more skills-based coaching experience. For example, suppose a supervisor has enrolled in performance coaching to improve supervision skills. Through several sessions of performance coaching the learner may identify a desire to improve group supervision skills and request coaching to specifically address this discrete skill. Given this scenario, the coach and learner will together decide if the current coach can provide this kind of skills-based learning or if the supervisor will need to seek out additional support.

Coaches using a performance or development coaching model will have advanced or expert knowledge in the use of questioning and reflection, which helps guide learners to identify effective ways for being successful, as opposed to having expertise in the skills learners are trying to embrace.

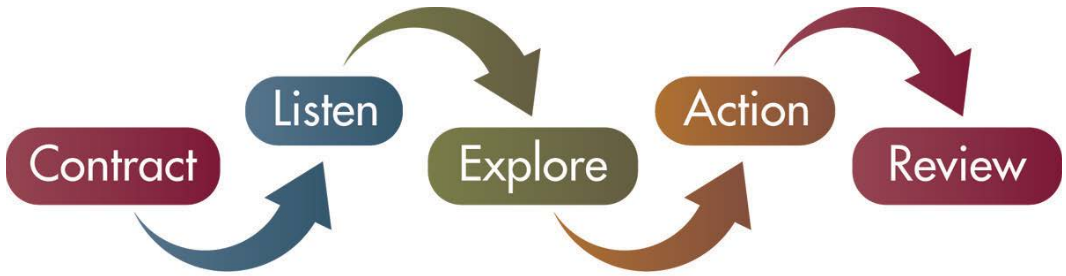
## CLEAR Model

The CLEAR, *Contracting, Listening, Exploring, Action, Review,* model was originally developed in the early 1980s. It is described as a "systemic transformational coaching" model, which purposefully facilitates the adult learning component of transformation (Hawkins & Smith 2006, p. 28).

The original CLEAR model provided coaches with a series of steps for the learner to reflect upon their work, which would lead to meaningful insight and a plan for incorporating new components into their career (Hawkins and Smith, 2006). Interestingly, once this insight and plan were prepared, the coaching process would end; the model relied on the change to happen outside, or after the coaching session. Hawkins and Smith realized the learning, or the change, must occur during the coaching session. They adjusted the model noting, "We have become increasingly aware that coaches and their clients are often frustrated when they recognize that in spite of making clear progress in their sessions, these new insights often do not lead to the hoped for change back at work" (p. 28).

> If the change does not happen in the coaching session, it is unlikely to happen back at work.
>
> ~ Hawkins and Smith, 2006, p. 28

Figure 6.3. CLEAR Model (Hawkins & Smith, 2006)




The improved CLEAR model consists of the following components, which may occur almost simultaneously, multiple times during one coaching session, or strung out between several sessions (see Figure 6.3, Hawkins & Smith, 2006).

Table 6.6 provides detailed information on each step of the CLEAR model.

***Table 6.6.*** CLEAR Model (adapted from Hawkins & Smith, 2006)

| CLEAR Step | Key ingredients and tips for coaches |
|---|---|
| Contracting | Hawkins and Smith suggest starting with the end in mind (2006). Creating learning contracts set the stage for the coaching process by discussing the goal or outcome of the coaching, setting ground rules, discussing boundaries as appropriate, and identifying other specifics such as accountability, expectations, and evaluation. Coaches can use the following questions to help generate a learning contract:<br>▪ How do you want to use your time?<br>▪ What do you need to achieve in this session? |

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| | ▪ How could I be most valuable to you?<br>▪ What in particular do you want us to focus on?<br>▪ What would make this session a success, both for you and your organization?<br>▪ What do you want to have achieved or shifted before leaving here? |
| Listening | The purpose of this stage is to facilitate learners' personal insight into the identified subject of coaching. Hawkins and Smith (2006) identify the main job of the coach as listening, including asking questions to obtain information and elicit self-reflection. Coaches may ask the appropriate questions, but without effective listening skills they may miss key opportunities to engage the learner in a meaningful process of change. Coaches can demonstrate effective listening by using reflective statements:<br>▪ Let us see if I can summarize the issue…<br>▪ What I am hearing from what you said is…<br>▪ What I am sensing from listening to you is…<br>▪ The connections I am making between what you have been sharing are… |
| Exploring | This phase has two components: (a) helping learners understand the personal impact of the current situation and (b) challenging learners to create new possibilities for future action in resolving the situation.<br>This stage requires that coaches appropriately reflect what the learners achieved and challenges they have |

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| | confronted. Coaches may employ various questions to assist learners in exploring this process.<br>▪ Who might be of help to you that you have not yet consulted?<br>▪ Who has the information you need?<br>▪ Who has the skills you need?<br>▪ Who has the power to effect change in this situation?<br>▪ Can you think of four different ways of tackling this situation?<br>▪ What is the wildest option you can think of for dealing with this situation?<br>▪ How would someone you admire deal with this situation? |
| Action | Coaches support learners in committing to moving forward and creating action steps. Coaches need to ensure learners create action steps, and the change is learner-led. Coaches should ask questions such as the following:<br>▪ What are the pros and cons of each possible strategy?<br>▪ What is your long-term objective?<br>▪ What is the first step you need to take?<br>▪ When precisely are you going to do that?<br>▪ Who needs to be involved, consulted, or informed?<br>▪ Is your plan realistic? What is the chance of your plan succeeding? |

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| | ▪ What do you need to do right now to radically increase the chance of success?<br>▪ Rehearse your opening line right now, as if I am the person you need to speak to. |
| Review | Coaches take stock; reinforce progress, improvements, and commitments made; review the process and how it could be improved; and plan the future review after the action has been tried.<br><br>The coach and learner have, at this point, officially completed the CLEAR coaching cycle. Next they must review and assess their actions. This does not necessarily signal the *end* of the coaching process, but does conclude the process of learning, action, and review. All of these steps may take place within one or many coaching sessions. Coaches may ask the following questions:<br>▪ What have you decided to do next?<br>▪ What have you learned from this session?<br>▪ In what ways have you increased your own ability to handle similar situations?<br>▪ What did you find helpful about this coaching process?<br>▪ What did you find difficult about this coaching process?<br>▪ What would you like to improve or do differently in the next coaching session with me?<br>▪ When and where are you going to review this experimental plan you have just committed to?<br>▪ Are we going to have another coaching session, and if so when and where? |

Coaches will know they have completed the CLEAR process by noting a "felt shift." For example, learners will express change

- through their language and way of talking about the issue;
- in their mindset and how they frame the problem, issue, or challenge;
- in their metaphors and how they feel about the situation;
- in their body and breathing and how they physically express themselves with the situation; and
- in their emotional expression and engagement.
- in the way they relate to the present moment with the coach and in the room

## Flow of Coaching Model

James Flaherty (2010) created a model for coaching that he named "the flow of coaching." This model describes a cycle that may occur several times throughout the entire learning process. Flaherty's *Flow* model is similar to the CLEAR model, in that the coaching process does not end until the desired change has begun to take effect. Importantly, note the first four tasks happen

> *Enrollment* can vary by degree, and can be thought of as something similar to the commitment level of the learner and coach. Flaherty describes enrollment as something that is tangible and intentionally named in the coaching process (2010). Enrollment is a central tenet of this coaching toolkit.

prior to the coaching conversation.

The Flow model features five basic stages: *(a) establish relationship, (b) recognize opening, (c) assess, and observe, (e) enroll, and (f) have the coaching conversation (Flaherty, 2010).* As noted in Figure 6.4, the Flow model allows for more organic coaching in the sense the stages, or steps, are not as linear as in other models. These are basic tasks that occur prior to the coaching conversation or the interaction between the coach and learner. In the center of figure is the coaching conversation. For a detailed description of the Flow stages see Table 6.7 (Flaherty, 2010).

Figure 6.2. Key Features of the Flow Model

***Table 6.7.*** Stages of the Flow Model (adapted from Flaherty, 2010)

| **Stages** | **Descriptions** |
|---|---|
| Stage 1: Relationship | The first step is to establish a relationship that will help to create a strong foundation for coaching. This relationship is often overlooked in professional coaching where the coach attempts to begin the learning process without having a relationship that is based on openness, communication, appreciation, fairness, and shared commitment. |
| Stage 2: Openings | Coaches and learners identify openings for which a genuine partnership can be built. Even though learners may have been enrolled in coaching by their supervisor, coaches need to identify when the learner embraces the coaching process and when finds value in the coaching process. Openings refer to points during which coaches and learners together understand the goal and purpose of the learning topic. For example, during an initial conversation with his coach, social worker Terry discusses a desire to learn more about family finding. Terry does not totally buy-in to the concept of family finding as he acknowledges having some biases against biological extended family members. He expresses an urge to look at this issue more closely. Both Terry and his coach agree the purpose of the coaching session and/or entire process will be on the topic of family finding. |

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| Stage 3: Assessment and observation | Learners and coaches engage in an assessment and observation of each other. Coaches can begin to formulate a plan for assessment of the skills learners currently maintain (which may be a self-assessment by each learner), and learners are given the task to observe someone doing the skills they desire. |
| Stage 4: Enrollment<br><br>Enrollment is a key tenet of the toolkit and has been discussed in previous chapters. | Enrollment on the part of the learner must occur prior to authentic learning. Both the learner and coach make explicit what they are committed to accomplishing in the coaching program. Coaches must feel comfortable having frank conversations regarding potential barriers. If learners do not seem to be engaged, coaches must discuss potential reasons and help to remove barriers.<br><br>The following questions may help coaches uncover hindrances or barriers:<br>▪ What could interrupt the coaching program for you?<br>▪ How does coaching fit into what you're already doing?<br>▪ How will you respond if the coaching process seems slow, boring, repetitious, or even pointless? |
| Stage 5: Coaching itself | At this point, coaches (a) determine the scope of the coaching project, (b) define the structure, and (c) carry out coaching through the coaching session conversations. During the sessions coaches offer support, clarify outcomes, provide feedback, facilitate reflections, and conclude with more goal setting. |

## GROW/REGROW Model

The GROW (Goal Setting, Reality, Options, Wrap-up) model, first developed by Sir John Whitmore (1992, 1996), highlights the importance of goal setting and action planning. Anthony Grant (2011) modified Whitmore's model to highlight the iterative process of *reviewing* and *evaluating* past coaching sessions and making appropriate adjustments. In the RE (Review, Evaluate) GROW model, learning goals are continually redefined and adjusted, since action between sessions may lead to changed goals.

**Figure 6.5.** REGROW Model


For example, social worker Terry is receiving coaching on safety planning with families, and while so doing identifies a need to learn more about family finding. Terry and his coach modify goals to include this learning topic.

If using this approach in coaching sessions, coaches should add steps for action, observation and reflection. The learners, in this sense, practice the new skill while the coach observes them and then makes time for feedback and reflection. Table 6.8 describes the stages of the REGROW model in detail.

***Table 6.8.*** REGROW Model (adapted from Grant, 2011)

| **Stages** | **Description** |
|---|---|
| Stage 1: Setting goals | *Establish realistic goals and learning contracts. Coaches may ask the following:*<br>▪ What would you like to achieve as a result of this session?<br>▪ What would you like to get from the next 30 minutes?<br>▪ Describe your perfect world. |
| Stage 2: Reality checking | *Coaches explore and validate current situations and understand rational and goals. Coaches invite learners to describe their current situation and offer self-reflection and insight they currently have.*<br>▪ On a scale of 1-10 where are you in relation to your goal?<br>▪ What has contributed to your success so far?<br>▪ What progress have you made so far?<br>▪ What is working well right now? |

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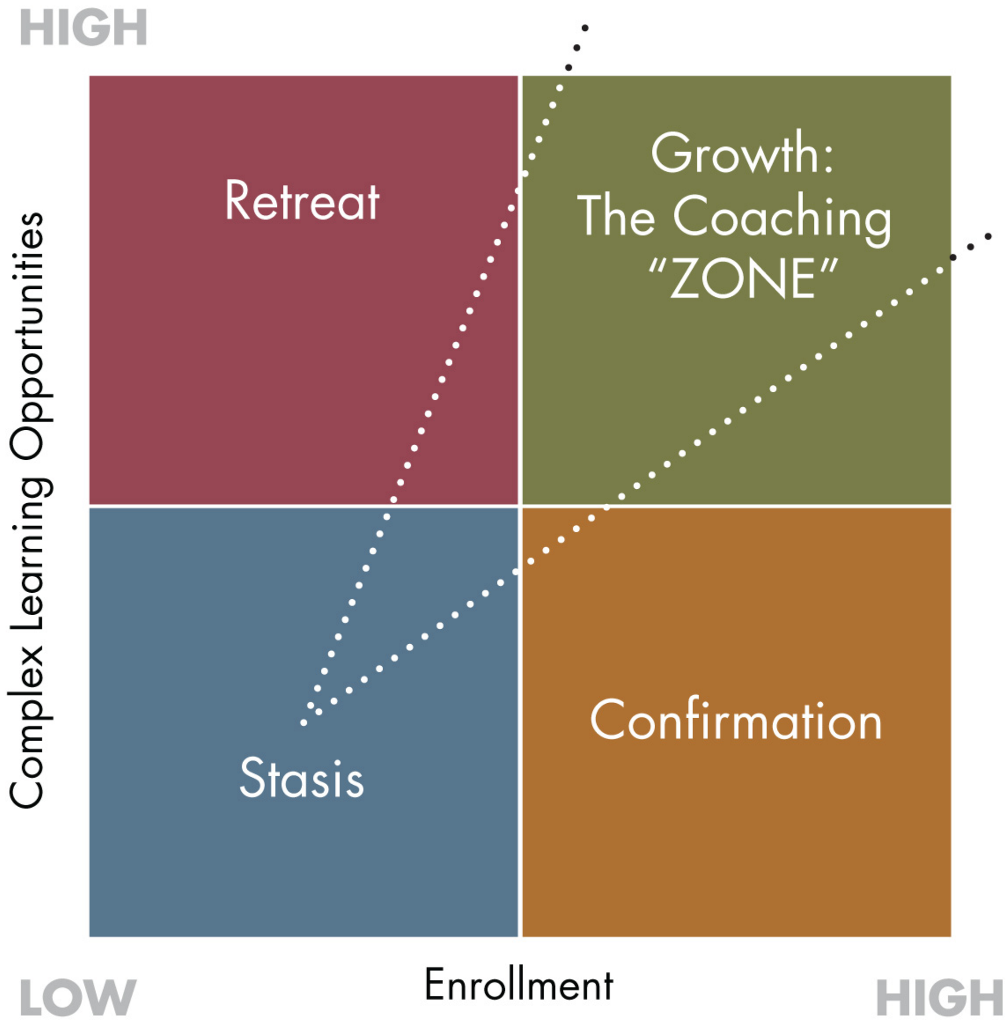
| Stage 3: Options | *Coaches work with learners to brainstorm options, as well as possible actions that have already been taken.*<br>▪ What possible options do you have?<br>▪ How have you tracked this or a similar situation before?<br>▪ Give me five options.<br>▪ If anything was possible, what would you do?<br>▪ What else? |
| Stage 4: Wrap-up | *Coaches work with learners to identify specific steps and obstacles, write an action plan, and check for commitment.*<br>▪ Which options work best for you?<br>▪ What one small step are you going to take now?<br>▪ What actions will you take?<br>▪ When are you going to start?<br>▪ Who will help you?<br>▪ How will you know you have been successful?<br>▪ How will you ensure you do it?<br>▪ On a scale of 1-10, how committed and motivated are you to doing it? |

# Summary

This chapter presents several options for coaches and agencies to use when structuring the coaching process. These models are designed to help coaches ensure the learning process is successful. Optimally, during coaching enrollment will be high and learning opportunities complex. Figure 5.6 depicts this "coaching zone," where the learner and the coach are making great progress (adapted from UCSF Mentoring Toolkit).

- If the learning opportunities are complex, but enrollment is low, learners may retreat from the process. To take meaningful learning risks and meet challenges head on, learners must be committed.
- If the learner's enrollment is high, but learning opportunities are not challenging, learners will most likely receive significant validation for their work, but the coaching will fall short. And clearly, if enrollment is low and learning opportunities are not challenging, meaningful change will not occur.

Figure 3.6. Coaching Zone (adapted from UCSF Mentoring Toolkit)



## Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?
- Which of the models makes more sense to you? Why?
- Which of the models most intrigued you? Why?
- How are you already integrating some of the models' stages into your coaching practice?
- How will you integrate the steps of the models into your coaching process?
- What phases of the models were you already familiar with?
- How have you conceptualized the differences between the models?

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Chapter 7

# Implementation

Implementation Drivers

Stages of Implementation

Change Agents

Creating the Coaching Implementation Plan

Pause and Reflect

References

# Implementation

Implementation is the art and science of incorporating innovations into typical human service settings to benefit children, families, adults, and communities.

~ Fixsen and Blasé, 2009, p. 1

The Child Welfare Coaching framework notes the role of coaching within the broader concept of implementation science (see Chapter 3). Oftentimes successful implementation of new programs can be elusive. Fortunately, significant evidence exists pointing to the key features of successful and sustainable program implementation (Fixsen 2005). This chapter presents information to on the various stages of implementation, with a dual purpose:

1. To prepare agencies to implement sustained, embedded professional development opportunities, such as coaching, system-wide. To this end, information is provided to help agencies develop coaching implementation plans.
2. To help the reader understand how coaching fits into the broader scope of implementation.

**Key Terms**

*Implementation science:* is the study of the process of implementing evidence-based programs and practices (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005).

The courses of action through which an idea, decision, rule, procedure, program or practice are put into use with the process consists of three core components: (1) Science, (2) Implementation and (3) Practice (Fixsen, et al., 2005).

*Diffusion:* the passive spread of innovation in an organization

*Dissemination:* active and planned efforts to specific groups in order to adopt innovation

*Implementation:* actions and efforts undertaken to spread innovation within an organization

Greenhalgh (2001) identified three strategies to incorporating organizational change. The most effective organizations do not leave implementation to chance; rather they strategize ways to successfully "make it happen."

1. *Letting it happen* suggests little time or intention is spent in creating an implementation plan. Implementation of a new program or practice is left up to each individual practitioner.

2. *Helping it happen* incorporates research findings into toolkits or materials designed for practitioners.
3. *Making it happen* involves implementation teams directly helping practitioners effectively implement programs.

The information provided throughout this toolkit aims to provide agency leadership with a plan for *making it happen*.

# Implementation Drivers

As discussed in Chapter 3: Framework and Foundation, Fixsen and colleagues (2005) describe the core implementation drivers or components which are further categorized by competency and organization drivers. These drivers are independent of each other but are interactive by nature, which means they compensate for one another; strengths in one component can overwhelm a weakness in another one.

## Competency drivers

These drivers describe how an organization develops, improves, and sustains implementation with fidelity that benefits consumers or service recipients.

*Selection* includes the assemblage of practitioners and organization staff (trainers, coaches, evaluators, administrators).

*Training* identifies efficient ways to provide knowledge of theory, background information, practical knowledge, and opportunities to practice new skills and receive feedback in a training environment.

*Coaching* needs to be readily available, reflective, work-based and opportunistic (Fixsen & Blasé, 2009). Most skills learned in training are learned on the job with the help and support of a coach.

*Performance assessment* measures success and effectiveness, which provides accountability to everyone involved in the coaching process.

## Organizational drivers

These drivers describe how an organization creates and sustains systems environments for effective services.

*Decision support data system* includes quality improvement information, organizational fidelity measures, and child and family outcomes.

*Facilitative administration* uses data to inform decision making, support overall processes, and keep staff focused on the desired intervention outcomes.

*Systems intervention* employs strategies to work with external systems to ensure the availability of the financial, organizational, and human resources required to support the work of the practitioners (strengthening key partnerships). It requires sustainable systems change, commitment, and leadership along with capacity and infrastructure, stakeholder involvement, values and vision, and a viable environment for fostering change.

## Leadership drivers

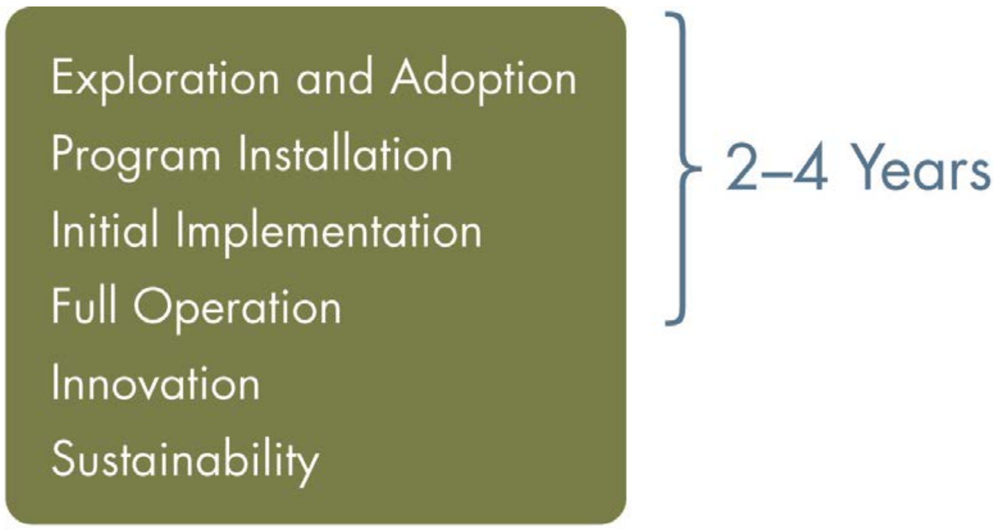
Leaders facilitate implementation through support and commitment to the intervention or practice. This includes ensuring the organizational structure is capable of implementing the new practice and holding realistic expectations. Implementation is viewed as a process that can take several years to achieve, and leaders must remain resilient and patient with the implementation process. Leadership will

- create a learning environment;
- celebrate performance;
- provide resources to the job;
- inspire with vision; and
- align agency values, mission, and practice.

## Stages of Implementation

Implementation happens in six stages (Fixsen, et al., 2005) as presented in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 Six Stages of Implementation




Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, (2005)

### First stage: exploration and adoption

Implementation teams examine service needs and resources and identify a particular program or intervention that can meet these needs. During this stage, the team assesses the fit and feasibility of the identified training, program, or intervention.

### Second stage: program installation

During this stage, the implementation team prepares practitioners to use the new program or intervention. The organization should identify strengths and potential challenges that may need to be addressed as required. At this stage an organizational readiness assessment should be performed to identify barriers to implementation and resources leveraged in response.

### Third stage: initial implementation

This stage involves implementation strategies to develop staff competence and create the systemic infrastructure of the new practice or program. This is a time to administer fidelity checks and assessments to identify the areas of practice that need further development.

During initial implementation it may be helpful to engage a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process (also known as the Shewhart or Deming cycle). Developed in the 1950's the PDS has been helpful in strategizing implementation of a new program or practice (Shewhart 1939, Deming 195). A central use of PDSA in carrying out the design and initial implementation of coaching is adjusting implementation and making changes as needed. This process comprises four phases (see Figure 7.2, Moen and Norman, 2010):

*Plan:* Identifies objectives and plans to carry out the cycle (who, what, where, when).

*Do:* Carry out the plan, document problems and unexpected observations, and begin data analysis.

*Study:* Complete the analysis, compare data to predictions, and summarize what was learned.

*Act:* Determine what changes need to be made and begin the next cycle.

Figure 7.2. PDSA Cycle for Improvement (adapted from Moen and Norman, 2010)


## Fourth stage: full operation

When an organization reaches this stage the intervention or new practice has become standard. The organization can now engage in a meaningful examination of the effect of the practice or intervention on child and family outcomes.

## Fifth stage: innovation

At this stage, the organization continues to examine fidelity, quality, and outcomes and further develops the personal competence of practitioners and the agency’s infrastructure. Some tools used in implementation research include:

- collecting and reporting of monthly metrics;
- surveys;
- fidelity measures;
- self-report measures; and
- observation.

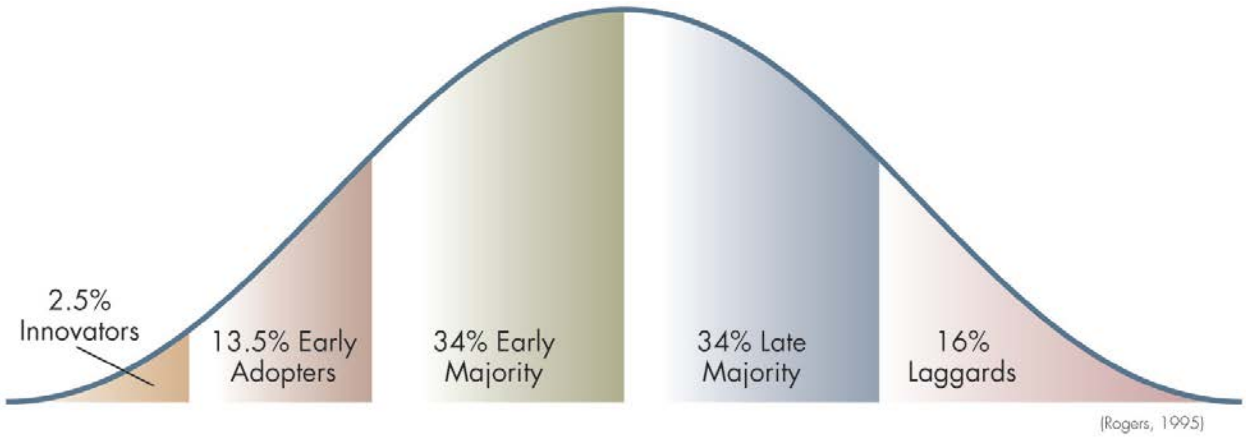
### Sixth stage: sustainability

During this stage, the organization focuses on long-term implementation and ensures new staff members are appropriately trained.

# Change Agents

Everett Rogers (1995) classified five different types of members of an organization based on response to change. Figure 7.3 depicts the average percentage of individuals in each group.

Figure 7.3. Adoption curve (Rogers, 1995)




*Innovators* are adventurous and most comfortable with uncertainty, and they have a high level of understanding of technical and practice knowledge. On average, they comprise 2.5% of any group and usually are the people who want the change.

*Early adopters* provide leadership and are part of the local organization system. They are typically respected and tend to decrease uncertainty for others. They will check to see if the change is worthwhile and they should be included in the change process until the end. Early adopters comprise approximately 13.5% of the typical group.

To create a professional learning community, focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and hold yourself accountable for results.
~ Richard Dufour, 2004, p.1

*Early majority:* Adopts new practices before the average number of any group but are not motivated to track new and exciting practices. Rogers refers to these individuals as “deliberate.” They typically do not lead the change and take longer to believe in its benefits. This group comprises about 34%. The early majority of people benefit from encouragement by the early adopters.

*Late majority* go along with the change out of necessity; they view the change as inevitable. Rogers refers to them as the “skeptical guardians” who will not convey enthusiasm. They make up about 34% and often offer valuable constructive criticism.

*Very late adopters* are "confirmed traditionalists” who always like the old way better. They comprise approximately 16% of the general workforce. Individuals in this category may actually leave the organization as a result of the change.

Implementation of evidence-based practices requires behavior change at the practitioner, supervisory, and administrative support levels. Training and coaching are the principle ways in which behavior change is brought about for carefully selected staff in the beginning stages of implementation and throughout the life of evidence-based practices and programs.

~ Fixsen, et al., 2005, p. 29

### Leadership styles

Leaders impact overall program implementation and system-wide culture in many ways. Leaders must be supportive and encouraging, but aware staff will meet this support with resistance if leadership is overly eager, mandates coaching, oversells coaching, or creates a contrived sense of collegiality.

One impact has been linked to various styles of leadership, which can be described as a continuum between coercive and pacesetting (Fullan 2001). Coercive and pacesetting characteristics typically create a negative organizational climate and performance:

*Coercive*—the leader demands compliance. ("Do what I tell you.")

*Authoritative*—the leader mobilizes people toward a vision. ("Come with me.")

*Affiliative*—the leader creates harmony and builds emotional bonds. ("People come first.")

*Democratic*—the leader forges consensus through participation. ("What do you think?")

*Pacesetting*—the leader sets high standards for performance. ("Do as I do.")

*Coaching*—the leader develops people for the future. ("Try this.")

### Change facilitation

To facilitate meaningful and sustainable change within an organization, Fullan (2001) suggests keeping the following useful actions in mind:

- Focus the innovation on the early adopters, not everyone.
- Work to obtain input and support from all of the key stakeholders.
- Acknowledge and manage the implementation dip. When one encounters innovation requiring new skills and new learning, there is an initial dip in performance and confidence in using the innovation.
- Use resistance as a potential positive force: "Successful organizations do not go with only like-minded innovators, they deliberately build in differences."

- Do not rely on checklists. Think about the leadership style of the organization (coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetting, coaching) and how that impacts people and success.
- Facilitate reculturing, which involves deepening the moral purpose of change through a collaborative work culture that respects differences and continues to build learning while incorporating measurable results.

Coaching will be far more successful if it is voluntary as opposed to mandatory (central coaching tenet).

It can be tempting to overly encourage or mandate coaching. Perhaps leaders understand and believe the mandated coaching will be non-punitive and led by highly regarded coaches. However, if the organization has not laid the right foundation, and staff is hesitant to accept coaching, trying to sell coaching or forcing it too soon will lead to more resistance in the long run.

Finally, learners must be helped to manage the time demands that coaching creates. This includes finding time in the schedule to regularly participate in discussion, observation, and conferencing; addressing competing time demands; and conveying the validity of the coaching activity (Sparks & Bruder, 1987). It also includes sensitivity to the pace with which a coaching program may be integrated in an organization. The greater the number of current demands and pressures on learners who may be involved in coaching, the slower the adoption of a coaching program must be to avoid creating stresses that ultimately undermine coaching efforts (Hargreaves & Dawes, 1990).

## Example 3: Coaching to Support Implementation

To illustrate the change agents defined earlier in this chapter, the following two scenarios describe how UC Davis, Northern Training Academy, coaches have worked with counties to support the implementation of Safety Organized Practice (SOP).

### Scenario one: coaching leadership

In County One a coach was assigned to work with the county leadership team on its Safety Organized Practice implementation plan. The leadership team participated in the very early training events on SOP and quickly supported the implementation in county practice. The UC Davis coach spent time with leadership discussing strategies, timelines, and actual training of staff. The county identified the *early adopters* who subsequently received more advanced training on SOP and ultimately benefited from opportunities to observe and demonstrate SOP with the coach. The early adopters are now providing coaching to other staff, which demonstrates the trickle-down effect of implementation. The early adopters and the supportive leadership generated energy that propelled these counties forward.

### Scenario two: coaching early adopters

In County Two a coach was assigned to work with line workers on the implementation of SOP. In this county, one individual was the champion of SOP and provided much of the leadership for SOP implementation, and did so with little support from management or upper administration. Over the course of a year the champion, or *early adopter*, enlisted another group of individuals, or the *early majority*. However, progress has relied heavily on the relentless effort of one person. The coach continued to work with the SOP champion with the goal of overall county implementation. Leadership started to notice the grassroots efforts to bring SOP to their county, and began asking questions and seeking more information.

# Creating the Coaching Implementation Plan

To effectively address the complex issues within child welfare services, it is important to develop a deliberate and thorough coaching implementation plan.

If you don't know where you're going,
you might wind up someplace else.

~Yogi Berra

The coaching implementation plan can be quite detailed. Use the following questions as a starting point for creating an implementation plan (see Table 7.1).

**Table 7.1.** Creating the Implementation Plan

| Steps | Planning Questions |
|---|---|
| Step 1:<br><br>Identify the vision (what the group wants to see happen). | ▪ Where does the agency want to be in one year after implementing coaching?<br>▪ What are the results or outcomes the agency hopes to achieve?<br>▪ Is the vision statement clear: When reading your vision statement does someone not working in your field understand what your agency hopes to accomplish? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Step 1 (Cont'd): | ▪ What is the purpose of coaching (for example, is it to coach individual learners on the topic of their choice or on agency identified topics)? |
| Step 2:<br><br>Identify the collaborative partners. | ▪ Are all of the necessary partners in agreement to effectively achieve the vision?<br>▪ Who will participate in the coaching process?<br>▪ Who are the practitioners targeted to receive coaching? Are they new to the field? Do they work in a particular content area?<br>▪ Does the coaching model selected use external practice leaders, internal practice leaders, supervisors, or a combination of these?<br>▪ How many individuals should be involved in coaching?<br>▪ Have all necessary internal stakeholders been considered for involvement in the development process (for example, departmental counsel, social work specialists, or representatives from the employee union, technology, research, and evaluation areas)? |
| Step 3:<br><br>Examine present circumstances. | ▪ Does everyone involved in the coaching understand how the current process operates?<br>▪ What is the agency's current professional development strategy? Stand-and-deliver training? Web-based training? Training followed by ongoing |

| | |
|---|---|
| Step 3 (Cont'd): | social worker and supervisor coaching by external consultants? Internal staff trained to be practice coaches? A combination of strategies?<br>▪ What are the agency's beliefs about continuous learning and quality improvement? |
| Step 4:<br><br>Identify the process for coaching. | ▪ Are only practice-focused elements the purpose of the coaching sessions?<br>▪ Are both knowledge and practice components the focus of the coaching sessions?<br>▪ Does each of the coaching sessions involve the same staff members, or does it involve coordination between staff members?<br>▪ How often will coaching occur onsite? Offsite?<br>▪ What is the period of time or duration in which coaching will occur?<br>▪ What kinds of resources are needed to ensure staff members have the time to engage in coaching?<br>▪ Will the coach be a staff member?<br>▪ What are the qualifications of the coach?<br>▪ Did the coach receive formal training in a particular coaching model?<br>▪ Will the coaches meet together as a group to reflect and obtain support?<br>▪ Will the coaches meet regularly with staff to develop and discuss goals and review progress?<br>▪ Are the goals predetermined and discussed at each |

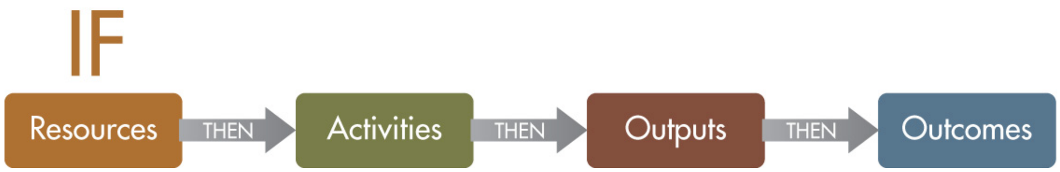
| | |
|---|---|
| | session, or are they constructed jointly with the coach? |
| Step 5:<br><br>Identify the form and type of documentation for the coaching. | ▪ Are the activities used to engage in coaching (e.g., discussion, observation) recorded?<br>▪ Are the processes and goals of each session recorded?<br>▪ What does the program data tell the agency about the kinds of changes needed? Based on this, what is their working hypothesis about the need for this change (i.e., what is driving the agency's desire to implement a coaching model to support practice)?<br>▪ Will the coaching focus initially on a specific population or practice?<br>▪ What types of ongoing, advanced and/or refresher training sessions will be included in the ongoing implementation and training plan? |
| Step 6:<br><br>Identify procedures for continuous quality improvement. | ▪ Has a practical and affordable evaluation design been developed? This should include collecting feedback from learners and evaluating the quality of the coaching, improvement in skill development?<br>▪ What form of outcomes measurement and budget analysis will be needed to document the economic value of this approach?<br>▪ For each evaluation strategy chosen, who will be responsible for doing what? What will it cost? What is the funding source?<br>▪ Once the scope of work, training plan, and |

| | |
|---|---|
| | sequencing and timing have been outlined, what is the budget needed to implement this project during the first 3 to 5 years? |
| Step 7:<br><br>Identify funding and areas for sustainability | ▪ Can Title IV-E or other federal funds be used to help support the implementation?<br>▪ What are the most feasible funding sources?<br>▪ Could certain local or state foundations be a source of political, program, technical assistance or financial support?<br>▪ Who are the key stakeholders? Should they participate in the training or be provided with an abbreviated overview session (for example courts, judges, departmental counsel, mandated reporters, and service providers)? |

## Logic models

Developing a logic model can greatly assist organizations in implementing a coaching model for a learning organization. Logic models facilitate clarity and purpose and illustrate how the coaching resources needed link with activities to attain short- and long-term goals. The logic model typically consists of a series of IF-THEN statements. For example, **if** coaching resources are available to the agency, **then** coaching activities can be implemented; **if** the coaching activities are implemented successfully, **then** certain outputs and outcomes are expected (see Figure 7.4). Table 7.2 serves as a guide or template for creating a logic model and Table 7.3 is an example of how one county formulated its logic model plan to implement coaching.

Figure 7.4. Logic Models



| Program (name): | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Situation: What the program is trying to address: needs, symptoms, strengths | | | | | | |
| Inputs | Outputs | | Outcomes | | | |
| | Activities | Participants | Short | Medium | Long | |
| What is invested?<br>• Staff, consultant and/or community partner, time, and expertise<br>• Money<br>• Technology<br>• Research Base | What will be done?<br>• Train<br>• Deliver services<br>• Develop products<br>• Coordinate with partners | Who will be the focus of program activities?<br>• Staff<br>• Clients<br>• Agencies | What do you expect short term?<br>• Awareness<br>• Learning<br>• Participant satisfaction<br>• Products<br>• Agreements | What do you expect medium term?<br>• Practice<br>• Client<br>• Behavior<br>• Policy<br>• Interagency coordination | What are the bottom line impacts?<br>• Safety<br>• Permanency<br>• Well-being | |
| **Assumptions:** Beliefs about the program, the people involved, and how the program will work (possibly from prior evidence-based information). | | | **External Factors:** Conditions outside the program that could influence results (e.g., policy, organizational culture, and availability of community resources). | | | |

***Table 7.3.*** Logic Model Example

Program Name:
**Situation**: Traditional classroom training alone does not result in sufficient transfer of learning and behavior change. This project seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of performance-based coaching on increasing the adoption of new practices behavior of child welfare workers.

| Logic Model | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inputs | Outputs | | Outcomes | | |
| | Activities | Participants | Short | Medium | Long |
| County child welfare staff: supervisors and social workers.<br><br>UC Davis coaches, experience, relationships.<br><br>Pre-existing collaboration and partnerships on both the local and regional levels. | Two-day classroom training in an integrated practice approach for child welfare.<br><br>Two hours per month of skills-based coaching. | Staff (social workers and supervisors) attend classroom training. | Coaching contracts, relationships and enrollment.<br><br>Development of SMART goals and GARS.<br><br>Increased motivation and confidence in new skill. | Increased worker self-assessments of learning.<br><br>Greater reported use of newly learned tools and strategies.<br><br>More consistent and accurate use of model tools and strategies.<br><br>Satisfaction with the coaching experience. | Attainment of county-determined goals related to coaching participation (e.g., better engagement of families, better risk, and safety related decision making).<br><br>Self-reported use of training skills and strategies at one year. |

**Assumptions:** Training plus coaching is more likely to result in transfer and practice change than training alone. Coaching based on application of new information to actual practice situations is more likely to result in behavioral change than other forms of coaching. Behavioral change is more likely when participants work on self-selected implementation areas.

**External factors include:** Individual, organizational and environmental factors shown to be related to transfer of learning in the literature such as perceptions of relevance, individual motivation, and supervisor and peer support.

## Pause and Reflect

- What was one new concept you read about in this chapter?
- What concept would you like to learn more about?
- At what stage of implementation is your agency? What is working well and what could be improved?
- What are the challenges to Implementation Science? The benefits?
- Does the concept of Plan Do Study Act resonate with you, and how so?
- Recall a time when you have served as the early adopter of a new program or practice, what were the benefits and challenges? And a time when you served as the late majority? Again, what were the benefits and challenges?

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# Chapter 8
# Readiness

# Readiness

This chapter provides information about creating an organizational culture that supports comprehensive and systematic coaching. Tools are provided to assess readiness of both the organization and learners.

> *"Making coaching successful requires consistent efforts to create the necessary foundations for coaching within the organization. Otherwise, the context, the organization's climate, and the principles of coaching may be in conflict. As a result, coaching efforts will be less successful. Moreover, lack of commitment to ongoing personnel development, whether on the part of an individual or an organization, frequently is a serious barrier to successful coaching."*
>
> *~ Gallacher, 1997, p. 208*

Organizational leadership must build and maintain a climate where coaching is viewed as important and where the predominant style of managing and working together is through a coaching framework. Megginson and Clutterbuck (2005) identify four main stages to incorporate a culture of coaching into an organization.

## Four stages to creating a culture of coaching

*Nascent:* The organization conveys little or no commitment to creating a coaching culture. This is the beginning stage of creating a culture of learning.

*Tactical:* The organization recognizes the value of creating a coaching culture, but there is little understanding of what that means and what will be involved. In this stage, some staff members may have already begun the coaching process.

*Strategic:* The organization has begun to expend effort and time in educating staff about the value of coaching and training people to coach in a variety of settings. Coaching at this point is discussed, and staff knows coaching may be used as a learning tool.

*Embedded:* People at all levels are engaged in coaching, both formally and informally, within the same function and across functions and levels.

# The Learning Environment

Coaching is best integrated into an organization that already has a strongly established learning environment. As noted in A Child Welfare Coaching Framework, the learning environment is the foundation upon which coaching can be implemented. Without the learning environment in place, staff may not take the risks necessary to learn or engage fully in the coaching process.

> Differences in the learning environments, and the relative success of each organization in preparing and developing its staff, have unique implications for promoting continuous learning.
>
> ~ Tannenbaum 1997 p.441

Tannenbaum (1997) suggests that eight characteristics are present in a positive learning environment.

## Eight characteristics of a positive learning environment

*Individuals are aware of the "big picture."* Learners at every level understand what the organization is trying to accomplish and how they relate to others in the organization. When individuals understand the “big picture,” they can ensure their personal goals are in balance with organizational goals.

*Individuals are assigned tasks where they can apply what they have learned and where they are stretched and challenged (Dubin, 1990).* Learners must have ample opportunity to apply new skills and put into practice the skills they have been taught in more formalized trainings events.

*Mistakes are tolerated during learning and early application, when individuals are trying new ideas and skills (Gundry, Kickul & Prather, 1994; Sitkin, 1991).* This cannot be emphasized enough. If learners do not feel they have the ability to make mistakes without reproach from supervisors or agency leadership, they will shy away from taking risks and trying newly acquired skills. Fear of reprisal can inhibit learning, initiative, and innovation (Suarez, 1994).

*Individuals are accountable for learning, and performance expectations are high enough to necessitate continued personal growth (Rosow & Zager, 1988).* Supervisors and other leaders must maintain high expectations for performance and continuous learning. Supervisors who assist with the transfer of learning from the training event to everyday practice promote professional development and growth. Individuals are recognized for newly learned skills and for appropriate risk taking.

*Situational constraints to learning and performance are identified and minimized.* Burnout is high among social workers, which is due partly to the high intensity of stress and pressure, often in tandem with a feeling of helplessness due to lack of resources, high case loads, secondary trauma, and other factors. Stressors must be acknowledged prior to asking staff to engage in new learning experiences.

*New ideas are valued and encouraged (McGill, Slocum & Lei, 1992).* All levels of staff are valued when they brainstorm solutions to challenges and potential programs or strategies to implement.

*Supervisors and co-workers provide support, allowing individuals to learn and attempt to implement new ideas (Dubin, 1990; Tracey, Tannenbaum & Kavanaugh, 1995).* Learners must be allowed to spend time in training and in the consequent transfer of the learning process.

*Policies and practices support the effective use of training.* Learners will be more engaged in learning and in enhancing the effectiveness of the organization if training is available, relevant and applicable to their jobs. If learners buy into training and see how it fits into the big picture, their chances of success are greatly enhanced.

## Assessing readiness

The first step to creating a learning organization is assessing readiness, both individually and organizationally. Table 8.1 describes characteristics of organizations that help or hinder the coaching process.

***Table 8.1.*** Factors influencing organizational change (Lehman,W. E. K., Greener, J. M.,& Simpson, D.D., 2002).

| **Motivation for change** | **Program resources** | **Organization climate** | **Organization dynamics and staff attributes** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ▪ Training needs<br>▪ Program needs<br>▪ Pressure for change | ▪ Equipment<br>▪ Offices<br>▪ Staffing<br>▪ Training needs | ▪ Autonomy<br>▪ Cohesion<br>▪ Stress<br>▪ Change<br>▪ Communi-cations<br>▪ Mission | ▪ Efficacy<br>▪ Growth<br>▪ Influence<br>▪ Adaptability |

Agencies will find the following learning culture assessments useful:

- *Learning Culture Self-Audit* provides information on overall organizational and leadership capacity.
- *Coaching Readiness Scale* identifies readiness and motivation for coaching for the individual learner and the organization.
- *Organizational Trust Inventory* provides a scale to measure learner's level of trust with his or her supervisor and the organization as a whole.

### Learning culture self-audit

This assessment tool was originally published in *Transforming Culture: An Executive Briefing on the Power of Learning* (Conner & Clawson, 2002). It is reprinted here with permission.

*Instructions:* Rank your organization on each characteristic on a scale of 1–5, 5 being "always yes" and 1 being "always no." At the bottom, tally your numbers to determine if your organization has more of a *pro-learning* or an *anti-learning* culture. Circle the items in each category that will require special attention from you in the coming days, weeks, and years.

| **Pro-learning culture** | **1 – 5** | **Anti-learning culture** | **1 – 5** |
|---|---|---|---|
| People at all levels ask questions and share stories about successes, failures, and what they have learned. | | Managers share information on a need-to-know basis. People keep secrets and don't describe how events really happened. | |
| Everyone creates, keeps, and propagates stories of individuals who have improved their own processes. | | Everyone believes they know what to do, and they proceed on this assumption. | |
| People take at least some time to reflect on what has happened and what may happen. | | Little time or attention is given to understanding lessons learned from projects. | |
| People are treated as complex individuals. | | People are treated like objects or resources without | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | attention to their individuality. | |
| Managers encourage continuous experimentation. | | Employees proceed with work only when they feel certain of the outcome. | |
| People are hired and promoted on the basis of their capacity for learning and adapting to new situations. | | People are hired and promoted on the basis of their technical expertise as demonstrated by credentials. | |
| Performance reviews include and pay attention to what people have learned. | | Performance reviews focus almost exclusively on what people have done. | |
| Senior managers participate in training programs designed for new or high-potential employees. | | Senior managers appear only to "kick off" management training programs. | |
| Senior managers are willing to explore their underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, and expectations. | | Senior managers are defensive and unwilling to explore their underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, and expectations. | |
| Conversations in management meetings constantly explore the values, assumptions, beliefs, and expectations underlying proposals and problems. | | Conversations tend to move quickly to blaming and scapegoating with little attention to the process that led to a problem or how to avoid it in the future. | |
| Client feedback is solicited, actively examined, and included in the next operational or planning cycle. | | Client feedback is not solicited and is often ignored when it comes in over the transom. | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Managers presume that energy comes in large part from learning and growing. | | Managers presume that energy comes from success, only looking at quantitative data. | |
| Managers think about their learning quotient, that is, their interest in and capacity for learning new things, and the learning quotient of their employees. | | Managers think they know all they need to know and that their employees do not have the capacity to learn much. | |
| **Total score for pro-learning culture** | | **Total score for anti-learning culture** | |

## Coaching readiness scale

This survey is a useful tool to quickly assess both the individual and organizational readiness for coaching (Coleman, 2008). Simply, if answers fall into the "yes" category more frequently than "no" category, agency staff are probably ready for formalized coaching. However, if answers fall into the "no" category more frequently than "yes" category, leadership should seek more comprehensive strategies to address overall learning culture.

| Assessing individual readiness for coaching | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| I'm at a point in my life where I'm ready to receive support and feedback while learning new skills or techniques or improving work performance in other areas, such as leadership. | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I'm prepared to tackle the tough issues to close the gap between where I am now and where I want to be. | | |
| I'm open to new ideas and new ways of doing things to facilitate positive change and growth. | | |
| My learning needs are unique. I only want relevant concepts and skills that help me address strategic issues and/or immediate concerns. | | |
| I'm looking for a coach who can share my successes and help me grapple with challenges. | | |
| I can commit to keeping my regularly scheduled appointment with my coach, even if it means having to reschedule an appointment. | | |
| My coach can count on me to always tell the truth, even when it's difficult for the coach or for me. | | |
| I understand that in coaching, the "learner does the work," not the coach. | | |
| If something is not working in my relationship with my coach, I will let my coach know immediately so we can take action right away to improve the situation. | | |
| I am in need of additional tools, resources, or concrete approaches to a variety of leadership and organizational challenges. | | |
| I am prepared to devote the time needed to make coaching work, including time for meetings and tasks in between. | | |
| I see coaching as an investment in my career and personal growth vs. a punitive measure or a "mandate" from others in my organization or administration. | | |
| There is something out of the ordinary going on in my personal life that might negatively affect my ability to work with a coach.* | | |

| Assessing organizational readiness for coaching | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Agency leadership supports coaching for me or for the organization. | | |
| Others in the organization understand the reasons for and goals of coaching. | | |
| The organization is experiencing a change in strategy, leadership or external conditions that can become a focal point for coaching. | | |
| The organization is seeking opportunities for leaders and key staff members to think about and plan how to put new learning into practice within the organization. | | |
| The organization is suffering because of interpersonal conflicts or other problems that might hinder the effects of coaching.* | | |

* If you answered "Yes" to the questions with an asterisk, then coaching may not be the right fit at this point in time.

## Organizational trust inventory

The Organization Trust Inventory (OTI) is a 12-item scale to measure an individual's level of trust in his or her supervisor and in his or her work organization as a whole. The OTI consists of three dimensions that measure the belief that an individual or group makes good-faith efforts to behave in accordance with any commitments (Dimension 1), is honest in negotiations (Dimension 2); does not take excessive advantage of another (Dimension 3) (Cummings & Bromiley, 1996). A higher number indicates a higher level of trust.

## Organizational trust inventory scale

After reading the statement, select the number from the scale above that is closest to your opinion, and write it in the blank column at the end of the statement.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nearly Zero | Very Low | Low | Middle | High | Very High | Near 100% |

| **Questions** | **1 - 7** |
|---|---|
| My level of confidence that my supervisor (coach) is technically competent at the critical elements of his or her job is | |
| My level of confidence that my supervisor (coach) will make well-thought-out decisions about his or her job is | |
| My level of confidence that my supervisor (coach) will follow through on assignments is | |

| | |
|---|---|
| My level of confidence that my supervisor (coach) has an acceptable level of understanding of his or her job is | |
| My level of confidence that my supervisor (coach) will be able to do his or her job in an acceptable manner is | |
| When my supervisor (coach) tells me something, my level of confidence that I can rely on what he or she tells me is | |
| My confidence in my supervisor (coach) to do the job without causing other problems is | |
| My level of confidence that my supervisor (coach) will think through what he or she is doing on the job is | |
| **Each of the following statements refers to your department** | |
| My level of confidence that this organization will treat me fairly is | |
| The level of trust among supervisors and workers in this organization is | |
| The level of trust among the people I work with on a regular basis is | |
| The degree to which we can depend on each other in this organization is | |

## Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?
- If you could wave your magic wand and create a learning organization what would you do?

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Chapter 9

# The Coach

# The Coach

This chapter provides detailed information regarding *who* coaches and coaching modalities and boundaries.

## Internal vs. External Coach

Organizations implementing a considerable amount of coaching may find it cost-effective to dedicate internal staff to the role of coach and to use external coaches in only specific situations.

Apart from considering cost and resource issues, there are some specific situations where either internal or external coaches may be preferable. Hall, Otazo, and Hollenbeck (1999) suggest the use of internal coaches when a quick intervention is needed and detailed knowledge of the corporate culture is critical. In contrast, external coaches may be more appropriate when highly sensitive or confidential issues must be addressed or when a coach with extensive and diverse experience is needed.

### External coaches are preferable when

- providing sensitive feedback to senior agency leaders (for political reasons, this can be difficult for an internal coach);
- specialized expertise from a wide variety of organizational and programmatic experiences is necessary;

- individuals are concerned about conflict of interests, objectivity, or confidentiality; and
- fresh ideas or options are desired.

### Internal coaches are preferable when:

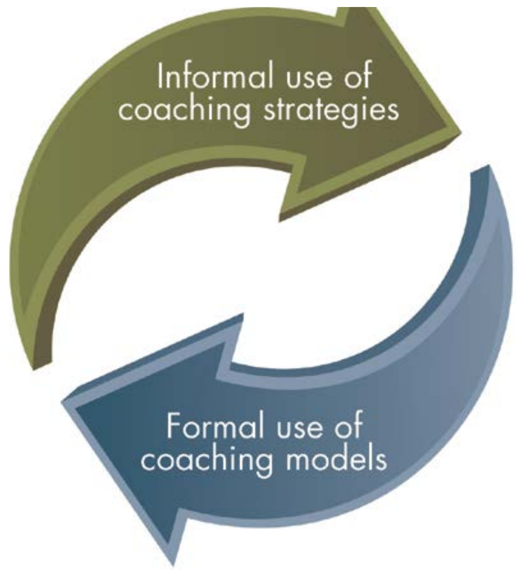
- knowing the company culture, history, and politics is critical;
- easy availability is desired; and
- the expense of an external coach is prohibitive (internal coaches may be less expensive).

## Supervisor as Coach

For the purpose of comparison in coaching, supervision will be defined as “oversight of a person or group of individuals engaged in an activity or task and the responsibility of ensuring that the task(s) are carried out accurately and appropriately.” This includes performance appraisals, quality control and evaluations, and coaching for improved performance. In child welfare, the role of the supervisor expands to include a multitude of tasks to be completed at demanding standards in a fast-paced work climate.

Organizations may wish to use supervisors, particularly child welfare supervisors, as coaches for social workers. This section will describe how to integrate a coaching-based supervision or management *style*. Many of the skills described in this toolkit can be integrated easily into supervisors' skills and repertoire to enhance the quality of supervision provided to staff; in fact, used together, coaching and supervision can create a *coaching-based supervision or management style*. Supervisors often employ coaching strategies and techniques as part of their normal tasks and this may result in the supervisor entering into more formalized coaching. We refer to this as the "Dance of Coaching" (see Figure 9.1).

Figure 9.1. Supervisor's Dance of coaching




Supervisors can effectively integrate coaching strategies (such as reflective questioning) or feedback into their daily routine. For example, a supervisor may ask a social worker reflective questions in order to discuss a case involving a biological mother who is struggling with alcohol issues and has recently relapsed after three months of sobriety. Instead of providing recommendations or feedback, the supervisor works with the social worker to reflect on the case.

The check, the key and the axe have no place here [in the coaching relationship between manager/supervisor and staff] as they can serve only to inhibit such a relationship.

~ Whitmore, 2009, Chap. 2, Paragraph. 1

Supervisors and managers can help staff, through coaching and support, succeed in learning new tasks and taking on new responsibilities. John Whitmore (2009) makes a persuasive argument for supervisors or managers providing coaching to direct reports, but notes that coaching "demands the highest qualities of that manager: empathy, integrity, and detachment, as well as a willingness, in most cases, to adopt a fundamentally different approach to staff" (Chapter 2, paragraph 2).

Whitmore furthers describes that coaching is most successful when the desired outcome is *(a) quality of the work product or (b) learning a new skill.* If the desired outcome is *timeliness*, sometimes the supervisor or manager will find it most appropriate to delegate or simply do the task themselves.

Many child welfare organizations share the same lament, they have attempted to implement several different programs and practices and have not witnessed success or real change. As described in Chapter 7: Implementation, real change takes time.

However, with the assistance of managers and supervisors serving as coaches, learning may be more authentic and results achieved more quickly.

### Example: Preparing supervisors to coach

A child welfare organization recently implemented ice-breakers. Supervisors were engaged early in the implementation process. It was important for supervisors to have the proficient skills in ice-breakers as they were to assist staff in their respective use of the skill. Supervisors used the child welfare skills-based coaching model, providing significant opportunities for new learners to observe them facilitating ice-breakers. Learners were asked to facilitate ice-breakers with supervisors present, demonstrating their use of new skills. Ample time was spent allowing for reflection and feedback. Importantly, supervisors ensured the learning process was supportive and non-punitive.

Supervisors can also implement a more formalized coaching model, such as the CLEAR model or the child welfare skills-based coaching model.

As supervisors move from employing the strategies as part of everyday normal supervision to using a formalized, purposeful coaching method, they must take special steps to ensure coaching success. The supervisor must

- understand the impacts of voluntary vs. mandatory coaching;
- understand the potential consequences to staff;

- understand the current level of trust between the staff and supervisor;
- empathize with staff regarding their likely concerns about performing new tasks in front of the supervisor; and
- become well skilled at the task of enrollment — address learners' resistance to engage in a new program they may not want to use.

When supervisors formally coach, there appears to be a natural fear and defensive response on the part of the learner, preventing the coaching process from becoming a full learning experience (Gallacher, 1997). Many researchers argue the need to separate *formalized* coaching from supervision — especially if coaching is to be accepted by the learner (e.g., Hargreaves & Dawes, 1990; Gallacher, 1997). As such, it is imperative to acknowledge the differences between supervision and coaching and know how to adjust as needed. When using formal coaching models or strategies, supervisors must do the following:

1) *Build trust.* The coaching environment should be a place where staff can take risks without fear of mistakes being noted in performance evaluations or disciplinary actions.

2) *Set clear boundaries.* It is essential that supervisors formally acknowledge when they are coaching and how performance concerns will be addressed. Lines can easily blur between supervisor and coach, creating a multitude of potential boundary issues. Supervisors must clearly articulate to individuals when they are coaching and when they are

supervising or evaluating the staff member so the supervisor's behavior is congruent with the role he or she is performing (Garmston, 1987).

> *"Supervisors influence virtually everything in child welfare. They affect how policies are followed and what practices are encouraged. They set the tone and expectations in the work environment to such an extent that they are sometimes called the 'keepers of the culture' for their agencies. They influence employee turnover (or lack thereof) more than any other factor… How well supervisors do their jobs affects nearly every outcome the child welfare systems seeks, including the timeliness with which we respond to reports of child maltreatment, the well-being of children in foster care, and the rate at which children are reunified with their parents."*
>
> *North Carolina Division of Social Services and the Family and Children's Resource Program, 2008, p. 1*

### Summary benefits and challenges of supervisors as coaches

*Benefits of supervisors:*

- are already aware of the strengths and challenges of the learner;

- will consider the long-term goals of the organization when developing goals;
- work within close proximity, providing easy access to one another for coaching to occur;
- create a less "directive" supervisory relationship and more of a partnership;
- use coaching as a vehicle for team building;
- can easily maintain coaching on a long-term basis; and
- can contribute to the sustainability of practice.

### *Challenges supervisors may face*

- supervisors may not have expertise in the skills being coached or may not fully support the new practice being implemented; and
- learners may fear taking risks, making mistakes, and maintaining confidentiality.

# Assessing Supervisory Coaching Skills

This section provides two tools to help supervisors determine whether or not they are confident in their coaching skills and able to juggle the roles of coach and supervisor.

1. *Supervisory coaching skills assessment* (North Carolina Division of Social Services and the Family and Children's Resource Program).
2. *Job responsibility data collection table* (The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning & The National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement)

## Supervisory coaching skills assessment

This instrument was designed to provide supervisors with a vehicle to assess their effectiveness as a coach and identify specific areas to improve upon. This tool is simplistic in nature, providing supervisors with ideas or starting points on which to focus in improving coaching skills.

### Instructions

Review all responses. Responses of “strongly agree” and “agree” probably indicate areas of strength. Responses of “strongly disagree” or “disagree” probably indicate areas that need improvement.

For each statement below, enter the corresponding number that best describes you.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |

| | Scale of 1-4 |
|---|---|
| 1. I am always on the lookout for ways to help staff apply new knowledge or skills. | |
| 2. I set aside ample time to support my staff. | |
| 3. I often ask staff questions that are open and reflective. | |
| 4. I understand the learning needs of each individual staff member. | |
| 5. I am aware of employees' individual learning styles and use this information when we meet to discuss their practices. | |
| 6. The people I supervise trust me and feel they can talk to me. | |
| 7. I listen actively and attentively and am highly aware of my employees' progress. | |
| 8. I constructively challenge other people's views in a way that helps them learn. | |
| 9. The feedback I give is always balanced, based on something I have observed — objective, specific, timely, and constructive. | |
| 10. I see the successes of my staff as opportunities to praise and celebrate them, reinforce their learning, and encourage their professional development. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 11. I am a good delegator. | |
| 12. I spend enough time planning for the future development of my staff. | |

## Job responsibility data collection table

This tool should be completed by supervisors and allows for their subjective thoughts on the importance of the variety of job responsibilities they have. The tool will help "to identify current organizational obstacles and supports to effective supervision as well as the needs of supervisors and others (e.g., caseworkers, administrators) who interact regularly with them and rely on supervisors for their own job performance" (National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning & National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, 2009, p. 27).

### Instructions

Supervisors should read each statement and enter the corresponding number (1-4) in each column and share the reason why. Also, describe the obstacles and supports for successfully achieving that respective responsibility.

To analyze results, simply compare the importance rating for each responsibility, and consider commonalities described in the obstacles or supports reported by supervisors. The information yielded from this tool can be used to identify priorities in professional development or how organizations can support supervisors to achieving success.

When reading through the below list, consider if each item is:

| **Most important to you (and reasons)** | **Important to you** | **Not important to you (and reasons)** | **Not applicable/ Not aware** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |

| | **Scale of 1 – 4 and *why* you wrote this number** | **Describe the obstacles to achieving this responsibility** | **Describe the supports you receive for achieving this responsibility** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Recruit, select, train, or arrange for training and retain staff. | | | |
| 2. Identify, manage, and evaluate front-line practitioners' performance. | | | |
| 3. Facilitate communication and collaboration. | | | |
| 4. Build and maintain working | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| relationships with other units in agency. | | | |
| 5. Manage caseloads in the supervisor's unit | | | |
| 6. Manage time and work flow for supervisor. | | | |
| 7. Monitor front-line practitioner's responsibilities to supervisor. | | | |
| 8. Provide leadership to unit. | | | |
| 9. Provide leadership within the organization. | | | |
| 10. Anticipate, address, and manage change within the unit. | | | |
| 11. Interpret and influence the organizational culture within the unit. | | | |
| 12. Manage time and work flow for supervisees. | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 13. Provide leadership within the community. | | | |
| 14. Influence the agency. | | | |
| 15. Anticipate, address, and manage change within agency. | | | |
| 16. Use management information systems (MIS). | | | |
| 17. Provide regular case reviews and staffing. | | | |
| 18. Address ethics in caseworker practice and model professional ethics. | | | |
| 19. Address ethics in supervision. | | | |
| 20. Assure ongoing professional development for supervisor. | | | |
| 21. Develop and monitor front-line practitioners' family-centered practice | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| competence. | | | |
| 22. Promote practitioners self-reflection, critical thinking, and case decision making. | | | |
| 23. Demonstrate culturally-competent supervision, and develop and monitor practitioners' cultural competence. | | | |
| 24. Facilitate ongoing professional development for front-line practitioners. | | | |
| 25. Promote evidence-informed practice. | | | |
| 26. Help front-line practitioners apply new knowledge from training and workshops in their day-to-day practice. | | | |
| 27. Monitor and provide | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| resources to assist front-line practitioners in applying knowledge of child development. | | | |
| 28. Prevent and address stress, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout for supervisor. | | | |
| 29. Anticipate issues related to safety, and managing risk. | | | |
| 30. Prevent and address stress, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout for front-line practitioners. | | | |
| 31. Build and maintain morale, and enhance front-line practitioners' job satisfaction. | | | |

## Peers as Coaches

Research regarding peer coaching has been driven by the field of teacher education, primarily public schools K-12. One of the most significant benefits of peer coaching cited in research is the support teachers can provide each other (Joyce, & Showers, 1996). This helps to lessen the feelings of isolation inherent in education where one teacher is assigned one classroom without time to discuss and share skills and strategies with colleagues. This peer sharing — also referred to as collegial relationships — is invaluable.

Peer coaching, where both coach and learner actively seek to enhance performance in the same skill or technique, provides a greater degree of mutual benefit than other forms of coaching. While one person may be more proficient in a particular skill or technique than the other, they both use the skill or technique and are both interested in improving their own unique practice. Some suggest that when using peer coaching, titles other than *coach* and *learner* be used to reflect the combined relationship (Joyce & Showers, 1996).

Peer coaching typically uses a model of planning, observation (by both parties), and follow-up. (For details on coaching models, see Chapter 6.) Feedback needs to be communicated very cautiously between peers; evaluation, judgment, or criticism can be detrimental to trust and can undermine the collegial relationship. Showers and Joyce (1996) recommend not using feedback techniques in peer coaching. Some experts in coaching suggest the mutual observation and follow-up discussion (known as reflection) does not require each person to provide the other with feedback on their performance.

### Example: Benefits of peer coaching

An agency is rolling out a major new initiative — family team meetings — for all social workers to learn. Organization leaders researched implementation, and after some initial introductory trainings selected the early adopters (see "Change Agents" in Chapter 7) to first receive formal classroom training. Early adopters were paired with external coaches who both demonstrated the skill and then observed the social worker using the skill.

When the social worker began demonstrating proficient skill, the agency offered formal training to other staff members. The experienced social workers began coaching the newly trained staff, first by having the new learner observe them demonstrating the practice. The shared learning experience between the early adopter and peers was beneficial to both learners. The organization chose not to mandate training or coaching, instead relied on the early adopters and the early majority to lead the implementation through their positive experiences in the coaching process.

## Group Coaching

Britton (2010) defines group coaching as “a small-group process throughout which there is the application of coaching principles for the purposes of personal or professional development, the achievement of goals, or greater self-awareness, along thematic or non-thematic lines” (Chapter 1, location 234). Cockerman adds, “a group coach creates an environment of confidentiality and trust where group members are open to being coached” (as cited in Britton, 2009, Chapter 1, location 726). Group coaching differs from that of training in that it is a facilitated group process, which relies heavily on core coaching skills and competencies (Britton, 2009). To ensure the group process maintains the integrity of coaching, group coaches must synthesize group facilitation skills with those of coaching, including mastery abilities, and knowledge of models and approaches. Coaches must make the best of small group discussions, reflective exercises and action planning.

A difficult aspect of group coaching is ensuring that the groups drive the coaching agenda; setting goals and learning objectives. When engaging in group coaching coaches must make sure learners progress with learning outside of the coaching sessions, through assignments for observing or demonstrating new skills.

Importantly, coaches who engage in group coaching must

- Create safety and confidentiality
- Set ground rules or ways of working

- Talk about confidentiality
- Provide participants with the opportunity to get to know each other. (Britton, 2009).

## Online Coaching

Technological tools make long-distance coaching a viable option. Online coaching, also known as e-mentoring or telementoring, allows coaches and learners to meet via the use of technology such as the internet, webinars, Skype, and/or video conferencing. Some programs arrange two or three face-to-face meetings, including one that acts as a kickoff event. Often the coach serves as a guide or adviser in practice-specific areas, such as helping learners complete a project or discussing specifics about an interaction with a client or family. Coaching through technology is especially useful for rural communities or when content experts live in communities removed from participating programs. An additional benefit of online coaching is the ability to effectively meet the development needs of child welfare professionals in a cost-effective manner.

## Coaches, Mentors, and Counselors

Formal coaching strategies have some similarities to different counseling styles and professional mentoring programs. Understanding the differences in these strategies will help the agency avoid coaching pitfalls, such as coaches who step outside the role of coaching and into the realm of counseling. All parties engaged in coaching need to understand these distinctions and boundaries prior to embarking on the coaching process (see Table 9.1).

## Mentors

*Mentoring* may be defined as a caring and supportive interpersonal relationship between an experienced, more knowledgeable practitioner (mentor) and a less experienced, less knowledgeable individual (learner) in which the learner receives career-related and personal benefits (Henry, Stockdale, Hall, and Deniston, 1994).

Mentoring facilitates the transfer of knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, and values between an experienced and a less experienced practitioner. The essence of the relationship is that the experienced practitioner takes a direct and personal interest in the education and development of the younger or less experienced individual (Gallacher, 1997).

## Counselors

*Counseling* is defined as a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals (The American Counseling Association, http://www.counseling.org/).

Generally, counseling focuses on feelings in a therapeutic manner to understand dysfunction and emotional trauma and most often to resolve past issues.

***Table 9.1.*** Comparison of Coaching, Counseling and Mentoring (Mink, Owen & Mink, 1993)

| Strategy | Time-Frame | Purpose | Focus | Objectives |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coaching | Short to inter-mediate | Job-related learning | Learning and/or development for current or future job. | Helping improve or transform individual, team, or agency performance through learning. |
| Counseling | Varies; typically short-term | Remedy motivational or attitude problems. | Remedial or development al; any area of person's life space | Active listening; exploring feelings and ideas; breaking frames of reference; and examining values, goals, and variables that creates unsatisfactory or satisfactory personal outcomes. |
| Mentoring | Mainly long term | Career, family role, and current performance that is future related | Typically development al; often covers all life structures – current and future. | Creating career opportunities; encouraging extensive programs of development – degree programs, certification, and professional licensing; and fostering and supporting career decisions. |

# Coaching Skills Assessment

To help both new and experienced coaches assess their skill level of coaching two tools are provided.

- *Coaching Practices Rating Scale (Rush &Sheldon, 2006).* This tool was developed to assess practitioner use of and adherence to evidence-based coaching practices in early childhood intervention (Rush & Sheldon, 2006). The tool is typically filled out by an observer, someone who is watching a coaching session occur, either in real time or taped. However, this tool can also be completed as a self-assessment for coaches interested in improving their skills.
- Coaching skills assessment (North Carolina Division of Social Services and the Family and Children's Resource Program, 2008). This is a self-assessment; coaches are encouraged to complete this scale on their own

## Coaching Practices Rating Scale

This scale is completed by an observer. When completing the scale:

- Review the items on the form and consider the opportunities provided for the practice to occur and the frequency with which the coach actually demonstrated the practice.
- Note on a separate piece of paper the specific circumstances regarding when and how the practices were used.

- Identify missed opportunities for using the practices, for example (a) consider reasons why practices could not be assessed and (b) identify areas for improvement.
- Develop a plan for improvement regarding the interaction(s) documented on the scale.

| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| None of the time | Some of the time | About half of the time | Most of the time | All of the time |
| | | | | |

| **Think about the coaching conversation for the period covered. For each practice indicator, specify if the practice was used and, if so, how often.** | **Check this box if there was no opportunity to measure the respective item** | **Scale of 1 – 5** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Acknowledged the [learner's] existing knowledge, skill, and ability as the foundation for improvement. | | |
| 2. Interacted with the [learner] in a nonjudgmental and constructive manner during coaching conversations. | | |
| 3. Identified with the [learner's] targeted skills he or she wanted to learn and a timeline for the coaching process. | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4. Developed with the [learner] a plan for action or practice necessary to achieve targeted skill(s) following each coaching conversation. | | |
| 5. Observed the [learner] demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the targeted skill(s) or practice(s). | | |
| 6. Observed the [learner] use of the targeted skill(s) or practice(s). | | |
| 7. Created opportunities for the [learner] to observe [you] the coach and or others modeling the targeted skill(s) or practice(s). | | |
| 8. Promoted use of multiple opportunities for the [learner] to practice implementation of the targeted skill(s) or practice(s). | | |
| 9. Used both planned and spontaneous opportunities to strengthen the [learner's] knowledge, skills and abilities. | | |
| 10. Asked probing questions to examine the [learner's] knowledge, skills and abilities. | | |
| 11. Prompted [learner] to reflect on his or her knowledge and use of the targeted skill(s) and practice(s) | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| compared with research-based practice standards. | | |
| 12. Provided feedback about the [learner's] knowledge and skills following [facilitated self-] reflection on his or her performance. | | |
| 13. Provided and/or promoted access to new information and resources after the [learner] reflected on his or her performance | | |
| 14. Engaged the [learner] in reflection on the usefulness, effectiveness, and need for continuation of coaching. | | |

## Coaching Skills Assessment

The following tool was created by the North Carolina Division of Social Services and the Family and Children's Resource Program (2008) as a way to assess coaching skills. This is a self-assessment; simply answer the questions the way *others* would answer if they were describing you. Enter the number that applies to each statement. After completing the survey consider which skills may have the greatest room for improvement.

| Almost Never | Not Very Often | Sometimes | Often | Almost Always |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| How often do you make a conscious effort to: | Scale 1 - 5 |
|---|---|
| 1. Trust other people's competence? | |
| 2. Encourage others to believe they can accomplish their goals? | |
| 3. Help people consider the impact of their actions on others? | |
| 4. Help others envision what's possible? | |
| 5. Help others solve problems for themselves? | |
| 6. Encourage others to implement their decisions and | |

| | |
|---|---|
| solutions? | |
| 7. Place a value on learning and on the ability to analyze and solve problems? | |
| 8. Encourage people to collaborate and cooperate with others? | |
| 9. Help people see the link between individual and organizational goals? | |
| 10. Listen to people's ideas openly and without judgment? | |
| 11. Encourage others to experiment with new ways of doing things? | |
| 12. Acknowledge individual contributions to the group's success? | |
| 13. Help people evaluate their own skills, knowledge, performance, and behavior? | |
| 14. Help others question and rethink their assumptions? | |

# Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something that you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?
- How ready do you feel you are to receive coaching?
- How ready do you feel to become a coach?
- How can you use the readiness tools in this chapter in your own organization? With your staff? With your co-workers? With the learners you coach?
- If you could wave your magic wand and create an organization that has a safe and authentic learning environment how would it look? What would you do differently than you do now?

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Chapter 10

# Continuous Quality Improvement and Evaluation

# Continuous Quality Improvement

Evaluation is most simply defined as the "systematic investigation of merit or worth" (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994, p. 3). The dominant question is typically whether the program is achieving the intended results. *Is the coaching actually fulfilling its purposes?*

The idea of evaluation is to collect and integrate multiple sources of data with the intent of obtaining the larger picture of effectiveness and intended outcomes rather than what can be obtained from only one source of information (Lawrenz & Huffman, 2002). To evaluate the impact of coaching, appropriate data sources should include case studies, semi-structured interviews, surveys, observation of skills and practice and, ultimately, client outcomes. As stated by both Guskey (1998) and Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2006), while evaluation cannot affirmatively establish causation it does provide evidence of program effectiveness.

If you want to bring about a fundamental change in people's belief and behavior, a change that will persist and serve as an example to others, you need to create a community around them, where those new beliefs can be practiced and expressed and nurtured.
~ Gladwell, 2000, p. 173

## Why Evaluate

In order to know what differentiates effective coaching from ineffective coaching, it helps to

- determine the effectiveness of social work practices and services in meeting the needs of the clients;
- demonstrate the costs and benefits of these services;
- advance the professional learning of the social work field; and
- identify the needs and resources of both learners and clients.

As stated by Sheldon (2007, as cited in Grant & Cavanagh, 2007): "the single most important thing for coaching…is the necessity of collecting rigorous empirical evidence…. This may be the only thing that separates the field from earlier humanistic psychology and from current non-validated self-help books, while also dealing with difficult scientific issues concerning demand effects, placebo effects and just plain wishful thinking. Coaching…is especially vulnerable to these problems because of the commercial and money-making possibilities it presents" (2007, p. 242).

It is also important to acknowledge that the success of coaching for ultimate outcomes, such as increasing children's safety, may not surface for years, and while it will not help everyone; it can have a significant impact in helping enough people to make a difference in the life of another.

### Essential aspects of an evaluation

Five characteristics of professional development are critical to examine when increasing practitioner knowledge and skills and improving practice (Desimone, 2009): (a) content focus, (b) active learning, (c) coherence, (d) duration, and (e) collective participation.

It is also important to assess the "coachability" of the learner, which begins with an awareness of where he or she is at the beginning of the coaching process. The learner's perception of the value of the process and perceived outcomes of the coaching, the level of the learner's fear, and the strength of competing commitments provide this context.

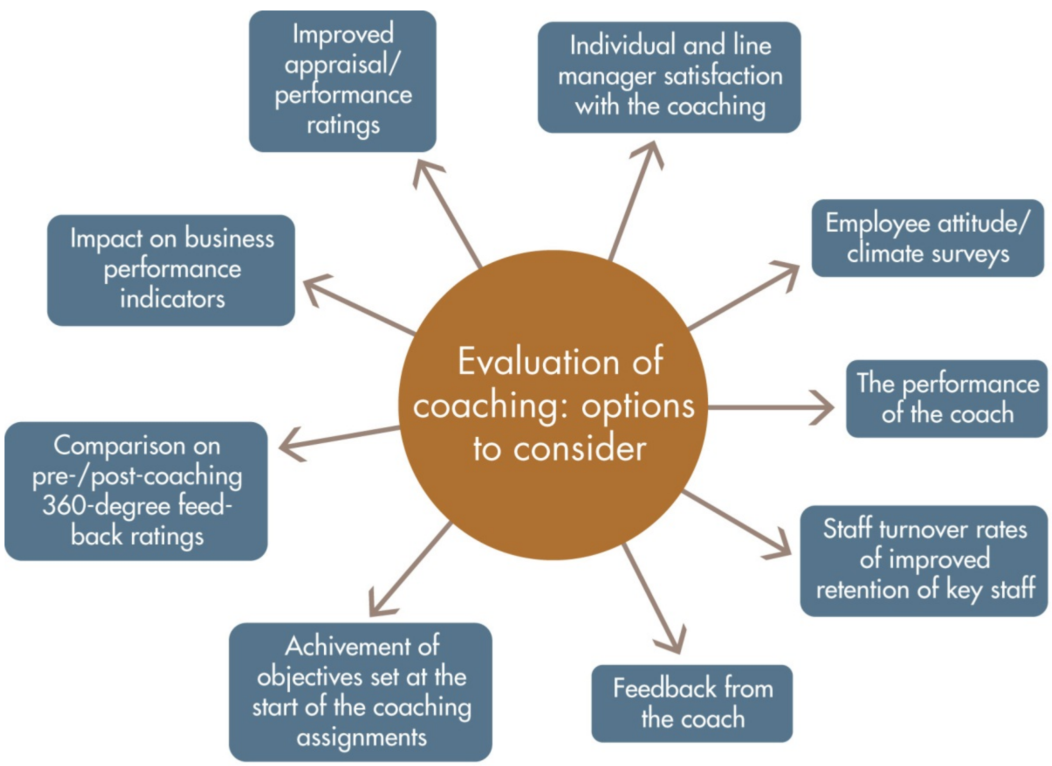
## Designing an Evaluation

The following are some helpful questions to consider when designing an evaluation:

- What will be different as a result of the coaching?
- How will coaching improve performance?

Most empirical literature comprises survey-based or contextual methods that examine the characteristics of coaches and learners and the delivery of coaching — rather than outcome research that examines the effectiveness of coaching leading to practitioner or agency change (for a review, see Grant, 2010). However, a body of research exists that provides some evidence that coaching improves practitioner practices and, in some cases, leads to improved client outcomes (see Figure 10.1).

Figure 10.1. Evaluating Coaching Effectiveness




Jarvis, J. (2004)

## Measures and instruments to consider for an evaluation of coaching in child welfare

Agency leadership can choose and implement particular measures and strategies to determine the effectiveness of coaching. Each measure should be examined to identify how it relates to the modality of coaching, the purpose of the coaching, and the expected outcomes.

*Multi-factor leadership questionnaire* (Bass & Avolio, 1990) has demonstrated the validity in assessing changes in leadership style. This tool would be good to use when coaching occurs internally with managers or supervisors.

*Organizational trust inventory (OTI)* (Cummings & Bromily, 1996) asks whether people in the organization behave in accordance with commitments, are honest in the negotiations leading to the commitment, and do not try to take advantage of others, even if the opportunity is available.

*Application potential of professional learning inventory (APPLI 33) — a shortened version of the transfer potential questionnaire (TPQ) —* (Curry, Lawler, & Donnenwirth, in development) assesses the learner's potential to transfer what is learned into actual on-the-job practice by asking questions about individual and organizational factors related to the transfer of learning.

*The CHOICES ARCHITECT®* (Lominger, 2009) is a research-based 360° tool designed to measure learning agility. This method collects information from both learners and managers before and after coaching.

*Depression, anxiety and stress scale* (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) examines characteristics of the learner that may influence or modify the effectiveness of coaching.

*Return on Investment (ROI)* (Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001) is dependent on the amount charged by the coach, the total costs of the coaching intervention, and the financial benefit obtained.

*Case-based approaches, such as social-network analysis,* involves (a) having different partners or members of the agency conduct interviews with each member and (b) rating those whom they perceive to be energizing or de-energizing by using a simple 1-5 rating scale. Such an approach can determine whether the coaching intervention is related to increased levels of positive energy (Cross, Baker, & Parker, 2003).

## Context

One of the less tangible—but crucial—aspects of planning a major change in practice is paying attention to the overall context of the work. Increasingly, coaching approaches in child welfare are being used to support staff retention and the implementation of programs and initiatives. The following are some examples:

- Existence of core family-centered values and principles.

- Practice framework is consistent with those core values and principles.
- Administrative and funding supports for practice framework and core values and principles.

## Pause and Reflect

- What is one new thing you learned in this chapter?
- What is one thing you read about in this chapter that validated something that you already know or value or that you already use in your daily practice?
- What excited you most about reading this chapter?

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Chapter 11

# Considerastions of Coaching

Ethics

Liability

Creating Agreements

Pause and Reflect

References

# Considerations of Coaching

Coaching child welfare professionals requires an understanding of both ethical codes of conduct and issues surrounding personal and organizational liability.

> **Ethics**, eth·ics, (plural noun): the rules of conduct recognized in respect to a particular class of human actions or a particular group, culture, etc. (Dictionary.com, retrieved from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ethics)
>
> **Liable**, li·a·ble, (adj.): legally obliged or responsible; answerable. (Dictionary.com, retrieved from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/liable)

## Ethics

Coaches must be mindful of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics as they provide ethical standards to assure the integrity of the work being done with the agency, the learner, and the families being served. The NASW code of ethics builds integrity by providing guidelines for working with clients and privileged or confidential information. In the field of coaching, the International Coach Federation (ICF) and the Association for

Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS) provide similar guidance on boundaries and ethical decision making.

Although both professions have separate ethical standards, there are significant similarities between them (see Appendix A, B and C).

## Key Shared Themes of Codes of Ethics

The NASW, ICF, and APECS Codes of Ethics share the following key themes:

- Maintaining conduct in accordance with professional standards and levels of competence (macroscopically).
- Maintaining professional conduct and abiding by ethical responsibilities (microscopically).
- Avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Maintaining confidentiality and privacy.
- Considering ethical issues in evaluation.

Prior to beginning the coaching, it is recommended to review standard reporting laws with the learner. This includes the mandated reporting laws (PC 11166) to report any suspected child abuse and neglect to the appropriate agency or jurisdiction. Further, in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics, the coach will maintain confidentiality except "when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person".

Coaches working within the child welfare agency often have the unique perspective of observing the agency functioning as a whole while simultaneously working with individuals at the practice level. In this position, the coach may encounter ethical dilemmas, for example, unsafe decision making for children that requires attention, either at a systemic and/or individual level. Unaddressed, this presents the coach with potential pitfalls from both sides; calling attention to problems with individual learners might damage the coaching relationship or identifying a systemic problem may be viewed unfavorably by the agency. Further, with some coaches uncertain of their footing, the issue may go wholly unaddressed, potentially exposing the organization and the individuals involved, coach included, to a higher risk of liability. Therefore, the coach, agency, and learner must have an agreement of how each participant is to handle and address such dilemmas.

> I will have a clear agreement upon how coaching information will be exchanged among coach, client (learner) and sponsor (agency).
> ~ ICF Code of Ethics

## Liability

This toolkit cannot provide conclusive information about the liability of coaching in the child welfare organization; liability laws, reporting requirements, professional privilege, and agency policies vary by jurisdiction. It will be necessary for the organization or coach to review policy regarding liability and the consent process, particularly for those times when the coach will be observing the learner with clients or when the coach may be in a situation to interact directly with clients.

Internal coaches generally enjoy a higher degree of protection and a greater level of permissible sharing because they are part of the organization. However, confidentiality laws and conflict-screening policies may still require careful attention to information sharing levels within the organization. As coaches should not be involved in making decisions regarding specific cases, the partitioned structure and limits of information sharing must be part of the initial planning when implementing a coaching program.

External coaches present an even more complex situation. As outsiders to the organization, explicit arrangements are required. Formal commitments, memoranda of understanding, and non-disclosure agreements should not be overlooked. Conversations with county counsel and/or risk management staff are strongly encouraged. This will facilitate the development of a contractual agreement with external coaches that allows them to maintain a meaningful depth of communication with the learner while protecting the coach, the families, and the agency from unintended liability. Early engagement with risk management, legal counsel, and/or conflicts specialists is ideal; waiting until a program is nearly complete may require a great deal more work if a fundamental liability issue goes unnoticed.

# Creating Agreements

The following questions have been adapted from the National Staff Development Council (2008) and provide a starting point for creating comprehensive agreements between the child welfare agency and coach.

## Questions for the coach

- How is the learner performing in the field? What is the required action if there are concerns?
- What is the ethical treatment of CWS clients if and when a coach has face-to-face contact with them?
- Is the agency functioning with high ethical standards?
- What will be the proper action if the coach observes unethical conduct by the learner? Supervisor? Management? What about systemic or procedural requirements or barriers that increase the risk of unethical conduct by staff? Or if the coach observes the learner making decisions or taking actions that could place a client at risk of harm?
- What is the appropriate, or legally required, degree of information sharing (that is, as a coach, how involved can and should you be in actual cases)?

## Questions for the learner

- What if there is disagreement between the coach's ethical standards and the learner's?
- What if the coach is requesting or requiring action the learner considers unethical?
- What if the coach requests an action that is considered unethical by the agency?

## Questions for the stakeholder or agency

- How will confidentiality be maintained if ethical issues arise in coaching?
- What is the coach required to disclose to the supervisor or management?
- If there are ethical concerns about the coach, who will address the issue? Management? A supervisor?
- If the coach is external, how will he or she be involved in observing the learner when working with families?

## Pause and Reflect

- Have you encountered any situations in which you were uncomfortable with the ethical or legal possibilities?
- How have you integrated agreements with coaching staff and organizational leadership to clarify legal or ethical guidelines?
- Which code of ethics resonates most with your personal style for coaching?
- Can you think of any other ethical or legal issues not discussed in this chapter which you would like to learn more about?

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Chapter 12

# Final Thoughts and Reflections

# Final Thoughts and Reflections

The *Coaching Toolkit for Child Welfare Practice* is developed to provide guidance in the development and implementation of a formal, professional coaching program within the child welfare context. We have aimed to provide the best, most effective information to the reader, harvested from a wide field of academic literature on coaching. While the methods presented in this toolkit are not necessarily new or surprising, they are integrated in a logical and intuitive way. We hope this toolkit will provide solid, practical information on coaching within child welfare organizations to better support families and obtain positive child outcomes.

## Overall reflections

- Which sections of the Coaching Toolkit are most relevant to your work in child welfare services?
- How will the Toolkit serve to improve your work with either learners or coaches in the child welfare organization?
- If you are implementing a new program within child welfare services, how will you begin to address the need for coaching?

- How have you utilized coaching, either as a leader, learner or coach within child welfare services?
- If you are a manager or supervisor in child welfare services, how will you integrate some of the coaching strategies into your daily practice?

# Appendices

Appendix A:
NASW Code of Ethics

Appendix B:
ICF Code of Ethics

Appendix C:
APECS Code of Ethics

## Appendix A

# National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics

### *Preamble*

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual wellbeing in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

### *Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics*

Professional ethics are at the core of social work. The profession has an obligation to articulate its basic values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. The NASW Code of Ethics sets forth these values, principles, and standards to guide social workers' conduct. The Code is relevant to all social workers and social work students, regardless of their professional functions, the settings in which they work, or the populations they serve.

### *The NASW Code of Ethics serves six purposes:*

(1) The Code identifies core values on which social work's mission is based.

(2) The Code summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes a set of specific ethical standards that should be used to guide social work practice.

(3) The Code is designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise.

(4) The Code provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable.

(5) The Code socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards.

The Code articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical conduct. NASW has formal procedures to adjudicate ethics complaints filed against its members.* In subscribing to this Code, social workers are required to cooperate in its implementation, participate in NASW adjudication proceedings, and abide by any NASW disciplinary rulings or sanctions based on it.

The *Code* offers a set of values, principles, and standards to guide decision making and conduct when ethical issues arise. It does not provide a set of rules that prescribe how social workers should act in all situations. Specific applications of the *Code* must take into account the context in which it is being considered and the possibility of conflicts among the *Code's* values, principles, and standards. Ethical responsibilities flow from all human relationships, from the personal and familial to the social and professional.

Further, the *NASW Code of Ethics* does not specify which values, principles, and standards are most important and ought to outweigh others in instances when they conflict. Reasonable differences of opinion can and do exist among social workers with respect to the ways in which values, ethical principles, and ethical standards should be rank ordered when they conflict. Ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker and should also consider how the issues would be judged in a peer review process where the ethical standards of the profession would be applied.

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many instances in social work where simple answers are not available to resolve complex ethical issues. Social workers should take into consideration all the values, principles, and standards in this *Code* that are relevant to any situation in which ethical judgment is warranted. Social workers' decisions and actions should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of this *Code*.

In addition to this *Code*, there are many other sources of information about ethical thinking that may be useful. Social workers should consider ethical theory and principles generally, social work theory and research, laws, regulations, agency policies, and other relevant codes of ethics, recognizing that among codes of ethics social workers should consider the *NASW Code of Ethics* as their primary source. Social workers also should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients' and their own personal values and cultural and religious beliefs and practices. They should be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibly. For additional guidance social workers should consult the relevant literature on professional ethics and ethical decision making and seek appropriate consultation when faced with ethical dilemmas. This may involve consultation with an agency-based or social work organization's ethics committee, a regulatory body, knowledgeable colleagues, supervisors, or legal counsel.

Instances may arise when social workers' ethical obligations conflict with agency policies or relevant laws or regulations. When such conflicts occur, social workers must make a responsible effort to resolve the conflict in a manner that is consistent with the values, principles, and standards expressed in this Code. If a reasonable resolution of the conflict does not appear possible, social workers should seek proper consultation before making a decision.

The *NASW Code of Ethics* is to be used by NASW and by individuals, agencies, organizations, and bodies (such as licensing and regulatory boards, professional liability insurance providers, courts of law, agency boards of directors, government agencies, and other professional groups) that choose to adopt it or use it as a frame of reference. Violation of standards in this *Code* does not automatically imply legal liability or violation of the law. Such determination can only be made in the context of legal and judicial proceedings. Alleged violations of the *Code* would be subject to a peer review process. Such processes are generally separate from legal or administrative procedures and insulated from legal review or proceedings to allow the profession to counsel and discipline its own members.

A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather, a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. Social workers' ethical behavior should result from their personal commitment to engage in ethical practice. The *NASW Code of Ethics* reflects the commitment of all social workers to uphold the profession's values and to act ethically. Principles and standards must be applied by individuals of good character who discern moral questions and, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments.

### *Ethical Principles*

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work's core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

**Value:** Service

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.
Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

**Value:** Social Justice

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers challenge social injustice.
Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers' social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic

diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

**Value:** Dignity and Worth of the Person

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.
Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients' interests and the broader society's interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

**Value:** Importance of Human Relationships

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.
Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

**Value:** Integrity

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.
Social workers are continually aware of the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

**Value:** Competence

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.
Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

**Ethical Standards**

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society.

Some of the standards that follow are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

## 1. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO CLIENTS

### 1.01 Commitment to Clients

Social workers' primary responsibility is to promote the wellbeing of clients. In general, clients' interests are primary. However, social workers' responsibility to the larger society or specific legal obligations may on limited occasions supersede the loyalty owed clients, and clients should be so advised. (Examples include when a social worker is required by law to report that a client has abused a child or has threatened to harm self or others.)

### 1.02 Self-Determination

Social workers respect and promote the right of clients to self-determination and assist clients in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals. Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination when, in the social workers' professional judgment, clients' actions or potential actions pose a serious, foreseeable, and imminent risk to themselves or others.

### 1.03 Informed Consent

(a) Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of a professional relationship based, when appropriate, on valid informed consent. Social workers should use clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services because of the requirements of a third party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent. Social workers should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions.

(b) In instances when clients are not literate or have difficulty understanding the primary language used in the practice setting, social workers should take steps to ensure clients' comprehension. This may include providing clients with a detailed verbal explanation or arranging for a qualified interpreter or translator whenever possible.

(c) In instances when clients lack the capacity to provide informed consent, social workers should protect clients' interests by seeking permission from an appropriate third party, informing clients consistent with the clients' level of understanding. In such instances social workers should seek to ensure that the third party acts in a manner consistent with clients' wishes and interests. Social workers should take reasonable steps to enhance such clients' ability to give informed consent.

(d) In instances when clients are receiving services involuntarily, social workers should provide information about the nature and extent of services and about the extent of clients' right to refuse service.

(e) Social workers who provide services via electronic media (such as computer, telephone, radio, and television) should inform recipients of the limitations and risks associated with such services.

(f) Social workers should obtain clients' informed consent before audiotaping or videotaping clients or permitting observation of services to clients by a third party.

**1.04 Competence**

(a) Social workers should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience, or other relevant professional experience.

(b) Social workers should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques or approaches that are new to them only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation, and supervision from people who are competent in those interventions or techniques.

(c) When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, social workers should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.

**1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity**

(a) Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures.

(b) Social workers should have a knowledge base of their clients' cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.

(c) Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.

**1.06 Conflicts of Interest**

(a) Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client.

(b) Social workers should not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

(c) Social workers should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with clients or former clients in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. In instances when dual or multiple relationships are unavoidable, social workers should take steps to protect clients and are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries. (Dual or multiple relationships occur when social workers relate to clients in more than one relationship, whether professional, social, or business. Dual or multiple relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.)

(d) When social workers provide services to two or more people who have a relationship with each other (for example, couples, family members), social workers should clarify with all parties which individuals will be considered clients and the nature of social workers' professional obligations to the various individuals who are receiving services. Social workers who anticipate a conflict of interest among the individuals receiving services or who anticipate having to perform in potentially conflicting roles (for example, when a social worker is asked to testify in a child custody dispute or divorce proceedings involving clients) should clarify their role with the parties involved and take appropriate action to minimize any conflict of interest.

**1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality**

(a) Social workers should respect clients' right to privacy. Social workers should not solicit private information from clients unless it is essential to providing services or conducting social work evaluation or research. Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply.

(b) Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of a client.

(c) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons. The general expectation that social workers will keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to a client or other identifiable person. In all instances, social workers should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose; only information that is directly relevant to the purpose for which the disclosure is made should be revealed.

(d) Social workers should inform clients, to the extent possible, about the disclosure of confidential information and the potential consequences, when feasible before the disclosure is made. This applies whether social workers disclose confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or client consent.

(e) Social workers should discuss with clients and other interested parties the nature of confidentiality and limitations of clients' right to confidentiality. Social workers should review with clients circumstances where confidential information may be requested and where disclosure of confidential information may be legally required. This discussion should occur as soon as possible in the social worker/client relationship and as needed throughout the course of the relationship.

(f) When social workers provide counseling services to families, couples, or groups, social workers should seek agreement among the parties involved concerning each individual's right to confidentiality and obligation to preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others. Social workers should inform participants in family, couples, or group counseling that social workers cannot guarantee that all participants will honor such agreements.

(g) Social workers should inform clients involved in family, couples, marital, or group counseling of the social worker's, employer's, and agency's policy concerning the social worker's disclosure of confidential information among the parties involved in the counseling.

(h) Social workers should not disclose confidential information to third party payers unless clients have authorized such disclosure.

(i) Social workers should not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be ensured. Social workers should not discuss confidential information in public or semipublic areas such as hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, and restaurants.

(j) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients during legal proceedings to the extent permitted by law. When a court of law or other legally authorized body orders social workers to disclose confidential or privileged information without a client's consent and such disclosure could cause harm to the client, social workers should request that the court withdraw the order or limit the order as narrowly as possible or maintain the records under seal, unavailable for public inspection.

(k) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients when responding to requests from members of the media.

(l) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of clients' written and electronic records and other sensitive information. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients' records are stored in a secure location and that clients' records are not available to others who are not authorized to have access.

(m) Social workers should take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information transmitted to other parties through the use of computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, telephones and telephone answering machines, and other electronic or computer technology. Disclosure of identifying information should be avoided whenever possible.

(n) Social workers should transfer or dispose of clients' records in a manner that protects clients' confidentiality and is consistent with state statutes governing records and social work licensure.

(o) Social workers should take reasonable precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the social worker's termination of practice, incapacitation, or death.

(p) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients for teaching or training purposes unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information.

(q) Social workers should not disclose identifying information when discussing clients with consultants unless the client has consented to disclosure of confidential information or there is a compelling need for such disclosure.

(r) Social workers should protect the confidentiality of deceased clients consistent with the preceding standards.

**1.08 Access to Records**

(a) Social workers should provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning the clients. Social workers who are concerned that clients' access to their records could cause serious misunderstanding or harm to the client should provide assistance in interpreting the records and consultation with the client regarding the records. Social workers should limit clients' access to their records, or portions of their records, only in exceptional circumstances when there is compelling evidence that such access would cause serious harm to the client. Both clients' requests and the rationale for withholding some or all of the record should be documented in clients' files.

(b) When providing clients with access to their records, social workers should take steps to protect the confidentiality of other individuals identified or discussed in such records.

**1.09 Sexual Relationships**

(a) Social workers should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with current clients, whether such contact is consensual or forced.

(b) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a close personal relationship when there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the client. Sexual activity or sexual contact with clients' relatives or other individuals with whom clients maintain a personal relationship has the potential to be harmful to the client and may make it difficult for the social worker and client to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Social workers—not their clients, their clients' relatives, or other individuals with whom the client maintains a personal relationship—assume the full burden for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in sexual activities or sexual contact with former clients because of the potential for harm to the client. If social workers engage in conduct contrary to this prohibition or claim that an exception to this prohibition is warranted because of extraordinary circumstances, it is social workers—not their clients—who assume the full burden of demonstrating that the former client has not been exploited, coerced, or manipulated, intentionally or unintentionally.

(d) Social workers should not provide clinical services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship. Providing clinical services to a former sexual partner has the potential to be harmful to the individual and is likely to make it difficult for the social worker and individual to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

**1.10 Physical Contact**

Social workers should not engage in physical contact with clients when there is a possibility of psychological harm to the client as a result of the contact (such as cradling or caressing clients). Social workers who engage in appropriate physical contact with clients are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern such physical contact.

**1.11 Sexual Harassment**

Social workers should not sexually harass clients. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**1.12 Derogatory Language**

Social workers should not use derogatory language in their written or verbal communications to or about clients. Social workers should use accurate and respectful language in all communications to and about clients.

**1.13 Payment for Services**

(a) When setting fees, social workers should ensure that the fees are fair, reasonable, and commensurate with the services performed. Consideration should be given to clients' ability to pay.

(b) Social workers should avoid accepting goods or services from clients as payment for professional services. Bartering arrangements, particularly involving services, create the potential for conflicts of interest, exploitation, and inappropriate boundaries in social workers' relationships with clients. Social workers should explore and may participate in bartering only in very limited circumstances when it can be demonstrated that such arrangements are an accepted practice among professionals in the local community, considered to be essential for the provision of services, negotiated without coercion, and entered into at the client's initiative and with the client's informed consent. Social workers who accept goods or services from clients as payment for professional services assume the full burden of demonstrating that this arrangement will not be detrimental to the client or the professional relationship.

(c) Social workers should not solicit a private fee or other remuneration for providing services to clients who are entitled to such available services through the social workers' employer or agency.

**1.14 Clients Who Lack Decision-Making Capacity**

When social workers act on behalf of clients who lack the capacity to make informed decisions, social workers should take reasonable steps to safeguard the interests and rights of those clients.

**1.15 Interruption of Services**

Social workers should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, relocation, illness, disability, or death.

**1.16 Termination of Services**

(a) Social workers should terminate services to clients and professional relationships with them when such services and relationships are no longer required or no longer serve the clients' needs or interests.

(b) Social workers should take reasonable steps to avoid abandoning clients who are still in need of services. Social workers should withdraw services precipitously only under unusual circumstances, giving careful consideration to all factors in the situation and taking care to minimize possible adverse effects. Social workers should assist in making appropriate arrangements for continuation of services when necessary.

(c) Social workers in fee for service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance if the financial contractual arrangements have been made clear to the client, if the client does not pose an imminent danger to self or others, and if the clinical and other consequences of the current nonpayment have been addressed and discussed with the client.

(d) Social workers should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client.

(e) Social workers who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

(f) Social workers who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.

**2. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES**

**2.01 Respect**

(a) Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues.
(b) Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues' level of competence or to individuals' attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.
(c) Social workers should cooperate with social work colleagues and with colleagues of other professions when such cooperation serves the wellbeing of clients.

**2.02 Confidentiality**

Social workers should respect confidential information shared by colleagues in the course of their professional relationships and transactions. Social workers should ensure that such colleagues understand social workers' obligation to respect confidentiality and any exceptions related to it.

**2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

(a) Social workers who are members of an interdisciplinary team should participate in and contribute to decisions that affect the wellbeing of clients by drawing on the perspectives, values, and experiences of the social work profession. Professional and ethical obligations of the interdisciplinary team as a whole and of its individual members should be clearly established.

(b) Social workers for whom a team decision raises ethical concerns should attempt to resolve the disagreement through appropriate channels. If the disagreement cannot be resolved, social workers should pursue other avenues to address their concerns consistent with client wellbeing.

**2.04 Disputes Involving Colleagues**

(a) Social workers should not take advantage of a dispute between a colleague and an employer to obtain a position or otherwise advance the social workers' own interests.

(b) Social workers should not exploit clients in disputes with colleagues or engage clients in any inappropriate discussion of conflicts between social workers and their colleagues.

**2.05 Consultation**

(a) Social workers should seek the advice and counsel of colleagues whenever such consultation is in the best interests of clients.

(b) Social workers should keep themselves informed about colleagues' areas of expertise and competencies. Social workers should seek consultation only from colleagues who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the subject of the consultation.

(c) When consulting with colleagues about clients, social workers should disclose the least amount of information necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

**2.06 Referral for Services**

(a) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals when the other professionals' specialized knowledge or expertise is needed to serve clients fully or when social workers believe that they are not being effective or making reasonable progress with clients and that additional service is required.

(b) Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should take appropriate steps to facilitate an orderly transfer of responsibility. Social workers who refer clients to other professionals should disclose, with clients' consent, all pertinent information to the new service providers.

(c) Social workers are prohibited from giving or receiving payment for a referral when no professional service is provided by the referring social worker.

**2.07 Sexual Relationships**

(a) Social workers who function as supervisors or educators should not engage in sexual activities or contact with supervisees, students, trainees, or other colleagues over whom they exercise professional authority.

(b) Social workers should avoid engaging in sexual relationships with colleagues when there is potential for a conflict of interest. Social workers who become involved in, or anticipate becoming involved in, a sexual relationship with a colleague have a duty to transfer professional responsibilities, when necessary, to avoid a conflict of interest.

**2.08 Sexual Harassment**

Social workers should not sexually harass supervisees, students, trainees, or colleagues. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, sexual solicitation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**2.09 Impairment of Colleagues**

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

**2.10 Incompetence of Colleagues**

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's incompetence should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague is incompetent and has not taken adequate steps to address the incompetence should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

**2.11 Unethical Conduct of Colleagues**

(a) Social workers should take adequate measures to discourage, prevent, expose, and correct the unethical conduct of colleagues.

(b) Social workers should be knowledgeable about established policies and procedures for handling concerns about colleagues' unethical behavior. Social workers should be familiar with national, state, and local procedures for handling ethics complaints. These include policies and procedures created by NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, agencies, and other professional organizations.

(c) Social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should seek resolution by discussing their concerns with the colleague when feasible and when such discussion is likely to be productive.

(d) When necessary, social workers who believe that a colleague has acted unethically should take action through appropriate formal channels (such as contacting a state licensing board or regulatory body, an NASW committee on inquiry, or other professional ethics committees).

(e) Social workers should defend and assist colleagues who are unjustly charged with unethical conduct.

**3. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICE**

**SETTINGS**

**3.01 Supervision and Consultation**

(a) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation should have the necessary knowledge and skill to supervise or consult appropriately and should do so only within their areas of knowledge and competence.

(b) Social workers who provide supervision or consultation are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

(c) Social workers should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with supervisees in which there is a risk of exploitation of or potential harm to the supervisee.

(d) Social workers who provide supervision should evaluate supervisees' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

**3.02 Education and Training**

(a) Social workers who function as educators, field instructors for students, or trainers should provide instruction only within their areas of knowledge and competence and should provide instruction based on the most current information and knowledge available in the profession.

(b) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should evaluate students' performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.

(c) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should take reasonable steps to ensure that clients are routinely informed when services are being provided by students.

(d) Social workers who function as educators or field instructors for students should not engage in any dual or multiple relationships with students in which there is a risk of exploitation or potential harm to the student. Social work educators and field instructors are responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries.

**3.03 Performance Evaluation**

Social workers who have responsibility for evaluating the performance of others should fulfill such responsibility in a fair and considerate manner and on the basis of clearly stated criteria.

**3.04 Client Records**

(a) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that documentation in records is accurate and reflects the services provided.

(b) Social workers should include sufficient and timely documentation in records to facilitate the delivery of services and to ensure continuity of services provided to clients in the future.

(c) Social workers' documentation should protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and appropriate and should include only information that is directly relevant to the delivery of services.

(d) Social workers should store records following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access. Records should be maintained for the number of years required by state statutes or relevant contracts.

**3.05 Billing**

Social workers should establish and maintain billing practices that accurately reflect the nature and extent of services provided and that identify who provided the service in the practice setting.

**3.06 Client Transfer**

(a) When an individual who is receiving services from another agency or colleague contacts a social worker for services, the social worker should carefully consider the client's needs before agreeing to provide services. To minimize possible confusion and conflict, social workers should discuss with potential clients the nature of the clients' current relationship with other service providers and the implications, including possible benefits or risks, of entering into a relationship with a new service provider.

(b) If a new client has been served by another agency or colleague, social workers should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

**3.07 Administration**

(a) Social work administrators should advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs.

(b) Social workers should advocate for resource allocation procedures that are open and fair. When not all clients' needs can be met, an allocation procedure should be developed that is nondiscriminatory and based on appropriate and consistently applied principles.

(c) Social workers who are administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that adequate agency or organizational resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision.

(d) Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for which they are responsible is consistent with and encourages compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics. Social work administrators should take reasonable steps to eliminate any conditions in their organizations that violate, interfere with, or discourage compliance with the Code.

**3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development**

Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics.

**3.09 Commitments to Employers**

(a) Social workers generally should adhere to commitments made to employers and employing organizations.

(b) Social workers should work to improve employing agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.

(c) Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that employers are aware of social workers' ethical obligations as set forth in the NASW Code of Ethics and of the implications of those obligations for social work practice.

(d) Social workers should not allow an employing organization's policies, procedures, regulations, or administrative orders to interfere with their ethical practice of social work. Social workers should take reasonable steps to ensure that their employing organizations' practices are consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate discrimination in the employing organization's work assignments and in its employment policies and practices.

(f) Social workers should accept employment or arrange student field placements only in organizations that exercise fair personnel practices.

(g) Social workers should be diligent stewards of the resources of their employing organizations, wisely conserving funds where appropriate and never misappropriating funds or using them for unintended purposes.

**3.10 Labor Management Disputes**

(a) Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.

(b) The actions of social workers who are involved in labor management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession's values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.

**4. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS PROFESSIONALS**

**4.01 Competence**

(a) Social workers should accept responsibility or employment only on the basis of existing competence or the intention to acquire the necessary competence.

(b) Social workers should strive to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work. Social workers should routinely review the professional literature and participate in continuing education relevant to social work practice and social work ethics.

(c) Social workers should base practice on recognized knowledge, including empirically based knowledge, relevant to social work and social work ethics.

**4.02 Discrimination**

Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

**4.03 Private Conduct**

Social workers should not permit their private conduct to interfere with their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities.

**4.04 Dishonesty, Fraud, and Deception**

Social workers should not participate in, condone, or be associated with dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

**4.05 Impairment**

(a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.

(b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

**4.06 Misrepresentation**

(a) Social workers should make clear distinctions between statements made and actions engaged in as a private individual and as a representative of the social work profession, a professional social work organization, or the social worker's employing agency.

(b) Social workers who speak on behalf of professional social work organizations should accurately represent the official and authorized positions of the organizations.

(c) Social workers should ensure that their representations to clients, agencies, and the public of professional qualifications, credentials, education, competence, affiliations, services provided, or results to be achieved are accurate. Social workers should claim only those relevant professional credentials they actually possess and take steps to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations of their credentials by others.

**4.07 Solicitations**

(a) Social workers should not engage in uninvited solicitation of potential clients who, because of their circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence, manipulation, or coercion.

(b) Social workers should not engage in solicitation of testimonial endorsements (including solicitation of consent to use a client's prior statement as a testimonial endorsement) from current clients or from other people who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

**4.08 Acknowledging Credit**

(a) Social workers should take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed and to which they have contributed.

(b) Social workers should honestly acknowledge the work of and the contributions made by others.

## 5. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

### 5.01 Integrity of the Profession

(a) Social workers should work toward the maintenance and promotion of high standards of practice.

(b) Social workers should uphold and advance the values, ethics, knowledge, and mission of the profession. Social workers should protect, enhance, and improve the integrity of the profession through appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.

(c) Social workers should contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession. These activities may include teaching, research, consultation, service, legislative testimony, presentations in the community, and participation in their professional organizations.

(d) Social workers should contribute to the knowledge base of social work and share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics. Social workers should seek to contribute to the profession's literature and to share their knowledge at professional meetings and conferences.

(e) Social workers should act to prevent the unauthorized and unqualified practice of social work.

### 5.02 Evaluation and Research

(a) Social workers should monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions.

(b) Social workers should promote and facilitate evaluation and research to contribute to the development of knowledge.

(c) Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice.

(d) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should carefully consider possible consequences and should follow guidelines developed for the protection of evaluation and research participants. Appropriate institutional review boards should be consulted.

(e) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should obtain voluntary and written informed consent from participants, when appropriate, without any implied or actual deprivation or penalty for refusal to participate; without undue inducement to participate; and with due regard for participants' wellbeing, privacy, and dignity. Informed consent should include information about the nature, extent, and duration of the participation requested and disclosure of the risks and benefits of participation in the research.

(f) When evaluation or research participants are incapable of giving informed consent, social workers should provide an appropriate explanation to the participants, obtain the participants' assent to the extent they are able, and obtain written consent from an appropriate proxy.

(g) Social workers should never design or conduct evaluation or research that does not use consent procedures, such as certain forms of naturalistic observation and archival research, unless rigorous and responsible review of the research has found it to be justified because of its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value and unless equally effective alternative procedures that do not involve waiver of consent are not feasible.

(h) Social workers should inform participants of their right to withdraw from evaluation and research at any time without penalty.

(i) Social workers should take appropriate steps to ensure that participants in evaluation and research have access to appropriate supportive services.

(j) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should protect participants from unwarranted physical or mental distress, harm, danger, or deprivation.

(k) Social workers engaged in the evaluation of services should discuss collected information only for professional purposes and only with people professionally concerned with this information.

(l) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and of the data obtained from them. Social workers should inform participants of any limits of confidentiality, the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and when any records containing research data will be destroyed.

(m) Social workers who report evaluation and research results should protect participants' confidentiality by omitting identifying information unless proper consent has been obtained authorizing disclosure.

(n) Social workers should report evaluation and research findings accurately. They should not fabricate or falsify results and should take steps to correct any errors later found in published data using standard publication methods.

(o) Social workers engaged in evaluation or research should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest and dual relationships with participants, should inform participants when a real or potential conflict of interest arises, and should take steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes participants' interests primary.

(p) Social workers should educate themselves, their students, and their colleagues about responsible research practices.

## 6. SOCIAL WORKERS' ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BROADER SOCIETY

### 6.01 Social Welfare

Social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels, and the development of people, their communities, and their environments. Social workers should advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs and should promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.

### 6.02 Public Participation

Social workers should facilitate informed participation by the public in shaping social policies and institutions.

### 6.03 Public Emergencies

Social workers should provide appropriate professional services in public emergencies to the greatest extent possible.

### 6.04 Social and Political Action

(a) Social workers should engage in social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require to meet their basic human needs and to develop fully. Social workers should be aware of the impact of the political arena on practice and should advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.

(b) Social workers should act to expand choice and opportunity for all people, with special regard for vulnerable, disadvantaged, oppressed, and exploited people and groups.

(c) Social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally. Social workers should promote policies and practices that demonstrate respect for difference, support the expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, advocate for programs and institutions that demonstrate cultural competence, and promote policies that safeguard the rights of and confirm equity and social justice for all people.

(d) Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical disability.

# Appendix B

## International Coach Federation Code of Ethics

### *Part One: Definition of Coaching*

- Coaching: Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.
- A professional coaching relationship: A professional coaching relationship exists when coaching includes a business agreement or contract that defines the responsibilities of each party.
- An ICF Professional Coach: An ICF Professional Coach also agrees to practice the ICF Professional Core Competencies and pledges accountability to the ICF Code of Ethics.

In order to clarify roles in the coaching relationship, it is often necessary to distinguish between the client and the sponsor. In most cases, the client and sponsor are the same person and therefore jointly referred to as the client. For purposes of identification, however, the International Coach Federation defines these roles as follows:

- Client: The "client" is the person(s) being coached.
- Sponsor: The "sponsor" is the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging for coaching services to be provided.

In all cases, coaching engagement contracts or agreements should clearly establish the rights, roles, and responsibilities for both the client and sponsor if they are not the same persons.

### *Part Two: The ICF Standards of Ethical Conduct*

Preamble: ICF Professional Coaches aspire to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon the coaching profession; are respectful of different approaches to coaching; and recognize that they are also bound by applicable laws and regulations.

Section 1: Professional Conduct At Large

As a coach:

1. I will not knowingly make any public statement that is untrue or

misleading about what I offer as a coach, or make false claims in any written documents relating to the coaching profession or my credentials or the ICF.

2. I will accurately identify my coaching qualifications, expertise, experience, certifications and ICF Credentials.
3. I will recognize and honor the efforts and contributions of others and not misrepresent them as my own. I understand that violating this standard may leave me subject to legal remedy by a third party.
4. I will, at all times, strive to recognize personal issues that may impair, conflict, or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. Whenever the facts and circumstances necessitate, I will promptly seek professional assistance and determine the action to be taken, including whether it is appropriate to suspend or terminate my coaching relationship(s).
5. I will conduct myself in accordance with the ICF Code of Ethics in all coach training, coach mentoring, and coach supervisory activities.
6. I will conduct and report research with competence, honesty, and within recognized scientific standards and applicable subject guidelines. My research will be carried out with the necessary consent and approval of those involved, and with an approach that will protect participants from any potential harm. All research efforts will be performed in a manner that complies with all the applicable laws of the country in which the research is conducted.
7. I will maintain, store, and dispose of any records created during my coaching business in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security, and privacy, and complies with any applicable laws and agreements
8. I will use ICF member contact information (e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, etc.) only in the manner and to the extent authorized by the ICF.

Section 2: Conflicts of Interest

As a coach:

1. I will seek to avoid conflicts of interest and potential conflicts of interest and openly disclose any such conflicts. I will offer to remove myself when such a conflict arises.

2. I will disclose to my client and his or her sponsor all anticipated compensation from third parties that I may pay or receive for referrals of that client.
3. I will only barter for services, goods or other non-monetary remuneration when it will not impair the coaching relationship.
4. I will not knowingly take any personal, professional, or monetary advantage or benefit of the coach-client relationship, except by a form of compensation as agreed in the agreement or contract.

Section 3: Professional Conduct with Clients

As a coach:

1. I will not knowingly mislead or make false claims about what my client or sponsor will receive from the coaching process or from me as the coach.
2. I will not give my prospective clients or sponsors information or advice I know or believe to be misleading or false.
3. I will have clear agreements or contracts with my clients and sponsor(s). I will honor all agreements or contracts made in the context of professional coaching relationships.
4. I will carefully explain and strive to ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching client and sponsor(s) understand the nature of coaching, the nature and limits of confidentiality, financial arrangements, and any other terms of the coaching agreement or contract.
5. I will be responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern any physical contact I may have with my clients or sponsors.
6. I will not become sexually intimate with any of my current clients or sponsors.
7. I will respect the client's right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point during the process, subject to the provisions of the agreement or contract. I will be alert to indications that the client is no longer benefiting from our coaching relationship.
8. I will encourage the client or sponsor to make a change if I believe the client or sponsor would be better served by another coach or by

another resource.

9. I will suggest my client seek the services of other professionals when deemed necessary or appropriate.

Section 4: Confidentiality/Privacy

As a coach:

1. I will maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information. I will have a clear agreement or contract before releasing information to another person, unless required by law.
2. I will have a clear agreement upon how coaching information will be exchanged among coach, client, and sponsor.
3. When acting as a trainer of student coaches, I will clarify confidentiality policies with the students.
4. I will have associated coaches and other persons whom I manage in service of my clients and their sponsors in a paid or volunteer capacity make clear agreements or contracts to adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics Part 2, Section 4: Confidentiality/Privacy standards and the entire ICF Code of Ethics to the extent applicable.

### *Part Three: The ICF Pledge of Ethics*

As an ICF Professional Coach, I acknowledge and agree to honor my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching clients and sponsors, colleagues, and to the public at large. I pledge to comply with the ICF Code of Ethics, and to practice these standards with those whom I coach.

If I breach this Pledge of Ethics or any part of the ICF Code of Ethics, I agree that the ICF in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for so doing. I further agree that my accountability to the ICF for any breach may include sanctions, such as loss of my ICF membership and/or my ICF Credentials.

Approved by the Ethics and Standards Committee on October 30, 2008.

Approved by the ICF Board of Directors on December 18, 2008.

# Appendix C

## Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision Ethical Guidelines

### *Introduction*

The Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision (APECS) is the top-level professional body for the provision of Executive Coaching and for the Supervision of Executive Coaches. The Ethical Guidelines contained in this document are indicators of that professionalism and the high standards seen as essential to the various relationships involved in Executive Coaching and Supervision. We want the safest and most effective conditions for clients (those being coached), the clearest and most transparent understanding with host companies who commission Executive Coaching and/or Supervision and the highest professional standards for our coaches and supervisors.

### *Nature of the Guidelines*

These Guidelines set out the principles, standards and sometimes procedures that guide our work. Members of APECS accept these as part of their contract with APECS and would be expected to tell APECS if there was any part or parts of the Guidelines with which they could not agree and which they could not practice. Failure to abide by these standards by any member of APECS may be reported to APECS for investigation under its Complaints Procedure. These procedures will be set out in a further document entitled "APECS Complaints Procedure".

### *Communication of this Code of Ethics and Conduct*

Whatever the contracting arrangements are with a coaching client (individual) or his/her sponsoring organisation, it must be brought formally to the attention of the individual client and the sponsoring organisation that these Ethical Guidelines and the APECS Complaints Procedure exist and where to obtain copies if required.

### *Definitions*

For the purposes of this Code:

"Coach" refers to the person who carries out Professional Executive Coaching of the "Client", the individual receiving coaching. "Sponsoring Organisation" or "Sponsor" refers to the company, institution or body, which is funding the coaching. Professional Executive Coaching or "coaching" refers to a one-to-one developmental relationship with clearly focused aims related to the clients' effectiveness in a particular role in the sponsoring organisation. "Supervision" or "Supervisor" refers to the relationship between the coach and a qualified person who is not in any managerial relationship with the coach wherein the coaching work with particular clients may be discussed in strict confidence with the purpose of enhancing the quality of the coaching work and of ensuring client safety.

### Guidelines

In general, Executive Coaches and Supervisors of Executive Coaches will behave in ways, which demonstrate;

- respect for individuals and organisations (rights and dignity);
- awareness of and sensitivity to difference (race, culture, gender, disability etc);
- concern for fairness and justice at all levels of their work;
- openness to new knowledge, competencies and attitudes that further the quality of their work;
- the importance of context in their work;
- commitment to establishing high quality and high level healthy relationships with individuals and organisations;
- ensuring insights into the impact of their behaviour on others;
- engagement with provisions that develop and enhance autonomy in individuals and organisations.
- APECS Executive Coaches and Supervisors will hold firmly to the foundation principles underpinning ethical thinking and behaviour.
    - Autonomy - to help individuals and companies make their own decisions and move towards increasing self-authority.
    - Fidelity - to be faithful to contracts, relationships and promises made.
    - Beneficence - to do what benefits the well being of all.
    - Non-Maleficence - to avoid whatever might harm others.
    - Justice - to maintain fairness.
    - Caring for self - to look after oneself physically, emotionally, mentally and motivationally so that clients and organisations receive the best service possible.

These guidelines (values) will influence decisions made by Executive Coaches and Supervisors in areas such as:

1. qualifications;
2. ongoing professional development;
3. setting up and engaging in Executive Coaching and Supervision relationships;
4. boundary management;
5. requirements for supervision;
6. other requirements.

(1) Qualifications

The coach or supervisor will:

- be properly qualified to carry out the work (see APECS Accreditation Criteria Guidelines);
- ensure that the requirements of the coaching/supervision contract are within their professional ability to deliver or make clear to the client and the sponsor where the shortfall may be;
- continue to learn and grow in their professional knowledge and expertise;
- invest in personal development work to enhance their self-awareness and emotional balance;
- work with an approved supervisor (see APECS Accreditation Criteria Guidelines) to ensure client safety, review their client case work and monitor their own well-being and effectiveness.

(2) Ongoing professional development

Executive Coaches and Supervisors with APECS will be committed to their own learning and development and take steps to ensure that they are up to date with current thinking and knowledge. They will review the steps they take to ensure this in professional supervision and they and their supervisor will agree an annual development plan that will be part of their supervisor's report.

(3) Setting up and engaging in Executive Coaching or Supervision Relationships

The coach or supervisor will:

- take proper steps to ensure a sound understanding of the nature of the sponsor's and clients expectations of coaching or supervision;
- where there appears to be inappropriate expectations of understandings of the nature of coaching or supervision, the coach or supervisor will explain its limitations and uses appropriately and simply;
- explain this Code of Ethics and Conduct to the Sponsor and the Client including the confidentiality requirements and the rare exceptions to it;
- establish a clear contract with the Sponsor and the Client which covers:
    - the process of coaching or supervision
    - the aims of the specific coaching engagement or supervision
    - the duration, hours provision and periodicity of the engagement
    - specifically who will be involved in the process and at which stages
    - the matters of confidentiality and boundary management (see below)
    - fee and cancellation arrangements
- The Coach or Supervisor will not in any way use his/her position of influence to take advantage of the Client and will always act in the Client's and Sponsor's best interests

(4) Boundary Management

The coach or supervisor will:

- maintain proper confidentiality of personal information gained within the coaching/supervision context;
- maintain confidentiality of the names and roles of those who are or have been coached or supervised;
- maintain commercial confidentiality regarding any aspects of the Sponsoring Organisations business and plans;
- only disclose information from the coaching or supervision context to the Sponsor with the specific permission of the Client and then only if there are special reasons why this is in the best interests of the Client;
- be prepared to disclose to the Sponsor or the competent authorities any matter which indicates an illegal or illicit action by the Client or where there

is a significant risk to another person or body should this not be disclosed. In such rare circumstances the Client should be given the first opportunity to disclose unless the timing indicates that urgent action is needed by the Coach/Supervisor.

(5) Requirements for supervision

Each Executive Coach will choose a form of supervision and a supervisor that best fits their learning needs. In ongoing and regular supervision they will discuss confidentially their thoughts, feeling and reactions to their work at all levels: clients, relationships, interventions, contracts, impasses, joys, upsets etc. Supervision will be a forum for reflection on coaching work where supervisees will take responsibility for their own learning.

Supervisors will provide APECS with a short annual report on supervisees assuring APECS that they are working ethically and to an acceptable standard.

(6) Other requirements

- The Coach or Supervisor will ensure the safekeeping of all related records and data connected with the coaching contract and its delivery.
- The Coach and Supervisor will have professional liability insurance of at least £1 million. Where necessary the Coach and Supervisor will have proper Public Liability and Employers' Liability Insurance cover.
- The Coach and Supervisor will always observe and comply with any U.K. or E.U. requirements or those governing the geographic area in which they work.

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