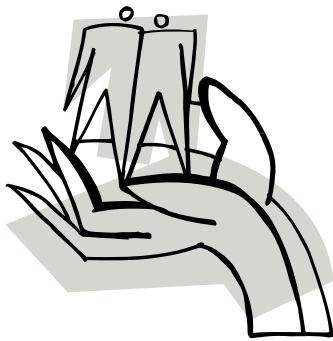




Playing For KEEPS Induction/Mentoring Program



- **K**nowledge-based
- **E**ncounters
- **E**nsuring
- **P**rofessional
- **S**uccess

Research and Training Guide

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Mentor's Creed

A Helping Hand



I am willing to invest in the educational success of a novice teacher.

I recognize that my hand of support will be used to encourage, promote, guide, teach, demonstrate, inform and celebrate the success of my Mentee.

I recognize that my hand of support is the foundation for a continuum of services and professional growth opportunities in the staff development portfolio of a successful teacher.

MISD Mentor

Mansfield KEEPS

Acknowledgement

The Mansfield KEEPS Program was developed exclusively for MISD and our Induction/Mentoring program criteria. It is based on research, training and information gathered from a variety of sources as well as program support documents created by MISD.

You may copy and distribute MISD KEEPS material as long as you do so for free and maintain the credits outlined on the subsequent pages. Credits acknowledge contributions from other resources as well as those created by Mansfield ISD.

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Research Based Rationale For Formal Induction/Mentoring



- New Teachers Lose
30% leave within first two years
Revolving Door Syndrome
- Taxpayers Lose Their Investment
Teacher Recruitment
Teacher Selection
Teacher Employment Costs
Teacher Staff Development
- Students Lose
Academic Achievement
Community Support
- State Mandates Formal Mentoring
SBEC Requirements
- Compressed Texas Teacher Preparation Programs
Practical Application is Weak

Source: Rationale/Implications/Recommendations. [Austin Educational Associates](#)

Implications

How to support novice teachers during the induction years to assure quality instruction and to retain them in the teaching profession is a great challenge with major consequences academically and financially.

Research indicates the following

A formal program of induction support results in substantially higher retention rates of novice teachers.

Induction support is necessary to provide support and instructional refinement. Novice teachers will initially have lower level concerns (those related to self and the mechanics of classroom management) which must be resolved in order for higher level concerns (those related to student well-being and achievement) to emerge. With formal support these novices will generally progress through the developmental stages more rapidly and become more instructionally effective than if left on their own to “sink or swim”.

It is necessary to provide adequate training to mentors in order to relieve their feelings of discomfort in being assigned a responsibility for which they have had no formal preparation and to increase their effectiveness with novices. Trained mentors appreciate the opportunity to help their colleagues grow professionally, and they also benefit from the partnership. Such relationships foster collegiality on campuses. Train mentors in...

- *Characteristics of novice teachers*
- *Skills for identifying teacher needs/concerns*
- *Role and function of Mentor Teacher*
- *Skills for facilitating teacher reflection*
- *Building a helping relationship*
- *Novice teacher assessment methodology*

It is crucial to the success of the program and to the novice to choose as mentors only highly motivated professionals who are committed to the concept of Induction Support.

Provide novice teachers with not only the basic support services necessary to make the initial transition into teaching, but also a solid foundation for instructional competence.

Provide new-to-district teachers with same high level of commitment to their success. Assist them in meeting the high standards set by the district.

The conclusions from this research are obvious. It is imperative that we develop a formal program that extends beyond providing a “buddy” for new teachers. By providing novice teachers support in the form of a formal Induction/Mentoring Program, retention rates will be increased, and most importantly, student success will be maximized.

Source: Rationale/Implications/Recommendations. [Austin Educational Associates](#)

Summary of Recommendations

To recap, the SBEC Panel for the Novice Teacher Induction Support System recommends:

1. Each novice teacher be provided
 - a two-year period of support; assigned to a trained mentor
 - weekly contact with the mentor (at least 30 minutes per week),
 - release time for professional growth purposes (6 days in first year and four days in second year for a total of 10 days),
 - a minimum of two formative observation cycles per year with the mentor
- men
2. Funding be made available on a competitive basis to develop a Phase two-year program involving approximately 10% of the novice teachers for the introductory program.
3. Continued funding to support statewide implementation of the novice teacher induction support system beginning in 2001-2002.
4. Extra lines be added on the AEIS reports to document the numbers of second and third year teachers in order readily track the retention of new teachers throughout the induction years.
5. The SBEC office coordinates with regional Education Service Centers to compile and provide districts with a listing of resources for induction programs, maintain a data base of induction program descriptions and contact persons, and serve as an informal clearing house of promising induction practices in Texas.
6. The requirement for evidence of substantive involvement in teacher induction efforts be incorporated into the teacher education program approval process.
7. Districts be encouraged to involve teacher preparation entities in induction efforts, yet not be penalized when such involvement is not practical or feasible.
8. The focus of assessment of the novice teacher during the first year of teaching be on participation in induction support activities rather than on teaching performance. Performance assessment of novice teachers not occur earlier than the second year of teaching.
9. SBEC develops a comprehensive and dynamic performance assessment system which will allow novice teachers, with support and guidance from mentor teachers and other experienced educators, to compile and present evidence of instructional effectiveness in clearly identified domains or categories.
10. The mentor teacher's role be that of assisting and serving as an advocate for the novice teacher, and that the summative assessment related to the novice teacher resides with the educators other than the assigned mentor.

Source: Rationale/Implications/Recommendations. Austin Educational Associate



Perceived Problems of New Teachers

- * Classroom Discipline
- * Motivating Students
- * Assessing Students' Work
- * Relations with Parents
- * Organization of Classwork
- * Insufficient Materials and Supplies
- * Dealing with Problems of Individual Students
- * Teacher Appraisals
 - High Stakes Testing
 - Time Spent Preparing Student for Test
 - Student Motivation
 - Parent Pressure to Ensure Acceptable Achievement
 - Results Reported by Individual Teacher
 - Student Promotion Based on Results
 - School Safety

Teaching Assignment

Research indicates that placement of the Novice teacher (NT) may well be the most influential variable related to first year teaching success. Factors contributing to a difficult teaching assignment include:

- Assigned in an area that does not match the background and training of the NT
- Having multiple teaching preparations; floating between classrooms
- Having time-consuming and demanding extra-curricular responsibilities
- Working with remedial and/or unmotivated students

Source: Perceived problems of beginning teachers. Veenman, S. Review of Educational Research, 1984, 54 (2)

Benefits of Supporting New Teachers



- **Improved Teaching Performance**
- **Improved Instruction for Students from Diverse Backgrounds**
- **Increased New Teacher Retention**
- **Increased New Teacher Satisfaction**
- **Increased Collegiality**

Source: Benefits of Supporting New Teachers & for the Mentors. California New Teacher Project. April 1999

MENTORING BENEFITS FOR MENTORS



Reciprocal Learning

Appreciation

Motivation

Pride

Reflection

Rejuvenation

Collegiality

WHAT CAN MENTOR TEACHERS GAIN FROM SUPPORTING NEW TEACHERS?

Reciprocal Learning

- While working with new teachers, you will learn new ideas and information.

Appreciation

- You will feel appreciated by the experience of working with new teachers and acknowledged for your contributions.

Motivation

- You will be motivated to improve your own instruction as you assist new teachers in improving theirs.

Pride

- You will feel increased pride in your profession and regard from your colleagues.

Reflection

- You will have the opportunity to talk with colleagues about teaching, to develop ways to describe what you do and why.

Rejuvenation

- You will experience a sense of renewal and personal satisfaction with teaching.

Collegiality

- As the school staff develops a norm of collaboration and support for new teachers, a greater sense of collegiality will emerge.

The new ideas and fresh approaches to teaching that I have gotten from her far outweigh the help I've been able to give her! Thinking of solutions to her problems forced me to analyze my own strategies- and we both benefited.

An experienced teacher

PHASES OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHING

First-year teaching is a difficult challenge. Equally challenging is figuring out ways to support and assist beginning teachers as they enter the profession. Over the course of the last years, Ellen Moir, Director of the Santa Cruz Consortium new Teacher Project and Director of Student Teaching at UC Santa Cruz, has been working with six colleagues to support the efforts of new teachers. In their day-to-day interactions with new teachers, they have noted a number of phases in the development of new teachers during their first year. While not every new teacher goes through this exact sequence, Ms. Moir believes these phases are very useful in helping everyone involved-administrators, other support personnel, and teacher education faculty-in the process of supporting new teachers. These teachers move through several phases from anticipation, to survival, to disillusionment, to rejuvenation, to reflection; then back to anticipation. Here's a look at the stages through which new teachers move during that crucial first year. New teacher quotations are taken from journal entries and end-of-the-year program evaluations.

ANTICIPATION PHASE

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of preservice preparation. The closer student teachers get to completing their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching position. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals. "I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge." This feeling of excitement carries new teachers through the first few weeks of school.

SURVIVAL PHASE

The first month of school is very overwhelming for new teachers. They are learning a lot and at a very rapid pace. Beginning teachers are instantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated. Despite increased field experiences and required courses in teacher preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching. "I thought I'd be busy, something like student teaching, but this is

crazy. I'm feeling like I'm constantly running. It's hard to focus on other aspects of my life."

During the survival phase, most new teachers are struggling to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. New teachers spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork. Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Veteran teachers routinely reuse excellent lessons and units from the past. The new teacher, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop much of this for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

"I thought there would be more time to get everything done. It's like working three jobs: 7:30-2:30, 2:30-6:30, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends." Although tired and surprised by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase.

DISILLUSIONMENT PHASE

After six to eight weeks of nonstop work, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of the phase varies among new teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and their competence. Many new teachers get sick during this phase.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important mile stones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that may yet be unclear in the new teacher's mind. Some parents are uneasy when they realize the teacher is just beginning and sometimes pose questions or make demands that intimidate a new teacher.

Parent conferences require that new teachers be highly organized, articulate, tactful, and prepared to confer with parents about each child's course of study and progress. This type of communication with parents can be awkward and difficult for a beginning teacher. New teachers generally begin

with the idea that parents are partners in the learning process and are not prepared for parent's concerns or criticisms.

Unfortunately, these criticisms occur right in the time when their self-esteem is waning.

This is also the first time that new teachers are formally evaluated by their principal. They are, for the most part presenting a "showpiece" lesson is time consuming and stressful.

During the disillusionment phase, classroom management is a major source of distress. "I thought I'd be focusing more on curriculum and less on classroom management and discipline. I'm stressed because I have some very problematic students who are low academically, and I think about them every second my eyes are open."

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first-year teacher coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching often brings complaints from family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entries into the profession. They express self-doubt, have lower commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

REJUVENATION

The rejuvenation phase is characterized by a slow rise in the new teachers' attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal lifestyle, with plenty of rest, food, exercise, and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones. This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope. They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment help to rejuvenate, new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year, beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce, or manage many problems, they are likely half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning, and teaching strategies.

"I'm really excited about my story-writing center, although the organization of it has at times been haphazard. Story writing has definitely revived my journals." The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way. Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can bet everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on the tests, questioning once again their own effectiveness as teachers. "I'm fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don't know enough about them to know what I haven't taught, and I'm sure it's a lot."

REFLECTION

The reflection phase beginning in May is a particularly invigorating time for first-year teachers. Reflecting back over the year, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum, and teaching strategies. The end is in sight and they have almost made it; but more importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like, which brings them to a new phase of anticipation. "Next year I'd like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids to more letters."

It is critical that we assist new teachers and ease the transition from student teacher to full-time professional. Recognizing the phases new teachers go through give us a framework within which we can begin to design support programs to make the first year of teaching a more positive experience for our new colleagues.



PHASES OF FIRST YEAR TEACHING

Anticipation

Anticipation

Reflection

Survival

Rejuvenation

Disillusionment

Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun-Jul

Source: Phases and Stages Moir, E. 1991.

A guide to prepare support providers for work with beginning teachers: Training module. In New teacher success: You can make a difference, ed. S. Garmston and C. Bartell. Riverside, CA: California Department of Education and Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Stages of Teacher Development

- **Stage 1:** Survival Stage (First Year)
- **Stage 2:** Adjustment Stage (2-4 Years)
- **Stage 3:** Mature Stage (5+ Years)

From: Burden, P.R. (1980). Teachers' perceptions of the characteristics and influences of their personal and professional development. Dissertation Abstracts International, 40, 5404A. T. Burden

Levels of Mastery between a Novice and Expert Teacher

- **Stage 1:** Novice Stage characterized by Survival and Discovery
- **Stage 2:** Advanced Beginner Style characterized by Experimentation and Consolidation
- **Stage 3:** Competent Stage characterized by Mastery and Stabilization
- **Stage 4:** Proficient Stage characterized by Analysis and Deliberation
- **Stage 5:** Expert Stage characterized by Fluidity and Flexibility

Source: Stages of Teacher Development. National Evaluation Systems Inc. (1997). The induction years: The beginning teacher: Amherst, MA.—Adapted from: Berliner, D.C. (1990). Implications of studies of expertise in pedagogy for teacher education and evaluation. In The Assessment of Teaching: Selected Topics. Amherst, MA: National Evaluation Systems, Inc.

Fuller's Sequence of Concerns about Teaching



Impact

Task

Self

Unrelated

Source: Stages of Concern. Concerns-Based Systems International via Austin Educational Associates

Description of Stages of Concern

6 REFOCUSING: The focus is on exploration of more universal benefits from the innovation, including the possibility of major changes or replacement with a more powerful alternative. Individual has definite ideas about alternatives to the proposed or existing form of the innovation.

5 COLLABORATION: The focus is on coordination and cooperation with others regarding use of the innovation.

4 CONSEQUENCE: Attention focuses on impact of the innovation on students in his/her immediate sphere of influence. The focus is on relevance of the innovation for students, evaluation of student outcomes, including performance and competencies, and changes needed to increase student outcomes.

3 MANAGEMENT: Attention is focused on the processes and tasks of using the innovation and the best use of information and resources. Issues related to efficiency, organizing, managing, scheduling, and time demands are utmost.

2 PERSONAL: Individual is uncertain about the demands of the innovation, his/her inadequacy to meet those demands, and his/her role with the innovation. This includes analysis of his/her role in relation to the reward structure of the organization, decision-making and consideration of potential conflicts with existing structures or personal commitment. Financial or status implications of the program for self and colleagues may also be reflected.

1 INFORMATIONAL: A general awareness of the innovation and interest in learning more detail about it is indicated. The person seems to be unworried about himself/herself in relation to the innovation. She/her is interested in substantive aspects of the innovation in a selfless manner such as general characteristics, effects, and requirements for use.

0 AWARENESS: Little concern about or involvement with the innovation is indicated.

Source: Stages of Concern. Permission for use granted by Concerns-Based Systems International

Stages of Concern (SOC)

About the Innovation



Stage	Concern	Expression of Concern
6	Refocusing	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.
5	Collaboration	I am concerned about relating what I am doing with what others are doing.
4	Consequence	how is my use affecting kids?
3	Management	I seem to be spending all of my time in getting material ready.
2	Personal	how will using it affect me?
1	Informational	I would like to know more about it.
0	Awareness	I am not concerned about it (the innovation).

Suggestions for Interviewing for Concerns

–to “get at” attitudes, feelings, reactions, concerns–“



Here’s a laundry list of phrases and questions – use those parts of or whole questions which seem most comfortable to you.

- How’s it going for you in the classroom?
- I’m interested in anything you’ll share with me about your teaching.
- How do you feel about it?
- Are you having any problems or concerns related to your teaching?
- What do you think of it?
- How does it affect you and others you are involved with?
- Anything you question or wonder about?
- What is your reaction to how it’s going so far?
- What is your attitude toward the students?
- Do you have any reservations about your teaching?
- Is there any information you would like?

Hierarchy of Needs



ANTECEDENTS TO INCREASING LEVELS OF SUPPORT

	MASLOW'S DESCRIPTORS	TRANSLATION AS RELATED TO NOVICES
SELF-ACTUALIZATION	Pursuit of personal mission (often for the greater good)	Guided by internal values over external pressures
ESTEEM	Need to feel worthy and respected; satisfaction from accomplishment	Being OK with self enough to focus on others and their learning; believing adequate teaching in this context is possible
BELONGING	Need for acceptance from significant others; family cohesion & harmony	Acceptance by faculty and students: freedom from feeling judged as inadequate
SAFETY & SECURITY	Safety of surroundings; need to structure; order, limits, boundaries	Safety(neighborhood, campus, classroom); classroom management
PHYSIOLOGICAL	Food, shelter, avoidance of pain or discomfort; preservation of family/primary relationship	Paycheck issues; location of restrooms, cafeteria, parking; adequacy of classroom

Source: Hierarchy of Need. Concerns-Based Systems International via Austin Educational Associates

Developing a Profile of the Successful Novice Teacher

As a mentor, it is important that you:



- recognize that it is unrealistic to expect novice teachers to perform like veteran teachers
- realize that there are multiple definitions of the “successful novice teacher”
- clarify in your own mind “what is a successful novice teacher”
- think about ways in which you might communicate your vision of a successful novice teacher to your mentee

Categories of Support Appropriate for Beginning Teachers

Systems Information

Giving information related to procedures, guidelines, and expectations of the school district

Resources

Collecting, disseminating, or locating materials or other resources

Curricular/Instructional Information

Giving information about curriculum content and sequence pattern; assisting with teaching strategies or the instructional process

Emotional Support

Emotional support by listening empathically and sharing experiences

Advice on Student Management

Giving guidance and ideas related to discipline and managing students

Help with the Classroom Environment

Helping arrange, organize, or analyze the climate and physical setting of the classroom

Demonstration Teaching

Teaching while the new teacher observes (combined with pre- and post- conferences)

Coaching

Observing and providing feedback on the beginning teacher's performance

Advice on Working with Parents

Giving help or ideas related to conferencing or working with parents

Mentoring a new teacher is an exciting extension of the classroom experience that can lead to a wonderful teaching and learning experience for both new teacher and experienced teacher.

The mentor is a guide or coach who joins the new teacher on a journey of reflective classroom practice, validates the new teacher's strengths, serves as a resource for professional growth and makes sure that the new teacher is viewed as an integral part of the campus.

Source: **MISD KEEPS Advisors**

Source: Categories of Support: Adapted from: Odell (1986).

Categories of Support



1) INSTRUCTIONAL: Giving information about teaching strategies, the instructional process, or content

- a) Curriculum guides and teachers' manuals
- b) Instructional goals
- c) Lesson Plans
- d) Expectations of grade level team: tests, discipline, duty schedule, interdisciplinary units, reading inventories, scope and sequence, etc.
- e) Effective instructional strategies
- f) Reinforcement and enrichment activities
- g) Student Evaluation
- h) Modifications
- i) Use of Manipulatives

2) SYSTEM: Giving information related to procedures and guidelines of the school and / or school district

- a) School handbook
- b) Teachers' hours
- c) Funds for supplies and materials
- d) Library procedure for checking out equipment
- e) Scheduling Library/Computer lab time
- f) Getting a substitute
- g) Bell schedule
- h) Lunch schedule, recess time, PE times, etc.
- i) Attendance, grading policy

3) RESOURCE: Collecting, disseminating, or locating resources for use by the new teacher

- a) Acquaint with school building; rooms, equipment, grounds
- b) Special Services available through resource teachers, nurse, counselor
- c) Textbook checkout, textbook cards/forms
- d) Region XI Education Service Center: availability of materials, location of catalog
- e) Telephone rules/procedures
- f) "Chain of Command" to follow in case of complaint
- g) Student records

4) EMOTIONAL: Offering new teachers personal support through empathic listening and by sharing experiences

- a) Maintaining a healthy balance between school and personal life
- b) Be available to listen to concerns
- c) Provide encouragement and support

- d) Give positive input
- 5) **MANAGERIAL: Managing and organizing the school day**
 - a) Arrival time
 - b) Bell schedule
 - c) Class seating arrangement/room arrangement
 - d) Organizing/Planning the first day
 - e) Planning the first week
 - f) Material preparation
- 6) **PARENTAL: Giving help and ideas related to conferencing or working with parents**
 - a) Importance of parental contact and support
 - b) When to contact parents
 - c) How to document parent contact
 - d) Written progress reports
 - e) Introductory letters to parents: grading system, supplies needed, special dates/events, etc.
- 7) **DISCIPLINARY: Giving guidance and ideas related to managing children**
 - a) A few concise and positive rules for expected behavior in classroom (the rules chosen should be rules that he/she is willing to enforce consistently)
 - b) Ideas to positively reinforce good behavior
 - c) Assist in setting goals for students and determining what will happen when the rules are not met
 - d) When to write a referral
 - e) When to send students to the office
 - f) Student conferences
 - g) Parent conferences
 - h) “HELP! What do I do? The kids are wild, and I’m desperate.” (What will you as a mentor do to help in this situation?)

**Quotes from Mansfield
KEEPS Mentors**

*Mentoring helps new teachers in their transition from student
To professional*

Information should be shared in a timely manner, without being totally over whelming
to a new teacher.

**I believe that I have become the teacher I am because of those who came
before me and their willingness to guide direct and share with me their
experiences and ideas.**

Mentor/ Mentee Collaboration Conversational Tips & Questions



Mentor-Mentee Collaboration

Clarifying Stems

Mediational Questions

Reflective Conversations

Creative Questions

- Belief/Mission
- Curriculum
- Lesson Plan
- Teaching Skill

Evaluative Questions

- Belief/Mission
- Curriculum
- Lesson Plan
- Teaching Skill

Personalized

- Belief/Mission
- Curriculum
- Lesson Plan
- Teaching Skill

CLARIFYING: FIVE PURPOSES

!Determine the meaning of language

English is an imprecise language. Many of our educational terms (e.g. “Restructuring” or “Constructivist Learning” or “Whole Language”, etc.) can be interpreted in different ways. Clarifying questions help the listener fully understand what the speaker has in mind.

1. Examine the rationale for a particular response

Clarifying questions can help the speaker connect their actions and interpretations of events with their decision-making. This can promote the speaker’s internal locus of control. They can also help the listener understand why the beginning teacher is focusing on a given issue or concern.

2. Recycle thinking for self-correction

Clarifying questions can not only ensure that the listener has heard correctly and has fully understood what the speaker has in mind, but they can also encourage the speaker to “self-correct” any misinterpretations or misrepresentations before proceeding.

3. Maintain the focus

Clarifying questions can help focus (or re-focus) a conversation. Sometimes the complexity of the issues being faced seems overwhelming to beginning teachers. The listener can use clarifying questions to help narrow the focus or help the new teacher prioritize issues and concerns. They can also serve to bring the discussion back to the main point.

4. Foster metacognition

Most important of all, clarifying questions can help the speaker think about his/her own thinking. This may, indeed, be the most important purpose of all!

CAUTION: Clarifying questions are NOT ways to manipulate a teacher, to redirect his/her thinking to what the support provider perceives to be the “best” course of action or the “right” solution. The intentionality of the listener must honestly be to understand fully what the speaker is saying and to facilitate the speaker’s OWN problem-solving around his/her issues or concerns.

Clarifying Stems



Please tell me a little more about...

Let me see if I understand...

Is that idea like...?

I'd be interested in hearing more about...

It'd help me understand if you'd give me an example of...

So, are you saying/suggesting...

Tell me what you mean when you...

Tell me how that idea is like (different from)...

To what extent...?

I'm curious to know more about...

I'm intrigued by.../ I'm interested in.../ I wonder...

Probing:

What triggered that thought?

Tell me what was going on in your head when...

How did you decide...(come to that conclusion?)

How do you know that...?

What might you see happening in your classroom if...?

NOTE: Avoid "why" questions!!!

Source: Clarifying Stems. Gless, Baron Revised May 1996

Mediational Questions

Tell me how you did that.

What went on in your mind when _____?

When have you done something like this before?

What would be your criteria for _____?

How is _____ different (like) _____?

When is another time you need(ed) to _____?

What do you think the problem is?

How can you find out?

How did you know _____?

What might you do next?

What's another way you might approach this?

How is this one (way) better than that one (way)?

What do you think would happen if _____?

How would you feel if _____?

How do you decide _____?

What would it look like if _____?

How (when) might you be able to use _____ in other situations?

ASK QUESTIONS TO PROMOTE THINKING:

****What might you see happening in your classroom if....?**

****What do you think would happen if...?**

****How did you decide...? (or) ...come to that conclusion?**

****How do you know that...?**

****Tell me how you...**

BUILD A TRUSTING & REFLECTIVE ENVIRONMENT:

****Use non-judgmental responses (avoid criticism/praise)**

****Listen**

****Acknowledge ideas**

IMPROVED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & STUDENT

REFLECTIVE CONVERSATIONS

PARAPHRASE & SUMMARIZE

***What I hear you saying is...**
***So, if I understand...**
***Then you're thinking...**
***So**

ASK CLARIFYING ?'S:

****Please tell me a little more about...**

****Help me understand that idea.**

****It'd help me understand if you'd give me an example...**

****Tell me what you mean when you...**

****To what extent...?**

****So are you sayin...?**

****I'd like to hear more about...**

****I'm curious about...**

Creative Questions



Belief/Mission Questions

Imagine what the perfect mission statement would be for your classroom.
If you had to hire a person to take your place for the classroom, what would that person be like?
What kind of person would you want to be subbing for you in your classroom?
Are you having fun yet? Why? How?
If you could redecorate your room only in colors, what colors would you choose and why?
Envision your school ten years from now. What goals could be developed?
What would you add or change about the school's current mission statement?
What should be the mission of your school?
What would you like your former students to say about you?
If we had a time capsule, what kind of evaluation would you give yourself?
Describe a creative teacher.
Explain how you would use parent volunteers next year in your classroom?
If you had the opportunity to choose a workshop for professional growth, what type of workshop would you like to attend? (Money is no object)
Draw the ideal floor plan of the ideal classroom.

Curriculum Questions

Speculate about what would happen if you integrated math into your social studies unit.
How would you incorporate technology if money were not a factor?
How would you expand the curriculum to better meet the needs of our students?
How will you incorporate technology into your curriculum?
Remembering when you were in the grade you teach now, what did you learn or not learn that you would like for your students to know?
Where do you see the curriculum going in the next five years?

Lesson Plan Questions

Visualize a lesson using the new technique _____.
Predict what the outcome of the perfect lesson would be.
Project what might be some products from the perfect lesson.
If you had to choose the best lesson from you week's plans, which would it be and why?
If you could create your own lesson plan book what would it look like?
How could you integrate this lesson plan into other areas of the classroom?
If you could have any materials available, what would you use to teach your lesson about earthworms?

Visualize a situation where “best practices” are in conflict with district policy. How would you approach this situation?



Teaching Skill Questions

How will you teach a United States ESL student about new technology?

Predict how your teaching skills will change in the next five years.

How would you use outside resources to enhance or bring to life what you do in the classroom?

Upon the start of the school year, textbooks have not arrived. What you do to best meet the needs of your students and ensure learning?

When I go into your classroom, what will I see you doing?

As you look at your own weaknesses, what are you willing to do to change them?

Evaluative Questions

Belief/Mission Questions

Tell me about your classroom environment.

Based on your experience with peer coaching how do you now feel about this process?

How do you expect your students will behave during this lesson?

What qualities make you an effective teacher?

If we had a time capsule, what would you place in it to represent your beliefs?

What advice would you give a former student who would like to be a teacher?

Describe a mission statement for your classroom.

Curriculum Questions

Explain how you plan to use cooperative learning in your curriculum.

How will you address your special needs students?

What do you like most about teaching?

If we had a time capsule, what would you place in it to represent your curriculum?

Since you've told me you believe in integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum, what subjects are you integrating into your science unit today?

Name two subjects that can easily be integrated. Why?

Describe a unit where you integrated all areas of the curriculum.

Explain your criteria for choosing specific pieces of literature.

Lesson Plan Questions (Evaluation)

Describe the strengths of your lesson.

How do your lessons reflect integrated learning?

How will the lesson you just taught impact your students' lives today?

If we had a time capsule, what would you place in it to best represent your lesson plans?

How did your lesson meet the needs of both the high and low students?

What kinds of accommodations/adaptations do you make to meet the needs of your special education students?

Tell the strengths and weaknesses of your lesson.
How will you know midway through your lesson if you are achieving your objectives?



Teaching Skill Questions

Tell me your thinking about what that child is sitting by himself.
If you were a student in your classroom which student would you be?
On a scale of 1 to 10, rate the effectiveness of your lesson today.
What other method(s) could also be successful?
When you teach this lesson again what will you change?
How have your teaching skills changed in the past five years?
What is the one most important thing you want your students to learn?
What are the most important skills you have gained from teaching?
Share with me some strategies you would use to promote success in a student who is unsuccessful in your classroom.
What methods do you use to evaluate your students?

Personalized Questions

Belief/Mission Questions

I heard you say you feel comfortable with our school mission and that you helped develop it. Tell me more about that experience.
You said you believe that all children can learn. How do you demonstrate this in your classroom?
As a (grade level) teacher what do you see as the most valuable trait a teacher at your grade level needs?
How do you personalize the school's mission statement to your classroom?
How will I see you demonstrate your belief that all children can learn?
How will your belief that all children are smart be demonstrated in the classroom?
What mission statement would you write for the school?
How would you like to contribute to our school and community outside the classroom?
What is your understanding of this district's mission and vision?

Curriculum Questions

Reflect on the curriculum and how you can integrate units.
How did you integrate across the curriculum?
Since you incorporate integrated learning, how can you modify it to an ESL student?
How will your hands on activities be demonstrated?

As a team member, what can you contribute?

Lesson Plan Questions

Clarify how you meet the needs of different learning styles within this lesson plan.

How effective do you think your lesson plans were?

You said you value parental involvement. What do you hope your students will share with their parents?

How do you relate lessons to everyday life skills?

As you look at your lesson plan for the class, where are your personal imprints?

What aspects of the lesson do you find joy in teaching?

Teaching Skills Questions

Tell me more about how cooperative learning contributed to the success of this lesson.

What position do you play on your team?

How do you come up with new teaching ideas?

What is the most important thing you want your students learn?

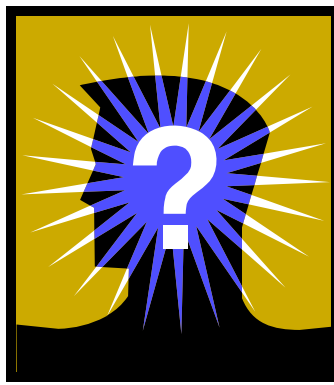
What do you think your students think of you as a teacher?

What signs of success did you see in this lesson?

If I were observing you in your classroom how would I identify your positive attitude through your body language?

Tell me how you decide which skills in your repertoire to use for specific lessons.

What are your plans for professional growth?



Important Characteristics of Mentor Teachers



- Demonstrated Excellence in Teaching
- Demonstrated Excellence in Working with Adults
- Sensitivity to the Viewpoints of Others
- Active and Open Learner
- Competent Social and Public Relations Skills

Selection of the Mentor Teacher



Novice teachers (NTs) consistently report that the mentor teacher is the single most helpful aspect of their teacher induction programs. Research has indicated that the relationship between the mentor teacher and the novice teacher is enhanced when the mentor teacher is:

- **A highly competent experienced teacher who is willing to help**
- **Assigned to teach the same subjects as the NT and has at least one common preparation with the NT**
- **Located in close proximity to the NT's classroom**
- **Has a common planning period with the NT**
- **Compatible with the NT both in personality and teaching ideology**

Source: Selection of the Mentor Teacher: Based on the Model Teacher Induction Project (MTIP) Study conducted at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas at Austin.



A Dozen Guidelines for Effective Mentors

- 1) Establish rapport.**
- 2) Be friendly and positive.**
- 3) Acknowledge the mentee's skills.**
- 4) Emphasize the importance of the teacher's role.**
- 5) Be tactfully honest.**
- 6) Be empathetic.**
- 7) Provide articles, pamphlets, or techniques in order to demonstrate helpfulness.**
- 8) Be a good listener.**
- 9) Ask objective rather than personal questions.**
- 10) Set realistic mentor-role expectations.**
- 11) Demonstrate the benefits of experience and change by building your own knowledge.**
- 12) Share ideas and solutions.**

Source: Guidelines. Maggie Westhoff

Mentor Roles



Role Description

Reference

Trusted Guide

Homer' Odyssey

Teacher, sponsor, host, counselor, supporter, guru, advisor

Levinson, 1978

Teacher, coach, trainer, positive role model, developer of Talent, opener of doors, protector, sponsor, successful leader

Schein, 1978

Traditional mentor, supportive boss, organizational sponsor, professional mentor, patron, invisible Godparent

Phillips-Jones, 1982

Guide, supporter, challenger

Daloz, 1983

Teacher, counselor, supporter, protector, promoter, sponsor

Zey, 1984

Confident (in addition to Schein's roles)

Gehrke & Kay, 1984

Master teacher, teacher advisor, teacher specialist, teacher researcher-linker, consultant

Bird, 1985

Colleague teacher, helping teacher, peer teacher, support teacher

Borko, 1986

Trusted professional colleague, supporter, coach, facilitator of independence

Odell, 1989

Responder to concerns, colleague, initiator of professional growth

Huling, 1990

Conferencer, observer of teaching, problem solver, informer about school culture and climate

Ganser, 1996

Empathizer, acknowledger of accomplishments, interpreter of teaching/learning events

NES, 1997

Source: Mentor Roles/Tips. Permission for use granted by Sandra J Odell, University of Nevada Las Vegas

Tips for Mentor Teachers Working With Novice Teachers



- establish a strong and trusting professional relationship with novice teachers
- develop mutual respect for each other's competence
- commit to a long-term, developmental view of teacher growth
- facilitate rather than control the professional development of novice teachers
- assist rather than assess the progress of the novice teacher
- notice and build on the strengths of the novice teacher
- focus on the novice teacher's own goals for teaching
- agree together on the goals of your work
- use classroom data as a basis for analysis and discussion with the novice teacher
- be a novice-teacher advocate as you communicate and interact with the principal

Source: Mentor Tips. Permission for use granted by Sandra J. Odell, University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Situational Mentoring



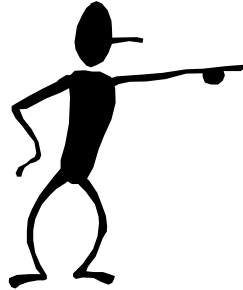
How Directive Should the Mentor Be?

Directive Mentoring

Collaborative Mentoring

Non-Directive Mentoring

When to Use Directive Mentoring

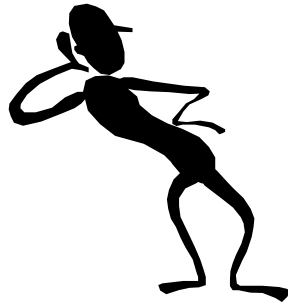


Directing Standardizing Reinforcing

- When the mentor has knowledge that the mentee does not possess
- When the mentor knows what the problem is and the mentee does not
- When the mentee's behavior is self-defeating but is not viewed as such by the mentee
- When the mentee is consistently defensive and closed to feedback
- In a crisis situation where the personal or professional well-being of the mentee is at stake

Source: Situational Mentoring. Glickman, C. (1985) *Developmental Supervision*

When to Use Nondirective Mentoring



Listening

Clarifying

Encouraging

- When the mentee possesses more knowledge than the mentor
- When the mentee is seriously concerned about a problem and the mentor does not see a problem
- When the mentor judges that a mentee's proposed action is safe
- When the mentee is capable but reluctant to act
- When the mentor wants to gain insight into the mentee's level of skill or motivation

When to Use Collaborative Mentoring



Reflecting Presenting Problem-solving Negotiating

- When the mentor and mentee both possess knowledge about the topic or issue
- When the mentor understands one part of a problem and the mentee understands another part
- When there is time for collaboration, and the mentor senses that the mentee is ready to assume more responsibility
- When the mentor senses that the mentee needs to feel part of the decision-making process.

Styles of Mentoring

Responder

- Encourages Novice Teacher (NT) to ask for help and provides assistance when requested in areas of concern

Colleague

- Through frequent, informal contact with NT, notices when NT experiences a concern or problem and provides assistance related to the area of concern.

Initiator

- Accepts responsibility to promote the professional growth to the greatest degree possible. In addition to providing assistance when requested, regularly makes suggestions to NT to promote professional growth.

Styles of Mentoring the Novice Teacher

Style &
Description

Requirements

Outcomes

Limitations

Responder:

Encourages NT to ask for help and provides assistance when requested in area of concern.

MT who is willing to help; NT who trusts the MT enough to ask

NT gets help with major areas of concern

Many of the day-to-day problems not dealt with constructively.



MT- Mentor Teacher; NT – Novice Teacher

Styles of Mentoring the Novice Teacher Con't.

Style &
Description

Requirements

Outcomes

Limitations

Colleague:

Frequently initiates informal visits with the NT and when NT expresses a concern or problem, provides assistance related to the areas of concern.

Additional time and commitment on the part of MT.

Strong personal relationship develops between NT and MT; NT gets substantial help with identified areas of concern.

Extent of professional growth determined by NT who has limited experience and view of effective teaching.



MT- Mentor Teacher; NT – Novice Teacher

Styles of Mentoring the Novice Teacher Con't

Style &
Description

Requirements

Outcomes

Limitations

Initiator:

Accepts responsibility to facilitate the professional growth of the NT to the greatest degree possible in addition to providing assistance when requested, regularly makes suggestions to NT to promote growth.

Substantial teaching expertise on the part of the MT; Strong rapport between MT and NT; MT must have opportunity to observe teaching of NT.

NT gets benefit of the expertise of the MT; MT experiences professional growth along with NT.

Extent of professional growth limited only by the potential of NT and the mentoring expertise of MT.



Common Problems and Pitfalls

Mentoring programs are rife with potential obstacles, dilemmas, snares, and pitfalls for the unwary. Here are some of the most common.

Mentor/Protégé mismatches. Sometimes mismatches occur due to lack of or inadequate consideration of personalities, temperaments, and chemistry. The inevitable result is personality clashes and soured relationships. The disaster is all too often compounded by continuing the relationship instead of breaking it off.

Forced relationships. Involuntary, legislated, arbitrary mentoring relationships, matching by the organization with no input from either the mentors or the mentees, is certain to result in problems. Such an approach causes discontent and generates resentment and suspicion. Mentoring partnerships should be voluntary for both parties.

Excessive structuring. Sometimes programs are too formal and have too many rules and prescribed procedures. That does not permit the degree of informality and flexibility so necessary to a personal/professional relationship. So, have few rules and allow mentors and their charges enough flexibility to adjust to

Giving advice. Although the mentor invariably is more mature and experienced than the mentee, he or she should refrain from giving advice. When advice is given, it takes decision making away from the mentee and makes the mentor responsible for the results if the advice is followed. However, most people unconsciously reject advice because a subtle message is being sent: the mentor is more capable of making decisions than the mentee.

Generalizing. There are very few absolutes in life. So, when anyone says, "Everyone believes that" or "All effective supervisors are...." he is she is being unequivocally ridiculous. Rarely are human being consistent enough always to be or do the expected.

Criticizing. The role of the mentor is to motivate the mentee, to provide information and ideas, not to judge and evaluate, particularly the mentee's beliefs, values, or behavior. Even if the criticism is considered to be constructive, it is likely that the mentee will resist and resent it.

Reprimanding. There is no place in the mentor-mentee relationship for scolding, chiding, or admonishing. Not only is it debilitating and unproductive, but it's also often demoralizing. Trying to evoke guilt is not only manipulative but also dead wrong.

Creating stress. Putting pressure on a mentee to elicit tension is likely to be non-productive. Stress is part of the learning and maturation processes, and is usually more useful when the mentee creates his or her own stress through personal commitment to growth and development.

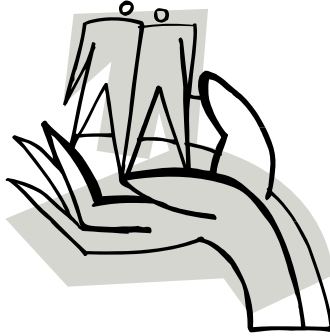
Other pitfalls

- Failure to evaluate and modify the mentoring program and its results.
- Resentment of those without mentors.
- Failure to identify positions for the employees whose skills and talents have been developed by the mentoring program.
- Failure to check on the satisfaction of both parties with the mentoring relationship.
- Inadequate opportunities for mentors and mentees to get to know and interact with each other.

Source: William R. Tracey, Ed.D. is president, Human Resources Enterprises of Cape Cod, Inc., an international training and education consulting firm based in South Yarmouth, MA. He can be reached at 508-394-9509 or by e-mail wtracey@capecod.net.

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