

10 Key Elements of Coaching in Early Childhood

Effective coaching practice should embody certain elements. Use this tip sheet as a reminder of the 10 key elements of coaching best practices as used in early childhood education.

Coaching practices should be...

1

Consistent with the principles of adult learning

If a learner aims to gain deep knowledge of a particular content area, then he or she must develop an understanding of how to use the knowledge in a specific context and how to generalize it to other situations.

2

Capacity building

Rather than creating dependency, the coach helps the coachee discover what he or she already knows and thus can do, shares new information and ideas, assists the coachee with developing the tools that they need to achieve the desired outcomes, and helps the coachee generalize the reflections and resulting actions to new and different situations.

3

Nondirective

As a nondirective approach, coaching does not mean that the coach can never share information with the coachee and must wait for the coachee's self-discovery; rather, the key to effective coaching is knowing when, how, and why questions are asked, information or feedback is shared, and a form of more directive instruction is used.

4

Goal oriented

Although goals may change over time, their achievement by the coachee is the purpose of the coaching relationship. The relationship between the coach and coachee is defined by the coachee's goals, which may be the factor that determines who serves as the coach.

5

Solution focused

If coaching is related to a specific problem or problem area, the purpose of using a coaching approach is to identify possible solutions that can be implemented immediately, instead of concentrating on the problem itself as in traditional counseling or psychotherapy.

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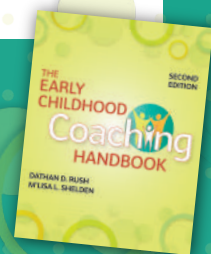
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6**Performance based**

Performance is measured in terms of growth, development, and learning over time, relative to the coachee's desired outcomes. Coaching that focuses on performance is action oriented rather than driven by emotions or feelings. Coaching requires the coachee to actively participate and be engaged in order for learning and behavioral change to occur.

7**Reflective**

Reflection can help the coachee discover what modifications or new knowledge and skills he or she might need in current and future situations to obtain a desired outcome. Reflection, active participation, and engagement on the part of the coachee are used both to strengthen that person's competence with regard to what he or she can do and to build on current knowledge or skills in order to acquire new ideas and actions.

8**Collaborative**

The coach must learn what the coachee knows, understands, and is doing, including his or her preconceived knowledge about coaching and ideas for change, and how potential changes might be applied and might affect the coachee's current situation. The coachee may learn the coach's processes for reflecting upon and generating ideas, developing resources, solving problems, and planning actions, in addition to gaining any specialized knowledge that the coach provides in the form of feedback.

9**Context driven**

Coaching is a relationship that is built on the achievement of goals related to functional activities, beginning with the coachee's current situation. The content of coaching is never separated from the context in which the coach and coachee use targeted performance and/or jointly identified solutions. The act of coaching includes observations and actions by the coach and the coachee in current situations related to the coaching goals, where the identified solutions may be tried and joint plans carried out.

10**As hands-on as it needs to be**

The coach may assist the coachee in identifying possible options or external resources, share information to build deep factual knowledge on the topic, model an action for the coachee, and provide feedback on the coachee's actions following the coachee's self-reflections. As the coachee becomes more confident and competent in his or her performance, the coach's role becomes more focused on process than on content—that is, the coach continues to prompt the coachee to reflect on and analyze ideas, consider alternatives, and plan actions. Over time, feedback by the coach becomes more affirmative and less informational.

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