

Coaching & Mentoring

SUMMARY

Teachers play an important role in developing people and often step into the role of mentor or coach when working with students and peers. Here is a summary of 12 activities performed by effective coaches and mentors as identified by experts and based on the experience of RAFT staff. These activities are covered in RAFT's professional development offering in coaching and mentoring skills.

ACTIVITIES FOR EFFECTIVE COACHING & MENTORING:

Building the relationship

1. **Build trust** - demonstrate honesty, integrity, credibility, and trust one's team
2. **Show empathy** - use protégé's figures of speech and express understanding
3. **Actively listen** - avoid distractions, use eye contact, acknowledge fact and feeling, ask questions, and use body language (smiles)
4. **Influence tactics** – Be a charismatic, persuasive, and assertive role model, show humor

Manage performance

5. **Goal setting** – Develop specific group/individual goals with deadlines, develop action plans, provide encouragement and regular review
6. **Performance** – Set expectations, metrics, and standards for positive performance; create plans for corrective action for performance that does not meet standards
7. **Provide frequent feedback** – Be specific, express feelings, interpret observations, discuss paradigm differences, be empowering, use small talk to build rapport
8. **Encourage positive action** – Recognize to reward, compliment to motivate, choose appropriate visible rewards that match the positive actions
9. **Discourage negative actions** – Clearly state consequences, establish corrective paths

Encourage growth and content mastery

10. **Provide training** – Encourage internalization of material, use motivated interest, provide practice, encourage reflection and informal learning, understand different learning styles
11. **Help others solve problems** – Know traits of protégé, use systematic approach, use creative techniques, ask good questions that guide to solutions
12. **Help difficult people** – Handle problems professionally, address conflicts directly & promptly, listen & respond, criticize constructively, make deals, reinforce civil behavior

CONCLUSION

Teachers may find that they already perform many of these activities to help their students grow as effective learners. Student teachers benefit greatly from working with teachers who possess the qualities of effective mentors/coaches. As teachers practice and improve their skills in these activities they become more confident in their role as mentors/coaches and are more likely to become teacher leaders within their sites or departments, providing an opportunity to have a positive impact on school improvement efforts.

RESOURCES

- Dubrin, A. (2005). *Mentoring and coaching skills*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Rodgers, J. (2008). *Coaching Skills: A Handbook (2nd ed.)*. Open University Press, McGraw Hill Education.