Louisiana Department of Education
Mentor Teacher Training

Module 6:
Difficult Conversations & Monitor Progress

(City, LA)
(Date)

Created by Learning Forward

Mentor Teacher Training

Mentor Training Course Goals

Mentors will:

- Build a strong relationship and effectively communicate with mentee, including providing ongoing support to mentee in a virtual space
- Understand the mindset and needs of adult learners, including new teachers, and how they apply to the mentoring role
- Diagnose and prioritize mentee's strengths and areas for growth in the areas of classroom management, instruction & understanding the unique needs of students
- Design and implement a mentoring support plan to develop mentee knowledge and skills
- Monitor mentee's progress and determine next steps for ongoing mentoring work

Module 6 Agenda:

- Welcome and outcomes
- Difficult Conversations
- Evaluate Impact
- Determine Next Steps
- Reflect
- Connection to Assessments
- Closure

Mutual Commitments:

Make the learning meaningful

Engage mentally and physically

Notice opportunities to support the learning of others

Take responsibility of own learning

Own the outcomes

Respect the learning environment including use of technology

Module 6 Outcomes:

- Facilitate difficult conversations using the "Opportunity Conversation" protocol

- Examine all data collected to identify mentee's progress toward SMART goal

- Determine next steps in work with mentee

- Engage mentee in reflection on practice

- Reflect on mentoring experience and make a concrete plan for future practice

The Mentoring Cycle
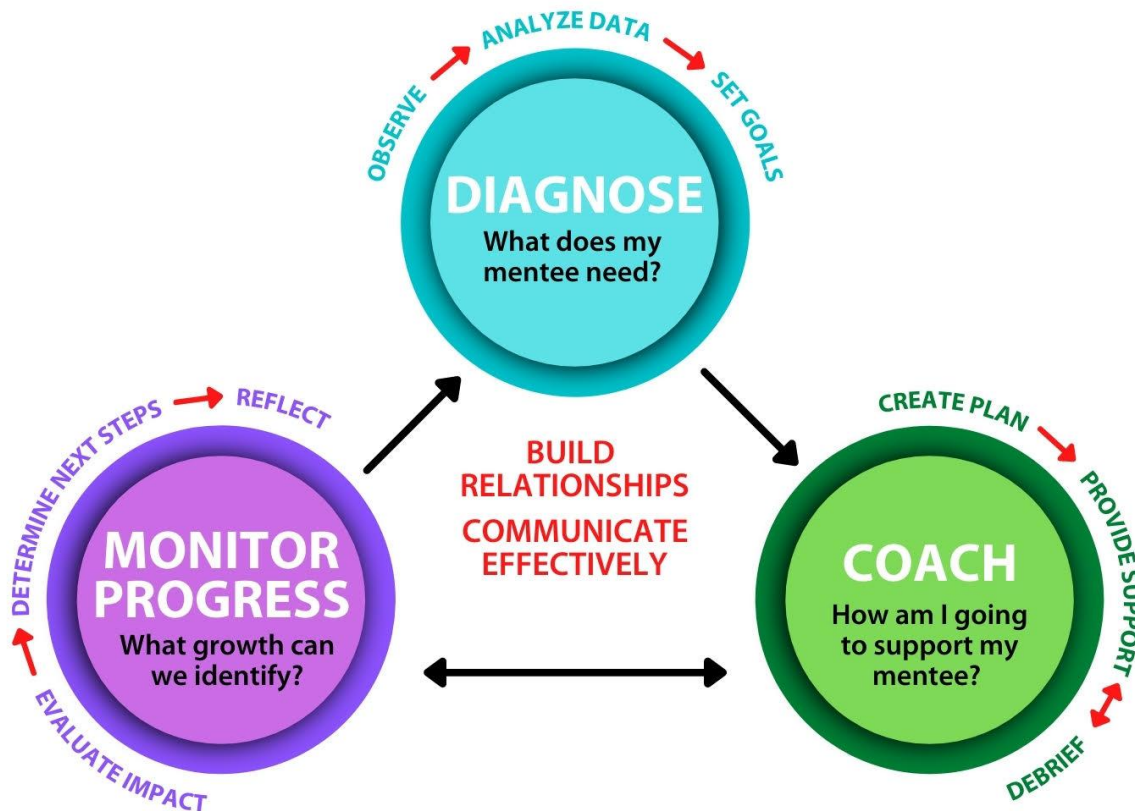
Let's Make a Date

Effective Communication: Difficult Conversations

Effective Communication: 3 Key Components

- Listen and paraphrase

- Ask questions

- Give feedback

Guiding questions:
1. What is a difficult/opportunity conversation?

2. What kinds of topics might be difficult for mentors to talk about with mentees?

3. How do mentors prepare for a difficult/opportunity conversation?

4. What process can mentors use to structure difficult/opportunity conversations?

5. How are my views about difficult /opportunity conversations changing as I learn more about how to engage in them?

~~Difficult~~ Opportunity conversations are . . .

those you'd rather not have because they are uncomfortable.

Name some example topics related to mentoring.

What difficult conversations have you experienced so far as a mentor?	What other kinds of topics might be difficult for mentors to talk about with mentees?

Why bother?

Difficult conversations are opportunities for:

1. Speaking your truth contributes to an environment of trust

2. Expressing your concerns reduces your level of stress

3. Saying what's on your mind increases your sense of self-efficacy

4. Addressing issues when they arise builds and maintains a productive, trusting relationship

5. Having these conversations models for mentees

6. Tackling issues simply handles them instead of letting them linger and get more difficult to address

Reflect

How are difficult conversations an opportunity to tackle important issues, build self-efficacy, and maintain trust?
What does this mean to you as a mentor?

<u>"Opportunity" Conversations Protocol</u>

Video - 1st watch: Jot down notes on how you might feel in the mentee's shoes during the conversation.
Video - 2nd watch: Jot down notes about things you notice about the structure of the conversation.

"Opportunity" Conversation Protocol

Use this protocol when there is a specific, uncomfortable, yet necessary issue to address between individuals.

Step	Sketch a doodle or symbol to help you remember what happens in this step

1. Prepare mentally.
   a. Reframe your thinking.
   b. Consider what your interests are.
   c. Consider the other person's interests.	

2. Identify the issue or situation.
   a. Name the issue.
   b. Consider if it is your issue alone or if you both share responsibility.
   c. Clarify if addressing it is likely to alleviate or prevent future issues.	

3. Provide a specific example that exemplifies what you think is necessary to change.
   a. Give one specific example.
   b. State it neutrally without interpretation, assumptions, or judgment.	

4. Describe your feelings about the issue.
   a. Name your response.
   b. Own that it is yours.	

5. Clarify what is at stake.
   a. State the potential immediate and long-term consequences.
   b. State them neutrally and clearly.	

6. Identify your contribution to this situation. a. Own responsibility for contributing to the situation.	

Step	Sketch a doodle or symbol to help you remember what happens in this step

1.   Prepare mentally.
     a.   Reframe your thinking.
     b.   Consider what your interests are.
     c. Consider the other person's interests.	

b. Name how you contributed.	

7.   Indicate your desire to resolve the issue.
     a.   Be truthful.
     b. Name what is at stake for you if the situation is not resolved.	

8.   Invite the other person to respond.
     a.   Listen fully and without interruption.
     b.   Paraphrase to demonstrate understanding.
     c. Probe if necessary, although silence, acceptance, and acknowledgement may be best.	

9.   Plan next actions together.
     a.   Be clear on the criteria for moving forward.
     b.   Generate possible next actions together.
     c.   Choose the action(s) that most closely meet the criteria.
     d. Seek agreement and commitment to implement the action(s), even if temporarily.	

10.   Set a time to revisit.
     a.   Come back to review how things are going.
     b. Listen and assess viability of continuing or if new agreements must be reached.	

Transcript of the Protocol in Action

This mentor and mentee have been working together around teaching writing. They've made plans several times for the mentor to come into the classroom during lessons that focus on the students' writing skills, but each time the mentor has visited the mentee's classroom, the mentee hasn't followed through on the plan and has skipped over and rushed past those parts of the lessons. The mentor wants to figure out why the mentee is doing this. The mentor feels that this is important because she is worried the students' writing skills are going to stagnate. She also wants the mentee to feel like they are partners - not someone who the mentee should just say "yes, yes" to and then ignore. The mentor thinks that maybe the mentee is just telling her what she thinks she wants to hear, but is ready to hear her point of view.

Mentor Hi, ____. Thanks for meeting up with me...I was hoping we could talk some more about what it looks like to teach writing skills in the ELA Guidebooks lessons. Does now still work to talk?

Mentee Yeah, I've got about 20 minutes.

Mentor Got it. So last Wednesday I popped by your classroom like we had planned, and while you focused on the knowledge and understanding the students needed, you skipped over the section of the lesson that focused on writing skills and said you didn't "have time".
I was disappointed that you skipped this part of the lesson because we had talked about that part of the lesson and you said you were ready to teach it.
I take some responsibility because we haven't done any coaching around writing skills instruction. I made an assumption that you were ready to teach those parts of the lessons, and I should have asked if you wanted me to model or co-teach it with you.
The impact of you skipping those parts of the lessons is that your students' writing will stagnate. They may have the knowledge and understanding of the texts, but won't have the skills to express this knowledge and understanding.
I want you to feel like you can let me know that you're not ready or comfortable teaching something when I ask you if you are or when I assume that you are. Being your mentor is important to me and I'd like to make sure I'm supporting you in all the areas you want and need support.
So...I just talked a lot. I really want to hear your perspective on this.

Mentee Wow, yeah, the writing parts of the lessons are uncomfortable for me. I don't think

you've noticed this, but even though I enjoy reading, I'm not a strong writer - this was always hard for me in school and I don't find it fun to teach.

Mentor Thank you so much for letting me know this about you. It sounds like writing doesn't come easy to you, and so teaching writing isn't coming easy for you either.

Mentee Yeah, I think so. And then you kept asking me, "You've got that part, right?" and I felt like I had to say yes.

Mentor I am so sorry about that - that is definitely my responsibility to not make assumptions.

Mentee Thanks, yeah. So then, it was kind of easy, you know, to let the first part of the lesson take too long and then I don't have time to teach writing.

Mentor So would you like to work on writing skills together?

Mentee If *t*his is something specific that you can focus on with me, that might help. You mentioned modeling or co-teaching. Could you come model a lesson for me and then maybe if we can co-plan and then co-teach the next few writing skills sections that are coming up, that will help me start to build my comfort.

Mentor That sounds great. Let's do that and after we do that for the next three lessons, let's revisit and see how you're feeling.

Take Notes on the Protocol in Action

What do you notice about each step?

What do you want to keep in mind for when you try the protocol?

Step	Notes
1. Prepare mentally.	
2. Identify the issue or situation.	
3. Provide a specific example that exemplifies what you think is necessary to change.	
4. Describe your feelings about the issue.	
5. Clarify what is at stake.	
6. Identify your contribution to this situation.	
7. Indicate your desire to resolve the issue.	
8. Invite the other person to respond.	
9. Plan next actions together.	

10. Set a time to revisit.	

"Opportunity" Conversation Practice

Use the protocol to practice having an opportunity conversation with the first scenario, with one partner playing the mentor, and one partner playing the mentee. Then switch roles for the second scenario.

Scenario 1:

Your mentee hasn't been wanting to show you their students' writing pieces. You've wanted to help him analyze his students' writing, but he keeps making excuses not to show you, and it's starting to get awkward. You're tempted to just stop asking and avoid the topic of writing all together.

Scenario 2:

You are starting to feel like your mentee sees you as unhelpful to him. When you offered suggestions during your last debrief conversation that were exactly what you would do in your classroom, the mentee gave a lot of reasons why the suggestions wouldn't work in his classroom, which made you feel disrespected as a professional. You don't understand why he's not valuing your experience and agreeing with your teaching practices.

Plan Forward

Step	Notes
1. Prepare mentally.	
2. Identify the issue or situation.	
3. Provide a specific example that exemplifies what you think is necessary to change.	
4. Describe your feelings about the issue.	
5. Clarify what is at stake.	
6. Identify your contribution to this situation.	
7. Indicate your desire to resolve the issue.	
8. Invite the other person to respond.	

9. Plan next actions together.	
10. Set a time to revisit.	

Reflection on "Opportunity" Conversations

| |
|---|
| How are my views about difficult/opportunity conversations changing as I learn more about how to engage in them? |

Key Takeaway: The "Opportunity Conversation" protocol is an effective method for facilitating difficult conversations with a mentee.

Monitor Progress: Evaluate Impact

Evaluate Impact: 3 Key Components

- Review the goals and plan

- Examine all data collected

- Identify progress or lack thereof

Review the goal and plan:
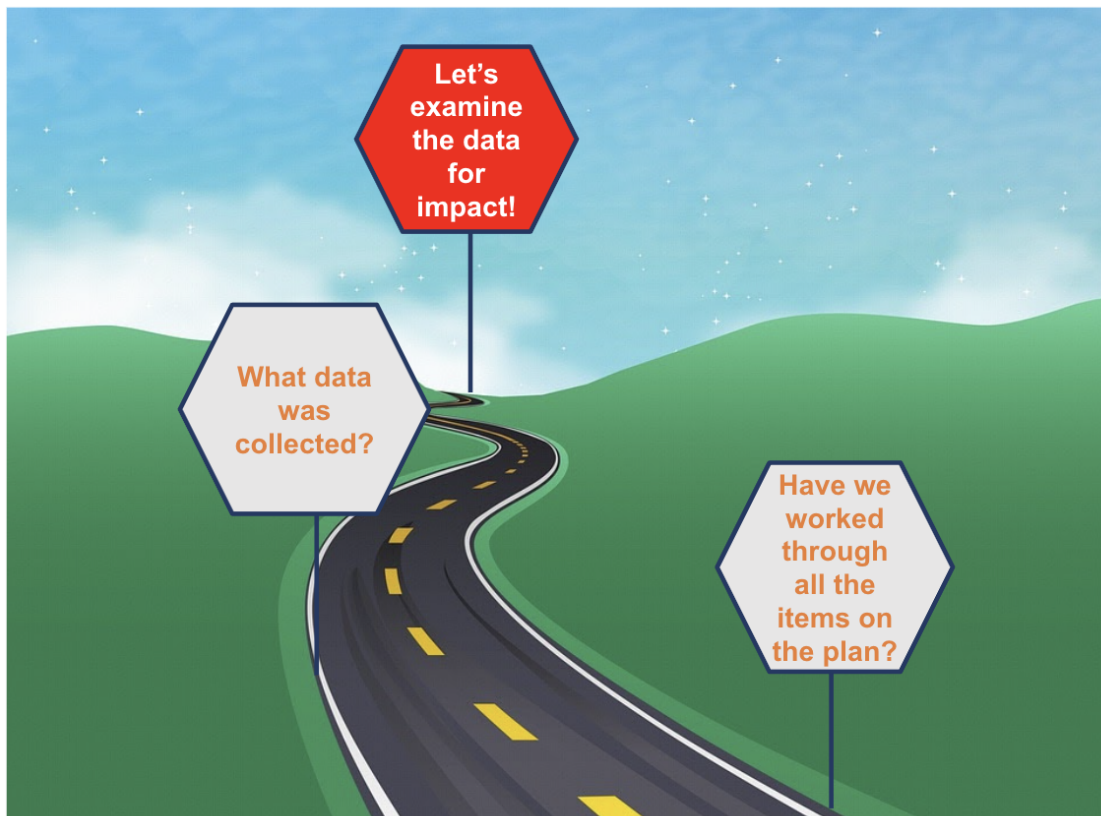
Examine all data collected:

What data? (may include any of the following)**:**

- Initial observation and set goals notes

- Model teaching look-fors checklist and debrief notes

- Co-planning notes (lesson, unit…)

- Co-teaching debrief notes

- Any other support or debrief notes

- Student work

- Student data

- Additional observations and feedback

Guiding Questions:

- What data are we looking at?

- What is being measured in each assessment?

- How did various populations of students perform? Are all students being positively impacted?

- What areas of student performance are demonstrating the goal is or is not being met?

- Do patterns exist in the data?

- What confirms what we already know?

- What surprises us?

Scenario Practice

SMART Goal: *During the next five lessons, the teacher will utilize evidence-based questions that are focused on the content of the text rather than opinions so that students provide answers based on evidence rather than prior knowledge as measured by teacher observations during class discussions.*

Data Includes:

- Initial observation notes & debrief planning document
- Mentoring plan
- Model look-fors checklist and debrief notes
- Student discussion data
- Additional observation notes

Click HERE to access the data set for the scenario.

Identify progress or lack thereof:

- Use professional judgment.

- Refer to high quality instructional materials guidance.

- Possibilities:

    - Student data collected shows obvious progress, ready to try something new

        - 80% achieved is usually sufficient

    - Progress has been slow, may not be the right thing to target, needs a new goal

    - Needs more direction and support on this goal

    - Needs support on something not addressed by current goal

Guiding Questions:

- Has the teacher made progress toward their goal?

- What evidence exists to support that?

- What additional evidence, if any, is necessary to show adequate progress toward the goal?

- Does enough evidence exist to support that the teacher has adequately met their goal? Describe the evidence.

- Could the teacher benefit from continued work on this goal?

Evaluate Impact Work Space

Guiding Question	Notes
What data am I looking at?	
What is being measured in each assessment?	
How did various populations of students perform? Are all students being positively impacted?	
What areas of student performance are demonstrating whether or not the goal is being met?	
Do patterns exist in the data?	
What confirms what I already know?	
What surprises me?	
Summary of key findings.	

Guiding Question	Notes

Has the teacher made progress toward their goal?	
What evidence exists to support that?	
What additional evidence, if any, is necessary to show adequate progress toward the goal?	
Does enough evidence exist to support that the teacher has adequately met their goal? Describe the evidence.	
Summary of key findings.	

What's sticking with you about Evaluating Impact?

Key Takeaway:
Evaluating the impact of all mentor work prepares a mentor for a next steps conversation.

Monitor Progress: Determine Next Steps

Determine Next Steps: 3 Key Components

- Plan *next steps* meeting

- Conduct *next steps* meeting

- Make decision

Next Steps **Meeting**

Suggested Guiding Questions for Discussion	Planning Notes (mentor completes prior to conversation)	Meeting Notes
Step One: Examine All Data Collected		
Your SMART goal is ___. How do you think it's going in meeting your goal?		
What actions/supports have best supported you in working on this goal?		
I brought some data from our time working together including _____. What evidence here exists to support your work on this goal?		
Step Two: Identify Progress		
How do you feel about the progress you've made toward meeting your SMART goal?		
What, if any, additional work could be done in continuing to address this SMART goal?		

Step Three: Make Decision		
Do we have a sufficient amount of evidence to support that your SMART goal was met?		
(If the answer to the above question is no) What next steps should we take to continue working on this goal? I.e. another model or co-teach, observation with feedback, etc.		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Do you have another focus area in mind that we can set a new SMART goal for?		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Would you like to participate in a new observation and see what new areas to grow in come through as a result?		

What do you notice?

What do you wonder?

Plan _next steps_ meeting:

- On your own, determine next steps.
- Set up "check-in" with your mentee.
- During check-in:
  - Review new data

○ Identify progress

○ Determine next steps in your work together

Scenario Practice Part 3

Next Steps **Meeting**

Suggested Guiding Questions for Discussion	Planning Notes (mentor completes prior to conversation)	Meeting Notes
Step One: Examine All Data Collected		
Your SMART goal is ____. How do you think it's going in meeting your goal?		
What actions/supports have best supported you in working on this goal?		
I brought some data from our time working together including _____. What evidence here exists to support your work on this goal?		
Step Two: Identify Progress		
How do you feel about the progress you've made toward meeting your SMART goal?		
What, if any, additional work could be done in continuing to address this SMART goal?		

Step Three: Make Decision		
Do we have a sufficient amount of evidence to support that your SMART goal was met?		
(If the answer to the above question is no) What next steps should we take to continue working on this goal? I.e. another model or co-teach, observation with feedback, etc.		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Do you have another focus area in mind that we can set a new SMART goal for?		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Would you like to participate in a new observation and see what new areas to grow in come through as a result?		

During _next steps_ meeting:

- Utilize ALL data from across ALL work done together

- Focus on examining for growth and change in practice

- Rely heavily on all effective communication skills

    - Listening

    - Paraphrasing

    - Questioning

    - Giving feedback

- Utilize opportunities protocol if needed

Next Steps **Meeting: Example Part 1**

First - look at pages 27-28 of your handout
- What similarities do you see between your break out room "next steps" planning and the "next steps" plan in your handout?

Second- read pages 29 and the top of 30
- STOP where the handout states to stop reading.
- How did the questions the mentor chose to ask drive the conversation?
- How did the mentor support their findings?
- What else are you noticing?

Next Steps Meeting Planning Template Example

Suggested Guiding Questions for Discussion	Planning Notes (mentor completes prior to conversation)	Meeting Notes
Step One: Examine All Data Collected		
Your SMART goal is ___. How do you think it's going in meeting your goal?	*During the next five lessons, the teacher will utilize evidence-based questions that are focused on the content of the text rather than opinions so that students provide answers based on evidence rather than prior knowledge as measured by teacher observations during class discussions.* *-the follow-up observation went really well!*	
What actions/supports have best supported you in working on this goal?	*-pre-planning the questions* *-sentence stems* *-varying ways for students to interact/discuss/answer questions*	
I brought some data from our time working together including _____. What evidence here exists to support your work on this goal?	*-the discussion tracker* *-majority of questions asked were focused on the content of the text* *-more students cited text*	

	evidence without prompting than with prompting *-majority students used sentence stems - they found them helpful!*	

Step Two: Identify Progress

How do you feel about the progress you've made toward meeting your SMART goal?	*-great progress! Found new tools that have had a major, positive impact*	
What, if any, additional work could be done in continuing to address this SMART goal?		

Step Three: Make Decision

Do we have a sufficient amount of evidence to support that your SMART goal was met?	*-Yes, I believe we do.*	
(If the answer to the above question is no) What next steps should we take to continue working on this goal? I.e. another model or co-teach, observation with feedback, etc.		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Do you have another focus area in mind that we can set a new SMART goal for?	*-I'm not sure, maybe she has an idea…*	
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Would you like to participate in a new observation and see what new areas to grow in come through as a result?		

Next Steps Meeting Transcript

Mentor: *Thanks for taking the time to come and check in with me. I know it's been a crazy couple of weeks, but I do feel like we've been working on your goal for a while now and it seems like this would be a great time to check in and see where we are at.*

Mentee: Yes! I've been anxious to check back in since your last observation.

Mentor: Well nothing to be anxious about I promise! But so what we are going to do in our conversation today is kind of take a step back and look at all of the work we've done so far, then talk about what progress you've made thus far toward your SMART goal, and make a decision about where we go from here. Sound okay?

Mentee: Sounds great!

Mentor: So your goal that we've been working on is, "During the next five lessons, the teacher will utilize evidence-based questions that are focused on the content of the text rather than opinions so that students provide answers based on evidence rather than prior knowledge as measured by teacher observations during class discussions." We've done a lot of work toward this goal. How do you think it's going?

Mentee: I feel like it is going way better than in the beginning.

Mentor: I agree. Can you tell me why you feel that way?

Mentee: I feel more relaxed during the class discussions because of the new structures I have in place. I am utilizing the teacher guidance and the guiding questions in the TE, the sentence stems to help students give text evidence without prompting, and I really feel like ALL of my students are engaged in the conversations, not just some.

Mentor: I completely agree! This was very obvious during my follow-up observation from last week. [brings out the student discussion tracker to reference] You can see on the discussion tracker how many students were citing evidence without you even having to prompt them. They were able to do this almost second nature because you were sticking to those types of questions rather than honing in on too many opinion/experience-based questions like you were doing at the start of our work together.

Mentee: Wow! I didn't even realize this many students were citing evidence to the questions without prompting! Even Louie, that's amazing!

Mentor: I know! So what tools and/or actions do you feel like you will continue to use moving forward?

Mentee: Definitely the discussion tracker. I like being able to see this type of quantitative data. The students really found the sentence stems useful, so I think not only will I continue to use that here, but I also plan on looking for other opportunities to integrate something like this in other areas.

Mentor: I love that idea! Sentence stems really are a great strategy across the board. As we revisit our plan and think about moving forward in our work together, would you agree that you've made great progress toward meeting your SMART goal?

Mentee: Yes, I feel really good about the work we did together and am super proud of how my students have benefitted from the new strategies I'm using.

<mark>PAUSE YOUR READING HERE. DO NOT READ AHEAD YET!</mark>

Mentor: I agree! So when I think about whether we have a sufficient amount of evidence to support that you met your SMART goal, I believe we can say yes! We went through a coaching cycle by co-planning, modeling, and debriefing. You continued to put what you learned into practice, which was very obvious in the follow-up observation. The student data tracker also supports the student impact the new strategies had. What do you think?

Mentee: Wow! Thank you! Yes, I do feel like I was able to improve in this area and that I will only continue to get stronger.

Mentor: So we don't want to get stuck in a circle and just work on the same skills over and over again. I believe you've really made progress in this area and now we get to decide how we want to move forward in our work together. Do you have another focus area in mind that we can set a new SMART goal for?

Mentee: Not really. I've been so hyper focused on my ELA instruction though I do feel like I haven't been giving my A game during my math block.

Mentor: I'm sure you've been doing great. Is there something in particular you would want to work on when it comes to your math instruction?

Mentee: Hmmmm, I'm not sure. We are about to start a new unit though. Fractions, ugh! I hate teaching fractions.

Mentor: Well, how about this? Why don't we set up a time for me to come do another initial observation during a math lesson and maybe this can help us come up with a new goal for our next mentoring cycle. What do you think?
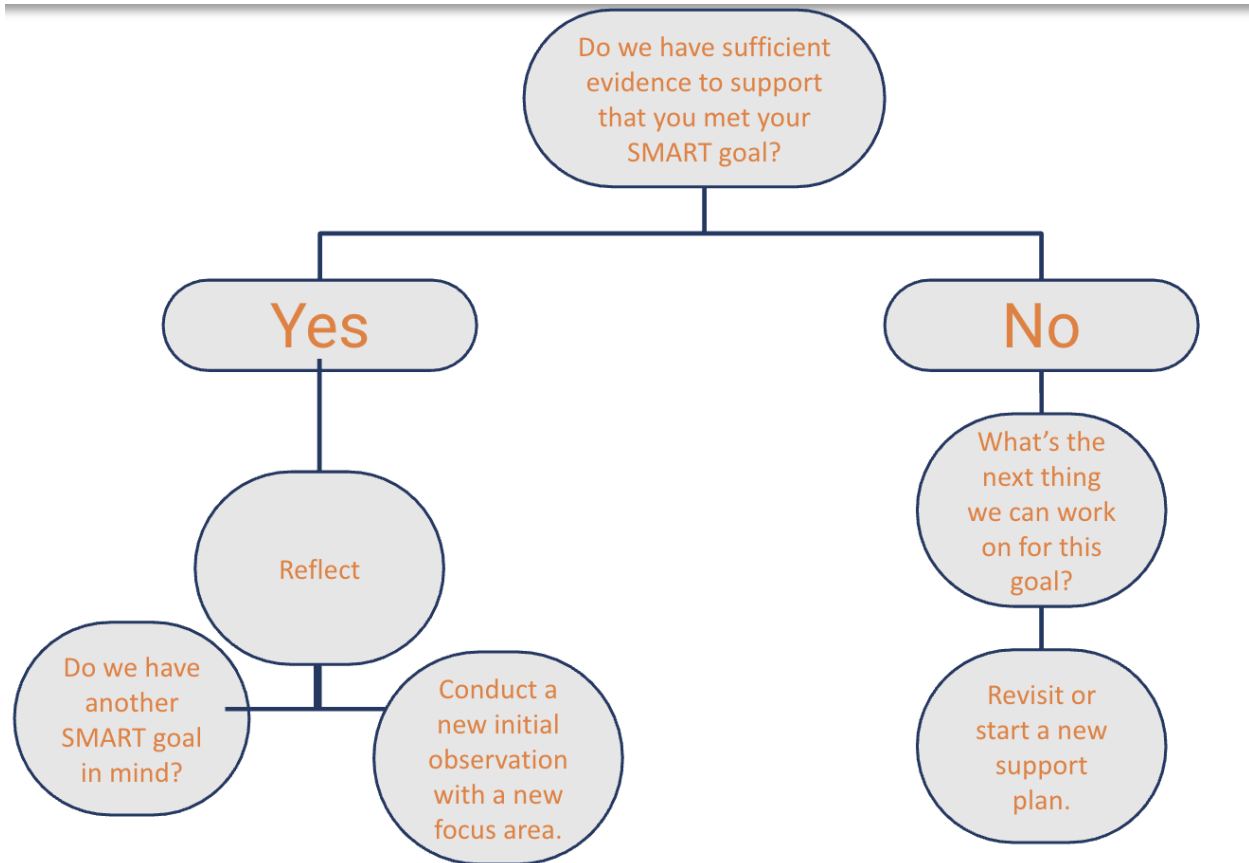
Mentee: That sounds good. I'll email you some dates and times as options.

Mentor: Perfect.

Next Steps Meeting - Example Part 1

- How did your planning for this meeting compare to the planning of this mentor?

- How did the questions the mentor chose to ask drive the conversation?

- How did the mentor support their findings?

- What else are you noticing?

Make Decision:

Do we have sufficient evidence to support that you met your SMART goal?

Yes

No

Reflect

What's the next thing we can work on for this goal?

Do we have another SMART goal in mind?

Conduct a new initial observation with a new focus area.

Revisit or start a new support plan.

Next Steps **Meeting - Example Part 2**

- What was the outcome of the conversation?

- Do you agree or disagree with the outcome?

- Will a new coaching plan be developed as a result of this conversation? How do you know?

Next Steps Meeting

Suggested Guiding Questions for Discussion	Planning Notes (mentor completes prior to conversation)	Meeting Notes
Step One: Examine All Data Collected		
Your SMART goal is ___. How do you think it's going in meeting your goal?		
What actions/supports have best supported you in working on this goal?		
I brought some data from our time working together including _____. What evidence here exists to support your work on this goal?		
Step Two: Identify Progress		
How do you feel about the progress you've made toward meeting your SMART goal?		
What, if any, additional work could be done in continuing to address this SMART goal?		
Step Three: Make Decision		

Do we have a sufficient amount of evidence to support that your SMART goal was met?		
(If the answer to the above question is no) What next steps should we take to continue working on this goal? I.e. another model or co-teach, observation with feedback, etc.		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Do you have another focus area in mind that we can set a new SMART goal for?		
(If the answer to the above question is yes) Would you like to participate in a new observation and see what new areas to grow in come through as a result?		

Key Takeaway:

The mentor monitors data on mentee progress toward SMART goal to determine when it is appropriate to reflect and engage in a new cycle.

Reflect

Reflect: 3 Key Components

- Facilitate reflective conversation

- Engage in self-reflection

- Celebrate wins and determine areas of growth

Three Levels of Text Protocol

1. Move into breakout rooms that are groups of three.
2. Assign one person to be the timekeeper.
3. Independently read the pieces on reflection and identify several passages that stand out to you because they have implications for your mentor practice. (10 minutes)
4. One person shares the following three levels of thought about the text. (2 minutes)
   a. LEVEL 1: Read aloud a passage you have selected.
   b. LEVEL 2: Say what you think about the passage. (interpretation, connection to past experiences, etc.)
   c. LEVEL 3: Say what you see as the implications for your work.
5. The group responds to what has been said. (1 minute)
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 for the remaining group members, not duplicating a passage that has already been shared. (6 minutes)
7. Discuss and summarize the implications for your work and be ready to share. (2 minutes)

Reflecting on Work Improves Job Performance

Published May 5, 2014 by Harvard Business School. Retrieved from HBS website at: https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/reflecting-on-work-improves-job-performance

by Carmen Nobel

New research by Francesca Gino, Gary Pisano, and colleagues shows that taking time to reflect on our work improves job performance in the long run.

Many of us are familiar with the gentle punishment known as "time-out," in which misbehaving children must sit quietly for a few minutes, calm down, and reflect on their actions.

New research suggests that grown-ups ought to take routine time-outs of their own, not as a punishment, but in order to improve their job performance.

In the working paper [Learning by Thinking: How Reflection Aids Performance](#), the authors show how reflecting on what we've done teaches us to do it more effectively the next time around.

"Now more than ever we seem to be living lives where we're busy and overworked, and our research shows that if we'd take some time out for reflection, we might be better off," says Harvard Business School Professor [Francesca Gino](#), who cowrote the paper with [Gary Pisano](#), the Harry E. Figgie Professor of Business Administration at HBS; Giada Di Stefano, an assistant professor at HEC Paris; and Bradley Staats, an associate professor at the University of North Carolina's Kenan-Flagler Business School.

The research team conducted a series of three studies based on the dual-process theory of thought, which maintains that people think and learn using two distinct types of processes. Type 1 processes are heuristic—automatically learning by doing, such that the more people do something, the better they know how to do it. Type 2 processes, on the other hand, are consciously reflective, and are often associated with decision making.

Essentially, the researchers hypothesized that learning by doing would be more effective if deliberately coupled with learning by thinking. They also hypothesized that sharing information with others would improve the learning process.

Reflection, Sharing, And Self-efficacy

For the first study, the team recruited 202 adults for an online experiment in which they completed a series of brain teasers based on a "[sum to ten](#)" game. A round of problem solving included five puzzles, and participants earned a dollar for each puzzle they solved in 20 seconds or less.

After recording the results of the first problem-solving round, the researchers divided participants randomly into one of three conditions: control, reflection, and sharing.

In the control condition, participants simply completed another round of brain teasers.

In the reflection condition, participants took a few minutes to reflect on their first round of brain teasers, writing detailed notes about particular strategies they employed. Then they, too, completed a second round of puzzles.

In the sharing condition, participants received the same instructions as those in the reflection group, but with an additional message informing them that their notes would be shared with future participants.

Results showed that the reflection and sharing group performed an average of 18 percent better on the second round of brain teasers than the control group. However, there was no significant performance difference between the reflection and the sharing

group. "In this case sharing on top of reflection doesn't seem to have a beneficial effect," Gino says. "But my sense was that if the sharing involved participants actually talking to each other, an effect might exist."

Next, the researchers recruited 178 university students to participate in the same experiment as the first study, but with two key differences: One, they were not paid based on their performance; rather, they all received a flat fee. Two, before starting the second round of brain teasers, they were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt "capable, competent, able to make good judgments, and able to solve difficult problems if they tried hard enough."

As in the first study, those in the sharing and reflection conditions performed better than those in the control group. Those who had reflected on their problem solving reportedly felt more competent and effective than those in the control group.

"When we stop, reflect, and think about learning, we feel a greater sense of self-efficacy," Gino says. "We're more motivated and we perform better afterwards."

A Field Experiment

The final study tested the hypotheses in the real-world setting of Wipro, a business-process outsourcing company based in Bangalore, India. The experiment was conducted at a tech support call center.

The researchers studied several groups of employees in their initial weeks of training for a particular customer account. As with the previous experiments, each group was assigned to one of three conditions: control, reflection, and sharing. Each group went through the same technical training, with a couple of key differences.

In the reflection group, on the sixth through the 16th days of training, workers spent the last 15 minutes of each day writing and reflecting on the lessons they had learned that day. Participants in the sharing group did the same, but spent an additional five minutes explaining their notes to a fellow trainee. Those in the control condition just kept working at the end of the day, but did not receive additional training.

Over the course of one month, workers in both the reflection and sharing condition performed significantly better than those in the control group. On average, the reflection group increased its performance on the final training test by 22.8 percent than did the control group. The sharing group performed 25 percent better on the test than the control group, about the same increase as the reflection group.

This was in spite of the fact that the control group had been working 15 minutes longer per day than the other groups, who had spent that time reflecting and sharing instead.

Gino hopes that the research will provide food for thought to overworked managers and employees alike.

"I don't see a lot of organizations that actually encourage employees to reflect—or give them time to do it," Gino says. "When we fall behind even though we're working hard, our response is often just to work harder. But in terms of working smarter, our research suggests that we should take time for reflection."

Win your life by harnessing The Power Of Reflection

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By Rybo Chen

We are all learners, at any and every stage and role in life. We need to learn as students, learn as parents, learn as employees, learn as managers. The list goes on forever. One important thing is that reflection is the most important part of the learning process, and whatever is not reflected is usually not learned and retained. The only way for us to grow and improve is to take a good look at what's working and what's not for us.

"We do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience." — *John Dewey*

At least once a day, and more often several times a day, I reflect and journal on my day, on my life, on what I've been doing right, and what isn't working. I reflect on every aspect of my life, and from this habit of reflection, I am able to continuously improve. Oftentimes, I learn much more about myself unexpectedly. For example, I was reflecting on my fitness habits, and I realized some of my work was affecting my fitness habits, I think reflected on my work as well. I was able to come up with a change that affected both of my fitness and work aspects positively.

Why should we reflect?

Great question to ask. We may all have different answers because every one of us is so unique. However, I believe the fundamental reason is because deep reflections really empowers us to gain self-awareness and to improve and become better humans.

Benefits of reflection

1. It helps you learn from your mistakes.
We are on route to repeat our mistakes and failures, if we don't reflect on our mistakes

and failures. We can be smarter and choose to reflect on those mistakes and failures, figure out what went wrong, see how we can prevent them in the future. Mistakes and failures are valuable learning tools because we can use them as stepping stones to get better, instead of something to feel embarrassed or upset about. Reflection is an important way to do that.

2. It gives you great ideas.

Every blog post so far is from my reflections. I reflect on things that I am currently doing or that are going on in my life, and share my learnings and reflections in the articles I write. If I reflect on something that works well for me, I think about the "why" behind it and share that too. Same goes with my failures and mistakes. I look forward to growing together with my readers.

3. It helps you help others.

I realized by reflecting upon myself, I have gained a lot of insights which I find may be a valuable learning experience for others as well. I can share what I've learned to help others going through the same things. I began the year with the hope that some of the things I've learned in the past couple years can help others. Only two weeks into my blogging career, I have people telling me how little tips, like how to wake up early, or how to start the exercise habit, have changed their lives. It's an amazing feeling. I'm simply humbled that I could help people or/and inspire them.

4. It makes you happier.

When we reflect on the things we did right, the things and relationships that we have, it allows us to celebrate the little things and little successes in life. It allows us to realize how much we've done right, the good things we've done in our lives and empower us to do even more. Without reflection, it's too easy to forget these things, and focus instead on our failures.

5. It gives you perspective.

Oftentimes we are caught up in the troubles in our busy daily lives. A mistake, a failure, a stressful project or anything similar can seem like it means all the world. It can be extremely overwhelming. However, if we take a minute to step back, and reflect on these problems, and how in the grand scheme of things they don't mean all that much, it can calm us down and lower our stress levels. We gain perspective, and empower us to focus on what's more important to us.

6. It helps you understand yourself better

When we reflect, we are having conversations with ourselves. Those self conversations are a great way to understand ourselves better. We can gain more insights of ourselves to further learn about our strengths, weaknesses, fears, and might even discover something unexpected.

How to do it?

Here comes the fun part. How should we actually reflect? I may have a different method and approach from you, and I'd love to share mine as a guideline. You are more than welcome to follow and/or even build your own reflection method.

I usually set aside some time at night after my bedtime reading, and think over the events that happened that day, think about the people I met that day and the interactions I had with them. I would ask myself one simple question and journal down my answers. "If I were to re-live today again, what 3 things would I change to make today better?" and from that question I may continue onto deeper reflective questions as follows.

1. Did I live up to my core values and personal mission today?
2. Did I act as a person others can respect today?
3. Did I respect my body the way I should today?
4. Did I make a positive impact on the world today?
5. Did I perform at my best today?
6. Did I have negative emotions today? Why?
7. Did I use my time wisely today?

Furthermore, think about the reasons behind the answers to the above questions to explore and gain more insights about yourself. When you're able to learn more and more about yourself, you have harnessed the power of reflection!

Notes: Why Reflect?

What is a specific skill or area that your mentor has helped you improve in? How do you know that you have improved in this skill or area?

Which supports from your mentor were most critical in meeting your needs?

What are your goals to continue to improve in this area?

Reflect: Build Relationships & Communicate Effectively

Building a Relationship

- Establish trust
  - Methods for building trust
  - Using Partnership Agreements
- Build confidence
  - Embrace growth mindset
- Maintain momentum
  - Use Gordon's Skill Ladder

Engaging in Effective Communication

- Listen and paraphrase
  - Deep listening
  - 3 Types of paraphrasing
    - Acknowledge & clarify
    - Organize & connect
    - Shift logic
- Ask questions
  - Powerful questions
- Give feedback
  - Learner-centered feedback

What wins do you want to celebrate for yourself in each area?

What areas of growth do you see for yourself in each area?

Diagnose

Diagnose has three components: observe,analyze data, and set goals.

Diagnose: Notes on key points
You can also save your post-its from the Give One, Get One, Move On activity here.

Give One, Get One, Move On Protocol

1. Get 3 post-its. Use your diagnose materials. On each post-it, write a key learning or important idea from your point of view about the Diagnose portion of the mentor cycle.
2. Get up and mingle. When the facilitator says "Give One! Get One!" stop and make a pair with someone close by. Share one of your key learnings with each other (give one and get one). Read each other's post-it.
3. When the facilitator says "Move On!" mingle again.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 two more times.

What practices have you applied that were related to this portion of the Mentor Cycle? What in your mentee's practice prompted you to apply these practices?
How do you determine if these practices are effective?
Select a time when you engaged in the practices of Diagnose to examine more closely. What did you do? What was the outcome? What went right? What was a mistake?
What are your strengths as a mentor in this area of the Mentor Cycle?
What are your areas of need as a mentor in this area of the Mentor Cycle?
What actions for your own practice will you take next based on this reflection?
What actions to help others will you take next based on this reflection?

Coach

Coach has three components: Create plan, Provide support, Debrief

Coach: Notes on key points

Coach: Two Minute Papers Protocol
1. Use your Coach materials.
2. Write to answer the question *from your perspective*. (2 minutes)
3. Share your response with the person sitting next to you. (2 minutes)
4. Repeat the steps for each question.

	Your Answer	Notes on Discussion
What is the most challenging aspect of the Coach portion of the Mentor cycle?		
What did you find to be the most confusing aspect of the Coach portion of the Mentor cycle?		
What is the most important aspect of the Coach portion of the Mentor Cycle?		

Mentor Self-Reflection: Coach

What practices have you applied that were related to this portion of the Mentor Cycle? What in your mentee's practice prompted you to apply these practices?
How do you determine if these practices are effective?
Select a time when you engaged in the practices of Coach to examine more closely. What did you do? What was the outcome? What went right? What was a mistake?
What are your strengths as a mentor in this area of the Mentor Cycle?
What are your areas of need as a mentor in this area of the Mentor Cycle?
What actions for your own practice will you take next based on this reflection?
What actions to help others will you take next based on this reflection?

Monitor Progress

Monitor Progress has three components: Evaluate impact, Determine next steps, & Reflect

Monitor Progress: Notes on key points

Recall, Summarize, Question, Comment., and Connect Protocol

> **Recall:** Make a list of what you recall as most important about Monitor Progress
>
> **Summarize**: Summarize the essence of Monitor Progress
>
> **Question**: Ask any questions that remained unanswered
>
> **Comment**: Share answers to the questions
>
> **Connect**: Explain how Monitor Progress relates to the Mentor Cycle as a whole

What practices have you applied that were related to this portion of the Mentor Cycle? What in your mentee's practice prompted you to apply these practices?
How do you determine if these practices are effective?
Select one time when you engaged in the practices of Monitor Progress to examine more closely. What did you do? What was the outcome? What went right? What was a mistake?
What are your strengths as a mentor in this area of the Mentor Cycle?
What are your areas of need as a mentor in this area of the Mentor Cycle?
What actions for your own practice will you take next based on this reflection?
What actions to help others will you take next based on this reflection?

Key Takeaway:
Engaging in reflection is an effective strategy for consolidating, understanding, and celebrating learning and for determining where to focus learning next.

Closure:

"Ain't nothin' to it but to do it." -Maya Angelou

<u>Appendix:</u>

- Click <u>HERE</u> to access a Secondary Math data set.
- Click <u>HERE</u> to access another ELA data set.
- Click <u>HERE</u> to access an upper elementary ELA data set.
- Click <u>HERE</u> to access an additional Secondary Math data set.