

Instructional Feedback for Professional Teaching & Learning

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In this February K12 INFO Brief, we look effective instructional feedback for teachers and instructional staff growth.

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Introduction/Definition

Instructional feedback is an important part of professional development and improvement of classroom practice. The interaction of supervisors, administrators, and peers is paramount in the improvement of teaching and learning in schools. As with students, the drive for lifelong learning and improvement of teaching and learning is a goal for all educators (FeedbackFruits, 2021). When teachers receive “regular, actionable feedback” on their practice, they are well-placed to make the changes that need to be made to improve practice and align

with new instructional requirements and standards (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2014).

What type of feedback and how that feedback is articulated to instructional staff is critical in the development of new and improved skills. Feedback can be “manifested in multiple forms, from constructive comments and advice, to behavior, social interactions, and praise (FeedbackFruits, 2021, p. 3).” Outside of structured evaluations, feedback is offered through a variety of conduits, including peer-to-peer comments, emails, and the sharing of instructional materials.

Winne and Butler (1994) define feedback as “information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding. Furthermore, this information should reduce the gap between the current performance and the desired outcomes” (Winne & Butler, 1994).

Turning growth-oriented assessment and feedback into a collective responsibility of teachers and school leaders solves the current “span of control” issue, whereby principals are solely responsible for the performance appraisal of dozens of teachers in the course of a year, a guarantee for formulaic superficiality. Collaborative cultures where growth-oriented assessment and feedback are a regular practice of teachers and leaders offer a more effective and sustainable solution to the improvement of the teaching profession (Fullan et al., 2015, p. 10).

Unfortunately, many people provide feedback the way they were taught to in decades past (Jackson, 2019b). There is a difference between evaluation and feedback. While rubrics and lists may be important, so is feedback that points to the root of practice, invites the opportunity for change, and focuses on student outcomes.

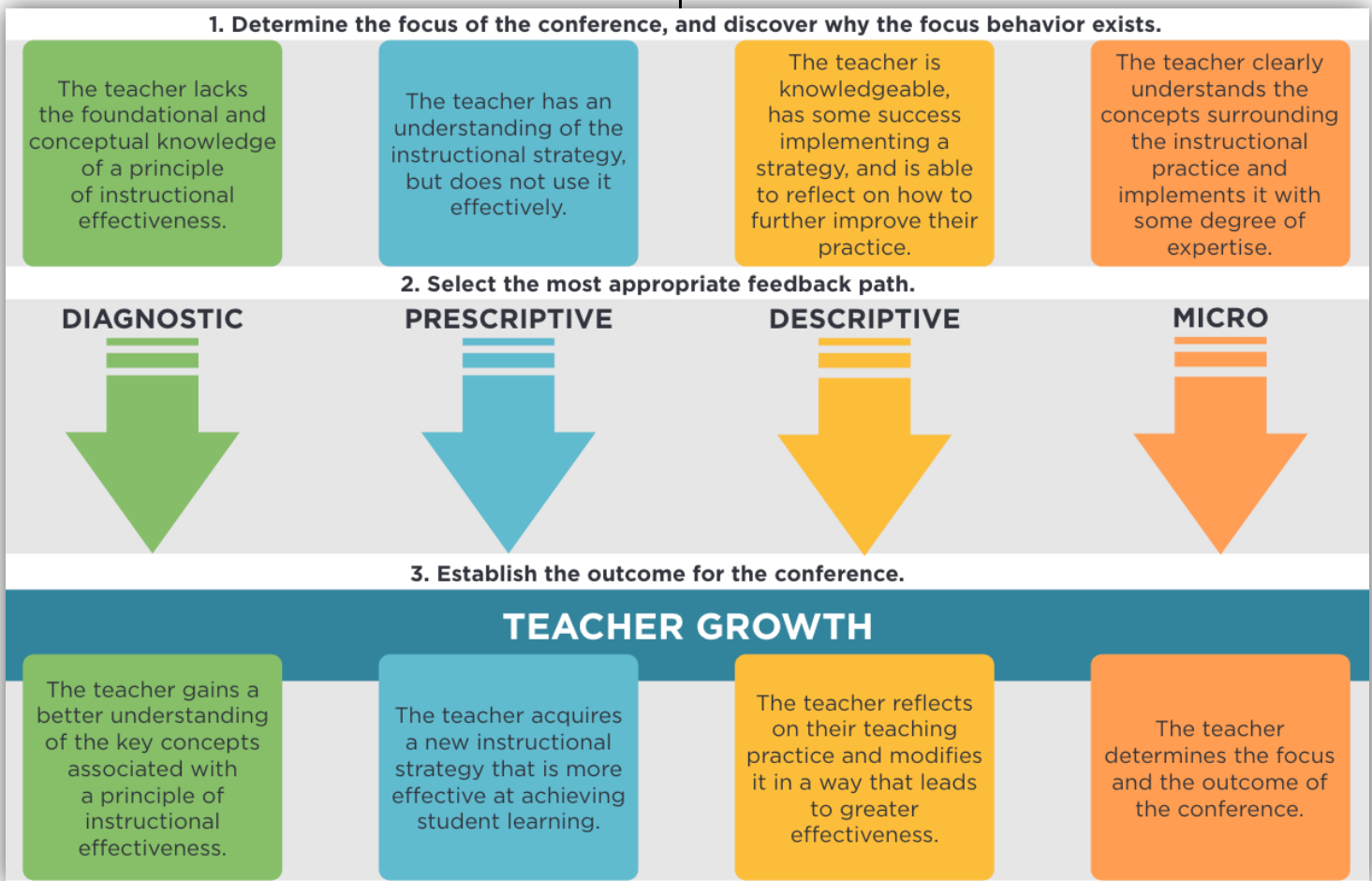
Types of Feedback

There are four main categories of effective feedback: diagnostic, prescriptive, descriptive, and micro-feedback (Network for Educator Effectiveness and Curators of the University of Missouri, 2021).

Exhibit 1. The Four Paths to Effective Feedback.

The Diagnostic Path focuses on the identification of something the teacher is or is not doing that may impede student learning. It provides instructors with information that can help remediate teaching practices based on learning theory (Jang & Wagner, 2013). Diagnostic feedback is helpful when the teacher does not fully comprehend what the problem is or how to correct it. Prudently provided feedback can help the teacher gain this knowledge and improve instructional practice.

The Prescriptive Path focuses on those occurrences where the teacher has knowledge of the pedagogical strategy but is not able to utilize it well, impacting student learning. The coach or team providing



SOURCE: Network for Educator Effectiveness and Curators of the University of Missouri (2021)

feedback recognize this and provide information that can help the teacher understand the deficiency and

learn positive strategies to improve his or her practice. As with the diagnostic path, the instructor gains knowledge through the support of peer coaching.

The Descriptive Path details a teacher who understands the expectations and principles of instructional practice and can improve their practice through reflection. Coaches in these situations often showcase what a teacher is doing well and where their practice can improve. This is sometimes described as holding a “mirror” to their practice. Coaches utilize the opportunity to help teachers build on their foundation of knowledge.

Finally, the **Micro-Feedback Path** centers on teachers who are very knowledgeable about pedagogy and practice and can often self-diagnose themselves. They are capable learners who strive to take their practice to the next level. Coaches help these teachers by providing “micro-feedback” that is very targeted and specific.

Setting the Stage for Feedback

As Matt O’Leary, whose career has been dedicated to researching the observation/evaluation process found, “Rating teachers’ (pedagogy) inhibits their growth; as soon as evaluative or developmental rating enters the picture teachers become cautious, fearful, and stop taking risks (2017).” In other words, when fear is present trust is absent, and the chance teachers will take big risks to innovate and grow their practice is minimized. Though not intended, the efforts to make observations more effective end up forgetting about the importance of trust, thus factoring into the results Bryk (2002) wrote about, “Relational trust is a vital but neglected factor in school success. Absent relational trust building, improvements in the quality of schooling remain unlikely (Randall, 2020).”

Understanding the pathway for feedback, as described above, is important to knowing what level of feedback should be provided. To provide authentic

feedback that will be well received by the teacher requires consideration of the situation, the teacher, and the environment. There are many descriptions of how this sets up, but Stone & Heen (2015) identify three “triggers” for feedback: Truth Triggers, Relationship Triggers, and Identity Triggers.

Truth Triggers relate to the sense upon those receiving the feedback that the information isn’t accurate, as if the supervisor is seeing and conveying something completely different from the teacher. Teachers may feel that the feedback is simply “wrong” or “off base” and easily rejected. To move past this issue, it is important that the teacher can question the feedback to better understand what the feedback is intended to mean. Understanding the meaning of the feedback is the important piece. When that meaning is missing between the provider and the receiver, miscommunication and mistrust may occur. For the supervisor or coach, it is important to connote the meaning of the feedback with clarity. For the teacher/instructor, they must open the door to understand that perhaps there are some things they do not understand about themselves or the practice and open themselves up to this “constructive” criticism. If the receiver simply shuts the door on the feedback, they potentially lose the importance transfer of information that can help them improve their classroom practice.

The **Relationship Trigger** has to do with the relationship between the supervisor and teacher. If based on trust and respect, the teacher is likely to view the feedback well. However, if there is a lack of trust or respect, then the feedback may be seen as inauthentic with lack of credibility. Most people have experienced feedback from people they do not value. It is common in everyday life and especially in social media. When we have a lower level of respect of the person providing the feedback, whether professionally or personally, we lessen our internal value of the feedback. Because of our value of the person, we actually impose the “Truth Trigger” as well by denying the viability of the feedback. This is a challenging issue because there exists a lack of trust between the teacher and the supervisor. Fixing this

trigger is difficult and requires the supervisor to work with the teacher to build trust, even if it is confined to the context of this particular situation. Similarly, the teacher needs to pause his/her judgement about the supervisor and try and pull out the nuggets of information that may be very useful for professional growth. Just because we do not like—or even value—someone providing us information does not mean they are wrong or misguided. It means we have to be mindful about how to receive this information.

Finally, the **Identity Trigger** focuses on the individual themselves. A teacher, under stress, may question their sense of who they are, limiting what may be well-intentioned (and accurate) feedback to more of an attack of who the teacher feels he or she is as a person and professional. All of these things undercut the nature of the feedback mechanism. People typically do not enjoy hearing negative information about themselves. Thus, it is important that the provider of this information is extremely clear and concise about what the information means. If the supervisor understands that the teacher is very sensitive to this type of information, special construction of the message should be considered. For the teacher, it is part of his/her responsibility to put themselves in a place where they can receive information that may be critical of what they did during their lesson.

Thus, the setup of the dialogue between a supervisor and a teacher will dictate, in many ways, the successful transfer of professional feedback. When truth, relationship, and identity are considered by both the provider and the receiver, the chance for a successful conversation is improved (Stone & Heen, 2015).

Building a Culture of Feedback and Trust

The culture related to feedback is an important piece of building trust and improving instructional practice. Culture can be defined as a “collection of organizational habits and the stories we tell ourselves about them” (Jackson, 2019a). Culture grows out of many things, including the micro-messaging that is transferred from person to person and unit to unit (Hirsch, 2017). Culture is intentionally developed through an intentional, transparent process. From culture comes trust.

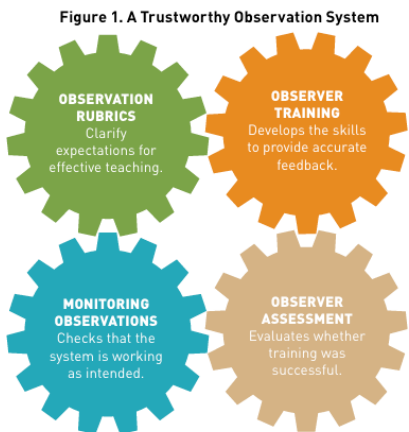
When observers take supportive actions, trust develops, which reduces the vulnerability that teachers experience as they take on new and uncertain tasks; it facilitates teachers' efforts to innovate in order to develop more effective instruction and leads to greater effort to implement successful innovations (Hattie, 2009).

Trust is an essential component of professional learning on par with student learning. Stoltzfus (2022) lists the establishment of trust as the number one tip for creating a culture of feedback. Trust builds a foundation upon which teachers and instructors take the opportunity to learn more and improve their classroom practice. When trust is absent, the opportunity to progress is stifled: “If there were no trust, then no one would take risks. Only when individuals can trust will they take personal risks in order to advance the organization” (Sinek, 2011). Sinek adds: “Trusting is a necessary risk for a leader. If we give people a sense of control and autonomy, we end up with healthier and happier teams” (Sinek, 2022).

The three triggers noted above serve as a basis for trust between observers and teachers. However, trust is carefully designed and manifested, built, in part, on a “proven observation rubric, carefully scaffolded observer training, assessment of observer accuracy, and ongoing monitoring of observations” (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2014, p. 5).

The development of trustworthy feedback process requires clear training of those who are the observers. As described in Exhibit 2 below, there are four pieces to ensuring trust from the observers' perspective, which include the observation rubrics, observer training, monitoring observations, and observer assessment.

Exhibit 2. A Trustworthy Observation System.



SOURCE: (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2014)

Observation Rubrics should be research based and align with state standards. An agreement on what constitutes good teaching and being able to provide examples that illustrate good teaching helps provide a foundation for success. A solid rubric provides a structure to the feedback and improvement of teaching. A well-designed rubric will be free from misinterpretation, providing clarity to the goals of the observation, and in turn, a framework for feedback.

The building of trust in observations requires quality **observer training**. Observers must fully understand the rubrics and goals of the observation as well as their role. Good observers will be taught to look for specific pieces tied to the rubric while minimizing their personal and professional biases. Observers need to continue to hone their skills and keep feedback focused on research-based principles.

Continual review of the observation process will help streamline and improve practice. Ensuring that teachers receive information that is of utility to them in order to improve teaching and learning is essential. Providing them with other, less-than-important

information can negate from the learning aspect of the feedback. And as teachers improve with observations and feedback, the level of feedback must also improve. Teachers review of the observations is important in process improvement.

Transparency and Intentionality

There are several benefits of transparent feedback. First, and perhaps most importantly, it builds trust. Trust among peers builds better relationships and ownership. It boosts engagement between team members towards the same goal: improving teaching and learning. It encourages problem solving to those ends where people with various perspective come together to find solutions. It creates better leaders by allowing everyone to lead. And finally, it creates a higher level of performance (Primalogik, 2015).

Feedback needs to be provided with a level of intentionality. Everything about the feedback process should be designed and considered with intent. Feedback with intent helps build teacher confidence and empowers their ability to teach at the highest level. It creates better relationships and builds trust with leaders and peers who are similarly focused on better teaching (New Leaders, 2022).

Intentional Feedback = Better Relationships

Essential Qualities of Effective Feedback

Wiggins (2012) identified seven keys to effective feedback that include:

Goal-Referenced	Effective feedback requires that a person has a goal, takes action to achieve the goal, and receives goal-related information about their actions. All feedback should provide recipients with information about their progress toward their goal and what actions they should take to achieve it.
Tangible and Transparent	Effective feedback should be connected to tangible outcomes that result from goal achievement. As such, school leaders should help teachers understand what those outcomes are, how to observe or measure them, and to what degree those outcomes are already being achieved.
Actionable	Effective feedback links to concrete, relevant, and specific next steps that the recipient can complete to improve their practice or knowledge in the competency or area of interest.
User-Friendly	Effective feedback is delivered at a volume and depth appropriate for the recipient. School leaders should avoid giving too much or little feedback or overly complex or simplistic feedback.
Ongoing	Effective feedback is given regularly to ensure continuous improvements are made and to provide multiple opportunities for recipients to gauge their progress toward goals.
Timely	Effective feedback is given within a timeframe appropriate to the behavior. While immediate feedback can be effective, school leaders should plan to give feedback with enough temporal proximity to the behavior so that recipients still remember it and can work toward improvement.
Consistent	Effective feedback should be accurate, stable, and trustworthy. This means that feedback mechanisms and processes should be formalized and shared with recipients so that they know what to expect. Feedback should also link to specific performance expectations or evaluative instruments.

NOTE: See [K-12 Info-Brief](#) from October, 2021 for additional information.

Framing Feedback

If principals do not really know their teachers, don't understand their personal and professional lives, aren't curious about their classrooms, and have not taken the time to understand how their practice and performance has evolved over time; if the only time principals see their teachers is during formal evaluation events, then they will often misdiagnose poor practice and the reasons for it. They might take a lesson out of context—a disruptive class that was unsettled by their previous teacher perhaps. They might see failure to post standards on the wall as a professional flaw without knowing that the teacher wants the point of that particular lesson—in social studies or drama perhaps—to unfold and be a surprise (Fullan et al., 2015, p. 13).

According to the Network for Educator Effectiveness (NEE), the “single greatest school-based impact on student achievement stems from the decisions made and the learning opportunities created by the classroom teacher,” necessitating a focus on active and objective evaluation of teaching practices

(Network for Educator Effectiveness and Curators of the University of Missouri, 2019, p. 2). The NEE identified three “golden rules” for providing effective feedback to teachers: Timely, Ongoing, and Consistent. Feedback for teachers should happen soon after observation, and always within 24 hours of the event. As well, the conversation(s) should be face-to-face whenever possible. No observation should be a one-and-done. Rather, these should be ongoing reviews and opportunities for dialogue between coaches and teachers. Finally, coaches need to be consistent in how they prepare and discuss the information with the teacher. A well-designed rubric to guide their observation and dialogue can help make this happen.

Providing sustained high quality professional learning opportunities for teachers and school leaders to learn and continuously practice how to provide, take and use effective feedback (Fullan et al., 2015, p. 11).

Exhibit 3. Five-Step process for creating effective feedback conversations. (Network for Educator Effectiveness and Curators of the University of Missouri, 2019)



Creating Effective Feedback

The feedback session can take place in a number of ways. The NEE created a five-step process to negotiate the feedback session.

Prepare. The initial step happens immediately after the observation and before the meeting with the teacher. This should include a review of notes and information gathered, both physically and visually, during the observation. The observer should narrow the focus on specific details of the lesson and use connect the review with the observation rubric.

Present Data. When the meeting reviews, the observer should provide an overview of what he, she, or they saw during the lesson, always keeping the information objective and dictated by the rubric. No opinions or speculations should be entered into the process.

Discuss Focus. Once the information has been presented, this step brings the teacher into the conversation to talk about practical improvement. Respond to the teachers input and questions, providing support language and keeping the dialogue factual based on the rubric. Ensure that the dialogue is one of support and keep it positive. Listen carefully to the teacher and provide responses that utilize active listening techniques, including paraphrasing back to the teacher.

Make a Plan. With the teacher, start creating a list of items for improvement and offer the teacher some strategies for consideration if the teacher is open to that feedback. This is the opportunity to support the teacher by expressing confidence. Actionable steps should be documented.

Follow Up. At the end of the session, a discussion about the next steps for the teacher putting the plan in place with a time window for a future observation. As always, the observer should provide an opportunity for clarity and questioning for the teacher.

There are a number of strategies for conducting a feedback mechanism and process for teachers. Many of them follow a similar guideline to that of the NEE above. The Centre for Teaching Excellence at the University of Waterloo created a seven-item checklist for providing feedback to teachers, understanding that coaches must consider the teacher's ability to process critical information in a short period of time (see Exhibit 4 on page 9).

Bell (2020) identified three frames for feedback that include validation, refinement, and correction:

- **Validation.** School leaders should look for ways to recognize successes and encourage continuation of effective practices. By focusing on effective actions, school leaders positively reinforce those behaviors they wish to maintain. Doing so also helps teachers recognize areas of strength that may not require as much active attention around improvement.
- **Refinement.** School leaders should highlight areas in which teachers can feasibly and noticeably improve with discrete adjustments or modifications to their practice. Essentially, school leaders should focus on skills and behaviors that teachers are currently developing or deploying with some fidelity in order to cultivate them toward higher levels of mastery.
- **Correction.** School leaders should identify behaviors that are inappropriate, ineffective, or incorrect. When delivering such feedback, school leaders should be direct about what teachers should stop doing and about what behaviors can replace those that are problematic.

Exhibit 4. How to Give Feedback Effectively.

<p>Concentrate on the behavior not the person</p>	<p>One strategy is to open by stating the behavior in question, then describing how you feel about it, and ending with what you want. This model enables you to avoid sounding accusatory by using "I" and focusing on behaviors, instead of assumed interpretations. Example: "I haven't seen you in class in for a week. I'm worried that you are missing important information. Can we meet soon to discuss it?" Instead of: "You obviously don't care about this course!"</p>
<p>Balance the content</p>	<p>Use the "sandwich approach." Begin by providing comments on specific strengths. This provides reinforcement and identifies the things the recipient should keep doing. Then identify specific areas of improvement and ways to make changes. Conclude with a positive comment. This model helps to bolster confidence and keep the weak areas in perspective. Example: "Your presentation was great. You made good eye contact and were well prepared. You were a little hard to hear at the back of the room, but with some practice you can overcome this. Keep up the good work!" Instead of: "You didn't speak loudly enough. However, the presentation went well."</p>
<p>Be specific</p>	<p>Avoid general comments that may be of limited use to the receiver. Try to include examples to illustrate your statement. As well, offering alternatives rather than just giving advice allows the receiver to decide what to do with your feedback.</p>
<p>Be realistic</p>	<p>Feedback should focus on what can be changed. It is useless and frustrating for recipients to get comments on something over which they have no control. Also, remember to avoid using the words "always" and "never." People's behavior is rarely that consistent.</p>
<p>Own the feedback</p>	<p>When offering evaluative comments, use the pronoun "I" rather than "they" or "one," which would imply that your opinion is universally agreed on. Remember that feedback is merely your opinion.</p>
<p>Be timely</p>	<p>Seek an appropriate time to communicate your feedback. Being prompt is key since feedback loses its impact if delayed too long. Delayed feedback can also cause feelings of guilt and resentment in the recipient if the opportunity for improvement has passed. As well, if your feedback is primarily negative, take time to prepare what you will say or write.</p>
<p>Offer continuing support</p>	<p>Feedback should be a continuous process, not a one-time event. After offering feedback, make a conscious effort to follow up. Let recipients know you are available if they have questions, and, if appropriate, ask for another opportunity to provide more feedback in the future.</p>

SOURCE: (Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo., n.d.)

Receiving Feedback

Instructional staff need to be properly prepared to receive feedback from their supervisors and/or peers. It is natural for many people to interrupt when hearing feedback; there exists a negative connotation with feedback in many ways, and high-quality instructional feedback works to break that expectation and create trust in the process. As Hirsch (2017) writes, “The secret to giving better feedback isn't what we say — it's what others hear” (p. 2). On the part of the teacher, learning to listen to feedback

is especially critical (Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo., n.d.). Active listening allows the receiver to focus on the content and message instead of preparing barriers for their own professional learning.

Part of listening for the teacher is to understand the message that has been prepared and delivered; to think critically about their performance and focusing on self-improvement. The supervisor must be cognizant of this process and think clearly about how he or she is conveying this information.

Exhibit 5. How to Receive Feedback Effectively.

Listen to the feedback given	This means not interrupting. Hear the person out and listen to what they are really saying, not what you assume they will say. You can absorb more information if you are concentrating on listening and understanding rather than being defensive and focusing on your response.
Be aware of your responses	Your body language and tone of voice often speak louder than words. Try to avoid putting up barriers. If you look distracted and bored, that sends a negative message as well. Attentiveness, on the other hand, indicates that you value what someone has to say and puts both of you at ease.
Be open.	This means being receptive to new ideas and different opinions. Often, there is more than one way of doing something and others may have a completely different viewpoint on a given topic. You may learn something worthwhile.
Understand the message	Make sure you understand what is being said to you, especially before responding to the feedback. Ask questions for clarification if necessary. Listen actively by repeating key points so that you know you have interpreted the feedback correctly. In a group environment, ask for others' feedback before responding. As well, when possible, be explicit as to what kind of feedback you are seeking beforehand so you are not taken by surprise.
Reflect and decide what to do	Assess the value of the feedback, the consequences of using it or ignoring it, and then decide what to do because of it. Your response is your choice. If you disagree with the feedback, consider asking for a second opinion from someone else.
Follow up	There are many ways to follow up on feedback. Sometimes, your follow-up will simply involve implementing the suggestions given to you. In other situations, you might want to set up another meeting to discuss the feedback or to re-submit the revised work.”

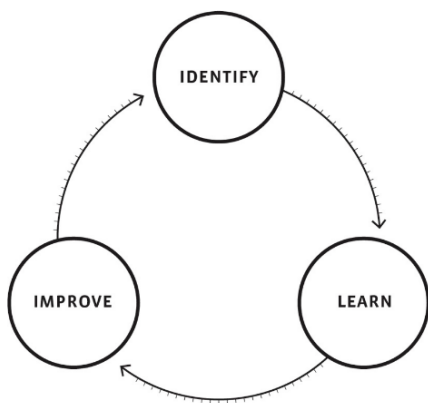
SOURCE: (Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo., n.d.)

Coaching and Feedback

Knight (2019) defines instructional coaching as a partnership with teachers to analyze current reality, set goals, identify and explain teaching strategies, and provide support. The tenet of working as a partner is critical to successful coaching and feedback, building on what Knight and his colleagues were able to discern from fields within and beyond education, including business, psychology, and cultural anthropology (Knight, 2011, p. 18). According to Knight, the quality of the interaction and the comfortability between coaches and teachers define the coaching opportunity: “Even if we know a lot about content and pedagogy and have impressive qualifications, experience, or postgraduate degrees, people will not embrace learning with us unless they’re comfortable working with us” (Knight, 2011, p. 18).

When coaches partner with teachers, the first step is to identify what reality is for the lesson and classroom. What is achievable? During the learning stage, the coach will work with the teacher on actionable goals that can be achieved during the lesson (see the PEERS Goal box below). Finally, coaches will provide feedback and work collaboratively with the teacher to identify areas of improvement to meet the goals of the lesson and practice.

Exhibit 6. Knight’s Impact Cycle.



SOURCE: Knight (2019), p. 7

Knight’s “Seven Partnership Principles” describe a theory of principles that provide a “conceptual language” that coaches can use with teachers (Knight, 2019).

1. **Equality.** The necessary condition of any partnership where coaches and teachers share ideas and work as equals, further building trust in their relationship.
2. **Choice.** In partnership, the coach and teacher discuss and set up the lesson. However, final decisions are left to the teacher. Professionals want to have a say in their development. The coaching/teaching relationship should respect this.
3. **Voice.** Conversations should be professional but warm and open, as with a good friend. There is a motivation to do well, so the conversations between coach and teacher matter greatly to the learning success.
4. **Reflection.** Providing an opportunity to reflect on the journey is an important aspect of learning. The “pause” to look back and understand what has occurred and what needs to change for improvement is a key aspect of professional growth.
5. **Dialogue.** Building on other aspects of the model, the dialogue allows for the free discussion of point/counterpoint without the aspect of “trying to win.” Ultimately, a discussion that results in choosing the idea that the coach and teacher agree upon is the best solution. Allowing one to listen instead of working to input a position is important.
6. **Praxis.** The act of applying new knowledge and skills.
7. **Reciprocity.** The belief that each learning interaction is an opportunity for everyone to learn—an embodiment of the saying, “When one teaches, two learn.” Reciprocity is the outcomes of the partnership between coaches and teachers and the respect that is earned by their cooperation.

Exhibit 7. What are some of the questions that coaches should ask?

- On a scale of 1-10, how close is the lesson to your ideal?
- What pleased you about the lesson?
- How would you have changed it to make it closer to a 10?
- What would you see your students doing differently?
- Describe what that would look like.
- How could we measure that?
- Should that be your goal?
- If you could reach that goal, would it really matter to you?
- What teaching strategy would you like to try to achieve your goal?

SOURCE: (EDTHENA, 2022)

Exhibit 8. PEERS Goals.

Powerful – Teachers should select a goal that, if achieved, will make a real difference in students’ lives.

Easy – In this case, “easy” does not mean the goal can be achieved with little effort. Instead, it means the goal is *simple* instead of unnecessarily complex.

Emotionally-compelling – The teacher should care deeply about the goal. Video helps here. When teachers identify areas of instruction needing improvement, they are more likely to select personally meaningful goals.

Reachable – This implies the goal can be measured, and the goal can be reached using a specific instructional strategy.

Student-focused – A focus on students ensures reaching goals will result in improved learning outcomes for students. Teacher-focused goals may sound nice but may not be directly connected to student learning. For example, a teacher might set a goal to “integrate more technology into instruction.” It’s difficult, though, to know if the goal actually helped students learn more.

SOURCE: EDTHENA (2022).

Bridging Feedback and Action

Entering a partnership between a coach, principal, or other observer with a teacher is a complex articulation that involves many of the issues covered in this brief. Trust, empathy, understanding, and a professional obligation to be better. For many teachers, this may be a change from how they have worked in the past.

In many cases you are sending in principals to give feedback to teachers who they have been managing for 10, 15, 20 years, and they have never told that teacher that they need to improve. So now, after 15 years of working with this same person, they are about to have to sit down and tell them, ‘Hey, you’re not very good at this particular set of things.’ Even for people who have the best of intentions, the psychology of that is hard (Myung & Martinez, 2013, p. 2).

It is important that those individuals involved in the feedback process understand that change takes time (Knight, 2021). It isn’t a one-shot deal and research illustrates that feedback and coaching are cyclical processes that never truly end. Of course, research and experience are only useful if they can be used in a meaningful way. Using research improperly can be problematic. As Fullan (2016) attested, false clarity “occurs when change is interpreted in an oversimplified way; that is, the proposed change has more to it than people perceive or realize” (p. 70). Thus, feedback and professional improvement require an attitude that education is “practice,” similar to that in the medical field.

Creating strategies for providing effective feedback requires an establishment of change. It can start with keeping a few strategies in place. Create a culture of feedback where positive learning is valued. Align feedback with the learning objectives and standards. Keep feedback focused and simple and consider the timing of your feedback (Feedback for Learning, n.d.). Hirsch (2017) talks about moving to a “feedforward” approach that sets the conditions for positive and lasting change by helping people understand their strengths while providing

encouragement and guidance to improve practice (Hirsch, 2017). In the end, status quo is a resistance to change, and for teachers to improve practice, they need to move beyond the resistance (Knight, 2021, p. 19).

In my work studying coaching for the past two decades, I have found, paradoxically, that the best way to get teachers to implement an innovation and become proficient with it is to turn the focus away from the innovation and toward students. When educators see that a new strategy is making a difference in students' lives, they're much more likely to keep using that strategy. Seeing an innovation as a means to an end rather" (Knight, 2021, p. 19).

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For more information, please visit

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Resources

Feedback Strategies for Coaches & Administrators

This e-book from Insight ADVANCE provides information on observation and feedback models, common teaching vocabulary, Dos and Don'ts, and how to use video during feedback. Also, check out "How to Create a Coaching Program That Works on their website under the Resources section.



Finley, T. (2017). Feedback Strategies for Coaches & Administrators (p. 12). Insight ADVANCE.
<https://www.insightadvance.com/blog/feedback-strategies-for-those-who-work-with-teachers>.

How to Give Powerful Feedback

MindSteps CEO Robyn Jackson provides a series of podcasts on a variety of issues. Check out this 36-minute podcast the illustrates the difference between good and poor feedback and shows a pathway to develop feedback that reinforces core values, mission, and vision.



Jackson, R. R. (2019, April 25). How to Give Powerful Feedback #LikeABuilder. School Leadership Reimagined.
<https://schoolleadershipreimagined.com/episode35/>.

Seven Keys to Effective Feedback

This ASCD publication by Grant Wiggins, former president of Authentic Education, describes his seven feedback essentials are, including goal-referenced; tangible and transparent; actionable; user-friendly (specific and personalized); timely; ongoing; and consistent.



Wiggins, G. (2012). Seven Keys to Effective Feedback. Educational Leadership, 70(1), 10–16.
<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/seven-keys-to-effective-feedback>.

The Four Paths to Effective Feedback

Diagnostic, prescriptive, descriptive, and micro-feedback. Important pathways to effective feedback discussed in this brief, learn more about the utility of this model and how you can guide your teams toward better coaching, observations, and feedback. Created by the team at the Network for Educator Effectiveness at the University of Missouri.



Network for Educator Effectiveness and Curators of the University of Missouri. (2021, September 8). The Four Paths to Effective Feedback. Network for Educator Effectiveness.
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