

PROTOCOL FOR COACHING INSTRUCTION
Part I: Welcome and Establish Goals for Session

Step	Conversation Details	Conversation Notes
1	Opening Be warm, genuine, and thank the teacher for taking time away from students to meet with you.	
2	Teacher's Lesson Aim Ask the teacher to explain the aim of the lesson you observed. LISTEN, and record the response to the right.	Teacher's lesson aim was . . .
3	Teacher's Aim for the Conversation Ask the teacher to share the aim for the conversation today. LISTEN, paraphrase, and question responses: For example, <i>So, you would like to explore effective ways to engage students in deeper thinking . . .</i> <i>Can you elaborate? Can you say more?</i>	Teacher's aim for the conversation . . .
4	Principal's Aim for the Conversation State your goal for the conversation. Acknowledge the teacher's aim and add your aim. For example, <i>That information is very helpful to me. I think we can explore ways to get the students more deeply into their learning.</i> <i>My goal for the conversation today is to highlight the effective pieces of your lesson, work with you on your goals and the goals of the school, and collaborate on options for next steps. Let's get started.</i>	

Part II: Determine Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities for Growth

Step	Conversation Details	Conversation Notes
5	Teacher Comment on What's Going Well Ask the teacher what went well in the lesson and/or what has been going well overall in the classroom to get started. LISTEN and paraphrase/question what the teacher says.	What the teacher feels went well . . .

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	<p>For example,</p> <p><i>It sounds like _____ has been a growing success in your lessons since the quarter began. Is that right?</i></p> <p><i>What do you attribute that to? What else do you feel went well? How do you know it went well?</i></p>	
6	<p>Principal Comments on What Went Well</p> <p>Repeat what the teacher feels went well and say,</p> <p><i>I appreciate that you feel ____ and ____ went well. I would like to add that I felt ____ went well too. Specifically, I saw ____.</i></p> <p><i>I heard ____.</i> <i>I observed students doing ____ and ____.</i></p>	
7	<p>Determine Challenges</p> <p>Transition the conversation to reflection and areas for improvement to be determined collaboratively with the teacher. Ask the teacher to identify parts of the lesson that could be strengthened. For example,</p> <p><i>Were there any parts of the lesson that you feel might have been more effective? What did you notice the students doing during this section of the lesson? What would you have liked to see from the students instead?</i></p> <p>LISTEN, paraphrase, and question the teacher's responses, seeking to paraphrase and ask questions to ensure you understand the teacher's feelings about how the lesson went.</p> <p>For example,</p> <p><i>So, you believe that the transitions from one part of the lesson to the next caused the students to become unfocused. Is that right?</i></p> <p><i>Can you think of an example of when that occurred? Why is this important to you during the lesson?</i></p>	<p>What the teacher feels was a challenge . . .</p>
8	<p>Lead Reflection to Address Challenges</p> <p>Lead an exploration about how to address the teacher's areas for improvement by saying,</p> <p><i>Let's examine this in more detail. We know that ____ is the challenge. What strategies are you thinking about trying to strengthen this part of the lesson? What effect might these strategies have on the students' engagement in the lesson? What support might you need to implement these strategies?</i></p> <p>LISTEN, paraphrase, and probe to understand the teacher's comments.</p>	<p>What strategies the teacher wants to try . . .</p>

Step	Conversation Details	Conversation Notes
9	<p>Identify Other Areas for Improvement</p> <p>Now it's the principal's turn to share other opportunities for growth. State what you observed, specifically during the lesson.</p> <p>For example,</p> <p><i>During the lesson, I noted that 11 students did not respond to any questions posed to the class. They did not raise their hands, nor were they called upon to respond.</i></p> <p><i>Did you happen to notice this? What are your thoughts about it?</i> LISTEN</p> <p><i>We know that one of the best ways to engage students in their learning is to involve them in responding to questions that push their thinking, and this was something you wanted to explore during the conversation today. What are some ideas you have for engaging all students in questioning and holding all students accountable for higher-order thinking in response to your questions?</i></p> <p>LISTEN, paraphrase, and question to lead the teacher to reflect deeply about this portion of the lesson.</p> <p>Then ask,</p> <p><i>Can I share with you what I have seen other teachers do to strengthen this aspect of their lessons?</i></p> <p><i>What are your thoughts about trying some of these ideas in your lessons?</i></p>	<p>Write teacher responses here.</p>

Part III: Collaborate on Next Steps and Close

Step	Conversation Details	Conversation Notes
10	<p>Collaboratively Determine Next Steps</p> <p>Review the ideas shared by the teacher regarding the challenges she identified. Review the ideas generated to address the areas you observed and develop a plan to go forward to address both areas.</p> <p>For example,</p> <p><i>Well, we have determined that you found _____ to be a challenge during the lesson, and you suggested _____ as a potential strategy to address it. We also discussed _____ as an area for growth from my observation, and you liked _____ strategy that other teachers have tried with success. Is that right?</i></p>	<p>Action steps to be taken . . .</p>

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Step	Conversation Details	Conversation Notes
	<p><i>What are your thoughts on going forward with these strategies? What support will you need from me and/or other staff members? When would be a good time to come in and see how it is going?</i></p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Close the Feedback Conversation</p> <p>To close the conversation, ask the teacher if the feedback conversation was helpful and if it met her aim that she stated at the beginning. Also share how well the conversation met your aim for the conversation.</p> <p>Thank the teacher for her time and insight. End with a statement about the continued growth of the teacher and the process of instructional improvement at the school.</p>	

Although reading through this protocol may have you thinking this process is time consuming, it is actually time efficient. We suggest that this protocol be shared with teachers at the beginning of the year and be used consistently for both formal and informal observational conversations. Having knowledge of the process for post-observation conversations lowers teacher anxiety about conversations with school leaders, and just as importantly, provides them think time to prepare for the conversation. Teachers then come to the conversation knowing the process, thus allowing them to fully engage in the conversation, and hear and contribute to the next steps going forward. With that, respond to the question below.

Which steps in the protocol resonated most with you? Make note of those parts, or the protocol in its entirety, as you plan to coach for instructional improvement. Furthermore, as you begin reading the next section on trust, be mindful that the protocol can only produce meaningful dialogue when trust has been built.

Retrieved from the companion website for *How Leadership Works: A Playbook for Instructional Leaders* by Cathy Lassiter, Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Dominique Smith. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwin.com. Copyright © 2022 by Corwin Press, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction authorized for educational use by educators, local school sites, and/or noncommercial or nonprofit entities that have purchased the book.