

## Chapter 13: Team coaching

	TOOL	PURPOSE
13.1	<b>Help groups</b>	Use this protocol when a team wants to support an individual member facing a challenge.
13.2	<b>Here's the situation</b>	Try this tool as an alternative protocol for teams wanting to support one member addressing an issue, putting themselves in that colleague's shoes.
13.3	<b>Metaphors</b>	Gain guidance as a coach by encouraging team members to explore and share pressing issues through divergent thinking and the use of the familiar to understand the unfamiliar.
13.4	<b>Questions to consider</b>	As a coach, help a team member expand his or her perspective on a situation that causes dissonance.
13.5	<b>Principles we live by</b>	Learn as a coach to help team members identify principles and assumptions associated with various issues, topics, or problems.

**TOOL 13.1****Help groups**

**H**elp groups involve participants in jointly solving problems. Participants offer suggestions and individualized help to members who have specific implementation issues. Because members of the help group are participating in the training and may have similar concerns and questions, they are able to take an active role in implementation. A staff developer or other facilitator may help the group with process, but facilitators are not essential to the success of this technique. In many cases, one facilitator may monitor many smaller groups.

**Purpose:** To help members during and after professional development with specific implementation questions and concerns or management issues.

**Materials:** Paper and pencils for notes

**Time:** Approximately 10 to 15 minutes per small group member

DIRECTIONS		TIME
1.	The group designates a timekeeper.	
2.	In small groups of three or four, a group member describes a problem he or she is facing or asks a question about implementation.	3 to 5 minutes
3.	Group members offer potential solutions to the question or problem. The group member who has the problem or question listens. During this time, the group member asks only clarifying questions about the suggestions and does not interact or evaluate recommendations.	5 to 7 minutes
4.	After the rest of the group has made recommendations or the time limit has expired, the group member who posed the question describes to the group what solution or actions he or she will try.	1 minute
5.	The group repeats the process with another member until every member has had an opportunity to describe a problem or ask a question.	

**Source:** "Follow-up: The key to training for transfer," by Joellen Killion and Brenda Kaylor, *Journal of Staff Development*, Winter 1991, Vol. 12, No. 1.

**TOOL 13.2****Here's the situation**

**Purpose:** To generate multiple ideas from a team to support an individual facing a challenge in his or her professional practice while leaving the decision making to the individual. (The coach will find it important to stress possibilities rather than give advice.)

**Materials:** Chart paper, markers

**Time:** Approximately 1 hour per situation, depending on team size

BEFORE THE COACHING SESSION		TIME
1.	Invite team members to present a situation to the team. Identify one person from among the volunteers, or schedule all volunteers to present over a series of meetings. After identifying the volunteer(s), provide <i>Here's the Situation</i> guidance to the volunteer so he or she is ready to describe a situation to the team. Guidelines might include:	
2.	Present a description of the situation, answering:	5 minute
	a. What is it?	
	b. Who is involved?	
	c. What does it affect?	
	d. How do I feel about it?	
	e. What goal(s) am I striving to achieve?	
AT THE COACHING SESSION		TIME
1.	Introduce the protocol and set norms for the team's work. Suggested norms might be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate actively.</li> <li>• Be open to multiple, different ways of approaching the situation.</li> <li>• Engage in divergent thinking.</li> <li>• Acknowledge that each individual should choose the approach that is best for his or her situation.</li> <li>• Accept all ideas.</li> <li>• Refrain from critiquing ideas.</li> <li>• Speak from own experience.</li> </ul>	5 minutes

**TOOL 13.2** cont'd

2.	Ask the presenter to describe the situation while team members listen carefully.	5 minutes
3.	Have team members identify in a round robin fashion what their goal(s) would be if this were their situation.	3 minutes
4.	Have the presenter describe related factors he or she is considering while team members listen carefully.	2 minutes
5.	Have team members share what they would think about this situation if it were theirs.	5 minutes
6.	Have team members shift gears and share possible strategies, along with their reasons for suggesting a strategy. Members should suggest only one strategy at a time, allowing other members to offer ideas. One team member can record the ideas and rationales, perhaps on a chart so all can see them. The presenter should listen carefully to each idea. The group should not discuss or criticize any ideas.	15 minutes
7.	Ask team members to pause to choose the idea that they might use given their current understanding of the situation and to report out, in turn, their selection and rationale.	7 minutes
8.	Ask the presenter to share his or her choice and rationale.	3 minutes
9.	Involve all members in discussing what they learned from the experience.	10 minutes

## TOOL 13.3

# Metaphors

**Purpose:** To promote divergent thinking, to break old patterns of thinking, and to use the familiar to understand the unfamiliar.

**Materials:** Pens or pencils, paper

**Time:** Approximately 1 hour

DIRECTIONS		TIME
1.	Welcome team members, conduct a check in, and review agreements.	5 minutes
2.	Invite team members to identify pressing issues and situations that are challenging them.	5 minutes
3.	Ask team members to jot notes privately about their situations. They might consider:	3 to 5 minutes
	a. What is at the heart of the problem?	
	b. What makes this situation pressing now?	
	c. What is unique about this situation? How does it differ from others that might be similar?	
	d. What effects is this situation causing?	
4.	Use a round-robin process to share only what makes this situation pressing now without describing the situation. Invite group members to continue to jot notes about their own situations as they listen to others' responses.	5 minutes
5.	Use a round-robin process to share the effects of this situation. Invite members to continue to jot notes about their own situations as they listen to others' responses.	5 minutes
6.	Ask team members to work privately to generate metaphors for their individual situations, beginning with the stem, "My situation is a _____." <b>Note:</b> A metaphor does not include the word <i>like</i> . For example, "My situation is a rogue wave. It shares these features with a rogue wave: ..."	5 minutes

**TOOL 13.3** cont'd

7.	Ask team members to share their metaphors and characteristics with one partner within the team. Partners work together to identify what is alike and different about their metaphors.	10 minutes
8.	Ask pairs to share their metaphors and the similarities and differences with the whole team.	10 minutes
9.	Debrief as a whole team.	15 minutes
a.	<b>What?</b> What was this process like? What did you observe/feel? What was most challenging/easiest?	
b.	<b>So what?</b> What did you learn? What are your insights?	
c.	<b>Now what?</b> What will you do now in your situation? What did you learn?	

**Source:** Adapted from *Effective Group Coaching: Tried and Tested Tools and Resources for Optimum Coaching Results*, by Jennifer Britton, Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons, 2010.

**TOOL 13.4****Questions to consider**

**Purpose:** To promote new thinking about a problem, concern, or issue.

**Materials:** Chart paper, markers

**Time:** Approximately 1 hour

DIRECTIONS		TIME
1.	Welcome team members, conduct a check in, define the meaning of open-ended questions, and review agreements. Possible agreements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convey respect and appreciation for the presenter and other team members.</li> <li>• Ask only open-ended questions.</li> <li>• Value uncertainty.</li> <li>• Listen for meaning.</li> <li>• Ask higher-order questions.</li> <li>• Take time for thinking.</li> <li>• Avoid masking advice as a question.</li> </ul>	7 minutes
2.	Invite the individual presenting to identify the problem to the team.	5 minutes
3.	Summarize or ask a team member to summarize the situation.	3 minutes
4.	Encourage team members to ask questions designed to promote deep analysis of the situation.  <i>Team members might also frame inquiry statements, such as, "I wonder about ...."</i>	
5.	The individual presenting the problem considers, but does not answer, the questions.	
6.	Have a group member record the questions for the presenter to review later.	20 minutes
7.	Ask the individual presenting the problem to summarize the themes of the questions and share which questions were most beneficial.	5 minutes

**TOOL 13.4** cont'd

8.	Facilitate the team's review of the process. Ask team members:	15 minutes
a.	Which questions surprised you?	
b.	Which questions helped you view the situation differently?	
c.	Are there questions you opted not to ask? What contributed to that? How did it feel to not answer the questions?	
d.	What are the benefits or downsides of the process of deep analysis or inquiry?	



**TOOL 13.5****Principles we live by**

**Purpose:** To have team members explore their individual and collective principles about a big idea through writing, listening, and generating new behaviors.

**Materials:** Copies of the following chart and article for each participant

**Time:** Approximately 1 hour

STEPS	TIME
<p>1. Explain to the group that team learning is the foundation of change within organizations.</p> <p>Peter Senge, author of <i>The Fifth Discipline</i>, describes team learning as the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into genuine dialogue and thinking together. Through the dialogue that occurs when members suspend judgment and seek to gain awareness of their mental models, assumptions, or principles, they open their minds to an internal shift that will transform their thinking and action.</p>	3 minutes
<p>2. Read aloud to the group this passage from Peter Senge's <i>The Fifth Discipline</i> (Doubleday Business, 1994, p. 8):</p> <p>“Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action. Very often, we are not consciously aware of our mental models or the effects they have on our behavior. ... The discipline of working with mental models starts with turning the mirror inward — learning to unearth our internal pictures of the world, to bring them to the surface and hold them rigorously to scrutiny. It also includes the ability to carry on ‘learningful’ conversations that balance inquiry and advocacy, where people expose their own thinking effectively and make that thinking open to the influence of others.”</p>	2 minutes

**TOOL 13.5** cont'd

3.	Provide a copy of the selection <i>Principles shape our thoughts, words, and actions</i> (below) to each member. Have each member read the selection and respond to these reflective questions:	7 minutes
	a. How would you define principles to someone who did not read this passage?	
	b. How do principles influence us, individually and collectively?	
	c. What is the value of becoming conscious of our individual principles?	
4.	Encourage team members to generate or select one topic that influences teachers' actions or decisions. Some possible ideas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity of all students to learn</li> <li>• Student independence</li> <li>• Inclusion</li> <li>• Differentiation</li> <li>• Grading practices</li> <li>• Personalized learning</li> </ul>	4 minutes
5.	Ask team members to write principles people might hold about the topic on the worksheet below.	7 minutes
6.	Ask team members to identify evidence of each principle in practice. What does it look like, sound like, etc.?	15 minutes
7.	Ask members to determine which principle and set of related practices about this topic most closely align with their own.	10 minutes
8.	Encourage all participants to identify a principle they hold which is different from the principles some of their colleagues hold. Ask participants to describe implications of the differences in principles.	10 minutes

**TOOL 13.5** cont'd

<b>TOPIC AREA</b>	
<b>Principle(s)</b>	<b>Evidence in practice</b>

**TOOL 13.5** cont'd**PRINCIPLES SHAPE OUR THOUGHTS, WORDS, AND ACTIONS**

**P**RINCIPLES shape our thoughts, words, and actions. They influence our decisions. They guide us in problem solving. They serve as touchstones that we continually return to when we face conflict, dilemmas, or challenges. They set a common foundation shared by members of a community. Members of the community are also challenged to uphold and protect the principles because they shape what the community stands for.

**EACH PERSON LIVES BY A SET OF PRINCIPLES.** Some of our principles are unquestioned and fundamental to who we are. Some are new to us and through our experiences and dialogue we continue to clarify and deepen our understanding of them. Our principles guide our work, thoughts, goals, actions, and decisions.

**PRINCIPLES ARE UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS** required in a system of thought and are often spoken of as laws for moral or ethical decision making. We frequently hear, “It’s the principle of it.”

**PRINCIPLES ENDURE OVER TIME.** They supersede time, programs, strategies, and current practices. They serve as the driver behind programs, strategies, and practice. Principles shape and drive what we say, think, and do. What we say, think, and do conversely serve as the symbolic indicators to others of our principles. Our words and actions convey how deeply we hold our principles. Our principles also can create dissonance within ourselves if we act and speak in a way that is incongruent with them. They can be the source of deep conflict between people or the source of strong alliances among people.

**Source:** *The learning educator: A new era for professional learning*, by Stephanie Hirsh and Joellen Killion, Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council, 2007.