



COACHING AT DAOS



What is coaching?

“Coaching is the process of unlocking a person’s potential to maximise their performance. It is about helping them to learn rather than teaching them”.

Whitmore, J. (2002), *Coaching for Performance*

Coaching is a series of one-to-one discussions. It can also include observations of both the coachee by the coach and the coach by the coachee. Coaching is different to mentoring/line managing. A mentor/line manager will set the agenda for your learning process. They will be supporting you to meet specific departmental, pastoral, school and national expectations. A coach does not have his or her own agenda. Coaches are trained to help their coachees identify their goals and promote action and reflection to develop confidence and success. Coaches provide support, guidance and direction through discussion by listening, and using precise questioning techniques, as well as offering collaborative planning, observation with feedback and articulating/modelling good practice at the coachee’s request. It is a confidential process and does not provide evidence for the appraisal process, unless you want it to. If you want to share your thoughts and evidence of improvement with us to help us evaluate and improve our provision, it is much appreciated, but this is voluntary.

Why do we do it?

Poor quality conversations are the biggest disablers of people in the workplace. Good conversations engender motivation, co-operation and openness, and allow individuals to find their own solutions. High quality one-to-one discussions are far more likely to help individuals actually develop and improve their practice than more traditional lecture style training which can feel prescriptive, rigid and even intimidating. Successful coaching is supportive, empowering, holistic, and inspirational. It is a great way to find the time and space for an honest reflection about your own practice and to experiment with strategies to get better. Coaching encourages you to think and act at higher levels, with beneficial results for your own practice and therefore the performance of your students.

Who is suitable for coaching?

Anyone who is interesting in improving their own practice can be coached. The important thing is that **you decide** to be coached. It is not a referral system where you are told you will be coached to help you improve a certain aspect of your teaching. This would undermine the principle of coaching. Our coaches can sometimes be involved in this type of work however, where they can aide line managers with **mentoring** teachers in order to help with specific issues where appropriate. In these situations the learning agenda will be clearly defined and agreed by the teacher, line manager and coach (as mentor!). NQTs – you can be coached, however, obviously you have the unavoidable task of meeting the long list of teaching standards

to achieve QTS, and therefore, you *may* decide that working towards these with your mentor and line manager should be your priority and that coaching is something you decide to do later when you are clearer about your strengths, areas for development and which aspect(s) of your teaching you would like to work on with a coach. Equally, if you think it could help you do this, then you are welcome to be coached.

Our guiding principles as coaches

We:

- will ensure confidentiality
- will not judge
- will not criticise
- believe people can find their next steps within themselves
- will make agreements about how we will work together
- will be positive and believe there are always solutions to issues
- will pay attention to recognising and pointing out strengths and building and maintaining self-esteem
- will challenge individuals to move beyond their comfort zone
- will break down big goals into manageable steps
- believe that self-knowledge improves performance
- hold a genuine willingness to learn from the people we coach as we are all students of teaching

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