Commitment in practice: a coach/mentor program for newly appointed principals

Catholic Education Office Sydney

growth coaching international
Context
• Support for 17 new Principals

Program Co-ordination
• Role of Co-ordinator
• Research
Initial planning

- Questions
- Budget
- Selection of Mentors/Coaches
- Matching participants
- Initial training
- Ongoing support and training
Some Key Questions

• Who should be included in designing the program?

• Do we need a partner/s to ensure success?

• Do our goals complement or conflict with other development initiatives?
Questions

- Will participation be mandatory or voluntary?
- How long will a new Principal participate in the program?
- Can mentors nominate themselves or should mentors be chosen?
Questions

- What selection criteria should we establish?
- What are the critical factors in a mentoring/coaching relationship?
- What does “confidential” mean?
- How will the program be evaluated?
The Mentoring/Coaching Development Program aims to

- Build a density of skills and competency with experienced Principals in leadership mentoring and coaching
- Provide a firm foundation for the new Principals to be coached and mentored in a way that facilitates effective and efficient transition into senior leadership roles
- Create a network of skilled, experienced Principals who can support the development of newly appointed colleagues.
Criteria for selection of Mentors

- Confirmation of highly effective leadership, particularly Religious Leadership and Leadership for Learning, in at least a second Contract Renewal as Principal
- Demonstrated capacity to relate and communicate effectively
- Motivation and willingness to undertake training and participate in the pilot program.
Overview of Program

17 June
Introduction to coaching / mentoring

23 June
Further skill development and planning

8 July
1 hour teleconferences
Review of field work

4 Aug
Intro for coachees
Intro for pairs

23 Sept
Check-in and refinement

Questionnaire
• Explore the role of the principal mentor/coach
• Develop knowledge and skills in a mentoring/coaching methodology
• View and practise quality mentoring/coaching conversations
• Learn how high Emotional Intelligence supports your coaching
• Build skills for managing the “hard” conversations and be able to more competently coach and give feedback
• Plan for implementing mentoring/coaching conversations with newly appointed principals
Forms of professional learning

Mentoring
- Experience vs novice
- Advice
- Skill development

Coaching
- Improved performance
- Capacity to create solutions

A trusting relationship
Focus on learning and growth
Effective questioning strategies
Active listening
Honest feedback to stimulate growth
Blended Coaching

Coaching
- Discovery
- Facilitative
- Ways of being
- Developing awareness and responsibility
- Generating options
- Sustaining new habits

Mentoring
- Informing
- Getting permission to instruct
- Ways of doing
- Analysing knowledge and skills to complete a task
- Sharing resources and information
Coachee

• identifies need
• agrees to collaborate

Coach

• Clarifies need/goal through the coaching process
• shares resources and ideas and poses questions and suggestions

work together to support implementation

• selects resource, clarifies needs and accepts/modifies/rejects the options generated
• makes final decisions about product and processes

• continues to draw attention to gaps, offer resources and refine the thinking and decisions of the coachee through GROWTH process and the 8 coaching skills
3 Pillars of Coaching

- GROWTH Model
- Coaching skills
- Emotional Intelligence
Emotional intelligence framework

- Self Awareness
- Social Awareness
- Self Management
- Relationship Management

Positive impact on others

Daniel Goleman 2007, NCSL presentation
The GROWTH coaching system is...

- **Goals**: What do you need to achieve?
- **Reality**: What is happening now?
- **Options**: What could you do?
- **Will**: What will you do?
- **Tactics**: How and when will you do it?
- **Habits**: How will you sustain success?

**Relationships**

- **Building trust**

**Results**

- **Celebrating the results**
8 Key Coaching Skills

1. Developing trust
2. Being present
3. Listening actively
4. Clarifying
5. Empathising
6. Being succinct
7. Asking the best questions
8. Giving feedback
Critical factors for success?

• Discuss at your table
• Each table group to distil a list of no more than six factors
• Write on sticky notes and be ready to present to whole group
Coach/newly appointed principal

- Aims
- Professional development
Coach/newly appointed principal

- Keys for success
- What went well?
Coach/newly appointed principal

- What was surprising?
Coach/newly appointed principal

- What were the challenges?
Coach / newly appointed principal

- Future directions
Taking small steps
Using time well
Building relationships and maintaining a trusting relationship that has clear boundaries
Maintaining commitment to the process and to each other
Feeling respected and valued – two way!
The coach’s focus on listening rather than telling
Setting clear goals
Engaging in open conversation without the feeling of being judged
Critical questioning
Making connections and networking
Challenges

- Finding the time to meet
- At times feeling under skilled
- Knowing when to bring a conversation to closure
- Remaining objective without bias or judgement
- Keeping on track with the process
- Not giving all the answers
- Ensuring that the interaction is life giving and not burdensome
What went well?

- Input sessions from an effective facilitator
- In general, the matching of mentors with new Principals
- Having the opportunity to establish a relationship with an experienced Principal, build trust, share ideas and seek advice
- Development of mutual respect and understanding that naming areas for growth is part of the landscape of our work
- Growth engendering conversations for both mentors and new Principals
- Having a mentor who was well prepared, an empathic listener and flexible with schedules
- Mentor and new Principal being geographically close
- The confidential nature of the meetings
- The sense of *journeying together, helping a colleague and making a difference*
What was challenging?

- Time - prioritising the program has helped
- In some pairings distance between schools was an issue, although Principals made effective use of phone conversations and connecting at Principals’ meetings.
- For a few of the new Principals, commitment to CSLP courses and the coaching was challenging
- Having the preparation session for new Principals so late in the first year
- As a mentor – not interrupting and trying to solve problems
- Developing skills in great questioning
- Trying to follow the growth coaching process without constantly needing to refer to the manual
- At times staying focused
What was surprising?

- The ability to build a trusting relationship quickly, identify issues and move forward with plans
- The depth of conversations
- Growth in developing an insightful mentor and coach
- The extent to which the process was really enjoyable and positive for both parties
- Being able to use the process/strategies to reflect on personal leadership – both new and experienced Principals
- Ability to apply the model in work with the school leadership team and staff