

Module Two

Entry Level

Title: Effective feedback in the weekly meeting

Mentor Training: Entry Level Module Two - Effective feedback in the Weekly Training Meeting

Please allow 40 minutes for this module and continue to reflect on the points below.

'Mentoring is a continuing but informal relationship focused on long-term goals, aspirations and career transitions. It involves passing on knowledge and offering support, based on the mentor's work experience, to a less experienced colleague. The mentor operates as a wise and trusted friend'.

(National College of Teaching and Leadership)

Please look at the video (14 minutes 39 seconds) through this link: <https://youtu.be/1uvBJ4RKx7Q>

Video 1:

Mentor feedback for a teacher who has just taught an RE lesson – topic 'Adoption and Fostering'

Read through the advice below on effective mentor feedback. Decide the extent to which the feedback session in the video matches the points below. Decide on any advice you would give to the mentor. Reflect on how you could develop your own mentoring skills.

Key points based on Matt O'Leary *Classroom Observation; a guide to the effective observation of teaching and learning*.

To what extent does the feedback support the following:

- Is the feedback formative in nature?
- Promote critical self-reflection from the trainee – does the trainee identify strengths and areas for development in their own practice in the feedback?
- Offer open, honest dialogue which avoids overly judgemental pronouncements which are driven by performativity causing fear which closes down reflection?
- Allow the person being observed an opportunity for critical self-reflection. Are they allowed to distance themselves in a controlled manner from their actions so they can analyse their practice?
- Promote experimentation in the teachers' practice?
- Promote new experiences coupled with reflection – expansive professional learning?
- Does feedback lead to collaborative discussion and wider reflection?

Notes

Did the feedback support the following:

- Open dialogue between the observer and the observee to some extent makes the dialogue more democratic and leads to more open discussions rather than just a top-down approach. Think point: A lot of feedback is dominated by the observer and can cut off reflection by the observee who is told what to do without taking ownership.

- Do observations allow the observee to have a voice in deciding what the observer focuses on? Wade and Hammick (1999) have argued that 'it must be recognised that a self-diagnosed need for learning provides greater motivation to learn than an externally diagnosed requirement'. Think point: *'The greatest gift we can give to others is not just to share our riches with them, but to reveal their riches to themselves.'* (Swahili proverb)

Notes

Did the feedback do this?

- Try not to make feedback purely evaluative or judgemental- pose searching questions rather than absolute statements.
- Avoid offering solutions before a person has had a chance to work out what they could have done.
- Avoid generalised statements such as – 'you need to work on your behaviour management' without working through with them what they themselves could do based on some specific examples from observed practice.
- Vary questions asked to encourage critical self-reflection e.g. 'can you explain what you were hoping to do in that circumstance?', 'why did you chose to do x in the lesson?'
- Provide constructive criticism or balanced feedback. Think about what they did well and invite them to reflect on why situations went well. Offer honest but supportive feedback.
- Feedback should be a two-way process. The trainee should take an active role in the process discussion taking ownership for their learning and development.
- Trainees should be allowed the opportunity to explain the decisions in their planning and teaching to rationalise what they did and why.
- Shared discussion should lead to discussion and agreement on targets.
- Prioritise targets without overwhelming the trainee.

Notes

Please now reflect on how the videos have made you think about your own practice.

Notes

Thank you to Matthew Sossick based at Kingston University. Thanks to school colleagues who staged the video to allow reflection.