



**Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent**  
*"Making Education Work for All Georgians"*



# **Mentors of Induction Phase Principals Training**

**Participant's Guide  
2013**

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 Mentors of Induction Phase Principals Training  
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## Acknowledgments

*Induction phase principals will benefit from effective mentoring that supports their learning, retention and ultimately student growth and achievement. Therefore, this resource is provided for Georgia districts to support the professional learning of principal mentors.*

**The Georgia Department of Education’s (GaDOE) Principal Mentor Modules were developed and written with the thoughtful contributions of the Design Team:**

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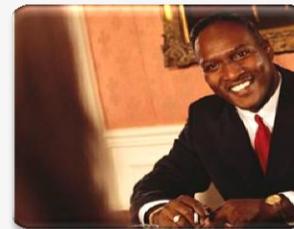
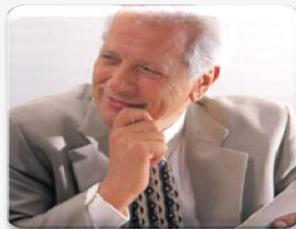
This work was facilitated by Cathy Tencza of Tencza Designs.

**Advisory Committee Team members** worked closely with Tencza Designs and the Georgia Department of Education to provide a framework for the content and real world examples based on their knowledge and experience. Members included: Rhonda Baldwin, Douglas County Schools; Dr. Maurice Brown, Meriwether County Schools; Dr. Leslie Hazle –Bussey, Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI); Chuck Ellington, Treutlen County Schools; Dr. Debra Harden, Georgia School Superintendents Association; Susan Holt, North East RESA; Dr. Molly Howard, Jefferson County Schools; Dr. Mary Jacobs, Mercer University; Scott John, Henry County Schools; Dr. Thomas Koballa, Georgia Southern University; Cindy Lee, Georgia Department of Education; Katherine Monti, Georgia Department of Education; Eddie Pollard, Fayette County Schools; Dr. Diane Ray, Professional Association of Georgia Educators; Calvin Rollins, Georgia Association of Educators and Dr. Karen J. Wyler, Georgia Department of Education.

**Special thanks.** In addition, GaDOE would like to recognize and thank the team from Georgia State University who worked in partnership to develop the instructional videotapes, including Dr. Caitlin Dooly, Dr. Hayward Richardson, Dr. Gwen Benson, Dr. Carolyn Hall, and Georgia Public Broadcasting.

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# Mentors of IPPs Training Overview



## SESSION 1

### The Role of the Mentor

- Opening
- Spirit of Mentoring
- Relationship Building
- Orientation and Regular Contact

## SESSION 2

### Active Listening

- What It Is
- Purpose
- Techniques

## SESSION 3

### The GROWS Model

- Purpose
- Acronym
- Listening Through the GROWS Model

## SESSION 4

### Strategic Questioning

- What It Is
- Types of Strategic Questions
- Questioning Through the GROWS Model

## SESSION 5

### Special Situations

- Critical Conversations
- Coaching Conversations
- Closing

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## Definitions

### **Mentor**

- One who is highly committed to supporting the personal growth of the induction phase principal.
- The mentor provides guidance, shares knowledge and experiences, and supports the induction phase principal in making a positive impact on student growth and achievement.

### **Induction Phase Principal**

- A principal who has been hired or appointed into a new permanent position in any Georgia school.
- Principals are considered to be in the “induction phase” until they successfully complete the district induction program.
- The district induction program will be tiered to provide differentiated support based on the individual's needs.

### **Advisor**

- An advisor gives advice to the IPP, such as telling the induction phase principal what the advisor would do in a given situation, and tells about his or her own relevant experiences.

### **Coach**

- A coach supports the performance of the induction phase principal in reaching specific goals, and helps the induction phase principal figure out how to maximize his or her potential in relation to those goals along his or her career path.

### **Teacher/Trainer**

- A teacher explains how to perform the various duties and tasks involved in the induction phase principal's job, offering examples and sometimes demonstrating for the IPP.

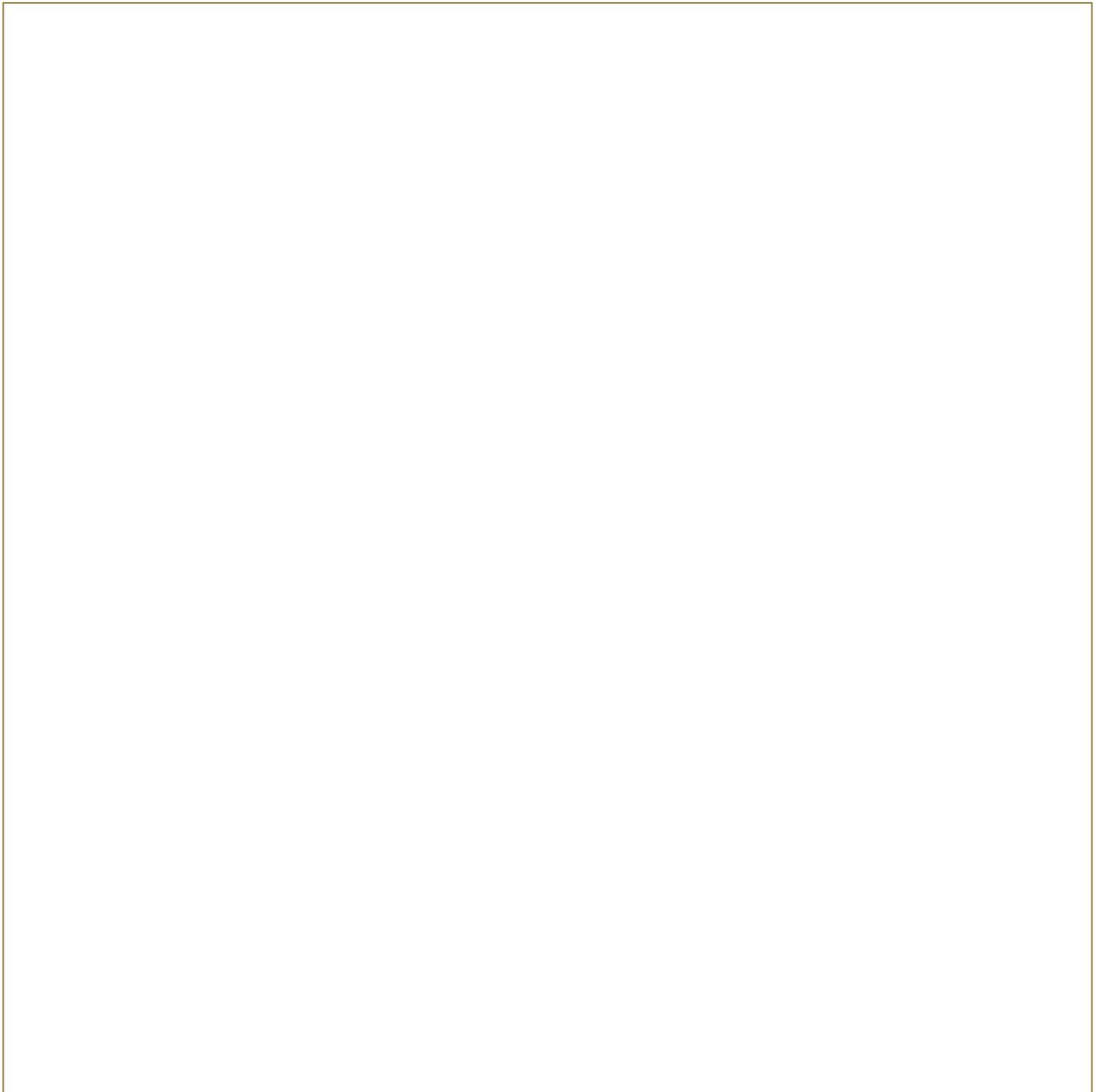
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## Video #1 Notes: The Spirit of Mentoring

Observe and record what the mentor DOES in the video.

**What did the mentor DO that embodied the spirit of mentoring?**

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# Worksheet: What Trust Looks Like and Sounds Like

Complete the reflection questions below, and then share with your buddy. You may think of a person from either your professional or personal life. Later you will watch Video #2 and continue to add to this checklist.

Trust and Relationship-Building Checklist	
<p><b>1.</b> Think of a person that you have known that embodied advocacy and trust. What kinds of things did he/she say or do to show this trustworthiness? <b>Record under Do's to the right.</b></p>	<b>Do's</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**2.** Think of a person that you have encountered that did NOT embody advocacy and trust. What kinds of things did he/she say or do to show this lack of trustworthiness? **Record under Don'ts to the right.**

**Don'ts**

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-

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- 3.** Did either of these people affect you? Which one (or both)?  
Describe how they affected you:



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# Homework Worksheet: Your Next Steps

## Session 1: The Role of the Mentor

What is your plan for mentoring as a result of Session 1's training on the role of the mentor? How might you apply what you've learned or begin shifting in a different direction? Record your thoughts and next steps below. Be prepared to share during the next session.

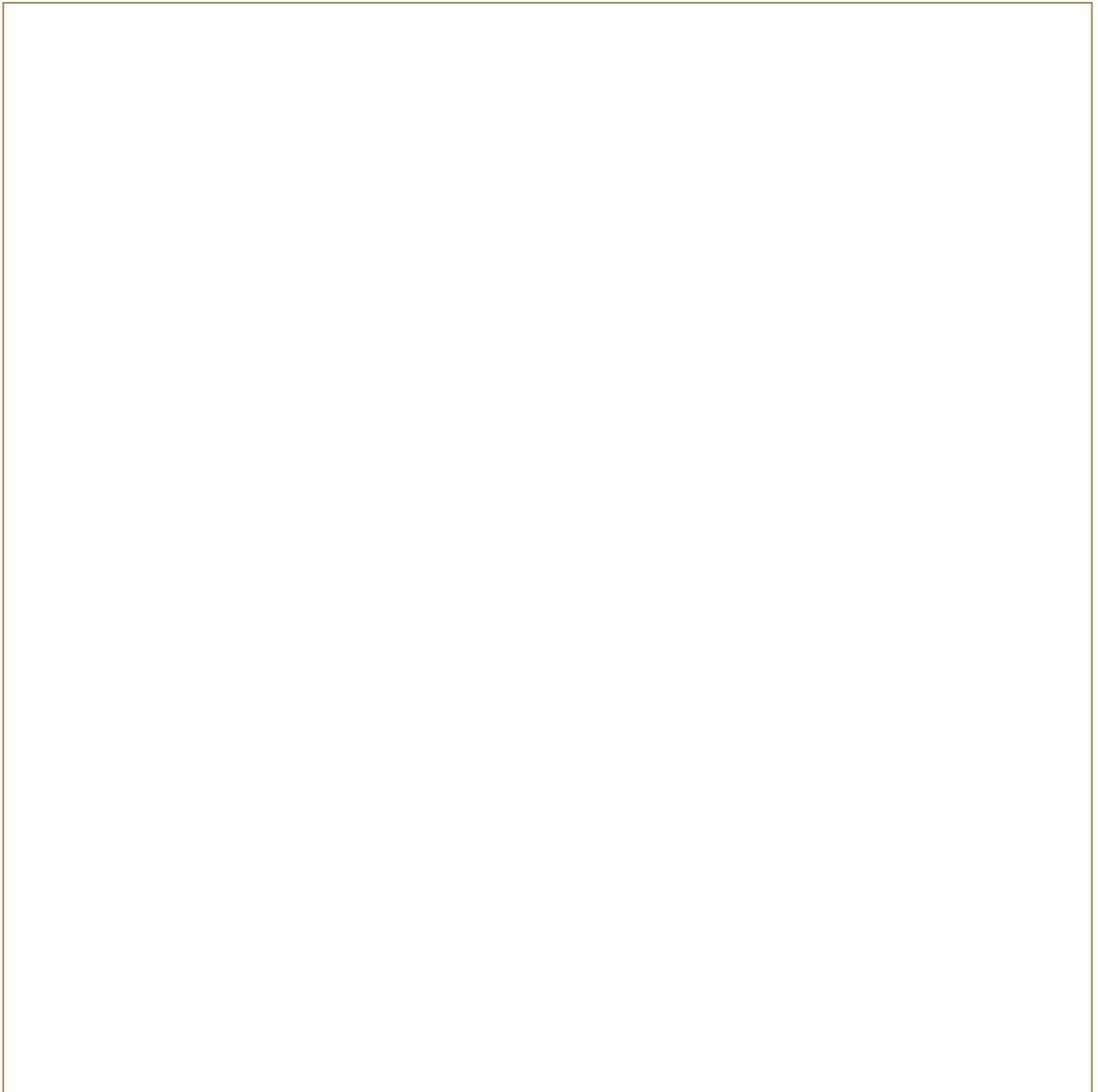
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## Video #3 Notes: Active Listening

Observe and record what the mentor DOES in the video.

**What did the mentor DO that showed active listening?**

---



## Observation Notes: Active Listening Checklist

During the *Activity: Advanced Listening*, Observers should observe the person playing the role of Mentor/Listener for his or her use of active listening skills, particularly those in the shaded column below. After each round, take 3 minutes to give the Mentor/Listener feedback before moving on.

### Skills the Mentor/Listener Used

- Pay attention**
  - Intentionally avoid distraction
  - Look at speaker directly
  - Mentally repeat speaker's words
  - Read speaker's body language
  - Do not mentally form next statements or rebuttal while the other person speaks
- Avoid interrupting**
  - Practice "silence" even during speaker pauses
  - Only speak during speaker pauses to show you're listening or to reflect the speaker's message
- Show you're listening**
  - Use body language that says "I'm interested"
  - Lean forward
  - Nod occasionally
  - Smile and use other facial expressions
  - Use minimal encouragers
  - Yes, OK, Uh huh...
  - Go on, I see, Tell me more...
  - Silence also encourages the other person to speak more
  - Re-state (mirror)
- Ensure understanding through reflection**
  - Paraphrase words, feelings, meaning
  - Summarize words, feelings, meaning
  - Question words, feelings, meaning
- Respond appropriately**
  - Analysis
  - Advice
  - Consideration
  - Demonstration
  - Support

### Other Notes

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# Homework Worksheet: Your Next Steps

## Session 2: Active Listening

Given what you have learned in Session 2, practice active listening in an actual interaction. You can practice with anyone...an IPP, a co-worker, a friend, or a family member. Review the active listening techniques you will practice. Then apply the techniques. In the box below, describe what you did, and specifically how you think active listening helped both of you. Be prepared to share during the next session.

**WHICH** active listening technique(s) did you use and **HOW** did you use them?

**HOW** did active listening **HELP** you as the listener?

**HOW** do you think active listening may have **HELPED** the other person who was speaking?

# Worksheet: The Butterfly Effect

Complete these two brief questions either during lunch OR as you re-enter the room from lunch.



One **skill** I'd like to improve is how to

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My grandest **vision** is for future IPPs to be

---

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## Video #4 Notes: The GROWS Model

Observe and record what the mentor DOES to show skill in your assigned area. Look for either: the GROWS process , active listening, relationship building, or questioning skills, as you were assigned.

**What did the mentor DO to show skill in your assigned area?**

---

# Observation Notes: Listening Through the GROWS Model

Observe what the mentor DOES in the role play to show active listening and to move through the GROWS model. Use your *Handout: Mentor Performance Checklist* to guide your observation.

## What did the mentor DO that showed active listening?

---

## What did the mentor DO to move through the GROWS model?

---



## Worksheet: Rear View Review • Sessions 1, 2, and 3

In your table groups, take about 15 minutes to complete the steps below. You may use your notes in this Participant's Guide to help you review.

1. Assign a facilitator from your table group.
2. The facilitator should assign each person at your table one or more of the bulleted topics below.

		
<b>Role of the Mentor</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spirit of Mentoring</li><li>• Relationship Building</li><li>• Orientation and Regular Contact</li></ul>	<b>Active Listening</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What It Is</li><li>• Purpose</li><li>• Techniques</li></ul>	<b>The GROWS Model</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purpose</li><li>• Acronym</li><li>• Listening Through the GROWS Model</li></ul>

3. Each person should take about one minute to recap their topic to the best of their ability for the others. This space can be used to prepare some notes.

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4. The facilitator should lead a discussion about the take aways from today's training (i.e., what you will take away from training back to the job, how your learning will now apply to the "real world").

# Homework Worksheet: Your Next Steps

## Session 3: The GROWS Model

Plan a session with an IPP or other individual in which you guide the other's problem solving by moving through each step in the GROWS model. In the box below, describe what you did for each of the 5 steps, and what you might do more effectively next time. Be prepared to share during the next session.

**In a recent problem-solving session, what did you do to guide problem solving using each step in the GROWS model below? Also describe what you might do differently next time.**

Goal

Reality

Options

Way Forward

Summary

# Video #5 Notes: Questioning Through the GROWS Model

This video is about a very well-like teacher who is an ineffective teacher. The IPP is conflicted about how to handle this situation and discusses it with the mentor. Observe and record what the mentor DOES in each stage of the GROWS model, including how he/she listened and asked strategic questions.

## What did the mentor DO in each stage of the GROWS model?

# Examples: Strategic Questions

## Open-ended Questions

This question is intended to give the IPP the widest possible scope for responding. It opens open the others person's thinking. Sometimes it may be necessary to repeat or rephrase an open question to give the IPP more thinking time and further opportunities to come up with ideas.

### Open-ended questions which are also good conversation starters

- What were you expecting to ...?
- How aware are you of ...?
- What experiences have you had with...?
- What was the basis for the action you took on...?
- What led you to draw the conclusion or make the decision that you did on...?

### Open-ended questions to support planning

- As you think about this event, what are surrounding dynamics that influence you?
- What are your perceptions about what is going on with...?
- As we start to think about..., what are the perspectives that will help us see a fuller view?
- Given the opportunity to think through this situation, what are some specific actions you will take?
- What are some variables that might influence your actions and outcomes?
- How does this experience connect with previous experiences?

### Open-ended questions to support reflections

- As you reflect on this experience, where does it fit in the big picture?
- Given your impression of this event, what might we talk about that would be most useful?
- Describe some of the differences between what you planned and what occurred?
- What are some inferences you are making about...?
- What are some of the variables that might have affected the outcome?
- What are some new connections you are making?
- Based on this experience, what advice would you give to someone about to do something very similar?
- What are some things you are taking away from this experience that will influence you?

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**Open-ended questions that move you through the GROWS model**

- G for Goals
  - How do you want \_\_\_\_\_ to turn out?
  - What do you want?
  - What is your desired outcome?
  - What benefits would you like to get out of X?
- R for Reality
  - What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Can you tell me more about the situation?
  - What is not going well?
- O for Options
  - What other ways did you try so far?
  - What do you propose?
  - If you do this, how will it affect \_\_\_\_\_ ?
  - What else do you need to consider?
- W for Way Forward
  - What is the best way forward?
  - Which option has the most advantages and the least disadvantages?
  - What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?
- S for Summary and Actions Steps
  - Can you summarize where you are right now and what you want to do next?
  - How can I help you connect with the individuals and resources you need?

## Probing Questions

Probing questions are a type of open-ended question. These questions provide food for thought and tend to elicit a reflective, thought-out response. Probing questions are used when you are trying to draw out more information or more specifics to help complete the picture. These questions take the IPP's responses and dig deeper to discover what lies behind and beyond their statements. Probing questions can be spotted when the other person has to really stop and think in order to answer the question. Think of probing questions as being on a continuum, from recommendation/advice-giving to most effective probing question. For example:

- **Poor.** Could you have students use the rubric to assess their own papers? (This is actually a recommendation stated as a closed question. You should avoid these types of rhetorical questions and reserve closed questions for other uses).
- **Poor, but better.** What would happen if students used the rubric to assess their own work? (Recommendation re-stated as a *probing* question, which is better than a closed question, but is still leading the IPP toward a solutions that you generated, i.e., using the rubric to assess their own work).
- **Better.** What do the students think is an interesting math problem? (Good probing question)

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- **Best.** What would have to change for students to work more for themselves? (Better probing question).

Good probing questions:

- Don't place blame on anyone
- Allow for multiple responses
- Move thinking from reaction to reflection and help create a paradigm shift because they facilitate self-reflection, processing of thoughts and feelings, and other points of view
- Empower the person with the dilemma to solve his or her own problem (rather than deferring to someone with greater or different expertise)
- Elicit a slow response

**Examples of Probing Questions**

- I know your overall goal at your school is \_\_\_\_\_, and we're here to make sure that you become more comfortable and confident in your ability to achieve that goal. Tell me what is going on at your school right now? Is that something you want to work on today?
- Can you describe what the best outcome would be?
- What do you think are some options to getting there?
- Why do you think this is the case?
- What would have to change in order for...?
- What do you feel is right in your heart?
- What do you wish...?
- What's another way you might...?
- What would it look like if...?
- What do you think would happen if...?
- How was...different from...?
- What sort of an impact do you think...?
- What criteria did you use to...?
- When have you done/experienced something like this before?
- What might you see happening in your classroom if...?
- How did you decide/determine/conclude...?
- What is your hunch about ....?
- What was your intention when ....?
- What do you assume to be true about ....?
- What is the connection between...and...?
- What if the opposite were true? Then what?
- How might your assumptions about...have influenced how you are thinking about...?
- Why is this such a dilemma for you?
- How do you think your own comfort has influenced your choice?
- What do the students think?
- You said xyz. What makes you say that?
- How have your perspectives on current events influenced you?
- Why aren't they involved?
- Why do you think the team hasn't moved?

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- What would understanding of this look like?
- How would you know when you've achieved your goal?
- Why did this cause a problem for you?
- Why do you think the expected outcomes weren't communicated?
- What evidence do you have?
- How might your assumptions have influenced what you have tried so far?
- How do you think your expectations might have influenced their work on this project?
- What do you think would happen if you restated your professional goals as questions?
- What other approaches have you considered?
- How does...apply to everyday life?

**Questions that probe assumptions**

- What could we assume instead?
- How can you verify or disapprove that assumption?

**Questions that probe reasons and evidence**

- What would be an example?
- What is....analogous to?
- What do you think causes to happen? Why?

**Questions that probe a point of view**

- What would be an alternative?
- What is another way to look at it?
- Would you explain why it is necessary or beneficial, and who benefits?
- Why is that best?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of...?
- How are...and ...similar?
- What is a counterargument for...?

**Questions that probe implications and consequences**

- What generalizations can you make?
- What are the consequences of that assumption?
- What are you implying?
- How does...affect...?
- How does...tie in with what we learned before?

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**More probing questions that move you through the GROWS model**

- G for Goals
  - How do you feel about it being like x ultimately?
  - What concerns you the most about that outcome?
  - Can you distill out the various outcomes from what you just said, one by one?
- R for Reality
  - Why do you think this is NOT going well?
  - Why do you think this IS going well?
  - What is causing this situation?
  - What's the gap between what is and what should be?
  - What is holding you back from achieving this goal?
- O for Options
  - What could you have done differently so that it would have worked when you tried it?
  - What else? Keep going...
  - What do you think about doing X this way?
  - What if budget was not a concern?
- W for Way Forward
  - How might you weigh all the factors we just talked about then?
  - What might happen if you xyz?
  - If you choose x, how will that impact y in the long run?
- S for Summary and Actions Steps
  - What will you have to do to get the job done?
  - What are you still concerned with?
  - What can I do to help you?

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## Clarifying Questions

These are also a type of open-ended question, but tend to elicit a quicker, more automatic response than do probing questions. The purpose of clarifying questions is to check understanding of the IPP's points. They have brief, factual answers. These questions do not provide any new "food for thought" to the IPP, they simply "follow up" for clarity whatever the IPP just said. The litmus test for a clarifying question is: Does the presenter have to think before s/he answers? If not, it's a clarifying question. If so, it's probably a probing question.

### Clarifying questions that move you through the GROWS model

- G for Goals
  - What outcome would you like, ultimately?
  - What would you like it to be?
  - That's what you don't want...what DO you want?
  - How does this relate to our discussion?
- R for Reality
  - What's not going the way you'd like?
  - Where does the problem lie in a nutshell?
  - What seems to be the problem?
  - What is the obvious obstacle?
  - How much time does the project take?
  - What resources are available for this project?
  - Why do you say that?
- O for Options
  - What other ways did you try so far?
  - How did that work for you?
  - What are your ideas?
  - What does...mean?
- W for Way Forward
  - Which option has the greatest likelihood of success?
  - Which feels right to you?
  - What's the best way to go about this?
- S for Summary and Actions Steps
  - When can you send me your action plan so we both know what you're working on?
  - When can we touch base again?
  - What is your next step?
  - So, in summary, I heard you say \_\_\_\_\_. Is that what you meant? Did I get that right?
  - What should we focus on in our next call?

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## Closed Questions

Closed questions have yes or no answers. They have their place at times to check or confirm specific pieces of information, or to get the IPP to *commit* on a point more precisely. Sometimes closed questions are used as the beginning of a conversation in an early attempt to draw the other person out and open up to conversation, before using open-ended questions.

### Closed questions that move you through the GROWS model

- G – Does this describe your desired outcome?
- R – Are there others who are “not” having a problem with this?
- O – Can you think of any other options? Do you have a plan in mind?
- W – Do you think this is the best option given the feelings of the parents?
- S – Did this conversation help? Has this mentoring process been helpful for you?

## Concluding Questions

Concluding questions can be open or closed. These questions are about summarization of what was just said and looking forward to next steps. After the speaker has spoken for a while, you may want to summarize and then ask if your summary was accurate. Oftentimes, it is best to conclude with a check on what will come next.

### Concluding questions that move you through the GROWS model

- G – So, is this your goal?
- R – Would you say things have improved? Have you made progress?
- O – Any other options or should we move on?
- W – Are you happy with this plan?
- S – What are your next steps? Did this help?

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# Worksheet: Mentoring Session Plan

Use this worksheet as a planning tool before each mentoring session.

---

- Anticipate the IPP's likely concerns and focus for a session. What will he or she most likely need help with?
  
- Record some active listening strategies you would like to use in your next mentoring conversation:
  
- Write down strategic questions ahead of time which move through each stage of the GROWS model.

**GOALS**

**REALITY**

**OPTIONS**

**WAY FORWARD**

**SUMMARY**

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- Do a questions check:
  - Assess the “riskiness” of your questions. Adjust them as needed. Comment below:
  
  - Assess the relevance of your questions to the IPP’s development, focus, needs. Adjust them as needed. Comment below:
  
  - Assess how well your questions are crafted and sequenced to facilitate each stage of the GROWS model. Adjust as needed. Comment below:
  
- Do a self-check:
  - Do you have a “right” answer in mind to any of your prepared questions? If so, then delete the judgment, or don’t ask it.
  
  - Are you asserting your own personal agenda? If so, then focus on the IPP’s needs and how to facilitate his/her own thinking.

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# Observation Notes: Fishbowl

Take notes on what the fishbowl volunteer mentor did to carry out each item below.

USED ACTIVE LISTENING	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Paid attention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Looked at speaker directly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mentally repeated speaker's words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seemed to read speaker's body language</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Did not interrupt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practiced "silence" even during speaker pauses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Only spoke during speaker pauses to show listening or reflect understanding</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Showed listening</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Used body language that said "I'm interested"</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leaned forward</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nodded occasionally</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Smiled and used other facial expressions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Used minimal encouragers, such as...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, OK, Uh huh...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Go on, I see, Tell me more...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Silence also encourages the other person to speak more</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Re-stated (mirrored)</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ensured your understanding of words, feelings, meaning through reflection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrased</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Summarized</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Questioned</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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USED ACTIVE LISTENING	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Responded appropriately</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Analyze problem further</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advise</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider options</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate what you would do</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support change</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
USED STRATEGIC QUESTIONING	HOW? WHICH QUESTIONS?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to identify a GOAL which was:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focused - Specifically addressed one identified problem</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Outcome-oriented – Stated what should be</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Positive - Rather than what you <i>don't</i> want, stated in affirmative language what you <i>do</i> want</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to outline the REALITY of the problem, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is NOT going well</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What IS going well</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possible root causes</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to outline some possible OPTIONS to achieve the goal, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What was already tried and how each worked</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Various options and what to consider:</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Benefits and downsides of each option</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likelihood of success for each option</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Factors which would impact the success of each option</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional options if obstacles were removed</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to determine the best WAY FORWARD:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed all factors and considerations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



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# Observation Notes: Purposeful Interactions

Take notes on what the person playing the mentor did to demonstrate each skill below.

USED ACTIVE LISTENING	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Paid attention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Looked at speaker directly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mentally repeated speaker's words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seemed to read speaker's body language</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Did not interrupt</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practiced "silence" even during speaker pauses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Only spoke during speaker pauses to show listening or reflect understanding</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Showed listening</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Used body language that said "I'm interested"</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leaned forward</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nodded occasionally</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Smiled and used other facial expressions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Used minimal encouragers, such as...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, OK, Uh huh...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Go on, I see, Tell me more...</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Silence also encourages the other person to speak more</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Re-stated (mirrored)</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reflected understanding of words, feelings, meaning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrased</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Summarized</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Questioned</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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USED ACTIVE LISTENING	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Responded appropriately</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Analyze problem further</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advise</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider options</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate what you would do</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support change</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
USED STRATEGIC QUESTIONING	HOW? WHICH QUESTIONS?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to identify a GOAL which was:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focused - Specifically addressed one identified problem</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Outcome-oriented – Stated what should be</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Positive - Rather than what you <i>don't</i> want, stated in affirmative language what you <i>do</i> want</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to outline the REALITY of the problem, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is NOT going well</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What IS going well</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possible root causes</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to outline some possible OPTIONS to achieve the goal, including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What was already tried and how each worked</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Various options and what to consider:</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Benefits and downsides of each option</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Likelihood of success for each option</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Factors which would impact the success of each option</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional options if obstacles were removed</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Used strategic questioning to determine the best WAY FORWARD:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed all factors and considerations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



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# Homework Worksheet: Your Next Steps

## Session 4: Strategic Questioning

Review the strategic questioning techniques you will practice. Then, given what you have learned in Session 4, practice strategic questioning in an actual interaction, preferably as you move through the GROWS Model with someone. You can practice with anyone...an IPP, a co-worker, a friend, or a family member. After asking your strategic questions, complete the worksheet below.

**WHAT** was the strategic questioning experience like for you?

**WHICH** types of strategic question did you ask? **WHAT** were the questions?

**IF APPLICABLE, HOW** did the strategic questions help you move through the GROWS steps?

**HOW** do you feel your questions were effective?

**HOW** will you improve your strategic questioning ability in the future? Be specific.

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## Article: We Have to Talk: A Step-By-Step Checklist for Difficult Conversations

Think of a conversation you've been putting off. Got it? Great. Then let's go.

There are dozens of books on the topic of difficult, crucial, challenging, fierce, important (you get the idea) conversations. (In fact, I list several excellent resources at the end of this article). Those times when you know you should talk to someone, but you don't. Maybe you've tried and it went badly. Or maybe you fear that talking will only make the situation worse. Still, you feel stuck, and you'd like to free up that stuck energy for more useful purposes.

What you have here is a brief synopsis of best practice strategies: a checklist of action items to think about before going into the conversation; some useful concepts to practice during the conversation; and some tips and suggestions to help you stay focused and flowing in general, including possible conversation openings.

You'll notice one key theme throughout: you have more power than you think.

### Working on Yourself: How To Prepare for the Conversation

Before going into the conversation, ask yourself some questions:

**What is your purpose for having the conversation?** What do you hope to accomplish? What would be an ideal outcome? Watch for hidden purposes. You may think you have honorable goals, like educating an employee or increasing connection with your teen, only to notice that your language is excessively critical or condescending. You think you want to support, but you end up punishing. Some purposes are more useful than others. Work on yourself so that you enter the conversation with a supportive purpose.

**What assumptions are you making about this person's intentions?** You may feel intimidated, belittled, ignored, disrespected, or marginalized, but be cautious about assuming that this was the speaker's intention. Impact does not necessarily equal intent.

**What "buttons" of yours are being pushed?** Are you more emotional than the situation warrants? Take a look at your "back story," as they say in the movies. What personal history is being triggered? You may still have the conversation, but you'll go into it knowing that some of the heightened emotional state has to do with you.

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**How is your attitude toward the conversation influencing your perception of it?** If you think this is going to be horribly difficult, it probably will be. If you truly believe that whatever happens, some good will come of it, that will likely be the case. Try to adjust your attitude for maximum effectiveness.

**Who is the opponent?** What might he be thinking about this situation? Is he aware of the problem? If so, how do you think he perceives it? What are his needs and fears? What solution do you think he would suggest? Begin to reframe the opponent as partner.

**What are your needs and fears?** Are there any common concerns? Could there be?

**How have you contributed to the problem?** How has the other person?

## **4 Steps to a Successful Outcome**

The majority of the work in any conflict conversation is work you do on yourself. No matter how well the conversation begins, you'll need to stay in charge of yourself, your purpose and your emotional energy. Breathe, center, and continue to notice when you become off center—and choose to return again. This is where your power lies. By choosing the calm, centered state, you'll help your opponent/partner to be more centered, too. Centering is not a step; centering is how you are as you take the steps. (For more on Centering, see the Resource section at the end of the article.)

### **Step #1: Inquiry**

Cultivate an attitude of discovery and curiosity. Pretend you don't know anything (you really don't), and try to learn as much as possible about your opponent/partner and his point of view. Pretend you're entertaining a visitor from another planet, and find out how things look on that planet, how certain events affect the other person, and what the values and priorities are there.

If your partner really was from another planet, you'd be watching his body language and listening for unspoken energy as well. Do that here. **What does he really want?** What is he not saying?

Let your partner talk until he is finished. Don't interrupt except to acknowledge. Whatever you hear, don't take it personally. It's not really about you. Try to learn as much as you can in this phase of the conversation. You'll get your turn, but don't rush things.

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## **Step #2: Acknowledgment**

Acknowledgment means showing that you've heard and understood. Try to understand the other person so well you can make his argument for him. Then do it. Explain back to him what you think he's really going for. Guess at his hopes and honor his position. He will not change unless he sees that you see where he stands. Then he might. No guarantees.

Acknowledge whatever you can, including your own defensiveness if it comes up. It's fine; it just is. You can decide later how to address it. For example, in an argument with a friend, I said: "I notice I'm becoming defensive, and I think it's because your voice just got louder and sounded angry. I just want to talk about this topic. I'm not trying to persuade you in either direction." The acknowledgment helped him (and me) to re-center.

Acknowledgment can be difficult if we associate it with agreement. Keep them separate. My saying, "this sounds really important to you," doesn't mean I'm going to go along with your decision.

## **Step #3: Advocacy**

When you sense your opponent/partner has expressed all his energy on the topic, it's your turn. What can you see from your perspective that he's missed? Help clarify your position without minimizing his. For example: "From what you've told me, I can see how you came to the conclusion that I'm not a team player. And I think I am. When I introduce problems with a project, I'm thinking about its long-term success. I don't mean to be a critic, though perhaps I sound like one. Maybe we can talk about how to address these issues so that my intention is clear."

## **Step #4: Problem-Solving**

Now you're ready to begin building solutions. Brainstorming and continued inquiry are useful here. Ask your opponent/partner what he thinks might work. Whatever he says, find something you like and build on it. If the conversation becomes adversarial, go back to inquiry. Asking for the other's point of view usually creates safety and encourages him to engage. If you've been successful in centering, adjusting your attitude, and engaging with inquiry and useful purpose, building sustainable solutions will be easy.

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## **Practice, Practice, Practice**

The art of conversation is like any art—with continued practice you will acquire skill and ease. Here are some additional tips and suggestions:

A successful outcome will depend on two things: how you are and what you say. How you are (centered, supportive, curious, problem-solving) will greatly influence what you say.

Acknowledge emotional energy—yours and your partner's—and direct it toward a useful purpose.

Know and return to your purpose at difficult moments.

Don't take verbal attacks personally. Help your opponent/partner come back to center.

Don't assume your opponent/partner can see things from your point of view.

Practice the conversation with a friend before holding the real one.

Mentally practice the conversation. See various possibilities and visualize yourself handling them with ease. Envision the outcome you are hoping for.

## **How Do I Begin?**

In my workshops, a common question is: "How do I begin the conversation?" Here are a few conversation openers I've picked up over the years—and used many times!

I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us work together more effectively.

I'd like to talk about \_\_\_\_\_ with you, but first I'd like to get your point of view.

I need your help with what just happened. Do you have a few minutes to talk?

I need your help with something. Can we talk about it (soon)? If the person says, "Sure, let me get back to you," follow up with him.

I think we have different perceptions about \_\_\_\_\_. I'd like to hear your thinking on this.

I'd like to talk about \_\_\_\_\_. I think we may have different ideas about how to \_\_\_\_\_.

I'd like to see if we might reach a better understanding about \_\_\_\_\_. I really want to hear your feelings about this and share my perspective as well.

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Write a possible opening for your conversation here:

## Resources

*Unlikely Teachers: Finding the Hidden Gifts in Daily Conflict*, by Judy Ringer

*The Magic of Conflict*, by Thomas F. Crum

*Difficult Conversations*, by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen

*Crucial Conversations*, by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler

[FAQs about Conflict](#), by Judy Ringer

## About the Author



Judy Ringer is a conflict and communication skills trainer, black belt in Aikido, and founder of [Power & Presence Training](#) and [Portsmouth Aikido](#).

# Homework Worksheet: Critical Conversations

After you read the Judy Ringer article, then answer the questions below. Refer back to the article for more detail on each question.

## The Critical Situation

- Think of an actual professional situation (past or current) which involves the need for a critical conversation, which has not yet occurred. Describe the basic situation here.

## Partner's Role: What the Other Person May Think About the Situation

- Who is the opponent in this critical situation? (We'll refer to this person from this point on as your "partner")
- What do you think your partner might be thinking about this situation? Is he or she aware of the problem? If so, how do you think he or she perceives it? What do you think are his or her needs and fears?
- What solution do you think he or she would suggest?
- How do you think the other person contributed to the problem?

**Continue the worksheet on the next page**



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## Video #6 Notes: Coaching Conversations

As you watch the video, record WHAT you observe the mentor DOING to coach the IPP. Use the Handout: Mentoring Performance Checklist (Coaching Conversations section) to guide your observations.

### **What did the mentor DO to coach?**

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# Video #7 Notes: A Coaching Conversation About a Critical Conversation

This video brings together both special mentoring situations we have just talked about: critical conversations and coaching conversations. Although the models in the video are different than those we talked about, there is some overlap. See if you can identify which of the following steps and skills “Dr. Dialogue” and his “mentee” demonstrate in the video—even if they are called something different—and which they do not.

COACHING CONVERSATION BETWEEN DR. DIALOGUE AND MENTEE	WHAT DID DR. DIALOGUE DO?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Asked permission to coach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focused on needs and goals</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reinforced mentee for what he did well</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Redirected what needed to be changed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provided needed teaching/training for mentee</li> </ul>	
CRITICAL CONVERSATION BETWEEN MENTEE AND DARTH VADER	WHAT DID THE MENTEE DO?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inquiry (Darth Vader’s turn to explain)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgment (Honoring and understanding Darth)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy (Employee’s turn to explain)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Problem-Solving (Employee and Darth working together)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If adversarial, created safety</li> </ul>	

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## Worksheet: Coaching Conversations

Complete Question 1 individually, as if you are an IPP. Then switch with someone in your group and ask that person to answer Question 2, as a mentor.

### **#1 Task or Skill:** Pretend that you are an IPP.

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- Record one of your IPP tasks or skills which could be improved through coaching.
  
- Describe some related needs and goals:
  
- Describe a related task or skill that you are performing well.

### **#2 Plan:** Now return to being a mentor. Read the task or skill that needs coaching above. Plan your coaching conversation below:

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- How will you ask permission to coach?
  
- How will you stay focused on the above needs and goals if the conversation gets off track?

## #2 Plan: cont.

---

- What might you say or do to reinforce the IPP for what he or she is doing well? Be sure to include:
  - The specific behavior or attitude
  - Form of appreciation or praise
  
- How might you redirect the task or skill that needs to change? Be sure to include:
  - The specific behavior or attitude
  - The specific correction (what *is* being done now and how vs. what *should* be done and how)
  - Form of appreciation or praise
  
- How might you provide the needed teaching or training to redirect the task or skill?

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# Observation Notes: Coaching Conversations

Take notes on what the person playing the mentor did to demonstrate each skill below.

COACHING CONVERSATION	HOW?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Asked permission to coach</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stayed focused on needs and goals</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reinforced for what is meeting or exceeding expectations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specific behavior or attitude</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation or praise</li> </ul> </li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Redirected what needs to change               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specific behavior or attitude</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specific correction ( what <i>is</i> being done now and how vs. what <i>should</i> be done and how)</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation or praise</li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provided needed teaching/training</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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## Worksheet: Rear View Review • Sessions 4 and 5

In your table groups, take about 5 or so minutes to complete the steps below. You may use your notes in this Participant's Guide to help you review.

1. Assign a facilitator from your table group.
2. The facilitator should assign each person at your table one or more of the bulleted topics below.

	
<b><u>Session 4</u> Strategic Questioning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What It Is</li><li>• Types of Strategic Questions</li><li>• Questioning Through the GROWS Model</li></ul>	<b><u>Session 5</u> Special Situations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical Conversations</li><li>• Coaching Conversations</li></ul>

3. Each person should take about one minute to recap their topic for the others. Use the back of this page to prepare notes, if needed.

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4. The facilitator should lead a discussion about the take aways from today's training (i.e., what you will take away from training back to the job, or how your learning will now apply to the "real world").

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