

# The Three Mentoring Stances

Consulting	Collaborating	Coaching
<p><b>Intention:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To share information, advice, and technical resources about policies, and procedures; learning, learners, and curriculum and content; and effective practices.</li> <li>To establish standards for professional practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing resource materials and references to research.</li> <li>Demonstrating processes and procedures informally and through model lessons.</li> <li>Offering a menu of options to consider.</li> <li>Providing introductions to building and district resource people as needed.</li> <li>Offering expert commentary on student work samples.</li> <li>Sharing principles of practice by elaborating the “What,” “Why,” and “How” of proposed ways of thinking about issues and proposed solutions.</li> <li>Framing presenting problems within wider contexts and providing expert ways to approach issues and concerns.</li> <li>Illuminating principles of practice that guide choices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a credible voice.</li> <li>Sitting up straighter or leaning back a bit from the table.</li> <li>Referencing a third point off to the side, gesturally placing information to be considered in this neutral zone.</li> <li>Using the pronoun “I” as in, “Here’s how I think about issues like that.”</li> <li>Using bookmarking phrases for emphasis such as “It’s important to...” “Keep in mind...” and “Pay attention to...”</li> </ul> <p><b>Cautions:</b> If overused, the consulting stance can build dependency on the mentor for problem solving. Advice without explanation of the underlying choice points and guiding principles usually does not develop a protégé’s ability to transfer learning to new settings or to generate novel solutions on her own.</p>	<p><b>Intention:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To co-develop information, ideas, and approaches to problems.</li> <li>To model a collegial relationship as a standard for professional practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorming ideas and options.</li> <li>Co-planning and co-teaching lessons.</li> <li>Sharing and exchanging resource materials.</li> <li>Planning experiments to try simultaneously in each of your classrooms and comparing notes on results.</li> <li>Jointly analyzing student work samples.</li> <li>Joining the protégé to offer support and “translate” when building and district resource people are there to provide technical assistance.</li> <li>Jointly noting problem frames and generating alternative ways to think about issues and concerns.</li> <li>Alternating paraphrasing and summarizing oneself with encouraging the protégé to paraphrase and summarize developing ideas and understanding.</li> <li>Alternating offering ideas with encouraging the protégé to contribute ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a confident, approachable voice.</li> <li>Sitting side-by-side, focused on the common problem.</li> <li>Establishing and referencing a shared third point.</li> <li>Using a mix of the pronouns “we” and “you.”</li> <li>Using phrases like “Let’s think about...” “Let’s generate...” or “How might we...”</li> </ul> <p><b>Cautions:</b> Mentors need to carefully monitor their own actions when they enter the collaborative stance. Their own enthusiasm and excitement for the topic or issues may override the intention to co-create ideas and possibilities. False collaboration then becomes disguised as consultation.</p>	<p><b>Intention:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the protégé’s idea production, instructional decision-making, and ability to reflect on practice.</li> <li>To increase the ability of the protégé to self-coach and become a self-directed learner.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining a non-judgmental stance with full attention to the emotional and mental processes of the protégé.</li> <li>Inquiring paraphrasing, and probing for specificity to surface the protégé’s perspectives, perceptions, issues, and concerns.</li> <li>Inquiring, paraphrasing, and probing for specificity to surface the protégé’s planning, problem solving, and reflecting on practice.</li> <li>Inquiring, paraphrasing, and probing for specificity to support the protégé’s analysis of student work samples.</li> <li>Inquiring, paraphrasing, and probing for specificity to increase the protégé’s self-knowledge and awareness as a teacher and a professional educator.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using an approachable voice.</li> <li>Attending fully and maintaining eye contact.</li> <li>Using the pronouns “you,” as in “So you’re concerns about...”</li> <li>When responding, using a pattern of pausing, paraphrasing, and inquiring to open thinking; or probing for specificity to focus thinking.</li> <li>Framing invitational questions to support thinking, such as, “What might be some ways to...?”, “What are some options you are considering?” and “What are some of the connections you are making?”</li> </ul> <p><b>Cautions:</b> The coaching stance assumes that the other party has resources for idea generation. If this is not the case, pursuing this stance can lead to frustration on the part of protégés. You cannot coach out of someone what is not in them.</p>

**Source:** Adapted from *Mentoring Matters: A Practical guide to Learning-Focused Relationships* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) (pp. 21.27), by L. Lipton, B. Wellman, & C. Humbard, 2003, Sherman, CT: MiraVia, LLC. Copyright 2003 by MiraVia, LLC.