

## Handout: Effective Coaching

What do coaches do?	What does this look like?
 <p>Nurture and support college teams to improve student and institutional outcomes via culturally responsive, customized coaching.</p>	
 <p>Model, guide and encourage teams of faculty, staff and administrators to create conditions for urgent, large scale, transformative change.</p>	
 <p>Model collaborative problem-solving and decision-making.</p>	
 <p>Question, challenge, encourage and inspire teams to create conditions, policies, and practices that enable students to succeed.</p>	
 <p>Support the development of organizational capacity to design, deliver and evaluate large-scale redesign and continuous improvement.</p>	
 <p>Work collaboratively or in consultation with State System Offices, Student Success Centers, and other organizations.</p>	



# Handout: Characteristics of Effective Coaches

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>If a coach demonstrates this characteristic, what might you hear them say?</i>	<i>If a coach demonstrates this characteristic, what might you see them do?</i>
<p><b>Excellent communication and listening skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ appreciative inquiry</li> <li>• Build rapport and trust</li> <li>• Motivate and inspire</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>		
<p><b>Strong interpersonal skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaged facilitation</li> <li>• Customer service focus</li> <li>• Emotional intelligence</li> <li>• Flexibility and tolerance for ambiguity</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>		
<p><b>Analytical and problem-solving strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask powerful, probing questions to clarify</li> <li>• Challenge assumptions: Why?</li> <li>• Support difficult discussions and decisions</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>		



# Handout: Characteristics of Effective Coaches

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>If a coach demonstrates this characteristic, what might you hear them say?</i>	<i>If a coach demonstrates this characteristic, what might you see them do?</i>
<p><b>Experience as a team leader and a team player</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do homework</li> <li>• Support affirming, celebrating, and leveraging prior work and achievement</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>		
<p><b>Commitment to student success work and equity</b></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>		
<p><b>Understanding strategies that drive transformative change</b></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>		



## Handout: Characteristics of Effective Coaches

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>If a coach demonstrates this characteristic, what might you hear them say?</i>	<i>If a coach demonstrates this characteristic, what might you see them do?</i>
<p><b>Experience as a change agent, especially championing and managing project(s) that resulted in improved student and institutional outcomes</b></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>		

\*Additional Strengths for Pathways Coaching: Substantive knowledge and resources in one or more areas:

- Developmental education/gateway course redesign
- Academic program mapping
- Advising system redesign, especially career advising
- Teaching and learning innovation
- Professional development
- Policy development
- Strategic finance
- Institutional effectiveness



# Handout: What's Your Coaching Style?



This exercise is intended to provide insight into your coaching style. As we define it, style refers to: “a particular pattern or way of behaving” that coaches use as their “go-to” tools when working with college teams. To assess your style:

1. Complete the coaching style assessment by responding to the following questions by circling the descriptor from the grid below that best describes your “go-to” coaching approach.
2. Once you respond to each of the questions, count the number of responses that you have in each quadrant.
3. Write your totals for each quadrant below.

<p><b>Collaborator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaxing</li> <li>• Encouraging</li> <li>• Facilitating</li> <li>• Elucidating</li> <li>• Supporting</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Empowering</li> <li>• Summarizing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Enthusiast</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selling</li> <li>• Motivating</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Convincing</li> <li>• Cajoling</li> <li>• Explaining</li> <li>• Promoting</li> <li>• Persuading</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mentor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observing</li> <li>• Monitoring</li> <li>• Reflecting</li> <li>• Empowering</li> <li>• Experimenting</li> <li>• Prompting</li> <li>• Challenging</li> <li>• Echoing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructing</li> <li>• Directing</li> <li>• Structuring</li> <li>• Describing</li> <li>• Lecturing</li> <li>• Guiding</li> <li>• Informing</li> <li>• Presenting</li> </ul>

1. As a coach, what do you see as your primary role?
2. When you are coaching, which communication strategies do you employ primarily?
3. What is your approach to goal-setting with the team?
4. As a coach, how do you build trust with the team?
5. When coaching, how do you support the team?
6. As a coach, how do you communicate instructions?
7. How do you present task-relevant feedback to the team?
8. How do you deal with failure when coaching the team?
9. When coaching, how do you raise uncomfortable topics that are affecting the team's ability to accomplish tasks?
10. When coaching, what strategies do you use to maintain the team's focus on the objectives?

**Totals:**

**Collaborator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Enthusiast:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dominant Coach Style:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Round 1: Move to the table of a coach who has the *same* coaching style as you do. With your group, discuss the following questions:**

*For the leader coach:* Discuss with the group how your coach style had to be adapted to fit with the leadership, culture, history, and/or “way they do business” at a college you’ve worked with as a coach. What intentional process did you follow to do this? What challenges did you have, and how did you overcome them?

*For the group:* What questions do you have? What do you anticipate will be your biggest strengths and challenges in coaching, given your coaching style?

**Round 2: Move to the table of a coach who has a *different* coaching style from yours. With your group, discuss the following questions:**

*For the leader coach:* Discuss with the group how your coach style had to be adapted to fit with the leadership, culture, history, and/or “way they do business” at a college you’ve worked with as a coach. What intentional process did you follow to do this? What challenges did you have, and how did you overcome them?

*For the group:* How does your style differ from the style of the leader coach? What strategies could you adopt from this style that is different from yours?

## Handout: Mini-Case Studies



With your table, take **20 minutes** to discuss your assigned mini-case study (on the following pages). Consider the questions included in your assigned case, as well as the questions below:

- What would your role be as a coach in this situation?
- What questions would you ask? With whom would you want to meet?
- How would your coaching style be an asset in this situation? A challenge?
- How might you address this situation differently *now* than you would have before hearing from the veteran coaches today?

# Handout: Mini-Case Studies (Case 1)



**Case 1: Medium Sized Community College (MSCC)** was kicking off a multi-year college-wide redesign of the student experience using the pathways framework. Members of the IR team prepared data, including student performance along several key early momentum metrics as well as completion data, in advance of the first site visit meeting with the pathways coach. The data was shared with the coach and the members of the college's core redesign team.

The data was voluminous. It consisted primarily of data tables with generic titles (such as first semester students, 2012-6). Some of the tables appeared to be describing the same cohorts of students but the totals were different and definitions were not included. In several of the tables, the percentages did not total to 100%.

As soon as the on-site meeting about data began, the head of IR expressed his conclusions about what the data said. It was clear, both from the questions asked and the body language, that most of the core team members were unfamiliar with the data, didn't understand it, and were having a hard time following the discussion.

The head of IR then announced that he had spoken with the chair of the English department and they agreed to conduct focus groups in several sections of Gateway English to understand why some students succeed and others don't. They planned to interview two "good" and two "bad" students in each course section based on student performance over the first three weeks of the semester. A few members of the core team suggested expanding the size of the focus groups and wanted to know if this was a "statistically valid sample," but no one questioned the methodology.

## ***Questions to consider:***

- 1. What issues would you recommend the coach discuss with the core group, and why?*
- 2. How could a coach help the core group "reset" its approach to data analysis?*
- 3. What discussion processes could the coach use to steer the core team toward group discovery? Is there any role for data modeling by the coach?*
- 4. What opportunities does this situation offer for infusing equity into the discussion?*

## Handout: Mini-Case Studies (Case 2)



**Case 2: Suburban Community College (SCC)** got off to a great start. They spent most of the first year of their pathways work discovering the root causes of the equity gaps and sharing/discussing the implications with the broad college community. The team felt a sense of pride and accomplishment for creating an action plan that reflected qualitative and quantitative data about institutional barriers, reflected the student voice in the strategy recommendations, and had deep support among faculty, staff and administrators.

However, the action plan did not include a detailed description of specific responsibilities or deadlines. There were no milestones or clearly defined processes for determining the extent to which progress was being made. There was frustration by the end of the first implementation year that the college had not made much progress towards their overall redesign goals.

The coach is on site with the college only twice per year, but tries to engage in between visits via zoom meetings, check-in phone calls and follow-up emails. Scheduled calls and meetings frequently get cancelled or postponed indefinitely. Despite collaboratively setting an agenda with the core team in advance of the site visit, participants in the meetings often are unprepared and default to a repetition of information that was discussed previously and/or the action plan power point presentation. The coach observed that the core team's focus seemed to change to the "priority of the moment" once the site visit is over.

The college president is disengaged from the process, rarely attending or participating in the on-site meetings. In one on one conversations with the coach, she expressed frustration with the lack of implementation progress being made and the capacity of her VPs to manage multiple priorities. The team told the coach that they know the president is not happy with their progress, but they don't think she understands how hard it is to implement the strategies selected or stay focused with everything that is going on at the college.

### **Questions to consider:**

- 1. What additional information does the coach need to help understand how best to get the college team back on track to make implementation progress?*
- 2. How would you address with the president her lack of confidence in the team? How would you address with the team their lack of confidence about the president's commitment to the redesign work?*
- 3. What types of strategies have you seen in other situations that might help this team recreate the feeling of success they had at the end of the first planning?*

## Handout: Mini-Case Studies (Case 3)



**Case 3:** The first time the core team from **Rural Community College (RCC)** met with their pathways coach, they laid out their plan for redesigning academic and support services to improve student and institutional outcomes. Core team members, led by a well-respected and active faculty member, had read several articles about student success strategies and attended a few webinars and conferences where these strategies were discussed. Their plan incorporated many of these “best practice” strategies including advising redesign, mandatory first year orientation, a first-year experience course, and faculty innovation groups. The plan did not incorporate much analysis of student performance data beyond credential completion, or perspectives from students about their college experiences. And, the data that was included had not been shared widely or discussed in college-wide venues.

The pathways coach described a comprehensive process that other colleges use for more in-depth discovery and learning about student barriers and equity gaps, explained the relationship between this intentional process and the equitable provision of student supports, and modeled several examples of how this process could add value using data from RCC and (anonymously) other colleges. Despite some reservations, the team agreed overall that a similar process could help them prioritize their redesign efforts.

Over a several month period, the team completed a thorough discovery process, identifying root causes of equity gaps, capturing student perspectives, assessing institutional strengths and resources, and engaging a broader group of faculty, staff and administrators. They were proud of their work and what they learned, especially across departments and functions.

The faculty core team lead volunteered to write the first draft of the Action/Implementation Plan. There was significant surprise and consternation when he presented the draft Plan at a core team meeting, also attended by the pathways coach. The draft Plan matched the initial pre-discovery plan, almost word for word. It was not aligned with new information about the most pervasive student barriers and equity gaps, focused on discrete interventions, and was not scalable to large numbers of students.

### **Questions to consider:**

- 1. How could the coach diffuse some of the confusion/consternation among the core team members and help move the team forward, incorporating their contributions in a more collaborative way?*
- 2. How could the coach support the core team lead to develop additional engagement, collaboration and communication skills?*
- 3. What is a realistic time frame for accomplishing each of these challenges?*
- 4. What recommendations could you offer about how the team should organize its work going forward to maximize cross-functional learning and improvement?*