

Cognitive Coaching

What is it?
How do I do it?
What are its benefits?

Background on Supervision.....

Many supervisors have, for years, used a method called **clinical supervision** to help interns or student teachers improve their practice. In this method, supervisors go into the classrooms, fill out an evaluation, and discuss with the student ways that he or she might improve. Unfortunately, as hard as the supervisor tries, often times it is he or she who does most of the **talking** and **thinking**.

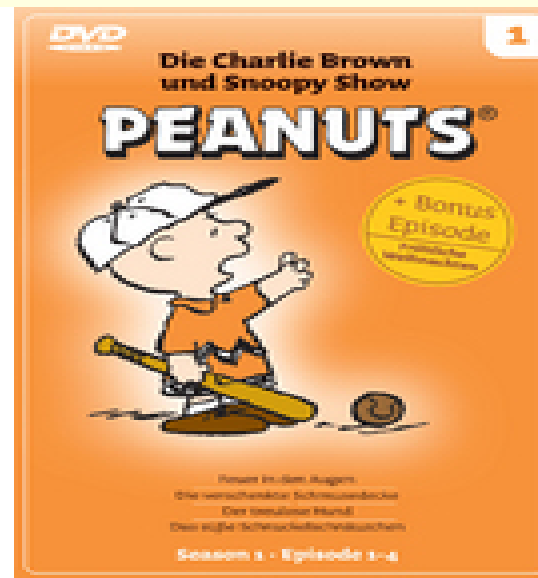
What is Cognitive Coaching?

In cognitive coaching, the intern will think for himself, make good decisions, and solve problems on his own. The supervisor guides the discussion through a series of questions.

The role of the supervisor is interact with the intern three different times: once, in a pre-conference where the lesson is planned; again, when observing the lesson; and finally, in a post-conference where the two debrief the lesson.

What Skills Does a “Coach” Need?

The skills needed for coaching a young teacher are not unlike those needed to coach Charlie’s baseball team.....



Necessary Skills

- *Good listening skills
- *Good paraphrasing skills
- *Knowledge of the lesson cycle, classroom management, special populations in the classroom

AND MOST IMPORTANT.....

Necessary Skills.....

A positive attitude.....



Part II: How Do I Do It?

The Pre-Conference

Step I: Before the Pre-Conference

- * Set up appointments with the intern-Pre-Conf (45 minutes to 1 hour) At this time, also set up the observation (regular class) and Post-Conference time (one hour)
- * Ask the intern to have a lesson prepared that you will discuss at the pre-conference
- * Assure the intern that this is not an evaluation but a collaboration

Pre-Conference....Don't

*Forget your agenda

*Talk too much

*Teach or preach

Remember....the purpose of this session is to get the intern to think....get them to solve their own problems.....

The Pre-Conference.....Do's

Do:

- *hold conference at least one day before the observation
- *start with broad questions and then go to narrow ones
- *take notes
- *assure privacy
- *ask for specific, measurable objectives
- *take off “coaching hat” and become instructor if necessary

On the Day of the Pre-Conference

Ask the intern the following questions:

- (1) So what are we doing that day? (general)
- (2) Ask what the students will be doing?
- (3) Ask them to describe strategies to be used to get students to final objective... (What is anticipatory set, bell work, closure, teaching strategies.....)
- (4) Ask them to go over the lesson cycle

Questions in the Pre-Conference...continued.....

(6) Ask how he or she will assess the students' success

(7) Anticipate Concerns (how will slower students do? What if they don't catch on?)
What about students who are absent?

(8) Ask how you can help? Are problem students in the class? Are there students who need extra help? What can I watch for to help you?

The Day of the Lesson Observation

- *Make sure to arrive before the lesson begins
- *Find a place to sit in an unobtrusive location in the room.
- *Script the lesson

Suggestions for Scripting.....

- *Draw a line down the middle of several pages
Write on the right hand side/left used later
- *Mark the top of each sheet to note time and
number of students on task
- *Try to take down everything the teacher says-
do not be selective and do not include your
own opinions....**collection of data** is the key!
- *If you need a break, mark time out and in....

At this point, as you leave.....

It's always a good idea to leave a note.....

Something like.....

*Thanks for letting me share this time with
and your students.

*I'm looking forward to our visit tomorrow...
thanks!



After the Lesson and Before the Post-Conference.....Analyze the Script

*Label each teacher statement as one of the four teacher actions: IRAQ

- (1) Giving **information**
- (2) **Responding** to students
- (3) Assigning **activities**
- (4) Asking **questions**

This data is irreplaceable to the teacher. If there are 4 pages of information with no activities or questions, there is a serious problem. What if the teachers gives discipline reminders 7 times on one page?

In Addition, Also Mark.....

Anticipatory Set

Instances of Active Participation

Closure

Method of Motivation

Circle items that they asked you to look for!

Finally, the Post-Conference ... The Big Questions!

- (1) How do you feel the lesson went?
- (2) What did the students do to make you feel this way?
Time on task, classroom management, success during active participation?
- (3) Recall your own behaviors (high points of lesson here) Strategies used? How did you keep the lesson going? Bell work? Manipulatives? Closure?
- (4) Compare student performance/behavior with what you expected? Did students meet expectations? Why or why not? What % got it? How did special populations perform?

And Finally.....

SHOW THEM THE MARKED SCRIPT HERE!

Allow a few minutes for them to look at it.

(5) So, if anything, that would you change about the lesson? What are elements you would keep?

(Supervisor takes notes here)

(6) What ah-ha's will you take away from the lesson?

Supervisor then paraphrases what has been said. One final question: What do you want to work on for next time? (Give them the notes, but you keep them as well)

Benefits of Cognitive Coaching

For the teacher it improves:

- *Communication Skills



- *Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

- *Classroom Performance

- *The Ability to Reflect

For the Supervisor.....

Cognitive Coaching helps us to better help those we mentor. By leading our students to the “answers” through questioning techniques, they solve their own problems, and in the process, they use and retain those solutions far longer than if WE had made the suggestion.



More Help.....



A very good source on this subject is *Cognitive Coaching by Jane Ellison and Carolee Hayes*.

There will also be a sample pre-conference conducted at the supervisor training.

Like riding a bicycle, this process is one that can be challenging at first, but with enough practice, the ride through cognitive coaching will be a smooth one.