



## Types of Coaching Strategies Used During

## Focused Observations

### 1. Observed:

While observing, the coach takes notes about the teacher's implementation of Pyramid Model practices and watches teacher's actions and practices without using any other coaching strategies.

Example: The coach sits down or stands in a place where she/he can observe teacher's implementation of practices and take notes based on the action plan goals.

### 2. Videotaped:

Coach utilizes technology to record a teacher within the classroom environment (via tablet or video camera). Coaches should only use videotaping in the classroom after having a discussion and agreement with the teacher. Video recording provides an objective view of classroom events. These video observations can be incorporated into reflection and feedback conversations, as the coach can use the video to share specific examples of the Pyramid Model practices related to the action plan. In addition, use of video recording allows the coach and the teacher an opportunity to focus on specific practices or behaviors that might have been missed during live observations.

Example: The coach uses a tablet to record the transition to center play after the introduction of new center time choice visuals. The coach reviews the video, and plans to engage the teacher in reflective conversations and provide the teacher with both supportive and constructive feedback based on use of the center time choice visuals during the debriefing session.

### 3. Modeled:

Verbal, gestural, physical or signed actions that demonstrates how to implement a Pyramid Model practice. In a modeling situation, the coach works with a child or the class and demonstrates how to do a certain practice. The teacher is in close proximity and observes the coach's behavior. Coaches should only use modeling in the classroom after having a discussion and agreement with the teacher.

Example: Coach demonstrates how to use an individualized direction or visual schedule by working with a child during a classroom activity, routine or transition. The coach might also notice a group of children who are having a difficult time at the computer and prompt the children to go get the solution kit.

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<sup>1</sup> Sources

Snyder, P. (2009) Coaching Manual for Embedded Instruction for Early Learning: Tools for Teachers (TfT). Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida.  
Hemmeter, M.L., Kinder, K., Artman, K., Snyder, P., & Fox, L., (2009). Coaching Manual for Classroom-Wide Implementation of the Pyramid Model. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.

#### 4. Collected Data:

While observing, the coach records data regarding implementation of a Pyramid Model Practice or specific action plan step. The data might come from the use of a teacher observation tool (running TPOT) or by recording data (frequency count, duration) that are related to the action plan goal. Coaches should only collect data in this manner after having a discussion with the teacher that data will be collected and shared as part of the coaching process. After data are collected, the coach might use graphs to summarize the data to help the teacher quickly identify trends in improvement or identify areas that need additional support. Additionally, a review of the data might be used during debriefing sessions to revise or add supports to the action plan.

Example: To collect data regarding progress towards a newly developed action plan, the coach completes a running TPOT and graphs the areas specific to the action plan as a way to share the progress with the coach during the debriefing session (e.g., graphs the TPOT key practices related to teaching problem solving and compares to it the initial TPOT). Other examples of data collection include tallying the total number of times the teacher joins in children play during centers/indoor play or recording the length of time it takes all children in the classroom to transition from snack time to circle time.

#### 5. Verbal Support:

Verbal support provided by the coach to the teacher about implementation of Pyramid Model practices while the teacher is implementing practices in the classroom. Coach delivers verbal prompts or cues to remind teacher to use specific practice. Verbal support differs from modeling in that the coach's comment is directed to the teacher. Modeling involves the coach interacting directly with the child to provide a model for the teacher.

Example: The teacher is beginning to use a "5-minute countdown glove" for transitions. Coach says to teacher, "Let Caleb pull off one of the minutes" or "Remember to let Joey pull off the numbers."

#### 6. Side-by-Side Gestural Support:

Nonverbal or visual actions used by the coach to guide the teacher's implementation of Pyramid Model practices. The action might be used to acknowledge the appropriate implementation of a practice or to prompt/remind a teacher to use a particular practice. Gestural support differs from gestural modeling in that the coach's gesture is directed to the teacher. Modeling involves the coach interacting directly with the child to provide a model for the teacher.

Example: Side-by-side gestural support can be as simple as the coach nodding her head to confirm the teacher's successful delivery of a Pyramid Model practice (e.g., referring to a class rule, guiding a child to choose a center). Other examples include giving a hand signal to indicate having the child finish one more step on a visual schedule or tapping a watch to indicate 20 minutes had passed at Circle Time.

#### 7. Problem-Solving Discussion:

Verbal interaction between the coach and teacher designed to lead the teacher through a systematic process involving identifying an implementation issue, generating options to address the issue, deciding on a possible course of action to address the issue, implementing the course of action, and evaluating the results.

Example: After observing a specific event/situation, the coach has a discussion with the teacher about his/her implementation of a practice. The teacher and the coach identify the teacher is having difficulty remembering to use transition warnings consistently (the issue). The coach and the teacher generate potential solutions to address the issue (e.g., use a timer as a reminder, check the visual schedule to see when transitions are planned), discuss a course of action to be taken, and agree to evaluate results,

often as part of the next coaching session. This problem-solving conversation might take place in several contexts: The teacher and coach might have a brief discussion on the way to the playground, or the coach might ask questions and generate solutions with the teacher in the moment.

### 8. Reflective Conversation:

A verbal interaction that includes a brief exchange between the coach and teacher and that is focused on reflection (e.g., how do you think it went? What additional support do you need?). Because this takes place during an observation, the conversation does not need to be lengthy (an initiation and response is sufficient). The goal is to encourage the teacher to think about his/her actions, the situation, the practices he/she used, the responses of the children, and/or the teacher's comfort level regarding implementation of Pyramid Model practices. No constructive or directive statements are used. Instead the coach offers a question to encourage reflection (i.e., "Do you think a white board would work for his schedule?"). Reflective conversation can focus on perspectives, feelings, interpretations, or use of practices.

Examples: Following an observation of a specific event or situation or a teacher comment, the coach might ask a question to encourage reflection during a natural break in the classroom activity (e.g., during a transition or meal time). Consider the following:

- During the transition to centers, one child refuses to pick up his toys and line up. The teacher is standing with the other children in line watching and says, "He's been doing so much better picking up, I don't know why he's doing this!" The coach approaches the teacher and says, "Let's think about your schedule. Is there anything different happening today?"
- When sitting at snack, the coach says, "So I saw you use the new visual schedule. How was it? Did it seem to work?"
- As the teacher ends circle time, she comments, "That was rough – Stacy didn't listen at all." The coach says, "Why do you think Stacy didn't stick with Circle today? What do you think is going on?"
- After the child's first use of a visual schedule during circle time, after the teacher transitions the other children to centers, the coach quickly comments "She seemed to really pick it up quickly. How did you think it went?"

### 9. Helped with Environmental Arrangements:

Coach assists the teacher with creating or adapting the environment to support the implementation of Pyramid Model practices. This might be rearranging or labeling the physical space. This does not include side-by-side gestural support or modeling for teacher.

Examples: The coach might help arrange a visual schedule to make it more functional, work with the teacher to change the entrance to a center to make it more accessible, offer additional materials to add to a center, or help adhere "feet" symbols to the floor for a transition activity.

### 10. Other Help in Classroom:

Doing other things in the classroom that are not related to the implementation of Pyramid Model practices but help to establish the coach/teacher relationship.

Example: Helping to serve lunch/snack, helping set up name tags or carpet squares, supervising the class for a short period of time while the teacher talks to a parent in the classroom, or helping to clean paint cups.

## Types of Coaching Strategies Used During **Debriefing Meetings**

### **1. Problem-Solving Discussion:**

Verbal interaction between the coach and teacher designed to lead the teacher through a systematic process involving identifying an implementation issue, generating options to address the issue, deciding on a possible course of action to address the issue, implementing the course of action, and evaluating the results.

Example: After observing a specific event/situation, the coach has a discussion with the teacher about his/her implementation of a practice. The teacher and the coach identify the teacher is having difficulty remembering to use transition warnings consistently (the issue). The coach and the teacher generate potential solutions to address the issue (e.g., use a timer as a reminder, check the visual schedule to see when transitions are planned), discuss a course of action to be taken, and agree to evaluate results, often as part of the next coaching session. This problem-solving conversation might take place in several contexts: The teacher and coach might have a brief discussion on the way to the playground, or the coach might ask questions and generate solutions with the teacher in the moment.

### **2. Reflective Conversation:**

A verbal interaction that includes a brief exchange between the coach and teacher and that is focused on reflection (e.g., how do you think it went? What additional support do you need?). The goal is to encourage the teacher to think about his/her actions, the situation, the practices he/she used, the responses of the children, and/or the teacher's comfort level regarding implementation of Pyramid Model practices. No constructive or directive statements are used. Instead the coach offers a question to encourage reflection (i.e., "Do you think a white board would work for his schedule?"). Reflective conversation can focus on perspectives, feelings, interpretations, or use of practices.

Example: During a debriefing, the coach might offer the following:

- "Let's talk about what happened with Bobby this morning. Why do you think this might have happened today? Let's think about your schedule. Was there anything different happening today?"
- "So I saw you use the new schedule. How was it? Was it comfortable to you?"
- "Why do you think Stacy didn't stick with Circle today? What do you think is going on?"
- "Do you think that was the best way for her? Do you think she really got it?"

### **3. Helped with Environmental Arrangement:**

Coach assists teacher with creating and/or adapting the environment to support the use of Pyramid Model practices. This might include engaging the teacher in discussions around the classroom environment, assisting the teacher in making changes in the classroom, or rearranging the physical space.

Examples: The coach might help the teacher generate ideas for center labels, help arrange a visual schedule, work with the teacher to change the entrance to a center to make it more accessible, discuss additional materials needed to add to a center, or help adhere "feet" symbols to the floor for a transition activity.

### **4. Role Play:**

A simulated situation that occurs between the coach and teacher to help the teacher to learn or practice Pyramid Model practices during debriefing. In a role-playing situation, both individuals take on a defined role and implement

a practice or respond to the implementation. The teacher might take on the role of the child while the coach demonstrates a practice, or the coach might take on the role of the child while the teacher implements a practice.

Example: The teacher and coach might practice a hypothetical conversation with a parent during a role play before the teacher meets with the parent. Additionally, the coach could use role play to practice the use of Tucker the Turtle or problem-solving strategies with the teacher.

### 5. Constructive Feedback:

Coach describes what occurred during the observation and provides precise feedback that assists the teaching in understanding missed components in the action plan steps or how to improve a targeted Pyramid Model practice. Use of constructive feedback provides the teacher with objective and specific information on how to make improvements with a practice or activity. As in the use of supportive feedback, constructive feedback might incorporate use of data, graphs, and video recordings. While early coaching sessions will include a high use supportive feedback, later sessions will incorporate increased use of constructive feedback as the teacher and coach develop a collaborative and trusting relationship.

Example: The coach might review details of the observation, providing specific and concrete links to the action plan by saying, "I saw the rules are posted and you reminded children of them during large group. Remember our action plan says to review the rules before the transition to centers as well. There was an opportunity to remind Bobby of the rules when he walked out of circle that was missed." The coach and the teacher then engage in a problem solving discussion about the use of individual visual reminders when teaching rules.

### 6. Goal Setting/Action Planning:

The coach helps the teacher identify and write goals related to action planning. Goal setting takes place any time a new goal is developed or new strategies/ action steps are added to an existing goal. To score this coaching strategy category in the coaching log, a new goal must be written OR a revision must be made to an existing Action Plan (e.g., adding new resources needed, updating the timeline, adding an Action Step).

Example: During the meeting, the coach and teacher identify an area the teacher would like to work on to improve implementation in her classroom (teaching friendship skills). The coach and teacher identify the steps that should be taken to meet the goal, develop a timeline for implementation, and write an Action Plan. Alternatively, the coach and teacher might expand upon an existing Action Plan by adding a new Action Step ("I noticed there's not much descriptive praise for friendship skills. How about we add that to the Action Plan for teaching friendship skills?").

### 7. Supportive Feedback:

Coach describes what occurred during the observation, focusing on use of specific encouragement to the teacher to report strengths, note improvements in practice implementation, or highlight accomplishments. This type of feedback connects the observation with the action plan, providing the teacher with concrete evidence of the progress he/she is making. Supportive feedback might incorporate use of data, graphs, and video recordings. During early coaching sessions, feedback will be predominantly supportive, and during later sessions, feedback will be both supportive and constructive. Both types of feedback are necessary for continued growth in teachers' implementation fidelity.

Example: The coach might review details of the observation, providing specific and concrete links to the action plan by saying, "I heard you use descriptive praise 3 times during story time" or "You reviewed the rules right before transition to the playground."

## 8. Material Provision:

Coach offers additional items that might help the teacher learn more about Pyramid Model practices and other recommended practices, or the coach might provide materials that might improve implementation of Pyramid Model practices.

Example: The coach might suggest the teacher read journal articles or book chapters that have information about the Pyramid Model. The coach might take pictures in the classroom to help create an enhanced daily schedule. The coach might provide a book, song, and/or visual that assists the teacher in implementing action plan goals.

## 9. Demonstration:

### *Demonstration-Live:*

Verbal, gestural, physical or signed actions that demonstrate how to implement Pyramid Model practices for the teacher. In a demonstration, the coach enacts the teacher's role and provides an example of how to use specific Pyramid Model practice. This is different from Role Play because it does not involve both the teacher and coach engaging in a simulation.

Example: The coach stands near the visual schedule and tells the teacher, "During Circle you might say, 'Ok, Circle is finished. Let's look at our schedule. Johnny, will you come flip over the piece for me?'"

### *Demonstration-Video:*

Watching a short audiovisual clip that focuses on Pyramid Model practices.

Example: The coach and teacher might view a video from the modules or Implementation Guides that showcases a transition practice the teacher is learning to use.

## 10. Individual Child Support:

Coach assists the teacher with planning for specific children who demonstrate the need for additional or individualized supports. While the coach might utilize a range of coaching strategies when debriefing around an individual child, (reflective conversation, problem solving discussion, action planning, roleplay), the focus of the debriefing remains on providing support the child, rather than on classroom-wide support.

Example: The coach might assist the teacher in developing an individual transition cue for a child who has not responded to the current classroom transition strategies, work with the teacher to set up a data collection system to monitor a child's progress after implementing a new behavior plan, or review a scripted story the teacher developed to assist a particular child with sharing toys with classroom peers.