

The MI Spirit

The MI Spirit is the emotional posture coaches take as they work with teachers. It is how coaches communicate they are present to collaborate and guide, not instruct and direct. The spirit is pervasive in MI practice- always present irrespective of the process coaches are in or the skill they are using. Without the spirit, which includes the four components below, the MI skills can be experienced as tricks, or tools of manipulation, weaken relationships, and decrease motivation for change.

Partnership:

- MI is *not* done “to” someone, it’s done “for” and “with” a person.
- MI is like dancing not wrestling (moving with rather than against each other).
- MI requires letting go of the assumption that you are the expert who will provide all the right answers!!!

Acceptance:

- MI believes in people's absolute worth – respecting the other and their right to grow.
- MI requires a non-judgmental approach, since judgement leads to discord.
- Coaches aren't here to direct, the choice to change always remains with the teacher.
- Coaches can let go of the idea, and burden, that you have to make people change.
- In MI coaches make every effort to understand the other's perspective, to see the world as they see it

Evocation:

- In MI coaches give space for individuals to talk themselves into change by evoking their ambivalence and exploring their reasons for change. We “call forth,” “stir up,” and “draw out”.
- The individual already has what they need and the coach's job is to help them locate and articulate it.
- Coaches evoke discrepancies between their current practices and their underlying values.
- Coaches embrace teacher ambivalence by helping them articulate pros and cons of change, coaches assist teachers to resolve it with solutions that match their stated goals and values.

Compassion:

- It's essential that coaches actively promote participants well-being, and that coaches give priority to teacher's needs.

The MI Processes

The MI Processes are the “roadmap” we follow as we navigate the process of change. They include engaging, focusing, evoking, and planning.

Engaging: Building trust and mutual understanding.

- Listen and confirm understanding
- Show empathy by understanding fully from the client’s perspective
- Avoid MINAs

Using OARS strategically (to understand BOTH sides of the ambivalence or dilemma)

Focusing: Prioritize the areas worthy of further discussion. To move to the next process (evocation) requires a specific target behavior.

- Seek and maintain direction towards change.
- Serve as guide.
- Help the teacher identify and prioritize potential change targets.

Evoking: Call forth the participants reasons for making a change.

- Use questions, reflections, affirmations, and summaries strategically to elicit change talk.

Planning: Articulating goals and concrete steps for achieving them.

- Consolidate commitment by selectively reinforcing commitment language
- Ask key questions to determine readiness for action planning
- Assist to identify planning goals and objectives
- Revisit the change plan to determine the need for more work in former stages and/or changes/additions to the plan.

Evoking Change Talk

Ask Evocative Questions:

- Ask open-ended questions for which change talk is the likely answer!
- DARN

Encourage “Looking Forward”

- Ask what may happen if things continue the way they are.
- Follow up with one of these open-ended questions:
 - If you were 100% successful in making the change you want, what would things be like down the road?
 - How would you like things to be in 5 years? In 10 years?

Ask for Elaboration

- When you hear change talk, ask for more details.
 - Tell me more.
 - What would that look like?
 - I’m interested in an example or two.

Query Examples

- What are the worst things that can happen if you don’t make this change?
- What are the best things that can happen if you do make this change?

Explore Values and Ideals

- Review any previously stated values and ideals.
- Compare current circumstances with those values and ideals.
- Explore how current parenting practices (adult behavior) fits with their values and ideals.

Evoking Change Talk, cont. (DARN)

Desire

How would you *like* for your relationships with your students to change?
 How would you *like* your student's engagement to be different?
 What do you *hope* our working together will accomplish?
 How do you *want* things to be different at the end of this semester?

Ability

What instructional practices do you think you might *be able to* change?
 What ideas do you have for how you *could* modify your instructional or management practices?
 Of the options we've discussed, which seems most *possible to change*?
 If you did decide you want to start using rewards and consequences, how *could* you do it?

Reasons

Why would you want to do something different with regard to your instructional practices or classroom management?
 What are the downsides of how are now?
 What might be the advantages of this change?
 What would make it worth your while to alter your instructional practices or classroom management?
 What might be the 3 best reasons for _____ (offer specific change that has been provided by the teacher)?

Need

What *needs* to happen?
 How *important* is it for you to _____? (1-10 scale)
 What do you think *has* to change?

After collecting their reasons for change, using some of the questions above, summarize (with a 'bouquet of change talk'), and then ask a short and simple question – a 'key question'. This process communicates, "Here are all the motivations for change you have given me. It's in your hands what, if anything, you choose to do. What do you think?"

Key Question

So what do you think you'll do?
 Where does all this leave you?
 I wonder what you might decide to do.

Eliciting Strength and Confidence

Reviewing Past Successes:

Help teachers explore changes they've made successfully in the past:

- What changes have you made along the way that were challenging for you?
- What things have you managed to do where you doubted yourself at first?
- How did you do that?
- How did you prepare for that change?
- What did you do to maintain the change?
- How did you overcome obstacles you may have faced?
- What does that change/success say about your skills or strengths or resources?

Affirmation:

Activity – Characteristics of Successful Changers

Provide the teacher with a list of positive characteristics they might possess. Invite them to look at the list and circle at least five words that describe him/herself. Then, ask open questions and reflect as you help them explore the strengths they identified.

Brainstorming:

- Encourage them to be creative and to generate as many ideas as possible.
- No critiquing allowed!
- Write them down.
- Then, ask them which ideas seem most plausible and why.

Giving Information and Advice:

- Only with invitation/permission and after you've solicited their own ideas.
- Offer a menu from which to choose, thus promoting autonomy.

Exchanging Information Handout

This handout is designed to provide a simple model for coaches to following when they are exchanging information with teachers. This model will be helpful when a) a teacher is asking for advice or b) your responsibilities with a teacher necessitate that you share knowledge or information with them. See below for helpful strategies and reminders.

A Strategy for Exchanging Information: EPE

Elicit – Find out what they know, then share only what’s needed.

Provide – Educate, provide pertinent information.

Elicit – Ask for their understanding and response.

1. Explore prior knowledge, and explore their interest:

- *Would you like to know about...?*
- *Is there any information I might help you with?*
- *What do you already know about...?*
- *What would you like to know about?*
- *What have you been wondering about that I might be able to clarify for you?*

2. Provide the information they need:

Prioritize: What do they most want/need to know?

Be clear: Avoid jargon; use everyday language. Provide small pieces of information at a time.

Support autonomy: Acknowledge freedom to disagree or ignore.

Don’t prescribe the person’s response: Present what you know without interpreting its meaning for the client.

2. Ask for the client’s interpretation, understanding or response using open-ended questions:

- “What do you think about that?”
- “How does that resonate with you?”
- “Of the suggestions I made, which, if any, jump out as something that might work for you?”
- “How do you see this apply to you?”

Reflect reactions you see. (“This seems to be clicking with you” or “You look puzzled.”)

Provide them with time to process and respond to the information you present.

Principles of Good Practice:

- “I have some expertise, and clients are the experts on themselves.”
- “I find out what information the clients want and need.”
- “I match information to client needs and strengths.”
- “Clients can tell me what kind of information is helpful.”
- “Advice that champions client needs, and autonomy is helpful.”

Common Traps:

- “I am the expert on how and why clients should change.”
- “I collect information about problems.”
- “I rectify gaps in knowledge.”
- “Frightening information is helpful.”
- “I need to just tell them clearly what to do.”

Motivational Interviewing Non-Adherent Behaviors (MINA)

Roadblocks to effective coaching...

When using motivational interviewing, roadblocks to effective use of the practice are called Motivational Interviewing Non-Adherent Behaviors, or MINAs. The challenge for individuals in the helping professions is that sustain talk brings about the nature tendency in the interviewer to want to right what is wrong – to fix what is broken – to share our experiences and what we know will work without building the importance of the change or addressing the confidence with which they can approach the change. For our perspective, when we give in to this “righting-reflex” we generally decrease the likelihood of helping move towards positive change. There are two categories of MINAs: persuasion and confrontation.

Persuasion: The coach makes overt attempts to change the teacher’s opinions, attitudes, or behavior using tools such as logic, compelling arguments, self-disclosure, or facts (and the explicit linking of these tools with an overt message to change).

Persuasion also involves subtle, or covert attempt change the teacher’s opinions, attitudes, or behavior by giving biased information or advice if it has not been solicited or the interviewer has not sought permission to do so; such as offering suggestions, tips, opinions, or solutions to problems. Thus, persuasion is acceptable, but ONLY *with* an explicit statement or strong contextual cues emphasizing the client’s autonomy and a desire to receive the recommendation(s).

Confrontation: The coach confronts the teacher by directly and unambiguously disagreeing, arguing, correcting, shaming, blaming, criticizing, labeling, warning, moralizing, ridiculing, or questioning their honesty. Such interactions will have the quality of uneven power sharing, accompanied by disapproval or negativity. Included here are instances where the coach uses a question or even a reflection, but the voice tone clearly indicates a confrontation.

Restating negative information already known or disclosed by the teacher can, at times, be considered confrontation. Most Confronts can be correctly recognized by careful attention to voice tone and context.