

Quick Guide

Step 1: Initial Interview

This document is designed to help guide Instructional Coaches as they complete Step 1, the *Initial Interview*. At the completion of the session coaches should have a clear sense of the teacher's classroom ecology (vibe, routines, culture), their values as a teacher, and their perception of their classroom management practices.

The **engagement** process is exploratory with a focus on building trust, an alliance, and rapport with teachers. Coach should work to establish a nonjudgmental and collaborative relationship. The more fully coaches grasp their teacher's current practices, values, and strengths and weaknesses - the more helpful they will be when the time comes for making behavior change plans.

REMINDERS:

- Embrace the **MI Spirit**: be their partner not instructor, be accepting of their struggles and frustrations, evoke their reasons for change, and always be compassionate.
- Strive to fully understand the teacher's perspective without imposing your own agenda and avoid **the righting reflex** or "fixing" problems they share.
- Use the **OARS** to guide the session, and to understand BOTH sides of their ambivalence: **O**pen-ended questions, **A**ffirmations, **R**eflections, **S**ummaries.
- Attend to their **Change Talk**, **Sustain Talk**, and **ambivalence**. Explore the pros and cons of change neutrally.

Agenda: time with teachers will be limited. Give yourself **5-10 minutes** for each exercise.

- Introductions
- Complete Teacher Interview
- Complete Values Discovery
- Prep the teacher for Step 2, *Providing Feedback*.

Exercises and Materials:

1. Teacher Interview (*Teacher Interview Form*)
2. Values Discovery (*Values Handout*)

OARS Examples for Step 1: Initial Interview

Potential Follow up Open-Ended Questions for the Teacher Interview:

- Why did you choose to become a teacher?
- When you are instructing the students do you feel confident and comfortable?
- How would you characterize your teaching style?
- What is your favorite part of the day any why? Your least favorite?
- To what extent do you enjoy being in the classroom?
- What might someone else describe as your strengths in the classroom? Weaknesses?
- On a typical day, do you enjoy being in the classroom? Why or why not?
- What factor is most important for establishing the classroom culture you want?
- What would really like me to know about you as a teacher?
- What do you hope to take from our time together?

Open-Ended Questions for the Values Discovery

- How do the values you chose influence the way you approach each day?
- Which of these values stand out for you as a teacher?
- How are your teaching practices influenced by your values?
- You shared ____ as an important value, how might you display that value to your students?

Affirmations:

- You have worked very hard this year.
- You care a lot about these kids.
- You're a really thoughtful teacher.
- I really respect you taking the time to reflect on your teaching practices with me.

Reflections:

- You have worked very hard to create a healthy classroom for your students.
- You spend a lot of time working to improve every day.
- You are really feeling (burnt-out / motivated) recently.
- You really love being a teacher, even though it's hard.
- You feel (organized / disorganized).
- You see areas you want to make changes, but don't know exactly how to begin.
- Helping your students reach their full potential is a responsibility you take seriously.
- You're committed to making sure all of the students in your room make the most of their time with you.