

Quick Guide Step 4: Planning

This document is designed to help guide Instructional Coaches as they complete Step 4, *Planning*. This stage should culminate in a specific plan of action that targets the areas in need of improvement discussed Step 3, specifically in regard to *Positive Feedback* and *OTRs*. Teachers should (a) express commitment to change, and (b) leave with an action plan. It is important to continue to engage, focus, and evoke throughout this planning process.

The **planning** process is more directive than earlier stages, in the session you may be providing resources or strategies for the teacher's consideration. Ask teacher's before helping them brainstorm, and remember to continue to focus on collaborative strategies while developing the teacher's actions plan. Break down the action plan into small, doable steps.

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: **Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflections, Summaries**.
- Attend to their **Change Talk, Sustain Talk, and ambivalence**. Explore the pros and cons of change neutrally.

Purpose: The planning process should culminate in a specific plan of action that targets the areas in need of improvement discussed earlier in the session. Teachers should (a) express commitment to change, and (b) leave with an action plan.

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

- Review the teacher's identified target for behavior change from Step 3.
- Create a change plan with the teacher (complete the *Teacher Action Form*)
 - Collaboratively brainstorm strategies for meeting goals using Problem-Solving Process.
 - Create an action plan that specifies action steps, supports needed, and a timeline.
 - Increase hope and confidence in making change.
- Prep the teacher for change maintenance.

Exercises and Materials:

1. Teacher Change Plan (*Teacher Action Form*)

OARS Examples for Step 4: Planning

While completing the Planning process continue using OARS to gather more details to **reinforce change talk**, and elicit the advantages of those optional strategies that are consistent with change. For example:

- *You see talking to your peers, in particular your behavior counselor, as being crucial to being successful in this change. Why?*
- *Making a list of the strengths your students possess is something you are willing to try. Why might that be helpful?*
- *What are 1 or 2 of the biggest “pros” of that option?*

Facilitator Note: Do NOT solicit cons for a potential solution, as focusing on the disadvantages or drawbacks of any potential change essentially serves to elicit sustain talk.

Facilitator Note: Throughout planning, evoke confidence by referring to the teacher’s strengths. Integrate the teacher’s strengths and values when reflecting their change talk (e.g., You are pulling on your strength of creativity and truly thinking outside the box to come up with these ideas; It’s so clear your students are important to you, as you’ve tied them into supporting you on this action plan.)

Open-Ended Questions:

- What has helped in the past when you’ve tried new approaches in your work?
- How would your class feel different if you use increased positive feedback?
- How much do you want me to offer some ideas, including some strategies that have worked for other teachers?
- So making a list of way to provide various OTRs is something you are willing to try. Why might that be helpful?
- What are 1 or 2 of the biggest “pros” of increasing these two strategies?
- Among the solutions you generated, which one(s) would you like to try out?
- I wonder if setting a specific goal would help you to know what you’re striving towards.
- How would your overall goal of increased OTRs play out in a typical lesson?
- How will you know when success in that areas occurs?

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.
- You came up with some great ideas!

Reflections:

- You see increasing your use of positive feedback for students as crucial to improved outcomes.
- You've homed in on specific strategies you plan to use for each new skill.
- You see increasing your use of positive feedback for students as crucial to improved outcomes.
- You feel very confident in your ability to utilize the strategies you have prioritized from our brainstorming session.

Open the Planning Process: Elicit and reinforce change talk

- **Affirm** initial ideas regarding steps to take towards positive change.
 - *You've clearly given [some / a lot] of thought to how you want to get started.*
- Introduce **collaborative** problem-solving process.
 - *How do you feel about us working together to create an action plan for those factors you noted you might want to maintain or improve?*
 - *You're the expert here, you know your teaching and your students so you know what works best. I'm here to facilitate, so I might have some ideas to offer.*

Brainstorm strategies for the behavior change using Problem-Solving Process

- Ask **open-ended questions** to prompt the teacher to generate alternate solutions for making positive changes with the first target (behavior to maintain or change) and write them down on Teacher Action form.
 - *What has helped in the past to address that behavior?*
 - *What have you seen work for your peers or other teachers?*
 - *How much do you want me to offer some ideas, including some strategies from the universal principals?*
- Encourage teacher to select the best solution(s)
 - *You came up with some great ideas! Among the solutions you generated, which one(s) would you like to try out?*
- Encourage teacher to celebrate successful outcomes when this solution works, and to pick a different solution if the outcome is not as positive as planned

Create an action plan with specific action steps, supports needed, and a timeline.

- Complete the Teacher Action form by breaking down the action plan into small, doable steps. Provide **reflections** and **affirmations** throughout this action-planning process, rather than a sole focus on the plan logistics.
 - *The target most important to you is [reflect teacher's choice] and your goal is [reflect teacher's choice, while filling in the form].*
 - *The solution(s) you choose to do are [reflect teacher's choice].*
- If a concrete goal or replacement behavior was not identified early in the meeting (e.g., end of Focus), set behavioral goal now prior to developing action steps.
 - *I wonder if setting a specific goal would help you to know what you're striving towards. How would your overall goal of [insert goal] play out in a typical week?*
 - *How will you know when success in that areas occurs?*
 - *What specific time and task management strategy would you like to focus on?*
 - *What parts of the day might work best with this plan?*
 - *How might you prepare the students for this change?*
 - *Are there other teachers/school professionals who can support this change?*
- Ask **open-ended questions** that **evoke mobilizing change talk** through commitment, activation, and taking steps (CAT). After each question pause to **reflect** the action steps the teacher plans on taking.
 - Preparing: *What would be a first step?*
 - Setting a date: *When could you do that?*
- Ask optional follow-up questions that continue to generate mobilizing change talk
 - Getting more specific: *What would you need to start this?*

- Evoking change talk: *How confident are you in taking this step?*
- Asking for commitment: *How committed are you to this change?*
- Reframe challenges, finding ways for the teacher to hold themselves accountable, and discuss supports that may be needed to accomplish plan.
 - *How can you stick to this plan?*
 - *Who can you share your progress with as you move through this action plan?*
- Use the **confidence ruler** to identify barriers
 - *On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you [describe change specifically]?*
 - *What is getting in the way of you getting to a ____ [insert a number one or two higher than the number given]?*
 - The answer to the confidence ruler are potential barriers the teacher currently sees.
 - *Knowing that this barrier might get in the way, what are some possible solutions to overcome this obstacle?*

Increase hope and confidence in change

- Ask **open-ended questions** to evoke/review and elaborate examples of prior successes and efforts/attempts to change. Re-affirm strengths, and boost confidence in his/her ability to make the desired change and be successful.
- *When you've used your strength of open-mindedness before, what did that look like?*
- *The last time you tried [specific solution], what did you learn through the process?*
- **Reflect change talk** specific to teacher's ability to make positive change in various areas of life, currently (and not necessarily limited to coping and student engagement) as well as in the past.
- *Tell me more how you were able to succeed/try [prior change, success, or effort].*
- Affirm **prior efforts to change** and reframe as one step closer to lasting change. Each time someone makes an effort to change, they learn something about change.
- Ask **open-ended questions** regarding the future, and make **complex reflections** that yoke previously stated values and goals to importance and the initial behaviors being elicited.
- *How are you feeling now that you've made this action plan focused on improving [target behavior]?*
- **Summarize** the reasons given by the teacher that indicate confidence about change.
- *Increasing your attention to positive behavior is really important to you. You've seen the direct connection between your this and student behavior. Not only are you ready to make a change, but you've also thought of some steps you will take today! You're going to start with [insert change plan steps]. Your ability to think creatively and be open-minded shines through in the plan you developed. You've got a plan and the resources to make the changes you want!*

Part 5: Increase commitment in change and end the meeting

- Ask teacher to sign the final page of the planning form if he or she is sufficiently confident to commit to enacting the change plan- with the desired level (if any) of support from the MISC coach.
 - Example support 1: Offer to drop off a letter to the teacher in a few weeks (or later) that summarizes the action plan developed in this first meeting.

- Example support 2: Offer teacher a second meeting with the coach in order to provide an opportunity for follow-up re: progress to plan. If the teacher agrees to the second meeting, decide on a timeline for the meeting.
- *This last page is the 'commitment' page where we both make a commitment on the work we've done today. On your end you are committing to try your best to follow through on the action plan you created. You don't have to be perfect, but make an attempt to use the strategies you came up with to reach your goal of [insert goal]. On my end, I'm committing to 2 things: One I'm going to be the person rooting for you behind the scene, silently cheering for you from the sidelines. Two, I'm also offering to meet with you again a month from now to check in on your action plan. We can celebrate any successes you've made and problem solve any barriers you've faced. How does that sound?*
- Coach also signs, demonstrating collaboration.
- Arrange for a paper or electronic copy (e.g., taking photo of the plan with their phone) of the action plan to be provided to the teacher.