

Coaching for Principals

“The responsibilities of school leadership, in particular principalship, are increasingly complex and demanding. Accountability requirements are high, expectations from the immediate school and the broader community continue to grow.”

Kathie Lacey (2006) Exploring sustainability in school leadership. IARTV

How coaching works

A coach provides

- A safe place to talk about problems and issues
- Reflective questions to help you develop a different perspective
- Challenges for you to make commitment to goals
- A structured change process and a framework for learning
- A 'sounding board' to express and test ideas

A coach focuses on finding solutions that suit the person and their needs rather than on analysing problems -always seeking the potential for development. Confidentiality is fundamental to the relationship.

A coach uses skilful questioning and tools to help you look more objectively at your situation, considering alternative courses of action. A coach might challenge self-imposed limitations. The end result is a formal action plan for achieving agreed goals. In return you must accept accountability for making and keeping commitments.

Where do you start

- With a personal commitment to change, to do things differently
- With knowledge about what you do now, how you act now – from formal feedback
- Developing, with your coach, a specific goal/s with milestones and action steps to get there
- With the confidence of your coach's support in taking those steps, in making the changes, until there are self-sustaining new habits in place

Benefits

Coaching is personal. People explore different options and choose to follow varied paths. Research tells us leaders list these as significant benefits:

- Increased capacity to see the 'bigger picture' of the business within which I work
- Ability to communicate ideas persuasively to others
- Awareness and understanding of team dynamics
- New insights and understanding of colleagues behaviours
- Visible improvements in my own and/or my team's performance

The possibilities/potential outcomes

- Do what you do now, only better
- Learn to think from a different perspective, and do things differently
- Learn to be different, challenge who you are and adapt your behaviour to achieve your goals

“Jennifer helped me focus on the important goals I wanted to achieve in the workplace. With her thoughtful questioning, I was able to clarify my thinking and work successfully towards positive outcomes. The regular meetings allow you to set small steps which you can then evaluate with your coach. I would highly recommend the process for other school principals.” **Julian Collas-Smith, Principal Nepean School, Seaford, VIC**

“I began the coaching program, feeling some frustration because I needed feedback on my own strategies. Jennifer works in a relaxed, casual and confidential way so, although it was challenging to admit my own shortcomings to myself, I came away feeling that I've added a bit of wisdom to my profile, that sometimes I expect too much from others, and I'm feeling a lot happier, contented and accepting now.” **John Cunningham. Ararat Rural City Councillor; Australian Principal Federation State Councillor; Principal, Ararat North Primary School.**