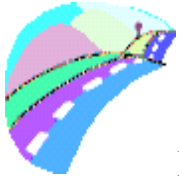


Alice to the Cheshire Cat: *Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?*”  
“*That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,*” replied the Cat.  
Alice: “*I don’t much care where—*”  
“*Then,*” said the Cat, “*It doesn’t matter which way you go.*”



## Moving Teachers along the road....coaches connect data to practice

### Make it Meaningful

- Give everyday examples of simple observational data that teachers already use to plan activities, change environments, or meet individual needs.
  - “*Whenever Johnny approached another child to play, I made a hash mark on this post-it note. I noticed he walked up to four different children and either held out a toy or said, “Hi”, without a response. The fifth time, he pushed the child down.*”
  - “*Last time I was here, I noticed you put out several books with dinosaurs, and I heard you tell Rafael that you knew he loved dinosaurs and that you found more books for him.*”
- Ask about prior experience with data—checklists, observation training or requirements, documentation.
- Give examples of ways that formal data have helped teachers—use stories, quotes.

### Introduce and Invite

- Introduce and explore assessment tools.
- Offer training on assessment with examples of how it was useful for teachers.
- Build background knowledge and vocabulary—what is baseline data and why is it useful? What are pre-post measures? How can a graph be useful?
- Reflect together—how could this tool be useful? What, if anything, concerns you about using this tool?
- Provide opportunity to observe someone using the tool and/or use the tool themselves.
- Present data in reader-friendly format (graphs, charts, bullets etc).

### Questions that promote reflection:

- What do you see? What surprises or confuses you?
  - Look for patterns; highs and lows
  - Brainstorm possible influences or reasons for what you see
- What does this mean in your classroom? For you? For your kids?
- What themes do you notice?
- Where do you see progress? What do you think contributed to this?
- Where do you see lack of progress? What do you think is happening? What does this mean for your work?



### Set Goals—Focus on strategies and intervention

- **S—Specific** (or systematic, synergistic, significant?) (*I will gather at least 5 rhyming books to use this month.*)
- **M—Measurable** (or meaningful, memorable, motivating?) (*I will sit down and play a game with Sam everyday this week during free plan.*)
- **A—Achievable** (or action plans, accountability, agreement). (*“I will talk to my teaching assistants everyday about my group time plans and give them an idea of how to help with group management,”* might become, *“On Monday, I will post this week’s large group activity plans above the sink, and at least twice a week I will acknowledge a specific way that my teaching assistant made a difference during group time.”*)
- **R— Relevant** (or realistic, reasonable, resonating, results-oriented, rewarding) (*It seems that Sam and I have so many negative interactions—I think playing a game everyday will help us both.*)
- **T-- Time-based** (or timely, tangible and thoughtful?) (*I learned a new rhyme and I’m going to use it before lunch and when we gather to come back from the large motor room every day this week.*)
- Have at least one goal come from the teacher—even if it is small.

### **Create Community—build teacher to teacher support**

- Learning communities build commitment and motivation.
- Coaches can share successful strategies (with teacher’s permission)—“you could ask Kou about that idea. It really worked well for him.”
- Teachers meet to share individual success and challenges—be intentional about opportunities during staff meetings.
- Identify ideas that work—post them in the break room, in a newsletter, e-mail highlights.
- “Cross pollination” of ideas is powerful because teachers have credibility with other teachers –“*That worked for you? I would never have thought of that, but now I can’t wait to try!*”

### **Provide responsive, respectful leadership:**

- Be nonjudgmental when sharing data—the purpose is to learn and grow, and find out how to meet child’s needs.
- Ask which data teachers find most useful or interesting.
- Respond/follow up when teachers give suggestions and ideas.
- Get feedback from teachers before changing assessment tools or procedures.
- Review tools periodically with staff.

### **Resources:**

Hanft, B., Rush, D., and Shelden, M. Coaching families and colleagues in early childhood. Brookes, 2004.

Heathfield, Susan M. Beyond Traditional SMART Goals.

<http://humanresources.about.com/cs/performance/a/goalsetting.htm>

Heidemann, S., Chang, C. and Menninga, E. 2005. When teachers are learning, children are too: teaching teachers about assessment. *Young Children* Vol 60 (3): 86-92 © NAEYC).