

ROLES & STANCES OF AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

Consulting / Collaborating / Coaching (The 3Cs) at a Glance

In their book *Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships* Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman describe a practical framework for mentors to consider. The chart below provides an at a glance guide to the 3Cs adapted with permission from their work. While these 3Cs are helpful as a frame, effective mentors demonstrate **flexibility of stance and role** based on the needs of the people they support. Mentoring relationships that flourish are reciprocal – all parties learn and grow!

Consultant

Offering Support and Providing Resources



CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentor shares key information about logistics, school or work site culture, policies and practices
- Beyond simple advice, a consultant provides the “why,” “what,” and “how” of their thinking

CUES

- Credible voice / Use of pronoun “I” / Phrases like “it’s important to”.... “keep in mind that”

CAUTIONS

- We tend to default to this stance / Overuse can build dependency on the mentor

Collaborator

Creating Challenge and Encouraging Growth



CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentor and colleague co-develop strategies and approaches
- 50/50 pattern of interaction and idea production

CUES

- Confident, approachable voice / Use of pronoun “we” / Phrases like “let’s think about”.... “how might we”

CAUTIONS

- Mentors need to ensure collaboration is authentic and they don’t take over

Coach

Facilitating Professional Vision



CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentor supports internal idea production through inquiry and paraphrase
- Ultimate aim is to develop colleague’s internal resources for self-coaching and independence

CUES

- Approachable voice, attending fully / Use of pronoun “you”
- Questions like “what might be some ways to?”.... “given all that you know, what options are you considering?”

CAUTIONS

- Stance can cause frustration if colleague lacks internal resources for idea generation