

Start with Curiosity: A Coaching Approach to Mentorship

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**EASY
LISTENING**

Both require listening

What is....?

Coaching

The International Coaching Federation (ICF) defines coaching as **partnering with** clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

Coaching is focused on the client **finding their own answers** through a process of asking “powerful questions.”

Mentorship

A protected relationship in which **a more knowledgeable or experienced person** guides and nurtures the professional development of another, can be outside the normal manager/subordinate line.

Goes beyond learning specific competencies or tasks and builds a climate of trust so the mentee can feel secure **to seek advice** on issues impacting their professional success.

(Berkeley Labs website)

Examples of how I...

Coach

Faculty asks “how do I integrate public-facing work into my scholarship?”

Coaching calls for curiosity not expertise:

Powerful questions that explore individual’s scholarly values, identity, goals, and purpose – and how to manifest those in public-facing scholarship and scholarly communications

Mentor/Advise

Faculty asks “how do I get resources for my public-facing scholarly work?”

Advising calls for expertise and guidance:

Recommend potential funding sources and other resources

Advise and assist in writing funding proposals

Connect with others who can support in obtaining resources

Mentor/Refer

Faculty asks “how do I demonstrate the value of public-facing scholarly work in my T&P file?”

Referral when I don’t have the expertise:

Connect with Associate Dean for Academic Personnel, Equity Advisor, faculty with experience including public-facing work in their T&P files

Powerful Questions

- Core of coaching
- Short
- Start with “what” or “how”
- Open-ended
- Non-judgmental
- Come from a place of curiosity
- Go where the client takes the conversation



A Coaching Approach to Mentorship

Why ask powerful questions when mentoring?

- Sometimes the issue isn't the issue.
- Mentoring works best when it meets the person where they are.
- Starting with curiosity about the person we are mentoring establishes a practice of listening and a basis for trust.

Examples of Power Questions

- What patterns are you noticing?
- What areas of your work feel misaligned right now? (values, responsibilities, expectations)
- What is the distinction between those two things (*mentioned by the person*)? What is their relationship to each other?
- What are your main takeaways from this experience?
- What else?

Coach the person not the problem

