

**GUIDE**

# **COACHING CONVERSATIONS THAT COUNT**

**A leader's guide to giving feedback  
that inspires, supports, and moves  
practice forward.**

Brought to you by your pals at

**alpaca**



# COACHING VISIT ROADMAP



Inside, you'll find a simple four-step framework:

**Step 1:** Celebrate the Wins

**Step 2:** Connect Practice to Impact

**Step 3:** Offer Actionable Next Steps

**Step 4:** Close the Loop

Plus ready-to-use phrases and a coaching template to make your feedback clear, encouraging, and effective.

**Whether you're visiting a classroom for five minutes or a full lesson, you'll have everything you need to make the moment meaningful.**

# Why coaching matters

Coaching isn't just about observation—it's about growing people, building trust, and helping students thrive.



## **Builds Relationships**

Regular visits show teachers you're invested in their success and open to their ideas.



## **Celebrates Strengths**

Coaching highlights what's working so teachers feel valued and confident.



## **Connects Practice to Impact**

Feedback shows how teaching choices affect student learning—making wins more visible.



## **Encourages Continuous Growth**

Small, targeted steps help teachers continue to improve without feeling overwhelmed.



## **Strengthens School Culture**

When feedback is consistent, supportive, and collaborative, it builds a culture of trust and shared purpose.

# Celebrate the Wins

Start with specific, genuine praise. Naming exactly what you saw—and how it supports students—builds trust and confidence.

## Sample Phrases:

- "Your commitment to student success shows in the way you... [specific example]."
- "I noticed how you set clear expectations before passing out materials—it kept students engaged and ready to learn."
- "Your classroom community is strong; students clearly feel safe to take risks."
- "That small-group instruction was spot on—students were working right at their level."



## Leader Tip:

Choose 1–2 celebrations that are authentic and observable. Overgeneralizing ("You're doing great!") is kind, but specificity builds credibility.

# Connect Practice to Impact

Show teachers how their actions directly impact student learning. This reinforces effective strategies and strengthens professional decision-making.

## Examples:

- "Your use of higher-level questioning pushed students to think beyond the text—they were making real-world connections."
- "When you checked for understanding mid-lesson, you caught misconceptions early and were able to adjust."
- "Differentiating by readiness level allowed every student to access the task and feel successful."
- "Because your objective was so clear, students knew exactly what was expected—and they met that expectation."



## Leader Tip:

Balance warm encouragement with clear direction. Teachers feel supported when feedback celebrates what's working and points to specific next steps.

# Offer Actionable Next Steps

End with a clear, encouraging idea the teacher can try right away. Keep it simple—one or two focused steps are better than a long list.

## Sample Phrases:

- "Next time, try having students turn and talk before sharing out—it gives everyone a chance to process."
- "Consider adding 5 more seconds of wait time after questions—you might hear deeper responses."
- "I'd love to see you integrate more student choice into [specific activity]; it could boost engagement even further."
- "If you post sentence starters on the board, it might help students participate more confidently."



## Leader Tip:

Frame next steps as an invitation, not a demand. Phrases like "I wonder if..." or "Have you considered..." keep the conversation collaborative.

# Close the Loop

End with gratitude, motivation, and a simple follow-up plan to keep the conversation going.

## Gratitude Statements:

- "Thanks for letting me spend time in your room today."
- "Your passion for student learning is inspiring."
- "I appreciate the work you're doing—it matters."

## Keep the Conversation Going:

- "I'm excited to see how [specific strategy] works for you over the next week."
- "Let's reconnect after [date/lesson/unit] to check in on this."
- "I'd love to hear how students respond when you try [specific idea]."



## Leader Tip:

Make gratitude personal and specific. A genuine "thank you" tied to what you observed builds trust and shows teachers you truly value their work.

# Mapping Out Your Coaching Conversations

## **Prep for a great coaching conversation by:**

### **Reviewing your monthly coaching schedule**

- Plan out which classrooms you'll visit each week to ensure everyone gets consistent time and support.

### **Gathering your tools**

- Coaching template (printed or digital)
- Observation notes or data from previous visits

### **Clarifying your focus**

- Decide if this visit will focus on a specific strategy, classroom practice, or student outcome.

### **Setting your tone**

- Enter the classroom with curiosity, encouragement, and the goal of celebrating growth.



### **Leader Tip:**

Share feedback promptly—ideally within 24–48 hours—so it stays relevant and actionable. Add follow-up dates to your coaching schedule, track progress along the way, and revisit wins in future conversations to keep momentum strong.

# The Ripple Effect of Coaching



Educational coaching doesn't just improve teaching—it elevates student learning, strengthens teacher confidence, and boosts job satisfaction.

When you set aside time each week for coaching, you're investing in the people who make your school thrive. Those conversations, celebrations, and next steps ripple outward—shaping stronger classrooms and brighter opportunities for every learner.

Use our coaching conversation cards to bring this ripple effect to life and keep every visit focused, supportive, and meaningful.



## The Building Blocks of Coaching

**Celebration:** The best coaching moments start with noticing and naming what's already going well.

**Growth:** Small, focused steps add up to big shifts in practice—and in student learning.

**Culture:** Coaching isn't just about teaching—it's about building a culture where everyone feels supported to grow.

# Structured Coaching Guides

Choose the framework that fits your style—each template makes it easier to guide meaningful conversations that encourage growth and build trust.



## 1. The 4 C's Template

- **Celebrate:** Name a specific win you observed.
- **Connect:** Link practice to student impact.
- **Clarify:** Identify one focus area or next step.
- **Commit:** Agree on a follow-up plan or date.

## 2. Glow & Grow Framework

- **Glow:** Highlight what's going well.
- **Grow:** Identify one actionable adjustment.
- **Support:** Offer a resource, model, or strategy.
- **Next Check-In:** Set a quick follow-up.

## 3. Impact Cycle Prompt

- **What worked?** Acknowledge the teacher's strengths.
- **What was the impact?** Tie their practice to student outcomes.
- **What's next?** Suggest one clear, doable step.
- **How will we know?** Decide how progress will be tracked.

## 4. Question-Driven Template

- "What felt strongest in this lesson?"
- "Where did you see students really engaged or successful?"
- "What's one area you'd like to strengthen next?"
- "How can I support you in that work?"

## 5. Simple 1–2–3 Check-In

- **3 Celebrations:** Share three specific successes you noticed.
- **2 Connections:** Highlight two ways the practice linked to student learning.
- **1 Next Step:** Identify one clear, focused action to try next.

**A GLOW I  
NOTICED TODAY:**



**A GROW TO KEEP  
BUILDING ON!**



**A GLOW I  
NOTICED TODAY:**



**A GROW TO KEEP  
BUILDING ON!**



# THANKS FOR LETTING ME VISIT!



**1** What worked today...

---

---

**2** The student impact I saw...

---

---

**3** Next step idea...

---

---

---

# THANKS FOR LETTING ME VISIT!



**1** What worked today...

---

---

**2** The student impact I saw...

---

---

**3** Next step idea...

---

---

# THREE CHEERS FOR YOU!

 I NOTICED...

---

---

 A CONNECTION TO STUDENT LEARNING:

---

---

 AN IDEA FOR NEXT TIME:

---

---

---

# THREE CHEERS FOR YOU!

 I NOTICED...

---

---

 A CONNECTION TO STUDENT LEARNING:

---

---

 AN IDEA FOR NEXT TIME:

---

---

A LITTLE NOTE TO  
CELEBRATE THE **BIG**  
**IMPACT** YOU'RE MAKING.



A LITTLE NOTE TO  
CELEBRATE THE **BIG**  
**IMPACT** YOU'RE MAKING.



A LITTLE NOTE TO  
CELEBRATE THE **BIG**  
**IMPACT** YOU'RE MAKING.



A LITTLE NOTE TO  
CELEBRATE THE **BIG**  
**IMPACT** YOU'RE MAKING.



## COLLABORATION

# BUILT BY EDUCATORS, FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

This resource was created in collaboration with dedicated educators and school leaders who brought their experience, ideas, and insight to every step of the process. We're grateful for their partnership in building tools that truly make a difference in schools.



**Megan Rogers**

Teacher  
Omaha, NE

# WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Thanks for downloading this resource—at [Alpaca](#), we're on a mission to **make school the happiest place to work**.



## Tried an activity?

Send a photo or a staff testimonial to [our team](#), and we'll send you a coffee on us!



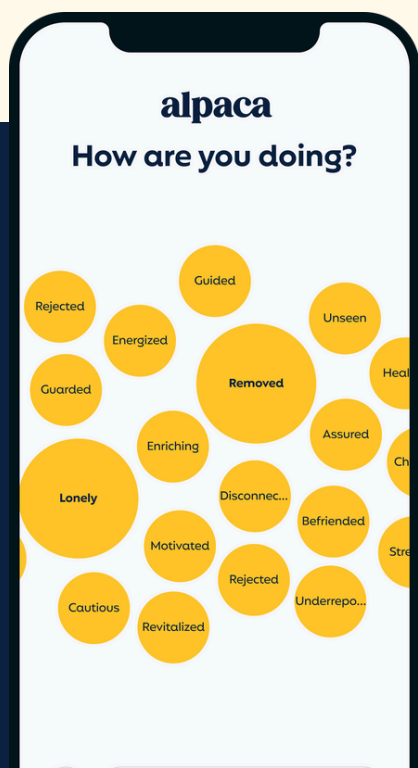
## Got an idea brewing?

We love co-creating with school leaders—[drop us a line](#) with any resource ideas you'd love to see next.



## Explore more!

Check out our [full resource library](#) for creative, ready-to-use tools to support you and your team.



## SEE HOW ALPACA WORKS

Beautiful surveys, delightful care packages, and real insights on teacher wellbeing—everything you need to lead with confidence, all in one simple solution. [Book a quick demo!](#)