

## INTERACTIONS AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

**INTERACTIONS:** The mentoring team interactions will vary in approach throughout the year. The mentor may respond in different ways depending on the situation and the goal. There will be times when a mentor needs to:

- **Consult** – to share experience
- **Collaborate** – to share ideas to solve problems
- **Coach** – to lead the protégé to improve decision-making

The following chart offers a quick reference about the purpose and use of each approach. The choice of approach depends on what the mentor sees as the best way to meet the needs of the protégé in a specific situation. Interestingly, these approaches can also be used with students.

<u>CONSULTING</u>	<u>COLLABORATING</u>	<u>COACHING</u>
<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide information, technical assistance</p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Includes logistical information (how we do things around here), content and pedagogical knowledge base</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Providing resources, demonstrations (including model lessons), offering directions (completing forms, where/how to's, etc.)</p> <p><b>Language:</b> Pay attention to ... you should ... it's important that you ... always, keep in mind ...</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To share ideas, to problem-solve</p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Reciprocal support of growth and improvement of practice</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Brainstorming, co-planning/co-counseling, exchanging resources, action research</p> <p><b>Language:</b> We might ... let's examine ... how might this affect our ... ?</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> To improve instructional decision-making and increase reflectivity in practice</p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Nonjudgmental support for planning, reflecting, problem solving (cognitive aspects of counseling)</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Learning-focused conversations, which include inquiry, reflection, and generation of insights regarding professional practice</p> <p><b>Language:</b> What might be some ways to . . .? What are some additional possibilities? What are some connections between...?</p>

*Used with permission from: Lipton, L., Wellman, B. (2003). Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships. Sherman CT: MiraVia, LLC.*

Different types of interactions may be required during different phases of the first year of school counseling year. Studies have shown there are developmental stages in the first year. The stages will vary with the individual, but the chart gives a good overview of the school counseling year. Protégés may find it helpful to know the phases occur as a normal part of the first year. Mentors benefit from reviewing the phases to raise their level of awareness and sensitivity in working with the protégés.