

Enhancing Learning & Persistence with Coaching: The ROCK SOLID Coaching Method Workshop



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Overview

Faculty empower a mix of students to thrive in an evolving and challenging personal and professional environment and need new skills and mindsets to excel. The three most important competency sets are facilitation, evaluation, and coaching, the last of which is not common but essential for helping students develop to their fullest capabilities. In addition to enhancing academic knowledge and skills, coaching develops key personal attributes including confidence, efficacy, growth mindset, self-improvement, and problem-solving.

The University of Maryland Global Campus implemented coaching in its first-term courses and supports adjunct faculty to skillfully coach its diverse adult undergraduate and graduate students. Faculty learn the ROCK-SOLID Coaching Method through a short online course. A condensed version of this course addresses participants' discovery of where coaching fits in teaching, why it helps learning, retention, and persistence of all students, and how participants can use it to prepare welcome and impactful feedback.

Participants will use the ROCK-SOLID mnemonic to remember the stages of academic coaching, apply concepts, and take-away materials so they may continue to practice at their institutions. Three contexts span most situations: developing relationships that foster coaching, coaching student assignments, and coaching personal problem-solving.

Description & Outcomes

The key competencies of adjunct faculty in a learner-centric approach to higher education are

- facilitating learning for all students
- evaluating learning to determine whether standards have been met
- coaching individual student's academic performance and personal problem-solving skills

When applied to an online learning environment, facilitation of the group shifts to increased coaching of individual students.

Rather than providing tutoring, coaching aims to continually challenge a learner's capacity for success. Simply put, coaching in the higher-education context is the process of delivering welcome and impactful feedback that is used to improve future performance.

Adult students experience challenging demands on their time and focus that must be prioritized, resolved, and otherwise productively handled, including unexpected work demands, family or personal crises, and insufficient mindsets and skills for learning or personal success. Non-traditional students, including first-generation college students, minorities, low-income, and remote students face additional barriers that are well addressed through individualized coaching. Coaching excludes nothing essential to learning and persistence other than handling mental health issues and other referrals to student services.

Facilitation Plan

Participants in this 1-hour tutorial will actively learn by interacting with peers, using tools, synchronous facilitation, including youtube videos. Persistent access to tools and videos will sustain the learning.

A. Preparing to Coach with the ROCK steps:

- R-how to build and maintain trusting relationships with students through validation, social connection, and personal contribution to a positive growth-community
- O-define clear coaching objectives around strengthening student capacity to learn and perform personally and professionally (as defined by each learner)
- C-create checklists that guide students' execution quality and self-assessment while building learner ownership and confidence
- K-know the facts, both concerning student capabilities and actual performances, especially when coaching personal problem-solving.

B. Creating and delivering welcome and impactful feedback to strengthen future performance with the SOLID steps:

- S-identifying the most important strengths to repeat in future performances
- O-describing the most impactful opportunities to improve the quality of future performances
- L-ensure a coach's open learner's mind by seeking to learn from a student's performance and expressing gratitude for what one discovers
- I-coaching a student's learning implementation plan
- D-setting expectations for future demonstrations of a student's success in improving|

C. Learn the basics of the language of coaching to surround all student-faculty interactions with positive, supportive language that contributes to trust, learning, and continuing self-belief.

D. Examine a model for implementing coaching across a program or college.

E. Practice a proven model of learning and continuously improving one's coaching skills through mental contrasting and written implementation intentions.

Participants will have gained a working knowledge of the ROCK-SOLID Coaching Method sufficient to begin coaching others, gain perspective on the benefits of coaching for an institution, and they will have examined a model of implementing coaching at scale. They will leave with a set of coaching tools and resources and an understanding that their coaching will become increasingly personalized and incrementally improved.