1 Setting Goals for Coaching Cycles

Goals provide us with much needed focus when we are faced with a sea of things that demand our attention. They also help us stay motivated to work hard. NFL coach Bill Parcells, who coached the New York Giants to two Super Bowl wins, once wrote, "When you set small, visible goals, and people achieve them, they start to get it into their heads that they can succeed" (Parcells, 2001). The same goes for student-centered coaching. Beginning our partnership with a goal helps us get clear on what we are about. It's how we help teachers (and students) get into their heads that they can succeed.

THE MOVE—*SETTING GOALS FOR COACHING CYCLES*

Our definition of coaching cycles has grown and changed over the decade in which we have been implementing student-centered coaching. If you have read *Student-Centered Coaching* (Sweeney, 2011) or *Student-Centered Coaching at the Secondary Level* (Sweeney, 2013), you probably understand the components of a coaching cycle. These have remained fairly consistent over the years. They include the following:

- A minimum of one weekly planning conversation to look at student work and design upcoming instruction
- One to three times per week for coaching in the classroom

What has evolved is our thinking around the length of a coaching cycle. Initially, we found ourselves in coaching cycles that lasted between

six to nine weeks. A primary reason for this is we designed our cycles based on the school calendar. We divided the year into quarters and used these to set up our coaching cycles. This continues to be the approach taken in some of our schools. More recently, however, we see curriculum being organized into units of study that last approximately four to six weeks. We are finding that structuring our coaching around these units provides us with an approach to scheduling that is more aligned with the standards. While the length of coaching cycles may vary, the key is to organize coaching into a format that is ongoing and creates the conditions where coaches can identify their impact on teacher and student learning. Setting a goal for the coaching cycle helps the teacher and coach articulate what they hope the students will learn as a result of this partnership.

Teachers often assume that the entry point for coaching is identifying a goal for themselves, or that coaching is about all of the things that they *should* be doing in their classrooms. This typically surfaces at the beginning of a coaching cycle when teachers ask for support with a new initiative or instructional practice. It may sound like, "I should be asking more text-dependent questions, can you help me with that?," "I need to be doing a better job managing my students' behavior," or "I have to start using the new math program that our district purchased."

Rather than focusing on what a *teacher* should do, student-centered coaching is driven by a goal for *student* learning. In this way, we design coaching cycles that are based on moving student learning forward. Teacher learning, schoolwide goals, and district initiatives will always be a part of the coaching process and may even come in the form of a secondary goal that is more about instructional practice. But we have found that using the language "Students will . . . " ensures that we are student-centered in our goal-setting process. This alone is what starts us off on the right path.

Goal setting isn't always a straightforward process. It can be a tricky conversation where the teacher and coach move in and among ideas, wrestle with competing demands, and balance priorities before landing on something that is (1) standards based, (2) valued by the teacher, (3) the right size and scope, (4) measurable through formative assessment, and (5) robust enough to carry a teacher and coach across the stages in a coaching cycle (Figure 1.1).

WHY *SETTING GOALS FOR COACHING CYCLES* IS IMPORTANT

The moment we set a goal is the moment when we decide on the outcomes we are after. We seek standards-based goals because we have found that if

Figure 1.1 Stages in a Coaching Cycle
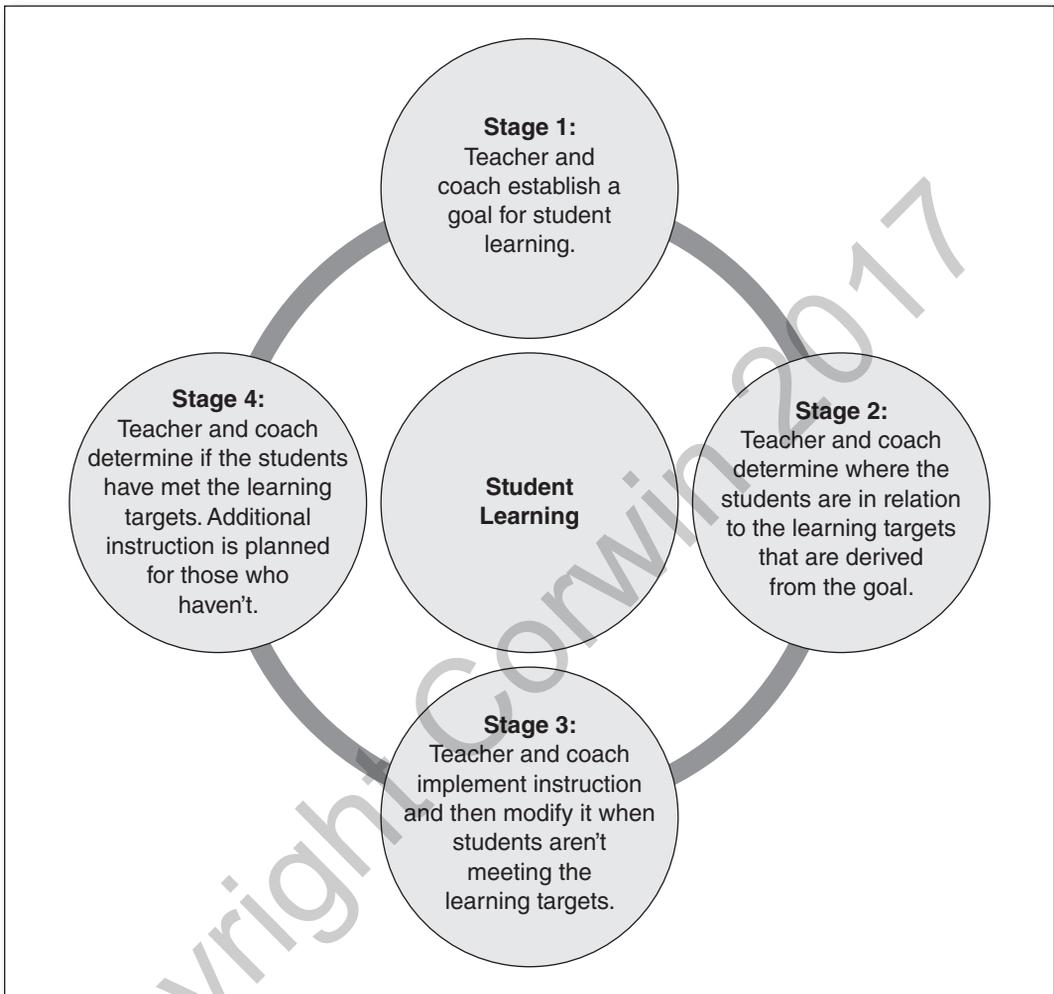
coaching is relationship-driven, the goal tends to be about what the coach will do for the teacher. If coaching is teacher-centered, we are oriented around implementing a program or set of practices. If coaching is student-centered, we set a goal that points us toward the outcomes that we seek for students (Figure 1.2).

There are a lot of reasons to get smart about goal setting. A well-crafted goal goes a long way in surfacing what we value. When a goal is missing, we are unfocused and unable to recognize progress. With a goal, we are more prepared to identify growth among our students. We'd dare say that goal setting is so much a part of this work that without a goal we are no longer coaching.

Figure 1.2 How the Goal Defines a Coach's Role

More Impact on Students--Less Impact on Students

	Student-Centered Coaching	Teacher-Centered Coaching	Relationship-Driven Coaching
Role	The coach partners with teachers to design learning that is based on a specific set of learning targets.	The coach moves teachers toward implementing a program or set of instructional practices.	The coach provides support and resources to teachers.
Goal	The goal for coaching begins with the language, "The students will . . . "	The goal for coaching begins with the language, "The teacher will . . . "	The goal for coaching begins with the language, "The coach will . . . "

WHAT *SETTING GOALS FOR COACHING CYCLES* LOOKS LIKE

Leading effective goal-setting conversations takes practice. We prepare by developing an understanding of the standards and curriculum so that we can support teachers to name a goal that they care about. We use strategies such as listening, probing, and paraphrasing so that we hear, and then build on, the concerns of teachers. The following recommendations are drawn from goal-setting conversations that we've engaged in across grades K–12.

Set Goals With Teachers, Not for Them

Since coaching is about establishing partnerships with teachers, then goal setting is the perfect time to send a message that you are there to help teachers reach *their* goals for students. In the book *Instructional Coaching*, Jim Knight (2007) writes, "Partnership at its core, is a deep belief that we are no more important than those with whom we work, and that we should do everything we can to respect that equality. This approach is built around the core principles of equality, choice, voice, dialogue, reflection, praxis, and reciprocity" (p. 24). When we help teachers set goals that they feel are important, we honor the principles of true partnership.

It's never a good idea to set goals for teachers, even if we think we know what's best for them. Goals are personal, and the ownership rests with whoever will be doing the work to get there. While this may seem obvious, we are often tempted to nudge teachers toward a goal that we

think is important, especially when we see the teaching and learning close up. After spending time in a teacher's classroom, we may be thinking, "I know the teacher wants to work on (fill in the blank). But we can't do that until we get (fill in the blank) under control." The temptation to redirect a teacher toward a goal that he or she hasn't named may come from a sincere concern for students. But going there may jeopardize the coaching cycle that we are trying to get started and the partnership that will help it succeed.

Use the Language "Students will . . . " to Help Teachers Frame Goals for Coaching

Goal-setting conversations aren't necessarily straightforward or predictable. Sometimes the coach is handed a goal on a silver platter, and other times it feels like a conversation loaded with land mines. In the following example, the teacher is clearly frustrated with her students' abilities. But rather than falling into that trap, the coach works hard to reframe the coaching partnership in a way that honors the concerns of the teacher but doesn't stay there (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3 Middle School Goal-Setting Conversation

Coach:	I'm looking forward to working with you during our upcoming coaching cycle. What goal for student learning would you like to focus on?
Teacher:	Well, it's my kids. They are so low. They can't read the novel I'm planning to teach. Other than reading it to them, I'm not sure what to do.
Coach:	Okay, so it sounds like you'd like to focus on reading. (*Pulls out the reading standards*)
Teacher:	I guess . . . but it's really just the novel.
Coach:	Got it. How about if we look at the standards for eighth grade and see where they fit with the literature you've selected. If we know what you'd like the students to do as readers, then we will be able to figure out what our work will look like.
Teacher:	We are reading historical fiction in the next unit. So we could look at that standard.
Coach:	(*Refers to standards*) They need to understand the structure of the plot, how the characters influenced the story, and different points of view. Which of these parts of the standard stand out to you?
Teacher:	Well, I like the idea of thinking about the characters.

(Continued)

Figure 1.3 (Continued)

Coach:	Ok . . . so how about going after a goal focusing on how the characters' qualities influenced the theme of the book? And we could even include different points of view.
Teacher:	I guess, as long as you can also help me with what to do about the lower readers.
Coach:	Definitely, we will work on how to scaffold and differentiate. We can even try using small groups and include some other short texts. There are a lot of instructional practices that we can use to support your struggling readers. Sound okay?
Teacher:	(*Sighs*) Okay. But that sounds like a lot.
Coach:	For now, we just have to envision our goal. We'll do the rest one day at a time. Can I just make sure I got this down correctly? Our goal is "Students will understand how fictional characters influence the theme of the book." What do you think?
Teacher:	That will work. Hopefully we can meet again to plan for my lower readers.
Coach:	Absolutely. How about if we meet on Friday to create a short reading assessment that will surface some of their needs? Then we can plan what to do next.

As you read the goal-setting conversation, you may have noticed some of the challenges that the coach was facing. While the teacher brought up concerns that were probably quite valid, they didn't necessarily translate into a motivating goal for a coaching cycle. Rather than letting the teacher's concern for her "lower readers" take over the conversation, the coach reframed it as being about differentiating and scaffolding. She even dropped in a few examples of what this might look like in practice. This way the coach honored the teacher's concerns and created a vision for how they would get past it.

Sometimes we find ourselves in a goal-setting conversation that focuses entirely on a new program or curriculum (Figure 1.4). As you read the next example, notice how the coach nudges the teacher away from perceiving her as a resource provider and toward the idea of a partner who is focused on standards-based instruction.

In this example, the coach was careful to nudge the conversation away from the activities in the math program and toward the student learning that they were after. Referring to the unit was a great start, but the coach also named their purpose as being about "teaching and assessing." She asked the teacher what she wanted the students to learn as a result of the unit, so they quickly moved beyond activities and toward learning.

Figure 1.4   Elementary School Goal-Setting Conversation

Coach:	I'm looking forward to working with you during our upcoming coaching cycle. You probably remember that we always start by determining a student-learning goal for our coaching cycle. What are you thinking?
Teacher:	I'm not sure about a student-learning goal. What I really need help with is a math unit coming up in two weeks that I've never taught. I need help with resources, strategies, and some formative assessment ideas. If you can get me those, then I should be ready to go.
Coach:	It's great that you are thinking through the unit ahead of time. Let's take a minute to review the unit so that we are clear about the learning we are after for your students. *(Coach pulls out the unit and standards)*
Teacher:	Ok, but what I really need is resources and activities.
Coach:	We'll definitely brainstorm resources and activities, but we need to start with a goal for student learning. That's key to understanding how we will teach and assess. It will also help us stay focused on your students.
Teacher:	Well, I suppose the goal is for my students to correctly add and subtract three digit numbers. I'd like them to do this quickly and from memory.
Coach:	Okay, that makes sense. As I look at the unit, I notice an emphasis on using a variety of strategies for solving these types of problems. For example, using place value, breaking apart numbers, and so on. What if we focused on helping your students use more strategies than just memorization? If we went in this direction, then we'd be right in line with the unit.
Teacher:	I guess more strategies would be okay. I just want them to get the correct answer and not count on their fingers anymore.
Coach:	I agree that the correct answer is important. How about if we make our goal for student learning something like "Students will understand and use a variety of strategies to correctly add and subtract three digit numbers." Would that goal work for you?
Teacher:	Sure, as long as I get some ideas for activities, too. That's really where I'm stuck.
Coach:	Of course! You'll remember that we have a weekly planning session as part of our coaching cycle. We'll do lots of planning together. We can also co-teach some lessons to try out some different ways to teach the lessons. Sound ok?
Teacher:	Sounds great. I'm excited to get started.

The coach was also careful to let the teacher know that she was hearing her concerns and reminded her that they will have lots of opportunities to co-plan and co-teach lessons. In this way, the coach honored the teacher and also made the coaching about student outcomes.

Use the Standards During Goal-Setting Conversations

The standards anchor most of our coaching cycles. This is how we ensure that the bulk of our coaching is focused on the knowledge and skills that are demanded of our students. Without the standards, we run the risk of identifying a goal that is too broad, too narrow, or not grade-level appropriate. With the standards, we are able to name a goal that is clearly aligned with what we want the students to know and be able to do.

We are often asked how to handle situations when teachers would like to focus on student engagement or behavior rather than any given standard. While we understand the importance of designing instruction that engages students, we don't see this as something that is separate from academics. For this reason, we like to steer teachers toward standards-based goals. We worry that if we isolate and coach into behavior, then we may end up looking at things like time-on-task rather than the learning that occurred. We'd rather put our effort toward engaging students through high quality and compelling work. As Phillip Schlechty (2011) suggests, a primary component of engagement is this: "The engaged student finds meaning and value in the tasks that make up the work" (p. 14).

As you might expect, there are exceptions to this rule. We understand that the teacher has to care about, and take ownership, over the goal. This means that there are times when we find ourselves in coaching cycles that focus less on the standards and more on engagement or behavior. For example, Diane recently worked with a group of special education coaches in the Denver area. They were working with teachers on managing behavior, helping students use assistive technology, and working with students to stay engaged throughout the day. Given their student population, the teachers were squarely focused on behavior and engagement. Rather than forcing the issue, and since goal setting demands that we be responsive to teachers, it didn't make sense to only focus on the standards. Instead, this team found more success setting goals for students around engagement and behavior. Would we like to see a focus on standards? Of course we would. And sometimes there is a follow-up opportunity to work on a standards-based goal after a cycle like this. But either way we understand that coaching is a partnership, and one of our primary beliefs is that the teacher has to be the one to set the goal for the coaching cycle. For more on the differences between standards-based goals and goals focusing on behavior or engagement, refer to *Student-Centered Coaching at the Secondary Level* (Sweeney, 2013).

Set Goldilocks Goals

If a goal is going to make the desired impact, then it ought to be just the right size and scope. We like to think of this as setting "Goldilocks goals," or goals that are just right. Figure 1.5 provides examples of goals that are too narrow, too broad, and just right.

Figure 1.5 Examples of Goldilocks Goals

Too Narrow	Just Right	Too Broad
Students will create a diagram that shows the water cycle.	Students will synthesize research in order to understand how drought impacts daily life.	Students will understand how weather works.
Students will learn their addition and subtraction facts.	Students will use a variety of strategies to solve two-digit addition and subtraction problems.	Students will understand the concept of addition and subtraction.
Students will memorize the major events in the Civil Rights movement.	Students will analyze the role of a key person in the Civil Rights movement.	Students will learn about the Civil Rights movement.

You may have noticed that our examples of "just-right goals" revolve around processes that involve reading, writing, or solving problems. This allows us to work with teachers to apply content knowledge in authentic ways. We understand the importance of learning content; we just don't view content knowledge as an ideal goal for a coaching cycle. For example, "learning your addition and subtraction facts" targets content. So does, "memorizing the major events in the Civil Rights movement." If these were goals for coaching cycles, then we would be limiting the outcome to learning discrete facts. Instead, we prefer goals that include content but also get at a deeper level of understanding.

When goals are too broad, such as "Students will learn about the Civil Rights movement," then we run the risk of kicking off a coaching cycle with little focus. We know that the scope is just about right when a goal leads us to generate between five and seven learning targets that capture the knowledge and skills we are after. It would be hard to accomplish this with a goal as broad as learning about the Civil Rights movement. But it would be possible if our goal was "Students will analyze the role of a key person in the Civil Rights movement," or "Students will read a collection of texts on the Civil Rights movement in order to create an argument for either side of the conflict." Having a clear sense of what the students should know and be able to do is essential for a goal to feel motivating and manageable. It is also essential for a coaching cycle to make the desired impact.

QR Code 1.1
Setting a Goal With a High School English Teacher

http://qrs.ly/ bz5cdtc

Focus on the Learning Instead of the Task

We also avoid setting goals that are task or project oriented, such as "Students will create a diagram that shows the water cycle." Task-oriented goals are limiting because they are measured by whether the students *did* something instead of if they *learned* something.

This is a common experience faced by technology coaches. For example, a teacher is about to begin her tried-and-true unit on rocks and minerals that culminates with a museum where the students share their own rock collections. It is quite possible that when asked, the teacher will name a goal for coaching that sounds something like "I would like help with the student-led museum that we will be doing at the end of the unit. You know a lot about technology, maybe our goal can be to have the students create their projects using technology instead of the old-fashioned posters that we've done in the past." Right about now is when the coach recognizes that a shift of focus is required. The trick is doing so in a way that respects the teacher's request to "create a product" but also moves coaching to a more rigorous and student-centered place. Asking the teacher "What would you like the students to know and be able to do?" is a great way to move the focus away from creating a product. And if that doesn't work, it's time to pull out the standards so that the teacher is thinking about the knowledge and skills that she is after.

The Goal Is a Starting Point . . . Not the End Game

We are often asked how our goal-setting process compares with developing SMART goals. While we see the value of SMART goals in the context of school improvement plans and other big picture measures for accountability, we take a narrower approach that is often related to a unit of study or specific content area rather than on a certain amount of improvement on a specific assessment. Goals for coaching cycles are about what we'd like our students to learn over the next four to six weeks, rather than how we are going to show progress across the whole year.

Goals for coaching cycles are a lot like when the horses line up at the Kentucky Derby. They are in the starting gates, they are excited, and they know the direction they are headed. That's enough for now because our next step will be to unpack the goal into learning targets so that we will be able to evaluate how students are performing throughout the coaching cycle. This will be the focus of Chapter 2.

Keep the Focus on Students . . . and on Instruction

As we mentioned earlier, for goal setting to be effective, it begins with the standards. While we steer coaching toward standards-based goals, we also understand that an outcome for coaching is to help teachers refine their instructional practice. After all, we wouldn't be doing our job if we didn't help teachers get better at the instruction that they deliver on a daily basis. Instruction is how we move student learning forward.

We find that our goal-setting process sometimes includes a conversation about how we will use certain instructional practices to reach the goal that we set. This may be inspired by a pending (or past) evaluation. Or it may align with the instructional practices that are expected throughout the district. We often suggest districts get clear about their instructional expectations so that coaching can be more about support than about telling teachers what they *should* be doing. For example, we are currently working with a district that is targeting the following instructional practices: (1) decreasing lecture and increasing student discussion, (2) differentiating instruction using small groups, and (3) providing feedback to students. The coaches have found that they can easily embed the expected instructional practices right into their coaching cycles and remain focused on the standards. While these things aren't the goal for the coaching cycle, they are helpful to refer to during the goal-setting process.

Manage Goal Setting With Groups of Teachers

Student-centered coaching isn't just about working with individual teachers. In fact, there are many advantages to working with groups of teachers during coaching cycles. Coaching groups of teachers increases the level of collaboration and is an efficient way to extend the coach's reach. We have found that small group coaching cycles are ideally made up of two to four teachers. Sometimes they are informal groupings, and other times they may be comprised of grade-level teams or departments. In either case, small group coaching cycles also begin with a goal for student learning.

At times, setting goals with groups of teachers is a piece of cake. The teachers are on the same page. They are predisposed to working together. And they are focused on moving student learning forward. In these cases, the coach may simply need to take the pulse of each group member to confirm that the goal feels right. This may sound like "Let's make sure this goal feels right before we commit to moving forward together."

QR Code 1.3

Setting a Goal for a Coaching Cycle With a First-Grade Team

http://qrs.ly/u159nu9

At other times, setting goals with groups of teachers can be extremely challenging. This often occurs when groups of teachers aren't on the same page, are confrontational, or have different philosophies about teaching and learning. We find that in these situations, it's best for the coach to engage the group in an open-ended conversation that surfaces what they would like their students to know and be able to do and to refer to the standards to anchor the conversation. If we hope to create a sense of shared ownership and agreement about the goal, it is important for each individual to verbally state his or her commitment or name any concerns he or she might have. We suggest moving around the table to hear from every group member and using the questions "How do you feel about the goal that is on the table? Can you get behind it or do you have reservations?" If there is disagreement about the goal, the coach may choose to continue the goal-setting process or decide not to pursue the small-group coaching cycle at that time. We make this decision based on whether the group is able to name a student-centered goal that everyone can support. If not, it's probably a good idea to rethink the coaching cycle and provide other options for support such as individual coaching cycles, a group coaching cycle at a later date, a coaching cycle with a different combination of people, or support through professional learning communities (PLCs) or data teams. There is nothing wrong with adjusting the plan, especially if it is off track right from the beginning.

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Margaret is new to her district. After attending a recent session on student-centered coaching, she reached out to Diane for help. She was having a hard time getting her footing during a coaching cycle with a second-grade teacher. She had set up a coaching cycle, worked with the teacher to establish a goal, used effective questioning, and co-taught with the teacher in her classroom. But still, she was finding that the teacher was becoming less engaged as the cycle progressed. At first the teacher claimed that she "wanted direct feedback from Margaret." But later, she stated that she "had already done" what Margaret was suggesting. An unspoken tension had developed between Margaret and the teacher, and she wrote to Diane for help.

Diane's first question was "What was the goal that the teacher named for the coaching cycle?" It's no surprise that Diane started here because we have learned that when most coaching cycles go off track, it almost always comes down to the goal. Is the goal (1) standards-based, (2) valued by the teacher, (3) the right size and scope, (4) measurable

through formative assessment, and (5) robust enough to carry a teacher and coach across the stages in a coaching cycle?

Margaret explained that at the beginning of the coaching cycle, the teacher had said she wanted to work on retelling and the Gradual Release of Responsibility, particularly helping students engage independently in their reading work. Diane thought that this seemed like the perfect opportunity to focus on retelling as their main goal and the gradual release as their secondary focus on instructional practice. It seemed like they were off to a good start. So what went wrong? Diane had to dig a little deeper.

As she continued to read Margaret's e-mail, the following line jumped out at her: "When I began to observe in her room, I noticed that behavior was a huge barrier to her making it to the independent practice part of each lesson. I was thinking that I would suggest embedding some work on behavior before we tackled retelling." Diane immediately recognized a common misstep. The original goal wasn't based on student behavior. But as Margaret spent time in the classroom, she began to view behavior as a problem, a problem that she worried would need to be solved before they could move forward with the goal that had been set. She tried to carefully raise the issue with the teacher in an attempt to help her reflect on how they might tackle this problem, but when she did this, she set aside the teacher's goal and introduced her own. While Margaret was probably 100% accurate in her belief that behavior wasn't where it should be, she had stepped into risky territory. Once a goal is set, it is incumbent upon us to maintain focus on the goal. If we stray, then we introduce our own agenda, and in turn, may alienate the teacher. Our ethic as coaches is that we are here to help teachers reach *their goals* for students. To do so, we have to stay focused on what they bring to the table.

Diane wrote back to Margaret and suggested that she bring the focus back to retelling. After all, this is what the students need to know and be able to do. She thought that if Margaret unpacked the standard by creating a set of learning targets with the teacher, then they would be in a better position to work side by side to implement instruction that increases student ownership and reduces behavior problems.

Margaret took this suggestion to heart and went back to the teacher, prepared with the plan of centering their work back on the standard of retelling. The teacher recommitted, and they saw the coaching cycle through. In the end, they were able to celebrate student growth and solidify instruction that is based on the gradual release of responsibility. Behavior improved and so did the students' ability to retell texts.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Troubleshooting Goals

The following if/then chart provides common scenarios that coaches face when engaging in goal-setting conversations (Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6 Language for Goal-Setting Conversations

If I hear . . .	Then I can use the following language . . .
My students can't do anything.	What is your next unit of study? Let's take a look at the standards, and then we can figure out how to scaffold for them as learners.
I'm supposed to be using effective questioning techniques. It's on my evaluation.	That's great. We can tackle that during our coaching cycle. But let's first set a goal for your students.
I really just want you to lend me a hand. My class is out of control.	I will definitely lend you a hand when I'm in your room, but our work should focus on a goal for students. What's coming up next in your curriculum?

Coaching Log: Identifying a Goal for Student Learning

We have found that it's always a good idea to go into a goal-setting conversation with a plan. We suggest that coaches create a shared document, or coaching log, that begins with the goal-setting conversation. Our coaching log includes the following questions to scaffold the goal-setting process (Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.7 Coaching Log: Identifying a Goal for Student Learning

1. What goal for student learning will we go after during the coaching cycle?
2. How does the goal connect with the standards?
3. How does the goal connect with our curriculum and materials?

Open-Ended Questions for Goal Setting

There is a conversational flow and tone to setting goals with teachers. We use open-ended questions to encourage teachers to own the goals that they set. We also do a lot of listening so that we honor teachers by asking them to green light whatever goal is selected. The following questions provide teachers with ownership over the goals that they set.

1. What do you hope the students will learn as a result of our partnership?

2. Let's look at the standards. How might they help us choose a focus?

3. What would you like to see your students doing as (readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, etc.)?

4. Is there any student work or data that could help us decide on a focus that would make the most impact on your students?

5. How do you feel about the goal we've selected? Does it feel right to you?

<div style="background:#666;color:#fff;text-align:center;padding:6px;">**A FINAL THOUGHT**</div>

Landing on a meaningful goal involves a combination of understanding the standards, hearing the concerns of the teacher, and creating a plan that is both realistic and inspirational. We avoid making goal setting a bureaucratic process. We prefer to think about goals for coaching cycles as being organic and motivational.

While goal setting drives so much of what we do in life, it is just the beginning. We can think, "I'm going to eat a healthy dinner tonight," "I'm going to watch less TV," or "I'm going to exercise more often," but we need more to truly change our behavior. We need guidance, encouragement, skills, and tools to reach our goals. That's what coaching is about. It's about helping teachers reach their goals for students. We can't stand around and hope that teachers will work hard toward *our* goals. That would be counter to everything we know about motivation and engagement. Rather, we see goal setting as an opportunity. It reminds teachers that we are committed to treating them with respect and, in turn, to creating trusting partnerships. As coaches, we can never forget that our job is to work side by side with teachers to help them reach their goals for student learning. This is how it all begins.