Coaching Style Defined: Analysis of Literature Supports Six Domains of Coaching Styles in Primary Care Redesign

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Aims

- Describe what is meant by “coaching style” in the literature in relation to practice facilitation
- Identify two perspectives of coaching style and the domains that coaches can use to assist others
- Demonstrate the use of a coaching team assessment to illustrate differences in style

Disclosures & Acknowledgments

- No relevant financial relationships to disclose
- Research reported in this meeting was funded through a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Award (PCS-1409-24372). The views, statements, and opinions presented in this presentation are solely the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), its Board of Governors or Methodology Committee.

First, a little context...

- 20 primary care practices consented to a complex initiative: integrating behavior health providers and changing:
  - Delivery of care through teams (clinical & non-clinical staff)
  - Sharing of patient information, records, and systems
  - Relationships among providers and with patients
- Externally provided facilitation – prohibited by funder
- Internally provided facilitation – allowed, if funded by practice
- Facilitator support was included:
  - On-line education on quality improvement (QI) team facilitation
  - A protocitized QI process based on Lean
  - Dedicated, remote external coach by phone or video conference
Facilitator and Coach

What does a Coach do?

- Conducts semi-structured interviews with facilitators
  - Focus (the conversation), Explore, Plan, Commit (to action)*
- Co-coaches in a dyad to support consistency & documentation
  - Implementation Specialist + Research Scientist
  - Weekly coaching team meetings to review methods and outcomes
- Organizes facilitator-centered schedules and expectations
  - Structured on the protocolized QI process
  - Follows facilitator education program
- Works in a team with the four other coaches
  - Dyad partners noticed differences – “there’s something else”

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What is Coaching Style?

- Literature review of descriptions of coaching style related to practice facilitation in U.S., Canada, and U.K. yielded 9 articles with multiple perspectives
- Content analysis of findings, reviewed by three members of our coaching team, to identify domains related to coaching
- Literature based descriptions to ground each domain
- Two different perspectives:
  - Coaching style is described as a function: it’s what you do
  - Coaching style is described as an approach: it’s how you do it

Coaching as a Function

- Establish coaching relationship: convey respect, openness, and non-judgmental attitude
- Assess facilitator’s development stage for change in the context of the facilitator environment: ownership of change
- Apply situational awareness and flexibility to coaching encounters: multiple methods and intensity of communication
- Support the facilitator’s ability to continue to function after the coaching relationship ends
- Support the practice’s ability to sustain & implement change
- Support engagement of leadership as needed
Coaching as an Approach

- Engage in a reciprocal relationship, promoting equality, choice, voice, reflection, dialogue / brainstorming, praxis (new knowledge & skills), reciprocity (everyone learns)
- Maintain egalitarian respect: nonhierarchical partnership; balance who is "leading in the dance"
- Employ behavioral skills: motivating others, conflict management, dealing with ambiguity, negotiating, providing effective feedback
- Self-modulate: directiveness, interest in the facilitator's life and role, curiosity about the person's thought process, flexibility with time, structuredness of session, seriousness, sharing of personal information to create interpersonal warmth
- Speak from expertise in primary care as needed
- Speak from expertise in QI as needed

Style = Approach + Function

- Reciprocal relationship
- Egalitarian respect
- Behavioral skills
- Self-modulate
- Expertise in primary care
- Expertise in QI
- Establish relationship
- Assess development stage
- Apply situational awareness
- Support continued function post-coaching
- Support long term practice change
- Support leadership engagement

What does that look like for a coach?

[Diagrams showing coaching style averages]
What does that look like for a coach?

How does that appear in a dyad?

What about IS Coaches?

What we learned

- Coaches could assess themselves and their co-coaches using these perspectives and domains
- The assessment process may assist coaches in self-reflection and team conversations based on function and approach
- Outcomes may include greater consistency of style across coaches, increased trust and sharing among coaches, and a method to help future coaches think and develop “style”
- All coaches are, to date, successful in supporting the facilitators in all 20 practice sites engaged in integrating care
Questions & Questions for You

- What have you seen re: external coaches and their coaching styles?
- What tools have you found or developed to help external coaches?
- What has been helpful to you in understanding the “style” of coaches involved in supporting practice facilitation?

References

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Thank you!

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