



Coaching Stances Reference Chart

(Based on Jim Knight & Elena Aguilar — Facilitative vs. Directive)

Facilitative Stances

*Used more frequently.

Stance	Purpose	When to Use	Sample Questions / Moves
Supportive	Build trust, affirm strengths, create psychological safety.	Early in the relationship, when teachers need encouragement, at the beginning/end of sessions.	• “What felt successful for you in that lesson?” • “How are you feeling about this new approach so far?” • “What do you want to celebrate this week?”
Cathartic	Provide space for emotional release to enable forward movement.	When the teacher is frustrated, overwhelmed, or emotionally charged.	• “It sounds like this has been weighing on you. What’s been the hardest?” • “I can hear the frustration. Do you want me just to listen or help think it through?” • Reflective paraphrasing: “You’re feeling... because...”
Catalytic	Surface new insights through reflection and questioning.	When teachers are ready to analyze their practice or explore root causes, during debriefs or goal-setting sessions.	• “What patterns are you noticing?” • “What might be at the heart of this issue?” • “If you tried that lesson again, what might you adjust?”



Directive Stances

*To be used strategically.

Stance	Purpose	When to Use	Sample Questions / Moves
Informative	Share expertise, research, or strategies.	When teachers need new information, strategies, or clarity.	• “Would it be helpful if I shared a strategy other teachers have used?” • “Here’s what research says about wait time...” • “Let me show you a structure that can support this goal.”
Prescriptive	Recommend specific next steps for growth.	With novice teachers, when clarity is needed, or when time-bound outcomes are required.	• “A next step that could help is...” • “I’d recommend trying ____ next week; how does that feel?” • “Let’s plan to implement this strategy and gather evidence.”
Confrontational	Address inconsistencies or resistance with respect and honesty.	When avoidance or incongruence blocks growth, after trust is built.	• “I hear you say engagement is a priority, yet students were not participating. Tell me more about why that was the case.” • “We agreed to try ____, but I didn’t see it today. What got in the way of doing that in this lesson?” • “I want to share something that might be hard to hear. Is now a good time?”



Coaching Conversation Flow

Build Trust → Reflect → Plan & Learn → Implement → Accountability & Growth

Phase	Typical Stances Used
Build Trust	Supportive, Cathartic
Reflect	Catalytic, Supportive
Plan & Learn	Catalytic, Informative, Prescriptive
Implement	Informative, Prescriptive
Accountability & Growth	Confrontational (when needed), Catalytic

Key Insight:

- Great coaches move fluidly between facilitative and directive stances, always grounded in partnership, respect, and the teacher's context.