

*EMPOWERING
MENTORS:
BUILDING A
CULTURE
WHERE EARLY
CAREER
TEACHERS
THRIVE*

Professor Haili Hughes






*A TALE OF TWO
MENTORS...*

THE IMPERATIVE OF EFFECTIVE MENTORING

- The challenges faced by early career teachers?
- The pivotal role of mentoring in teacher retention.
- The Early Career Framework (ECF).



A photograph of a modern building with a glass facade, showing multiple floors and balconies. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape that serves as a background for the text.

*“EFFECTIVE MENTORING CAN
REDUCE BEGINNING TEACHER
ATTRITION, IMPROVE TEACHING
PRACTICES, AND SUPPORT
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY
FORMATION—MAKING IT ONE OF
THE MOST POWERFUL TOOLS FOR
EARLY CAREER TEACHER
DEVELOPMENT.”*

*Hobson, A.J., Ashby, P., Malderez, A. & Tomlinson, P.D. (2009).
Mentoring beginning teachers: What we know and what we
don't. Teaching and Teacher Education, 25(1), pp. 207–216.*

Cultivating a Mentoring Culture

Leadership Commitment: How can school leaders model and prioritise mentoring, embedding it into the school's ethos?

Cultivating a Mentoring Culture

- **Resource Allocation:** Emphasise the importance of dedicating time and resources to mentoring.
- **Recognition and Incentives:** Explore ways to acknowledge and reward effective mentors, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

BUILDING STRONG MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS

- Trust and Respect
- Effective Communication
- Feedback Mechanisms

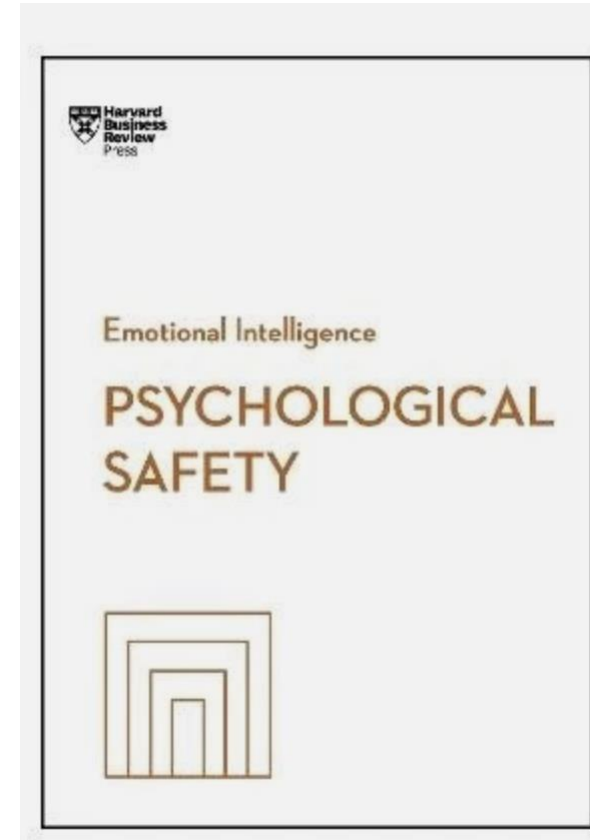
"Our flourishing is dependent upon who we are with—together in community."

Ubuntu, meaning "I am because we are," the Church emphasises that flourishing is a collective endeavour. This philosophy encourages teachers to view their success and well-being as interconnected with that of their colleagues.



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- **N - Needs:** Identify the needs of those involved in the conversation.
 - **E - Emotions:** Acknowledge the emotions present that might affect the dialogue.
 - **F - Facts:** Utilize factual information to ground the discussion.
 - **I - Impact:** Discuss the impact of the issues at hand on individuals and the organization.
 - **A - Actions:** Agree on the actions to be taken as a result of the conversation.
 - **R - Review:** Plan a follow-up to review the progress of the actions discussed.
 - **T - Thank You:** Finish the conversation positively by expressing gratitude for the participants' contributions and efforts.

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Praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrate the positive with precise praise	1 – 2 minutes
Probe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use targeted open-ended question and scaffold to identify the core issue	2 – 6 minutes
Action step	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State single, concrete, highest-leverage action step	1 minute
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simulate how to improve current practice	As much time as remains
Plan ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design/revise upcoming lesson plan to implement action	As much time as remains
Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish timeline when the action step will be completed	1 – 3 minutes

LEVERAGING INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING AND DELIBERATE PRACTICE

The evidence behind instructional coaching:

- Kraft et al. (2018) Coaching has a greater effect on instruction and attainment than any other form of CPD.
- Sims & Fletcher-Wood (2021) Structured coaching increases fidelity of implementation.
- EEF Guidance: Coaching shows promising outcomes, especially when embedded in a wider professional culture.

What might the active ingredients of coaching be?

5 evidence-based principles:

- 1. Focused** – Target one precise area of practice.
- 2. Instructional** – Tied to classroom teaching and learning.
- 3. Sustained** – Ongoing over time, not a one-off.
- 4. Dialogic** – Driven by questioning and co-construction.
- 5. Action-Oriented** – Involves practice, feedback, and follow-up.

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THIS INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING?



REFLECTION:

- Action Step:** Assess your current mentoring training and support. How can it be improved?



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Mentoring in Schools



How to become an expert colleague

THANK YOU

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