

## Conferencing Template for On-the-Job Retirees

### ***Conferencing Phase I: Providing a Focus for the Conference***

To best provide a focus for the conference, set the proper tone by letting the teacher know that the conference will be a professional experience. Sample statements include:

- “I appreciate the time you set aside to meet with me. I know you have been effective in the past and want to return to your high level of effectiveness.”
- “I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me today to clear up this issue.”
- “Thank you for your focus on this issue and for meeting with me to clarify it.”
- “I know it’s not always easy to talk about these types of situations, but I do appreciate that you are willing to work with me to get to the bottom of this issue.”

Next, provide an overview or outline for the conference. People like it when they know what to expect during a conference. Use this phase of the conference to lay out the plan for your time with the teacher. Sample statements include:

- “Today, I’d like to spend some time talking about your teaching—what is working and areas of challenge for you. I’d like to get your ideas about how you’d like to improve. Then we can talk about a plan to move forward.”
- “We both know the major issue here, so we’ll start off the meeting with an update from you. I’ll share the progress from my perspective, and then we’ll decide the next steps in the process.”
- “During this meeting, I need to share a concern I have with your performance. I’ll give you a chance to share your side of the story, and then I’ll take your thoughts into consideration to develop a plan to stop the problem behaviour.”
- “In our meeting today, I want to share my concerns, give you a chance to think about them, and get together later to \_\_\_\_\_.”

### ***Conferencing Phase II: Gaining Information and Feedback About the Teaching Performance***

During the second phase, ask the teacher questions to help him or her reflect on the event and share his or her perceptions. It is important to find out what the teacher thought of the lesson. This helps build his or her reflective skills.

Be careful with this section because sometimes people think that the lesson was great when it was not. Don’t just accept a teacher’s perception if you have a different opinion about the lesson. Sample statements include:

- “Let’s have an open conversation about the areas of challenge you face in your teaching. What do you notice when \_\_\_\_\_?”
- “How does what actually happened in the lesson match your plan? What is different from what you had planned?”
- “What went as you expected? What surprises did you experience in the lesson?”
- “What do you think went well, and what challenges did you face in this lesson?”

Next, provide specific feedback including examples of effective teaching practices. In this section, you can give the teacher feedback about the lesson and what worked or went well from your perspective. Sample statements include:

- “As I have watched you teach in your classroom this year, there are several areas where you are doing well. They are \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “In my observations over the course of the year, I have noticed there are some areas that are consistently working for you.”

- “There are several areas where you are on track with the district’s expectations. Let me focus on two of those areas here.”

Then, tell the teacher what needs to be changed in his or her future teaching performance. This section of the conference is where you can thoroughly explain or teach something the teacher needs to improve or refine. Sample statements include:

- “In my assessment of your teaching, I observed that you are struggling with \_\_\_\_\_. Here are some of the examples I have observed over the last few months.”
- “In my observations, I’ve noticed that you are \_\_\_\_\_. This is not in compliance with our standards, and it needs to be addressed immediately.”
- “When watching you interact in staff meetings, I’ve noticed that you \_\_\_\_\_. This behaviour is diminishing your professional position with the staff. You need to \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “In talking with \_\_\_\_\_, it has come to my attention that \_\_\_\_\_. This behaviour needs to stop immediately and \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “On Tuesday, I saw you \_\_\_\_\_. You know this behaviour is outside the boundaries of my expectations and needs to be addressed immediately.”

***Conferencing Phase III: Ensuring the Major Recommendations From the Conference Are Applied in the Classroom***

In the third phase, begin by asking questions to make sure the teacher understands the marginal area and what his or her expectations are for the needed improvement. Make sure the teacher understands the issue and what improvement you expect. Asking clear questions to ensure that the teacher understands can feel unnatural, but it ensures that your expectations are clear. Now, if the performance does not improve, you can move forward in taking additional actions because you are sure the teacher understood what needed to be changed. Sample questions include:

- “What, specifically, will you take away from today’s conference, and how do you plan to change your behaviour?”
- “How would you summarise what we talked about today, what my expectations are in relation to this type of behaviour, and what you need to do to address these expectations?”
- “We’ve talked about several topics today. What are the main points you are taking away from this conversation?”

Finally, share the plan for follow-up to ensure the recommended changes are made in the classroom. Follow-up is essential to the success of any teacher evaluation process. Here you plan to check in with the teacher in the future to make sure that the refinement area you shared is being implemented. Sample statements include:

- “I know that you are interested in working to get back to your past high levels of teaching. I am willing to do the following to help you \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I want to make sure that you have the support you need to \_\_\_\_\_. Let’s meet to talk about this issue on a monthly basis.”
- “After you have had a chance to \_\_\_\_\_, set up a time to fill me in on \_\_\_\_\_. Let’s say that we’ll meet again in two weeks.”