

We at TASN ATBS are so glad you chose to read and discuss *Art of Coaching: Effective Strategies for School Transformation*. (Aguilar, E. 2013. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.) Copies of this book are available for checkout to Kansas educators in our [TASN ATBS Lending Library](#).

Wondering about the logistics of our book talks? We held a 30-minute virtual chat once a month for four months using zoom. The questions we discussed are included in the pages below. The first question for each discussion was always a roll call question, designed to give each person an opportunity to share. 3-4 additional questions provided the framework for additional discussion with an emphasis on using the strategies in this book in each person's current role.

In addition to our monthly discussions, we used an app (Voxer) to engage in a continued group discussion. Each question was designed to be answered in a few words to a few sentences ... but kept our discussion alive and ongoing.

Finally, members were encouraged to share websites and additional articles that related to this topic. See many of these on the [TASN ATBS Coaching Page](#).

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## TASN ATBS SESSION 1 DISCUSSION

### Part 1: Foundations of Coaching, Chapters 1-4

1. Roll call question:  
Introduce yourself to the group by sharing your name, your role, & 2-3 words that caught your attention as you read the first section.
2. In the introduction, the author talks about coaching as critical to educational change and transformation. "... to meet the needs of students, we must transform the experience of adults who work in schools (Aguilar, 2013, p. xiv)." She suggests coaching does this by identifying needs, supporting change, and bringing educators together. She discusses other components required for change – increased funding, change in public policy, and high quality curriculum.

Here is the question we'll begin with. Base your answer on your own experiences and knowledge and on the information from the chapters we read.

If you had \$1 and could assign value to components that affect school change in a BUILDING, what value would you assign to professional coaching and why? 50 cents? 25 cents? How much and WHY?

3. Answering this question may require a commitment to vulnerability that we aren't ready for if we haven't had time to establish a strong relationship and rapport. Let's leap in any way and move toward what Aguilar calls "the optical refractor" – her second essential framework. It begins on p. 49 – 65. Consider conversations you've had – whether professional or personal – and talk about the refractor you already use with the most skill. Give an example.
4. All coaching models are based on listening carefully so questions are responsive, intentional and designed to support the person being coached. Again, Aguilar suggests doing that through the lenses. Which lens do you hope to become more skilled at using? What might be next steps as you develop your proficiency in coaching through that lens?

5. Speaking of next steps, as we reflect just on the format and platform for this morning's discussion, what suggestions might you have for changes that would make this more effective?

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## TASN ATBS SESSION 2 DISCUSSION

### Part 2: Establishing Coaching with a Client (Chapters 5-7)

Roll call question: Aguilar discusses ten steps to building trust. In 3-5 words, name the one you use most successfully.

1. Asking questions is key to the coaching process. As an example, Aguilar suggests "Could you tell me more about that" (Aguilar, 2013, p. 85). What's a "go to" question you might practice using to clarify information?
2. On page 104, Exhibit 6.1 offers storytelling prompts that provide a framework for the exploration stage. What insights might be gained from using these prompts?
3. Given the information in Chapter 7 on developing a work plan, what might you do to prepare for a conversation before you start this process?
4. When you consider coaching challenges you've experienced in your role, what strategies in these chapters might offer strategies to face those differently in the future?

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### TASN ATBS SESSION 3 DISCUSSION Part 3: The Coaching Dance (Chapters 8-11)

#### Roll Call Question

Which of the three "movements" in the coaching dance -- listening, questioning, or supporting -- are you most skilled at implementing?

1. The author talks about the power of silence. First, how do you feel when you use wait time or when there are pauses in the conversation? What tips are helpful when you think about embedding times of silence as part of the conversation?

2: Chapter 9 focuses on three stances – cathartic, catalytic, and supportive. Which of those would be most effective if someone were coaching you AND is that your default stance?

3: Chapter 10 discusses coaching activities – role-playing, visualization, storytelling, and videotaping. There were nine strategies in all. You may already be using some. Which strategy – that you haven't ever used – would you consider using in the future? Talk a little about that – why would you use it and is there anything you'd need to do to feel confidence in using it?

4: In Chapter 11, Aguilar talks about discovering someone's mindset by listening for "rut" or "river" stories. As a coach, our job is to listen, then help the person we are coaching test and revise those rut stories. In your role, are there any "rut stories" that you hear repeatedly? What impact does that mindset have?

5. The author talks about using "dyads" on page 156-157. How might you prepare for using that strategy?

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#### TASN ATBS SESSION 4 DISCUSSION

##### Part 4: Professional Development for Coaches (Chapters 12- 13 & Appendices)

Roll call question: Consider this statement: "When we come into contact with the other person, our thoughts and actions should express our mind of compassion, even if that person says and does things that are not easy to accept." - Thich Nhat Hahn. On a scale of 1-10, how hard is it to coach someone who consistently says and does things that are having a negative effect on students. What is most helpful in overcoming that challenge?

1. Chapter 12 focuses on activities that can be part of coaching – modeling, lesson planning, field trips to observe other educators or teams. From a personal perspective, which of those strategies have you used? Talk about your level of success. What helps you make decisions about which activities to use – with whom – and when?

2. "Where does my client need to go?" In some ways, that question contradicts the essence of coaching. Coaches support clients in answering that question for themselves so for a coach to make that determination seems like it might be counterproductive. Let's talk about that ...

3. The final pages of the book are filled with helpful tools. Which of these would be most helpful in your continued growth as a coach? Share the tool and the reason you'll be using it. What impact might it have on your coaching clients?