

## **“Smart Questions” to Use in Each Step of the *Coaching Conversation***

1. Check in
  - What would you like to focus on today?
  - How would you like to use our time together today?
  - What outcome would you like to see from this conversation?
2. Define the challenge
  - What's the problem? How would you define it?
  - What's the current reality – how would you describe it?
  - Who's being impacted? What's it costing us?
3. Determine the goal
  - What's your goal?
  - What's the ideal outcome?
  - What would success look like?
  - What result are you seeking?
4. Generate options
  - What has worked for you in the past? (or what have you seen work for others?)
  - What are our options here? What's a viable alternative?
  - That's one . . . what's another?
  - If we took a completely fresh approach, what would that look like?
  - What might happen if you go that direction?
5. Evaluate options
  - Which of these options is most workable?
  - What are the advantages and disadvantages you see in this idea?
  - Which one is the most sound in terms of our mission & values?
  - Are these options fair to all concerned? (values check)
  - What's the right thing to do? (values check)
  - Can you more fully describe your concerns?
6. Select the most viable option
  - Of the approaches we've discussed, which would work best?
  - What resources will you need?
  - What might get in the way?
  - Are there any unforeseen consequences we could encounter with this option?
  - What would the outcome of this approach be?
  - Will it get us to our goal?
7. Develop the action plan
  - What needs to happen first?
  - What are your next steps?
  - Who else needs to be involved (or be informed)?
  - What is your sense of timing on this? How long will it take to complete each step?
  - What milestones do you anticipate?
8. Anchor the plan
  - So, would you just recap what you're going to do? (The coach wants the coachee to do the recap for two reasons – to be sure they really understand what they are about to do and second, to get them to state for the record what they are going to do, which aids in accountability.)
  - What will you commit to do, and by when? Who will you involve/inform?
  - For our next check-in meeting, what date will work?
  - As you have recapped this, what other items come to mind that need to be addressed?
  - What can I do to support you?
  - I look forward to your next check-in.
  - Please know that if anything comes up, anything at all, my door is open.
  - Please let me know how I can help.