



# **Coaching**

## **For Professional Learning**

# **Resource Manual**

**April, 2010**



### MISSION

We unite in our purpose to inspire and prepare learners for life in our changing world community.

### VISION

We are the faces of public education. We understand our gifts and challenges. We are motivated by our dreams and act towards their fulfillment. We respect and celebrate our differences. We invite and value the spirit of community, creativity, and personal growth. We support each other. We have joy in who we are and who we are becoming.

### VALUES

- We recognize and celebrate excellence, and the heart-felt efforts and contributions of our community.
- We strive for equity, inclusiveness, and diversity in all our programs, practices, facilities, and people.
- We value dedication and commitment.
- We value and will respond in an appropriate manner to the voices, ideas, and understanding of all our community members.
- We believe it is the right and responsibility of everyone to ensure a safe nurturing community.
- We embrace the spirit of innovation that acts to realize opportunities to transform our vision into reality.
- We are all responsible for our words and actions.

Dear Colleagues

Schools and worksites have become increasingly complex and demanding environments. As a result, the roles for all staff have also increased in their complexity. Mastery of the vast skill sets required of all of us requires time, professional learning and support. Organizational research points to the significant impact which coaching can have on further developing capacity, professional learning and self-directedness in order to effectively address the complexities and demands of our roles.

In the York Region District School Board, we are pleased to continue our coaching program in the interests of creating a 'culture of coaching' within our system. All staff play a vital role in the accomplishment of our goals to improve student achievement and success through our focus on literacy. If we truly wish to deliver on our commitments, each of us needs to engage in professional learning that supports our growth regardless of our role. Coaching can support us in this growth.

Many thanks are extended to the Leadership Development team for the development, implementation, facilitation, and organization of the coaching program. Thanks are also extended to our coaches and coachees for their efforts to make our Board's mission and vision a reality.

Ken Thurston

Director of Education

York Region District School Board

January, 2010

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Message from the Director .....	3
Our Commitment to Coaching.....	5
For Whom Do We Provide Coaching?.....	5
What are the Qualities of Effective Coaches?.....	5
Steps in the Coaching Process.....	6
Step One: Establishing Trust and Rapport .....	7
Step Two: Ensuring a Positive First Exchange.....	9
Step Three: Creating the Context for Coaching.....	10
Step Four: Developing the Coaching Plan.....	12
Step Five: Implementing and Monitoring the Coaching Plan.....	14
Exit Strategy .....	14
The Coaches .....	15
What Training and Support do Coaches Have? .....	15
Resources .....	16
Research .....	16
Appendices.....	17
Appendix A .....	17
An Appreciative Inquiry .....	17
Appendix B.....	18
Coaching Modules—Series 1 .....	18
Coaching Modules—Series 2.....	19
Appendix C: .....	20
Coaching Plan—Working Template .....	20
Coaching Plan—Sample .....	21
Appendix D .....	22
Coaching Log—Working Template .....	22
Coaching Log—Sample .....	23
Appendix E .....	24
Coaching Skills Checklist.....	24
Notes.....	25

## OUR COMMITMENT TO COACHING

The York Region District School Board is committed to supporting the development of self-directedness, professional learning and high performance in all employees. Coaching is an important component of that commitment.

*“...helping all employees find meaning, increased skill development, and personal satisfaction in making contributions that simultaneously fulfill their own goals and the goals of the organization.”  
from, The Six Secrets of Change, 2008*

## FOR WHOM DO WE PROVIDE COACHING?

Our intention is to make coaching available to all employees and to develop coaching skills among both formal and informal leaders.

## WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE COACHES?

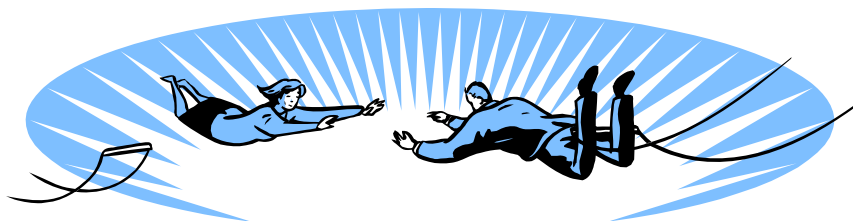
- Accessibility and willingness to provide on-going support to a colleague
- Demonstrated effectiveness in a leadership role
- Understanding of Board priorities and initiatives
- Flexibility in working with diverse learning styles
- Ability to identify and support professional or leadership competencies
- Ability to establish relationships characterized by trust and rapport
- Skill in supporting others in their planning, reflection and problem-solving
- Openness to the views and feedback of others
- Empathic listening skills
- Commitment to professional learning and meta-coaching to enhance coaching skills

*“Coaches should be expected to learn and grow throughout the coaching process, constantly refining their skills and furthering their understanding of adult learning and organizational change.”  
from Learning to Change: School Coaching for Systemic Reform, 2005*

# COACHING RESOURCE MANUAL

## STEPS IN THE COACHING PROCESS:

	Establishing Trust and Rapport
	Ensuring a Positive First Exchange
	Creating the Context for Coaching
	Developing the Coaching Plan
	Implementing and Monitoring the Coaching Plan



## Step One: Establishing Trust and Rapport



### Trust Matters

Relational trust is the foundation for effective coaching. Coaches are usually chosen because they have a reputation for integrity and competence. This reputation may predispose colleagues to trust them, but that expectation must still be regularly validated by the coach's actions. Coaches must be very clear about their intentions and then ensure that their behaviours align with those stated intentions.

Significant research has been done on trust in leaders. Two key criteria have emerged from those studies that apply to coaches: benevolence and honesty. (Tschannen-Moran, 2004)

Benevolence is demonstrated through caring and concern. The coach expresses good will, personal regard and appreciation for the coachee. The coachee leaves a coaching session feeling supported. That benevolence is balanced in equal measure by honesty. The coach avoids manipulation and communicates clearly and openly. The coach keeps promises and honours commitments.

Research on trust also suggests that it develops over time as coach and coachee work together. Nevertheless, there are some important messages that a coach might share and some significant first steps he or she might take that will start that process.

A key message is that the role of coach is non-evaluative. The coach consciously sets aside his or her own judgments in order to elicit and support the coachee's criteria for assessing performance. Neither criticism nor praise is part of the coach's feedback. These set-asides free up the coach to gather data that the coachee identifies as valuable for reflection and analysis.

Trust is also based on mutual respect, including specifically, respect for the confidentiality of coaching conversations. Powerful coaching brings to the surface deeply held beliefs, values and assumptions. Individual coachees will have their own comfort levels with disclosing information that is deeply personal but all need to hear that those confidences are safe with the coach.

## Rapport

# Rapport Rapport

The natural process of matching and being in alignment with another.

While trust develops over time, rapport can be established immediately. Coaches understand the importance of nonverbal communication and pay conscious attention to the elements of rapport. Their undivided attention and mirroring of body language help to establish a state of relaxed alertness in their colleague which maximizes the potential for thinking.

By matching a colleague's tone of voice, language patterns and even breathing, the coach reinforces the message that the focus of the conversation is the speaker and that the coach's role is to listen to understand.





## Step Two: Ensuring a Positive First Exchange

In entering a coaching relationship, it's important for colleagues to know each other as people as well as coach and coachee. Finding ways for new coachees to present themselves and to experience respect, appreciation and attentive listening from their coaching colleague is important.

Structuring that initial exchange might take several forms:

- an appreciative interview (see Appendix A for outline)
- a guided tour of the coachee's workplace
- a social meeting
- job shadowing by the coach

A highly recommended strategy is for the coach and coachee to view some or all of the **on-line coaching modules** developed by the board. These resources provide background information about coaching and highlight the experiences of board personnel who have been engaged in coaching-both as coaches and coachees. The modules also include actual examples of coaching conversations. Coach and coachee are invited to watch these demonstrations, gathering data which they can then share. After analyzing their observations, they may also view a debriefing of the conversation.

Note: Appendix B contains a user's guide to the two series of online modules. Series 1 is for all users. Series 2 is specifically designed for use by principals coaching vice-principals.



# COACHING RESOURCE MANUAL

## Step Three: Creating the Context for Coaching

It is important for the coachee to understand the varied ways in which an individual can be supported in further developing his or her competencies. The coach uses the framework of the **Four Support Functions** to differentiate among the various roles or stances that he or she might take during coaching conversations.

### Four Support Functions

Support Function	Purpose	Cues	Cautions
Coaching	To enhance an individuals' ability to self-coach and to become self-directed in learning, decision making and problem resolving.	-non-judgment -inquiring, paraphrasing, probing for specificity	Assumes resourcefulness/capacity. You cannot coach out of someone what is not in them.
Consulting	To share information, advice and resources to support effective practices.	-demonstrating -providing options -expressing opinions	If overused, can build dependency. May not support coachee's ability to transfer learning to new contexts.
Collaborating	To co-develop information, ideas and approaches to problems. To model collegial relationships.	-planning together -mutual support -balanced exchange of ideas -shared stake in results	For collaboration to be authentic, there must be mutual responsibility for outcome. False collaboration is disguised consulting.
Evaluating	To judge performance according to established standards. To ensure accountability.	-judgments -encouragement -advice -direction/goal setting	Over time, value judgments or advice from others reduces the capacity for accurate self-assessment.

The coachee should understand from the outset that the coach will shift his or her stance in response to the coachee's needs. This flexibility ensures that their coaching conversations remain timely, relevant and helpful.

The coach discusses the purpose of each function, providing an example of what a conversation might look, sound and feel like given that desired outcome for the coachee. The on-line modules provide specific examples of coaches using the different stances in support of a colleague's learning.

The framework of the four support functions provides a structure for establishing expectations and for developing and monitoring an individualized Coaching Plan for the coachee.

In some circumstances, a coach may identify a need for help that lies outside the roles mandated for coaches within the framework of the four support functions. Specifically, coaches are careful not to cross over into the domain of counseling and psychotherapy.

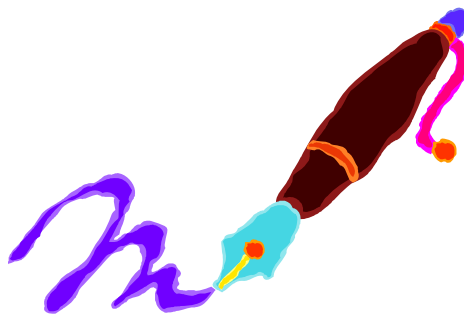


# COACHING RESOURCE MANUAL

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## Step Four: Developing the Coaching Plan

Coaching is enhanced when it is focused on the development of competencies which have been identified as part of the coachee's planning.



Coachees will typically have done some initial self-assessment using resources like the:

- Leadership Competencies for School Leaders
- Self-Assessment and Reflection Tool
- Manager Competencies
- Leadership Plan
- Performance Appraisal processes
- Annual Learning Plan

*“A professional learning plan describes what will be observed, participated in, and led with each activity selected based on competencies needed.”*  
*“Make Mentoring Matter”, April, 2007*

A key role for the coach is to assist the coachee in developing, implementing, monitoring, assessing and refining his or her planning. Therefore, one of their initial coaching sessions will centre on a planning conversation which includes:

1. Goals
2. Success Indicators
3. Strategies / Approaches
4. Learning Focus

The conversation might also include the identification of relevant data which the coachee would find informative and some consideration of how that data might be gathered and analyzed. The coach and coachee will now have a context for what might be called a “contracting conversation” in which they negotiate the parameters for their work together. They make specific commitments to ensure clarity around expectations for both parties.

Appendix C includes a form for creating a coaching plan.

Consideration should be given to the logistics of arranging coaching sessions including their:

- frequency
- duration
- location
- format(s)

Both coach and coachee may initially benefit from meeting frequently. Moreover, given the importance of establishing trust and rapport, early sessions should be one-on-one and face-to-face. Other formats such as telephone calls and e-mails or group coaching may be added to the mix if they align with the established goals of the coaching plan.



# COACHING RESOURCE MANUAL

## Step 5 Implementing and Monitoring the Coaching Plan

The coach and coachee will meet regularly as planned. Their coaching sessions will include opportunities for planning, reflection and problem-resolving conversations. The coach will explicitly invite the coachee to make connections between his or her daily work and the development of new skills or new learning. Revisions may also be made to that initial plan as new needs or priorities arise.

The coach and coachee will also reflect upon their relationship and re-negotiate their agreement if necessary. It may be helpful for the coach and/or coachee to keep a log of the coaching sessions with such information as:

- Type of conversation (planning, reflecting, problem-resolving)
- Stance used (consulting, collaborating, coaching)
- Coach /Coachee's reflections on the session

These logs may provide useful data for analyzing patterns and trends in the coaching sessions and for planning future sessions. Appendix D suggests a possible format for the coaching log.

It is also recommended that coaches have access to a colleague who serves as a meta-coach. Meta-coaching conversations include opportunities for reflecting on the coaching process, goal setting for coaches and support for addressing issues or concerns which might emerge during the coaching sessions. Coaches should also have opportunities to collaborate with one another for shared practice and on-going skills development. See Appendix E for the Coaching Skills Checklist—this can be used to peer and self-assess in meta-coaching conversations.

## EXIT STRATEGY

On rare occasions, coach and/or coachee may determine that renegotiating their coaching agreement is not their best option. Rematching the coachee with a new coach may better serve his or her needs. Part of the coach's integrity is to facilitate this process, encouraging the coachee to contact the Board's Coaching Lead who will facilitate his or her selection of a new coach from the board-approved list.



## THE COACHES

People who choose or who are selected to coach typically have well-developed communication skills. For example, others seek their support because they have a reputation as good listeners. Their ability to establish rapport helps others to feel comfortable in their presence. Using Daniel Goleman's terms, we might characterize them as emotionally and socially intelligent.

The training provided for coaches is designed to enhance those communication skills with the express purpose of mediating a coachee's thinking. Coaches practice specific skills such as using pauses, advanced paraphrases and mediational questions to elicit shifts in the coachee's thinking. Coaches also learn to structure conversations to help maintain focus and clarity while clearly leaving the coachee in the driver's seat. They are also sensitive to the need to differentiate their coaching style to match the preferences of their coachee.

Coaching training also focuses on "unlearning" certain patterns of listening and responding which are not congruent with the purposes of coaching. Specifically, coaches learn to avoid "solution-focused" listening since their intention when coaching is to elicit strategies and approaches from the coachee. Coaches also learn to monitor their own questions to ensure that they add value to the coachee rather than satisfying the coach's need for information. Thus coaches have the capability of monitoring their own behaviours to ensure that these align with their intentions or stance in relation to the coachee.

The Coaching Skills Checklist in Appendix E lists some of the specific skills which are modeled, practiced and observed during both initial and follow-up training for coaches.

*A mediator of thinking is one who shines a spotlight of awareness upon data in the environment and interacts to support self-directed learning.*

## WHAT TRAINING AND SUPPORT DO COACHES HAVE?

- Participation in foundational training in coaching
- On-going coaching clinics which provide for additional training, coaching practice and sharing
- Access to on-line modules developed to support coaches and coachees
- Access to resources on coaching (articles, DVDs, books, etc.)

## RESOURCES/RESEARCH

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### RESOURCES

*Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change.* Sara L. Orem, Jacqueline Binkert and Ann L. Clancy. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2007.

*Cognitive Coaching<sup>sm</sup>: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools.* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Arthur L. Costa and Robert J. Garmston. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2002.

*Cognitive Coaching<sup>sm</sup>: Weaving Threads of Learning and Change into the Culture of an Organization.* Jane Ellison and Carolee Hayes. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2003.

*Culturally Proficient Coaching: Supporting Educators to Create Equitable Schools.* Delores B. Lindsey, Richard S. Martinez and Randall B. Lindsey. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2006.

*Effective School Leadership: Developing Principals through Cognitive Coaching<sup>sm</sup>.* Jane Ellison and Carolee Hayes. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2006.

*How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work.* Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.

“Make Mentoring Matter” by Cheryl Gray and Susan Walker in *The Learning Principal*. Vol. 2, No.7. April 2007. National Staff Development Council.

*Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.* Carol S. Dweck. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006.

*The Six Secrets of Change.* Michael Fullan. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008.

*The Thin Book of Trust: An Essential Primer for Building Trust at Work.* Charles Feltman. Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing, 2009.

*Trust Matters: Leadership for Effective Schools.* Megan Tschannen-Moran. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.

### RESEARCH

*Building trusting relationships for school improvement: Implications for principals and teachers.* By Request series. Cori Brewster and Jennifer Railsback. Northwest Regional Education Laboratory. September, 2003.

Available at:

[www.nwrel.org/request](http://www.nwrel.org/request)

*Learning to change: school coaching for systemic reform.* Carol J. Brown, Heather R. Stroh, Jeffrey T. Fouts and Duane B. Baher. Prepared for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation by Fouts and Associates, L.L.C. February, 2005.

Report available at: <http://www.spu.edu/orgs/research/Learning%20to%20Change%204-5-05.pdf>



### AN APPRECIATIVE INTERVIEW

The following questions are adapted from *Appreciative Coaching: A Positive Process for Change*. They can be used to structure an initial conversation between coach and coachee.

Additional benefit may be gained by both partners using these same questions to interview one another to identify some common beliefs, values or assumptions they bring to their new coaching relationship.

1. As you think about a supportive relationship that you have had with a colleague, what worked well for you? What is it from that experience that you would like to see reflected in our coaching work together?
2. Without being humble, what it is that you value most about yourself and your work?
3. What might be some of the things you are hoping to learn during the next six months to a year?
4. What might you need to get started?



## APPENDIX B

COACHING MODULES—SERIES I	
Topic	Module
Assumption of capacity in coachee	5
Coaching demonstration	8
Cognitive Coaching model	5
Collaborating	3
Consulting	3
Creating a coaching culture	1,2,4,8
Debriefing coaching conversation	8
Enhancing job performance	6
Evaluating	3
Four support functions	3
Goals of coaching	2,3
Maps for coaching	2,4,7,8
Metacoaching	4
Observing coaching conversation	8
Reflecting conversation	4,7
Professional learning	1,6
Self-coaching	2,6
Self-directedness	1
Set-asides for coach	7
Tools of coaching	6,7

<b>COACHING MODULES—SERIES 2</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Module</b>
Assumption of capacity in coachee	2
Coaching demonstration	5
Consulting	3
Creating a coaching culture	1,4
Data gathering	4
Debriefing coaching conversation	5
Further developing the organization	1
Leadership capacity building	1
Leadership competencies	2,3,4
Observing coaching conversation	5
Reciprocal coaching	4
Reflecting conversation	1,2
Professional learning	1,2
School effectiveness	1
Self-directedness	1
Set-asides for coach	3
Supporting new administrators	3
Tools of coaching	2,4
Trust	1,2

# APPENDIX C

## COACHING PLAN—WORKING TEMPLATE

Coachee: \_\_\_\_\_ Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coaching Focus:

	Goal(s)	Success Indicators	Strategies/ approaches	Learning focus
1				
2				
3				

**COACHING PLAN—SAMPLE**

Coachee: \_\_\_\_\_ Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coaching Focus: Engage in courageous conversations, providing and receiving feedback effectively.

	<b>Goal(s)</b>	<b>Success Indicators</b>	<b>Strategies/ approaches</b>	<b>Learning focus</b>
1	use coaching stance during performance review process with staff		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-conduct a planning conversation before observation on the job</li> <li>-conduct a reflecting conversation after observation on the job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-withholding evaluative comments</li> <li>-asking open-ended questions that invite analysis and self-assessment of performance</li> </ul>
2	address employee's behaviours or attitudes that impact performance in a timely and effective manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-clear understanding of the concern and its implications for self and others</li> <li>-commitment by both parties to implement, monitor and assess a plan to remediate problem</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. provide objective, descriptive feedback for the employee to analyze and interpret</li> <li>2. engage employee in identifying:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) options for future action</li> <li>b) specific criteria for monitoring progress</li> <li>c) timelines for review</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. identify sources of support (e.g. materials, training, coaching)</li> <li>4. follow up to ensure that agreed-upon changes in performance have been achieved.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-demonstrating a balance of honesty and care for employee during a problem-resolving conversation</li> </ul>
3	solicit and respond to feedback effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-demonstrated openness to feedback, both positive and negative</li> <li>-staff and colleagues trust that feedback will be respected and reviewed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-paraphrase feedback to check for understanding and to verify speaker's emotions</li> <li>-administer board surveys designed to gather data about employee satisfaction, trust, efficacy, etc.</li> <li>-reflect on feedback during conversations with coach</li> <li>- use Kegan and Lahey's mapping process to identify competing commitments that may impact effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-use feedback as data for reflection, analysis and goal-setting</li> <li>-avoid defensiveness or need to self-justify when receiving negative feedback</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX D

### COACHING LOG—WORKING TEMPLATE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Focus of coaching (based on coachee competencies and goals)</b>	<b>Type of conversation (planning, reflecting, problem-resolving)</b>	<b>Coach's Stance(s)</b>	<b>Reflections on session and next steps</b>

**COACHING LOG—SAMPLE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Focus of coaching (based on coachee competencies and goals)</b>	<b>Type of conversation (planning, reflecting, problem resolving)</b>	<b>Coach's Stance(s)</b>	<b>Reflections on session and next steps</b>
<b>Sept.15</b>	Drafting Coaching plan	Planning	Coaching	Coachee identified leadership capacity of engaging in courageous conversations as focus for coaching sessions
<b>Sept.30</b>	Planning for performance review of experienced employee	Planning	Consulting  Coaching	Reviewed performance appraisal steps and board resources.  Brainstormed success indicators for successful pre-and post-observation conferences.
<b>Oct.15</b>	Responding to a complaint	Problem-resolving	Coaching	Worked through emotional response to negative feedback.  Identified goal for follow-up conversation with colleague.
<b>Oct.30</b>	Responding to a complaint	Reflecting into planning	Coaching  Collaborating	Reviewed initial conversation with colleague to clarify feedback and identify underlying issue.  Planned next steps for follow-up conversation.  Reviewed chapter on factors contributing to trust in <b>Trust Matters</b> .

# APPENDIX E

## COACHING SKILLS CHECKLIST



Attends fully	
Establishes rapport	
Matches style preferences	
Listens without interrupting	
Sets-aside unproductive patterns of listening (e.g. solution-focused)	
Pauses before and after speaking	
Paraphrases emotion	
Paraphrases content	
Asks questions for specificity	
Inquires to broaden thinking	
Asks open-ended, invitational questions	
Aligns behaviours with chosen stance (i.e. consulting, collaborating, coaching)	
Speaks/responds non-judgmentally	
Mediates coachee's States of Mind	
Navigates coaching maps: planning, reflecting, problem-resolving, calibrating	
Supports self-direction in coachee	
Gathers/provides data for analysis	







## OUR COMMITMENT

To support the development of leadership capacity within our learning organization that cultivates excellence, innovation, creativity and commitment through quality professional learning that is:

- ✓ informed by research
- ✓ aligned with our Board Plan for Continuous Improvement
- ✓ culturally proficient
- ✓ engaging and promotes collaboration
- ✓ inspiring and forward thinking
- ✓ technologically integrated
- ✓ focused on building knowledge and skills
- ✓ responsive and connected to our changing local and global community

Location:  
Aurora/King  
Newmarket/East Gwillimbury  
Georgina  
Toronto/Markham/Richmond Hill

Switchboard:  
905-727-3141  
905-895-7216  
905-722-3201  
416-969-8131

Automated:  
905-727-0022  
905-895-7227  
905-722-6255  
416-9697170

Fax: 905-727-1931

Centre for Leadership and Learning  
300 Harry Walker Parkway South, Newmarket, ON L3Y 8E2