

Foundations of Reflective Leadership

Leading with curiosity, emotional awareness, and a commitment to growth

Reflective Leadership: Leading with curiosity, emotional awareness, and a commitment to growth

IT IS:

- Curious and compassionate
- Rooted in self-awareness
- Focused on relationships and growth
- Open to feedback
- Willing to pause and learn

IT IS NOT:

- Passive or permissive
- Emotionally reactive
- Focused on tasks and performance
- Defensive or dismissive
- Driven by urgency

Reflective Listening in Action



Presence



Curiosity



Reflection



Validation



Pause

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

You shouldn't let that bother you.
Just do your best.
At least it's almost Friday.
You need to...

REFLECTIVE RESPONSE:

it sounds like that really got to you.
It seems like you're not sure what your best is right now.
It sounds like this week has felt really heavy.
What do you think might help in this situation?

Feedforward

Feedback: Past-focused, evaluative, often corrective

Feedforward: Future-focused, collaborative, growth-oriented

FEEDBACK

You didn't handle that well.
You need to be more consistent.
You can't...

FEEDFORWARD

What do you think could make it better?
What would support you to be consistent?
What might help you...?.

Feedforward Rewrite

Rewrite the feedback using reflective, feedforward language.

Stay curious. Invite problem-solving. Share your best line with the group.

- A teacher consistently ignores children's cues during group time.
- A staff member rolls their eyes when asked to help in another classroom.
- A classroom aide often stands off to the side, disconnected from classroom activities.

Walk in My Shoes

Educator/Parent

Director (practices reflective response)

Observer (gives feedback on tone, pacing, presence)

Observer prompts:

Did they maintain a calm tone?

Did they reflect emotions?

Did they ask open-ended questions?

Did they validate experience?

Did they avoid fixing or defending?

Reflect, Reconsider, Recommit

Reflect: What's something you're already doing that matters?

Reconsider: What's something new you're still thinking about?

Recommit: What's one thing you'll try intentionally?