

CL 09

COACHING LAYER

Coaching an Embedded Practice in real work.



Problem-Solving &
Critical Thinking



PRACTICE: The Hypothesis First

Bring a hypothesis with every problem you surface, not just the problem.

THE HOOK

Surfacing a problem without a hypothesis is a report. Surfacing one with a hypothesis is a conversation. That's a completely different kind of contribution.

DEFAULT

BEHAVIOR SPECTRUM

EMBEDDED

01

SIGNAL

Are they catching it in time?

A problem, risk, or blocker is about to be surfaced. Note whether you're reading the message, hearing it live, or hearing about it secondhand.

You see their message drafted in a shared channel — no hypothesis yet, just the problem. A signal, not yet confirmed.

02

REDIRECT

Is the new or default action running?

Did they offer a hypothesis and a first step, or just report the problem and stop? Can't tell, ask. Can tell, reinforce it.

In your one-on-one, they mention guessing at the cause before asking you. You reinforce it: "Do that again."

03

SHIFT

Is this a pattern, or one good moment?

Hypotheses show up before you have to ask for one, not only when prompted. Check this holds across more than one problem.

Third blocker this month with a guess attached — not a one-off, a pattern.

04

EMBEDDED

Is it showing up unprompted?

No prompting needed. They surface a hypothesis by default, and problem conversations move straight to testing it.

A teammate says, "She always has a guess ready." You name it: "That's the habit — keep it."



REPEAT UNTIL EMBEDDED

BEFORE (Old Pattern)

- The Practitioner surfaces the problem and stops.
- The diagnostic work falls entirely to you.

AFTER (Embedded)

- The Practitioner surfaces a hypothesis and a first step.
- You engage with their thinking instead of starting from zero.

THE GOAL

Consistent evidence a hypothesis is offered with every problem — without a reminder.