

Professional Development Guide:

Module 5, Session 15

Growing in Professional Knowledge

and Practice



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Modules and Sessions Table

Module	Topic	Session	Minutes	Session Date
1	Domain A: Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture	Intro	60	
		1	120	
		2	150	
		3	150	
2	Domain B: Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy	4	120	
		5	120	
		6	165	
3	Domain C: Collecting Data to Inform Professional Learning	7	150	
		8	140	
		9	170	
4	Domain D: Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Literacy Instruction	10	175	
		11	135	
		12	165	
		13	130	
5	Domain E: Growing Professionally	14	120	
		15	120	
6	Planning and Implementing Coaching	16	120	

Bridge to Practice Module Projects for Coaches

A Bridge to Practice project after each module will provide evidence that coaches are able to apply the knowledge and skills they developed in this course in their schools. Coaches will:

- **Module 1:** develop a principal-coach partnership agreement;
- **Module 2:** develop a needs assessment for professional development on evidence-based instructional practices and complete an **ADDIE model** for planning this professional development;
- **Module 3:** develop and describe planned implementation of a professional learning action plan;
- **Module 4:** create a video that reflects coaching to help teachers plan, implement, and analyze standards-based literacy instruction;
- **Module 5:** complete a reflection on the course, including plans for continued professional growth;
- **Module 6:** choose one teacher with whom you have seen significant growth as a result of coaching support and complete a reflection on what worked, why it worked, and which areas of growth were most evident.

A rubric is provided at the end of each module for the corresponding Bridge to Practice project.

Fundamentals of Literacy Coaching

Professional Development Modules

Module 5, Session 15

Growing in Professional Knowledge and Practice



Module	Topic	Session	Minutes	Session Date
		Intro	60	
1	Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture	1	120	
		2	150	
		3	150	
		4	120	
2	Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy	5	120	
		6	165	
3	Collecting Data to Inform Professional Learning	7	150	
		8	140	
		9	170	
		10	175	
4	Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Literacy Instruction	11	135	
		12	165	
		13	130	
5	Growing Professionally	14	120	
		15	120	
6	Planning and Implementing Coaching	16	120	

Bridge to Practice Projects for Coaches

- An activity designed to serve as a Bridge to Practice after each Module will provide evidence that coaches are able to apply the knowledge and skills they developed in this course in their schools. Coaches will complete the following activities:

Module 1	Develop a principal-coach partnership agreement.
Module 2	Develop a needs assessment for professional development on evidence-based instructional practices and complete an ADDIE model for planning this professional development.
Module 3	Develop and describe planned implementation of a professional learning action plan.
Module 4	Create a video that reflects coaching to help teachers plan, implement, and analyze standards-based literacy instruction.
Module 5	Complete a reflection on the course, including plans for continued professional growth.
Module 6	Choose one teacher with whom you have seen significant growth as a result of coaching support and complete a reflection on what worked, why it worked, and which areas of growth were most evident.

- A rubric is provided at the end of each Module for the corresponding Bridge to Practice project.

Norms for Our Course

Cell phones
on silent



Pay attention to
self and others



Presume
positive intentions



Define and Discuss Session Goals and Content

Goals for Today

- Review Session 14 and debrief the self-study activities completed after the session.
- Engage in activities to demonstrate understanding of current trends in evidence-based instructional practices.
- Explore how to engage with organizations, develop partnerships, and access resources to help you continue to expand your knowledge and improve coaching practices.
- Take a post-course assessment to help evaluate the knowledge building in this course.

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Debrief

Review of Module 5, Session 14

- In your small groups discuss your responses to the questions on **Self-Study 1: Reflecting on the ADDIE Model**. Be prepared to share with the whole group.
- Discuss your responses to the questions on **Self-Study 3: Reflection** (on Session 14). Be ready to ask any questions related to Session 14.
- We will review **Self-Study 2: Elementary Literacy Coach Self-Efficacy Survey** later in this session.

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Literacy Coach Domain and Standards: Session 15

E. Ability to grow professionally. Coaches will be able to:

2. Demonstrate understanding of current trends in evidence-based instructional practices.
3. Determine and utilize appropriate collaborative partnerships with professional learning groups to expand knowledge and improve coaching practices.

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Learn and Confirm

Recap of Prior Sessions

- Module 1 (Domain A) – Applying Principles and Practices that Foster a Positive Culture
- Module 2 (Domain B) – Applying Effective Pedagogy and Andragogy
- Module 3 (Domain C) – Collecting Data on instructional Practices to Inform Professional Learning
- Module 4 (Domain D) – Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Standards-Based Literacy Instruction

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Handout 1: Literacy Coach Program Domains and Standards

Definition of a Literacy Coach

A literacy coach is an instructional leader with specialized knowledge in the science of reading, evidence-based practices, English Language Arts state standards, as well as the knowledge of how to work with educators as adult learners. The coach provides collegial, job-embedded support to ensure literacy instruction is data-informed and student-centered. Coaches accomplish this by collaborating with leaders and teachers, engaging in practices such as co-teaching, co-planning, modeling, reflective conversations and data chats with teachers to build teacher and school capacity to improve student achievement for all.

Domains and Standards: Literacy Coaching

- A. Knowledge of and ability to apply principles and practices that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture. Coaches will be able to:
 - 1. Identify and apply systems that foster an inclusive and collaborative culture (e.g., trust, confidentiality).
 - 2. Identify and apply strategies that build effective teams
 - 3. Identify the strengths and needs of colleagues to engage in effective collaboration.
 - 4. Identify and apply appropriate practices to communicate across lines of difference (e.g., critical reflection, negotiate and clarify meaning, constructively challenge each other's thinking).
 - 5. Determine and use appropriate strategies for facilitating dialogue that ensures equitable participation in small and large group settings (e.g., protocols that ensure all participants contribute to discussion and reflection).
 - 6. Determine and apply strategies that promote collective responsibility for student and professional learning (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, collaborative planning, lesson study).
 - 7. Establish a coach/teacher partnership agreement.
 - 8. Establish a principal/coach partnership agreement.
- B. Knowledge of and ability to apply effective pedagogy and andragogy. Coaches will be able to:
 - 1. Identify and apply foundational principles of how students learn.
 - 2. Identify and apply foundational principles of adult learning theory.
 - 3. Select and apply appropriate methods (e.g., co-planning, collaborative teaching, modeling, etc.) to support effective teacher practice and growth in a variety of settings, including elementary self-contained and departmentalized classrooms, secondary classrooms, content area classrooms, prioritizing English Language Arts and reading.
 - 4. Identify and apply scaffolding strategies that address the strengths and needs of individual teachers (e.g., differentiation of coaching support based on strengths and areas of growth).
 - 5. Identify and apply appropriate strategies and resources for planning, facilitating and evaluating professional learning (e.g. use of the Florida's Professional Learning Standards) aligned with school and district goals.
 - 6. Identify and apply scaffolding strategies that address the strengths and needs of individual students and small groups (e.g., differentiation of instruction for individual students and small groups based on strengths and areas of growth).

- C. Ability to effectively collect and use data on instructional practices to inform and implement professional learning opportunities. Coaches will be able to:
1. Determine appropriate area of focus based on observational data aligned to goals (e.g. school goals, coaching goals, learning goals, teacher goals).
 2. Identify and apply appropriate student progress monitoring instruments and assist with data analysis after students are assessed.
 3. Evaluate data in addressing specific goals.
 4. Identify and apply appropriate data collection methods that assist colleagues in developing action plans.
 5. Identify and apply appropriate data collection methods that measure the effectiveness of professional learning.
 6. Observe classroom instruction and active student engagement to collect data that informs the analysis of teaching and learning.
 7. Analyze and interpret data to identify trends and patterns.
 8. Collaborate with administration, instructional leaders and teachers to develop a professional learning action plan that is informed by data analysis.
 9. Facilitate the implementation of an action plan based on data analysis.
 10. Analyze and evaluate school, teacher and student outcomes to determine follow-up actions.
- D. Knowledge of and ability to apply effective methods for planning, implementing and analyzing standards-based literacy instruction based on the science of reading and evidence-based practices. Coaches will demonstrate their abilities in and understanding of:
1. Instructional design and planning strategies that support teachers in developing engaging, effective, standards-aligned lessons (e.g., stacking benchmarks, curriculum mapping, vertical progression of the standards).
 2. How to align instruction and intervention to a logical scope and sequence of reading skill development.
 3. The application of standards-aligned systematic instruction and intervention for language and literacy development.
 4. The stages of language and literacy development for all students.
 5. The strategic use of evidence-based instructional practices grounded in the science of reading.
 6. Literacy learning processes and language development of English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities in collaboration with English for Speakers of Other Languages and Exceptional Student Education departments.
 7. Multi-Tiered System of Support and evidence-based practices, programs and interventions.
 8. How to use student data to make instructional decisions.
 9. The role of student motivation and active engagement in developing literacy.
 10. How to analyze the effectiveness of lessons, instructional materials and assessments using a variety of techniques (e.g., lesson plans, formative/summative assessments and student work samples).
 11. How to observe and analyze the implementation of instructional practices and determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning in order to provide instructional support.
 12. Developing a plan for effective coaching conversations informed by observations, data analysis and classroom artifacts.
- E. Ability to grow professionally. Coaches will be able to:
1. Analyze individual performance data to determine and engage in professional learning to broaden personal coaching and instructional knowledge.
 2. Seek and demonstrate understanding of current evidence-based instructional practices.
 3. Seek, determine and utilize appropriate collaborative partnerships with professional learning groups to expand knowledge and improve coaching practices.

 **Collaborate and Practice****Demonstrating Understanding of Current Trends in Evidence-Based Practice****Activity**

- Read **Handout 2: Scenarios to Practice Coaching**.
- In small groups, respond to your assigned scenario.
- Provide feedback to each group through a gallery walk.

Handout 2 on next page

Handout 2: Scenarios to Practice Coaching

Demonstrating Understanding of Current Trends in Evidence-Based Practice

Scenario #1

A kindergarten teacher has asked you to explain the difference between phonemic awareness and phonological awareness. Draft a response to help her understand the differences.

Scenario #2

A first-grade teacher has asked you to help her select appropriate phonemic awareness lessons for a group of struggling readers. Develop a set of guidelines you can share to help her plan appropriate phonemic awareness instruction.

Scenario #3

Your principal has asked you to write a brief for the monthly staff newsletter to clarify systematic and explicit phonics instruction. List the key points you plan to include in the brief.

Scenario #4

Several first-, second-, and third-grade teachers have asked you to demonstrate fluency-building lessons. Which practice would you demonstrate? Describe your rationale for selecting this fluency-building practice.

Scenario #5

Across grade levels, teachers are determining vocabulary words they should teach directly from their reading programs and content area texts. Develop a set of guidelines to help teachers select appropriate words to teach directly to their students.

End of Handout 2

Learn and Confirm

The Importance of Professional Development for Coaches

“Professional development for instructional coaches: Coaches need to understand the interventions they are sharing, and they need to understand how to productively employ the coaching process. Without their own professional development, instructional coaches run the risk of being ineffective, wasting time and money or even misinforming teachers. Therefore, coaches need to participate in their own professional development to ensure they know how to coach and what to share when they coach classroom teachers.”

Jim Knight

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Professional Development for Coaches

- “First, coaches should engage in various professional learning activities designed to improve their coaching practices.”
- “Second, professional development for coaches should deepen their knowledge about the teaching practices they are sharing with teachers.”

Jim Knight

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Expanding Knowledge and Improving Coaching Practices Through Collaborative Partnerships with Professional Learning Groups

- Coaching cadres in the district
- Partnering with other coaches in neighboring districts/regions
- Partnering with other coaches virtually
- Collaborating with other coaches via social media groups
- Engaging with professional organizations
- Subscribing to YouTube channels, blogs, etc.

Jim Knight

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Collaborate and Practice

- International Literacy Association
- State Chapters of the International Literacy Association
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- State Chapters of the Association for the Education of Young Children
- National Council for Teachers of English
- International Dyslexia Association
- State Chapters of the International Dyslexia Association
- The Reading League
- State Chapters of the Reading League

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Professional Organizations Activity

Access **Handout 3: Professional Organizations - Notes** and answer the following questions:

- What resources does this organization provide that might expand your literacy content knowledge?
- What opportunities for professional development does this organization provide that might help you grow as a coach?

Handout 3 on next page

Handout 3: Professional Organizations – Notes

Name of Organization:	Name of Organization:
What resources does this organization provide that might expand your literacy content knowledge?	What resources does this organization provide that might expand your literacy content knowledge?
What opportunities for professional development does this group provide that might help you grow as a coach?	What opportunities for professional development does this group provide that might help you grow as a coach?

End of Handout 3

Exploring Other Resources

- YouTube Channels
 - Edutopia
- Blogs
 - Shanahan on Literacy
 - Instructional Coaching Group
- Websites
 - Edutopia
 - Read, Write, Think
 - What Works Clearinghouse
 - Florida Center for Reading Research

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Let's Reflect...

- Read through **Handout 4: Improving Teaching Practice with Instructional Coaching.**
- In your small groups, discuss the following questions:
 - How does this document support what we've done in this course?
 - How does the coaching you do in your school align with what effective coaches are doing?
 - What supports do you feel that you need to be successful?
 - Who in your district might benefit from seeing this document?

On your chart paper, develop your own “Do This, and “Not This” chart for coaching. Create at least three entries—one chart per group. Post this in the room when you are finished.

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Handout 4 on next page

Handout 4: Improving Teaching Practice with Instructional Coaching

Laura Neergaard Booker & Jennifer Lin Russell

DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR IMPROVING PRACTICE WITH INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING AT A GLANCE

Who are the best candidates to coach and to be coached?

COACHES



Coaches who are skilled in teaching and are able to build trusting relationships with the teachers they coach generate stronger improvements in teaching and learning.

TEACHERS



Teachers who are less experienced and teachers who are more open to being coached benefit most from coaching.

What do effective coaches do?

ACTIVITIES



Planning discussions, observation, and feedback are essential coaching activities.

FOCUS



Content-specific coaching in reading and math shows greater effects on teaching and learning than coaching focused on general teaching practices.

FREQUENCY & DURATION



Most studies of coaching include at least several coaching interactions during a school year, though coaching quality likely matters more than quantity.

DELIVERY MODE



Coaching can take place in-person or virtually. Video-recording lessons for coaches can facilitate scaling a coaching program.

What supports do coaches need to be successful?

TIME



Coaches often spend less time coaching than intended. Positioning them as district-level rather than school-level support can help reduce this problem.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT



Coaches perform best with strong support from their school and district leadership.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Coaches benefit from opportunities to connect with and learn from their peers, as well as other forms of professional development.

THE EVIDENCE BASE: THE CASE FOR INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

Evidence strongly suggests that a well-designed instructional coaching program improves teacher practice and student outcomes.

- Instructional coaches provide individualized, intensive, sustained, context-specific, and focused one-on-one or small-group support to teachers to improve their teaching.
- A 2018 [meta-analysis](#) of 60 causal studies found that the difference in effectiveness between teachers with instructional coaches and those without was equivalent to the difference between novice teachers and teachers with five to 10 years of experience.
- A randomized controlled trial showed that a [two-year coaching program](#) focused on building relationships between teachers and students and engaging students in learning eliminated differences in student discipline referrals by race.

Instructional coaching programs that incorporate the essential features of high-quality professional development are more likely to improve teacher practice.

- The core activities of instructional coaching are [well aligned to the research evidence](#) on the key features of effective professional development for improving teacher practice: content focus, active learning, coherence, sustained duration, and collective participation.

Novice teachers who receive instructional coaching are more likely to improve student outcomes and stay in the teaching profession.

- Alternative certification programs that train new teachers, like [Teach For America](#) and [TNTP Teaching Fellows](#), generally include coaching as part of their training model. The students of teachers prepared through these programs show greater achievement gains than students of teachers prepared in other ways.
- Nationally representative survey data found that the presence of a content- focused coach was associated with reduced turnover of novice teachers.
- [Randomized controlled trials](#) and studies using [observations, coaching logs, and interviews](#) show that the New Teacher Center induction model, which includes coaching, has helped teachers improve their practice.

WHO ARE THE BEST CANDIDATES TO COACH AND TO BE COACHED?

COACHES

Coaches who are skilled in teaching and can build trusting relationships with the teachers they coach generate stronger improvements in teaching and learning.

- Effective coaches are strong at teaching practices and building relationships.
- A review of [coaching literature followed by focus groups with teachers and coaches](#) reveals that coach credibility as instructional specialists is essential. Coaches build credibility through content and classroom experience, proficiency with technology, and strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- In a [study of the implementation of a classroom management strategy](#) with accompanying coaching, teachers who had positive relationships with their coaches implemented the intervention with higher fidelity.
- [School leader interviews](#) suggest that having the same person as both coach and evaluator can hinder trusting relationships and result in superficial and infrequent feedback.

TEACHERS

Teachers who are less experienced and teachers who are more open to being coached benefit most from coaching.

- [Survey data from an evaluation of coaching](#) in a mid-sized California district found that novice teachers reported the highest impact of instructional coaching on their efficacy. Teachers with 15 years of experience or more reported the lowest impact.
- A [review of coaching literature followed by focus groups with teachers and coaches](#) found that teachers benefit most from coaching when they are willing to engage in the process and are genuinely interested in improving student learning.
- Whole group professional development or peer evaluation, rather than one-on-one coaching, may be helpful for [teachers who are resistant to coaching](#).
- An [analysis of six years of data from a teacher training organization \(TNTP\)](#) found that matching a Black teacher to a Black coach is associated with more instructional improvement than matching a Black teacher to a non-Black coach. The authors found no impacts of race matching for White coaches working with White teachers. Teacher Center induction model, which includes coaching, has helped teachers improve their practice.

WHAT DO EFFECTIVE COACHES DO?

ACTIVITIES

Planning discussions, observation, and feedback are essential coaching activities.

- In a [2016 survey of instructional coaches](#), coaches reported that co-planning and observing teachers and providing feedback were the most effective uses of their time.
- A [math coaching](#) initiative that emphasized a routine of goal and task selection, pre-observation planning, observation, and post-observation feedback found improvements to both coaching and teaching.
- A [review of empirical studies](#) of teacher video coaching, where teachers discuss videos of their own practice with a coach, found that this type of coaching often resulted in improvements to teacher and student outcomes.
- A four-year-long case study of coaching in a large school district highlighted five coach planning activities for improving teacher practice: identify long-term goals for teachers' development, assess teachers' current practices, situate current practices on teacher development trajectories, identify next steps for instructional improvement, and design activities to support teacher learning.

FOCUS

Content-specific coaching in reading and math shows greater effects on teaching and learning than coaching focused on general teaching practices.

- The coaching [meta-analysis](#) found smaller average effects from general coaching than content-focused programs, though the difference is not significant because of the small number of studies of general programs.
- In a [randomized controlled trial of a three-year teacher coaching program](#), teachers who received literacy-focused coaching saw improved classroom text discussions and student reading achievement.

FREQUENCY & DURATION

Most studies of coaching include at least several coaching interactions during a school year, though coaching quality likely matters more than quantity.

- The coaching [meta-analysis](#) finds no evidence that more total hours of coaching were associated with stronger instruction or achievement outcomes. The authors interpret this to mean that when comparing across coaching models, quality of coaching sessions matters more than quantity. However, the authors speculate that for a program at a given level of quality, it is likely better to have more coaching sessions, not fewer.
- A [study of a math coaching model](#) found increases in teacher effectiveness based on a minimum of three cycles of planning, observation, and feedback over the school year.

DELIVERY MODE

Multiple studies have found no difference in impact between coaching delivered in-person or virtually.

- An RCT of online science coaching along with summer professional development showed significant gains in teacher knowledge, efficacy and teaching practices.

WHAT SUPPORTS DO COACHES NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL?

TIME

Coaches often spend less time coaching than intended. Positioning them as district-level rather than school-level support can help reduce this problem.

- In 2018, instructional coaches in Tennessee named insufficient time to work with teachers as the top barrier to coaching (66% of coaches).
- In a [2007 study of Reading First](#), a large-scale literacy coaching initiative, coaches were expected to spend 60% to 80% of their time working directly with teachers on issues of instruction. However, on average, instructional coaches spent only 28% of their time on these tasks because of administrative and logistical work such as attending meetings, administering assessments, or substitute teaching.
- [Surveys and interviews from district and school leaders and coaches](#) in a large urban district revealed that coaches accountable to district leaders spent more time working with teachers on instruction than school-based coaches, who devoted more time to administrative and teaching duties.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Coaches benefit from opportunities to connect with and learn from their peers and other forms of professional development.

- A [three-year randomized controlled trial](#) found that coaches positively influenced elementary student mathematics achievement, particularly after coaches had gained experience and skill through extensive professional development.
- A [four-year study of a literacy coaching program](#) that selected coaches from a pool of current classroom teachers and provided graduate-level training on reading pedagogy and adult learning found improvements in student learning.
- A [cross-case analysis](#) found that when district coaches worked together, they were able to align district policies and structures with coaching goals.
- A [mixed-methods investigation](#) of how a group of coaches implemented a mathematics coaching model across multiple districts found that opportunities to collaborate and access coaching expertise led to deeper and more specific conversations between coaches and teachers about instruction.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Coaches perform best with strong support from their school and district leadership.

- [Survey data](#) indicate that principal support for coaching positively predicted teachers' greater participation in coaching activities.

WHAT ARE KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DESIGNING AN EVIDENCE-BASED COACHING PROGRAM?

SCALE

Smaller coaching programs typically have stronger implementation and larger impacts than larger coaching programs. Scaling up coaching programs may introduce more variation and reduce adherence to program design.

- The 2018 [coaching meta-analysis](#) found greater impacts from studies that included fewer than 100 teachers compared to studies of larger programs.

COHERENCE

Coaching initiatives are more effective when they are intentionally integrated into teachers' instructional contexts; for example, aligned with curricula and student learning expectations.

- The 2018 [coaching meta-analysis](#) found that pairing individual coaching with group training and curricular and instructional resources was associated with larger effects on instruction and achievement than coaching alone. The authors say this suggests that teachers may benefit from building baseline skills before or while engaging with a coach.
- A [longitudinal case study of an urban elementary school](#) found that coaches support instructional reform by helping teachers connect new initiatives with their day-to-day teaching strategies.

COST

Instructional coaching generates substantial improvements in student achievement at a lower cost per student than student-level interventions such as high-dosage tutoring or summer learning programs.

- The impact of teacher coaching on student achievement is roughly half a year to a year of learning. Compared to student-level academic interventions, coaching has about half the impact of high-dosage tutoring but double the impact of summer learning programs.

- Coaching can achieve those gains at a lower cost. A 2010 study found that the average cost of coaching per teacher ranged from \$3,200 to \$5,200 in the 2009- 10 school year. Roughly speaking, if coaching costs \$5,000 per teacher and if each coached teacher has 20 students, coaching would cost \$250 per student. By comparison, the National Summer Learning Project’s five-week summer learning program with classes of 15 or fewer students costs about **\$1,400 per student**. Per-student costs for high-dosage tutoring range from **\$650 to \$1,500 per student**, depending on tutor type.
- Coaching programs become **more cost-effective over time** as start-up costs of hiring and training coaches are averaged over multiple years.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Improvement cycles help ensure that coaches are employing high-leverage practices and can reduce implementation roadblocks.


- A **time allocation study** found great variability in how coaches spend their time, even within the same coaching program. Continuous data collection and study can confirm whether coaches are engaging in the most effective coaching practices.
- A **continuous improvement study** engaged coaches in cycles that enabled them to test and study changes to their coaching practice, which helped them overcome challenges such as time allocation and teacher resistance.
- Evaluation and progress-monitoring work can take advantage of existing surveys, logs, and observation tools, including ones from programs in **New York City**, **California**, and **Tennessee**.

DO THIS	NOT THIS
Create coach hiring processes that consider both teaching and coaching abilities by allowing coaches to demonstrate, model, or reflect on how they work collaboratively with teachers to improve teaching.	Hire experienced and expert teachers without considering their ability to coach other teachers.
Protect coaches' time to work with teachers on instruction by creating clear expectations and accountability mechanisms.	Make coaches the default substitute teacher, interventionists, or administrative workers.
Structure coaching to allow coaches to build relationships with their teachers, for example, through limited coach-teacher ratios and strategic assignment of teachers to coaches based on experience and expertise.	Overload coaches with large numbers of teachers to coach or make coaches solely responsible for formal evaluations tied to consequences for teachers.
Determine and broadly communicate the essential elements of the coach program design.	Scale coaching programs without thoughtful consideration and plans to address implementation barriers.
Build coach programs into a broader system of instructional support including curriculum, standards, assessment practices, and other professional development to help teachers improve their instruction.	Rely on coaching as the sole strategy to promote high quality instruction.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

This brief is one in a series aimed at providing K-12 education decision-makers and advocates with an evidence base to ground discussions about how to best serve students during and following the novel coronavirus pandemic.

End of Handout 4

 **Reflect, Plan, and Implement****Post-Session Reflection, Planning, and Implementation**

- READ** **Handout 5: Instructional Coaching** by Jim Knight.
- DO** Complete **Self-Study 1: Reflecting on the Instructional Coaching Article** by Jim Knight.
- WATCH** **A video of your choice on coaching** and complete **Self-Study 2: Reflection on Video**.

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Bridge to Practice Project for Module 5

Write a reflection on what you have learned in the course and include your plan for continued professional growth. **Handout 6** is the Rubric for this project.

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Questions?



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**We have completed
Session 15**

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Handout 5 on next page

Handout 5: Instructional Coaching

Jim Knight

Eight factors for realizing better classroom teaching through support, feedback and intensive, individualized professional learning by Jim Knight

The number of school districts using instructional coaches is growing at a staggering rate. Coaching is becoming popular, in part, because many educational leaders recognize the old form of professional development, built around traditional in-service sessions for teachers, simply doesn't affect student achievement. By offering support, feedback, and intensive, individualized professional learning, coaching promises to be a better way to improve instruction in schools. Indeed, preliminary research suggests that effective coaching programs make a difference. For the past decade, researchers at the Kansas University Center for Research on Learning have been implementing, refining and evaluating instructional coaching programs. In the past year alone, our staff has provided professional development and consultation to programs in 14 states across the country. We've learned a few lessons while developing, studying and observing effective coaching programs. We believe superintendents and other educational leaders who consider these success factors will be better able to use valuable resources to realize the promise of instructional coaching.

No Quick Fix

Facing intense pressure to improve student achievement, it is tempting to try anything that promises a quick solution. However, the trouble with quick fixes is they often make things worse in the long run.

One common fix is what we refer to as the "attempt, attack, abandon cycle." During this vicious pattern, a new practice or program is introduced into a school and teachers make a half-hearted attempt to implement it. Then, before it has been implemented effectively and for a sufficient length of time, various individuals in the school or district begin to attack the practice or program and, not surprisingly, many of the teachers implementing it begin to lose their will to stick with the program. Eventually, even though it never had a chance to be implemented properly, leaders in the district reject the program as unsuccessful and abandon it, only to propose another approach that is soon pulled into the same vicious cycle. In this manner, schools stay on an unmerry-go-round of attempt, attack, abandon, without ever seeing any meaningful, sustained change in instruction taking place.

Instructional coaching represents one way to end this vicious cycle by providing sufficient support for real change to occur. Coaching is a non-evaluative, learning relationship between a professional developer and a teacher, both of whom share the expressed goal of learning together, thereby improving instruction and student achievement.

Coaching requires a trusting relationship and sufficient time to provide the individualized professional learning that is most relevant to a teacher's needs. Coaches often employ collaborative conversations (sometimes referred to as conferences), model lessons, observations, and mutual problem solving to assist teachers in implementing and mastering new teaching practices.

Coaching can take many forms. We have found eight factors that can increase the likelihood that coaching will be a real fix for a school:

1. Sufficient time to work with teachers. To move a school forward, coaches must spend the bulk of their time working with teachers on instruction. This seems obvious, but the most frequent concern raised by the more than 300 instructional coaches we worked with in 2005 was that they are asked to complete so many noninstructional tasks they had little time left to work with teachers. Because coaches' job descriptions are often vague or nonexistent and because their schedules are more flexible than the schedules of others, they often are asked to do many clerical or non-instructional tasks. Paying coaches to copy and bind standards documents or shop for math lab furniture or serve as a substitute teacher is a poor way to spend money and perhaps an even poorer way to improve teaching practices in schools.

Some instructional coaches and principals in the 16,500-student Cecil County, Md., Public Schools have found a way to ensure their instructional coaches use their time productively. In Cecil County, where there is an instructional coach in each of the 17 elementary schools, the coaches and administrators draw up a pie chart that depicts exactly how much time they agree the coaches should spend on various tasks. Then, each week the coaches report to their principals how the time was spent. If necessary, this allows the coach and principal to adjust the time allocations so they can focus their efforts on improving instruction.

2. Proven research-based interventions. If instructional coaches are going to make a difference in the way teachers teach, they need to have scientifically proven practices to share. Hiring coaches but not ensuring they have proven practices is a bit like trying to paint a beautiful painting without any art supplies. Instructional coaches need to have a repertoire of tools to help them assist teachers in addressing their most pressing concerns.

Instructional coaches working with the Center for Research on Learning use interventions that address what we refer to as the “Big Four” areas of behavior, content knowledge, instruction and formative assessment. The coaches develop a deep understanding of scientifically proven practices they can share with teachers to help them improve in any or all of the four areas.

If an instructional coach and teacher agree to address content knowledge, the coach collaborates with teachers to develop critical questions, course and unit content maps and concept diagrams using scientifically proven “content enhancement routines” developed by Keith Lenz, Jan Bulgren and other researchers at the Kansas University Center for Research on Learning.

Similarly, if an instructional coach and teacher need to work on classroom management tactics, the coach can use the classroom expectations planning sheets from Randy Sprick’s “CHAMPs: A proactive and positive approach to Classroom Management” as a tool for collaboratively developing a classroom management plan with the teacher.

Among the tools in CHAMPs is a framework coaches can use to identify and explain what they expect from students in five important areas of behavior, encapsulated in the CHAMPs acronym. The areas of behavior are: (a) Conversation — What kind of conversation is acceptable? (b) Help — How should students ask for help? (c) Activity — What should the student be doing? (d) Movement — What kind of movement, if any, is permitted? and (e) Participation — What does appropriate participation look like?

3. Professional development for instructional coaches. Coaches need to understand the interventions they are sharing, and they need to understand how to productively employ the coaching process. Without their own professional development, instructional coaches run the risk of being ineffective, wasting time and money or even misinforming teachers. Therefore, coaches need to participate in their own professional development to ensure they know how to coach and what to share when they coach classroom teachers.

Professional development for coaches should address at least two subjects.

First, coaches should engage in various professional learning activities designed to improve their coaching practices. Specifically, instructional coaches affiliated with our center learn how to employ powerful, proven practices to (a) enroll teachers in coaching; (b) identify appropriate interventions for teachers to learn; (c) model and gather data in the classroom; and (d) engage in dialogue about classroom and other data. Additionally, the center's instructional coaches improve their professional skills in areas such as communication, relationship building, change management and leadership.

Second, professional development for coaches should deepen their knowledge about the teaching practices they are sharing with teachers. Obviously, if coaches have a superficial knowledge of the information they share with teachers, they will not know what to emphasize when they discuss, model or observe during professional learning with teachers. Indeed, coaches who do not deeply understand what they are sharing with teachers could misinform teachers and actually make things worse, not better, for students.

The Passport to Success statewide coaching program sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education emphasizes professional learning for coaches. Prior to starting their new role, the coaches receive two weeks of intensive professional development focusing on the theory, practice, teaching strategies and routines they will share with the teachers. Then, the Passport coaches participate in a week-long summer institute where they deepen their knowledge of the teaching practices they will share with teachers.

During the school year, the instructional coaches meet monthly with other coaches in a coaching professional learning community, and they also participate in formal professional learning sessions twice a semester. Additionally, Passport coaches read research articles and complete many learning tasks that enable them ultimately to become certified professional developers for the content enhancement routines and learning strategies they share with teachers.

4. Protecting the coaching relationship. Many, perhaps most, teachers see their profession as an integral part of their self-identity. Consequently, if coaches and others are careless with their comments or suggestions about teachers' practices in the classroom, they run the risk of offending teachers, damaging relationships, or at the very least not being heard. Because teaching is such a personal activity, coaches need to win teachers' trust. Trust is an essential component of an open coaching relationship.

Coaches who learn our center's approach to instructional coaching define their relationship with teachers as a partnership. This partnership approach is based on the assumptions that (a) coaches and teachers are equal partners, (b) teachers should have a choice about what and how they learn, (c) teachers should reflect and apply learning to their real-life practice as they are learning, (d) professional development should enable authentic dialogue and (e)

coaches should respect and enable the voices of teachers.

Sue Woodruff, a leader of professional developers from Grand Rapids, Mich., considers the partnership principles to be a central part of her professional practice. “The principles really help me think through what should happen when I work with teachers,” she says. “On those occasions when I don’t feel I’ve been successful, I go back to the principles and I usually discover that I failed because I violated one of the principles.”

To make it easier for coaches to work as partners with teachers, educational leaders must protect the coaching relationship. If leaders ask coaches to hold the dual role of administrator and coach, they put their coaches in a difficult situation. Administrators, by definition, are not peers. Usually people are more guarded when they talk with their bosses than when they talk with their peers. Coaches will find it easier to have open conversations about teaching practices if their collaborating teachers do not view them as bosses and, therefore, do not have to worry about how their comments might affect the way they will be evaluated.

5. Ensuring principals and coaches work together. The instructional coach can be and should be the right-hand person of the principal when it comes to instructional leadership in schools, but the principal must remain the instructional leader. No matter how much a coach knows, and no matter how effective a coach is, the principal’s voice is ultimately the one most important to teachers. For that reason, coaches must understand fully what their principals’ vision is for school improvement, and principals need to understand fully the interventions that their coaches have to offer teachers.

One way to ensure principals get the most out of their instructional coaches is to provide them with sufficient training. Principals who do not understand the importance of protecting the coaching relationship may act in ways that make it difficult for a coach to be successful. Also, a principal who is unaware of the tools that an instructional coach can offer will be unable to suggest them to teachers who might benefit from learning them.

District administrators in Pflugerville, Texas, a district with three high schools, four middle and 15 elementary schools, address this issue by providing coaching professional development for administrators. In Pflugerville, middle and elementary principals, along with the directors of special education, language arts, mathematics and technology, attended sessions with their lead teachers and coaches to ensure that both administrators and coaches developed a shared understanding of each coach’s goals, responsibilities and methods.

Another way to ensure principals are on the same page as their coaches has been adopted by principals working with instructional coaches from the center’s Pathways to Success GEARUP project in Topeka, Kan. In Topeka, coaches and principals from six middle schools and three high schools meet one-on-one each week for approximately 45 minutes.

The meetings usually follow the same format. First, the coach asks the principal to discuss her or his most pressing concerns; the issues discussed are usually a blend of long- and short-term issues that most interest the principal. Second, the coach and principal solve problems together. Third, the coach reports on what she or he has done since the previous week’s meeting. Fourth, the coach and principal discuss teaching practices they would like to share with each other. In this way, the coach and principal fully understand all the tools they have at their command to help students.

6. Hiring the right instructional coaches. All the factors described here will not yield success if the wrong people are hired as coaches. Indeed, the most critical factor related to the success or failure of a coaching program may be the skills and attributes of the instructional coach.

First, instructional coaches must be excellent teachers, particularly because they will likely provide model lessons in other teachers' classrooms. They also need to be flexible since their job requires them to change their plans almost daily to meet the changing needs of teachers.

In addition, coaches should be highly skilled at building relationships. In our experience, whether a teacher adopts a new teaching practice has as much to do with the instructional coach's communication skills as with whatever intervention the coach has to share. Simply put, if teachers like a coach, they usually will try out what the coach suggests. If they don't like the coach, they'll even resist helpful teaching practices.

Jim Collins' study of great organizations in *Good to Great* offers additional insight into the desirable attributes of an effective coach. Great leaders, Collins writes, "are ambitious first and foremost for the cause, the movement, the mission, the work — not themselves — and they have the will to do whatever it takes to ... make good on that ambition."

The attributes Collins identifies in great leaders are also found in the best instructional coaches. They need to be ambitious for change in their schools and willing to do, as Collins emphasizes, "whatever it takes" to improve teaching practices. If a coach is too passive about change, chances are that little will happen in the school. At the same time, if a coach is too self-centered or aggressive, there is a good chance the coach will push teachers away.

Effective coaches embody what Collins describes as a "compelling combination of personal humility and professional will." They are affirmative, humble and deeply respectful of classroom teachers, but they are unwilling to rest unless they achieve significant improvements in teaching and learning in their schools.

7. Evaluating Coaches. Evaluation is a major mechanism for continuous improvement of any coaching program. Evaluating instructional coaches can offer unique challenges because no one in a district, including the principal, may ever have been a coach before and there may be no guidelines for evaluating coaches.

One way to address this challenge is to involve coaches in the process of creating guidelines, standards and tools to be used for their evaluation. Instructional coaches and the leaders of the Pathways to Success project in Topeka, Kan., have done just this. Specifically, project leaders and coaches have collaborated to spell out in detail the knowledge coaches need to have about the various scientifically proven teaching practices they are sharing with teachers. Additionally, project leaders and instructional coaches together have described the skills necessary to build relationships and effectively execute the components of the coaching process.

Involving coaches in the process of writing their evaluation guidelines accomplishes at least three goals. First, it enables school districts to develop a rubric for evaluating coaches that is especially designed for coaches. Second, it increases coaches' buy-in to the guidelines and process of being evaluated since they created them. Third, the dialogue coaches have while creating the guidelines is an excellent form of professional development.

8. Coaching Fixes. School district leaders can increase the likelihood that their instructional coaching program will succeed if they ensure their coaches have sufficient time to work on instruction with teachers and their coaches know how to coach and what to share with teachers. Additionally, leaders can make it easier for coaches to succeed by protecting the coaching relationship and by preparing coaches and principals to work together effectively. Finally, the effectiveness and continual improvement of any coaching program hinges on hiring the right people and evaluating them professionally.

Instructional coaching holds much potential for improving the way teachers teach and the way students learn, but that potential will only be realized if leaders plan their coaching program with care. Coaching is not a quick fix, but it can be a real fix — a powerful way to help teachers and students be more successful. When planned carefully and when the success factors are addressed, instructional coaching can begin to deliver on the promise of making a real difference in schools.

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End of Handout 5

Self-Study 1: Reflecting on the Instructional Coaching Article by Jim Knight

1. Write a short summary of this article.

2. Which of the eight factors that Knight describes as increasing the likelihood that coaching can be a “real fix” for a school do you think needs to be more fully addressed in your coaching context? How can you more fully address it?

End of Self-Study 1

Self-Study 2: Reflection on Video

What was the title of the video you watched?

What is the link to the video?

Summarize the content of the video.

How will the video you viewed help you in your role as a coach?

End of Self-Study 2

Handout 6: Reflection PD Plan Rubric

Component	Met	Not Met
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response includes: • Reference to the content in each of the five modules • Reference to how engagement in the modules was relevant to the role as a coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response does not include or is missing: • References to content in one or more of the five modules • References to how engagement in the modules was relevant to the role as a coach
Plan for Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response includes: • Specific steps the coach will take to ensure professional growth is ongoing • References to resources and organizations the coach intends to access • A timeline for engaging in professional growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response does not include or is missing: • Reference to specific steps the coach will take to ensure professional growth is ongoing • References to resources and organizations the coach intends to access • A timeline for engaging in professional growth
Communication of Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response includes: • Ideas that are well-organized and clearly communicated • Information that addresses the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response does not include or is missing: • Ideas that are well-organized and clearly communicated • Information that addresses the task

End of Handout 6