Three Reasons to Replace Department Chairs With Instructional Coaches

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Learning Objectives

• Know why coaching builds a culture of growth, encourages difficult conversations, and motivates staff

• Understand a model for faculty coaching and the ties to faculty evaluation

• Explore ways to bring coaching to your school
Pair & Share: Define - Coaching & Evaluation
• Coaching: “Unlocking a person’s potential to maximize their own performance.” - Sir John Whitemore

• Evaluation: “A good system of teacher evaluation must answer four questions: How good is good enough? Good enough at what? How do we know? and Who should decide?” - Charlotte Danielson
2150+ Student Semester Enrollments

650+ Schools Engaged in Student & Educator Programs

1000+ Educators In Professional Development Programs
One Schoolhouse

- Founded in 2009
- Progressive educators
- Had to overcome quality perceptions of online education
- Train teachers from 40+ schools annually
- Grown quickly: 17.8% annually for last six years
Robust Faculty Evaluation System
• Faculty Evaluations 4x/year
• Student Evaluations of Courses 5x/year
• Comprehensive Faculty Competencies & Course Standards

Robust Teacher Training System
• New Faculty Training Program
• Pathways for Faculty Growth
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Baseline Effectiveness - <em>minimum required to meet expectation</em> (= 1 point)</th>
<th>Exemplary Implementation - <em>description of ways to exceed expectations or exemplify mastery of this competency</em> (= baseline + 2-3 points)</th>
<th>Total Points and Artifacts/Goals* - <em>examples of emerging practice, artifacts of innovation, and/or space to share growth goal</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher builds an authentic relationship with each student as cornerstone of learning experience.</td>
<td>- builds learning partnership with students based on mutual respect and trust - knows student's goals and learner profile; actively works to support growth through regular contact with and feedback to student</td>
<td>- connects feedback to data as foundation for growth - anticipates learner challenges and proactively engages student to strategize and trouble-shoot</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher approaches the practice of teaching and learning with a growth mindset.</td>
<td>- sets goals that measurably improve student experience - participates in faculty discussions and engages with peer collaborator(s) - reflects on practice and adjusts in response to feedback - manages technology platforms proficiently</td>
<td>- iterates based on results of experimentation - initiates application of researched-based innovations that improve student learning over time - envisions the future of and implements the tools of competency-based education</td>
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Faculty Training
Our Challenge: Fast-growing school with an increasing number of faculty members. How should we best support their growth?

**Departmental Model:** Traditional department chair model with department chair working as evaluator and mentor.

**Instructional Design Model:** Coaching model with instructional designer supporting faculty toward growth objectives and evaluation done separately.
Does Coaching Work?

• Could it empower teachers to create incremental metrics for growth?

• Could it provide structures for continuous improvement, and encourage an organization growth mindset?
What We Learned: Coaching Is Effective
What We Learned: Coaches Can Be Trained

"Coaching is a skill that needs to be learned and honed over time. Fortunately, even a small amount of training can help."
What We Learned: Coaching Is Effective

Annenberg Institute for School Reform:

• Effective coaching encourages collaborative, reflective practice
• Embedded professional learning promotes positive cultural change
• Encourages use of data to inform practice
• Promotes the implementation of systemic change and reciprocal accountability
• Supports collective leadership
What We Learned: Coaches Can Be Trained

Refining listening strategies

Applying analytical frameworks

Practicing different kinds of coaching conversations
What We Learned: Both Evaluation & Coaching


Table 1. Teacher professional development outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional development elements</th>
<th>Knowledge level (% understanding content)</th>
<th>Skill attainment (% demonstrating proficiency in instructional practices)</th>
<th>Transfer to practice (% regularly implementing instructional practices in the classroom)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory (e.g., presenter explains content—what it is, why it is important, and how to teach it)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration (e.g., presenter models instructional practices)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice (e.g., participants implement instructional practices during the session)</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching (e.g., participants receive ongoing support and guidance when they return to the classroom)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>99%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Case Study:
Laura has been a popular, accomplished science teacher at your school for nine years. She has a masters degree and this is her second teaching position; she is positive community member. But her pedagogy never changes. Even though you do professional development on student-centered learning each August, and every year she sets a goal of doing more inquiry-driven labs, her classes are still very teacher-driven. Her supervisor gives annual feedback about increasing student voice, and she embraces that feedback positively, but her annual reviews show little pedagogical change. How might a coach promote growth?
Instructional Design Model

• Preconditions Met
  • Robust Evaluation System in Place
  • Robust Training Systems in Place

• Coaching is Effective
Pair & Share:

How might a coaching system be implemented at my school:

• By adding additional staff?
• By re-training existing staff? Or re-organizing jobs?
• By reducing staff?
• The department chair model does little to support faculty growth.
• There is an effective alternative.
• It can save schools money by decreasing administrative costs while increasing faculty morale.
Group Conversation:
I Now Know; I Need to Know
Resources

- Research Project - Jim Knight, University of Kansas, Kansas Coaching Project - https://kucrl.ku.edu/instructional-coaching
- Books by Jim Knight
  - The Impact Cycle: What Instructional Coaches Should Do to Foster Powerful Improvements in Teaching, 2017
  - Unmistakable Impact: A Partnership Approach to Dramatically Improving Instruction, 2011
  - Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction, 2007