

Coaching Scenarios 1

Using Technology Effectively

A component of Carter County High's school improvement planning process is to involve the staff in self assessments and informal classroom visitations. As a result, Carter County HS has begun engaging teachers in learning walks every two weeks with available teachers, administrators, and coaches.

In the most recent learning walk, the group visited a classroom where the teacher, Ms. Fennway, was using a PowerPoint presentation to facilitate the learning in the classroom. The coach noticed, however, that Ms. Fennway was using the technology as if it were an overhead projector, not as a tool that could be very interactive and engaging. Several students in the back of the room were having sidebar conversations and were not on task or working towards the day's objectives.

Ms. Fennway was very interested in hearing the comments from the learning walk group and to share his perspective of the class's performance that day.

Questions to ponder:

1. **As a coach, what can you tell the teacher about integrating technology and engaging students?**
2. **What can you suggest to the teacher to help her understand how technology is a tool to support learning and how the four lenses of learning (social, human, making meaning and language based) are all tools to engage students?**
3. **As a coach, how can your IU mentor help you move this teacher to the next level of understanding about student engagement and improving student outcomes?**



Coaching Scenarios 2

Professional Learning Communities

As a way to engage staff in their own professional learning, PLCs were created at Fair Plains High School according to a needs assessment prepared by a committee at the school. Each staff member selected a PLC which is facilitated by staff members.

In one particular PLC, Mr. Lincoln, the instructional coach is the facilitator. This group has met twice so far this year. After the second meeting, Mr. Lincoln noticed that a few teachers are disenfranchised and uninterested in the content of the PLC, even though membership was self-selected. He also noticed that instructional techniques designed to increase student engagement and improve student achievement are not being implemented in the classrooms of these few teachers.

On several occasions, the teachers have met with the Mr. Lincoln to discuss a variety of instructional strategies and to engage in meaningful conversation around student learning. Unfortunately, he sees little or no evidence of learning applied to the classroom.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. As a coach, what can you do to help teachers see the benefits of nourishing their own professional growth and applying what they've learned in their own classrooms?**
- 2. As a mentor, what are some ways that you can help the coach build teacher capacity and create a more meaningful PLC experience for the teachers and ultimately their students?**



Coaching Scenarios 3

The B, D, A Coaching Cycle

In Academy Heights High School, the newly appointed instructional coach is eager to start engaging teachers in the implementation of a coaching cycle, including visiting classrooms on a regular basis. The coach, Mrs. Hardy, has obtained a master schedule and designed a rotating schedule. She has asked the teachers to devote their next available prep period to discuss those visits. Mrs. Hardy's goal for these follow up visits is to help teachers become reflective practitioners and begin to share some classroom strategies.

One teacher, Ms. Sylvain, engaged Mrs. Hardy in several conversations during the week and ultimately asks for help. In the initial visit, Mrs. Hardy notices that there are several areas that need to be addressed in Ms. Sylvain's classroom. She is not quite prepared, classroom management is an issue and materials are not readily available. Unfortunately, Ms. Sylvain is new and a bit overwhelmed; she is unable to schedule time to meet with the coach even though the two agreed on a date for a follow-up session prior to the actual visitation.

Mrs. Hardy has attempted several times during the next week to meet with the Ms. Sylvain. In fact, Ms. Sylvain asks Mrs. Hardy several questions about classroom management but does not want Mrs. Hardy to visit again. Mrs. Hardy tries to explain how much more effective these suggestions can be if the teacher and coach plan, co-teach, and then debrief at the end of the day. Ms. Sylvain is not interested in that process but still wants some advice about classroom management. Each day, Ms. Sylvain seeks advice but not the coach's participation in his/her classroom.

Questions to ponder:

1. **As a coach, how can you help Ms. Sylvain understand the BDA cycle of instructional coaching and other interactive support strategies?**
2. **How can you help her understand that classroom management is impacted by solid planning and preparation.**
3. **What type of support can the IU mentor provide to help the coach address resistant or reluctant teachers?**



Coaching Scenarios 4

Understanding the Coach's Role

As part of the instructional coach's responsibilities, Mrs. Davis facilitates monthly professional development sessions for all of the teachers in her school district. After one of these PD sessions, a teacher named Ms. Turner asks Mrs. Davis to model or co-teach a lesson with her. She is thrilled and plans a lesson with Ms. Turner around the implementation of the instructional strategies recently shared.

On the scheduled day, Ms. Turner welcomes Mrs. Davis into her room but admits she hasn't had an opportunity to practice what has been demonstrated during the PD sessions and is not ready to implement the plans that she and Mrs. Davis prepared earlier. After the first few minutes, Mrs. Davis realizes that the class lesson does not resemble anything discussed in the planning session. After the lesson, Ms. Turner apologizes to Mrs. Davis and asks her to please return the next day to co-teach with her using the previously planned lesson.

On the second day, Ms. Turner begins her lesson and then turns the class over to the coach, walks to the back of the room, sits down and begins to mark some homework papers. As Mrs. Davis begins modeling the lesson, Ms. Turner is clearly inattentive to the actions of the coach or students. At the end of the class, Mrs. Davis approaches Ms. Turner to schedule a time to meet and discuss what happened, but Ms. Turner's next class arrives and she walks the coach to the classroom door with the comment, "Let's talk tomorrow."

Ms. Turner continues to make plans and appointments with the coach for co-teaching situations but fails to be prepared for her role in the co-teaching, shifting the flow of lesson activity to the coach, and often making excuses for why she must leave the room to attend to one task or another.

Questions to ponder:

1. **As a coach, what are the issues and how would you support this teacher?**
2. **How can you help Ms. Turner understand the coach's role in supporting her and the difference between collaboration and cooperation?**
3. **How can the IU mentor help the coach address the various professional development needs/issues in this school?**



Coaching Scenarios 5

Implementing an Evidence-Based Literacy Model on the Classroom Level

The high school team from the Madison School District has participated in two PLN 1 sessions so far this year. Mr. Allen, the coach, has supported the implementation of the PLN framework between PLN sessions by facilitating 45 minute professional development sessions during the day where teachers can participate on their preparation periods. Mr. Allen chooses one or two concepts shared during the PLN sessions and facilitates the same concepts throughout the day so more than just a few teachers can participate.

In the follow-up support provided by Mr. Allen to all the teachers, he notices that the focus is not on the four lenses of learning: social, human, meaning-centered, and language based. In fact, in several classrooms, he only sees evidence of “do nows” and “tickets out the door” as the implemented instructional strategies. He realizes that he needs to address the needs of the teachers in several ways: one-on-one instructional coaching and small/large group professional development where he and the teachers can share some new learnings and collaborate with one another to prepare a more interdisciplinary approach to student learning.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. As a coach, what are the issues and how would you support teacher professional development in this school?**
- 2. What kind of professional learning opportunities could you design to help teachers collaborate and practice their craft?**
- 3. How can the IU mentor help the coach address the various professional development needs/issues in this school?**



Coaching Scenarios 6

Creating a Collaborative Culture of Coaching 1

At Maple Area School District, Ms. Jaynes and Ms. Reynolds are instructional coaches responsible for working with teachers who are on improvement plans designed by the district. Instructional coaching at this district is a new idea and schools are just beginning implementation of a coaching model. Both instructional coaches are former teachers in the Maple Area School District so they know many of the teachers already. Both Ms. Jaynes and Ms. Reynolds decided to approach all of the teachers in a whole faculty format and then individually work with those identified teachers.

Unfortunately, they are both having some difficulty collaborating with the teachers who appear to be tolerant during professional development sessions but not when Ms. Jaynes or Ms. Reynolds need to visit their individual classrooms even though the coaches' role has been clearly shared by the district administrators.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. What are the issues, strategies, and ongoing professional development that can be provided to help in this situation?**
- 2. How can these two instructional coaches re-negotiate their relationships with their colleagues and build trust with all teachers in their schools?**
- 3. How can the coaches work with the administrators to help them understand about building relationships when the original goal of hiring instructional coaches was to work with dysfunctional and marginal teachers?**
- 4. Using Rita Bean's *Levels of Intensity* (see attached), identify your coaching level in this scenario. What support do you need in order to provide a deeper level of coaching to teachers, administrators, and other coaches?**



Coaching Scenarios 7

Evidence-Based Literacy Model Pushback

The Waterbury High School PD team has recently completed professional development using an evidence-based literacy model. Ms. Crist, their principal, has met with the team (the coach and two high school content teachers) to discuss the potential for advancing professional development for the WHS faculty using this model. While she is interested in learning more about this model and how students can be more engaged in their learning, she remains concerned that it might simply be a “literacy” model, not the school-wide PD model she is looking for to improve learning for students in her school. She is very familiar with other frameworks such as Charlotte Danielson’s Professional Framework which she sees as wider in scope.

The coach, Ms. Longfellow, and two high school teachers (Mr. Wallis and Ms. Benard) have already begun the turnaround training for their colleagues at the school. Not only is Ms. Crist still “on the fence” concerning her view of this evidence-based literacy model, but the team is debating the best way to conduct future professional development. The team: Ms. Benard, Mr. Wallis and Ms. Longfellow, cannot agree on how to proceed because of the conflict between Ms. Crist’s vision and the vision for professional learning supported by PIIC.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. What are the issues, strategies, and ongoing professional development that can be provided to help in this situation?**
- 2. How can Ms. Longfellow help Ms. Crist understand the value of an evidence-based literacy model while honoring her vision as the principal of Waterbury High School?**
- 3. How can Ms. Longfellow, Ms. Benard, and Mr. Wallis engage in meaningful dialogue to create a shared vision about planning professional development, increasing student engagement and improving student achievement?**
- 4. Using Rita Bean’s *Levels of Intensity* (see attached), identify your coaching level in this scenario. What support do you need in order to provide a deeper level of coaching to teachers, administrators, and other coaches?**



Coaching Scenarios 8

Monthly Coaching Meeting Conflict

At the Tall Trees School District, the IU PIIC mentor (Mr. Cleary) has been mentoring a large group of instructional coaches who are assigned to four different high schools. Mr. Cleary convenes monthly coaches' meetings so that all the coaches can share their experiences and network with each other.

Lately, Mr. Cleary has noticed that one of the coaches, Ms. Walsh, has been dominating the conversations both during site visits and during the monthly meetings. She frequently interrupts others and provides feedback that is not always appropriate or useful. Her questions are often off-topic or cynical. Mr. Cleary has utilized a variety of facilitation skills to guide the conversation and reminds the coaches to stick to the agenda, always including an agenda item entitled, "Other" for additional comments. In fact, two of the coaches do not want to participate any longer due to Ms. Walsh's constant negative and inappropriate comments.

Questions to ponder:

1. **What are the issues, strategies, and ongoing professional development that can be provided to help in this situation?**
2. **How can the other instructional coaches help Ms. Walsh understand how to be non-judgemental and more positive with them as well as with the teachers she coaches?**
3. **How can the other coaches help Ms. Walsh understand how to respect each other and the varied experiences they all bring to the table?**
4. **Using Rita Bean's *Levels of Intensity* (see attached), identify your coaching level in this scenario. What support do you need in order to provide a deeper level of coaching to teachers, administrators, and other coaches?**



Coaching Scenarios 9

Part-time Coaching

Administrators at the Sheridan West High School have decided that instructional coaches are valuable resources and included them in their school improvement plans. Unfortunately, the schedules of the coaches have not been modified so that they coach all day. Instead of full release time, the coaches coach 2-3 periods a day and teach their own classes 4-5 periods a day.

These coaches have attended a variety of professional development sessions and networked during statewide events. They cannot, however, fully recognize their coaching potential or the power of instructional coaching because their time is so limited. They want to offer ongoing professional development for teachers but cannot fulfill their obligations to their own classes and provide onsite support to teachers via planning, visiting, modeling, or debriefing. At best, they are resource providers and have not been able to move their practice to a more intense level of instructional coaching.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. What are the issues, strategies, and ongoing professional development that can be provided to help in this situation?**
- 2. How can the instructional coaches at Sheridan West High School help teachers improve their practices if they do not have time to work with them?**
- 3. What steps can the coaches take to build awareness of the most effective instructional coaching model (one-on-one) for the administrators and other teachers?**
- 4. Using Rita Bean's *Levels of Intensity* (see attached), identify your coaching level in this scenario. What support do you need in order to provide a deeper level of coaching to teachers, administrators, and other coaches?**



Coaching Scenarios 10

Creating a Collaborative Culture of Coaching 2

Mr. Marley is a newly appointed instructional coach in the Red Sun School District. He joins several other instructional coaches who have been working in the district for some time. This school district's instructional coaching model is a modified cohort coaching cycle. The coaches visit schools on a scheduled, rotating basis, providing weekly lesson plans and modeling one sample lesson during a four-week cycle. They do not meet for any planning (before) or any debriefing (after) so there is no evidence that the instructional coaching model is effective. Ongoing professional development is not a component of their coaching cycle.

Mr. Marley has an additional dilemma. Although he has a strong background in adolescent literacy, he also has some technology expertise. Instead of providing onsite instructional literacy support for the teachers, he is often asked to problem-solve the technology issues that surface since his funding comes through a technology grant. He recognizes that his time is not used effectively and wants to make some changes in the Red Sun School District instructional coaching model.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. What are the issues, strategies, and ongoing professional development that can be provided to help in this situation?**
- 2. What are some of the steps Mr. Marley can take to build awareness for an effective instructional coaching model?**
- 3. How can Mr. Marley and the other coaches collaborate to ensure that they are helping teachers understand how to increase student engagement and improve student achievement?**
- 4. Using Rita Bean's *Levels of Intensity* (see attached), identify your coaching level in this scenario. What support do you need in order to provide a deeper level of coaching to teachers, administrators, and other coaches?**



Coaching Scenarios 11

Learning Walks

The administration of Sun Isle High School decided that learning walks were needed to determine if the classroom environment was structured to foster student collaboration and student engagement. Learning walks were new to the school and were not clearly communicated to the teachers. In fact, there had not been any prior discussion or professional development provided to the faculty to clearly communicate administrative expectations before the learning walks were scheduled.

During the same week, the instructional coaches were asked by the administration to go on learning walks to look for evidence of instructional strategies introduced at a recent professional development they had provided for the teachers. The teachers felt threatened by the instructional coaches, thinking that they were being evaluated for evidence of instructional strategies being used in their classrooms. As a result, the teachers complained to the teacher union representatives at the high school and refused to let the coaches enter their classrooms. The teachers, instructional coaches, and administration were all unhappy and frustrated with the final results of the learning walks and needed to resolve the situation so that the coaches could build trust and work with the teachers in their classrooms in the future.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. What are the issues, strategies, and ongoing professional development that can be provided to help in this situation?**
- 2. What steps are necessary to change the communication process between and among all staff members?**
- 3. How can the coaches rebuild the trust with their colleagues and change classroom practice?**
- 4. Using Rita Bean's *Levels of Intensity* (see attached), identify your coaching level in this scenario. What support do you need in order to provide a deeper level of coaching to teachers, administrators, and other coaches?**



Coaching Scenarios 12

How can a coach provide confidential support to teachers and still be responsible to building administrators?

Mrs. Walsh is a literacy coach at Westland HS. She has been a coach for 4 years. Initially, she was a coach working with any teacher who invited her into his/her classroom. She worked very hard developing a relationship with all the teachers built on trust and expertise. This year, however, the principal made some changes in Mrs. Walsh's coaching responsibilities to reflect the school improvement plan and their AYP status. As a result of the new plan, Mrs. Walsh is assigned to work with teachers whose past classroom data indicate large numbers of student failures and very low standardized classroom test scores.

Mrs. Walsh is very concerned that her colleagues will perceive her coaching role as working only with teachers who cannot address the needs of their low performing students or who are not differentiating their work to meet the needs of a variety of student skill levels. She believes that teachers will not work with her and engage in collaborative, problem-solving conversations around student work and best practices. To compound matters, Mrs. Walsh is asked by the principal to give him a biweekly update about the teachers with whom she is working and what kinds of things she is addressing to change teacher practices and help improve student achievement.

Mrs. Walsh has met with each teacher one-on-one and in small groups to explain the changes in her responsibilities as per the principal. A few of the teachers say they understand but have not invited Mrs. Walsh into their classrooms yet this year. The other teachers have remained distant and have not participated in any small group professional development.

Questions to ponder:

- 1. As a coach, what can Mrs. Walsh say/do to help the teachers understand that she must work with teachers assigned by the principal and that she plans to include other teachers willing to participate?**
- 2. How can Mrs. Walsh show the teachers that their work with her will remain confidential even though she is required to report her work to the principal?**
- 3. As a coach evaluated by the principal, what are some of the ways Mrs. Walsh can remain faithful to her beliefs about confidentiality with teachers and yet update the principal on the work she is facilitating with the teachers?**

