

TEACHERS' COACHING PREFERENCES

When executed well, the value of professional development formats like coaching and collaboration can be substantial. And teachers in strong collaborative environments see significant benefits in their day-to-day work. But the way these formats are offered in many places falls short of the ideal and leaves many teachers unsatisfied.



TEACHERS EXPRESS STRONG PREFERENCES FOR COACHING PROGRAM DESIGN.

RANK	ATTRIBUTES OF IDEAL COACHING EXPERIENCE
1	My coach knows what it's like to be in my shoes.
2	My coach is an expert in my subject area.
3	Coaching sessions give me specific actions I can try in my classroom immediately.
4	My coach is well-trained at providing feedback.
5	My coach is not the same person who does my evaluation.

TEACHERS EXPRESS CONCERNS OVER WHO SERVES AS A COACH AND REPORT NEGATIVE STIGMA AROUND COACHING.

Demand for content expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If they could bring retired teachers out to serve as coaches ..."
Preference for ongoing relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I don't want someone coming in on their high horse telling me what to do ... They don't know my strengths and weaknesses. I'm a little territorial."
Skepticism of administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Most administrators don't have enough classroom seat time to coach teachers. Many of them went in just to be administrators, did the minimum time in the classroom." • "Coaching shouldn't be done by the person who evaluates you. It's a conflict of interest."
Negative stigma; coaching is perceived as a "last resort" for low performers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I got told I was going to be meeting with the district reading coach. I thought, 'Oh, no, they're talking about me at the district.'"

Source: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (2014, December). *Teachers know best: Teachers' views on professional development* (pp. 5, 7). Seattle, WA: Author.

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powerful WORDS

“The ingredients for successful coaching are neither magic nor mysterious. They are essentially the same ingredients included in nearly all effective school reform efforts: strong leadership, a clear focus and goals, essential resources, well-prepared staff, ongoing measures of assuring and monitoring progress, and rigorous evaluations.”

Source: Killion, J., Harrison, C., Bryan, C., & Clifton, H. (2012). *Coaching matters* (p. vii). Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.



QUESTIONS *for* LEADERS

Leaders who work closely with coaches need the skills to adapt to quickly changing schools and communities. Leaders will want to consider:

- What knowledge and skills do coaches need in order to be able to affect teaching and learning?
- How can coaches help teachers connect neuroscience with student instructional needs?
- How can coaches help teachers become globally knowledgeable?
- How will coaches help teachers align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to prepare students to be citizens in a global society?
- How will leaders and coaches address factors of school culture that contribute to, as well as threaten, teacher leaders' development?
- How do leaders and coaches create the type of culture that supports teacher leadership development?
- How might leaders and coaches apply Killion and Harrison's coaching framework in *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-Based Coaches* (NSDC, 2006) to develop building-level professional learning for classroom teachers?
- What professional learning will help develop a school culture in which teachers take a stance of inquiry and take on leadership roles?
- How might the roles of noninstructional support personnel, such as special education providers, psychologists, and social workers, be reimaged in order to build teachers' knowledge?
- What are the special challenges in different kinds of schools, such as rural, small, large, urban?

Source: Killion, J., Harrison, C., Bryan, C., & Clifton, H. (2012). *Coaching matters* (p. 177). Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

Mindsets matter

“How people think about change influences how they approach it. This is true for coaches and teachers. A coach's mindset influences the coach's ability to support teachers.

Coaches with a mindset of appreciation, inquiry, and assets will have safe and constructive



relationships with their colleagues.

“When a coach's mindset is limited by judgment and focused on the gap between the ideal and current practice, the coach will have a more difficult time acknowledging teachers' small successes, may not



value progress over time, and may not have the patience and perseverance to help teachers become independent

with the new practices. These coaches may be more directive, neglect to listen to individual needs or concerns, and fail to provide appropriate support.”

Source: Killion, J., Harrison, C., Bryan, C., & Clifton, H. (2012). *Coaching matters* (p. 80). Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.