

Coaching Journal

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## **Coaching Session 1: 2-19-18**

### **Strategies**

The first session was a group coaching session with my academic department. There is a school-wide initiative for all teachers to use a Learning Management System (LMS) more frequently in each of their classrooms. During this session I walked the teachers through the process of creating a course, adding content pages, creating assignments, building quizzes, and a brief introduction of many other features that are available through the LMS. This session was part of what Knight refers to as the enrollment stage (2007). Knight mentions that coaches have a difficult time enrolling teachers when they have experienced a great deal of turnover with instructional programs (2007). The biggest goal of this session was to show my colleagues the benefits of using tools within the LMS and leave them with the impression that the LMS is here to stay. Teachers seemed very receptive to this introductory session and several showed interest in receiving additional coaching. After the department meeting, teachers filled out a short survey evaluating their experience from the original session and describing areas where they would like to grow. These surveys were used to help identify candidates for the future one on one coaching sessions.

### **Skill and Affective Change**

Since this was an introductory session for many of the teachers in the department, there was a great deal of change in their knowledge and skills. Several teachers were resistant to the idea of using the LMS. The veteran teachers already view themselves as effective teachers that they are and they view the LMS as extra work on them that does not benefit their students. As they became aware of some of the gains that the program offers, they have become more curious.

Some positive features that increased interest were the ease of sharing content, formative assessment tools, and collaborative tools that are available to students. I would not say that teachers were proficient with these tools at this point, but they had given more attention to the LMS than in the past. The fact that they are actually looking at these tools increases the likelihood of future implementation in their classrooms.

### **Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

The greatest challenge at this point is scheduling of additional coaching sessions. I was blessed with time on a teacher workday for this initial session, but characteristics of my school really make scheduling of future sessions difficult. The school is currently on a seven-period bell schedule, which only gives teachers a 52 minute planning period each day. Since we are a relatively small school, many of our teachers are stretched thin with several preps and do not have common planning for conducting coaching sessions. The solution to this will require that coaching take place either before or after school. As the teacher is sacrificing their personal time it is important to make the sessions worthwhile and informative.

### **Coaching Session 2: 2-28-18**

#### **Strategies**

This session was a one on one coaching session with Mr. W. Mr. W and I have worked together for several years and I feel that we are able to work in an effective partnership. I respect his work in the classroom very much and I feel that I have a great deal to learn from him there. One weakness that he has is incorporating technology into his classroom. This is where I can help him. This coaching session focused one of The Big Four tactics for coaching (Knight 2007). After analyzing Mr. W's survey responses the tactic that he would benefit the most from

is instruction (2007). He is proficient with instruction, but he can see an opportunity to take his instruction to the next level using technology. During this coaching session, we discussed ways of setting up his course within the LMS. Through the past few years, I have created several different classes using the LMS. We were able to discuss the benefits and disadvantages of several different courses. Through our discussion, we were able to come up with a course design that he was satisfied with. For the rest of the session, I worked with him and helped him to publish content to his course. In the future, we will work to utilize more of the tools available through the LMS.

### **Skills and Affective Changes**

While working with Mr. W, I was able to see him work with the LMS more than he has in the past. The course that he had created went from something that was difficult to navigate to something much more user-friendly. Students should be able to easily find content and course information from visiting the course. This session will lay a foundation as he begins to incorporate the online content into his course.

### **Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

While coaching Mr. W, I quickly realized that we are on different skill levels with technology. This proved to be the greatest challenge throughout the coaching session. I did not spend enough time before the session thinking about his prior experience with technology. Knight discusses the importance of seeing the coaching through the teacher's eyes (2007). I walked into this session with the expectation that he was on the same level as me. I take for granted many tasks that I am able to do without thinking about them. In the future, I need to have a step by step plan that includes all basics that I take for granted. I also need to be prepared

to explain these steps and walk a teacher through them. This session would have gone a lot smoother if I walked in prepared to speak more clearly about the technology.

### **Coaching Session 3: 3-15-18**

#### **Strategies**

In this session, I met with Mr. K to address the fourth tactic of The Big Four which is formative assessment (Knight, 2007). According to Knight, formative assessment is essential in showing students that effort leads to success (2007). Mr. K expressed interest in learning more about the question bank feature of the learning management system. I would describe Mr. K as an experienced user of the program who is looking to add another tool to his toolbox. Before working with him I looked at some of the courses that he has created and focused on the assessments within those courses. Many of his assessments were effective, but he was interested in learning more. During this session, I was able to show him many advanced features that are available within the LMS. I was able to show him how to create question banks, create formula questions, upload questions from other online sources, import questions from other courses, and import questions from the common marketplace. By accessing all of these assessment tools I was able to assist him as he creates a variety of assessments for his courses. I even learned more about these tools while working with Mr. K. This will be an ongoing collaboration as we both learn more about tools that are available through the LMS.

#### **Skills and Affective Changes**

Utilizing the tools that are available through the LMS allows for Mr. K's students to maintain a growth mindset. Many of these tools such as question banks and formula questions allow for assessments to be randomly generated. Students are given the opportunity to receive

immediate feedback where they receive a report of their success and room for improvement.

With the availability of assessment tools and value of the data created, Mr. K is creating formative assessments much more frequently.

### **Reflection on Challenges and Solution**

The greatest challenge is finding time to fit coaching sessions in. Mr. K and I were able to meet for a morning coaching session, where I was able to show him many of the tools that are available. We frequently chat in between classes about new strategies that we are trying as a follow-up. It is difficult for fellow teachers to be able to find time to observe how technology is being used in each other's classes. It is also difficult to find time to collaborate. The school could really benefit from an instructional coach that specializes in technology to be available for all teachers.

As I continue to work with my colleagues I feel that I am becoming more comfortable with coaching. It is essential that I think of every step of the process that I am attempting to coach. Experience is helping me to become a much clearer communicator. Some key lessons that I have learned are to stay detached and clarify my message (Knight 2007). I have to resist the urge to make every teacher do things the same way that I do. Many of the teachers are already effective educators and what works for me may not be the best for their style. I need to listen to them and suggest the best tools for their needs. I need to really focus on what I am saying and how I am saying it in order to ensure that teachers feel that they truly are a part of this partnership.

### **References**

Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press