

“Instructional Coaching to Improve Student Outcomes”

Anna Di Virgilio - ITALIAN ARMY FOREIGN LANGUAGES SCHOOL, ITALY

Instructional coaching is a process to help teachers improve the quality of their teaching via an individualised classroom based observation, feedback, practice cycle. Research studies and robust evidence have found that Instructional Coaching (IC) has strong efficacy and significantly impacts and improves student achievement especially as traditional generic professional development has been found to be inadequate to meet teachers' needs.

The facilitative, dialogical and directive approaches are the three most commonly used approaches in the coaching process. Each approach has its unique strengths and weaknesses and all three of these can be helpful in different situations. Coaches often adapt their approach and may incorporate elements of each of the three approaches as needed to support the coachee's growth and development.

However, the dialogical approach, according to research, has been proven to be the most effective in improving the quality of teaching and student learning. The dialogical approach places strong emphasis on the power of dialogue and commitment to the partnership principles of voice and choice in the coaching process. It views coaching as a co-constructed conversation and genuine dialogue between the coach and coachee. The coach engages in open, exploratory dialogue with the coachee and focuses on building a collaborative relationship in which both parties contribute to the conversation. The coachee's perspectives, values, and beliefs are respected and central to the dialogue.

More specifically, dialogical coaches partner with teachers to identify, growth areas for both teachers and students, student focused measurable goals and teaching strategies to better meet students' needs. Dialogical coaches help teachers implement the strategies and gather data on whether or not they lead to students achieving their goals. If the goals are not met the strategies are modified until the goals are reached and student outcomes improve.

In conclusion, Instructional coaching ensures focused, data-driven improvements in teaching practices and significantly improves student learning and outcomes.