

By [IU PIIC Mentors Christina Steinbacher-Reed and Amy Walker](#)

Part-time coaches often find it difficult to work with teachers in a meaningful BDA coaching cycle due to a lack of time. However, despite their challenges, effective part-time coaches create opportunities that reflect PIIC's model of coaching. Successful part-time coaches share the following three characteristics:

1. Creativity – Part-time coaches are creative in scheduling the time they do have to work with teachers. One such example is turning lunches into “learning lunches” where coaches invite teachers to talk about teacher learning. Coaches can follow-up on these conversations by sharing a related article in their lunch buddies’ mailboxes so that they can keep the conversations going during the next learning lunch. Another way to keep the conversation going is by using “safe” sites like Edmodo to blog and invite others to comment and post their ideas for everyone to share.

2. Resourcefulness – Rather than focusing on what they can't provide, effective part-time coaches embrace what they can provide! In many cases, part-time coaches also have classroom teaching responsibilities. Why not turn a classroom into a professional learning laboratory? Part-time coaches can post the times that they are planning on modeling a strategy or demonstrating a lesson for all teachers. Teacher/coaches can even build debrief time into the demonstration by scheduling a small group or independent student activity for 10-15 min. after the demonstration. Coaches can also video tape demonstrations or directions for using a particular strategy or technology tool and house the video on a shared school site where teachers have easy access to view it at their convenience. They can debrief about the video using discussion forums or blog sites.

3. Empowerment – Effective part-time coaches find ways to involve and empower the teachers with whom they work. They start book studies and provide interesting and thought provoking books and articles for the staff to share that are based on needs determined by data collection (surveys, achievement data, etc.). At the start of the process, coaches assure participation and voice by assigning roles and responsibilities to each member. As the studies progress, the coach gradually shifts the role of leader/organizer to the individual teachers and becomes a participant along with the other participants. Effective part-time instructional coaches organize learning walks during their coaching time so that teachers can learn from one another. They facilitate the debriefing of these walks so that they remain focused, instructional, and positive. These types of strategies allow part time coaches to share leadership with others so that they truly are building capacity and empowering the staff with whom they work.

Effective part-time coaches maximize the time they have while continuing to advocate for more coaching time. When part-time coaches embrace this approach, we believe the possibilities can be endless.

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