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Recent [research done by FHI360 on behalf of the Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional Coaching \(PIIC\)](#) suggests that the greatest impact on teacher practice occurs when coaches spend the majority of their time working one to one or with small groups of teachers. Full-time coaches have the greatest opportunity to deliver this intense coaching service to the school staff. However, in this difficult economic climate, many school districts find it necessary to introduce instructional coaching through a hybrid or part-time model. When a coach is faced with this dilemma, it is easy to become frustrated. The demands of two different jobs can be very overwhelming. But there are strategies that the coach can employ to make this situation not only manageable but very productive.

- Integrate both roles. One way to do this is to open up your classroom to other teachers as a way to model strategies and make the planning process visible. Always schedule a debriefing meeting after the visit to discuss what the teacher observed and how it will be used in their classroom. It is always best to schedule this meeting before the classroom visit so that is established as a part of the BDA process.
- Analyze available data to focus your energy around a few priorities that will have the greatest impact on student achievement. Focusing on a few well defined areas allows you to demonstrate success. That success will generate enthusiasm for instructional coaching and increase the value of the coaching process in the eyes of both the teachers and administrators.
- With the building administrator, make a plan for coaching. Include clear, well defined and measurable goals. Then meet regularly with the administrator to monitor the implementation of the plan and adjust the activities as needed.
- Work with groups as much as possible. Whole-school professional development sessions on in-service training days or during faculty meetings, book studies, professional learning communities, and lunch-and-learn groups are some strategies coaches should consider. The topics for these interactions should come from your list of priorities.
- It is easy to be distracted with necessary but non-coaching related activities. Protect your coaching time and spend it doing the coaching activities that will have the greatest impact on changing teacher practice. Plan your time and make your calendar public so that everyone understands how you spend your day.
- Do not overcommit. It is okay to say no when you know that you will not be able to meet a commitment or when the request does not contribute to your overall plan. Conversely, once you have made a commitment, keep it. That is what builds trust and sustains relationships.

When done properly, instructional coaching will have a positive impact on teacher practice and student achievement. Full-time coaches have the greatest opportunity to implement high

intensity coaching activities closely associated with success. But when implemented in a thoughtful, intentional and planned manner, part-time coaches can positively affect the student achievement in their schools without being overwhelming or frustrating for the coach.

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