

By [IU PIIC Mentors Lisa Kelly and Demetrius Roberts](#)

Have you ever brainstormed ideas about how you can get more teachers to go through the BDA cycle of consultation with you? You are not alone. Instructional coaches are constantly trying to get new teachers to work with them, but running into reluctant teachers can really take a toll on coaches. If you have found yourself in this situation, here are five useful tips on how you can get reluctant teachers to work with you.

Start with a Relationship

The coach-teacher relationship is one of the most important aspects of gaining and keeping the trust of reluctant teachers. Start small, sell yourself, and be authentic. Try to get your foot in the door. Ask for permission to see a lesson or collect some data for one of the teachers in your building. Talk to your teachers about how you can help them gain insights about student achievement in their classes. Most importantly, be yourself. Remember, instructional coaching is all about helping teachers to improve practice through the BDA cycle of consultation. While building your relationships with teachers in your school find out what they need, what their teaching insecurities are, and how you can support their growth. Genuinely express your desire to help those reluctant teachers enhance teaching and learning in your school.

Get Support from Other Teachers

Successful instructional coaching programs must be cultivated. Be sure to develop positive associations around teacher participation in instructional coaching. It is very common for instructional coaching to be associated with struggling teachers. You must be sure to counter any negative preconceived notions associated with receiving, needing, and/or accepting instructional coaching. One way to counter negative perceptions of instructional coaching is to ask the teachers that you work with to share success stories. This is one instance where you would ask a teacher that you are working with to share some of what you are doing in your one-on-one work together. You may want to ask for five minutes during a faculty meeting to advertise your ability to help teachers improve practice and ask one of your teachers to highlight a success they have had while working through the BDA cycle with a coach. Testimonials from teachers can begin to redefine the purpose of instructional coaching and change the perception of working with a coach for those reluctant teachers.

Make the Conversation Confidential

Reluctant teachers often have an array of fears and anxieties toward instructional coaching. These fears and anxieties may stem from a lack of trust toward leadership. Therefore, it is

crucial to have the support of your organization's administration. Make the conversation confidential by gaining the support of the administrators in your school/district. The support provided by the administrative leadership must be public and supported by your procedures and policies as an instructional coach. For example, it is good practice to acquire permission from your teachers before you collect data in a During session. Asking for permission and reassuring reluctant teachers of the confidential nature of the teacher-coach relationship affirms that instructional coaching is about teacher support. Leave the data that you collected with the teacher whenever possible, and get your administrator to support the confidential relationships between you and the teachers you coach.

Make the Conversation Student Centered □

Reluctant teachers may feel that an instructional coach is there to judge their teaching capability and that may be nerve racking for a teacher. Coaches are there to be a support system to the teacher, but reluctant teachers may not view coaches in that manner. Begin your before session by making your conversations with reluctant teachers student centered. For example, how do you think the students will react to this new teaching method? Have your students used this method before? What skills will your students need in order to accomplish this task? By making the conversation about the students, the teacher may feel less pressure on them and their practice. In addition, when you visit the classroom for the During session you can now look for what the students are doing rather than what the teacher is doing, and that will take some pressure off of the teacher.

Use Data to Drive the Conversation

Some teachers may not believe they can benefit from working with an instructional coach. They may believe their classroom runs efficiently and there is not room for growth within their practice. However, you may want to ask those teachers if they use data to drive their instruction. By looking at data, instructional coaches can help teachers that feel they will not benefit from working with a coach see areas where they can grow. For example, just because your lesson was free of behavioral issues, does not mean all students are engaged. By allowing a coach to collect data in a during session, you may find that only 75% of your students are engaged in your lesson even though you did not see any egregious behavioral issues. Once a teacher reviews this data, they are able to determine where they can grow. The use of data will allow the teacher to reflect on their practice when you meet for your After session, and it allows the instructional coach to act as a support system for the teacher.