

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
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Instructional Coaches
 Recommendations from North Dakota Coaches

The use of instructional coaches is becoming increasingly prevalent in schools across the nation. How a coach is utilized within a building can greatly affect the level of success that is attained. A survey was conducted with North Dakota instructional coaches. The survey obtained feedback as to the types of responsibilities assigned to instructional coaches. In addition, the coaches were asked to offer some recommendations to other schools within the state who are contemplating using instructional coaches.

Listed below are some recommendations to consider in the planning phases of employing an instructional coach, as well as some suggestions on what not to do in order to be successful.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Have a lot of contact with the principal; the same vision is important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Use a judgmental or evaluative approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Get into the teachers' rooms as much as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Go in and act like the expert
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Read up on coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Evaluate teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Establish a relationship with teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Take the place of the principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Build trust and confidence 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Be open 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Listen to needs 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Go in at their level 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Keep a part of the team 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Make sure to help teachers review and understand data 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Help teachers set goals to avoid teachers getting offended 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Find out what the student needs are and then provide the intensity 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Market yourself and what you have to offer 	

The "Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse" also has a document which provides a list of Dos and Don'ts for staff new to the role of an instructional coach. Log on to www.literacycoachingonline.org/briefs.DosandDontsfinal.pdf to access this document.