



Tom Sherrington

## TOM SAYS

Nearly everyone is in a team — their main home.

For teachers to progress, we need to get rid of the judgement trap.

Coaches: don't hog the WalkThru resources. Get them out there!

If you can't arrange your schedule to have time to coach, then why are you their coach?

You have to get ahead of life — don't let the system crush you!

Once a teacher realises you know their curriculum, they trust you.

## Coaching is a problem-solving culture

1: Team identifies and agrees learning problems to address with selected WalkThrus | 2: Reviews & plans adaptations to feedback



### FEEDBACK IN INST. COACHING

- 1 | PROVIDE PRECISE PRAISE
- 2 | PROBE
- 3 | IDENTIFY PROBLEM & CONCRETE ACTION STEP
- 4 | PRACTISE
- 5 | PLAN AHEAD; SET TIME LINE

WalkThru  
Vol. 2 p.158  
Bambrick-Santoyo

Individuals try out the selected WalkThru/clusters & coaches observe in a variety of arrangements: classroom observations, video self-observations, learning walks and so on.



Coach engages team in conversation, following the steps of the WalkThru Feedback in Instructional Coaching [vol.2 p.158]

Individuals execute the actions discussed and agreed at the previous feedback conversation, in the context of solving the problem first identified.

## COACHING AS PROBLEM-SOLVING

There are several assumptions about coaching that can easily become counter-productive. The major one Tom found in his work with schools and colleges, is the premise that the purpose is to improve — i.e. to remedy the imperfections of the teacher.

More effective in establishing necessary levels of trust alongside the development of fruitful mental models is to frame the coaching pursuit as one of problem solving.

This turns the attention outwards towards the classroom and its students, and away from unproductive feelings of anxiety triggered by the continual focus on the individual's competencies.

## TEAM COACHING

The other major assumption is that coaching is always composed of a 1:1 dynamic. Logistical and financial constraints have led some to explore the potential of team coaching. They have found that working with a team surfaces members' shared experiences and skills of their common subject/age expertise.

This knowledge forms a richer analysis of the problem to be addressed. And by doing so, the links between pedagogy and subject content are explicitly revealed. Learning — for both student and teacher — is *situated*, so the more informative you are about the classroom context, the more accurate will be the analysis of the problem and its solution.

## CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

Successful instructional coaching in schools and colleges is dependent on: **Coaches** | You can't start coaching if you don't have any, or too few, coaches. Coaches are developed in the same way that they coach: through the Feedback In Instructional Coaching WalkThru.

**Toolkit** | Instructional coaches need a playbook of techniques to provide an array of solutions for the problems identified in teachers' classrooms.

**Time** | If there's no time, there's no coaching.

The conclusion of the above is to build on the capacity you have, not on the capacity you don't have!

## DEVELOPING COACHES

A single term of preparation gets appropriately experienced teachers set up for coaching — if it is a rigorous application of the Bambrick-Santoyo WalkThru (vol 2, p.158). You can only coach well if you are, yourself, coachable. Thereafter, you get better at coaching by doing it, following the 5-step WalkThru, emphasising making teachers feel safe and effective, along with not avoiding the direct conversations of the method.

## RECORDING

Find the balance. No recording leads to a chain of effects: no accountabilities, no action, no progress. But too much results in time-consuming, cynical box-ticking that forgets that records should be subservient to coaching conversations.