

# EVERY TEACHER A COACH

## AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING PROGRAM

Instructional coaching (IC) is one of the most powerful ways to improve teaching. It is focused on teachers making small steps by introducing high-impact, and actionable instructional strategies. To build a culture of ongoing improvement for everyone, we have adopted

the 'every teacher a coach' model for our ongoing PL program. This means you will work with a partner to give and receive structured feedback, implement and review action steps and record your progress on online. Here's a quick summary of what you need to know...

## JOSH GOODRICH

Co-founder & CEO  
STEPLAB



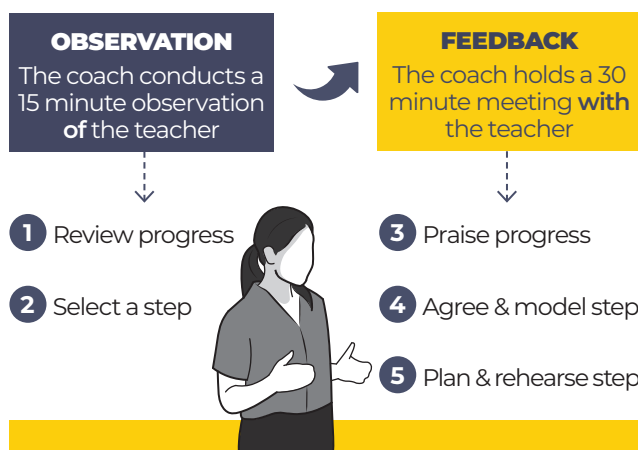
“Instructional coaching is one of the best ways for schools to improve teaching.”

### WHAT IS INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING?

Steplab's Peps Mccrea explains instructional coaching as a process that “involves one teacher working with another teacher, to help them take small, personalised steps to improve their practice.” Each cycle involves revisiting the same skill with granular, bite-sized bits of feedback to show teachers how to improve.

### WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE IC PROCESS?

Our peer coaching program is focused on being responsive to the needs of teachers. This means you will move through regular observation and feedback cycles that are focused on reviewing, modelling, and rehearsing action steps to help you both improve.



### WHAT IS STEPLAB ALL ABOUT?

Steplab is an PL platform that will help teachers and coaches focus on specific and actionable techniques.



The platform is designed to facilitate the IC process through scaffolded observation and feedback forms. It includes a broad range of model videos and effective tools to support rehearsal.

### HOW DOES OUR IC PROGRAM WORK?

Each bi-weekly cycle of the program involves observing and giving feedback to your partner. To ensure your coaching conversations are focused, you will have a short 1:1 meeting with the PL Lead to discuss your action step and plan for the feedback meeting.



### WILL I HAVE TO COMMIT ADDITIONAL TIME?

Currently, bi-weekly feedback meetings will be conducted in the scheduled after school group session. The rest of the program is purposefully built into the school day. For example, the short 1:1 'Coach the Coach' meetings can be booked online at a convenient time of your choice such as a free period or before school.

# THE OBSERVATION

## THE MECHANICS OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

To help improve the quality of teaching, effective coaches offer specific feedback to teachers based on real life data. By observing approximately 15 minutes of a teacher's lesson, coaches can identify areas of strength and challenges based on what the teacher is saying,

doing and by looking at the quality of students' answers. The built-in Steplab observation form helps to scaffold this process. Whilst observing your partner, fill in the information to help prepare and plan your subsequent feedback session. Here's a summary of what it entails...

**PEPS MCCREA**

Director of Learning  
STEPLAB



Instructional coaching observations are about developing teachers, not judging them.

### PLANNING FOR PRAISE

During the observation, identify and record one thing your partner did effectively. When delivering your subsequent feedback, praise will help to build motivation. For example, you might record: "Sam, I was impressed by your use of probing questions when you asked..." Use Steplab's Shoutout feature to celebrate this with everyone in the program.

### PLANNING QUESTIONS

Deep questions (based on your observation evidence) can help teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching and/or their current Action Step. Questions such as: 'How does this impact pupil learning?' also help to check the teacher's depth of understanding. Remove opinionated language by using phrases like, 'I noticed...', 'Tell me about...'

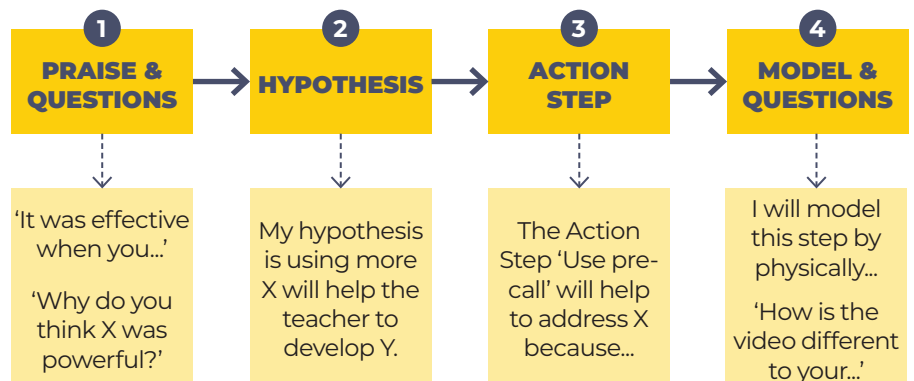
### FORMING A HYPOTHESIS

As you watch your partner teach, form a hypothesis based on a key piece of evidence. During the feedback session, this theory will help you to put forward your suggested Action Step. For example, "If Sam speeds up her entry routine, it will help to get students thinking faster. Therefore the action step is 'Positively Narrate Entry'.

### CHOOSING THE ACTION STEP

Select a suitable Action Step from the Steplab Library to help support your hypothesis and address a key learning problem identified in your observation. Record concrete evidence (video or transcription) to justify your step selection. In the long-term, this step might help form a sequence of interrelated steps that help the teacher hit a broader goal.

### DURING THE 15 MINUTE OBSERVATION COACHES USE STEPLAB TO PLAN THE...



### PLANNING MODELLING

During your observation, it is a good idea to plan the modelling process ahead of time. Modelling helps teachers to form concrete representations of what good looks like. Use the Action Step criteria to plan a model in advance of your feedback meeting. This might mean you think about enacting your suggested Action Step by physically demonstrating what you would do and explaining the thinking behind

your actions. Reinforce your own modelling by watching Steplab's model videos. Write down some deep questions you will ask during the feedback meeting. For example: "What is the difference between my model and your current practice?" or "What did you notice about the way the teacher in the video...?" Outline your approach and questions on the observation form. This observation form will not be seen by your partner until you deliver your feedback.

# GIVING FEEDBACK

## THE MECHANICS OF INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING

Structured feedback meetings of approximately 30 minutes enable coaches to give precise praise, propose an action step and help the teacher improve through focused modelling and rehearsal. The Steplab observation form you filled in previously will help you to

scaffold the feedback conversation and ask questions at the right moments. Deliberate practice is essential to help the teacher make permanent changes. This means your feedback meeting must happen in a quiet space where you both feel comfortable to conduct multiple rehearsals.

### OLLIE LOVELL

Teacher, Author  
STEPLAB AU



**The Action Step is the moment when the coach transitions the conversation from praise to a suggested area for improvement.**

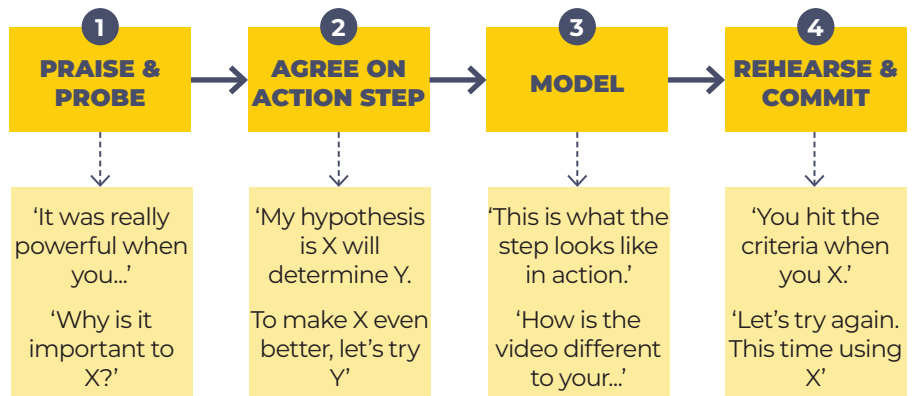
### GIVE PRAISE & AGREE ON AN ACTION STEP

It is critical to start your coaching feedback by praising one thing you recorded in your observation. The most sensitive part of the coaching conversation is when the coach presents their chosen action step because teachers can easily feel they are being criticised. A remedy for this is to frame your selected Action Step as a hypothesis or way to build on a current strength. For example: "Hayden, your starter was absolutely excellent. To make it even better, perhaps we could tweak X. This would help to Y." or "Let's make X even better by Y".

### MODEL THE ACTION STEP

Working with the teacher, read through the success criteria for your chosen action step and watch the supporting model video. Deconstructing the step together will help you to develop a shared understanding of the strategy. Give them a clear picture of what success looks like by modelling the step yourself to show specifically the different ingredients involved and clarify examples and non-examples.

### DURING THE 30 MINUTE FEEDBACK MEETING COACHES USE STEPLAB TO...



### REHEARSE THE ACTION STEP TOGETHER

During this phase of your feedback meeting, you should rehearse the suggested Action Step with your partner. This means physically enacting the strategy so it becomes easy to remember later. Toggle the switch on or off in Steplab's rehearsal engine to indicate if the teacher has hit the success criteria or not. In between each round of rehearsal, address the criteria by saying things like: "It was effective when X" and, "Next time, try Y..." or "Tweak your use of Z". Conducting multiple rounds of rehearsal will help to consolidate the Action Step so that it is crystal clear and easier to implement.

### PLAN TO MAKE THE CHANGES STICK

To help turn the Action Step into a habit, consider practical ways for your partner to embed the changes and use the step consistently in their teaching. This commitment might be a phone reminder, post-it note (to self), visual cue such as a prompt on a slide.



**Let's set a reminder on your phone to help you...**