

Peer Observation of Effective Teaching

Observing peer lessons shows the teaching team how to observe peers demonstrating effective teaching practice. Instruction coaches plan release time for teachers and teaching assistants so they can 'shadow' the instruction coach while they conduct an extended classroom observation of another teacher. During the observation, the instruction coach will try to gauge what the shadowing teacher is observing and may quietly share what they think the teacher is doing successfully or not. The instruction coach records their observations of the techniques being delivered and their impacts on teaching and learning. Observing lesson delivery utilises collaboration to build the effective teaching capacity of the teaching team and fosters a culture of classroom collaboration and high expectations.



Procedure

The instruction coach:

- **Schedules** observation time for each teaching team member twice per term.
- **Releases** each teacher to accompany the instruction coach on an extended classroom observation of another teacher twice per term.

The teacher or teaching assistant:

- **Observes** peer for 15 minutes.
- Spends five minutes **documenting** what they observed on the Techniques Observation Form.

The instruction coach and teacher:

- **Discuss** their observations.

Remember

Collaboration is required for peer observations to work. When teachers share their classroom experience, they recognise each other's strengths and support one another in the acquisition and refinement of skills.

Ways to Master the Technique

- Schedule teacher observations well in advance so that the teaching team can plan to be out of the classroom, and so each teacher engages in two observations per term.
- When scheduling peer observations, plan them for a time when the observing teacher will observe the effective teaching technique in practice.
- Print or have an online version of the Techniques Observation Form ready before the lesson.
- Be ready to direct the teaching team to what they should have observed and gained from the observation during the discussion. This can be done through reflection questions or reviewing the form together. The take-away for the teaching team should be clear and actionable.

Further Information

For more information about engaging with parents, complete Practice Peer Observation of Effective Teaching. Read about the technique in Cycle 6: Classroom Collaboration of the 8 Cycles of School Practice Guide.