

# Teachers' Perceptions of the Characteristics of Highly Effective Coaches

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# Agenda

- Overview
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion

# Overview





- Liza Cope
- BS Mathematics (2005)  
MS Secondary Mathematics (2006)  
PhD Curriculum & Instruction (2013)  
University at Albany, SUNY
- Taconic Hills Central School District  
(2006 - 2009)
- Curriculum Writer (2012, 2013)  
Coach (2014)  
Domain Specialist (2015)
- Assistant Professor of Mathematics  
Program Coordinator for Math Ed.  
(2013 - current)



- Katherine Bussiere
- English major with a Spanish minor at Mount Holyoke College
- Graduated summa cum laude and was named to Phi Beta Kappa (May 2013)
- Summer Intern at Learnzillion (2012 and 2013)
- Project Manager at Learnzillion (September 2013)
- Fulbright fellowship to teach in Brazil (May 2014)

# Dream Team Post-Summer Survey (August, 2013)

**Purpose:** To improve professional learning cycles (people and processes)

**Focus areas:**

- The Lesson Creation Process
- Relationships & Interactions
- Professional Development

# Research Questions

1a. What are K-12 ELA and Mathematics teachers' perceptions of the **positive attributes of coaches**?

1b. What **percentage** of teachers perceive the uncovered positive coaching attributes as significant?

2a. What are K-12 ELA and Mathematics teachers' perceptions of the **negative attributes of coaches**?

2b. What **percentage** of teachers perceive the uncovered negative coaching attributes as significant?



# Significance

Inform **researchers** designing or evaluating future PLCs

Inform **policy makers** in making data-informed decisions

Inform the **course and program design** decisions of faculty at institutions of higher education

Inform **coaches** to make evidence-based improvements to their practices

Add to the scarce **research** literature focused on online PLCs

## PLCs (May – August, 2013)

Three to ten teachers with **one** coach ( $\bar{x} = 5$ )

**Teachers role:** Create a fifteen lesson unit with all supporting materials aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

**Coaches role:** Review all materials, provide feedback & support, approve materials

**Methods of communication:** comments on submitted materials, emails, phone calls, social media page, webinars, google hangouts

**Frequency of communication:** daily

# The 2013 Dream Team

199 teachers

171 females, 28 males

42 states

# The Survey Respondents

164 teachers

82% response rate

\$10 amazon gift card

(survey required 25-45 minutes)

# Items of Interest

1. Rate the revision process with your coach at Teach Fest
2. Rate the revision process with your coach during the revision and lesson set outline stages
3. Rate the revision process with your coach during the slide creation process
4. Rate the revision process with your coach during the recording process
5. Rate the revision process with your coach during the assessment stages

# Items of Interest

6. Rate the usefulness and quality of feedback
7. Rate the promptness of feedback
8. Rate the consistency of feedback
9. Rate the sense of mutual respect
10. Rate the level of trust
11. Rate the professionalism
12. Rate the level of expertise

Note: For items 1-12 participants could respond that they were very unsatisfied, unsatisfied, satisfied, very satisfied, or not applicable

# Items of Interest

13. How impactful was your coach to your professional learning?
14. What was the best quality you saw in your coach?
15. What was something your coach could have done better?

Note: For item 13 participants could respond that it was not at all impactful, somewhat impactful, impactful, or very impactful. Items 14-15 were open response.

*Methodology*

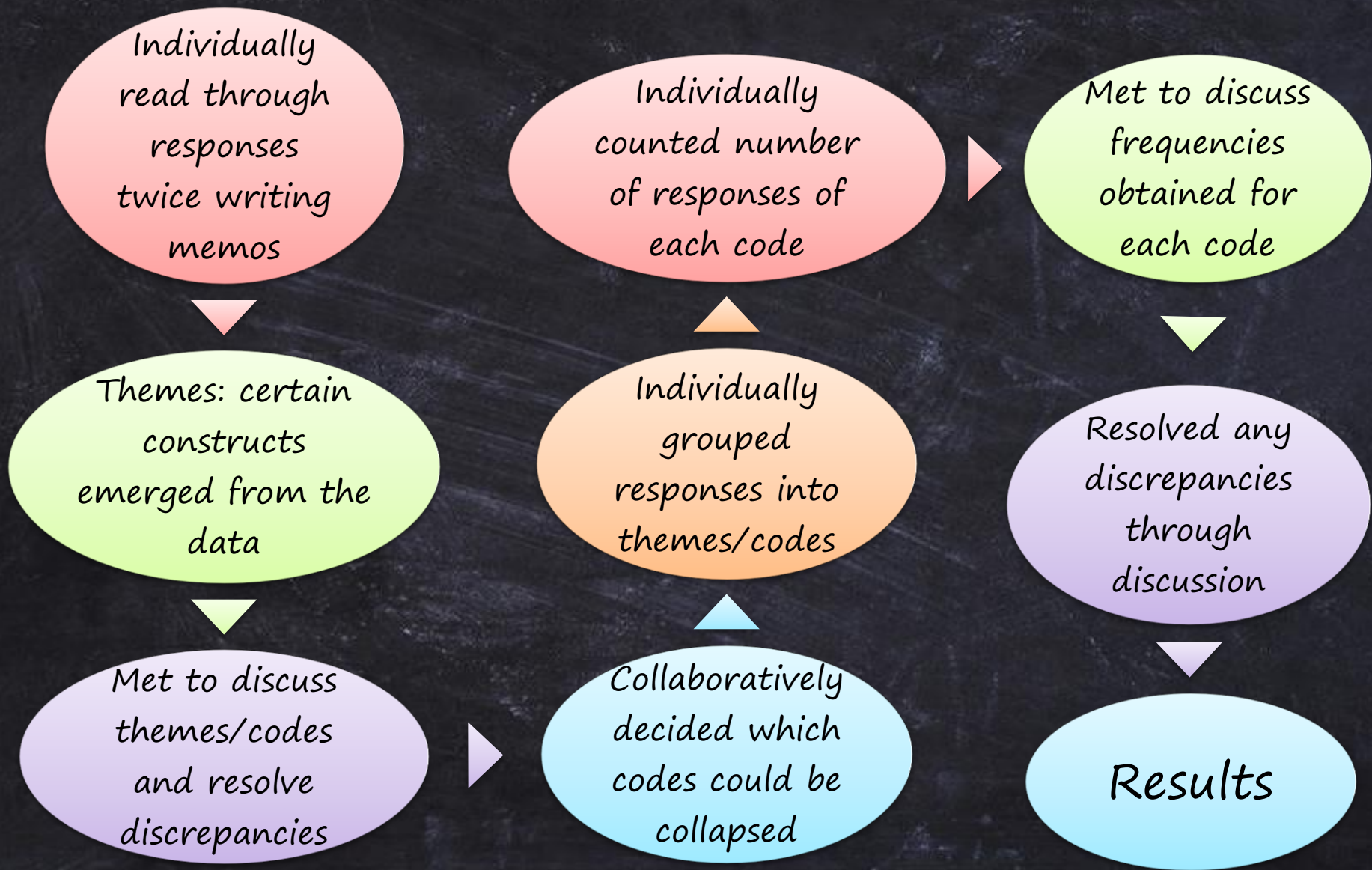


# Likert-scale items (1-13)

- (The easy part)
- Only required tabulation of the frequency counts

# Open-Ended Items (14-15)

- (The difficult part)
- Grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)



*Results*

87-88% of participants were either Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the revision process

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable
1. Revision process with your coach at Teach Fest	n=3 2%	n=13 8%	n=45 28%	n=96 59%	n=5 3%
2. Revision process with your coach during the research/outline stages.	n=5 3%	n=11 7%	n=41 26%	n=99 62%	n=3 2%
3. Revision process with your coach during the slide creation process.	n=6 4%	n=8 5%	n=39 24%	n=107 66%	n=2 1%
4. Revision process with your coach during the recording process.	n=4 3%	n=8 5%	n=38 24%	n=100 63%	n=8 5%
5. Revision process with your coach during the assessment stages.	n=3 2%	n=9 6%	n=38 24%	n=102 63%	n=9 6%

86-93% of participants were either Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the feedback that they received from their coaches

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable
6. Usefulness and quality of feedback from your coach.	n=2 1%	n=8 5%	n=42 26%	n=107 67%	n=0 0%
7. Promptness of feedback from your coach.	n=7 4%	n=16 10%	n=41 26%	n=95 60%	n=0 0%
8. Consistency of feedback from your coach.	n=3 2%	n=14 9%	n=36 23%	n=105 66%	n=0 0%

94-96% of participants were either Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the mutual respect, trust, professionalism, and level of expertise of their coaches

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable
9. Sense of mutual respect with your coach.	n=2 1%	n=3 2%	n=23 14%	n=131 82%	n=0 0%
10. Level of trust of your coach.	n=2 1%	n=7 4%	n=26 16%	n=124 78%	n=0 0%
11. Professionalism of your coach.	n=1 1%	n=3 2%	n=23 23%	n=131 83%	n=0 0%
12. Level of expertise of your coach.	n=1 1%	n=7 4%	n=25 16%	n=123 79%	n=0 0%

86% of participants felt that their work with their coach was either impactful or very impactful on their professional learning

	Not Impactful	Somewhat Impactful	Impactful	Very Impactful	Not Applicable
13. How impactful was your work with your coach to your professional growth?	n=4 2%	n=19 12%	n=47 29%	n=92 57%	n=0 0%



91% of participants responded favorably about their experiences with their coaches

	<b>Not Impactful</b>	<b>Somewhat Impactful</b>	<b>Impactful</b>	<b>Very Impactful</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
Frequency Mean	M = 3.31	M = 9.69	M = 35.69	M = 108.62	M = 2.08
Frequency Std. Dev.	s = 1.84	s = 4.75	s = 8.48	s = 13.83	s = 3.25
Percent Mean	M = 2.08	M = 6.08	M = 23	M = 68.08	M = 1.31
Percent Std. Dev.	s = 1.12	s = 3.01	s = 4.74	s = 9.14	s = 2.10

*Frequency and Percent of Responses for Best Quality of Coach*

<b>Quality</b>	<b>Frequency and Percent of Responses</b>
Constructive Criticism	n=78 45%
Expertise	n=42 24%
Character	n=27 15%
Thought Partner	n=18 10%
Autonomy	n=10 6%

# Constructive Criticism

45%

*"My coach was always positive--even when I had a lot of revisions to make!"*

*"My coach gave the best feedback! She worked to understand the concept I was trying to convey and always gave tips for improvement! Her feedback was clear, meaningful, and never nitpicky. I looked forward to her feedback on each lesson!"*

*Expertise*

24%

*“She really knew her content, and she would often give me feedback that would cause me to look at my lesson from a different angle, and I was able to make my lessons even better.”*

*“He really knew the content from the most basic levels to the most advanced. He had a vision of how the standards were connected and the conceptual misunderstandings at the middle and high school levels that, if not addressed, would persist even in college courses.”*

Character

15%

Thought Partner

10%



*"I loved how she could see things with a different eye than mine. I have led lots of professional development & coaching and I have to say I think I challenged her and she challenged me. When I would be struggling for just the right word/angle she could come through w/the perfect suggestion."*

*Autonomy*

6%

*"She gave me things to think about, but then left the final decisions up to me. She gave me the freedom to do my lesson creation in a way that worked for me."*

*"He was extremely receptive to my ideas and even when he had his own, never made me feel as though what I had done was wrong but rather could just be improved upon."*

*Frequency and Percent of Responses for Something Coach Could Do Better*

<b>Quality</b>	<b>Frequency and Percent of Responses</b>
Faster Feedback	n=49 50%
Inconsistent/Unclear Feedback	n=17 17%
More Team Building	n=15 15%
Should be a Veteran	n=11 12%
Superciliousness	n=6 6%

*Faster Feedback*

*50%*

*“I wish he would have been able to provide feedback faster. There were times I waited a week to get feedback and that put me a little behind my timeline.”*

*“The amount of time it took to get something looked at was too long. I wish he could have been a lot quicker. He would post something that needed revision, I would revise it and re-post it just an hour or two later and I wouldn't hear back about it for 2 days.”*

*Inconsistency*

17%

*“It seemed as if there were a lot of inconsistencies and contradictions given, as if we were not on the same page on a few points during the process. I felt like I had to try to explain a lot of things to justify why I did things a certain way during the first lesson set. Some of the feedback was hard for me to interpret, so I had to ask for concrete examples.”*

*“Unfortunately, she was on vacation during the two weeks when I had space and time to work on my lessons. I had very helpful feedback from another coach who was filling in during one of those weeks, but then had to wait for her to review and approve things. Her feedback was not consistent with the other coach.”*



More Team Building

15%

*“My coach was great, but I do think that coaches should have at least one year experience as a Dream Team teacher. I was initially hesitant of my coach’s leadership knowing that she was just as inexperienced as I was.”*

*Should be a Veteran*

12%

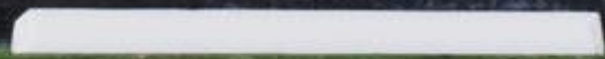
*“I wish that our coach had done a better job at helping us to feel like a team at Teach Fest. We did not interact together very much at Teach Fest and worked independently on our outline while other teams were doing group cheers and collaborating. I would have liked to collaborate with my team while we were together at Teach Fest so we could work together through emails or chats after it was over. I know other teams had chats through Google after Teach Fest, but our team did not. I felt our coach could have done a much better job at helping us bond as a team and share ideas together.”*

# Unequal Positioning

6%

*"The one time my coach was incorrect mathematically on the problem I was using, he would never admit to it. He kept a back and forth process of emailing explaining why he was right. He never once tried to call when I told him multiple times that I could explain myself better over the phone. Another coach had to talk to him for us to move on from this problem. Again, he never apologized or let me know that I was correct."*

*Discussion*



Findings from the thirteen likert-scale items revealed that overall the vast majority of teachers were very satisfied with all attributes of their coach.

$$\bar{x} = 68.08, \sigma^2 = 9.14$$



Among these thirteen items, the lowest three ratings appeared in teachers who reported that their coach was very impactful towards their professional growth, and teachers who were very satisfied with the revision process at Teach fest and promptness of their coach's feedback.

The highest three ratings appeared in teachers who reported that they were very satisfied with their coach's professionalism, level of mutual respect, and expertise.

From most to least frequent, teachers reported that their coach's *best quality* was their:

- ability to provide them with *constructive criticism*
- their *expertise*
- their *character*
- their ability to work as a *thought partner*
- giving them *autonomy*

From most to least frequent, teachers reported that something that their coach could have *done better* was:

- providing them with *faster feedback*
- giving them feedback that was more *consistent and clear*
- making more of an effort for PLC members to *interact*
- being a *DT veteran*
- positioning themselves at the *same level* as the teacher

This *data* complemented by the *illustrative quotes* paint a clear picture of teachers' perception of the *ideal coach*.

Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers can benefit from the findings of this study.

Scholars can use the results of this exploratory study to *design and evaluate future PLCs*.

Additionally, the results of this study can help **policy makers** make data-informed decisions about the **personnel** to recruit and hire, and the duties to assign personnel, how to **evaluate personnel**, and in selecting **external resources**.

Furthermore, the findings of this study can inform the *course and program design decisions* of faculty at institutions of higher education as they develop and refine programs for math educators and specialists.

Moreover, coaches can use the findings of this study to make evidence-based improvements to their practices. Finally, the results can add to the scarce literature focused on online PLC.



*Thank you!*

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