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Is coaching an intervention? According to Merriam-Webster there are three definitions of the word *intervention* to consider.

One definition of the word intervention is “an occurrence in which a person with a problem is confronted by a group whose purpose is to compel the person to acknowledge and deal with the problem.” This would imply that not only is the work of coaches limited to teachers identified as problematic, but that teachers own a problem and are expected to work with the coach to fix it. Utilizing coaching as a means to change teacher practice for the sole purpose of increasing student achievement is about fixing problems, not about the collaborative work of the coach and teacher to continuously grow and improve instruction. As mentors, we need to help coaches raise awareness of those who might view coaching as an intervention for teachers.

An intervention can also be defined as “the interference in the affairs of others for the purpose of compelling them or forbearing them to do certain acts.” When teachers view coaching as an “interference,” it hinders the work of the coach. To avoid this, we must work with coaches to ensure that teachers are initiating coaching interactions and are actively involved throughout the *Before, During, and After* portions of the coaching cycle. Coaching should support school initiatives and issues that are initiated by the teacher, not the coach.

The final definition, “the act of interfering with the outcome or course, especially of a condition or process, as to prevent harm or improve functioning,” is the closest, yet still not accurately depicting coaching. While coaching works to improve teacher practice and ultimately student achievement, it should not interfere with the desired outcomes of the school.

Is coaching an intervention? The glaring differences between how Merriam-Webster defines an intervention and how we define coaching clearly show that it is not.