

By [IU PIIC Mentors Scott Snyder and Alicia Hull](#)

When we began as coach mentors just a year ago, the future was cloudy and uncertain. How would we adapt to this new challenge? How would we design and plan for our meetings? How would we keep our coaches engaged and growing? There was a bigger issue too: would coaching even exist beyond the 2016-17 school year? Now, nearly a year later, we are still here and looking ahead to another year of instructional coach mentoring. How did we get here and where are we going next?

BEFORE it all began (before we were even officially IU Mentors), we worked with and learned from our predecessors to transition into this new role. Now, nearing the end of an academic year we begin our AFTER, pausing to reflect on what has happened throughout our year-long DURING, when we began our new roles, planned learning opportunities for our coaches, shepherded a flock through PLN, and designed breakout sessions for the PLO. We've adjusted our planning for our monthly sessions to address the needs of our coaches that we never expected when our year began.

So, how did we get here? Mentor meetings and RMC groups provided networking time which gave us opportunities to share our vision and discuss the course we would take towards it. The feedback and wisdom from mentors/RMCs helped us refine our practice. We utilized the knowledge and skills possessed by our veteran coaches and energy and innovation brought by new coaches. We aspired to grow professionally, participating in numerous learning opportunities.

Where are we going next? We are thrilled to be able to continue to network with other mentors and coaches. Entering year two, heavier mentoring, with a focus on the BDA cycle will produce heavier coaching. We are working on new ways to create opportunities for our coaches to connect and grow with one another, as we see the value in what is currently in place. Two regional professional development opportunities are on our calendars, and there will potentially be monthly online networking opportunities, allowing coaches and mentors within our region to explore and have conversations around areas of interest. We will continue our professional growth and will use the knowledge and wisdom gained to continue to push our coaches and ourselves, ultimately creating change in classrooms and increasing student achievement. While our future may not be crystal clear yet, there is a future, and that is what matters.