

13 TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS™

FOR A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY OF TEACHER LEADERS

WHAT'S INSIDE



NSDC PROFILE

As an instructional coach, Ric Palma helps teachers see their successes.

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Focus on the NSDC

standards:

EVALUATION

Not frightening at all, it's something we do every day.

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ROLE: Classroom supporter

PURPOSE: To increase the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction.

BY JOELLEN KILLION AND CYNTHIA HARRISON

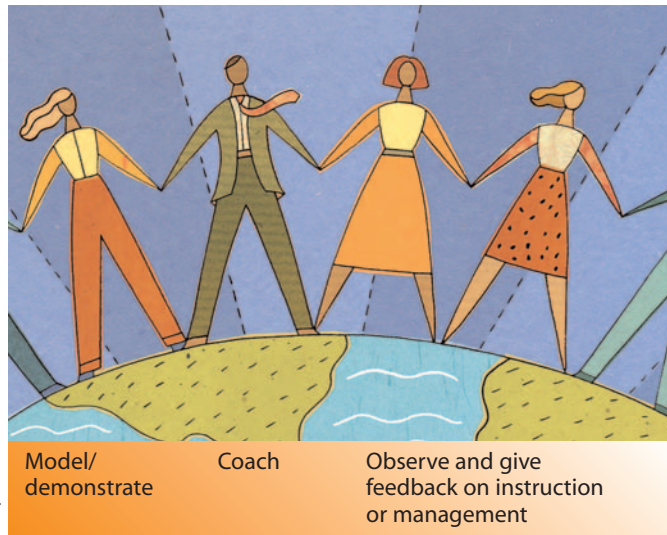
Last in an eight-part series about roles of the school-based coach

Coaches spend a great deal of their time working directly with teachers in their classrooms. In the role of classroom supporter, coaches choose from a range of possible support options. (See continuum at right.)

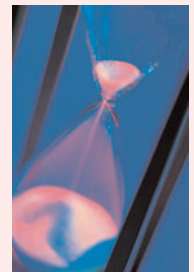
This range of options is built on the theory of gradual release.

Over time, the teacher assumes more responsibility for owning or enacting the new behaviors.

When a coach chooses to **model or demonstrate**, she does so in a classroom of students similar to the teacher's or in the teacher's classroom with his students. The coach co-plans a lesson, often in collaboration with the teacher, and conducts



the lesson with the teacher or a group of teachers observing. Sometimes, coaches teach part-time in a demonstration classroom in which they model instructional practices for visitors who may observe within the classroom or "behind the glass." Coaches choose modeling when a teaching practice is new, when teachers feel uncertain about how to implement a



NSDC TOOL

The Coach's Time Chart provides a wealth of information.

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Our goal: All teachers in all schools will experience high-quality professional learning as part of their daily work.

SCENARIO:
Classroom supporter at work

Bill Jackson, a differentiation coach, serves two elementary schools and a middle school. He spends one day a week at each elementary school and two days at the middle school. When he is on-site at his three schools, he divides his time working with teams of teachers planning and demonstrating, co-teaching, and observing individual teachers. Weekly, he concentrates on one grade-level team at the elementary and several interdisciplinary teams at the middle school. The week before he is scheduled to work with a grade or team, Jackson meets with the teachers to plan how he can best support them during his next visit. A look at part of one day in Jackson's schedule provides an example of how he serves as a classroom supporter.

Tuesday, Jansen Elementary

Time	Action
7:45 am	Meet with the 4th-grade team to plan work with the team next Tuesday.
8:30 am	Model tiering, the newest differentiation strategy in Ellie Repp's classroom. Frances Chevalier, another 2nd-grade teacher, slips in to observe the demonstration lesson.

new practice, when teachers have some disbelief or concern about how the practice will work with their students, or when a model or exemplar of the practice is needed.

Coaches may choose **co-teaching** as an option for classroom support. Co-teaching is the practice of sharing responsibility equally with the teacher. Both work collaboratively to plan the lesson and determine in advance the role each will play in the lesson. Sometimes, the division of responsibility falls along various aspects of the lesson design. For example, the teacher may review the previous lesson and present the lesson's objective and introduce the co-teacher.

The co-teacher (coach) may then activate students' background knowledge. Coaches choose co-teaching when the teacher has developed a beginning level of understanding and comfort with the new practice and when the teacher is ready to try the practice. Occasionally,

9:10 am	Debrief with Repp and Chevalier in Repp's classroom while her students are engaged in seat work.
9:30 am	Observe Phil Cook using learning centers. By prior agreement, observe how three students respond to the strategy.
10:00 am	Reviews notes for meeting with Phil Cook.
10:30 am	The principal slips into Cook's class so Cook and Jackson can meet in the conference room. Jackson uses the descriptive protocol to share data from the lesson. Together, they discuss the implications of the data and plan for Cook's next steps.
11:00 am	Co-teach with Barbara Black.
11:30 am	Eat lunch with the 2nd-grade team. The four teachers share what they have learned during the morning and how they can use the new differentiation strategies.

In a typical morning, Jackson holds three meetings with teachers, models a differentiation strategy, and co-teaches another. He moves quickly and fluidly among the various aspects of this role, prepared for each one.

** Fictitious names and school*

coaches will encounter teachers who are so comfortable with the coach modeling that they resist co-teaching. Gentle urging is one strategy to encourage teachers to take the risk to co-teach with the coach.

A third option for the coach as classroom supporter is **observing and offering feedback through reflection conferences** (Costa & Garmston, 2002). In this stance, the coach usually, although not always, meets with the teacher before observing the lesson to determine the area of focus for the observation. The coach watches the teacher conduct a lesson, gathers data on a mutually agreed-upon focus area, and meets with the teacher following the lesson to debrief what occurred. The coach uses one of a number of feedback protocols to assist the teacher in reflecting on his or her lesson. A coach chooses observing and giving feedback when teachers have implemented the new practices within their own

T3 has presented one role of the school-based coach each month.

9 roles of the school-based coach

- Catalyst for change (T3, April 2006)
- **Classroom supporter**
- Curriculum specialist (T3, Feb. 2006)
- Data coach (T3, Oct. 2005)
- Instructional specialist (T3, March 2006)
- Learning facilitator (T3, Sept. 2005)
- Mentor (T3, Nov. 2005)
- Resource provider
- School leader (T3, Dec./Jan. 2006)

From *9 Roles of the School-Based Coach* by Joellen Killion and Cynthia Harrison

classrooms independently and are ready to receive feedback on their practice.

Knowledge and skills

The knowledge and skills a coach uses as a classroom supporter are extensive. When demonstrating, coaches have a deep understanding of the curriculum and instructional strategies and use the skills of master teachers. In co-teaching, coaches use their knowledge of curriculum, assessment, and instruction along with the specific skills of honoring the partner teacher, making agreements, and sharing responsibility. As an observer and feedback provider, the coach knows the elements of effective instruction. In addition, the coach uses skills in observation, data collection, analysis, giving feedback, promoting metacognition and reflection in, on, and for practice, and building trusting relationships. Most importantly, coaches in this role know how to move teachers along the continuum so that teachers develop independence rather than dependence. All dimensions of this role rest on the coach's ability to build trusting relationships, demonstrate respect for the teacher, listen fully, and communicate clearly and concisely.

Challenges

The greatest challenge a coach faces in this role is getting stuck on the demonstration end of the classroom supporter continuum. While this is an easy way to show teachers what instruction and learning might look like, it is also a comfortable place for teachers to stay because they have less responsibility and accountability for student learning as an observer of a demonstration lesson. Coaches also sometimes find it easier to demonstrate rather than co-teach because that means they fully control the success of the lesson.

A danger in co-teaching is overstepping agreed-upon boundaries to take over for the teacher if the lesson is not going well. When observing and giving feedback, a coach sometimes faces the challenge of balancing warm and cool feedback in an artful way that helps the teacher clearly know the areas for improvement, while not overwhelming the teacher with too much information. A tremendous challenge for coaches is knowing when and how to move the teacher along the continuum to increase the teacher's responsibility and accountability for student learning while ensuring that the teacher is both comfortable and confident. ♦

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NEW WEB SITE FOR NSDC MEMBERS ONLY

The members-only area of the NSDC web site has been redesigned and expanded, thanks to an exciting partnership with Microsoft Partners in Learning.

New features include:

- **New staff development communities:** Discussion areas designed to support collaboration and information sharing among members with similar concerns.
- **NSDC members library:** Full archives of NSDC publications, links to valuable web resources, and a special collection of staff development tools organized in one place.
- **Professional development in the news:** Links to current news stories about professional development policies and practices.

You'll find everything you've come to expect from NSDC's web site plus more!

NSDC thanks the Microsoft Partners in Learning Program for its support in building this site for members.

To log into the new web site, follow these easy steps:

1. Go to members.nsd.org.
2. Use your NSDC membership ID (on the mailing label of this publication) and the password **learning** in the box that opens.
3. Fill out a quick profile of yourself for members to see.
4. Create a unique password.
5. Use your NSDC membership ID and new password to access the entire site.

Questions? E-mail tracy.crow@nsdc.org for answers.