



Coaches are the multipliers that schools need

In her book, *Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter*, Liz Wiseman describes two types of leaders. The first, diminishers, are those who drain intelligence, energy, and capability from the people around them or those who always need to be the smartest person in the room. On the other side of the spectrum are leaders who use their intelligence to amplify the smarts and capabilities of the people around them. These leaders are known as multipliers. They inspire others to stretch themselves to deliver results that surpass expectations.

The Leadership standard describes three core practices of leaders: capacity development, advocacy for professional learning, and the establishment of support systems. Multipliers, as described by Wiseman, are masters in these areas.

Teacher leaders, specifically coaches, can be the multipliers that schools need by aligning their actions with Wiseman's five types of multipliers (see box at right):

- Work with a transparent agenda, refraining from selling ideas, making all of the decisions, or telling people what to do.
- Increase individual and collective efficacy by including teachers in key decisions about their work.
- Foster dialogue, reflection, and risk-taking to build capacity in others and allow for more im-

proved collaboration, confidence, and practice.

- Ask questions that will foster a culture of inquiry and learning, and promote independent thinking and honor what teachers know.
 - Stay apprised of teacher's knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices to be able to acknowledge their strengths, connect them with others they can collaborate with and support, and share opportunities that are aligned with their strengths.
 - Create a safe environment that allows teachers and teams to try new practices, and follow up with timely feedback.
 - Seek ways to challenge teams to be problem solvers and take responsibility for their own solutions, and refrain from micromanaging the work.
 - Solicit support from teachers in making decisions about next steps and creating directions for responding to information collected from student and team data.
- Students and teachers deserve multipliers in their schools. As a coach, continue to enact the Leadership standard by building capacity in others and leveraging their knowledge and skills. Whenever possible, lead people in the right direction and take yourself out of the equation, giving people space to demonstrate your belief in their capabilities of others. Know when to provide gentle pressure, feedback, and follow up to support ongoing progress.



FIVE TYPES OF MULTIPLIERS

The talent magnet: Attracts talented people and uses them to their highest potential.

The liberator: Creates an intense environment that requires people's best thinking and work.

The challenger: Defines an opportunity that causes people to stretch their thinking and behaviors.

The debate maker: Drives sound decisions by cultivating rigorous debate among team members.

The investor: Gives other people ownership of results and invests in their success.

REFERENCES

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