Chapter 3: Characteristics of effective coaches

	TOOL	PURPOSE
3.1	**Instructional coach professional development plan**	Use this tool as a coach to set goals and action plans for professional growth related to student achievement.
3.2	**Instructional coach self-assessment**	Assess your strengths and areas of need as a coach in relation to the attributes of effective coaches.
3.3	**Instructional coach self-assessment activity**	Assess your strengths and areas of need as a coach in relation to the attributes of effective coaches using a Likert scale.
3.4	**Principles we live by**	Follow this process to examine your principles and beliefs about your work as an instructional coach.

TOOL 3.1

Instructional coach professional development plan

Instructional coach:
School:
Principal:
Date:

Results related to student achievement		Indicators of success related to student achievement	
Actions/strategies to achieve results	**Persons involved/ responsible**	**Timeline**	**Resources needed**

TOOL 3.2
Instructional coach self-assessment

Complete the following self-assessment tool to gain deeper insight into your characteristics as a coach.

Consider the degree to which each statement is true for you, and mark the corresponding number.

Reflect on the results, and revisit the tool periodically to monitor your own growth.

1 = Not at all true of me
2 = Somewhat true of me
3 = Very true of me

CATEGORY: BELIEF		1	2	3
BEHAVIOR	1. I am willing to learn.			
	2. I have a passion for ongoing development and learning.			
	3. I believe that everyone is important.			
	4. I believe in the capacity of others to grow and develop.			
	5. I do not assume I have the answer.			
	6. I am committed to continuous improvement.			
	7. I have moral purpose.			
	8. I can let go of being responsible for another person's behaviors.			
CATEGORY: TEACHING EXPERTISE				
BEHAVIOR	1. I am skilled in instructional planning.			
	2. I have strong classroom organization and management skills.			
	3. I am fluent in multiple methods of delivering instruction.			
	4. I use multiple methods to assess student learning.			
	5. I have demonstrated success as a classroom teacher.			
	6. I articulate my practice.			
	7. I reflect on my practice.			

TOOL 3.2 cont'd

CATEGORY: COACHING SKILLS				
BEHAVIOR	1.	I understand and apply knowledge about adult development.			
	2.	I listen skillfully.			
	3.	I communicate effectively.			
	4.	I use effective questioning skills.			
	5.	I understand and use a specific reflection process.			
	6.	I diagnose teacher needs.			
CATEGORY: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS					
BEHAVIOR	1.	I want to be part of a team.			
	2.	I work effectively with teachers and principals.			
	3.	I build trusting relationships.			
	4.	I am respected by my peers.			
	5.	I am patient with people as they learn.			
CATEGORY: CONTENT EXPERTISE					
BEHAVIOR	1.	I possess and apply appropriate, in-depth content knowledge.			
	2.	I use extensive research and theory to support instructional decisions.			
CATEGORY: LEADERSHIP SKILLS					
BEHAVIOR	1.	I understand and apply knowledge about change.			
	2.	I communicate the school's vision.			
	3.	I align work with school goals.			
	4.	I use data to drive decisions.			
	5.	I engage others in developing improvement plans.			
	6.	I maintain a productive culture.			

Source: Adapted from *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches,* by Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison, Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council, 2006.

TOOL 3.3
Instructional coach self-assessment activity

Characteristics of effective school-based coaches
Directions
1. Read the list of qualities of effective instructional coaches.
2. Write a plus sign (+) next to the attributes you believe are your strengths.
3. Write an asterisk (*) next to attributes you want to improve.
4. Place a question mark (?) next to those you aren't sure about.

BELIEFS	TEACHING EXPERTISE	COACHING SKILLS
Is willing to learn	Is skilled in instructional planning	Understands and applies knowledge about adult development
Has a passion for ongoing development and learning	Has strong classroom organization and management skills	Listens skillfully
Believes that everyone is important	Is fluent in multiple methods of delivering instruction	Communicates effectively
Believes in the capacity of others to grow and develop	Uses multiple methods to assess student learning	Communicates effectively
Does not presume to have the answer	Demonstrates success as a classroom teacher	Uses effective questioning skills
Is committed to continuous improvement	Articulates practice	Understands and uses a specific reflection process
Has moral purpose	Reflects on practice	Diagnoses teachers' needs
Can let go of being responsible for another person's behaviors		Aligns support with teachers' identified needs

TOOL 3.3 cont'd

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS		CONTENT EXPERTISE		LEADERSHIP SKILLS	
	Wants to be part of a team		Possesses and applies appropriate, in-depth content knowledge		Understands and applies knowledge about change
	Works effectively with teachers and principals		Uses extensive research and theory to support instructional decisions		Communicates the school's vision
	Builds trusting relationships				Aligns work with school goals
	Is respected by peers				Uses data to drive decisions
	Is willing to be patient with people as they engage in the learning process				Engages others in developing improvement plans
					Maintains a productive culture

TOOL 3.4

Principles we live by

Purpose: To explore the principles coaches and others hold and how those principles influence what occurs each day in schools for teachers, principals, learning coaches, and students.

Directions: Read the text below for an explanation of mental models — the principles that people form in their minds that explain how they interpret reality and that influence how they approach experiences. Discuss how people develop principles through experiences, perceptions, discourse, or imagination.

Principles shape our thoughts, words, and actions

"PRINCIPLES SHAPE OUR THOUGHTS, WORDS, AND ACTIONS. They influence our decisions. They guide us in problem solving. They serve as touchstones that we continually return to when we face conflict, dilemmas, or challenges. They set a common foundation shared by members of a community. Members of the community are also challenged to uphold and protect the principles because they shape what the community stands for.

"EACH PERSON LIVES BY A SET OF PRINCIPLES. Some of our principles are unquestioned and fundamental to who we are. Some are new to us and through our experiences and dialogue we continue to clarify and deepen our understanding of them. Our principles guide our work, thoughts, goals, actions, and decisions.

"PRINCIPLES ARE UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS required in a system of thought and are often spoken of as laws for moral or ethical decision making. We frequently hear, 'It's the principle of it.'

"PRINCIPLES ENDURE OVER TIME. They supersede time, programs, strategies, and current practices. They serve as the driver behind programs, strategies, and practice. Principles shape and drive what we say, think, and do. What we say, think, and do conversely serve as the symbolic indicators to others of our principles. Our words and actions convey how deeply we hold our principles. Our principles also can create dissonance within ourselves if we act and speak in a way that is incongruent with them. They can be the source of deep conflict between people or the source of strong alliances among people."

TOOL 3.4 cont'd

Our principles as related to learning coaches

Write about the principles that drive your work, focusing on adults as learners, inclusion, and the learning coach as promoter of change and instructional improvement. Be prepared to share your thinking.

AREA	MY PRINCIPLE(S)	OTHERS' PRINCIPLES
Adults as learners		
Inclusion		
Learning coach as promoter of change and instructional improvement		

Source: *The learning educator: A new era for professional learning*, by Stephanie Hirsh and Joellen Killion, Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council, 2007.