

Leveraging feedback and coaching

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Developing coaching skills and understanding stances

Purpose	To support principals in understanding and strengthening essential coaching skills and stances for advancing individual and team learning and reflection.
Recommended time	3–4 hours over 2 or 3 sessions
Materials	<p>Tool 6.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Coach Innovation Configurations (IC) Map, pages 3–6 • Principal as Coach Growth Plan, page 7 • Coaching Stances, page 8 • Coaching Scenarios, page 9
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the entire tool and decide how you will use it. The exercises will work best if you engage others in the process. Consider members of your administrative team, a principal learning partner or community, and/or your supervisor. 2. Rate yourself on the Principal Coach IC Map, pages 3–6 and invite others to provide similar input as appropriate. 3. Use the Principal as Coach Growth Plan, page 7, to support analysis of the findings, identification of future learning and improvement goals, and development of a learning plan. 4. Review Coaching Stances, page 8, carefully to develop understanding of each coaching stance. Consider deeper study by reading Chapter 7 in <i>The Coach's Craft: Powerful Practices to Support School Leaders</i> (Learning Forward, 2011). 5. As you work through the Coaching Stances, consider that highly effective principals as coaches may move from one stance to another working with the same team at the same time. Needs may change throughout a professional learning community session. 6. Complete the Coaching Scenarios, page 9. 7. Consider asking a peer or supervisor to observe you as you work with an individual or team, and, afterwards, engage with you in a coaching feedback conversation.

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Principal Coach Innovation Configurations Map

Innovation Configurations for Highly Effective Principals as Coaches

<p>Definition: Principals acting as coaches want to improve the skills and effectiveness of the teaching staff in ways that increase the success of all students. To do that, they use listening and questioning techniques that allow teachers and teaching teams to value their own learning, establish learning opportunities for themselves, explore connections between teachers and students, and implement their curriculum materials appropriately and strategically to advance teaching and learning.</p>	
<p>Rationale: Principals use a variety of coaching stances to build trusting relationships with individuals and teaching teams. Quality coaching inspires and energizes others. By questioning and challenging assumptions in the school, teaching teams learn more aggressively and change their practices with greater confidence because the thoughts and ideas matter.</p>	
<p>Desired outcome 1:</p>	<p>The principal as coach builds a safe and nurturing environment by being totally committed to others and their success, sees the strengths in others (not just the challenges), helps teams see possibilities and work toward achieving challenging goals for themselves and their students, and comes from the view that anything is possible and that teaching teams are in control of the factors that impact student learning.</p>
<p>Desired outcome 2:</p>	<p>The principal as coach structures the learning to ensure that teams engage in effective learning communities.</p>
<p>Desired outcome 3:</p>	<p>The principal as coach is the model learner and continuously seeks to improve his practices as a leader and as a coach.</p>

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Innovation Configurations for Highly Effective Principal Coaches, continued

<p>Desired outcome 1: The principal as coach builds a safe and nurturing environment by being totally committed to others and their success, sees the strengths in others (not just the challenges), helps teams see possibilities and work toward achieving challenging goals for themselves and their students, and comes from the view that anything is possible and that teaching teams are in control of the factors that impact student learning.</p>				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal as coach is a trusted confidante and builds trusting relationships among all staff and students. • The principal as coach has high regard for the teaching staff and student population’s emotional safety and security. • The principal as coach deeply understands individual and organizational change and the principles of systems thinking and adult learning. • The principal as coach maintains high regard for the teaching staff and communicates clearly their value and contributions to the school’s success. • The principal as coach communicates clearly his/her confidence in the staff to lead their own learning and to set and achieve challenging goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal as coach is valued and trusted by all on the staff and students. • The principal as coach understands that adults have different learning needs and designs coaching strategies that best meet the individual needs of learners. • The principal as coach uses systems thinking to design learning for all in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though the principal as coach values trusting relationships with staff and students, he is not comfortable in being open and honest in all situations with the staff and students. • Though the principal as coach understands that adults learn in different ways, he insists on all staff engaging in the same professional learning and rarely allows learning communities to focus just on their own learning needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal as coach does not intentionally focus on building trusting relationships. • The principal as coach designs incident driven professional learning and rarely engages anyone in a cycle of continuous improvement. 	

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Innovation Configurations for Highly Effective Principal Coaches, continued

Desired outcome 2:				
The principal as coach structures the learning to ensure that teams engage in effective learning communities.				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach is grounded in the definition, standards, principles and practices of effective professional learning. The principal as coach uses a variety of modeling, mediating, visioning, and inquiry strategies to help the teaching teams develop purposeful, goal-oriented systems that engage them in the 5-Stage Cycle of Continuous Learning The principal as coach skillfully selects adult learning designs that best meet the needs of teams they serve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach uses research and inquiry skills to help the teaching teams understand the value of and the processes of high-quality professional learning. The principal as coach focuses all teaching teams on learning new skills, developing new attitudes toward each other and their students, and applying new approaches to teaching to increase their success and the success of their students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach uses effective questioning strategies skillfully in working with teaching teams. The principal as coach helps the teaching teams establish goals for their own learning based on the needs of their students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach uses storytelling and questioning strategies that leave the teaching teams unsure of what to do next. The principal as coach is unclear about the attributes of effective professional learning and uses incident-focused problem-solving strategies that do not engage teams in a cycle of continuous improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach attends the learning community sessions but is unclear when to interject questions that might lead to new ways of thinking or new practices. Because the principal as coach is unclear about the attributes of effective professional learning, whatever the learning communities decide to do is acceptable.

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Innovation Configurations for Highly Effective Principals as Coaches, continued

Desired outcome 3: The principal as coach is the model learner and continuously seeks to improve his/her practices as a leader and as a coach.				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach routinely self-assesses and regularly requests feedback from staff and students about his effectiveness. The principal as coach works collaboratively with other principals to strengthen his coaching and leadership skills. The principal as coach sets learning goals for himself to use new coaching skills and implements selected strategies to develop competence in them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach continuously engages in learning new strategies to increase his/her coaching effectiveness. The principal as coach regularly sets learning goals for himself and works to develop competence in using them effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach attends conferences and sessions on coaching effectively and stays current in the research around coaching. The principal as coach reflects on what he is learning, but rarely if ever sets goals to increase skills in coaching others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach views himself as learners but does not have effective personal learning strategies to increase his effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal as coach is content with his coaching skills.

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Principal as Coach Growth Plan

Complete the following questions:
The strengths I discovered as I determined my level of expertise in the desired outcomes are:
My greatest challenge in each area is:
My first priority is:
My SMART goal for the next _____ weeks is:
I will use the following strategies to strengthen my skills and achieve my goal:
I will seek the following types of support from my partner principals or my supervisor:
I will use the following measures of my progress and effectiveness:

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Coaching Stances

Mentoring			
Purpose	Dispositions	Skills	Notes — Teams where I may need to use this approach
To help teaching teams develop skills in curriculum analysis, assessment design and use, instructional design, and use of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect for beginners and the skills, enthusiasm, and energy they bring to their work High expectations for success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modeling Planning Next-step thinking Listening Questioning 	
Facilitative coaching			
Purpose	Dispositions	Skills	Notes — Teams where I may need to use this approach
To help teaching teams use effective collaborative processes, the Five-Step Cycle process, and to design the teams learning agenda for themselves and their students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team I am coaching is very capable of solving their own issues and setting their own goals. The support I give will relate to the systems essential for their success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning Evaluating conversation for assessments and ungrounded assertions Paraphrasing Observing Problem solving Engaging in feedback conversations Reflective practices 	
Collaborative/consultative coaching			
Purpose	Dispositions	Skills	Notes — Teams where I may need to use this approach
For the team to generate powerful learning for themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are in this together. I will learn as much as they will learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening Questioning Problem-solving Systems thinking Planning Envisioning Assessing progress and impact 	
Coaching for mastery			
Purpose	Dispositions	Skills	Notes — Teams where I may need to use this approach
To insist that all on the teaching team achieve high levels of proficiency — and to assist them in doing so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone, absolutely everyone, can be a star! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision building Listening Questioning Reflecting Engaging in feedback conversations Sustaining innovations Persistence Progress monitoring Celebrating progress 	

Source: Adapted from *The Coach's Craft: Powerful Practices to Support School Leaders*, p. 188 by Kay Psencik. Copyright 2011 Learning Forward.

Principal coaching skills and understanding stances, continued

Coaching Scenarios

Scenario 1:	The five-member 4th-grade team is really struggling to implement new curriculum materials provided by the district. One teacher who joined the team to select the materials is frustrated with the rest of the team for not “getting on board.” Another member, a new teacher with much to offer, rarely speaks up. Team members generally have had trusting relationships, but these perspectives have disrupted the working relationship. Through several observations the principal coach has been reflecting on her approach to working with the team. Share what you think her approach to coaching should be and why.
Scenario 2:	The high school language arts team is a strong team. They work well together and trust one another. They value their professional learning time. They are experienced teachers and their approach to instruction is traditional. The district has selected a new approach to teach ELA at the secondary level and the team is not the least bit excited about it. They may not like the state test results of their students, but they like what they do and they believe the students are the problem: They don’t read well enough; they do not do their homework; they don’t like ELA classes. Although the coach principal has tried several strategies; he has not been successful in shifting their practice to the new skills. Share what coaching approach he should use and why.
Scenario 3:	Write your own:

Leveraging feedback

Purpose	Feedback, like coaching, is an opportunity to engage with teachers and teaching teams in meaningful conversations about their practice for the purpose of increasing instructional effectiveness and student achievement.
Recommended time	Individual or team coaching — 1 hour per session for multiple sessions aligned to same goal
Materials	<p>Tool 6.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Art of Feedback,” pages 11–13 • Text Analysis Protocol, page 14 • Feedback Process Readiness, page 15 • Learning Partner Invitations, page 17
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the entire tool and determine with whom you want to use it. Consider your administrative team and instructional coaches, principal learning community, or a principal learning partner. Be prepared to adjust the exercises to accommodate the needs or interests of the participants. 2. Record the main ideas to guide discussion of key learnings. 3. Use Feedback Process Readiness on pages 15–16 to prepare for a future feedback session with a learning team or individual. Complete page 16 after the session and reflect on your findings with the other participants. 4. Review Using Learning Partner Invitations on page 17 and identify an individual or learning team for practicing these phrases. Reflect on the experience with other participants. 5. Use these questions for a final reflection on the value of this tool: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn about the principal as coach from the use of this tool? • What skills in using the tool do you want to develop so that it becomes a natural part of your leadership skill sets? • How might you change it to better meet the needs of your teams? • How might you differentiate its use depending on the needs of your teams?

Leveraging feedback, continued

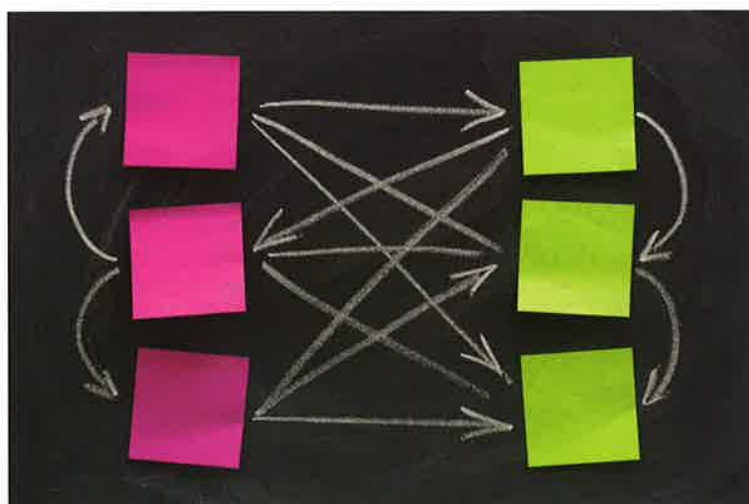
THE ART OF FEEDBACK

Support observers with a system that ensures learning-focused conversations

By Anthony Armstrong

When Jeffery Pestrak, chief academic officer for Mastery Charter Schools in Philadelphia, Pa., was assigned as a principal at a struggling school in need of turnaround, he quickly discovered that providing observational feedback to teachers was more complicated than he first imagined. “I would give the teachers feedback about their practice, and they might value it or they might not. Sometimes they would flatly disagree with what were best practices or what was getting results with students. I realized at that time that I was observing and giving feedback without conveying what I would be valuing.”

This type of disconnect about how to define quality instruction is just one of many complex considerations for feedback that Pestrak has addressed over the years. Now, in his role as chief academic officer, Pestrak understands the importance of creating an effective feedback system and makes it an important part of Mastery’s three-day coaching institute every summer. Mastery also conducts other observation learning throughout the year. These include calibration events, where observers make sure their feedback is consistent from one person to the next, and peer leader-



ship reviews that bring observers from different campuses together to conduct a simultaneous observation and share their feedback with each other.

START AT THE SYSTEM LEVEL

For Laura Lipton, co-author with Bruce Wellman of *Learning-Focused Supervision* (in press) and co-director of MiraVia, a publishing and professional development company, effective feedback is learning-focused, complex, and an integral part of a learning system: “Feedback that
Continued”

Leveraging feedback, continued

The Art of Feedback, continued

Continued.

leads to growth and improvement is data-driven, is based on shared definitions and understandings between parties, acts as a foundation for conversation, and sets goals and improves practice by naming strengths and gaps in relation to a clear set of standards.”

Professional learning leaders often draw distinctions between coaching feedback and evaluation feedback, citing the need for coaching feedback to be nonjudgmental and unattached to the pressures and consequences of an evaluation process. However, the systemic foundation and framework for both types of feedback are almost identical for Lipton. “Whatever the label is, they both have to have a preponderance of types of evidence that substantiates descriptions of practice,” she said. “You can be an evaluator and still have a learning-focused conversation that produces greater learning, forward movement, and problem solving. It is a matter of clarity of purpose and skillful communication.”

These conversations are often sources of anxiety for those receiving the feedback, so *how* the feedback is delivered is as critical as *what* is being delivered. According to Lipton, this anxiety comes from being judged on one’s frailties or weak points and can hinder the learning and improvement process. “This is why skillfulness in providing feedback needs to be deep and sophisticated,” explained Lipton. “Evaluators need to believe that they are growth agents. They need a developmental mindset that tells them the purpose of the feedback is not to judge or be the end of a conversation. Feedback is just the beginning of a conversation that explores and improves practice. If these conversations are done well, they will shift the culture to start having data-driven, inquiry-based conversations between colleagues about improving practice.”

based conversations between colleagues about improving practice. This shift gives everyone permission to give each other feedback and ask tough questions about what’s happening in the school.”

BUILD A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

According to Lipton, feedback is only as good as the

opportunity to make meaning from it and apply that meaning to the receiver’s own practice. To do that, Lipton says, the relationship between the giver and receiver of feedback needs to be clearly developmental and growth-oriented. This means there is a culturally shared belief that everyone can move forward to improve practice, and the feedback conversations establish a baseline and clarity about desired growth and desirable practice. “The system’s values can be conveyed clearly and modeled congruently by the system leader and others,” said Lipton. “The on-the-ground person can be clear by naming some of the outcomes of the conversations, the use of feedback, the desired qualities of the supervisor-teacher relationship, etc.”

“Strategizing together helps the receiver increase capacity to self-monitor and self-modify — based on the same set of standards. This way, the language choices made by the evaluator become the internal talk of the teacher.”

While coaches will often cite the need to establish strong relationships first before providing feedback, Lipton feels that it is possible to relate to someone in a way that helps them feel safe and emotionally secure, if one pays attention to the psychological and emotional aspects of providing feedback. Learning skills to establish psychological and emotional safety is critical for engaging in these types of conversations, said Lipton, and feedback providers should learn how to use verbal and nonverbal practices to demonstrate an underlying belief in the exploration of practice.

“If you look at the neurology of the brain,” Lipton explained, “people shut down and do not have the capacity for complex thought when they feel threatened. This can happen if they feel they are being judged, or if they think that the evaluator feels they are not up to the task. To prevent this, the evaluator must learn to avoid questions that can be threatening. Inquiries must be exploratory and not have a ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ dynamic. For example, when the evaluator asks, ‘Can you think of...’ the question itself expresses the potential doubt that the receiver can think of something. Instead, the question can be phrased as ‘What might be some ways to...’ which invites exploration of the topic at hand. Instead of asking ‘What might be *the* cause of...’ which implies that there is one right answer, one could ask

Continued



“Feedback is just the beginning of a conversation that explores and improves practice. If these conversations are done well, they will shift the culture to start having data-driven, inquiry-based conversations between colleagues about improving practice.”

Leveraging feedback, continued

The Art of Feedback, continued

Continued.

‘What might be *some* causes of...’ which implies that there is more than one correct answer.

“Therefore, the feedback giver is continually making intentional choices about verbal and nonverbal communication that leads to creating an environment of emotional safety, which gives the receiver the capacity to have cognitive complexity in the conversation.”

PROVIDE SUPPORT

Pesttrak understands the importance of making sure teacher evaluators are skilled in providing high-quality feedback and builds it into the system’s professional learning schedule. “We do a significant amount of training on providing feedback and conducting observations and coaching,” said Pesttrak. “During our summer institute, Molly Eigen, our deputy chief academic officer, who is the brains and execution behind our coaching model and training, makes sure our coaches also study effective teacher practice, conduct modeling and norming activities — where we compare observation notes from different observers, review data to look at trends, review teacher thoughts on coaching and observations, and examine input from the supervisors of our observers.”

To provide coaches and other observers with a solid foundation for delivering quality feedback, Mastery starts with the links between instructional models, coaching, and evaluation and how that alignment drives professional learning for teachers. “At the core of our instructional system is our instructional standards document,” said Pesttrak, “which we use to drive induction, orientation, and ongoing professional development for teachers. When our coaches coach, everything they use comes from it, such as observation tools, targeted feedback, and classroom visits. Everyone knows what expectation is — what we consider quality instruction.”

The summer learning Pesttrak provides is then supported throughout the year. “Everyone has a supervisor who provides coaching and support. They co-observe, calibrate, and review observations. We also have regional directors and directors of teacher coaching that can support principals and assistant principals as well. We routinely collect formal observation data, look for trends, and talk with people about what we see in the data. We will have assistant principals and principals from several schools gather in one school to co-observe one teacher. They will record and review their observations collectively. We might also watch videos of teachers to calibrate our observational practices. So there is this constant conversation about the feedback that administrators and coaches provide to ensure they are

improving and in alignment.”

Helping facilitate these constant feedback conversations, said Pesttrak, is Mastery’s value-based culture. “We have a culture of open doors where teachers and administrators talk to each other. Everyone should feel comfortable in talking to each other. One of our values is straight talk, which means that we should be able to talk with each other in a direct and nice way.”

Mastery schools use formal observations that are based on their five instructional standards and require both a rating and a narrative. “We have our observers rate the teachers on each of our five instructional standards and the accompanying specific strategies we expect to see being used to implement the standards,” said Pesttrak. “The observers then write comments for each that form a narrative of the observation, like ‘The lesson was conveyed clearly and was highly focused. Could use more checking for understanding and cold calling.’ ”

Because Mastery’s instructional standards and expectations are the basis for observation and feedback, the process is assured alignment, a common language, and clear goals for moving forward. “All of our professional development, induction, teacher coaching, and performance-based evaluation system is directly tied to our instructional standards,” said Pesttrak. “The ideal that we work towards is transparency as to what the observer is looking for; training to prepare the teacher for such an instructional approach; agreement among all that those key standards and focus areas are valued; and the confidence that our observers know how to evaluate. These have all contributed to our improvements in practice and gains in student achievement.”

According to Lipton, the importance of ensuring that evaluators can provide the right quality of feedback and deliver it with psychological and emotional skill cannot be overstated. “Without high-quality feedback, people will stagnate — there will be no growth. When people engage in rich conversations, it changes the culture to one of collective efficacy. Shining spots of distinguished practice are not enough to produce rich learning for all kids. Teachers and administrators need to talk with each other, learn, be willing to learn, and see each other as resources so that we are all moving forward in improving practice.”

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Learning Forward BELIEF

Sustainable learning cultures require skillful leadership.

See
 pp. 6-7 for
 tools that help
 structure feedback
 conversations.

Leveraging feedback, continued

Text Analysis Protocol

Task	Time
1. Select a facilitator to keep the group on track and a timekeeper to provide one-minute warnings before transitions.	5 minutes
2. Read the article silently.	15 minutes
3. Re-read the article, underlining or highlighting sentences, phrases, or words that are significant to you as a reader.	5 minutes
4. In pairs, Partner A shares with Partner B his or her highlighted ideas, explaining why they were significant and where they appear in the text. Partner B then shares with Partner A.	10 minutes
5. Have each group summarize common themes or ideas for the whole group.	20 minutes
6. Debrief the process.	5 minutes

Leveraging feedback, continued

Feedback Process Readiness

As you prepare for the feedback process, ask yourself, “How am I addressing each key attribute?”

In the second column below, jot a note about how you plan to address each attribute to assess your readiness to enter the feedback process. For example, in response to “is criteria-based,” you might note that you will have the performance standards and rubric available for reference.

Key attributes of effective feedback	How am I addressing this attribute?
Is a process	
Is criteria-based	
Integrates multiple forms and sources of data/evidence	
Is desired	
Is timely	
Is responsive to learner	
Is frequent	
Is future-focused	
Is reciprocal	
Employs skillful interaction	

Source: Reprinted with permission from *JSD 36(5)*, “Attributes of an Effective Feedback Process,” pages 59–61. Copyright 2015 Learning Forward.

Leveraging feedback, continued

Post-Feedback Process Readiness

As you reflect on the feedback process you participated in, ask yourself, “How did I attend to each attribute, and what might I want to do to strengthen how I integrate each into the feedback process?” In the second and third columns, record your responses. For example, in response to “is a process,” you might rate your inclusion of this attribute a 2. In the third column, you might note that you want to shift from giving information to facilitating the construction of knowledge by talking less, listening more, and asking powerful questions.

Key attributes of effective feedback	How well did I attend to this attribute? Scale: 1 (not well) to 3 (well)	What do I want to do to strengthen my feedback process?
Is a process		
Is criteria-based		
Integrates multiple forms and sources of data/evidence		
Is desired		
Is timely		
Is responsive to learner		
Is frequent		
Is future-focused		
Is reciprocal		
Employs skillful interaction		
Is multidimensional		

Source: Reprinted with permission from *JSD* 36(5), “Attributes of an Effective Feedback Process,” pages 59–61. Copyright 2015 Learning Forward.

Leveraging feedback, continued

Learning Partner Invitations

Component	Learning partner invitations	Questions
Review learning goals	Let's review your learning goal.	
Specify indicators for success	Tell me about the criteria for success.	
Collect data	Tell me about the student work that we are discussing today.	
Analyze data and evidence	Let's examine this data together.	
Construct knowledge	Let's reflect on what you are learning about your students; about yourselves.	
Deconstruct knowledge	Let's explore when this learning might not apply to your work in the future and/or how it might vary.	
Determine next actions and make commitments	Tell me what you are considering about how you might use this learning in the future. Tell me about what you are committing to do next as a result of this work.	
Reflect on feedback process	Tell me about how I might be more effective in coaching you and the team in the future.	
Integrate knowledge	Tell me how you are going to apply your learnings next week and when I can check back with you about it.	

Adapted from *The Feedback Process: Transforming Feedback for Professional Learning*, pp. 68–69 by Joellen Killion. Copyright 2015 Learning Forward.

Practicing committed listening

Purpose	To increase principal effectiveness in listening.
Recommended time	2–3 hours for initial practice
Materials	Tool 6.3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening Guide, page 19
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This tool is designed for the principal. The principal may want to share it with others after completing some of the exercises in it. 2. Consider this: Listening is a difficult skill to develop in our modern world of “sound bites” and “tweets. Your goal is to practice listening throughout an entire conversation. Don’t interrupt or offer your advice or opinions. Your disposition is: “I am listening to you. What you have to say is the only thing that matters.” Reflect on what you are learning about the other person and about yourself. 3. Go to the school library, media center, or cafeteria and sit with students. Just listen. Do not make judgments about the students, their assignments, their teachers, the cafeteria, or media center. Note what you are learning by listening. Practice listening like this often. 4. Attend a learning community session in your school. Just listen without judgment. What new observations are you making about the team by being in their presence and listening? About team members? About the trust among team members? About their interactions? What is different about you when you simply listen? 5. Use the Listening Guide, page 19, to determine the quality of the listening that you do and to guide goal setting for improving your skill as a listener.

Practicing committed listening, continued

Listening Guide

Descriptor	Reflections	Personal goal
I listen carefully to what is said without interruption — refraining from comment, commiseration, and offering assistance — until the person is finished. When the person seems to be done, I inquire, “What else?” to make sure the person has fully spoken on the subject at hand.		
I convey nonverbally my full attention and interest in what is being said.		
I minimize my use of statements or questions that direct the conversations or subtly convey a point of view. I trust that people will reveal to me as little or as much as they wish.		
I genuinely honor the speaker’s views even though I might not agree with them. I am working on listening not defending my position.		
I refrain from analyzing what has been said and why it is being said so that I am fully engaged with, and respect, the other person.		
I reflect on the skills I am developing as a listener and recommit to my practice of becoming a powerful listener.		

Adapted from *Leading for Results: Transforming Teaching, Learning, and Relationships in Schools*, 2nd edition, p. 71 by Dennis Sparks. Copyright 2005 Corwin.

Capturing five insights to wisdom

Purpose	Use the tool to increase awareness of and practice actions that promote understanding and appreciation of the attributes of wise people.
Recommended time	A lifetime journey
Materials	Tool 6.4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wisdom and Personal Insights, pages 21–22
Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the following: Smart people have produced amazing inventions; some inventions have been helpful to humanity and the planet, and some, most destructive. We are in new times that demand new leadership — leadership that adds meaning, enhances our core values, deepens our love for one another, and strengthens the well-being of the planet. Those with great wisdom understand that integrity comes from a place of wholeness and operate from an internal compass that guides them toward goodness and compassion for others. The leaders of tomorrow not only will be smart, they will be wise. 2. Use Wisdom and Personal Insights, pages 21–22, to review the insights of wisdom and make notes about your own strengths and challenge in each of the areas. 3. Be thoughtful about what you might do to deepen your wisdom in areas of greatest challenge to you. 4. Once you have completed the reflections, keep them visible to you. Wisdom does not have a simple strategy; somehow, it comes over time with reflections on experiences.

Capturing five insights to wisdom, continued

Wisdom and Personal Insights

Insight	Descriptors	Strengths	Challenges
Acceptance	Accept others as they are — amazing wonderful human beings — working the best way they can to make their way through the world.		
Service	Coach as a servant. Empathize without sympathizing. Humbly lead. Model what you want others to do in their classrooms and with their teams. Celebrate others' learnings; never demand attention for personal contributions.		
Awareness	Constantly reflect on who you are. Remain grounded in past experiences, and yet seize the moment to learn and grow. Tune in to yourself to your emotional well-being. Modify your emotions, body, and language when you feel yourself slipping into negative self-talk and emotional turmoil.		
Persistence	Work diligently with others. Never give up on them or their goals. Concentrate on their learning and their progress and what they want to achieve. Resist being distracted by what you think by what you think is important for them to do and do well. Celebrate progress along the way. Short-term wins are inspirational. Look for them and honor them.		

Capturing five insights to wisdom, continued

Wisdom and Personal Insights, continued

Insight	Descriptors	Strengths	Challenges
Transparency	Live by your values. You will not always be liked, but you will always be trusted. When you live a transparent life, those you serve count on you, trust their future to you, and grow strong and confident in your presence.		
Lightness	Principals as coach cannot coach with negative energy. Live in lightness! Cheerfulness, optimism, and warmth spread easily. Spread positive emotions and energy (not superficial, fake comments — genuine matters). Laugh often (Laughter makes a positive impact on the limbic system.). Never use sarcasm as humor. It is not funny to those who suffer the brunt of the joke. Others will wonder when their turn will come to experience the pain.		
Hope	Wise principals as coach lead others to set audacious goals for themselves and to have the confidence to achieve them. Believe in yourself and others. Every child and every adult you serve can achieve amazing goal. Believe it. Live it. Be the principal coach you want to — and know you can — be.		
Commitments			

Source: Adapted from *The Coach's Craft: Powerful Practices to Support School Leaders*, p. 188 by Kay Psencik. Copyright 2011 Learning Forward.