

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: