

TEACHER SUPERVISION AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: DOES IT WORK?

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An important concern in education today is teachers' continuing professional development. The notion that supervising and evaluating teachers might lead to their professional development has traditionally made sense; certainly, the emphasis on teacher evaluation suggests so. However, the literature indicates that for teachers to change themselves or their teaching practices, they must believe in the process: Educational change depends on what teachers do and think—it's as simple and as complex as that.¹ Nevertheless, teacher ownership and involvement is not consistent with usual supervisory and evaluation practices.

In 1985, the Medicine Hat School District—a district of about 300 teachers and 6,200 students in southern Alberta, Canada—initiated the Model for Teacher Supervision and Evaluation. The model's intent was to change the culture of the school district—to promote teachers' professional development and empowerment. The change mechanism was clinical supervision—a process where the teachers would determine their own instructional and professional goals and through a collegial (or supervisory) relationship, work toward accomplishing those goals. The model was considered a long-term, major innovation for the district, and considerable resources were allocated to its implementation.

MEDICINE HAT MODEL FOR TEACHER SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

Theoretical Underpinnings

The district's approach to clinical supervision has roots in the works of Cogan and Goldhammer. Their classic cycle of supervision has eight phases:

¹Michael Fullan, *The Meaning of Educational Change* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Press, 1982), p. 107

- establishing a relationship
- planning with the teacher
- planning for observation
- observing instruction
- analyzing the data from the observation
- planning for the conference
- conducting the conference
- renewing the initial planning—thus, resuming another cycle²

Characteristic guiding concepts, though not exclusive to clinical supervision, more accurately define the actual practice of clinical supervision.

- *collegiality*—the posture of the people who become involved, their state of being, their mental baggage
- *collaboration*—the nature of people's involvement during the supervisory alliance
- *skilled service*—competent accommodation and activities that the supervisor requires because of prolonged and specialized training and practice
- *ethical conduct*—constant discretion and judgment to maintain trust and protection³

One mechanism for maximizing a collegial approach to professional development is through *intervisitation*, or a structured system of observing other teachers' methods, techniques, and styles. "When combined with post-observation conferences, intervisitation offers a potentially powerful avenue for teacher collaboration pertaining directly to classroom practice."⁴ Thus, two specific components of the Medicine Hat model were intervisitations and conferencing. Fitzgerald suggests that the self-confrontational aspect of clinical supervision is important, though perhaps neglected: "Clinical supervision is a powerful device for metacognition. . . . Metacognition is thinking about one's thinking. . . . Applied to teaching it is frequently called 'reflective teaching.'"⁵ Thus, the model was based on the concepts of clinical supervision, and in particular the supervisory cycle, with its components of intervisitation, conferencing, and reflection.

²Morris L. Cogan, *Clinical Supervision* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); Robert Goldhamer, *Clinical Supervision. Special Methods for the Supervision of Teachers* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969); Noreen B. Garman, "The Clinical Approach to Supervision," in *Supervision of Teaching*, ed. Thomas J. Sergiovanni (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1982), p. 35

³*Ibid.*, p. 38

⁴Robert J. Alfonso and Lee Goldsberry, "Colleagueship in Supervision," in *Supervision of Teaching*, ed. Thomas J. Sergiovanni (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1982), p. 100.

⁵John H. Fitzgerald, "Metacognition in Clinical Supervision," *Canadian School Executive* 8 (March 1989): 13–16, 22

Purposes and Intentions

Although not explicitly stated on paper, the model's purposes and goals were apparent from documents and interviews and from its title; improving the teacher-evaluation system was the initial driving force and underlying goal. In fact, early on, one major difficulty became apparent: linking a collegial supervision process with an administrator evaluation system. Nevertheless, during the project's first few months these major goals were identified (quotations are taken from interviews):

- a defensible supervision and evaluation system:

... based on integrating the existing research and what we know about good teaching practice. . . . If you asked teachers to describe how they were being evaluated, they would describe a process that reflects the stages of the model: pre-conferencing, the observation, and the post-conferencing. . . .

- the development of a supportive, sharing culture:

... teachers expressing more open feelings . . . being prepared to risk a bit and have other people in their classrooms . . . a lot of sharing going on . . . where people are more willing to share with each other and help each other recognize that everyone has their strengths and everyone has their weaknesses, and we can work together to improve and do a better job and feel better about it as we are doing it.

- more teacher observations:

... teachers being observed more frequently, and the kind of material that goes into their files will be more positive, more objective, and more related to what the teacher considers to be important, teachers will have greater involvement in and commitment to their own evaluations.

- improved teachers' classroom behavior:

... teachers being more effective and feeling good about it.

- students feeling more positive:

... they [students] will feel that the program being delivered to them is significant and meaningful . . . hopefully, a change in student performance and student learning, but that's difficult to do.

- finally, perhaps, the "evolution" of a profession."

Implementation

In spring 1985, a group of 30 to 40 district administrators attended a seminar introducing the model's concept; a steering committee formed to plan and oversee the model's implementation conducted the seminar. In fall 1985, all district teachers were introduced to the model, and a group of 60 administrators (the original seminar participants plus about 30 others) were

paired with a group of volunteer teachers to become the project's first participants. A trainer from the University of Lethbridge who had worked with the district in various capacities was hired, and a training schedule was established. The district provided substitute teachers so that all participants could attend the workshops. Besides attending at least four or five workshops over the year, the participants were expected to conduct supervisory cycles with each other and to videotape at least one cycle for group discussion.

In fall 1986, further advanced-training workshops were held for the original group of teachers and administrators, and a second group of 50 teacher volunteers entered the project to begin training. In fall 1987, another 59 teachers entered the project. At this point, the district made a pivotal decision: to transfer the training from the external consultant to a group of teachers experienced in the model. This group became known as the coaching team. A final group of 64 teachers began training with the coaching team in fall 1988, making a total of about 290 teachers (about 80 percent of the district staff) who had participated in the model.

Although the formal research study is over, the model itself is continuing to evolve. The continuing action team, a group of teachers and administrators, now oversees the model's implementation. While the goal is still teachers' professional development and empowerment, the focus has broadened to include the principles of clinical supervision—collegiality, collaboration, skilled service, and ethical conduct—for curriculum development and implementation.⁶

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In spring 1986, the district decided to research the model and to get evaluative feedback during its implementation. The district also recognized the considerable resources required to evaluate the project. Accordingly, Alberta Education agreed to provide major funding for a three-year research and evaluation project and contracted a team of university researchers to conduct the evaluation.

The contract negotiated among Alberta Education, the Medicine Hat School District, and the research team specified five specific questions for the three-year project to address. The intent here, however, is to describe the project's implementation and effects, to highlight what worked and what didn't, and to outline reasons for the successes and failures. Nevertheless, to explain the sources of the data and the basis for the conclusions, a brief word about methods follows.

⁶For a more detailed discussion of the implementation process from the trainer's point of view, see David Townsend and Les Omotani, "Teacher Supervision and Evaluation Project: How Medicine Hat Evolved and Implemented an Innovative Project," *Education Canada* 30 (Winter 1990): 18–22, 27.

Various quantitative and qualitative methods addressed each research question and assessed the effects of the model. Other major research components consisted of four school case studies that were intensive, interactive, and qualitative and an intensive study of six "pockets of activity"—situations where particularly successful implementation had occurred. Table 1 presents an overview of the data collection procedures.

In total, over three years, data were collected from more than 150 classrooms, more than 80 videotapes, 1,100 student surveys, and almost 1,000 teacher surveys. In addition, teachers and administrators participated in 195 interviews, resulting in more than 2,000 typed pages of transcript, not to mention the analysis of participants' journals and the researchers' participant-observer role in workshops and other activities.

EFFECTS OF THE MODEL

The specific questions and findings of the research and evaluation project are detailed elsewhere.⁷ What follows is a condensed description of the model's implementation and effects, gleaned primarily from the intensive and interactive qualitative data analysis and the researchers' collective perceptions over a three-year period.

Implementation Process

Although the stimulus for the model originated with school administrators, the perception was that the model was developed and initiated at the top. Also, those most deeply involved and those invited to be the initial participants in the project were administrators. Teachers were invited to participate during the early stages, and in fact, the initial group was about 50 percent teachers, nevertheless, teachers believed that this project was being imposed on them and that they were participating in a different capacity than were administrators. Perhaps the decision to focus initially on administrators was appropriate and even necessary, but it was also costly.

After deciding to expand the model to all school personnel, however, the district moved quickly to include teachers on the steering committee and to invite and encourage teachers to participate in the project's second phase. Since that time, teachers and administrators have been involved at each step of the implementation. The steering committee made the decisions, which were not necessarily those suggested initially by the central office. Communications occurred directly between the central office administration and staff members. Further, once the district decided to transfer the training compo-

⁷Myrna L. Greene, Richard Butt, Pamela Loewen, Michael Pollard, Camillon Purvis, and Ritchie Whitehead, *The Evaluation of the Medicine Hat Model for Teacher Supervision and Evaluation: Final Report* (Edmonton: Alberta Education, 1990).

Teacher behavior	Observations	Teachers in research sample, fall '86, '87, '88
	Interviews	Teachers in research sample, fall '88
Student outcomes	Observations of at-task behavior	Students of research- sample teachers, fall '86, '87, '88
	Perception of classroom climate survey	Students in grades 6, 9, and 12; teachers in grades 9 and 12, fall '86, '87
	Achievement test scores	Grades 3, 6, and 12, fall '86, '87, '88
Conferencing behavior	Videotapes of supervisory conferences	Research sample, fall '86, '87, '88
Perceptions	Perceptions of supervision and evaluation survey	Pre-project teachers and administrators, spring and fall '85
	Perceptions of the model and district policies surveys	Participants in research sample, fall '86, '87, '88; nonparticipants, spring '88
	Stages of concern survey	Teachers in research sample, fall '86, '87, '88
	Sense of efficacy survey	Teachers in research sample, fall '86, '87, '88
Implementation and effects of change	Interviews	Project administrators, '86, '87, '88, coaching team, '87, '88; participants, '88
	School case studies	Four schools for the duration; various methods
	Pockets-of-activity case studies	Six pockets; various methods, fall '88
	Informal conversations	Various
	Analysis of journals	Summaries of G-H and I-H groups and coaching team
	Informal activities	Observations of training session, attendance at meetings, socials, etc.

ment to school district staff, the members selected for the coaching team were primarily teachers; that is, even though four of the six had administrative responsibilities, their primary responsibility was as teacher.

Although teachers' commitment and involvement was crucial to the project's success, district commitment and support were equally critical. The district expressed its commitment by providing financial and personnel support, by giving supportive stories to the media, by holding regular celebration dinners, and by having central office personnel participate fully in the supervision workshops and processes.

Thus, although conceived initially by teachers and administrators, the model was implemented by central office personnel who provided the training, the resources, the incentives, and the expectation of participation.

Considerable research argues whether a new project's implementation is more effective if initiated and imposed from the top or if it emerges from the grass roots. The issue, however, is communication. An idea that begins with teachers is doomed to fail no matter how much support it has from the roots if the administration does not support the idea or provide the resources necessary for its implementation. Similarly, when an idea or a project begins at the top and does not include teachers in the planning, much energy and resources will be spent on encouraging participation, on obtaining commitment, and on troubleshooting and dealing with negative perceptions, lack of interest, or outright sabotage. After a somewhat shaky start, though, the district exemplified Grimmer's conclusion:

The desirable mix to bring about school improvement seems to be one of decisive central office initiatives either in favor of specific programs or school-based staff development along problem-solving lines, together with ample provision of structured support and technical assistance for the program or process decided on by the district. . . . What is needed is top-down pressure and support for bottom-up involvement [and] . . . a perceptive sense of timing when to switch.⁸

Clinical Supervision Process

The components of the supervision process first emphasized in the project were intervisitations and conferencing. The third component of metacognition or reflection became an issue as the project progressed.

Conferencing. After four years of implementation, more than 80 percent of the teaching staff had participated in the training sessions on clinical supervision, and many had participated in further advanced training. The self-reported number of supervision cycles completed by all participants had increased from zero to an average of about four per year. However, the

⁸Peter P. Grimmer "The Role of District Supervisors in the Implementation of Peer Coaching," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 3 (Fall 1987): 27-28.

number of cycles conducted with an administrator (most often for the purposes of evaluation) inflated that mean. Some teachers had completed only the cycle required as part of the training or the research project. Others had progressed well beyond expectations and completed as many as six or eight cycles per year. Still others had developed creative ways of modifying the process while maintaining the principles of peer coaching and had taken the process well beyond its initial definition.

A comparison of videotaped conferences from an untrained group of teachers with three years of participants' videotaped conferences indicates that the model did affect supervisors' and teachers' conferencing behaviors. The major changes involved a shift in decision making during conferences. Supervisors stopped deciding on their own what to observe and record and then imposing a judgment on teachers. Instead, supervisors began creating an environment where teachers actively participated in deciding what supervisors would observe and then accepted a major responsibility for analyzing the meaning of the data and the alternatives to pursue. For example, by the third year, supervisors spent significantly less time during the conference supporting teachers; the need for supportive behavior decreased once teachers' opinions had value. They spent significantly more time providing solicited information and less time providing unsolicited suggestions. Over the project's three years, the ratio of supervisor providing information to teacher analyzing information changed from 2:1 to 1:1. The increases in supervisors accepting or using teachers' ideas and in teachers accepting or using supervisors' ideas were statistically significant.

Despite these positive developments in the number and type of supervisory conferences, many difficulties still arose reaching the desired levels. Virtually every group at every stage of the process raised the critical issue of time. Time became both a pragmatic, concrete, solvable problem and a measure of support for, or resistance to, change. As a pragmatic issue, the difficulties included arranging time in people's fully committed schedules, reconciling conflicting timetables, preparing for substitute teachers, and working with other people's agendas. As a measure of support or resistance, the issue was determining priorities. The district made heroic efforts to provide substitute teachers and release time and the needed resources, and some school administrators were willing and able to build in a schedule of observations and conferences. Nevertheless, the reality of teachers' daily lives means that time will remain a major hurdle in implementing change of this magnitude.

Another issue militated against effective peer supervisory relationships: the nature of the partnerships. Partnerships formed for the sole purpose of participating in the supervisory cycle were often less than effective, either because the partners did not share similar interests or because one partner did not have the expertise the other was seeking. In some cases, partner

changes and long time lapses between cycles also contributed to a less-than-effective supervisory system. Videotaping supervisory conferences was also a time consuming and occasionally threatening activity for the participants.

Intervisitations. The model encouraged teachers and administrators to take risks, and to a large extent it succeeded. Every data source indicated that classroom intervisitations became a common occurrence. In some schools, teachers regularly visited each other's classrooms and observed each other's teaching, and some observations even occurred across schools. Clearly, teacher observations occurred more frequently in some schools than in others, but the extent of the activity within the district was quite remarkable. Developing a trusting relationship where teachers are willing to become vulnerable is a significant step in professional development. Many teachers and administrators in this district became willing to expose and share their teaching with colleagues.⁹

Reflection. Teachers could actually think about changing their teaching only after spending considerable time and effort at the earlier stages. The researchers initially believed that if teachers would learn to trust each other, to observe and work with each other, and to help each other analyze their own teaching, their teaching would magically improve. Even after three years, however, the content of most conferences and teacher discussions focused primarily on relatively low-level and nonthreatening behaviors—questioning skills and student on-task behaviors. Only toward the end of the third year did teachers begin to reflect on, analyze, and try to address more complex teaching behaviors and student outcomes. The model had legitimated what they were already doing and given them an avenue for risking deeper analysis and reflection on their own terms.

Evaluation or Supervision?

One of the most difficult issues identified in the project's early stages was the relationship between teacher evaluation and the model's supervision process and intents. Despite the rhetoric, the theoretical framework, and the intended practices of collegial, collaborative supervision, one stated goal was "a defensible teacher-evaluation system." These concepts clashed frequently; even the model's language became problematic. Although *evaluation* and *supervision* were used interchangeably when discussing the model and in implementing its procedures, teachers distinguished between the concepts

⁹Richard L. Butt, David Townsend, and Danielle Raymond, "Bringing Reform to Life: Teachers' Stories and Professional Development," *Cambridge Journal of Education* (in press).

of supervision and evaluation in practical terms: If a senior administrator was involved, the process was evaluation, if two teachers were involved, it was supervision or, more accurately, peer coaching.

Nevertheless, developing and implementing an acceptable evaluation system was one of the model's most successful outcomes. The participants believed that the policies and procedures were clearly defined and understood, and they generally agreed with and supported the prescribed procedures. Although some administrators continued to drop in to observe teachers, the model's visibility validated the teacher's right to request that the administrator and the teacher discuss the proposed observation beforehand. The supervision cycle had become the expectation and the norm in teacher evaluations.

To the extent that administrators followed the model's tenets—a pre-conference, an observation focusing on teacher-identified areas, and a post-conference—teachers considered the evaluation process less threatening, more data-based, more helpful, and more fair than before. Central office administrators' comments on the detail and thoroughness of the evaluation reports submitted supported teachers' beliefs that evaluation had become more data-based and more helpful.

McLaughlin discusses five elements associated with building and sustaining a district culture for successful teacher evaluation; the Medicine Hat model clearly demonstrated each one:

- *Evaluation embedded in a broader improvement effort.* In the Medicine Hat model, teacher evaluation was the mechanism for accomplishing goals—improved teaching practice, a supportive culture, and increased visitations—it was not an end in itself.

- *Stakeholder involvement.* A steering committee composed of all stakeholders implemented and administered the model, the coaching team consisted primarily of teachers.

- *The superintendent's active commitment.* The superintendent and his associate participated in everything from recognition dinners to substitute teaching for participating teachers.

- *Joint training for teachers and administrators.* Teachers and school and district administrators attended all workshops and participated jointly in training sessions.

- *Resources to support individual needs.* The district provided considerable financial and personnel resources to support teachers wishing to participate in the model.¹⁰

¹⁰Milbrey W. McLaughlin, "Embracing Contraries. Implementing and Sustaining Teacher Evaluation," in *The New Handbook of Teacher Evaluation*, ed. Jason Millman and Linda Darling-Hammond (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990), pp. 2–8.

A Supportive, Sharing Culture and an Evolving Profession

Two stated goals of the model were developing a supportive, sharing culture and, perhaps, an evolving profession. The Medicine Hat School District has few equals in this area, and much of its success is due to the model. Much of the model's success is also due to the district's professional nature. More than 80 percent of the district's teachers participated in training, and another 30 teachers were turned away. Attendance at related workshops on teachers' own time was high (e.g., 52 teachers attended an evening workshop on using the model with student teachers). The number of teachers and administrators who met regularly and frequently (and often at 7.00 a.m.) as members of the coaching team, or the project steering committee, or various in-school model-related committees, was remarkable. More qualitative and informal data support these assertions:

- the feeling of camaraderie and the considerable talk about teaching evident even at social gatherings
- teachers' responses to school evaluations—occasionally asking members of external school evaluation teams to follow the model's procedures when visiting their classes
- the relationships and feeling of trust evident among teachers, school administrators, and central office staff—for example, even in public gatherings, members of the coaching team would suggest to the superintendent how the model should proceed in the future
- the positive atmosphere at the central office and the obvious faith in the teaching staff's expertise and quality—one central office administrator said, "The Medicine Hat curriculum implementation process has gone past the jargon of empowering teachers; we *know* our teachers will assume that responsibility"
- the expressed willingness, even eagerness, to affiliate further with the university and to have "as many student teachers as you can send" placed in the Medicine Hat schools
- the sense in many schools that occurs when teachers clearly know what others are doing, when they are comfortable in each other's classrooms, and when they regularly collaborate with each other

In January 1989, a member of Alberta Education visited Medicine Hat. He suggested that change of this nature usually requires at least 5 to 6 years, with the median being closer to 10 to 15 years. He said that this change over 4 years was "like a jet."

Many Medicine Hat schools exemplified most, if not all, of the characteristics of schools Little uses to distinguish schools successful in implementing change.¹¹ The following are examples:

"Teachers engaged in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise talk about teaching practice."¹² Evidence of this characteristic came from the interviews, the videotapes of conferences, and from formal and informal interviews.

"Teachers and administrators frequently observed teaching."¹³ Observations, surveys, and interviews supported this behavior.

"Teachers and administrators planned, designed, researched and evaluated, and prepared teaching materials together."¹⁴ These activities became increasingly obvious in the district, particularly in planned curriculum implementation projects.

"Teachers and administrators teach each other the practice of teaching."¹⁵ The coaching team was an excellent example of teachers and administrators teaching each other.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE MODEL'S SUCCESS

Over the three years of this research and evaluation project, the model positively affected the district as a whole. At individual schools and among individual teachers, however, it was clearly more effective in some situations than in others, and some effects were far more obvious and more entrenched than others. Several factors appeared most influential in enhancing or hindering the model's success. Figure 1 presents these factors in three categories: contextual, individual, and related to the model itself. Each factor interacted with each of the others within and across categories, and the particular configuration of these factors, and probably others, determined how successfully the model was implemented.

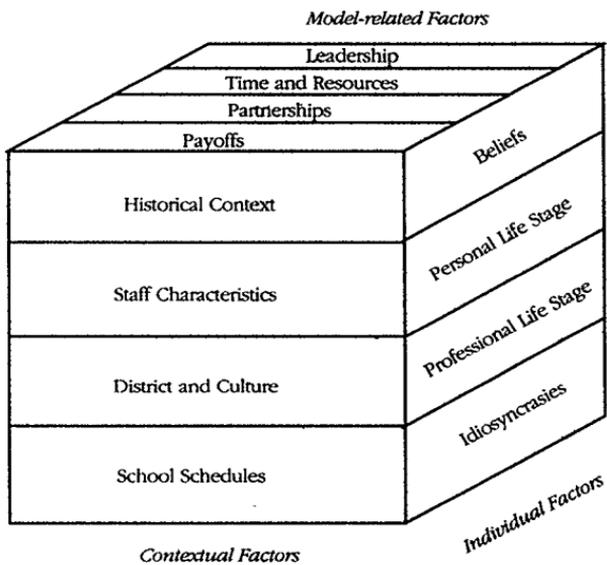
¹¹Judith Warren Little, "Finding the Limits and Possibilities of Instructional Leadership. Some Possibilities for Practical and Collaborative Work with Principals," Project Report (Washington, DC: National Institute of Education), pp 1-3. Cited in Kenneth R. Howey and Joseph C. Vaughan, "Current Patterns of Staff Development," in *Staff Development*, 82nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, ed. Gary A. Griffin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 92-117.

¹²Cited in Kenneth R. Howey and Joseph C. Vaughan, "Current Patterns of Staff Development," in *Staff Development*, 82nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, ed. Gary A. Griffin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p 107

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

Figure 1. Factors Influencing the Model's Success

Contextual Factors

Teachers' work context plays a major role in how much they accept or reject a significant intervention in their working lives. Several contextual factors influenced the model's success: the historical context, the culture of the school and the district, characteristics of the school staff, and school schedules and timetables.

For example, the model was introduced in one school while the teachers were still adjusting to a new administrative team with a different administrative philosophy than they were accustomed to, this change in administration just before the model's introduction diverted the focus from the model and influenced how the staff received and implemented the supervision process.

The characteristics of the school staff played a similar role. In some schools, teachers had worked at the school for years and had assumed leadership roles there. Their receptivity to the model and their willingness to integrate the model's goals into their own practice became a key to success at that school. Thus, the involvement and support of key people in the school was critical. In schools where the staff had been together for some time and had developed both a social and a professional relationship, the model's implementation was considerably smoother.

School timetables and schedules further influenced the model's implementation. In one school, staff involvement in supervision and extracurricular activities almost prevented teachers from meeting collegially to even begin discussing the model. Regardless of the staff's willingness to participate, the scheduling in the school made implementing the model virtually impossible. Before the model could be effectively implemented there, the school day would probably have to be restructured.

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Individual Factors

Teachers' individual beliefs—about the model's purposes and structure, about others' motives, about teachers' autonomy, about supervision and evaluation—influenced how receptive they were to the model in the first place and the commitment they were willing to make. Teachers' personal and professional life stages were also factors. For example, a young teacher with many family commitments found the scheduling of after-school events difficult, an experienced teacher close to retirement saw little reason to participate. Similarly, some teachers who had considerable related training or experience with supervision models did not perceive a need to strongly commit to the model. Individual personality traits and interpersonal relationships also affected the model's implementation.

Model-related Factors

Perhaps the major factors contributing to the model's success or failure related specifically to the model itself. These factors influence most major change efforts.

Leadership. School leadership was the single most influential force in the model's implementation. People in positions of leadership, in some cases single-handedly, thwarted or enhanced the model's success. Leadership, or lack of leadership, appeared in various forms:

- as behaviors, either overt action or simple lack of interest, that presented obstacles to those who wished to participate in the model
- as rhetorical support for the model where people professed support but where actions were not congruent with the rhetoric
- as real support that allowed and encouraged participation
- as direct promotion of the model—through modeling and participating fully, scheduling activities to ensure participation, or even substituting in teachers' classrooms so they could observe or conference—in short, demonstrating congruence between words and practice.

Leaders were not necessarily administrators, although without at least verbal support from the school administrators, teachers had trouble assuming the leadership role. Nevertheless, in schools or situations where the model, or a variation of it, flourished, someone had assumed a leadership role—modeling, organizing, and in every sense facilitating the process.

Leadership at the district level was also a significant factor in the model's success. The central office personnel provided far more than the financial resources required for the innovation; they provided leadership in the most positive sense of the word. Besides the substantial and basic support of providing release time, substitute teachers, and regular and ongoing training and practice sessions, the district administrators demonstrated their commitment to the model in countless other ways—from sponsoring recognition banquets and publicly praising and rewarding the participants to actually substituting in classrooms to allow teachers to observe and conference with each other. Their belief in the process of the model and in the benefits of collegial supervision and their trust and faith in their teachers was obvious and genuine. This type of committed leadership also appeared in the steering committee, in the coaching team, and in the various pockets and schools with significant activity.

To paraphrase Little, leaders' perspectives and practices powerfully enhance successful school relationships and activities.¹⁶ Although Little was speaking specifically about principals, his comments apply equally well to all leaders who contribute to successful change by "announcing and describing expectations for collegial and experimental work . . . , modeling or enacting the desired behavior . . . , sanctioning the announced and modeled behavior in the allocation of resources . . . , [and] defending the norms thus established."¹⁷

Implementation processes. The implementation of an innovation is key to its success or failure. The implementation of this model, assessed earlier, was no exception.

Time and resources. The issue of time was raised at virtually every step of the process and by every group of participants. Teachers seemed to say that for the model to succeed, they needed time to implement its goals, and resources needed to focus on providing that time to the teachers and administrators. In many cases, the district had to support teachers in ways they themselves determined were best suited to their needs. For example, the nature of the clinical supervision relationship necessitates that at least two teachers' schedules coincide for at least two complete supervision cycles several times per year. Although many teachers developed creative strategies for implementing the process, they needed to believe that it was worth their while to do so. The lack of time to implement the model also reflected a larger issue about the working reality of classroom teachers. This time constraint was most obvious at the elementary level, where many teachers' comments reflected their busy schedules and heavy teaching loads. The model's success seemed to depend in part on developing a perception that the project was not another thing added on to already busy schedules; rather, it would be incorporated into existing routines.

Partnerships and payoffs. Issues of collegiality and collaboration were raised frequently, particularly in the case studies. Partnerships were originally established between administrators and teachers, resulting in an early perception of the model as evaluative rather than collegially supervisory in

¹⁶Judith Warren Little, "Finding the Limits and Possibilities of Instructional Leadership: Some Possibilities for Practical and Collaborative Work with Principals," Project Report (Washington, DC: National Institute of Education), pp. 1-3. Cited in Kenneth R. Howey and Joseph C. Vaughan, "Current Patterns of Staff Development," in *Staff Development*, 82nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, ed. Gary A. Griffin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

¹⁷Cited in Kenneth R. Howey and Joseph C. Vaughan, "Current Patterns of Staff Development," in *Staff Development*, 82nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, ed. Gary A. Griffin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 108

nature. The shift in this perception was gradual and occurred as more collegial pairings were established. The formal establishment of partnerships also neglected or negated in some ways the number of informal partnerships already existing. Some teachers indicated that much of what the model tried formally was already being done informally through various school groups' cooperative and collaborative work. Some found shifting their informal supervisory practices to the model's perceived more formal setting difficult. Partnerships created out of mutual need or respect or common interests appeared most successful.

Critical to the model was the need by all those involved to see the benefits of their investment to themselves as practicing teachers. For those already engaged in collegial supervisory practices with colleagues, the model supported their own empowerment and rewarded their professionalism with acceptance and recognition. The school administration and the district welcomed, encouraged, and supported the attention to their teaching practices.

Some teachers who had trouble with their own practice used the model as a vehicle for obtaining the assistance and support they needed to overcome their difficulties. The model provided the framework for discussing needs in a professional context and the tools for analyzing practice and establishing alternatives.

The project participants needed to believe the model would benefit them and help them with their own teaching and learning. The politically advantageous recognition dinners and the like were important, but the coaching team's role was critical. It allowed other teachers to see that the model's direction rested with colleagues who focused on classroom practice and peer coaching.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

After three years of intensive and interactive data analysis, the researchers concluded that the Model for Teacher Supervision and Evaluation in the Medicine Hat School District was one of the most ambitious, exciting, and successful ventures attempted by a school district of this size. The research results do not convey the excitement and enthusiasm of the steering and coaching committees, nor do they capture the individual commitment, the risk taking, and the energy of countless participants. Certainly, the model cannot claim 100 percent success; nor is it ever likely to because of its evolving nature. In fact, one of its significant successes is that it continues to evolve; now in its fifth year, it has become known as the Coaching, Supervision, and Evaluation Project.

Some factors are essential to any district, or even school, wishing to implement a major project that uses the principles of teacher supervision as a mechanism for teacher development and cultural change:

- providing continuing training over a significant period of time, based on the participants' needs and supported with time and personnel
- separating the collegial coaching relationship from the administrative evaluation system (that is not to say that the principles of clinical supervision cannot also facilitate an effective evaluation system)
 - involving teachers at every step of the process and combining teacher input and decision making with sensitive and perceptive leadership from those who control the resources
 - being flexible and sensitive to particular situations and providing opportunities to share alternative and creative ideas and practices
 - providing and nurturing leadership committed in word and in action—leaders must serve by example rather than by rhetoric
 - publicly and privately recognizing, rewarding, and celebrating participation and successes
 - recognizing that change of this magnitude requires a commitment of several years

Finally, teacher supervision does lead to professional development, but not without considerable resources (both personal and financial), effort, goodwill, commitment, and an unshakable vision of teachers as competent professionals able and willing to take control of their own professional lives¹⁸

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