Facilitator’s Guide

Improving Instruction Through Observation and Feedback

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Alexandria, Virginia, USA
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Introduction
Interestingly, as a profession, we’ve attended to the learning of students, and we’ve attended to the learning of ourselves; but oftentimes we haven’t raised our eyes around the table to say, “I am also responsible for your learning, as a colleague, and you’re responsible for my learning.” Embedded in that is one of the most essential factors in learning, which is reciprocity. I have something to learn from you. You have something to learn from me. And we have something to learn together.

—Linda Lambert, in an interview with ASCD (Checkley, 2000)

Laura is learning to sew. Laura’s teacher, Ms. Verang, sits by her side as she carefully feeds her fabric onto the track that will push it under the moving needle. Ms. Verang watches closely as Laura guides the dress along what she hopes is a straight path. When she has finished sewing one seam, Laura and Ms. Verang examine the result. “What do you think?” asks Ms. Verang. Laura identifies a section of the seam that is slightly puckered. In another section, the tiny stitches seem to veer off into a kind of zigzag. “What do you think happened?” asks Ms. Verang. She and Laura then discuss the likely causes: Laura tugged at the cloth here; she pulled the cloth in the wrong direction there. Ms. Verang then demonstrates how she would operate the sewing machine and work with the cloth to eventually arrive at a perfectly straight seam, and Laura practices again.

It’s not hard to draw a parallel between the preceding scenario and effective classroom-based instructional assistance. The student and teacher share a goal, and they know what they want the end product to be. The teacher watches the student’s technique as she works with her material. After examining the finished product, the student, guided by the teacher, identifies areas that could be improved. The teacher then demonstrates a way of performing the operation that brings about the desired result, and the student tries again. Furthermore, there is mutual respect, trust, and openness. The feedback the student receives is objective, and both the student and teacher understand that the focus is on the goal and figuring out together how to achieve that goal. Similarly, the characteristics of Laura and Ms. Verang’s situation describe a constructive learning community among professional educators—a community that is devoted to giving practitioners the knowledge and skills they need to improve their craft through effective classroom-based instructional assistance.

This video-based professional development program focuses on several models of classroom-based instructional assistance: clinical supervision, peer coaching, study groups, and self-directed improvement. The program also examines observation techniques and leadership approaches.
that will help educators make informed decisions about instructional improvement goals and plans. The program’s focus on critical skills such as observation, data collection, and conferencing enables educators to create the conditions that will maximize teachers’ classroom improvement.

**A History of Success**

*We need to reach out to our colleagues and say, “What do you think about . . . ?” or “When I tried that, this is how it went,” or “Are you doing anything like this?”*

—Linda Lambert, in an interview with ASCD (Checkley, 2000)

There is a growing consensus among researchers and educators that when teachers work together to improve instruction, instruction improves. This belief was not always so widespread. As Beverly Showers and Bruce Joyce (1996) point out, before the 1980s there was little formal understanding of how teachers could learn from each other. Indeed, they write that educators “assumed that teachers could learn new strategies, return to a school, and implement their new learning smoothly and appropriately” (p. 13). When, despite intensive training efforts, new instructional practices didn’t live long in the classroom, teacher attitudes and lack of motivation—not the absence of structures to support continued practice and refinement of the new instructional approaches—were seen as the reason.

Showers and Joyce (1996) note that peer coaching first arrived on the scene in the 1980s, helping to usher in a new emphasis on reflective learning:

> In 1980 we believed that “modeling, practice under simulated conditions, and practice in the classroom, combined with feedback” (Joyce & Showers, 1980, p. 384) was the most productive training design. We hypothesized that teachers attempting to master new curriculum and teaching approaches would need continued technical assistance at the classroom level. (p. 13)

The result was that teachers learned theory and observed other teachers demonstrating new approaches. Teachers then practiced using the techniques and received both structured and open-ended feedback. The results of such an approach, according to Showers and Joyce (1996), were positive:
The results were consistent: Implementation rose dramatically, whether experts or participants conducted the sessions. Thus we recommended that teachers who were studying teaching and curriculum form small peer coaching groups that would share the learning process. In this way, staff development might directly affect student learning. (p. 12)

What surprised Showers and Joyce most, however, was what they called “a serendipitous by-product of the early peer coaching studies: Successful peer coaching teams developed skills in collaboration and enjoyed the experience so much that they wanted to continue their collegial partnerships after they accomplished their initial goals” (p. 12–13).

That learning should inspire more learning is not a surprise to Linda Lambert, a professor and author of *Building Leadership Capacity in Schools* (1998). Lambert, who is also the director of the Center for Educational Leadership at California State University, Hayward, states in her interview with ASCD that “the impulse for lifelong learning is in all of us,” but that oftentimes it is not a practice that is encouraged or rewarded. Therefore, she states, “the culture and the context are critical. I think the role of other adults, including the principal, is critical. I think the notion of having opportunities for adult conversation and then engaging in such things as dialogue, reflective writing, networking, and being part of an inquiry-based practice in the school are actually critical because then growth spirals.” Once that starts, she says, “there’s no stopping teachers. They are lifelong learners—it’s just a matter of how we create an environment that will evoke that.”

**Goal-Oriented, Standards-Based**

Educators can begin to create such an environment when they work together to establish a shared sense of vision, says Lambert during her ASCD interview: “One of the things that we know about schools is that a unity of purpose is absolutely essential because otherwise we’re fragmented.”

Other educators agree, and understanding the need to align goals guides the work of those who design professional development programs. Indeed, the revised Standards for Staff Development, released by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) in 2001, suggest that, in order to create effective professional development programs, educators must first ask themselves what it is that students will be expected to know and do. Then, educators must determine what teachers must know to help students meet those learning objectives. Once those criteria have
been established, professional development activities can be designed to meet the learning needs of both students and teachers (see box, p. 7).

Educational leaders must think clearly about the ends of the programs they seek to use, agree Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2001). A peer coaching program, for example, “void of articulated definition and purpose has no rudder for steering and selecting the training” (p. 323). What’s more, if a goal isn’t established, how can educators determine whether the instructional strategies they’ve employed are working?

Goal-oriented professional development is a step in the right direction, affirms James Stigler, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles. In an interview (Willis, 2002), Stigler observes that “professional development has been largely divorced from practice . . . it’s been generic . . . it’s been haphazard.” What’s more, according to Stigler, professional development programs have not been research-based. That kind of professional development, he notes, “doesn’t really help teachers or students learn more.”

Fortunately, professional development has changed considerably, according to Stigler. “Today, people believe that professional development should be targeted and directly related to teachers’ practice. It should be site-based and long-term. It should be ongoing—part of a teacher’s work-week, not something that’s tacked on. And it should be curriculum-based, to the extent possible, so that it helps teachers help their students master the curriculum at a higher level.”

Purpose of the Program

The videotapes and the facilitator’s guide in this program are designed for instructional leaders who wish to work effectively with their colleagues for the improvement of instruction. Superintendents, school board members, and professors in educational leadership programs should also find this program helpful in determining how they can assist instructional leaders in providing assistance to teachers in a variety of situations.

The workshops in this guide are designed to stimulate exploration, discussion, and sharing in a collaborative setting. An individual may also use the videotapes and exercises for personal reflection and growth. Both workshop and individual use will enable participants to develop the skills essential to becoming strong and reflective teacher leaders.
The Standards for Staff Development

ASCD was one of many educational organizations that assisted the NSDC in revising the Standards for Staff Development. (The original set of 27 standards was released in 1995.) According to the NSDC, the 12 revised standards reflect what is now known about quality professional learning.

Context Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students

- Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district. (Learning Communities)
- Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement. (Leadership)
- Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration. (Resources)

Process Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students

- Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement. (Data-Driven)
- Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact. (Evaluation)
- Prepares educators to apply research to decision making. (Research-Based)
- Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal. (Design)
- Applies knowledge about human learning and change. (Learning)
- Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate. (Collaboration)

Content Standards

Staff development that improves the learning of all students

- Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students; create safe, orderly, and supportive learning environments; and hold high expectations for students’ academic achievement. (Equity)
- Deepens educators’ content knowledge, provides them with research- based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately. (Quality Teaching)
- Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately. (Family Involvement)
Had this staff development video-based program been made 20 years ago, viewers would have seen effective supervisory intervention to assist teacher performance. However, this program emphasizes collegial, collaborative, and self-directed activities that involve teachers in their own development. The program consists of three videotapes and a facilitator’s guide that includes detailed agendas and activities for five workshops, as well as handouts, overheads, and additional readings and resources. Tape 1, *Different Models of Providing Classroom-Based Assistance*, and its corresponding workshop activities help participants examine the key principles and steps in the clinical supervision process, the roles teachers play in assisting other teachers’ growth, the necessary elements needed to provide classroom-based assistance, and various methods schools are using (clinical supervision, peer coaching, study groups, and self-directed learning) to improve teaching and student learning. In Tape 2, *Observation Techniques*, participants see how both quantitative and qualitative observation techniques are used to collect classroom data to improve instruction. Tape 3, *Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers*, introduces interpersonal approaches and specific behaviors leaders use to work with teachers, shows how leaders determine which approach will be most effective with a given teacher, and explains how leaders can assist teachers to become more autonomous.

Two workshop formats are provided. In the shorter format, participants view the video in its entirety, reflect on it, and share broad reactions and perspectives about the issues addressed. The longer format divides the video into segments and incorporates activities, supplemental readings, and opportunities for discussion to deepen participants’ understanding of specific issues and to help participants relate these issues to their own situations. The longer workshops are designed to help participants gain a better understanding of the complex process of improving instruction through observation and feedback and some of the various methods used by schools and districts.

After viewing and discussing the content of the videos, the participants will be able to

- Identify and describe four models for providing classroom-based assistance to teachers.
- List and describe the essential knowledge, skills, attitudes, and plans that need to be in place for the models to be effective.
• Explain the critical role of observation and data collection in the improvement process.

• Articulate the difference between quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

• List examples of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

• Identify whether quantitative or qualitative observation techniques are more appropriate for a given situation.

• Create a data collection model tailored to an individual teacher’s need.

• Identify specific behaviors leaders use when working with teachers.

• Identify the four approaches to working with teachers and describe specific behaviors for different situations.

• Determine which of the four approaches is appropriate for a given individual or group.

• Identify strategies to assist teachers in increasing their expertise, decision-making skills, and autonomy.

As the facilitator of these workshops, you may find it helpful to keep in mind that if participants discuss their different insights, they will often learn more than if they simply view each tape without follow-up activities. Moreover, viewing videotapes can be a passive activity unless careful preparation has been made to turn viewing into an intellectually active experience by providing the viewer with appropriate preliminary and follow-up activities. The follow-up activities can promote further reflection and can support participants’ efforts to plan for the effective application of the ideas presented in the program.

This guide is designed to help you get the best possible benefits from the video program. The workshop activities and discussion questions included here can serve as starting points. However, the facilitator’s choices of activities and questions certainly should not be limited to those contained in this guide. Indeed, facilitators should encourage participants to raise their own questions based on their particular needs or concerns.
This guide contains four sections:

**Introduction.** This presents an overview of observation and feedback techniques and how they are used to improve teaching and student learning, as well as a description of the video series.

**Workshops.** These provide feature agendas, material, and information needed for the facilitator to plan and conduct workshops for each videotape.

**Handouts and Overheads.** These are the materials to be duplicated and distributed to participants for each workshop. They include camera-ready masters for overhead transparencies and handouts that are incorporated within the various workshop formats.

**Readings and Resources.** This section includes a selection of articles pertaining to observation and feedback techniques and the different methods and strategies highlighted in this video series. These articles may be duplicated and distributed to workshop participants. A reference list of related resources is also provided.

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**Role of the Workshop Facilitator**

Your preparation for each session and your openness to discussion will enable you to help your group benefit from this program. It is important that you view each videotape and read through this manual before the workshops. Your background, knowledge, and outside reading will provide you with a strong base for discussion. As a facilitator, you have several major responsibilities:

**Read and View the Materials.**

Your initial preparation should include viewing the video you are going to use in your workshop, reading the Introduction to this guide, and studying the workshop format you plan to use. You will want to read the related reference materials in the Readings and Resources section, and you may also want to check the reference list for additional background information. As you preview the video, you may find it helpful to note the VCR counter numbers at the beginning of each section and examples that you would like to point out during the workshop.

**Prepare the Program Activities.**

Select the appropriate workshop format for your audience. Make adaptations based on the time available and the needs of the workshop.
participants. Plan the agenda for the workshop, with scheduled breaks for a longer workshop.

**Reserve a Room and Plan the Seating Arrangement.**

Reserve a room that is large enough to comfortably seat the number of participants you expect; ensure that it is conducive to both large- and small-group activities. Tables that can accommodate five to eight participants are recommended to facilitate interaction and collaboration.

**Arrange for Necessary Video and Audiovisual Equipment.**

Arrange for a VCR and monitor; ensure proper electrical fitting. (One 23- to 25-inch monitor will suffice for up to 25 participants.) Make sure you have sufficient power cords with adapters for the VCR. Plug in both machines to ensure their working condition and make sure that the electrical outlets in the room are in working order. If the room is large, you may need to arrange for a microphone and speakers. If you plan to use overheads, arrange for an overhead projector and screen; check that they work properly. Bring extra transparencies and markers with you if you need them. Provide or arrange for a flip chart with a pad of poster-size paper and markers, or chalk and an eraser for a chalkboard.

**Prepare Materials.**

Duplicate enough handouts for all participants, as well as supplementary readings you would like to distribute. Prepare overhead transparencies from the Handouts and Overheads section of this guide. Duplicate any overheads you wish to use as handouts.

**Announce the Program.**

In your announcements or invitations, give sufficient notice and clearly specify the day of the week, date, time, and location for the program. Remind participants to bring pencils and notepads. If parents, business leaders, or community members are invited, they may need more advance notice than school or district staff members.

**Make Other Arrangements.**

Prepare an agenda, including times for breaks. Arrange for refreshments, if desired.
Workshops
This 3 and ½-hour session provides an in-depth analysis of the four models for providing classroom-based assistance to teachers. It examines how educational professionals use observation and feedback methods in conjunction with other strategies to help teachers improve their classroom practice. The activities encourage participants to consider the key knowledge, processes, skills, attitudes, and planning necessary to implement effective programs. This workshop uses Tape 1, Different Models of Providing Classroom-Based Assistance. Viewing the video and reading this guide in advance of the workshop will give you important and helpful information. Your background knowledge and outside reading will give you a strong base for discussion. As the facilitator, you may use the following agenda or vary it to suit your particular needs. You may also want to consider showing the video in its entirety and choosing the activities that are most appropriate for your audience.

**Agenda and Time Guide**

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<th>Time (Minutes)</th>
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<td>Opening Activity</td>
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<td>Tape 1, Different Models of Providing Classroom-Based Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 1, “Clinical Supervision”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction to Segment 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 2, “Peer Coaching”</td>
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<td>Reaction to Segment 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 3, “Study Groups”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction to Segment 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 4, “Self-Directed Improvement”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction to Segment 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
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</tbody>
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**Total Approximate Workshop Time:** 3 hours, 15 minutes
Materials List for Workshop 1

Handout 1, Four Models of Classroom-Based Assistance
Handout 2, Clinical Supervision
Handout 3, The Five Steps of Clinical Supervision
Handout 4, Principles of Clinical Supervision
Handout 5, Important Elements of Clinical Supervision
Handout 6, Peer Coaching
Handout 7, Issues in Peer Coaching
Handout 8, Expert Peer Coaching and Reciprocal Peer Coaching
Handout 9, Components of Successful Peer Coaching Programs
Handout 10, Study Groups
Handout 11, Collegial Problem-Solving Groups and Action Research Groups
Handout 12, Self-Directed Improvement
Handout 13, Three Aspects of Self-Directed Improvement
Handout 14, Matching Models with Instructional Improvement Efforts
Overhead 1, Workshop 1 Objectives
Overhead 2, Four Models of Classroom-Based Assistance
Overhead 3, Study Groups Summary
Overhead 4, Three Aspects of Self-Directed Improvement

Facilitator’s Note
Providing folders with all materials inside is an efficient way to distribute handouts and other resources. You may also wish to provide name tags for everyone.

You may also wish to give participants information from the Introduction or Readings and Resources section of this facilitator’s guide. Read these materials and select the information that is relevant to your participants’ needs and concerns. You can distribute it to participants after the workshop as a review.

Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)

1. At the door, have a sign-in sheet for participants to record their names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. This will enable you to send participants copies of comments and questions
recorded during the workshop and to notify them of opportunities for future meetings.

2. Welcome all participants. Introduce yourself and explain your role as workshop facilitator. As the facilitator, you will guide participants through the activities to help them meet the workshop objectives.

3. Depending on the size of the group and whether participants know one another, you may want to set aside time for participants to introduce themselves individually and share some aspect of their current professional responsibilities that would benefit from ongoing observation and feedback.

4. Display Overhead 1, Workshop 1 Objectives, and tell participants that by the end of this workshop, they will be able to

   • Identify and describe the four models for providing classroom-based assistance to teachers.

   • List and describe the essential knowledge, skills, attitudes, and organizational plans that need to be in place for the models to be effective.

   • Explain the critical role of observation and data collection in the instructional improvement process.

Opening Activity (15 minutes)

1. Have participants form small discussion groups. Ask them to arrange themselves so that those who work together in a school or district are in the same small group, or, if you prefer, to form mixed groups with different job roles represented (teachers with administrators, teachers from different grade levels, or teachers from different departments). Ask each group to select a reporter who will share the small group’s responses with the full group.

2. Distribute Handout 1, Four Models of Classroom-Based Assistance. Ask teams to take a few minutes to write down what they already know about each of the four models. Explain that sharing their various levels of prior knowledge about observation techniques helps the whole group benefit and learn together.

3. Ask the reporters to share what was discussed in their small groups. Record the comments using Overhead 2, Four Models of Classroom-Based Assistance, placing a mark next to duplicate ideas.

Facilitator’s Note
You may wish to make copies of Overhead 1 to distribute to participants, or write the workshop objectives on a flip chart or chalkboard before participants arrive.
4. Review as a whole group which models are currently being used in participants’ schools or district and their effectiveness. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- Which models are currently being used in your school or district? How effective are they in improving classroom teaching and student learning?

- How can the models being used be improved? What is preventing this?

- What are the possible advantages and challenges of embedding any or all of the four models of classroom-based assistance into the daily culture of schools? How might this occur?

5. Summarize the discussion by pointing out that these four models help provide the structure to support continued practice and refinement of instructional approaches. Tell participants that the video they are about to watch shows how schools and teachers use different methods to collect and analyze data for the purpose of improving teaching and student learning.

View Video Segment 1, “Clinical Supervision” (15 minutes)

1. Distribute Handout 2, Clinical Supervision, and give participants time to read it. Explain to participants that clinical supervision is the best-known, oldest, and most widely used structure for working directly with classroom teachers. It most often is used in some type of line relationship, such as supervisor to supervisee, principal to assistant principal, department head to teacher, mentor teacher to mentee, cooperating teacher to student teacher, master teacher to intern, and so on.

2. Distribute Handout 3, The Five Steps of Clinical Supervision, and give participants time to read it. Tell participants that as they view the first video segment they should use the handout to note the important elements in each step of the clinical supervision model.

3. Show Video Segment 1, “Clinical Supervision,” (approximately 15 minutes). Stop the tape just before the “Peer Coaching” segment.
Reaction to Segment 1 (35 minutes)

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish writing notes and thoughts on Handout 3, The Five Steps of Clinical Supervision.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Use Handout 3 to guide the discussion.

3. Review as a whole group the possible advantages and effectiveness of using the clinical supervision model in their schools or district. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
   - What are the advantages and challenges of using the clinical supervision model?
   - How could the clinical supervision model be used in your classroom, school, or district? What would it be like? What would be needed for this to occur?
   - If the clinical supervision model is currently being used, how effective is it? Does it follow the outline that is in Handout 3 and demonstrated in the video? What is needed to improve it and make it more effective?

4. Tell participants that although clinical supervision follows a structure of providing supervisory assistance, it can be effective only if it follows a set of specific principles. Distribute Handout 4, Principles of Clinical Supervision, and allow participants time to read it. Ask participants to return to their small groups. Assign each group one of the six principles found on Handout 4. Explain that each group should try to answer why their assigned principle is important to the success of the clinical supervision model. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

5. Ask the reporters to share what their small groups discussed. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Discuss each principle and why it is important for successful clinical supervision.

6. Distribute Handout 5, Important Elements of Clinical Supervision, and explain that these elements are equally applicable to the peer coaching, study groups, and self-directed improvement models.

View Video Segment 2, “Peer Coaching” (25 minutes)

1. Distribute Handout 6, Peer Coaching, and give participants time to read it. Explain that despite using the same structure and principles as clinical supervision, peer coaching is different and features several different types of programs. One way to classify peer coaching

Facilitator’s Note
You may wish to record the group’s ideas on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

Facilitator’s Note
You may wish to use Handout 4 as an overhead transparency to record notes as reporters share what their small groups discussed.
programs is according to purpose: responding to the individual needs or concerns of a colleague, transferring skills learned in training programs, or helping teachers improve their cognitive functioning or decision-making skills. A second way to classify peer coaching programs is by the professional relationship of the participants, either expert coaching or reciprocal coaching.

2. Distribute Handout 7, Issues in Peer Coaching. Ask participants to return to their small groups and answer each of the five questions while thinking of the ideal peer coaching program for their school or district. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

3. Introduce the next segment of the video by telling participants

   ◆ This next segment highlights examples of peer coaching. As you watch this segment, think about how your school or district is currently using or could use peer coaching.

4. Show Video Segment 2, “Peer Coaching” (approximately 25 minutes). Stop the tape just before the “Study Groups” segment.

**Reaction to Segment 2 (20 minutes)**

1. Ask participants to return to their small groups and add any new information they learned from the video clip that would enhance their responses on Handout 7. Give participants a few minutes to complete this.

2. Ask the reporters to share what was discussed in their small groups. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Use the questions on Handout 7 to guide the discussion. If peer coaching is currently being used in participants’ schools or district, encourage participants to discuss how it is being used, how effective it is, and what is needed to improve it.

3. Distribute Handout 8, Expert Peer Coaching and Reciprocal Peer Coaching. Ask participants to return to their small groups and list the similarities and differences between the two methods of peer coaching. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

4. Ask the reporters to share what was discussed in their small groups. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Discuss the similarities and differences between expert peer coaching and reciprocal peer coaching. Guide the discussion toward an examination of both methods and whether one or both methods would be beneficial in participants’ circumstances.

**Facilitator’s Note**

You may wish to use Handout 7 as an overhead transparency to record notes as reporters share what was discussed in their small groups.

You may wish to use Handout 8 as an overhead transparency to take notes as participants share what they discussed in their small groups.
5. Distribute Handout 9, Components of Successful Peer Coaching Programs, and tell participants

- Regardless of the type of coaching, successful peer coaching programs have several common characteristics: clearly defined purpose or purposes, voluntary participation, and training in peer coaching skills for participating teachers. Training topics might include the principles and structure of peer coaching, conferencing skills, and observation skills. Successful programs also have a formal plan for scheduling peer coaching, providing released time for coaching, and monitoring the program. A program coordinator provides assistance with logistics and addresses problems that might arise. Finally, participants meet on a regular basis to consider the program’s progress, discuss concerns, and reflect on professional growth.

Break (5 minutes)

Invite participants to use the break to informally discuss what they have seen and heard.

View Video Segment 3, “Study Groups” (10 minutes)

1. Introduce the next segment of the video. Explain that it shows educators using study groups to build a learning community among teachers and to improve their understanding of the teaching and learning process. As they watch this segment, ask participants to jot down on a sheet of paper the similarities and differences between this model and those previously discussed.

2. Show Video Segment 3, “Study Groups” (approximately 10 minutes). Stop the tape just before the “Self-Directed Improvement” segment.

Reaction to Segment 3 (20 minutes)

1. Ask participants to discuss what they observed in the video segment. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
   
   - How are study groups similar to other models of providing classroom-based assistance?
   
   - How do study groups provide additional information and help beyond what other models of classroom-based assistance provide?
2. Distribute Handout 10, Study Groups, and give participants time to read it. Explain that two approaches are discussed: collegial problem-solving groups and action research groups.

3. Ask participants to return to their small groups. Distribute Handout 11, Collegial Problem-Solving Groups and Action Research Groups. Assign each team to one of the two study group methods. Ask the teams to list the five most important elements of their assigned method. Allow 10 minutes to complete this activity.

4. Ask the reporters to share what was discussed in their small groups. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency, placing a mark beside duplicate ideas. Lead a discussion about how the two methods would be beneficial to teachers, how they could be organized in participants’ schools or district, and what challenges there would be in implementing the methods. If participants are already using one of the methods, ask them to discuss how it is being used, how effective it is, and what is needed to improve it.

5. Show Overhead 3, Study Groups Summary, and briefly review its main points. Allow time for participants to write any additional information in their notes.

View Video Segment 4, “Self-Directed Improvement” (10 minutes)

1. Distribute Handout 13, Three Aspects of Self-Directed Improvement, and give participants time to read it. Tell participants that as they view the video segment they should use the handout to record the various elements of the self-directed improvement model that they see.

2. Show Video Segment 4, “Self-Directed Improvement” (approximately 10 minutes).

Reaction to Segment 4 (25 minutes)

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish recording the various elements of the self-directed improvement model that they observed.

2. Ask participants to share what they have learned and observed regarding the self-directed improvement model. Use the three aspects listed on Handout 13 to guide the discussion.
3. Show Overhead 4, Three Aspects of Self-Directed Improvement, and briefly review its main points. Allow time for participants to write any additional information in their notes.

4. Distribute Handout 12, Self-Directed Improvement, and give participants time to read it. Tell participants

   ◆ There are two variations of the self-directed improvement model. In one, a supervisor assists teachers in selecting a focus area; gathering and analyzing classroom data; designing, implementing, and evaluating a plan for improvement; and developing a portfolio that documents each stage of the improvement process. This assistance requires the supervisor to share resources with the teacher, conduct classroom observations, and meet with the teacher on a regular basis. In the second variation, the teacher meets with the supervisor to discuss the improvement plan prior to implementation; after completion of the plan, the teacher shares a portfolio documenting implementation and results. Beyond these two meetings, the teacher independently carries out all stages of the improvement project, but the supervisor is available for consultation upon the teacher’s request.

5. Lead a whole-group discussion about the effectiveness of the self-directed improvement model. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

   • How is the self-directed improvement model similar to other models of providing classroom-based assistance?

   • How would use of the self-directed improvement model provide additional information and help beyond what other models of classroom-based assistance provide?

   • How could the self-directed improvement model be organized and implemented within the structure of your school or district?

   • What challenges would there be in organizing and implementing the self-directed improvement model?

   • If the self-directed improvement model is already being used in your school or district, how is it being used? How effective is it? How could it be improved?

6. Distribute Handout 14, Matching Models with Instructional Improvement Efforts. Have participants return to their small groups. Assign
one model to each group and ask participants to discuss a scenario in which their assigned model could be used effectively to improve instruction. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

7. Ask reporters to share what their small groups discussed. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead.

8. Review with the whole group the possible advantages and challenges of using any of the models for any or all of the scenarios described.

9. Lead a discussion about possible next steps. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

   • Which of the various models would provide teachers in your school or district with the greatest benefit?
   
   • Which of the various models would align with current instructional improvement plans in your school or district?
   
   • What would you like to learn more about prior to implementing any of the models? Where could you go for more information?
   
   • What next steps will you take in your school or district to generate interest in these models?
   
   • Which models, if any, are already in use in your school or district? How effective are they? How can they be improved?

Record participants’ comments on a flip chart or overhead and guide the discussion toward consensus as to appropriate next steps regarding models of classroom-based assistance for teachers. Consensus may be reached quickly for some items, but others may require more discussion. Put a star or check mark by any item that has whole-group consensus. Allow 15 minutes for this activity.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

1. Review the workshop objectives (Overhead 1) and address any questions the participants may have. Thank participants for attending the workshop.

2. If appropriate, offer participants additional opportunities for discussion or participation in future meetings regarding the models of providing classroom-based assistance. Consider forming a study group that would conduct further research. Help recommend and implement specific actions.

3. Collect all comments noted on flip chart or overhead transparency.
Workshop 2A is a 2 and 1/2-hour session that provides an overview of observation techniques teachers and supervisors use to gather data to improve instruction and student learning. Using Tape 2, Observation Techniques, this workshop examines the complexities of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques and highlights teachers engaged in pre-conferencing, observing, and post-conferencing. Throughout the tape, observers and teachers provide insights into and thoughts about the issue of observation. Viewing the video and reading this guide in advance of the workshop will give you important and helpful information. Your background knowledge and outside reading will give you a strong base for discussion. As the facilitator, you may use the following agenda or vary it to suit your particular needs.

**Agenda and Time Guide**

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**Materials List for Workshop 2A**

Handout 15, Brainstorming Quantitative and Qualitative Observation Techniques

Handout 16, Observation Techniques

Handout 17, Quantitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections

Handout 18, Qualitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections

Handout 25, Creating a Tailor-Made Observation Tool

Handout 26, Observation Versus Interpretation

Handout 27, Being a Reflective Practitioner

Overhead 5, Workshop 2A Objectives

Overhead 6, Quantitative and Qualitative: What Is the Difference?
You may wish to offer participants information from the introduction to this facilitator’s guide or copies of the information found in the Readings and Resources section. Read these materials and select the information that is relevant to your participants’ needs and concerns. You can distribute it to participants either before the workshop as an introduction to the topic or after the workshop as a review.

Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

1. Welcome all participants. Introduce yourself and explain your role as workshop facilitator. As the facilitator, you will guide participants through the activities to help them meet the workshop objectives.

2. Depending on the size of the group and whether participants know one another, you may want to set aside time for participants to introduce themselves and say why they are interested in observation techniques. You may also want to ask participants to share with the group some observation experiences they have had as either an observer or the one being observed.

3. Explain that this workshop will provide an overview of the complexities of quantitative and qualitative observation as methods of gathering important classroom data to improve teaching and student learning. Display Overhead 5, Workshop 2A Objectives, and tell participants

   ◆ By the end of this session, you will

   - Know the difference between quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
   - List examples of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
   - List pros and cons of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

   Discuss how these objectives correspond to the participants’ expectations for the workshop.

Opening Activities (25 minutes)

1. Ask participants to brainstorm and discuss methods to record data for a classroom or teacher observation. Depending upon the background of the participants, encourage those who have had observation experience to relate why an observation was conducted and the method
that was used to record the data. Record participants’ comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

2. Display Overhead 6, Quantitative and Qualitative: What Is the Difference?, and explain the difference between the two observation techniques.

3. Distribute Handout 15, Brainstorming Quantitative and Qualitative Observation Techniques, and ask participants to classify the brainstormed observation techniques listed on the flip chart or overhead. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

4. Ask participants to share their thoughts with the entire group. Guide the discussion toward a consensus on classifying the observation techniques. Consensus may be reached quickly for some items, but others may require more discussion. Put a star or check mark by any item that has whole-group consensus.

5. Distribute Handout 16, Observation Techniques, and allow participants time to read it. Tell participants

◆ It is important to select or design an observation technique that gathers the data that will best satisfy the purpose of the observation and eventually improve teaching and student learning. To do this, the observer and teacher must first clearly understand the lesson to be observed, the learning objectives, the learning activities, how the student learning will be assessed, and any concerns about or distinguishing characteristics of the lesson or the class. It is important that the observer only collect the data and not make interpretations during the lesson. This ensures the quality of the data and provides a more complete picture of what occurred during the lesson; otherwise, the personal bias of the observer may skew the results of the observation.

**View Tape 2, Observation Techniques (30 minutes)**

1. Distribute Handout 17, Quantitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections, and Handout 18, Qualitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections. Tell participants that as they view the video they should use the handouts to note the differences they see between quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

2. Show Tape 2, Observation Techniques.
Reactions to the Video (20 minutes)

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish recording their observations on Handouts 17 and 18.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Use Handouts 17 and 18 to guide the discussion. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

3. As a whole group, discuss the effectiveness of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
   - What are the advantages of using a quantitative technique over a qualitative technique? What are the advantages of using a qualitative technique over a quantitative technique?
   - When would using a quantitative approach be beneficial to a teacher? When would using a qualitative approach be beneficial to a teacher?
   - What are your concerns regarding the use of either a quantitative or qualitative approach?
   - Could the teacher in the video who demonstrated the quantitative approach have used a qualitative technique instead? What would you recommend as her next step: using a quantitative technique, a qualitative technique, or a tailored observation technique?
   - Could the teacher in the video who used the qualitative approach have used a quantitative technique instead? What would you recommend as her next step: using a quantitative technique, a qualitative technique, or a tailored observation technique?

Allow 10 minutes for this discussion.

4. Explain that quantitative and qualitative approaches can help improve the professional quality of teachers who work to help all students be successful and lifelong learners. Tell participants

   Classroom observation is central to clinical supervision and peer coaching, and it is often used in study groups and self-directed improvement models. There should be a clear distinction between observation for instructional assistance and observation for teacher evaluation. The purpose of observation for instructional assistance is to gather data as a basis for voluntary efforts by teachers to improve their
The purpose of observation for teacher evaluation is to gather evidence about a teacher’s competence that eventually will be used to make decisions about the teacher’s continued employment, merit raises, and so forth. Thus, a district’s teacher evaluation instrument should never be used in an observation for instructional assistance.

**Applying Observation Techniques (50 minutes)**

1. Explain that in addition to quantitative and qualitative observations, sometimes it is necessary for a teacher and observer to design their own observation technique. These tailor-made tools may be a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. They are useful when no standard observation technique can be matched with the observation’s purpose.

2. Distribute Handout 25, Creating a Tailor-Made Observation Tool, and ask participants to form small groups, each with a reporter. Assign each group one of the three scenarios listed on Handout 25. Explain that each group must decide which observation technique would be appropriate, how the observation should be conducted, when the observation should occur, and how long the observation should last. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

3. Ask the reporters in the small groups to share what was discussed. They should first read their assigned scenario aloud and then explain the observation technique their group decided on, how the observation should be conducted, when the observation should occur, and how long the observation should last (a segment of a lesson, the entire lesson, the entire classroom time, or several classroom days).

4. Distribute Handout 26, Observation Versus Interpretation, and allow participants time to read it. Ask participants to complete the handout by writing an O next to the statements that reflect observation and an I next to the statements that reflect interpretation. Explain that to obtain accurate and useful data, observers must be careful to distinguish between gathering and interpreting data. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

5. Ask participants to share their answers for Handout 26. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency.
6. As a whole group, check and discuss the responses according to the following answer key:

   1. I   6. O
   2. O   7. O
   3. O   8. I
   4. I   9. I
   5. I   10. O

7. Distribute Handout 27, Being a Reflective Practitioner, and ask participants to complete the handout by listing the major things that they learned from the workshop; remind them to write the most important idea in the center. Explain that the overall goal of all observation techniques is to help improve teachers’ professional quality by helping them become self-reflective practitioners. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

1. Review the workshop objectives (Overhead 5) and address any questions the participants may have. Thank participants for attending the workshop.

2. If appropriate, offer participants additional opportunities for discussion or participation in future meetings regarding observation techniques.

3. Collect all comments noted on flip chart paper or overhead transparencies.

Facilitator’s Note

You may wish to offer participants an opportunity to discuss this topic at future meetings. If you plan to conduct the other workshops in this facilitator’s guide, tell participants and invite them to attend. Explain that the other videos in this series focus on specific observation and feedback methods that schools and teachers can use to improve teaching and student learning. Tape 1 highlights Different Models of Providing Classroom-Based Assistance, and Tape 3 demonstrates Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers.
Workshop 2B lasts about 3 and 1/2-hours and can be used for either a half-day or a full-day staff development session. This workshop uses Tape 2, *Observation Techniques*, and provides a more in-depth analysis of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques. The workshop activities will help participants discuss the key components of effective observations. The following agenda provides a format for achieving the objectives identified for this session. Viewing the video and reading this guide in advance of the workshop will give you important and helpful information. Your background knowledge and outside reading will provide you with a strong base for discussion. As the facilitator, you may use the following agenda or vary it to suit your particular needs. Workshop activities are designed for 10 or more participants. For a smaller workshop, you may eliminate portions of the activities as appropriate.

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**Materials List for Workshop 2B**

Handout 15, Brainstorming Quantitative and Qualitative Observation Techniques

Handout 16, Observation Techniques

Handout 17, Quantitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections

Handout 18, Qualitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections

Handout 19, Past Observation Experience
You may wish to offer participants information from the introduction to this facilitator’s guide or copies of the information found in the Readings and Resources section. Read these materials and select the information that is relevant to participants’ needs and concerns. You can distribute it to participants either before the workshop as an introduction to the topic or after the workshop as a review. The activities in this workshop also call for a flip chart and chart paper, masking tape, felt-tip markers, an overhead projector, and a tennis-size ball.

One activity for this workshop—the re-creation of a qualitative observation classroom scene in the Reaction to Segment 2 section—may require some advance preparation. You may want to consider identifying in advance persons to portray the 6th grade teacher, John, and Christina for the activity and provide them with copies of Handout 24, Script for Practicing Qualitative Observation Techniques, so that they may practice their parts.

Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

1. At the door, have a sign-in sheet for participants to record their names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. This will enable you to send participants copies of comments and questions recorded during the workshop and to notify them of opportunities to attend future meetings.

2. Welcome all participants. Introduce yourself and explain your role as workshop facilitator. As the facilitator, you will guide participants through the activities to help them meet the workshop objectives.
3. Depending on the size of the group and whether participants know one another, you may want to set aside time for participants to introduce themselves and say why they are interested in observation techniques. You may also want to ask participants to share with the group some observation experiences they have had as either the observer or the person being observed.

4. Display Overhead 7, Workshop 2B Objectives, and introduce the objectives. Tell participants

◆ By the end of this session, you will
  - Know the difference between quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
  - List examples of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
  - Practice designing an observation tool.
  - List pros and cons of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
  - Understand the importance of separating observation from interpretation.

Discuss how these objectives correspond to the participants’ expectations for the workshop.

**Opening Activities (25 minutes)**

1. Ask participants to brainstorm and discuss methods to record data for a classroom or teacher observation. Depending upon the background of the participants, encourage those with observation experience to relate why an observation was conducted and what method was used to record the data. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

2. Display Overhead 6, Quantitative and Qualitative: What Is the Difference?, and explain the difference between the two observation techniques.

3. Distribute Handout 15, Brainstorming Quantitative and Qualitative Observation Techniques, and ask participants to classify the brainstormed observation techniques listed on the flip chart or overhead. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.
Facilitator’s Note
You may wish to use Handout 15 as an overhead transparency to record the participants’ thoughts.

4. Ask participants to share their thoughts with the entire group. Guide the discussion toward a consensus on classifying the observation techniques. Consensus may be reached quickly for some items, but others may require more discussion. Put a star or check mark by any item that has whole-group consensus.

5. Distribute Handout 19, Past Observation Experience. Ask participants to complete the handout by writing a brief description of an experience of being observed and words or phrases to describe how they felt while being observed. If they never have been observed as a teacher, ask them to think of a time when they were observed in another setting for a different reason (e.g., a piano recital). Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

6. Ask participants to share their thoughts with the entire group. Explain that the use of teacher and classroom observations is based on the assumption that all educators want to become better, and that the observation techniques are a method to collect important data for collaborative analysis. To optimize the success of an observation, a risk-free environment for thoughtful discussion where everybody learns is necessary. Tell participants

- Classroom observation is central to clinical supervision and peer coaching, and often is used in study groups and self-directed improvement models. There should be a clear distinction between observation for instructional assistance and observation for teacher evaluation. The purpose of observation for instructional assistance is to gather data as a basis for voluntary efforts by teachers to improve their instruction. The purpose of observation for teacher evaluation is to gather evidence about a teacher’s competence that eventually will be used to make decisions about the teacher’s continued employment, merit raises, and so forth. Thus, a district’s teacher evaluation instrument should never be used in an observation for instructional assistance.

View Video Segment 1, “Quantitative Observations” (15 minutes)

1. Distribute Handout 16, Observation Techniques, and allow participants time to read it. Tell participants

- It is important to select or design an observation technique that gathers the data that will best satisfy the purpose of the
observation and eventually improve teaching and student learning. To do this, the observer and teacher must first clearly understand the lesson to be observed, the learning objectives, the learning activities, how the student learning will be assessed, and any concerns about or distinguishing characteristics of the lesson or the class. It is important, too, that the observer only collect the data and not make interpretations during the lesson. This ensures the quality of the data and provides a more complete picture of what occurred during the lesson; otherwise, the personal bias of the observer may skew the results of the observation.

2. Distribute Handout 17, Quantitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections. Tell participants that as they view the video segment they should use the handout to note what occurs during the pre-conference, observation, and post-conference; which quantitative technique is used; the reason for using this particular method; and the rapport between the teacher and the observer.

3. Show Video Segment 1, “Quantitative Observations” (approximately 15 minutes). Stop the tape just before the “Qualitative Observations” segment.

Reaction to Segment 1 (60 minutes)

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish recording their observations on Handout 17, Quantitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Use Handout 17 to guide the discussion.

3. As a whole group, discuss the pros and cons of quantitative observation techniques. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
   - What are the advantages of using a quantitative technique?
   - When would using a quantitative approach not be beneficial to a teacher?
   - What are your concerns regarding the use of a quantitative approach?
   - Could the teacher in the video who demonstrated the quantitative approach have used a different technique to obtain the data she needed?
• What would you recommend as her next steps to reach her desired goal?

Allow 10 minutes for this discussion.

4. Have participants form small discussion groups of four. Ask each group to select a reporter who will share the small group’s responses with the full group.

5. Distribute Handout 20, Quantitative Observation Techniques, and give participants time to read it. Ask the groups to draw a line connecting each quantitative observation technique listed on Handout 20 to its descriptor. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

6. Ask the reporters to share the answers from their small groups. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead. The answers to Handout 20 should be as follows: 1.B, 2.C, 3.D, 4.A. If small groups had different responses, ask them to explain their answers.

7. Distribute Handout 21, Examples of Quantitative Observation Techniques, and give participants time to read it. Remind participants that quantitative observations result in data that can be reduced to numbers. For example, the Classroom Movement instrument can be structured so that the frequency of the teacher visits to each table, the duration of each table visit, and the sequence of each movement can be recorded.

8. Ask participants to share any questions or concerns they may have regarding quantitative observation techniques. To help prompt the discussion, you could ask a question regarding the Verbal Interaction diagram in Handout 21. For example, say to participants

- The Verbal Interaction example in Handout 21 shows a small-group discussion. How could we record data from a whole-class discussion with maybe 20 or more students?

9. Distribute Handout 22, Create a Quantitative Observation Tool, and ask participants to return to their small groups. Ask the small groups to follow the instructions for step 1 of Handout 22. Encourage participants to use a real situation that they may currently be facing in their own school or classroom. After the groups have each written a brief scenario, ask them to pass Handout 22 to another group. To complete the activity, have each group resolve their given scenario by creating a quantitative observation tool. Allow 20 minutes for this activity.
10. Have the small-group reporters share the work of their groups. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Discuss as a whole group the appropriateness of the observation technique for each scenario described. Ask participants whether other observation techniques could be used with the scenarios described.

**View Video Segment 2, “Qualitative Observations” (15 minutes)**

1. Distribute Handout 18, Qualitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections. Tell participants that as they view the video segment they should use the handout to note what occurs during the pre-conference, observation, and post-conference; which qualitative technique is used; the reason for using this particular method; and the rapport between the teacher and the observer.

2. Show Video Segment 2, “Qualitative Observations” (approximately 15 minutes).

**Reaction to Segment 2 (20 minutes)**

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish recording their observations on Handout 18, Qualitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Use Handout 18 to guide the discussion. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

3. As a whole group, discuss the pros and cons of qualitative observation techniques. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

   - **What are the advantages of using a qualitative technique?**
   - **When would using a qualitative approach not be beneficial to a teacher?**
   - **What are your concerns regarding the use of a qualitative approach?**
   - **Could the teacher in the video who demonstrated the qualitative approach have used a different technique to obtain the data she needed?**
   - **What would you recommend as her next steps to reach her desired goal?**

Allow 10 minutes for this discussion.
4. Distribute Handout 23, Qualitative Observation Techniques, and give participants time to read it. Remind participants that qualitative observations result in data in the form of words or visuals that are not reduced to numbers.

5. Explain that for this next activity participants will engage in a simulated observation. Describe the scenario as involving a 6th grade teacher who believes that she is having difficulty keeping two students focused on work assignments; she is concerned that this may be affecting the rest of the class. Her students have been working in groups on a math project that involves drawing a proportional blueprint of the school. The teacher has asked for an observation of one of her lessons.

Identify three volunteers to play the roles of the teacher, John, and Christina. Give them each a copy of Handout 24, Script for Practicing Qualitative Observation Techniques. Allow the volunteers time to read the handout.

6. Ask the remaining participants to return to their small groups. Assign each group a qualitative observation technique. Those using a Verbatim approach should record all verbal interactions during the lesson word for word. Those using a Selected Verbatim approach should record only those interactions between the teacher and John. Another group using Selected Verbatim should record only those interactions between the teacher and Christina. Those using the Open Narrative should summarize in their own words all of the verbal and nonverbal interactions that take place. And those using the Focused Open-Ended approach should take notes on the level of participation of John and Christina and what they perceive as the classroom climate.

7. Ask the volunteers to perform the simulated classroom lesson using Handout 24, Script for Practicing Qualitative Observation Techniques.

8. After the simulated classroom lesson has concluded, thank the volunteers and ask for a round of applause for their bravery in simulating the classroom lesson. Ask participants to return to their small groups to analyze and discuss what they observed. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

9. Ask the reporters in the small groups to share which qualitative method their group used and what they observed. As a whole group, discuss the results of the observations and what possible next steps the teacher could try. Guide the discussion beyond suggestions of
simply doing a whole-class review prior to the lesson. Ask participants to consider the learning and developmental abilities of John and Christina; the effects of John’s absenteeism; and whether additional observations, meetings with stakeholders, or other data collection methods need to be employed.

10. As a whole group, discuss the effectiveness of each qualitative method used. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

   • To what extent did your group’s assigned qualitative method obtain data to help the teacher better understand what is taking place in her classroom?

   • Which qualitative method appeared to be the most effective? Which was the least effective?

   • What do you see as some of the advantages in using each of the qualitative methods? What are some of the challenges or concerns in using each of the qualitative methods?

Applying Observation Techniques (60 minutes)

1. Explain that in addition to quantitative and qualitative observations, sometimes it is necessary for a teacher and observer to design their own observation technique. These tailor-made tools may be a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. They are useful when no standard observation technique can be matched with the observation’s purpose.

2. Distribute Handout 25, Creating a Tailor-Made Observation Tool, and ask participants to return to their small groups. Assign each group one of the three scenarios listed on Handout 25. Explain that each group must design an observation technique that would be appropriate and decide how the observation should be conducted, when the observation should occur, and how long the observation should last. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

3. Ask the reporters in the small groups to share what was discussed. They should first read their assigned scenario aloud and then explain the observation technique their group decided on, how the observation should be conducted, when the observation should occur, and how long the observation should last (a segment of a lesson, the entire lesson, the entire classroom time, or several classroom days).

4. Distribute Handout 26, Observation Versus Interpretation, and allow participants time to read it. Ask participants to complete the handout
by writing an O next to the statements that reflect observation and an I next to the statements that reflect interpretation. Explain that to obtain accurate and useful data, observers must be careful to distinguish between gathering and interpreting data. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

5. Ask participants to share their answers for Handout 26. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

6. As a whole group, check and discuss the responses according to the following answer key:
   1. I  6. O
   2. O  7. O
   3. O  8. I
   4. I  9. I
   5. I  10. O

7. Distribute Handout 27, Being a Reflective Practitioner, and ask participants to complete the handout by listing the major things that they learned from the workshop; remind them to write the most important idea in the center. Explain that the overall goal of all observation techniques is to help improve teachers’ professional quality by helping them become self-reflective practitioners. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

8. Ask all participants to stand. Explain that you will make eye contact with one participant and throw a ball to that person. Upon catching the ball, the participant must state one thing that he or she learned today. Then, the participant will make eye contact with someone else and throw the ball to that person. Allow 3-5 minutes for this activity; end when no new information is forthcoming.

**Conclusion (5 minutes)**

1. Review the workshop objectives (Overhead 7) and address any questions the participants may have. Thank participants for attending the workshop.

2. If appropriate, offer participants additional opportunities for discussion or participation in future meetings regarding observation techniques.

3. Collect all comments noted on flip chart paper or overhead transparencies.
Workshop 3A is a 1 and 1/2-hour session that provides an overview of instructional leadership behaviors and approaches. This workshop uses Tape 3, *Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers*, which examines specific courses of action leaders can take when working with teachers based on the teachers’ level of commitment, level of abstraction, and other factors. Viewing the video and reading this guide in advance of the workshop will give you important and helpful information. Your background knowledge and outside reading will give you a strong base for discussion. As the facilitator, you may use the following agenda or vary it to suit your particular needs.

### Agenda and Time Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time (Minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Activity</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View Tape 3, <em>Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers</em></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Approximate Workshop Time 1 hour, 30 minutes

### Materials List for Workshop 3A

- Handout 28, A Brief Bio of Two Teachers
- Handout 29, Instructional Leadership Behaviors and Approaches
- Handout 30, Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers
- Handout 31, Directive-Informational Approach
- Handout 32, Collaborative Approach
- Handout 33, Nondirective Approach
- Overhead 8, Workshop 3A Objectives

You may wish to offer participants information from the introduction to this facilitator’s guide or copies of the information found in the Readings and Resources section. Read these materials and select the information that is relevant to participants’ needs and concerns. You can distribute it giving participants folders with all materials inside is an efficient way to distribute handouts and other resources. You may also wish to provide name tags for everyone.
to participants either before the workshop as an introduction to the topic or after the workshop as a review.

Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

1. Welcome all participants. Introduce yourself and explain your role as workshop facilitator. As the facilitator, you will guide participants through the activities to help them meet the workshop objectives.

2. Depending on the size of the group and whether participants know one another, you may want to set aside time for participants to introduce themselves and say why they are interested in learning about approaches to working closely with teachers.

3. Explain that this workshop introduces participants to instructional leadership behaviors and approaches. Display Overhead 8, Workshop 3A Objectives, and tell participants

◆ By the end of this workshop, you will be able to

  • Identify specific behaviors leaders use to work with teachers.

  • Implement one of the four approaches to working with teachers and apply specific behaviors for different situations.

  • Determine which of the four approaches, based on the level of abstraction and the level of commitment of individual teachers, would be most effective.

Discuss how these objectives correspond to the participants’ expectations for the workshop.

Opening Activity (20 minutes)

1. Distribute Handout 28, A Brief Bio of Two Teachers, and give participants time to read it. Discuss what approaches they would use to work with each of the two teachers. Use the questions at the bottom of each description to guide the discussion. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

2. Tell the participants that, because teachers come to the classroom with a variety of unique experiences and skills, a leader must be prepared to work with teachers as they are. Different teachers require different approaches.
3. Distribute Handout 29, Instructional Leadership Behaviors and Approaches, and allow participants time to read it. Point out that each approach encompasses certain behaviors. Explain that many factors help a leader determine which approach to use with a given teacher.

**View Tape 3, Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers (40 minutes)**

1. Distribute Handout 30, Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers, and allow time for participants to read it. Explain that Handout 30 shows a summary of all the methods that leaders can choose from in working with teachers. Point out that the behaviors and approaches correspond to other elements, such as scale of control and choice, teacher readiness, and outcomes desired. Tell participants that as they view the video they should use the handout to make notes about how Gracie Rocha, an assistant principal at Tom Green Elementary School in Buda, Texas, uses the various approaches.

2. Show Tape 3, Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers.

**Reactions (20 minutes)**

1. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Use the summary of approaches listed in Handout 30 to guide the discussion. Use the following questions to start the discussion:

   • *What struck you?*

   • *What interested or concerned you?*

   • *What did you notice?*

2. Distribute Handout 31, Directive-Informational Approach; Handout 32, Collaborative Approach; and Handout 33, Nondirective Approach. Give participants time to read them. Explain that these handouts show where each approach falls within the continuum of behaviors for instructional leaders.

3. Have participants form small discussion groups. Ask them to consider the handouts they have received and the video they have just viewed as they discuss which approach seems most appropriate for the teachers described on Handout 28, A Brief Bio of Two Teachers. The participants should be able to explain their reasons for selecting an approach and behaviors. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.
4. Ask the small groups to share what they discussed. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- How high does each teacher’s level of commitment and level of abstraction seem to be?
- What other factors might you as a leader consider when working with each teacher?

Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

Remind participants that these are “people on paper” with complex motivations and objectives, and that when they as leaders work with teachers it is important to remember to address their individual needs rather than to try to fit them into categories.

**Conclusion (5 minutes)**

1. Review the workshop objectives (Overhead 8) and address any questions the participants may have. Thank participants for attending the workshop.

2. If appropriate, offer participants additional opportunities for discussion or participation in meetings regarding observation techniques.

3. Collect all comments noted on flip chart paper or overhead transparencies.

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**Facilitator’s Note**

You may wish to offer participants an opportunity to discuss this topic at future meetings. If you plan to conduct the other workshops in this facilitator’s guide, tell participants and invite them to attend. Explain that the other videos in this series focus on specific observation and feedback methods that schools and teachers use to improve teaching and student learning. Tape 1 highlights Different Models of Providing Classroom-Based Assistance, and Tape 2 demonstrates Observation Techniques.
Workshop 3B lasts about 3 and \( \frac{1}{2} \) hours and can be used for either a half-day or a full-day staff development session. This workshop uses Tape 3, *Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers*, and provides in-depth analysis of instructional leadership behaviors and approaches. The workshop activities will help participants to examine specific courses of action leaders can take when working with teachers based on the teachers’ level of commitment, level of abstraction, and other factors. The following agenda provides a format for achieving the objectives identified for this session. Viewing the video and reading this guide in advance of the workshop will give you important and helpful information. Your background knowledge and outside reading will provide you with a strong base for discussion. As the facilitator, you may use the following agenda or vary it to suit your particular needs. This workshop details the activities for 10 or more participants. For fewer participants, you may eliminate portions of the activities as appropriate.

### Agenda and Time Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time (Minutes)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opening Activities</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tape 3, <em>Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 1, “Directive-Informational Approach”</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction to Segment 1</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 2, “Collaborative Approach”</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction to Segment 2</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Break</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Video Segment 3, “Nondirective Approach”</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction to Segment 3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the Best Approach</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Approximate Workshop Time</td>
<td>3 hours, 40 minutes</td>
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### Materials List for Workshop 3B

- Handout 28, A Brief Bio of Two Teachers
- Handout 29, Instructional Leadership Behaviors and Approaches
- Handout 30, Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers
Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

1. Welcome all participants. Introduce yourself and explain your role as workshop facilitator. As the facilitator, you will guide participants through the activities to help them meet the workshop objectives.

2. Depending on the size of the group and whether participants know one another, you may want to set aside time for participants to introduce themselves and say why they are interested in learning about approaches to working closely with teachers.

3. Explain that this workshop will help participants examine the specific course of action leaders can take when working with teachers based on the teachers’ level of commitment, level of abstraction, and other factors. Display Overhead 9, Workshop 3B Objectives, and tell participants

   ◆ By the end of this session, you will be able to

   - Identify specific behaviors leaders use to work with teachers.

   - Implement the four approaches to working with teachers and apply specific behaviors for different situations.
• Determine which of the four approaches, based on the level of abstraction and the level of commitment of individual teachers, would be most effective.

• Recognize key strategies for fostering long-term teacher growth toward higher levels of commitment and better decision making.

Discuss how these objectives correspond to the participants’ expectations for the workshop.

Opening Activities (25 minutes)

1. Have participants form small discussion groups. Ask each group to select a reporter who will share the small group’s responses with the full group.

2. Distribute Handout 28, A Brief Bio of Two Teachers. Assign each group one of the two descriptions found on Handout 28 and give participants time to read it. Ask participants to discuss in their small groups which approaches they would use to work with their particular teacher. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

3. Ask the reporters to share what their small groups discussed. They should first read the description of the teacher aloud and then describe how their small group would help improve that teacher’s teaching. After each small group has reported, lead a whole-group discussion about the effectiveness of the approaches that the small groups identified and respond to any questions or concerns. Use the questions at the bottom of each description on Handout 28 to guide the discussion. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

4. Tell the participants that, since teachers come to the table with a variety of unique experiences and skills, a leader must be prepared to work with teachers as they are. Different teachers require different approaches.

5. Distribute Handout 29, Instructional Leadership Behaviors and Approaches, and allow participants time to read it.

6. As a whole group, discuss reactions to Handout 29. What ideas or questions did the handout inspire? How well do the behaviors listed on The Instructional Leader Behavior Continuum correspond to the specific approaches? Record questions generated on an overhead
transparency or flip chart. Refer to this list of questions as the workshop progresses.

**View Video Segment 1, “Directive-Informational Approach” (25 minutes)**

1. Distribute Handout 34, Behaviors and Key Phrases, and allow time for participants to read it. Ask participants to record key phrases that correspond to the behaviors listed. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

2. Introduce the video. Tell participants

   - The first segment of this video introduces the behavior continuum and how the behaviors are applied to one of the approaches in working with teachers. As you watch, note any additional key phrases that correspond to the list of behaviors on Handout 34.


**Reaction to Segment 1 (20 minutes)**

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish writing notes and thoughts on Handout 34, Behaviors and Key Phrases.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

3. Distribute Handout 31, Directive-Informational Approach, and allow participants time to read it. Review and discuss the behaviors listed on the handout and whether they correspond to what participants viewed in the video segment.

4. Remind participants that there are two kinds of directive approaches that an instructional leader can use: directive-control and directive-informational. Mention that many instructional leaders have difficulty distinguishing between these two types of approaches in practice.

5. Ask participants to return to their small groups. Distribute copies of Handout 35, Directive-Control Approach Versus Directive-Informational Approach. Ask the small groups to follow the handout instructions and record the similarities between these two approaches in the overlapping circles on the Venn diagram. The participants should
then write the unique characteristics of each approach in the non-overlapping parts of the circles. Allow about 10 minutes for this activity.

6. Ask the reporters to share what their small groups discussed. Use the questions on Handout 35 to guide the discussion. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency.

7. Ask the whole group whether any similarities or unique characteristics are missing from the discussion. Use the following answer key as a guide.

**Directive-Control Approach**

- Leader should use only when there is danger (intellectual, emotional, or physical) to students.
- Leader has a line relationship, such as supervisor to teacher.
- Leader uses phrases such as “You need to . . .,” “You will be required to . . .,” or “I expect you to . . .”

**Directive-Informational Approach**

- Suggestions are seen as coming from an expert.
- Leader provides a limited range of options.
- Teacher has option of following suggested plan or not.
- Leader uses phrases such as “You could . . .,” “One possibility is to . . .,” or “A strategy that works for me is . . .”

**Similarities of Both Approaches**

- Leader must have a great deal of expertise and knowledge about the situation.
- Leader takes primary responsibility for decision making.

8. Review the list of questions generated earlier to see whether progress has been made in answering them.

**View Video Segment 2, “Collaborative Approach”** *(15 minutes)*

1. Introduce the video. Tell participants

   - The next segment highlights the collaborative approach leaders use with teachers. As you watch this segment, note any
additional key phrases that correspond to the list of behaviors on Handout 34.

2. Show Video Segment 2, “Collaborative Approach” (approximately 15 minutes). Stop the tape just before the “Nondirective Approach” segment.

Reaction to Segment 2 (15 minutes)

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish writing down notes and thoughts on Handout 34, Behaviors and Key Phrases.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

3. Distribute Handout 32, Collaborative Approach, and allow participants time to read it. Review and discuss the behaviors listed on the handout and whether they correspond to what participants viewed in the video segment. Explain that the final product of this approach often is an agreed-upon plan of action or an actual contract of responsibilities between the teacher and the leader.

4. Review the list of questions generated earlier to see whether progress has been made in answering them.

Break (5 minutes)

Invite participants to use the break to informally discuss what they have seen and heard.

View Video Segment 3, “Nondirective Approach” (15 minutes)

1. Introduce the final segment of the video. Tell participants

   - The final video segment highlights the nondirective approach. As you watch this segment, note any additional key phrases that correspond to the list of behaviors on Handout 34.

2. Show Video Segment 3, “Nondirective Approach” (approximately 15 minutes).
Reaction to Segment 3 (30 minutes)

1. Give participants a few minutes to finish writing down notes and thoughts on Handout 34, Behaviors and Key Phrases.

2. Ask participants to share their observations with the entire group. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

3. Distribute Handout 33, Nondirective Approach, and allow participants time to read it. Review and discuss the behaviors listed on the handout and whether they correspond to what participants viewed in the video segment. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

4. Tell participants that instructional leaders sometimes have difficulty distinguishing between a nondirective approach and a laissez-faire approach. Ask participants to brainstorm the characteristics of a laissez-faire supervisor. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

5. Ask participants to discuss and compare the sequencing of behaviors identified on Handout 33, Nondirective Approach, with the list of laissez-faire characteristics. Ask what they see as the characteristics of a nondirective leader. Emphasize that the nondirective leader is involved in the process of direct leadership on the basis of a particular teacher’s level of functioning, while the laissez-faire leader takes a more hands-off approach to instructional improvement.

6. Review the list of questions generated earlier to see whether progress has been made in answering them.

Determining the Best Approach (60 minutes)

1. Explain to participants that if the goal of education is to provide each student the best opportunity for learning success, then the most effective means of attaining this goal is to foster and develop a staff of educators who are motivated toward self-improvement and intellectual growth. Tell participants

   ◆ To foster and develop a staff of educators who are motivated toward self-improvement and intellectual growth, leaders must, whenever possible, use an approach that demands the greatest choice and thought on the part of the teacher. Determining the “right” approach requires leaders to consider the commitment, expertise, and needs of individual teachers. It also requires that leaders be aware that thinking and
problem-solving skills are not static. To determine the most appropriate approach and to develop an honest, reciprocal, professional relationship means finding out more about the lives, aspirations, and hopes of others. Leaders should be aware of social and professional factors such as status, power, hierarchy (the organizational relationship between the leader and the teacher receiving assistance), and influence, and the identity factors of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, and life history. It is important to remember also that attitudes and enthusiasm toward work can and do ebb and flow depending on working conditions and personal concerns. To avoid potential problems, leaders should first understand themselves, their predominant way of interacting, and their core beliefs about working with others.

2. Distribute Handout 36, Instructional Leadership Beliefs Inventory, and tell participants that this exercise is designed to help them become more aware of their own personal leadership style. Ask participants to complete the inventory. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

3. Ask participants to discuss their findings. What are their reactions to this exercise? Did their initial idea of their preferred leadership style match the outcome of the inventory? Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

4. Explain to participants that Handout 36 can give them an idea of their own personal leadership style. Offer the idea that they may obtain more useful information about themselves with this same instrument by asking their colleagues and teachers to identify which of the four methods they see being used.

5. Distribute Handout 37, Four “Types” of Teachers, and tell participants that it is helpful to carefully think about the teacher when choosing and planning the most appropriate method of working with him or her. Remind participants that while the variables of abstraction and commitment are helpful lenses through which to view a particular teacher’s skills, in reality it is difficult to categorize people in this way.

6. Ask participants to return to their small groups. Assign each group one of the four types of teachers named in Handout 37. Each small group should list the developmental characteristics or write a brief description of their assigned teacher type, decide which approach
would be most effective in working with that type of teacher, and record other factors that might affect the approach chosen. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

7. Ask the reporters to share what their small groups discussed. Use Handout 37 to guide the discussion. Record the comments on a flip chart or overhead transparency. Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

8. Ask participants to use the materials they have received and the video they have just watched to discuss which approach seems most appropriate for the teachers described on Handout 28, A Brief Bio of Two Teachers. Use the following questions to guide this whole-group discussion:

• Which approach would you use for Shirley Horvback? Why?
• Which approach would you use for Frank Apanka? Why?
• How high does each teacher’s level of commitment and level of abstraction seem to be?
• What other factors might you as a leader consider when working with each teacher?

Allow 10 minutes for this discussion.

Remind participants that these are “people on paper” with complex motivations and objectives, and that when they as leaders work with teachers it is important to remember to address their individual needs rather than to try to fit them into categories.

9. Distribute Handout 30, Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers, and allow participants time to read it. Explain that Handout 30 shows a summary of all the methods that leaders can use in working with teachers. Point out that the behaviors and approaches correspond to other elements, such as scale of control and choice, teacher readiness, and outcome desired.

**Conclusion (5 minutes)**

1. Review the workshop objectives (Overhead 9) and the list of questions that was generated earlier in the workshop. Address any questions the participants may have. Thank participants for attending the workshop.

2. If appropriate, offer participants additional opportunities for discussion or participation in future meetings regarding approaches to
Facilitator’s Note
You may wish to offer participants an opportunity to discuss this topic at future meetings. If you plan to conduct the other workshops in this facilitator’s guide, tell participants and invite them to attend. Explain that the other videos in this series focus on specific observation and feedback methods that schools and teachers use to improve teaching and student learning. Tape 1 highlights Different Models of Providing Classroom-Based Assistance, and Tape 2 demonstrates Observation Techniques.

working closely with teachers. A possible extension activity would be to create various scenarios of fictitious teachers to allow participants to practice using the various instructional leadership behaviors and approaches.

3. Collect all comments noted on flip chart paper or overhead transparencies.
Handouts & Overheads
Four Models of Classroom-Based Assistance

Clinical Supervision

Peer Coaching

Study Groups

Self-Directed Improvement

What is the purpose of observation and data collection?
The clinical supervision model includes both a set of principles and a structure for providing classroom assistance. The principles of clinical supervision are

- **Collegiality.** It is assumed that both the teacher and supervisor can make meaningful contributions to the instructional improvement process.

- **Trust.** If the teacher is to participate openly and fully in the improvement process, he or she must believe that the supervisor is committed to the teacher’s growth and development, to a collegial relationship, and to high ethical standards.

- **Nonevaluative Assistance.** Clinical supervision is separate from the school’s summative evaluation process.

- **Data-Based Assistance.** The supervisor gathers objective data during a classroom observation, as agreed upon in advance by the teacher and supervisor.

- **Nonjudgmental Assistance.** The supervisor does not attempt to “remediate” the teacher; rather, he or she helps the teacher to identify gaps between the ideal instruction and what actually is occurring in the classroom. Once identified, these gaps become the teacher’s focus for instructional improvement.

- **Reflective Dialogue.** The supervisor asks questions and raises issues that assist the teacher to reflect deeply on the observation data, gaps between the teacher’s ideal and actual practice, and possible changes to improve teaching and learning.

The structure of clinical supervision consists of a five-stage cycle:

- **Pre-Conference.** The supervisor establishes a positive tone, then asks the teacher to share the instructional plan for the lesson to be observed. The supervisor asks the teacher to share concerns or interests about the lesson that can be addressed through the gathering of observation data. The supervisor and teacher then work together to select or design an observation technique to gather data on the teacher’s concerns or interests. The supervisor and teacher agree on a time and place for the post-conference, and the supervisor reviews pre-conference decisions.
• Observation. The supervisor gathers the data agreed upon in the pre-conference, using the agreed-upon data-gathering technique.

• Analysis and Planning. The supervisor reviews the observation data and decides on the interpersonal approach to use during the post-conference.

• Post-Conference. The supervisor establishes a positive tone, then shares the observation data with the teacher. The teacher and supervisor engage in reflective dialogue on the meaning of the data and alternatives for instructional improvement. The teacher and supervisor decide on an instructional improvement goal, a plan for achieving that goal, and techniques for assessing the improvement effort. To assess the improvement effort, the teacher and supervisor may decide on a new classroom observation, review of student achievement data, an informal follow-up conference, and so on. One clinical supervision cycle may lead to another: a post-conference for one cycle may evolve into a pre-conference for a new cycle. The post-conference ends with the supervisor’s review of decisions made.

• Critique of Previous Stages. The critique can be carried out immediately after the post-conference or in a separate meeting. The supervisor asks the teacher to assess the benefits of each of the previous stages and the clinical supervision cycle as a whole. The supervisor also can engage in a separate self-critique by reviewing an audio- or videotape of the conferences held during the cycle.

Historically, clinical supervision is the predecessor of peer coaching.
The Five Steps of Clinical Supervision

Purpose of Observation and Data Collection:

1. Pre-Conference

2. Observation

3. Analysis and Planning

4. Post-Conference

5. Critique
Why is adherence to each of the following principles important to the success of clinical supervision?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Why this principle is important</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collegiality</td>
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<td>Trust</td>
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<td>Nonevaluative Assistance</td>
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<td>Nonjudgmental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflective Dialogue</td>
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</table>
Pre-Conference

- Establish positive tone.
- Discuss instructional plan.
- Share concerns or interests about lesson.
- Select or design observation technique.
- Agree on time and place for post-conference.
- Review decisions.

Observation

- Use agreed-upon observation technique.
- Gather agreed-upon data.

Analysis and Planning

- Review observation data.
- Decide on interpersonal approach for post-conference.

Post-Conference

- Establish a positive tone.
- Share observation data.
- Interpret data.
- Discuss alternatives for instructional improvement.
- Decide on improvement goal.
- Design plan for achieving goal.
- Decide on technique for assessing plan.
- Review decisions.

Critique of Previous Stages

- Assess each stage of clinical cycle.
- Assess benefits of cycle as a whole.
In the peer coaching model, teachers observe and provide feedback to other teachers. Like clinical supervision, peer coaching adheres to principles of collegiality, trust, nonevaluative assistance, data-based assistance, nonjudgmental assistance, and reflective dialogue. Peer coaching usually is carried out within the same structure as clinical supervision: a cycle including a pre-conference, classroom observation, analysis and planning, a post-conference, and a critique of the previous stages.

There are several types of peer coaching. One way to classify peer coaching is according to the purpose of the peer coaching program. In **responsive peer coaching**, the peer coach responds to the individual needs of a colleague by gathering data and providing feedback on concerns the colleague has about his or her teaching. Responsive peer coaching essentially is clinical supervision provided by peers rather than by supervisors. The purpose of **technical peer coaching** is to help teachers transfer skills learned in training programs to their classrooms. This includes helping teachers adapt the new skill to their students, subject, and teaching style. **Cognitive peer coaching** is intended to improve teachers’ decision-making skills. The cognitive coach assists the teacher to reflect deeply about teaching decisions before, during, and after the observed lesson. Although these three purposes of peer coaching are presented as distinct in the literature and in some training programs, in practice the boundaries between the three purposes often are blurred. Many schools integrate two or all three purposes within the same peer coaching program.

Another way to classify peer coaching programs is according to the professional relationship of the participants. **Expert peer coaching** is one-way coaching. Teacher A coaches Teacher B, but Teacher B does not coach Teacher A. This is because Teacher A has experience or special expertise that Teacher B does not have. For example, the expert coach might be an experienced teacher serving as a mentor, lead teacher, or master teacher responsible for providing instructional assistance to other teachers, or a teacher with extensive training in a new instructional method who is charged with coaching other teachers in the new method. **Reciprocal peer coaching** is two-way coaching. Teacher A and Teacher B take turns coaching each other (or several members of a coaching team take turns coaching each other). Reciprocal coaching is appropriate when all teachers have been trained in coaching skills. Although both expert and reciprocal peer coaching have advantages, one particular advantage of reciprocal coaching programs is that all participants have opportunities to grow professionally both through observing colleagues teaching and through receiving feedback from teachers who observe them.
Answer each of the five questions while thinking of the ideal peer coaching program for your school or district.

Why should teachers participate in peer coaching programs?

What skills do teachers need to be effective peer coaches?

What arrangements can be made to provide teachers with time to participate in peer coaching?

What support is needed and how can administrators support peer coaching?

How can we measure the effect of peer coaching on teachers and students?
## Expert Peer Coaching and Reciprocal Peer Coaching

<table>
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<th>Expert Peer Coaching</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Reciprocal Peer Coaching</th>
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The purpose or purposes of peer coaching must be clearly defined. Participation should be voluntary. Teachers should be trained in peer coaching on topics such as

- Principles and structure of peer coaching.
- Conferencing skills.
- Observation skills.

A formal plan should be in place for

- Scheduling peer coaching.
- Providing released time for peer coaching.
- Monitoring of the program by a coordinator who provides assistance with logistics and addresses problems that might arise.
- Participant meetings on a regular basis to reflect on the program’s progress, discuss problems and solutions, and reflect on professional growth.
In study groups, teachers collaboratively engage in inquiry, reflection, and dialogue. Beyond those common characteristics, study groups have a variety of functions. Two functions especially relevant to classroom-based assistance are collegial problem solving and action research.

Collegial problem-solving groups, sometimes called critical friends groups, enable teachers to receive and provide short-term assistance with immediate classroom problems. A facilitator with expertise in group process leads a study group. A teacher experiencing a problem presents it to the group, including data he or she has already gathered (e.g., student achievement data, samples of study work, a written description of a critical incident, and so forth). Colleagues in the group help the teacher analyze the problem and consider solutions. The group helps the teacher design an action plan for solving the problem, including the gathering of additional data to determine the success of the improvement effort. At a future study group meeting, the teacher describes the implementation of the action plan and presents data gathered during the plan’s implementation. The group assists the teacher in analyzing the data, assesses outcomes of the improvement effort, and decides whether additional actions are necessary.

Teachers in action research groups define long-term focus areas and help each other to conduct classroom inquiry aimed at improving instruction. A focus area may be common or individual. Examples of common focus areas include integrating technology, interdisciplinary teaching, and implementing a new instructional program. Action research groups with a common focus share and discuss readings on the focus area, then gather and analyze preliminary data. Preliminary data might be obtained through classroom observations, student interviews or questionnaires, student achievement records or work samples, and so on. The preliminary data helps the study group better understand the focus area and establish a baseline for measuring improvement. During data analysis, the study group often creates data displays to organize and compare different types of data.

Based on data analysis and dialogue, the group establishes common improvement objectives, an action plan for meeting the objectives, and a plan for evaluating progress. Each group member accepts equal responsibility for implementing the action plan. During implementation, the study group meets regularly to discuss progress, share new data, and revise the action plan when necessary.
Toward the end of the period designated for the action plan (often an entire academic year), the study group conducts a formal evaluation of progress toward the objectives. As with preliminary data gathering, a variety of data sources and data gathering techniques are used. After analyzing and discussing evaluation data, the group decides on future directions.

A variation of the action research group consists of individual, long-term action research carried out by each teacher in the group, each with a different focus area. Group members share readings and dialogue on each other’s foci. The group helps individual teachers decide what preliminary data to gather and what data gathering techniques to use. Because action research is longer in duration than the research required for problem solving, more in-depth data is gathered when using the action research model. For example, the teacher might keep a journal of reflections on classroom interaction, a log of student behaviors, or a running record of student performance over time. Other members of the action research group might make classroom observations to gather additional preliminary data. Once the teacher has gathered preliminary data, the group assists the teacher in data analysis and action planning.

As teachers carry out their individual action research, other group members provide assistance through peer coaching and group meetings in which teachers share successes, problems, and solutions. Toward the end of their projects, teachers share project evaluation data, assist each other in analysis of evaluation data, and help one another to plan future actions.
Record what you believe are the five most important elements about each of the two approaches to study groups.

Collegial Problem-Solving Groups
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Action Research Groups
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
A self-directed improvement plan is a long-term, data-based project carried out by an individual teacher to improve her instruction. The teacher selects a focus area for improvement, studies it through readings in theory and research, and gathers classroom data on it. After data analysis and reflection, the teacher identifies improvement objectives, designs a long-term plan (usually for the academic year), and presents the plan to her supervisor for approval. During implementation of the plan, the teacher gathers additional data to measure progress toward improvement objectives. The final stage of the project is to gather and analyze evaluation data to determine the success of the project and future directions.

Engaging in self-directed improvement does not mean that the teacher becomes a lone wolf, isolated from colleagues. During an individualized improvement project, a teacher might attend workshops and conferences, work on a curriculum development team, or join a professional network related to the focus area. What makes the improvement self-directed is the fact that the teacher makes his own decision about how to proceed at each stage of the improvement process.

Self-directed improvement plans often are documented through the development of a teacher portfolio. The portfolio might include:

- The teacher’s educational philosophy.
- A discussion of the focus area and why it was chosen. This section also might include a discussion on the relationship of the focus area to the school’s vision and mission.
- Preliminary data on the focus area and the teacher’s reflections on that data.
- The action plan.
- Artifacts gathered and reflections written throughout the plan’s implementation.
- Project evaluation data and reflections on that data.
- Plans for the future.

Self-directed improvement projects often conclude with a supervisor-teacher conference to review the portfolio, assess the outcomes of the project, and discuss the teacher’s plans for continued professional growth.
Three Aspects of Self-Directed Improvement

Purpose is

Key steps are

Self-Directed Improvement

Portfolios might include
For each of the instructional assistance models listed, describe a scenario in which the model could be used effectively to improve instruction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Instructional Improvement Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Supervision</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert Peer Coaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reciprocal Peer Coaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Groups: Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Groups: Action Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Directed Improvement</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Brainstorming Quantitative and Qualitative Observation Techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
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In observation for instructional assistance, the type of observation technique depends on the specific purpose of the observation. There are two general types of observation techniques: quantitative and qualitative. **Quantitative observation techniques** result in data that can be reduced to numbers. Some examples of quantitative observation techniques are

- **Categorical Frequency Counts.** Using predetermined categories, the observer makes a mark each time a particular teacher or student behavior occurs. For example, an instrument focusing on teacher behaviors might require the observer to make a mark each time a teacher gives directions, asks a question, praises a student, and so on. An observer using an instrument focused on student behaviors might make a mark for a particular student each time that student is listening to the teacher, working independently, disturbing others, and so on. After the observation, marks are tallied to determine how often a teacher, individual student, or the entire class engaged in each behavior. From these counts, the percentage of class time that the teacher or students engaged in each behavior also can be calculated.

- **Verbal Interaction Tallies.** The observer records the frequency of verbal interactions between the teacher and students or among students. This technique also can track particular types of interactions, such as teacher- or student-initiated interactions.

- **Classroom Movement Tracking.** The observer tracks the teacher or students as they move about the classroom during a lesson. The observation instrument can be structured so that the sequence, time, direction, and destination of each movement can be recorded.

- **Use of a Performance Indicator Instrument.** The observer uses a performance indicator instrument to record the presence or absence of elements within the lesson. For example, the effective cooperative learning lesson usually includes six elements: academic and social objectives, teaching social skills, face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, individual accountability, and group processing. A performance indicator instrument designed for a cooperative lesson would list these elements, and the observer would indicate on the instrument whether or not each element was present during the lesson.
On the other hand, when using qualitative observation techniques, the observer records data in the form of words or visuals that are not reduced to numbers. Some examples of qualitative techniques are

- **Verbatim Recording.** The observer records all verbal interaction during the lesson, word for word. *Selected verbatim recording* is a variation in which the observer records the verbal interaction only for those parts of the lesson selected in advance by the teacher and observer.

- **Open Narrative.** The observer summarizes in his or her own words the verbal and nonverbal interactions, activities, and events that take place during the lesson.

- **Focused Open-Ended Observation.** The teacher and observer agree on certain foci for the observation, such as the classroom climate, behaviors of a subgroup of students, or the level of student participation in particular activities. The observer takes open-ended notes on observations relative to each focus area.

- **Videotaping.** After the observer videotapes the lesson, the observer and teacher review and analyze the videotape. Analysis can be open-ended or focused on particular aspects of the lesson.

To select or design an observation technique, the observer and teacher first discuss the lesson to be observed. What are the learning objectives? What learning activities are planned? How will the teacher assess student learning? Next, the teacher discusses concerns about the lesson or aspects of the lesson that he or she is curious about. The observer and teacher work together to convert concerns or interests to observable behaviors: quantitative or qualitative data that can be gathered by the observer during the observation. Once the teacher and observer have agreed upon the type of data to be gathered, they are ready to select or develop an observation technique. Despite the variety of standard observation techniques to choose from, sometimes no standard technique to gather the desired data is available. In such cases, the observer and teacher must design a tailored observation technique. Like standard observation techniques, tailored techniques may be quantitative or qualitative.

The observer must be careful to distinguish between the gathering and interpretation of observation data. Usually it is better to delay interpretation until the teacher and observer meet in a post-conference, when they can interpret the data together. Joint interpretation is consistent with the
collegial, nonjudgmental nature of both clinical supervision and peer coaching. It allows the teacher to provide information that may clarify observation data, and it typically provides a more complete picture of what occurred during the lesson.
Quantitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Conference</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Post-Conference</th>
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Reflections about quantitative observation techniques:
Qualitative Observation Technique: Notes and Reflections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Conference</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Post-Conference</th>
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Reflections about qualitative observation techniques:
Think of a time when you were observed as a teacher. If you never have been observed as a teacher, think of a time when you were observed by another person for a different reason (e.g., a piano recital). Write a brief description of the experience.

List words and phrases that describe how you felt while being observed.
Draw a line connecting each quantitative observation technique to its descriptor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative Observation Techniques</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Verbal Interaction Counts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Classroom Movement Tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use of a Performance Indicator</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Categorical Frequency Counts</td>
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</table>
Examples of Quantitative Observation Techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categorical Frequency</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Behaviors when Answering Questions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tally Marks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raises hand/waits to be acknowledged before responding</td>
<td>/////</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raises hand and responds</td>
<td>///</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds without raising hand</td>
<td>/////</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal Interaction</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher at door</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students complete warm-up</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher takes attendance</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher collects homework</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher and students review previous lesson</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create a Quantitative Observation Tool

1. Think of a concern that a teacher may have that can be observed. Write a brief scenario to describe the situation.

2. Create a quantitative observation tool that could be used when observing the teacher in the scenario that you created.
**HANDOUT 23**

**Verbatim Recording** (also referred to as script taping)
The observer records all verbal interaction during the lesson, word for word.

**Selected Verbatim Recording**
The observer records the verbal interaction for only those parts of the lesson selected in advance by the teacher.

**Open Narrative**
The observer summarizes in her own words the verbal and nonverbal interactions, activities, and events that take place during the lesson.

**Focused Open-Ended Observation**
The teacher and observer agree on certain foci for the observation, such as the classroom climate, behaviors of a subgroup of students, or the level of student participation in particular activities. The observer takes open-ended notes on observations relative to each focus area.

**Videotaping**
After the observer videotapes the lesson, the observer and teacher review and analyze the videotape. Analysis can be open-ended or focused on particular aspects of the lesson.
Inform participants that you are a 6th grade teacher. Your students have been working in groups on a math project, which involves drawing a proportional blueprint of the school.

Teacher: We are going to continue working on our blueprints. Please get in your groups.

John: I wasn’t here yesterday, so I don’t have a group.

Teacher: Just find a group, and join them.

(John pulls his chair up to a group and says nothing.)

Christina: (raising her hand) Come over to our group. We don’t know what we’re supposed to do.

Teacher: Christina, we went over this yesterday. Your group needs to review your notes.

Christina: I hate this class.

John: Me too. I don’t even know what we’re doing.

Teacher: There is a lot of talking. You should be working together to create the blueprint.

Christina: Can you come over here and see if this is right?

Teacher: (walks to her group) This is a nice drawing of the school layout. Are all sides proportional to the measurements we took of the campus last week?

Christina: What do you mean by proportional?

Teacher: Christina, what do we do when we don’t know the meaning of a word?

John: (calls out sarcastically) We look it up in the glossary.

Christina: (putting her head down) I hate this class.

Teacher: Christina, you’re just frustrated. Try your best. Your group will help you.
John: *(gets up to look at what other groups are doing)*

Teacher: John, sit down.

John: *(pointing)* Why does that group get to move around?

Teacher: John, sit down. Everyone, sit down. These projects are due on Friday.

Christina: What if we don’t finish on time?

Teacher: Just do your best. You’ll finish. Remember, everyone in the group has to participate. It’s a team effort.

John: Can we just draw a picture of the school?

Teacher: No, you have to draw a blueprint. We talked about what a blueprint is.

John: But I wasn’t here.

Teacher: *(frustrated)* Would someone please tell the class what a blueprint is?

Christina: It’s a picture of the school.

John: That’s what I said, but she said it was wrong.

Teacher: It’s not just a picture. It is a picture from an aerial view that is proportional to the actual building.

Christina: What does *aerial* mean?

John: From the air, I think.

Christina: I still don’t get this.

John: Why can’t we draw the front of the school?

Christina: Miss, yeah! Can we? We could draw the flag!
Scenario 1

The teacher to be observed is a novice 4th grade teacher who is concerned because his classroom becomes chaotic every time his students work on art projects. The beginner wants to address this issue but does not know where to begin. The instructional leader is a veteran fourth grade teacher who has been asked by the novice to observe his class and provide feedback.

Scenario 2

The teacher to be observed is a 7th grade mathematics teacher. Recently, the social studies teacher on her team informed her that he overheard many students complain that she shows favoritism to certain students in the classroom. She is surprised and hurt. The instructional leader is the teacher’s mentor, who has been asked by the teacher to help her look at this issue.

Scenario 3

The teacher to be observed is a 12th grade English teacher who wants to ensure that she is implementing all elements of a new cooperative learning model that she learned about recently at a campus-based professional development workshop. She asked the instructional leader, the assistant principal who facilitated the workshop, to observe her implementing this new cooperative learning model.
Write an O next to statements that reflect observation and an I next to statements that reflect interpretation.

1. O The class was chaotic and out of control.

2. O Seventy-five percent of the students were out of their seats and were not working on the assignment.

3. O The teacher spent most of the class period talking to students in the front half of the classroom.

4. I The teacher prefers to work with female students rather than with male students.

5. I The students were bored and uninterested.

6. I Five students had their heads down during the teacher’s lecture.

7. I All students wrote in their journals.

8. I The students were unclear about the objective of the social studies activity.

9. I The teacher was fair and consistent in her discipline management strategies.

10. I The teacher circulated throughout the entire room while the students worked in their groups.
Being a Reflective Practitioner

The most important thing I learned
A Brief Bio of Two Teachers

Shirley Horvback is an English teacher in her 12th year at New Castle High School. She is married, has no children, and lives in a high-socioeconomic neighborhood 20 miles from the low-socioeconomic neighborhood of her school. A major reason that Ms. Horvback teaches at New Castle is her desire “to help students from such impoverished surroundings acquire an appreciation for literature.” She is an avid reader of both contemporary and classic literature and occasionally writes her own short stories.

Ms. Horvback generally is regarded as a competent teacher. She has a rather bombastic manner of speaking and with her large and robust physical stature creates an imposing presence. Many of her students are afraid of her, and word passes quickly around to new students that “you don’t mess with Ol’ Lady Horvback.” Most students grudgingly believe that her classes are worthwhile. When the hard work and teacher pressure are over, students seem to emerge from her class as better readers and writers.

Except for one close friend, Ms. Horvback is not liked by the other teachers at New Castle. They complain of her arrogant, elitist attitude. She conveys the impression that New Castle High is privileged to have such a literate person on its staff. She lets it be known that she was once accepted as a Ph.D. student in English at a prestigious university but turned down the opportunity so she could teach at New Castle. At faculty meetings, Ms. Horvback’s sense of superiority is evident. She has an answer to every problem; she is insightful; she analyzes and proposes thorough solutions; and she can easily suggest what others should do to make New Castle a better school. But when it comes to action, she backs off. Ms. Horvback is usually the last teacher to arrive at school in the morning and the first to leave in the afternoon.

If you were working with Ms. Horvback, what else would you like to know about her? What else do you need to know about yourself in relation to her? What kind of “up-close” work can help Ms. Horvback improve her classroom instruction and the learning climate of the school?
Frank Apanka, a young Caribbean American, was raised in poverty in the urban Midwest and is a cum laude graduate from a city college. After four years as an associate at a major investment firm, he decided to take a major cut in pay and pursue a teaching career in a rural elementary school with an increasing second-language and migrant population of students. He is a specialist in upper-level mathematics and science. He has vim, vigor, and passion but has run up against students he literally cannot understand, a set of high-stakes state standards and tests that he finds overwhelming and intrusive, and a faculty that is predominantly mature, experienced, white, and middle class.

Mr. Apanka is one of the lateral-entry teachers—degreeed individuals who are not education majors entering the teaching profession. He cares quite deeply about students and believes in the importance of science and mathematics in their later lives. Although he is still completing the requirements for provisional certification, he constantly volunteers for extra duties, such as to head the student science fair, to serve on the school climate committee, and to staff the tutorial program three mornings a week before school. Other faculty members see him as a joiner, a leader, and an idealist who is always on the verge of being overcommitted.

How do you—as principal, supervisor, mentor, or colleague—work with Mr. Apanka? What else do you need to know about him, his classroom, his subject, his concerns, and his relationships with students, parents, faculty, and others? How might you approach and work with him?

The figure below, The Instructional Leader Behavior Continuum (Glickman, 2002), displays 10 behaviors used by instructional leaders in conferences with teachers. Toward the nondirective end of the continuum are the behaviors of listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting. Midway along the continuum are the collaborative behaviors of presenting, problem solving, and negotiating. At the directive end of the continuum are the behaviors of directing, standardizing, and reinforcing.

Variations of behaviors on the continuum can be combined and sequenced to create four general approaches to instructional leadership:

- In the **directive-control** approach, the leader clarifies the problem, presents a plan for solving the problem, directs the teacher or group to take specific actions, demonstrates required teaching behavior, standardizes by establishing baseline data and improvement criteria, and reinforces mandated behaviors through social or material incentives.

- In the **directive-informational** approach, the leader clarifies the improvement goal, presents alternatives for reaching the goal, directs the teacher or group to choose from alternative actions, demonstrates suggested teaching behavior, standardizes by suggesting baseline data and improvement criteria, and reinforces suggested behaviors by offering follow-up assistance.

- In the **collaborative** approach, the leader clarifies by asking the teacher or group to present possible improvement goals, listens to teacher goal suggestions, presents additional possible goals by building on teacher ideas, negotiates to choose an agreed-upon goal, problem-solves by inviting and proposing possible actions, and negotiates an agreed-upon plan.

- In the **nondirective** approach, the leader listens to the teacher’s or group’s instructional concern, encourages the teacher or group to elaborate on the concern, clarifies to make sure the concern is understood, encourages the teacher or group to consider alternative actions, presents ideas when asked to do so, and problem-solves by asking the teacher or group to decide on actions to be taken (Glickman, 1980, 2002; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001).

Two adult developmental variables can help the leader decide which leadership approach to use. One of these is the teacher’s or group’s level of commitment. Teachers of low commitment have little concern for students, expend little time or energy on improving their teaching, and are primarily concerned with professional survival. Teachers of moderate commitment have concern for their own students, expend some energy on improving their teaching, and are concerned with the technical aspects of teaching. Teachers with high commitment have concern for all students in the school as well as other teachers, expend extra time and effort on improving their teaching, and are concerned about the holistic development of students and colleagues.
Another developmental variable is *level of abstract thinking*. Teachers with low levels of abstraction are confused about the nature of the instructional problem, have no solutions, and want to be told what to do. Teachers of moderate levels of abstraction can define the problem and can think of one or two possible solutions, but need some assistance in examining all alternatives and developing a comprehensive plan for solving the problem. Highly abstract teachers examine the instructional problem from many perspectives, generate a full range of alternative solutions, and think through each step of a comprehensive plan to solve the problem.

One rule of thumb is to match a leader with a directive approach with a teacher or group with low levels of commitment and abstraction, a collaborative leader with a teacher or group with moderate or mixed levels of commitment and abstraction, and a nondirective leader with a teacher or group with high levels of commitment and abstraction. However, other variables such as teachers’ culture and experience, the particular problem, and context must be considered. For example, a beginning teacher of moderate commitment and abstraction may prefer directive-informational leadership during the first few months of employment; teachers with high levels of commitment and abstraction might prefer a collaborative approach if they are challenged by a problem they have not previously experienced.

Another important factor to consider in determining the best approach to use is the leader’s organizational relationship with the teacher or group. Only a supervisor in a line relationship with a teacher or group should use the directive-control approach. A leader using the directive-informational approach should be recognized by the school organization as having special instructional and interpersonal expertise (e.g., a lead teacher, mentor, or expert coach). A collaborative or nondirective approach usually is appropriate for experienced teachers working with each other in reciprocal peer coaching or study groups.

There is a distinction between the directive-control and directive-informational approaches. It is important that the leader wishing to use one of these approaches not slip into the other by choosing the wrong language. Directive-control verbal behaviors include phrases such as “You need to . . .,” “You must . . .,” “You will be required to . . .,” “I expect you to . . .,” and so on. A leader should use the directive-control approach only in emergency situations, when students are in physical, emotional, or academic danger. The leader should move away from directive control as soon as the situation is stabilized. Directive-informational behaviors
include phrases such as “You could . . .,” “You might . . .,” One possibility is to . . .,” “An alternative is to . . .,” “A strategy that works for me is . . .,” and so on. The directive-informational approach provides information and suggestions but also allows the teacher or group to choose from options provided by the leader.

There is also an important distinction between the nondirective and laissez-faire approaches. The laissez-faire leader takes a hands-off approach to instructional improvement (this approach is not recommended). In the nondirective approach, however, the leader is actively engaged in instructional improvement, encouraging, listening, clarifying, presenting, and problem-solving. Nondirective leadership does not mean that the power of collaboration is lost. Rather, the leader can use a nondirective approach to facilitate collaboration among teachers.

The direction of interpersonal communication should be toward less leader control and more teacher control of instructional decisions. A leader using the directive-informational approach gradually should move toward a collaborative approach, and collaborative leaders gradually should move toward nondirective leadership. The leader’s goal is to foster long-term teacher growth toward higher levels of commitment and better decision making (Glickman, 1980, 2002; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001).
## Approaches to Working Closely with Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Scale of Control/Choice</th>
<th>Readiness</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Nondirective</td>
<td>Teacher in control/maximum teacher choice</td>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>Teacher self-plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarifying</td>
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<td>High commitment with high abstraction</td>
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<td>Encouraging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflecting</td>
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<td>Presenting</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Shared control/mutual choice</td>
<td>Analytic</td>
<td>Mutual plan</td>
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<td>Problem solving</td>
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<td>Negotiating</td>
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<td>Directive-</td>
<td>Leader in control/shared choice</td>
<td>Unfocused</td>
<td>Leader-suggested</td>
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<td>Informational</td>
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<td>plan</td>
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<td>Directive-Control</td>
<td>Leader in control/no teacher choice</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Leader-assigned</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Used only in</td>
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<td>Dropouts</td>
<td>plan</td>
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<td>emergency situations)</td>
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<td>Low commitment with low abstraction</td>
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Directive-Informational Approach

5.3

Instructional Leader Behavior Continuum: Directive Informational Approach

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<td>1</td>
<td>(a) Leader clarifies the improvement goal</td>
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<td>(b) Leader presents alternative actions</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>(c) Leader directs teacher to choose what actions will take place</td>
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<td>(d) Leader demonstrates suggested teaching behavior</td>
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<td>(e) Leader suggests baseline data and standard for improvement</td>
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<td>(f) Leader offers follow-up assistance</td>
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Product: Assignment for the teacher

Key: T = Maximum teacher responsibility  L = Maximum leader responsibility  t = Minimum teacher responsibility  l = Minimum leader responsibility

Collaborative Approach

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(a) Leader presents perceptions of areas for improvement.
(b) Leader asks teacher to present perceptions of areas for improvement.
(c) Leader listens to teacher.
(d) Leader and teacher propose alternative actions.
(e) Leader and teacher revise and reject options and agree on plan.

Product: Leader and teacher contract

Key: T = Maximum teacher responsibility  L = Maximum leader responsibility
t = Minimum teacher responsibility  l = Minimum leader responsibility

### Instructional Leader Behavior Continuum: Nondirective Approach

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</table>

(a) Leader listens attentively as teacher discusses instructional concern.
(b) Leader encourages teacher to elaborate on concern.
(c) Leader asks questions and rephrases teacher statements to make sure problem is clearly understood.
(d) When asked by teacher, leader offers thoughts and possible solutions.
(e) Leader asks teacher to determine what actions will be taken.

**Product:** Teacher self-plan

**Key:** T = Maximum teacher responsibility  L = Maximum leader responsibility
        t = Minimum teacher responsibility  l = Minimum leader responsibility

Directions: Record some key phrases that correspond to the behaviors listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Key Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarifying</td>
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<td>Reinforcing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Directions: Write the similarities between the directive-control approach and the directive-informational approach in the overlapping portion of the circles. Write what is unique about each approach in the non-overlapping parts of the circles.

Consider the following points:

Under what circumstances might the approach be used?

What relationship should the leader have with the teacher in order to effectively implement this approach?

What behaviors should leaders implement when using the approach?

What specific phrases might be used with each approach?
## Instructional Leadership Beliefs Inventory

### Part I: Predictions

Check one answer for each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>About 100% of the time</th>
<th>About 75% of the time</th>
<th>About 50% of the time</th>
<th>About 25% of the time</th>
<th>About 0% of the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often do you use a <strong>directive-informational or control approach</strong> (rather than either of the other two approaches)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you use a <strong>collaborative approach</strong> (rather than either of the other two approaches) in supervising teachers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do you use a <strong>nondirective approach</strong> (rather than the other two approaches) in supervising teachers?</td>
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Author’s note: This is a slight modification of an instrument originally developed by Dr. Roy T. Tamashiro and me.

4.4

Instructional Leadership Beliefs Inventory
Part II: Forced Choices

Circle either A or B for each item. You may not completely agree with either choice, but choose the one that is closest to how you feel.

1. A. Leaders should give teachers a large degree of autonomy and initiative within broadly defined limits.
   B. Leaders should give teachers directions about methods that will help them improve their teaching.

2. A. It is important for teachers to set their own goals and objectives for professional growth.
   B. It is important for leaders to help teachers reconcile their personalities and teaching styles with the philosophy and direction of the school.

3. A. Teachers are likely to feel uncomfortable and anxious if the objectives on which they will be evaluated are not clearly defined by the leader.
   B. Evaluations of teachers are meaningless if teachers are not able to define with their leaders the objectives for evaluation.

4. A. An open, trusting, warm, and personal relationship with teachers is the most important ingredient in supervising teachers.
   B. A leader who is too informal and friendly with teachers risks being less effective and less respected than a leader who keeps a certain degree of professional distance from teachers.

5. A. My role during conferences is to make the interaction positive, to share realistic information, and to help teachers plan their own solutions to problems.
   B. The methods and strategies I use with teachers in a conference are aimed at our reaching agreement over the needs for future improvement.

6. In the initial phase of working with a teacher . . .
   A. I develop objectives with each teacher that will help accomplish school goals.
   B. I try to identify the talents and goals of individual teachers so they can work on their own improvement.

7. When several teachers have a similar classroom problem, I prefer to . . .
   A. Have the teachers form an ad hoc group and help them work together to solve the problem.
   B. Help teachers on an individual basis find their strengths, abilities, and resources so that each one finds his or her own solution to the problem.

8. The most important clue that an inservice workshop is needed is when . . .
   A. The leader perceives that several teachers lack knowledge or skill in a specific area that is resulting in low morale, undue stress, and less effective teaching.
   B. Several teachers perceive the need to strengthen their abilities in the same instructional area.
4.4—(continued)

Instructional Leadership Beliefs Inventory
Part II: Forced Choices

9. A. The formal leadership staff should decide the objectives of an inservice workshop because they have a broad perspective of the teachers’ abilities and the school’s needs.
   B. Teachers and the formal leadership staff should reach consensus about the objectives of an inservice workshop before the workshop is held.

10. A. Teachers who feel they are growing personally will be more effective in the classroom than teachers who are not experiencing personal growth.
    B. The knowledge and ability of teaching strategies and methods that have been proven over the years should be taught and practiced by all teachers to be effective in their classrooms.

11. When I perceive that a teacher might be scolding a student unnecessarily . . .
    A. I explain, during a conference with the teacher, why the scolding was excessive.
    B. I ask the teacher about the incident but do not interject my judgments.

12. A. One effective way to improve teacher performance is to formulate clear behavioral objectives and create meaningful incentives for achieving them.
    B. Behavioral objectives are rewarding and helpful to some teachers but stifling to others; also, some teachers benefit from behavioral objectives in some situations but not in others.

13. During a pre-observation conference . . .
    A. I suggest to the teacher what I could observe, but I let the teacher make the final decision about the objectives and methods of observation.
    B. The teacher and I mutually decide the objectives and methods of observation.

14. A. Improvement occurs very slowly if teachers are left on their own; but when a group of teachers works together on a specific problem, they learn rapidly and their morale remains high.
    B. Group activities may be enjoyable, but I find that individual, open discussion with a teacher about a problem and its possible solutions leads to more sustained results.

15. When an inservice or staff development workshop is scheduled . . .
    A. All teachers who participated in the decision to hold the workshop should be expected to attend it.
    B. Teachers, regardless of their role in forming a workshop, should be able to decide if the workshop is relevant to their personal or professional growth and, if not, should not be expected to attend.
## 4.4—(continued)

### Instructional Leadership Beliefs Inventory

#### Part II: Forced Choices

**Scoring Key**

Step 1. Circle your answer from Part II of the inventory in the columns below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column I</th>
<th>Column II</th>
<th>Column III</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
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<td>15A</td>
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Step 2. Tally the number of circled items in each column and multiply by 6.7.

2.1. Total responses in Column I _____ X 6.7 = _____

2.2. Total responses in Column II _____ X 6.7 = _____

2.3. Total responses in Column III _____ X 6.7 = _____

Step 3. Interpretation

The product you obtained in Step 2.1 is an approximate percentage of how often you take a *directive approach* (informational or control) with teachers, rather than either of the other two approaches. The product you obtained in Step 2.2 is an approximate percentage of how often you take a *collaborative approach*, and Step 2.3 is an approximate percentage of how often you take a *nondirective approach*. The approach on which you spend the greatest percentage of time is the leadership model that dominates your beliefs. If the percentage values are equal or nearly equal, you take an eclectic approach.

You can also compare these results with your predictions in Part I.
Directions: List characteristics of each type of teacher. Indicate which approach (directive-control, directive-informational, collaborative, or nondirective) is appropriate to use with each type of teacher. List other factors that might affect the approach chosen.

**Quadrant III**
Analytical Observers
Characteristics:

**Quadrant IV**
Professionals
Characteristics:

**Quadrant I**
Teacher Dropouts
Characteristics:

**Quadrant II**
Unfocused Workers
Characteristics:

Workshop 1 Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to

- Identify and describe the four models for providing classroom-based assistance to teachers.
- List and describe the essential knowledge, skills, attitudes, and organizational plans that need to be in place for the models to be effective.
- Explain the critical role of observation and data collection in the instructional improvement process.
Four Models of Classroom-Based Assistance

Clinical Supervision

Peer Coaching

Study Groups

Self-Directed Improvement

What is the purpose of observation and data collection?
Study Groups Summary

Collegial Problem Solving

- Facilitator-led groups
- Short-term activity
- Focus on a team member’s immediate classroom problem
- Group assistance in designing plan and assessing results

Action Research

- Long-term, in-depth activity
- Focus either on a team-selected problem or individual projects pursued with team support
- Study, data collection, and analysis performed in team setting
- Conclusion with a formal analysis of progress
- Group assistance in designing plan and assessing results

Key Commonalities

- Teacher-directed activity
- Focused inquiry
Three Aspects of Self-Directed Improvement

**Purpose is**
To develop long-term projects to improve instruction

**Key steps are**
- Select a focus
- Study the area
- Gather data
- Identify objectives
- Design a plan
- Implement
- Evaluate

**Self-Directed Improvement**

**Portfolios might include**
- Teacher’s philosophy
- Focus area
- Action plan
- Artifacts/reflections
- Evaluation data
- Plans for the future
Workshop 2A Objectives

By the end of this session, you will

- Know the difference between quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
- List examples of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
- List pros and cons of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.
Quantitative and Qualitative: What Is the Difference?

*Quantitative* observation techniques result in data reduced to numbers.

*Qualitative* observation techniques result in data in the form of words or visuals.
Workshop 2B Objectives

By the end of this session, you will

• Know the difference between quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

• List examples of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

• Practice designing an observation tool.

• List pros and cons of quantitative and qualitative observation techniques.

• Understand the importance of separating observation from interpretation.
Workshop 3A Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to

• Identify specific behaviors leaders use to work with teachers.

• Implement one of the four approaches to working with teachers and apply specific behaviors for different situations.

• Determine which of the four approaches, based on the level of abstraction and the level of commitment of individual teachers, would be most effective.
Workshop 3B Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to

- Identify specific behaviors leaders use to work with teachers.

- Implement the four approaches to working with teachers and apply specific behaviors for different situations.

- Determine which of the four approaches, based on the level of abstraction and the level of commitment of individual teachers, would be most effective.

- Recognize key strategies for fostering long-term teacher growth toward higher levels of commitment and better decision making.
Readings & Resources
The Evolution of Peer Coaching
Beverly Showers and Bruce Joyce

Fifteen years have passed since we first proposed peer coaching as an on-site dimension of staff development (Joyce and Showers 1980). In the 1970s, evaluations of staff development that focused on teaching strategies and curriculum revealed that as few as 10 percent of the participants implemented what they had learned. Rates of transfer were low even for those who had volunteered for the training. Well-researched curriculum and teaching models did not find their way into general practice and thus could not influence students’ learning environments.

In a series of studies beginning in 1980, we tested hypotheses related to the proposition that regular (weekly) seminars would enable teachers to practice and implement the content they were learning. The seminars, or coaching sessions, focused on classroom implementation and the analysis of teaching, especially students’ responses. The results were consistent: Implementation rose dramatically, whether experts or participants conducted the sessions. Thus we recommended that teachers who were studying teaching and curriculum form small peer coaching groups that would share the learning process. In this way, staff development might directly affect student learning.

Our central concern has been helping students benefit when their teachers learn, grow, and change. In studying how teachers can create better learning environments for themselves (Joyce and Showers 1995), we noted with interest a serendipitous by-product of the early peer coaching studies: Successful peer coaching teams developed skills in collaboration and enjoyed the experience so much that they wanted to continue their collegial partnerships after they accomplished their initial goals. Why not create permanent structures, we wondered, that would enable teachers to study teaching on a continuous basis?

In working with this broadened view of peer coaching as a mechanism to increase classroom implementation of training, we evolved our present practice of organizing entire faculties into peer coaching teams. We have been convinced throughout that peer coaching is neither an end in itself nor by itself a school improvement initiative. Rather, it must operate in a context of training, implementation, and general school improvement. There is no evidence that simply organizing peer coaching or peer study teams will affect students’ learning environments. The study of teaching and curriculum must be the focus.

Here we examine the history of coaching, describe changes in the conduct of coaching, and make recommendations for its future, including its role as a component of staff development that drives organizational change.

History of Peer Coaching

Pre-1980. The processes of training and implementation have come under close scrutiny only in the last 25 years. Beginning in the mid-1950s, national movements to improve education focused on academic quality and social equality. By the early 1970s, educators recognized that many of those efforts, even when well-funded and approved by the public, seldom led to changes. The lack of research on how people learn teaching strategies and how schools successfully disseminate innovations contributed to our failures. Educators assumed that teachers could learn new strategies, return to a school, and implement their new learning smoothly and appropriately. The organization of the schools did not support the intensive training efforts that occurred in summer institutes or workshops during the year, however. Initial diagnoses attributed the failure to “flaws” in the motivation, effort, and attitudes of the teachers rather than to the state of the organization or the design of training.

1980–1987. We began to believe that changes in the school organization and in training design could solve implementation problems or ease them greatly, and that assigning the blame to teachers was erroneous. Our understanding of how people learn new behaviors and put them into practice has continuously evolved, as a result of work by colleagues in schools and universities and our own efforts with teachers and schools.

When we first advanced the notion of coaching, we had just completed an exhaustive review of literature on training and presented our findings as a set of hypotheses about types of training likely to produce results. The training components discussed in that early work grew from what we found in the literature: theory presentation, modeling or demonstration, practice, structured and open-ended feedback, and in-class assistance with transfer.

In 1980, we believed that “modeling, practice under simulated conditions, and practice in the classroom, combined with feedback” (Joyce and Showers 1980, p. 384) was the most productive training design. We hypothesized that teachers attempting to master new curriculum and teaching approaches would need continued technical assistance at the classroom level. For purposes of research, we distinguished between the initial development of a skill that would permit a teacher to experiment with new teaching strategies, and the classroom practice of that skill until it had become a part of the teacher’s repertoire. At that time, training designs for skill development were much better developed than were designs for conditions that would lead to transfer.

In the early ’80s, we formally investigated the hypothesis that coaching, following initial training, would result in much greater transfer than would training alone (Showers 1982, 1984). We confirmed this hypothesis. We assumed that the coach needed to have more expertise in the content area, and thus paired teachers with an outside consultant or an expert peer. The literature on supervisory practices and feedback influenced our thinking as we struggled to create the kind of structured feedback that appeared to facilitate skill development.

Results of our early studies showed that teachers who had a coaching relationship—that is, who shared aspects of teaching, planned together, and pooled their experiences—practiced new skills and strategies more frequently and applied them more appropriately than did their counterparts who worked alone to expand their repertoires. Members of peer-coaching groups exhibited greater long-term retention of new strategies and more appropriate use of new teaching models over time (Baker and Showers 1984).

Coaching helped nearly all the teachers implement new teaching strategies. Equally important, teachers introduced to the new models could coach one another, provided that the teachers continued to receive periodic follow-up in training settings. Thus we recommended that schools organize teachers into peer coaching teams and arrange school settings so that the teachers could work together to gain sufficient skill to affect student learning. We had moved from the ’50s and ’60s, where the probability of implementation was extremely low, to a very simple technology that virtually reversed the odds. The coaching process was added to the training paradigm, taking into account the two levels of skill development described above.

Current practice. We conducted the early studies with individual teachers or small groups within a school. The next stage involved faculties that volunteered as a whole, which required collaborating with staffs to determine their students’ most pressing needs, selecting appropriate content, helping them design training, and assessing the impact on students. Increasingly we have found that attention to the social organization is extremely important. We now ask entire faculties to decide whether they want the school site to work with us, and we discuss at length exactly how we might work together.

Principles of Peer Coaching

Numerous staff development practices are called “coaching.” These include “technical coaching,” “collegial coaching,” “challenge coaching,” “team coaching,” “cognitive coaching,” and uses of “peer coaching” (Garmston 1987) to refer to the traditional supervisory mode of pre-conference/observation/post-conference. None of these should be confused with, or used for, evaluation of teachers.

Similar to our approach, technical coaching, team coaching, and peer coaching (as in peer clinical supervision) focus on innovations in curriculum and instruction (Kent 1985, Neubert and Bratton 1987, Rogers 1987), whereas collegial coaching and cognitive coaching aim more at improving existing practices (Garmston et al. 1993). All except team coaching differ from our practice in that their primary vehicle for improving or changing classroom instruction is verbal feedback.

Following are our principles of peer coaching.

1. When we work with entire faculties, all teachers must agree to be members of peer coaching study teams. Teams must collectively agree to (a) practice or use whatever change the faculty has decided to implement; (b) support one another in the change process, including sharing planning of instructional objectives and developing materials and lessons; and (c) collect data about the implementation process and the effects on students relative to the school’s goals.

2. We have found it necessary and important to omit verbal feedback as a coaching component. The primary activity of peer coaching study teams is planning and developing curriculum and instruction in pursuit of shared goals. Especially when they are learning teaching strategies designed for higher-order outcomes, teachers need to think through their overarching goals, as well as the specific objectives leading to them. Collaborative planning is essential if teachers are to divide the labor of developing new lesson and unit sequences and use one another’s products.

When teachers try to give one another feedback, collab-
Recommendations for Training Sessions

Continuing concerns drive our work: how best to help teachers teach students to build intellectual independence; reasoning and problem-solving capability; competence in handling the explosion of information and data; and, with the help of technology, the ability to navigate the information age. We believe that staff developers can assist educators by incorporating certain behaviors in their training sessions.

First, we can help schools and teams of teachers redesign their workplaces. Rather than simply advocating that

schools provide time for collaborative planning and problem-solving related to specific plans for change, we can provide time during training to address this problem. Re-viewing Raywid’s (1993) research on finding time for collaboration is one way to begin such a session.

Second, staff can form peer coaching teams on the first day of training. When entire school faculties train together, they have many options for forming teams, and staff developers can facilitate discussion of those options. Faculties can also try out various formats, comparing costs and benefits of alternative plans. A school attempting to develop an integrated curriculum as part of its improvement plan may want to experiment with cross-subject or cross-grade teams. Schools with a focus on multicultural curriculums may want to spread faculty expertise on various cultures among the teams. However a school forms its teams, it is useful for teachers to have immediate practice in working together toward shared goals.

Third, we can provide examples of formats or structures for collaborative planning. Many teachers have shared with us their difficulty in jointly performing an activity they have traditionally done alone. A structured walk-through of a planning activity can allow teams to respond to questions within specific time frames, practice thinking aloud about what each person wants to accomplish, and identify overlap with their colleagues’ agendas. A sample sequence might include the following.

■ Think about your year’s “course.” What are your big, overarching goals for your students?

■ Now think about the first six weeks of school. What objectives will you need to accomplish if you are to meet your year’s goals? How much time can you spend in review and still meet your objectives?

■ What instructional strategies are most appropriate for the objectives you’ve set for the first six weeks? Are they consistent with your year-end goals?

■ Given the overlap of objectives in your team, can you divide the labor and develop materials that others can use?

Fourth, peer coaching study teams need to plan how they will monitor implementation of new initiatives, and how they will determine the impact of each initiative on their students. When whole schools agree on a specific change agenda, study teams may want to address in small groups how they will discover whether their efforts are having the desired effects, then combine their ideas in a whole-school session. Measuring the impact of planned change is critical to any school improvement effort. The training setting is optimal for planning mini-studies that teams can conduct throughout the year for this purpose.
Coaching and School Improvement

Collaborative planning and data collection increase the time, and thus the cost, of staff development activities. To the extent that such activities result in greater clarity about means and ends, more thorough implementation of planned changes, and more immediate information about effects on students, the additional effort is well worth the investment.

Adding peer coaching study teams to school improvement efforts is a substantial departure from the way schools often embark on change efforts. On the surface, it appears simple to implement—what could be more natural than teams of professional teachers working on content and skills? It is a complex innovation only because it requires a radical change in relationships among teachers, and between teachers and administrative personnel.

When staff development becomes the major vehicle for school improvement, schools should take into account both the structures and content of training, as well as changes needed in the workplace to make possible the collaborative planning, decision making, and data collection that are essential to organizational change efforts. As we ponder ways to ensure that training/coaching fuels the school renewal process, we are also examining how the culture of the school can increasingly provide a benign environment for collective activity.

A cohesive school culture makes possible the collective decisions that generate schoolwide improvement efforts. The formation of peer coaching teams produces greater faculty cohesion and focus and, in turn, facilitates more skillful shared decision making. A skillful staff development program results in a self-perpetuating process for change, as well as new knowledge and skills for teachers and increased learning for students.

References


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Seeking to understand and acting on the best we know. That describes how most educators hope to live and grow as professionals. It also describes action research. For the past 10 years, I have used that statement to introduce action research to school teams, administrators, and other educators in central offices, intermediate service agencies, and departments of education.

A more formal definition of action research is continual disciplined inquiry conducted to inform and improve our practice as educators. Action research asks educators to study their practice and its context, explore the research base for ideas, compare what they find to their current practice, participate in training to support needed changes, and study the effects on themselves and their students and colleagues.

For 60 years, action research has been an avenue for creating professional learning communities whose members engage in problem solving and for attaining individual and collective goals. As Lewin (1946) wrote, action research can transform...a multitude of unrelated individuals frequently opposed in their outlook and their interests, into cooperative teams, not on the basis of sweetness but on the basis of readiness to face difficulties realistically, to apply honest fact-finding, and to work together to overcome them. (p. 211)

My experience with action research has convinced me of its potential to transform professional development. Action research can change the social system in schools and other education organizations so that continual formal learning is both expected and supported. It can replace superficial coverage with depth of knowledge. And it can generate data to measure the effects of various programs and methods on student and staff learning.

Action Research at Work: A Teacher’s Story

Katie’s school was involved in an initiative called ‘Every Child Reads.’ Sponsored by the Iowa state department of education, the initiative aimed to change the context in which participants engaged in professional development, help them become more closely connected to scholarship in reading, and support them in generating knowledge and increasing their capacity as learners and leaders. Over a three-year period, participating school facilitation teams (composed of teachers, the principal, and, when possible, district office and intermediate service agency staff responsible for supporting school improvement) became a statewide professional learning community engaged in the study of literacy.

Participants attended 14 days of workshops and received additional technical assistance at their school sites. They studied current practices in their schools and classrooms; examined research related to literacy development; selected and used evaluative instruments to assess literacy; organized and used data to make decisions about effectiveness; learned how to implement new practices; and learned to provide staff development to colleagues as they engaged in these same actions.

Katie implemented the picture word inductive model (PWIM), a new teaching strategy for her, and studied her kindergarten students’ vocabulary development as a part of learning to use this model. The picture word inductive model is an inquiry-oriented language arts approach that uses pictures containing familiar objects and actions to elicit words from students’ own vocabularies. Teachers use it to lead their students into inquiring about word properties, adding words to their sight-reading and writing vocabularies, discovering phonetic and structural principles, and using observation and analysis in their study of reading, writing, comprehending, and composing. The picture word cycles (inquiries into the pictures) generally take from four to six weeks at the kindergarten level (Calhoun, 1999).

At first, Katie thought the learning tasks might be too demanding for her students. But as she tried the model and studied what her students did in response, she changed her mind. Katie’s data collection showed that her students had achieved a mean gain of 16 sight vocabulary words during their third PWIM unit (in November), and a mean gain of 27 words in their sixth unit (ending in mid-March). These results confirmed for Katie the effectiveness of the picture word inductive model.
Katie also collected detailed data on each student’s word knowledge as he or she began the unit and again at the end of the unit. The data allowed her to analyze the word-reading strategies that individual students were using: sight vocabulary, decoding, analogies, common spelling patterns, and context clues (Ehri, 1999). As she analyzed the data for each student and across students, Katie made many instructional decisions, such as which phonics principles needed additional explicit instruction, when more modeling was needed to support using context clues, which students needed small-group work on phonemic analysis, and who needed special attention to encourage independent decoding.

Studying specific domains of student performance and her own instructional practice has become a way of life for Katie.

The Power of Organization-Wide Support

Katie’s use of action research occurred as part of a structured initiative sponsored by a state department of education. This initiative illustrates how education leaders in states, districts, and schools are attempting to make action research a dominant way of doing business—building an organization context that supports inquiry by school staffs working as a whole and by smaller groups and individuals pursuing their particular avenues of study. The development of inquiring communities is what distinguishes action research from school improvement approaches that focus on the implementation of specific initiatives, such as a new curriculum or a new mode of assessment.

Although I am an advocate of carefully conducted action research whether it is individual, collaborative, or organization-wide, I put my professional energy and time into supporting schoolwide and organization-wide action research (Calhoun, 1994; Joyce, Calhoun, & Hopkins, 1999). This action research option has the power to transform the organization into a learning community.

My experience is that regular use of multiple sources of data to inform us about student performance or our own performance is often threatening at first, because it requires that we juxtapose our practices and our students’ performance against exemplary research-based practices and high levels of student performance attained in similar settings. The resulting confrontation and social turmoil, however, may be natural accompaniments to substantive change.

The good news is that when groups have adequate organization support in using data as a source of information to guide practice, leadership generally surfaces within the group. These leaders provide examples of using classroom data to make instructional and curriculum changes and model informed decision making and problem solving in action. Their schools begin to use on-site data and the external knowledge base as sources for continually assessing the effectiveness of actions and current practices.

This emerging leadership often signals a change in the social system of the school. It doesn’t come easily in most settings, but with opportunity and leadership from school and district administrators, it happens. Along with benefits for students, educators feel more professional.

Using a Structured Action Research Model

Educators who wish to use action research for professional development or school improvement should select a structured process to use in the school, district, or region. Many resources are available. Although all action research approaches encourage disciplined inquiry, reflection, and the improvement of practice or expansion of knowledge, they do vary in purposes and emphases.

My own approach (Calhoun, 1994) focuses on the schoolwide or district-wide pursuit of student learning goals.

It emphasizes using action research to change how the organization works so that educators study student and staff learning continually and pour information from the external knowledge base into the collective study and action-taking process. Glanz (1998) provides a number of tools useful for administrators and leadership teams as they study school effectiveness and student performance. Sagor (1992) emphasizes the development of collaborative action research teams who identify issues or problems, study the context of those problems, collect data, take actions, and engage in discourse and reflection around the results of those actions. And Hopkins (in press) emphasizes changes in classroom practice through careful study by individual teachers as researchers.

After selecting a resource or action research model, those leading the effort need to learn to use it in their work and determine how to support its use within their organization. If no one in the initiating group has experience and skill in using action research, perhaps faculty members at the local college or university can provide technical assistance.

If the group wishes to use action research to support school improvement as well as individual professional development, the chief administrators in the school or district need to be on board—preferably as members of the initiating group. In most settings, school or district staff
members will need to change the way they use data, study student and staff learning, and use the external research base. These changes are unlikely to occur if principals, district office staff members, and the superintendent do not participate and help lead the effort.

The Schoolwide Action Research Matrix

Figure 1 provides an example of how schools might structure their action research around a common student learning goal. In providing technical assistance to sites working to implement action research focused on student achievement, I often recommend that they use this Schoolwide Action Research Matrix as a guide for structuring collective inquiry and action. The matrix includes a place to identify the student learning goal that a staff selects for its current collective focus and six sections to describe the content of collective study and action. Educators build their school or district action plans and staff development plans around the actions outlined in each of the six matrix sections.

In the example shown in Figure 1, a high school staff focused on improving reading comprehension because staff members felt that many of their students could not read and write well enough to succeed in the core academic curriculum subjects. Here are some of the major action research tasks that they engaged in during the first year, led by their action research facilitation team.

Current Student Information
Scores on both norm-referenced tests and state curriculum exams told the staff that their students were performing below expected levels. For example, the staff reviewed data comparing their students’ reading performance on the state curriculum tests in 8th grade with the performance of the same cohort in 10th grade. In the three years studied, the mean percentiles in reading had decreased 12 percent, 10 percent, and 14 percent from their 8th grade levels.

Staff members also collected data about perceptions. Teachers identified many instances where students would have been able to manage the assignments from their courses had they had better literacy skills. And according to data from the past three years of school climate questionnaires, dissatisfaction with students’ reading and writing performance had been a persistent problem identified by parents (42 percent), the business community (60 percent), and school staff members (75 percent).

External Information About Learners
The staff reviewed data on student reading performance in high schools with demographics similar to theirs. Out of 21 high schools studied, they found three where students were performing at much higher levels in reading and writing on state tests administered in 10th grade. The principal had insisted that the staff look at these data because he wanted teachers to recognize that some schools with similar student populations were achieving better results.

To gather information about the literacy standards that students should be achieving, the staff also reviewed their district’s new curriculum standards document and the executive summary and sample items from the National Assessment of Education Progress in Reading (Donahue, Voelkl, Campbell, & Mazzeo, 1999).

Student Performance Goals
Staff members decided that they wanted to improve the reading performance of all their students to the point where students could at least manage the secondary education that was planned for them—the basic high school curriculum.

Using the state tests, they set one of their first targets: Students would not lose ground in their scores on these tests between 8th and 10th grade. Staff members, however, were not ready to set other benchmarks or indicators of performance. The facilitators agreed that it might be useful to begin by studying what worked to improve reading performance and how much this performance could be improved in a semester or year. Then, the staff would set further benchmarks for improvement.

Internal Information About the Learning Environment
Next, the facilitation team organized the teachers to identify the programs, initiatives, and instructional practices that they were currently using to address the literacy problem. Organization efforts already in place included summer school programs, after-school and lunchtime tutorials, a ‘buddy program’ in which high school students read with elementary students once a week, and special education programs. In addition, individual teachers identified what they were already doing to help struggling students, such as reading materials aloud, using computer programs, giving students extra time for assignments, and using cooperative learning. The teachers agreed, however, that they had no systematic program or plan for accelerating the reading and literacy development of the struggling readers and writers.

External Information About the Learning Environment
The facilitation team had a resource collection of about 20 articles and chapters and four books. From this, the team selected four items for in-depth study by the staff. At staff
meetings during the next two months, the teachers worked in cross-department groups to discuss and analyze each item. Using structured response sheets (Sparks, 1999), they identified curriculum ideas, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques that would be applicable in their courses, as well as ideas about organizing the learning environment more effectively in terms of staff deployment, class size, changes in course availability, and scheduling. A facilitation team member worked with each group.

**Learning Environment Goals**
The facilitation team studied what groups had derived from their analyses and put together a tentative action plan for the staff to review. The plan included actions at the school level, actions all teachers would take, and actions for departments. Actions included:

- Providing a series of staff development sessions on designing classroom activities and homework assignments, including modeling and discussing successful strategies for gaining meaning from text.
- Increasing student access to high-quality, non-fiction tradebooks at a range of reading levels (in classrooms, the school library, and community libraries).
- Recruiting more tutors, providing a better support system for them, and increasing the amount of time tutoring is available before and after school.

### FIGURE 1—The Schoolwide Action Research Matrix—One Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners (Students)</th>
<th>Learning Environment (District/School)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Current student information</strong></td>
<td><strong>4. Information about the current learning environment in our district/school</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gates-MacGinitie scores, grade 9: Only 25% of students scored at GLE 9.0 or higher</td>
<td>- Summer school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher, parent, and business leader perceptions:</strong> Consensus that students are not prepared</td>
<td>- Buddy program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. External information about learners/students</strong></td>
<td>- Special education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Data from the state testing program from other high schools with similar demographics; found 3 schools with better performance</td>
<td>- Reading aloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- NAEP Executive Summary and test items</td>
<td>- Group work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- District curriculum standards</td>
<td>- Extra time for assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Student performance and response we would like to see</strong></td>
<td>- Computer tutorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students able to comprehend and learn from the texts being used in courses</td>
<td><strong>5. External information about the learning environment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No loss from 8th to 10th grade on state curriculum tests</td>
<td>Collective study of four selected texts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- More benchmarks will be developed</td>
<td>- Moore et al. (1999). Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Learning environment we would like to see</strong></td>
<td>- Stahl (1999). Vocabulary Development (pp. 8–13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Richardson (2000). Read It Aloud: Using Literature in the Secondary Content Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Showers et al. (1998). “A Second Chance to Learn to Read”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing a course for accelerating literacy for those students who are reading two or more grade levels below their placement. The course would be 90 minutes per day, replace elective courses, and focus primarily on the reading and writing of informative prose. Both teachers and students would study progress assiduously.

Some Results
A group of teachers volunteered to teach the literacy course. A consultant helped the group design it and learn the new teaching strategies that were needed. The teachers selected students for the course on the basis of a combination of standardized test scores and teacher judgment, serving the poorest readers first. During the first semester, the teachers enlisted the students in the formative evaluation process. For example, each student kept a “word box” that contained cards with vocabulary words that he or she was learning.

It became immediately apparent that the standardized test scores were overestimates of the actual reading levels of many of the students. About half of them were not even sure of the “high-frequency, useful little words” that are often learned in the first year of school.

At the end of the first semester, a re-administration of the standardized test indicated that about half of the student scores had risen about two grade level equivalents, and by the end of the second semester, most of the students were making gains and had learned how to learn more effectively. Teachers and students are continuing to refine and improve the class.

The Potential for Change
As with other types of school improvement efforts, school and district staff members who attempt to make effective use of action research will encounter barriers to change. They may have difficulty providing time for the staff to work together, finding and supporting staff members who are willing to lead such work, and designing collective work that improves student learning, professional expertise, and staff leadership capacity simultaneously.

It’s a challenging task to help staff structure action research into their work and the work of the organization. Yet we know that improvement in education requires us to change the typical, ineffective practice of professional development.

The good news is that we have options and models. When used as an organization-wide process for school improvement, action research changes the context and provides a way of organizing collective work so that professional expertise is tended and extended, helping to build a strong professional learning community. Whether action research is used as a school improvement tool or as an individual professional development option, staff members who draw on the current research base, add to their current knowledge, and create new knowledge-in-action can make instruction in the school or in the classroom more intentional and effective for student learning.

References


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Upon entering a 1st grade classroom and seeing that the adult leading the discussion was not the teacher, I asked a student where might I find her teacher. The youngster replied, “She is studying.” Of course, I knew the teacher was with her study group, but I was curious as to how the student perceived the absence. It is this child’s view of her teacher—as an active learner—that will demonstrate to her that learning and serious study with peers is continuous—from childhood throughout adulthood.

Organizing teachers into small groups to promote collegial interchange and action is not a new idea. However, organizing entire faculties into study teams to bring about school improvement is unusual. Study groups have been a dominant feature of school improvement in the Richmond County Public Schools in Augusta, Georgia, since 1987. In the spring of that year, the district initiated a whole-school staff development effort—the Models of Teaching program—to train teachers in several new teaching strategies. Since then, study groups have become a chief vehicle for follow-up and support in many of the district’s 54 schools. My experience in organizing, facilitating, and observing many such groups has taught me valuable lessons about organizing whole faculties into groups for continuous study.

Why Study Groups Are Needed

Why should educators spend some professional time in study groups? I see three major functions. Study groups help us implement curricular and instructional innovations, collaboratively plan school improvement, and study research on teaching and learning.

Our individual abilities to understand and use new curricular and instructional ideas vary considerably, depending on personal values and beliefs as well as prior experience. Current studies tell us that only about 10 percent of teachers trained to use a new procedure actually use it in their classrooms. Study groups provide a regular collaborative environment for teachers of varying backgrounds, knowledge, and skills. Such settings enable teachers to help one another use new learning appropriately.

The second purpose—studying how to make the school better—involves altering the workplace so that students can learn more effectively. Schools get better as the adults in the building develop a shared understanding of good teaching and learning. As the workplace becomes more congenial, it is easier not only to put improvement initiatives in place but also to better focus, articulate, and integrate them. For example, teachers who study how to assess writing progress examine the writing of their students and then reflect on that information so they will be more prepared for the next round of implementation.

Another aspect of improving the school through study groups is to use them as the organizational mechanism for restructuring the school. In the Models of Teaching schools in our district, study group leaders, with other key leaders, make up the school’s Instructional Council. The council meets monthly to examine staff development needs and to determine the school’s progress toward attaining its goals. In this way, the study groups and the council become a framework to restructure the problem-solving, goal-setting, and decision-making processes.

Educational research is increasingly focusing on school-related problems and what constitutes effective schools and teaching. A third important function of study groups is to increase contact with that data base and with innovations developed in the United States and abroad. As teachers become more objective about teaching and learning practices, they counter the isolation of their profession. In addition to exploring what other districts are discovering about school improvement, teachers should be actively collecting and analyzing the data from their own classrooms and schools. Action research conducted by groups of teachers is a powerful force for setting improvement targets and measuring student outcomes.

If we learn to work together through study groups to accomplish these three purposes, a number of good things should follow. First, as we get to know one another better as teachers and borrow from one another’s storehouses of ideas and practices, we will become more cohesive as faculties and better able to work together to improve our schools. And, as individuals, we will be empowered by our new knowledge as we work with children and parents.
How to Organize Study Groups

When forming study groups, we have found that groups of six or fewer individuals function best. In larger gatherings, it is easy for some individuals to stay uninvolved and for cliques of two or three to “splinter off.” The groups may be homogeneous (by grade level) or heterogeneous, depending on the six people who are available at the same time. I have seen cross-grade study groups that are just as effective as grade-level study groups. Because the individuals are not as familiar with one another, they are more likely to stay away from administrative trivia and not delay commitments.

When should study groups meet? The highest indicator of a district’s commitment to the ongoing study of teaching is reflected in when groups meet. If top district-level administrators view study groups as a critical element in school improvement, then the district will provide time within the school day. For example, after consulting with the community, one district in the Midwest decided to keep students one half-hour later every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and release them two hours earlier on Wednesday. During the two-hour block of time on Wednesdays, study groups meet in every school throughout the district.

In our district, meeting times for study groups is a site-based decision. In elementary schools, where there are no planning periods, teachers who can be freed up at a given time through the music, art, media, and physical education programs may regularly get together. In addition, teaching assistants (if available), parents, and business “adopters” may relieve teachers in classrooms while they are “out-to-learn.”

In secondary schools, where our teachers do have a set planning period each day, study groups are usually scheduled for all or part of one planning period each week. Teachers traditionally plan in isolation or in pairs, or the planning period is spent calling parents or tending to other administrative tasks. The study group time is distinguishable in that the focus is clearly on “how I am doing as a teacher.”

In secondary schools, using a planning period for study groups has not worked well—probably because those having the same planning period are from differing content areas. So, in the one high school where study groups (called “quality circles” at this school) are in place, the teachers meet either before or after school. However, the decision is theirs, and the district has not allocated funds to release or pay teachers for study group time, leaving the mechanism to be worked out at the school level.

Where do study groups meet? Anywhere and everywhere. No special arrangements are necessary. I have seen groups meeting in an empty classroom, the media center, the faculty lounge, the school courtyard, and even a hallway. Teachers meeting in study groups are encouraged to tell their students what they are doing, so that students understand the significance of the groups. Students realize that serious study with peers is a lifelong endeavor.

Outside the school, study groups can meet in homes, restaurants, college libraries, and at the chamber of commerce or other community/business sites.

How Study Groups Operate

Establishing and keeping a regular schedule is critical to the success of study groups. Meeting once a week for about an hour is recommended. I have not seen strong evidence that groups need to be trained as groups nor that study group leaders need to be trained. Study group leaders are informal leaders, and leadership is easily rotated among members. All members have equal status. The absence of hierarchical overtones reinforces the equality of ideas and develops a greater sense of individual responsibility for the whole.

Study group leaders are the chief communicators with persons outside the group. After each meeting, the leader completes a log stating who was present and what was discussed. The log informs the principal or staff development consultant about specific types of support and resources that are needed (Murphy 1991a). The weekly logs also alert the leadership team to groups that may need extra attention.

While the content of study is a decision of the entire faculty, each group should decide its own focus. For example, if the faculty decides to study the teaching of language, one group may choose to focus on using computers to teach language skills. The choice of content is often essential to the long-term success of the group. The content gives direction and focus to the “teacher talk,” grounding it in the day-to-day world of practice.

Whatever it is, the content needs to be substantive enough to solidify the group while individuals are learning to work together and develop trust. The content takes the focus off the individual, and it is the content that will lead the group to an atmosphere of collegiality and support. For example, in Richmond County, teachers in a K-5 school decided to teach all the students about the 40 presidents. The presidents were divided equally among the study groups, and each group developed mnemonics for teaching the presidents in consecutive order. Eventually, teachers compiled a booklet containing all the mnemonics. Not only did this activity provide a powerful activity for collegial “joint work” (Little 1990), but it also unified the study groups as they were learning to work together.
While the original focus of our district’s study groups was the Models of Teaching program, over time, other innovations have been introduced into the study groups. It is important that teachers consolidate new and ongoing initiatives so as not to isolate them from one another.

For example, when we purchased math manipulatives for the schools, the question was: How can we develop lessons using math manipulatives with each of the strategies we are learning: Teach a concept attainment lesson with shapes? An inductive lesson with fractions? A mnemonics lesson with vocabulary? And, all within a cooperative learning setting? Now, as whole language becomes a focus, the study groups again ask key instructional questions.

Study groups are self-evaluative in that the level of use of the innovation in the classroom is the desired outcome. Self-report logs of meetings are useful, but only from the standpoint of charting the group’s growing level of confidence in its use of new practices and to inform outsiders to the group what support and resources may be needed.

**Some Lessons Learned**

As a district leader who has observed many study groups in action over the past five years and who has been a member of a study group, I have learned a number of lessons.

First, for study groups to achieve the above purposes, participation should not be voluntary. It is not optional that student learning improve and that schools get better. Volunteerism supports individual, not organizational, development. I understand that there is a fine line between individual rights and the rights of the organization. While I support the individual in selecting development activities that meet personal needs, those individual rights should not hinder the organization’s progress. The course that individual professional development follows may be in conjunction with the study group or entirely separate.

In Richmond County, when a school is given the option of adopting the Models of Teaching program as its vehicle for improvement—and 80 percent of the faculty agree to such a design—then all certificated staff members, including administrators, are expected to join a study group. Initial indifference and even opposition can be turned around when the meetings satisfy a need and members are given ongoing, high-quality, meaningful assistance.

Second, district-level leaders play a critical role in facilitating school change. The superintendent and other leaders establish the climate that enables study groups to be a powerful force for “reculturing” and restructuring at the district and the school levels. Expectations must be clear and structural changes made to provide the time for study groups to meet. At the least, until district-level adjustments can be made, the superintendent must convey that he or she is open to letting schools decide how study groups will function. Without visible support from top district administrators, study groups will have a very short life.

A lesson not newly learned, but certainly reinforced, is that consistent, supportive leadership at the school level is necessary for study groups to fulfill their purposes. Active participation by the principal clearly communicates the importance of study groups and underscores Fullan’s (1991) assessment that key leaders set the conditions for continuation of a new practice.

For example, in Richmond County, during the 1990–91 school year, all district administrators and principals were organized into study groups (Murphy 1991b). The superintendent announced that the groups would meet at least once every two weeks, was a visible member of his own group, and was a vocal supporter of study groups. That year, all the groups functioned productively. The following year, the superintendent made study groups voluntary, and it was not clear that top-level leaders would continue as members of a study group. To my knowledge, not one study group formed from the 117 administrators. I do not believe that the superintendent felt any less strongly about the need for collegial study. Rather, we underestimated the powerful influence of personal modeling by top-level leaders, which would have provided the pressure still needed as the meeting of administrators in study groups was struggling to be legitimized. In their studies of the long-term success of 45 innovative programs, Huberman and Miles (1986) concluded that educational leaders should not think that even effective innovations will automatically lock themselves into the existing culture without ongoing pressure and support.

An insight that came early on was contradictory to my assumption that teachers would eagerly jump at the opportunity to meet regularly with colleagues to focus on their own new learnings and that of their students. I was not prepared for the resistance. Teachers accustomed to following instructional materials closely and “letting the textbook do the planning” sometimes found that thinking through lessons was onerous work. Some felt that asking for help was a sign of weakness. A few wondered whether colleagues were a legitimate source of help and were not sure that their colleagues knew enough. Whereas isolation leads to passivity, collegial work often leads to conflict and confusion. However, these feelings can be overcome and resolved as teachers focus on the content, becoming more skillful in their use of the innovation, collaborating on school improvement, and tracking student progress.
I have also learned that staff development is itself an innovation—if practiced as the current literature describes. The time and energy it requires, the changing belief systems it demands, and the necessity for forming study groups make staff development a bundle of innovations. As we consider what Fullan calls second-order changes—those that alter roles and relationships—we view staff development as organizational development (Murphy 1991c). When teachers are organized into study groups to explore a new teaching strategy, the process of study groups is as much of an innovation as is the content.

**A New Culture of Learning**

Organizing the workplace for the continuous study of teaching and curriculum is not for the fainthearted. Bruce Joyce recently put it into perspective when he said, “Efforts to change the culture of the school . . . require a magnitude of change in behavior and norms far more complex than we can presently imagine. Focusing directly on attempts to change the culture by involving all personnel in the study of change may cause educators to gradually ‘work their way into’ a new culture.”

Study groups offer a structure that brings everybody back to the basics of being a learner, of taking responsibility for our own learning, the learning of our colleagues, and the learning of those for whom we are responsible. Students are the common denominator of study groups: What are students learning? How are they learning? How can classrooms be more engaging for them? By becoming learners again, we will work our way into that new culture. Because study groups are changing “the way we do things around here,” I believe it is “reculturing” through study groups that will focus “restructuring” on instruction.

**References**


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Clarifying Developmental Supervision

Supervisors should match their assistance to teachers' conceptual levels, but with the ultimate goal of teachers taking charge of their own improvement.

The theory of developmental supervision (Glickman 1981, 1985) has generated a great deal of interest, application, and research, as well as some misinterpretation. Our purposes here are to clarify propositions underlying the process, discuss the three phases necessary to put the theory into practice, and illustrate the process as applied to two task areas of instructional supervision. Finally, we discuss the purpose of the theory.

Underlying Propositions
Developmental supervision is based on three general propositions. First, because of varied personal backgrounds and experiences, teachers operate at different levels of professional development. They vary in the way they view and relate to themselves, students, and others. Teachers also differ in their ability to analyze instructional problems, to use a repertoire of problem-solving strategies, and to match appropriate strategies to particular situations. Furthermore, there are variations within the same teacher depending on the particular instructional topic or timing of life and work events.

Second, because teachers operate at differing levels of thought, ability, and effectiveness, they need to be supervised in different ways. Teachers at lower developmental levels need more structure and direction; teachers at higher developmental levels need less structure and a more active role in decision making.

The third proposition is that the long-range goal of supervision should be to increase every teacher's and every faculty's ability to grow toward higher stages of thought. More reflective, self-directed teachers will be better able to solve their own instructional problems and meet their students' educational needs (Murphy and Brown 1970; Parkay 1979). Further, if the goal of education in a democratic society is to produce responsible learners and decision makers, then teachers who are themselves autonomous and independent will be better able to facilitate students' growth toward such ideals (Calhoun 1985). Put simply, thoughtful teachers promote thoughtful students.

Phase One: Diagnostic
The developmental supervisor's first task is to diagnose the level at which a teacher or group of teachers is functioning in regard to a particular instructional or curricular concern. The central determinant in the supervisor's diagnosis is the level of abstraction exhibited by the teacher or group. The concept of teacher abstraction is derived from conceptual systems theory (Harvey et al. 1961). Abstraction is the ability to form "more orientations toward the environment and the interpersonal world" (Sullivan et al. 1970). Abstraction is not an innate characteristic of an individual but rather a variable. Teachers exhibiting low abstraction have difficulty identifying instructional problems and generating alternative solutions; they seek concrete advice from an expert or authority on how to complete a complex task. Teachers exhibiting moderate abstraction can define instructional problems (usually centering on a single dimension of the problem) and can generate one or two possible solutions. They strive for independence but need help in selecting and prioritizing solutions, thinking through consequences, and implementing an improvement plan. Teachers exhibiting high abstraction can identify problems from disparate sources of information. They can visualize various strategies, anticipate the consequences of each action, and select the most appropriate response. Highly abstract teachers follow the problem-solving task through to completion, taking full responsibility for its results.

The supervisor makes this diagnosis by talking with and observing teachers in action and asking them questions, such as, "What do you see as areas for classroom instructional improvement?" "How do you know this is an area of concern?" "What could you do about it?" Another part of diagnosis is observing classroom teaching behav...
ior, especially with students who aren't learning. The supervisor looks for the degree of flexibility and adaptability the teacher exhibits when handling a learning or behavioral problem. Do teachers use habitual, routinized sets of behaviors when learning problems continue? Can they change in midstream by abandoning actions that aren't working in favor of other actions? Is there a rationale for new actions, or are actions random and erratic? Talking with and observing teachers at work can help the supervisor to determine teachers' varying levels of abstraction.

Phase Two: Tactical

The supervisor's next step is tactical, focusing on the immediate concern of helping teachers solve current instructional problems. The tactical phase initially involves matching supervisory approach to the level of teacher abstraction. The supervisor matches a directive approach with teachers exhibiting low abstraction, a collaborative approach with teachers exhibiting moderate abstraction, and a non-directive approach with teachers exhibiting high abstraction.

Using the directive approach (with teachers of low abstraction), the supervisor provides teachers with a great deal of information and advice. This approach calls for high supervisor responsibility and low teacher responsibility for the instructional improvement decision. The supervisor does not attempt to coerce teachers to use a specific action, but instead suggests alternatives for the teacher to consider and choose.

The supervisor using the collaborative approach works with teachers (of moderate abstraction) to share perceptions of a problem, propose alternatives, and negotiate a mutually designed plan of action. In the collaborative approach, supervisors and teachers share responsibility for the final decision.

Taking the non-directive approach, the supervisor invites teachers (of high abstraction) to define instructional problems themselves, generate actions, think through consequences, and create their own action plans. The non-directive approach calls for low supervisor responsibility and high teacher responsibility for the final decision. Non-directive supervision, however, should not be confused with a laissez-faire approach.

The non-directive supervisor takes an active role by encouraging teachers to make critical decisions and follow through on those decisions, and by being an involved facilitator, helping teachers clarify their perceptions and plans.

The tactical phase of developmental supervision—matching supervisory approach to teacher level of abstraction—is the functional dimension of the model, concerned with the approach most likely to produce a satisfactory solution.

Phase Three: Strategic

The real and more important "developmental" dimension of the model is the third phase. The strategic phase is aimed at accelerating the development of teacher abstraction, helping teachers to think "harder and smarter," and stimulating their problem-solving abilities. The strategies intended to promote growth in teacher abstraction are all long-term propositions. One strategy is to gradually expose teachers to new ideas, ways of viewing students and instruction, problem-solving techniques, and teaching methods. At first, such new ideas should be related to concepts that teachers already understand and value. In time, teachers can be exposed to a wider range of ideas and innovations (see Hall and Loucks 1978).

A second strategy is to gradually lessen teachers' dependence on the supervisor during decision-making conferences. This can be done by gradually decreasing the structure provided by the supervisor while simultaneously increasing the teacher's decision-making role. A third strategy is for the supervisor to involve teachers exhibiting lower levels of abstraction with teachers exhibiting slightly higher levels in problem-solving sessions. Such "optimal mismatches" (Hunt 1971) can result in conceptual growth for teachers exhibiting lower abstraction.

The three phases of developmental supervision make for a complex model of instructional leadership. Table 1 summarizes the purposes, goals, and supervisory techniques related to each phase.

Two Illustrations of the Model at Work

We can further clarify the model by illustrating the three different phases of developmental supervision as implemented in two distinct supervisory tasks: providing direct assistance to three teachers and helping a group of teachers work together.

Direct assistance. In our first example, let's suppose that the developmental supervisor is engaged in a separate clinical cycle (preobservation conference, classroom observation, postobservation conference) with each of three teachers, focusing on teacher questions and student responses. In the diagnostic phase (phase 1) the supervisor holds preobservation conferences and classroom observations for each teacher. The supervisor diagnoses Teacher A as exhibiting low abstraction. Teacher B is moderately abstract, and Teacher C is highly abstract in regard to questioning techniques.

The tactical phase can be illustrated by discussing initial postobservation conferences held with each of three teachers. With Teacher A (low abstraction), the supervisor uses a directive approach, first presenting data gathered during the observation, then interpreting the data and asking for teacher response. The supervisor next suggests instructional improvement goals and enlists possible alternatives to accomplish them. The teacher is asked to select from these alternatives and the supervisor outlines an action plan. Finally, the supervisor provides Teacher A with baseline data and standards by which to evaluate the effectiveness of the improvement effort.

Taking the collaborative approach with Teacher B (moderate abstraction), the supervisor asks for the teacher's perceptions of how the observed class went and potential areas for improving teacher questions and student responses. The supervisor then follows with observation data and his or her own interpretation of improvement areas. Comparing perceptions, the supervisor and Teacher B determine their goals for improvement. Through continued brainstorming, ne-
The supervisor uses a non-directive approach with Teacher C (high abstraction) by reporting observation data, which Teacher C has requested, and then using active listening skills while the teacher relates personal perceptions. The supervisor encourages Teacher C to set instructional improvement goals and explore alternative avenues for reaching those goals. The supervisor serves as a sounding board, using the non-directive interpersonal behaviors of listening, clarifying, encouraging, and reflecting as the teacher formulates an action plan.

Despite the fact that different supervisory approaches are used in each of the three conferences, they are all examples of the tactical phase of developmental supervision. In each conference the supervisor attempts an optimal match between supervisory approach and teacher level of abstraction. The goal of each conference is to solve a relatively immediate instructional problem.

The strategic phase of the developmental model is carried out in subsequent cycles. During the next post-observation conference with Teacher A (originally of low abstraction), the supervisor moves away from a purely directive approach, asking the teacher to propose some personal ideas for instructional improvement. At this stage the supervisor might still assume the bulk of the decision-making responsibility, but in future clinical cycles the supervisor and Teacher A would gradually move into a fully collaborative relationship.

During the next clinical cycle with Teacher B (originally of moderate abstraction), the supervisor begins a gradual shift away from a collaborative approach toward nondirective supervision. This is done by requesting that the teacher set a personal goal for instructional improvement, then collaborating on the remainder of the decisions in that conference. In subsequent post-observation conferences, the supervisor hands over more responsibility to Teacher B, in time assuming an entirely nondirective approach with that teacher. The ultimate goal of the strategic phase of developmental supervision is for all experienced teachers to take charge of their own instructional improvement efforts, with supervisors and peers serving as facilitators and providing feedback.

**Group development.** Our second example illustrates how a supervisor might work with a group of teachers. The critical part of a group's functioning is being able to make collective decisions in their team, grade level, department, or school. An effective group must be able to reach agreement on how change is necessary and what direction that change will take.

Suppose that a supervisor is working with three departments or teams on curriculum revisions. In the diagnostic phase, the supervisor determines that Group A is made up primarily of teachers exhibiting low abstraction; most of the teachers in Group B are exhibiting moderate or mixed levels of abstraction; and highly abstract teachers predominate in Group C. (If there is an equal distribution of abstract thinkers, the supervisor would regard the group as moderate.)

Greiner (1967) has identified a number of approaches used to bring about organizational change with groups. The supervisor can use adaptations of three of these approaches during the tactical phase of group development, for instance, a decision-from-alternatives approach when working with Group A (low abstraction). The supervisor identifies the need for curriculum change, then presents the group with alternative ways to make the change, along with advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. The group then decides which alternative it will use. This approach is essentially directive, in that the supervisor takes responsibility for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting data to the group.

The supervisor uses an adaptation of the data discussion approach (Huse 1980) with Group B (moderate abstraction) by seeking data from the group, organizing the information gathered, and presenting the organized data to the group. The group then analyzes the supervisor's feedback to determine if change is necessary and, if so, the appropriate means for making the change. This is basically a collaborative approach to change, with the supervisor serving as an "information mediator" between initial data gathering and the group's final data acquisition.
analysis and decision.

The supervisor relies on the *group problem-solving approach* (Greiner 1967, Huse 1980) when working with Group C (high abstraction). Here the group generates its own data, then analyzes those data to identify problems and decide on appropriate changes. The supervisor serves as group facilitator throughout the problem-solving process. The group problem-solving approach, then, is a non-directive one (again, not a laissez-faire approach).

The strategic phase of group development begins with the next round of problem-solving sessions. The supervisor helps the less abstract groups to gradually increase their share of responsibility in the decision-making process. During Group A’s next series of meetings, the supervisor changes to the more collaborative data discussion approach for identifying needed change, but maintains the original (and more directive) decision-making approach for choosing a plan of action. Eventually the supervisor shifts toward the more collaborative decision making, using the data discussion approach throughout the decision-making process.

For the next session with Group B, the supervisor shifts to the non-directive problem-solving approach for identifying the group’s new problem, then returns to the role of information mediator, using the (more collaborative) data discussion approach for creating an action plan. In time, the supervisor uses the group problem-solving approach during all stages of decision making with Group B.

The gradual movement of the groups of lower abstraction to higher abstraction can be accelerated by optimal group matches. Group A is matched with Group B either in a workshop that simulates decision making or in an actual decision-making session aimed at solving a problem common to both groups. Here, Group B shares new ways of thinking about change and change strategies with Group A and thereby models a higher level of thought process and decision making for the members of Group A. A separate workshop or meeting, focusing on a different change-related problem, involves Groups B and C. In this session, Group B is pulled toward Group C’s level of abstraction and change strategies.

Another way of promoting increased thought and collective responsibility of group members is by re-forming groups in which the highest level of abstraction is exhibited by the majority of group members. This placement pulls toward the thinking of the minority of members who exhibit less abstraction. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true. If the majority of group members are less abstract, they tend to inhibit and pull down the more abstract thinkers.

The ultimate goal of developmental supervision is to have all groups operating at the group problem-solving level, with the supervisor using nondirective, interpersonal behaviors to facilitate the group’s own decision making.

**A Human Theory**

We are aware that the model of developmental supervision is complex. Level of abstraction will vary not only among individuals and groups but within the same individual or group depending on the particular instructional concern. For example, a high school teacher might exhibit high abstraction when thinking about improvements in her advanced physics class and exhibit low abstraction when thinking about her general science class. A science department might exhibit high abstraction with a laboratory approach to teaching and exhibit lower levels of abstraction with student record-keeping. Also, a stage of development is not reached permanently but can change with new teaching situations, personal life happenings, and altered professional work conditions.

Developmental supervision is not a contingency or situational theory. It is not a theory to label teachers into fixed categories. It does not lend itself to algorithms or prescriptive actions. Rather, it is a theory about understanding the aim of our work in relation to ourselves and others. A democracy such as ours aims at educating students to become thoughtful and independent citizens who ultimately will make decisions in the best interests of all (Kohlberg and Mayer 1972). Insofar as informed human judgment is critical to education, we must strive for all educators to become more active, autonomous, and thoughtful about instruction.

For a thorough discussion and review of research on the application of developmental supervision, see Glickman 1985.

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