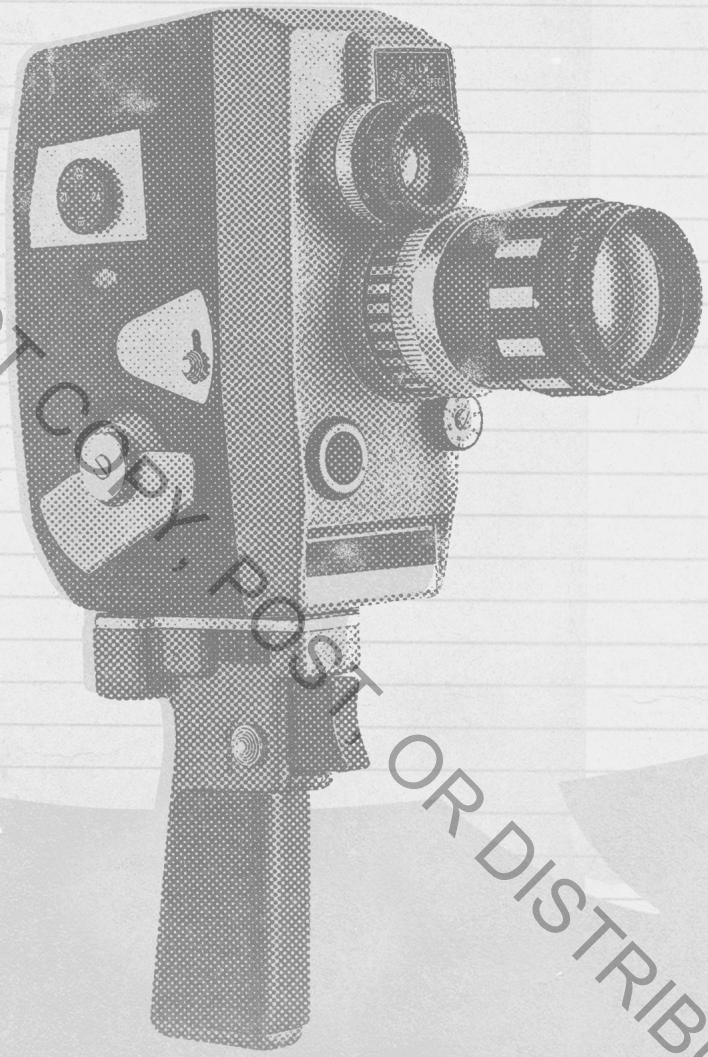
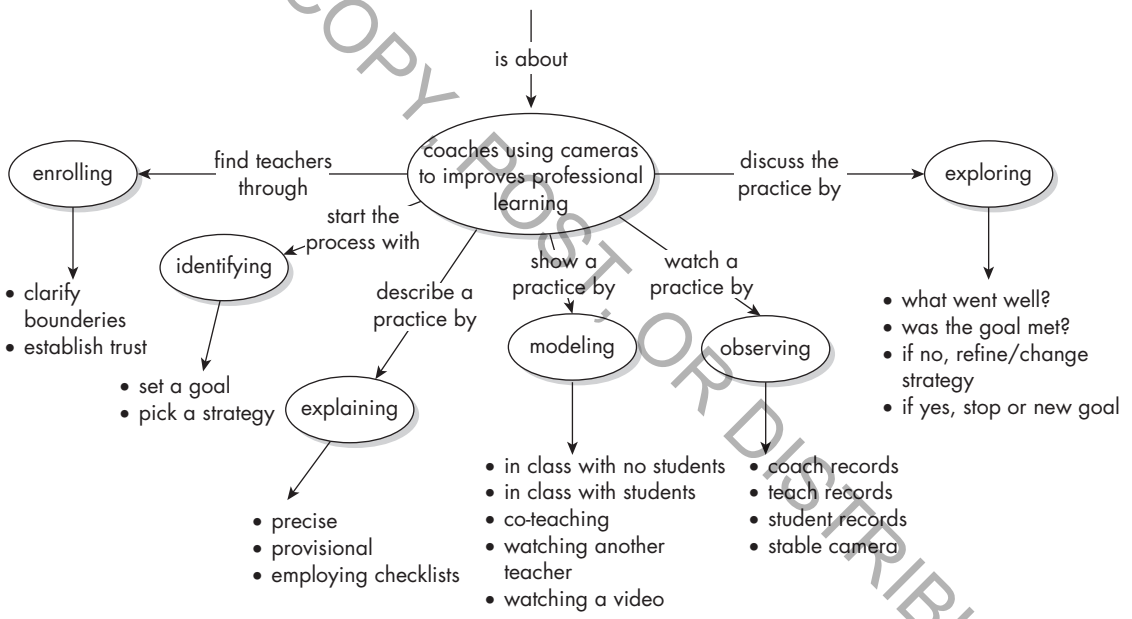




3

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES

Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance.

—Atul Gawande

Using video during coaching is like the gas in the car. Video helps you move forward, and it's easier and quicker. If you don't have gas in the car, you can't move forward at all. Video is like stepping on the accelerator.

—Amanda Trimble, Instructional Coach, Noblesville, Indiana

When Mellissa Hickey was offered the chance to be an instructional coach, she didn't think she wanted the job. "I really didn't want to be an instructional coach. I didn't want to be out of the classroom," she said. Mellissa "absolutely loved" working with the children in her school, but the miles she had to drive to work were too long, and when an instructional coaching position "kind of presented itself . . . closer to home," she decided to take the job at a new school, The Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts Elementary Magnet School in Hartford, Connecticut.

Mellissa "was a little scared about starting a new job." At first, she said, "I had no idea what I was doing. For the first month and a half at the new school, I opened a lot of boxes and delivered a lot of supplies until we all got our feet on the ground. I thought I was a pretty good teacher, but I was worried that I wouldn't be able to do my job."

Mellissa went to a workshop on video and coaching during her second month on the job. She thought video was interesting, and decided to try it at her school. At first she met "resistance from a couple teachers. Nobody wants to be video taped. Nobody wants to see it," she commented. But Mellissa made sure teachers knew, as she expressed it, "that they were going to have all the power." Teachers had the option to keep or delete the video. "It wouldn't go further than me or them. There were times when a teacher didn't want me to video record them, so I would offer to video record the students."

Mellissa was very surprised at "how quickly the teachers all came around to agreeing to be video recorded." At first she worked one-on-one with teachers. "I would have them view the video by themselves and then we would meet the next day and talk about it." Video helped teachers see many things that they would not otherwise have noticed. "One teacher," Mellissa said,

> spoke very, very fast, but until she saw the video of herself, she never realized how fast she spoke. Once she saw it though, she was able to correct it immediately. I think it only takes seeing yourself on video once or twice to get over the initial shyness or reluctance. After that you can kind of let it go and really focus on the teaching. They all loved the fact that they could see themselves, and teachers started sharing snippets of videos at grade level team meetings. I think video breaks down a lot of walls.

For Mellissa, it was important to ensure the teachers knew they could trust her. "Initially, I think they were all a little apprehensive and they thought it might become a punitive thing," she said.

> The big thing I learned as a coach is that you have to let the teachers decide what they want to work on, what happens to the videos, what videos to take, etc. Give them options so they don't feel this is being imposed on them. Make it clear that this is confidential, not evaluative but for best teaching. It can't be that today is a video taping day and I have to put on my high heels and best dress."

After a few weeks, teachers started sharing snippets of video at grade-level team meetings. Eventually, everyone was willing to let Mellissa show the videos, and using them deepened the quality and meaning of the collaborative conversations and built a true community among the staff. "I think it has brought them all closer," Mellissa concluded, "because they were able to see their good and their not-so-good teaching. Everyone saw everyone else being courageous in

showing video. They were willing to be vulnerable with each other, which brought the grade-level teams together."

> The collaboration opened up a lot of lines of communication. We were all just kind of in it together for these deep conversations. Best of all, the teaching got much better. Video allowed us to see ourselves as we truly were. It allowed us to collaborate. It allowed us to focus on certain aspects of our teaching and go a lot deeper with that. We all saw each other improve. Seeing a brand-new teacher get better at classroom management throughout the year and getting better at teaching—that was big. We had many new teachers in the school. Video was a really effective way to meet the needs of a lot of teachers at a lot of different levels.

Now, after a year coaching, Mellissa reports that she is much more comfortable being a coach. "What I didn't expect was that I would learn as much as I did coaching. Sometimes I think I learned a lot more than the teachers I'm supposed to be coaching. I'm really excited to be a coach now. I'm excited to keep going with what we have started. I'm excited to get better at it. We can move forward and get even better."

Instructional coaches like Mellissa Hickey have been the focus of study for my colleagues and me at the Kansas Coaching Project for the past 15 years. Our interest in coaching has grown out of a basic understanding and recognition: Without follow-up, professional learning likely won't change instruction.

Over more than a decade, we've conducted studies to refine and validate instructional coaching. Using a variation on design research, which we refer to as lean design research, we are continuously trying to simplify and improve our model for coaching. The most significant finding we have uncovered so far is that video recording makes instructional coaching easier and more effective. Video recording was not a part of coaching when we started studying it, but in the course of our work we have learned that it can have a huge, positive impact on the whole process.

Video-Enhanced Instructional Coaching

Using video as part of coaching involves much more than simply turning the camera on and later talking about what the video shows. If they want to make an impact, coaches using cameras must understand how complex it is for teachers to watch themselves do what they do. A few years back a teacher in Alberta, Canada, helped

Video 3.1
An Overview of Coaching Using Video

www.corwin.com/focusonteaching

me understand why it is often difficult at first for teachers to watch themselves teach. He told me that when he was on the wrestling team in college, he and his coach used to go over video of him wrestling almost every week. "Watching that video of myself wrestling wasn't a big deal," he said. "In fact, I looked forward to it. But watching video of myself teaching, that is an entirely different thing."

What is the difference between watching yourself playing a sport and watching yourself teaching? The answer is likely the complexity of the work.[1] When we get feedback on technical skills, such as how to position ourselves while playing a sport, we are less inclined to take the feedback personally. However, when we get feedback on more complex or artful practices, we are more inclined to be defensive about what we hear. For example, suggestions on classroom management are usually harder to listen to than suggestions on how to use a computer program. When the topic turns to complex skills, the conversation becomes more difficult. Talking about messy problems usually is messy.

More than a decade ago, Heifetz and Linksy enhanced our understanding of the complexity of tasks. They explained the importance of distinguishing between simple and complex challenges, which they referred to as "technical" and "adaptive" problems:

> Every day, people have problems for which they do, in fact, have the necessary know-how and procedures. We call these technical problems. But there is a whole host of problems that are not amenable to authoritative expertise or standard operating procedures. They cannot be solved by someone who provides answers from on high. We call these adaptive challenges because they require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization or community. (p. 13)

According to Heifetz and Linksy, "the single most common source of leadership failure . . . is that people, especially those in positions of authority, treat adaptive challenges like technical problems" (p. 14).

When we ignore the difference between simple and complex problem by, for example, suggesting that teachers simply listen to instructional coaches the way athletes listen to athletic coaches, we risk creating a coaching model that is twice doomed for failure: first, because addressing complex challenges as if they were simple skills increases the likelihood of resistance, and second because technical solutions for adaptive problems likely won't work.

[1]For an insightful discussion of the complexity of a task and the quality of performance, see Chapter 3 in Atul Gawande's *Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right* (2009).

Video recording addresses both of these issues. First, when we video record a class, the video captures the rich complexity of the classroom. As middle school English teacher Lea Molzcan told us, "looking at a recording of your class is like looking into a kaleidoscope because there are some many things happening. What you see keeps changing and evolving." Additionally, instructional coaching that employs video responds to the complexities of teaching by adapting to that complexity over time. Coach and teacher set a goal based on the picture of reality revealed in video of the class, they monitor progress toward the goal by recording and watching video of teaching and learning, adapt their strategies for hitting the goal based on what the video reveals, and then continue learning together until they hit the goal.

Instructional coaching is not a one-size-fits-all approach; instructional coaches adapt solutions to the unique opportunities and challenges each teacher experiences.

Video Increases Trust

Perhaps the most frequent comment we heard in the interviews conducted for this book is that teachers need to trust their coach in order unreservedly to agree to being recorded. As instructional coach Michelle Hickey explained, "There has to be a certain amount of trust between the coach and the teachers. Teachers have to be able to say 'no I don't want to be video taped' or, 'no today is just not a good day.' They have to be comfortable with video." Of course, if teachers don't trust their coach, coaching of any sort will most likely be unproductive anyway.

However, one of the surprise findings from our interviews is that coaches and teachers both reported that video actually strengthens colleague's relationships and increases trust. Courtney Horton said she felt that using video during coaching "helped strengthen my partnership with teachers because it is something we are going through together. It's a growth process for us both to watch video and talk about it together. Video is a great non-evaluative, reflective tool that has deepened my partnerships with my teachers."

Courtney's comments suggest two reasons why video might increase trust. First, when coaches and teachers base their conversations on video, they work from a shared understanding of current reality in the classroom. If teachers haven't seen a video of the classroom, they may understand the classroom differently than the coach. As I have pointed out throughout this book, we usually have a poor understanding of what it looks like when we do what we do. As a result, if teachers haven't seen video recordings of their lessons, they may not see the relevance of their coach's comments and dismiss what a coach

says. When coach and teacher both see the lesson the same way, however, they can engage in real, meaningful dialogue about learning.

"Video," Kristen Shrout an instructional coach from Central Fall, Rhode Island said, "is a really important tool for building shared understanding. It helps ensure that both the coaches and the teachers are on the same page. Sometimes you may be talking about something and the other person may not fully understand what you are trying to say. Watching video changes this. Now people say, 'Oh, so that is what you're talking about.' "

A second reason why video increases trust is that when coach and teacher set a goal based on video, collaborate to implement a teaching practice, monitor progress by viewing video recordings of a class, and eventually hit the goal based on clear evidence from video, both have a shared sense of accomplishment based on real-life evidence. Coaching based on video is coaching that is real, and coach and teacher feel a real sense of accomplishment when their collaboration leads to better learning for students.

Video Facilitates Partnership Coaching

Video also enables an important change in the way coach and teacher interact. For some, coaching involves top-down interactions with an expert giving feedback and advice to an apprentice. During such a top-down approach, the coach observes the teacher, identifies what is going well and what the teacher needs to do to improve, and then makes suggestions. Essentially, during top-down coaching, the coach does most of the thinking, decides what the teacher needs to do, and then tries to get the teacher to agree to do it.

There are a number of problems with this top-down model. First as Kegan and Lahey (2001) have explained, top-down interactions are grounded in two problematic assumptions:

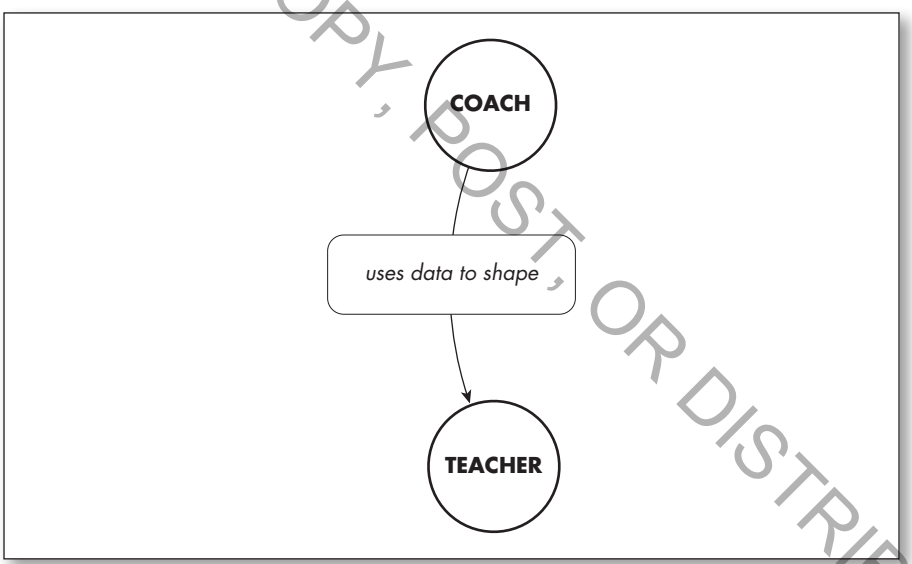
> The first [assumption] is that the perspective of the feedback giver (let's call him the supervisor)–what he sees and thinks, his feedback–is right, is correct. An accompanying assumption is that there is only one correct answer. When you put these two assumptions together, they amount to this: the supervisor has the one and only correct view of the situation. (We call this "the super vision assumption"; that is, the supervisor has *super vision*). (p. 128)

When coaches work from "super vision assumptions," they limit how much they learn from the person who knows most about the

classroom, the teacher. The classroom teacher is in class every day, and usually knows an enormous amount about each student. Coach and teacher arrive at better solutions when the teacher's knowledge, insights, and ideas are a part of the coaching conversation—that is, coaching leads to better solutions when teachers have a voice in coaching.

An equally significant problem with top-down feedback is that it often engenders resistance. As I have written in this book and Unmistakable Impact in particular (Knight, 2011), when teachers are told, explicitly or implicitly, that their opinion doesn't matter, that coaching is compulsory, and that they must implement practices that have been chosen for them, they resist. A more effective model is one that positions teachers as equal partners in the coaching process (see Figure 3.1) (Knight, 2007, 2011).[2]

Figure 3.1 Top-Down Coaching



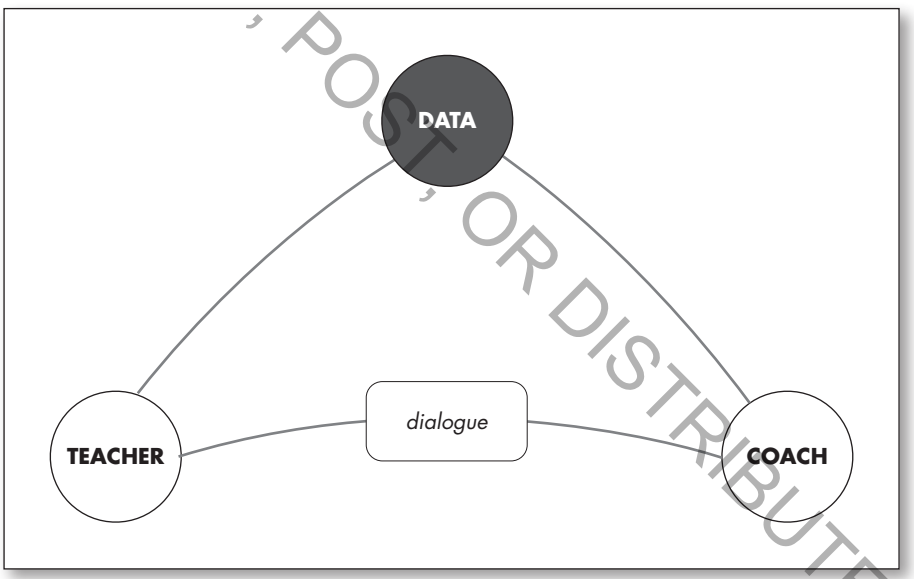
Instructional coaching based on partnership is an alternative to top-down coaching (see Figure 3.2). During this approach, which is much easier to implement using video recordings, the coach is not positioned as an expert with "super vision," but as a partner who engages in dialogue with teachers about what they see on video and what they want to do to move forward. Video recordings, much like Thinking Prompts in the classroom (described in High-Impact Instruction, 2013), become what Parker Palmer (1997) refers to as a "third things:"

[2]Sadly, a recent survey conducted by the Gallup organization of over 100,000 employees in a wide variety of occupations found that teachers are the "least likely" to say "at work my opinion seems to count." (http://www.gallup.com)

> "third things" . . . represent neither the voice of the facilitator nor the voice of the participant . . . Rightly used, a third thing functions a bit like the old Rorschach inkblot test, evoking from us whatever the soul wants us to attend to. (pp. 92–93)

Video functions as a third thing throughout the coaching process, representing, to paraphrase Palmer, neither the voice of the instructional coach nor the voice of teacher. Teacher and coach equally interpret video, identify a goal, sometimes looking at video of others teaching the practice to be implemented, monitor progress by watching video, and use video as a point of departure for all coaching conversations. As Amanda Trimble an instructional coach from Noblesville, Indiana told us, "Using video made it so that the conversation wasn't about me and what I thought; it had more to do with the teacher and what she felt was good for her students."

Figure 3.2 Partnership Coaching



Video and the Components of Instructional Coaching

For more than a decade, I have worked with researchers, coaches, and educators to refine the process instructional coaches use when they collaborate with teachers. Although each coaching session is different depending on the teacher, a coach can increase the chance that there will be lasting impact by undertaking certain activities.

The instructional coaching process is pretty straightforward. Once a teacher is enrolled in coaching, the coach and teacher collaborate to identify a goal (a measurable change the teacher would like to see in student achievement, behavior, or attitude). Then, coach and teacher identify a teaching strategy the teacher will implement to try to hit the goal, usually a strategy drawn from a collection of effective teaching practices such as those described in High-Impact Instruction (2013). Following this, the coach precisely describes the practice, often using a checklist, and works with the teacher to modify the practice to tailor it to the teacher's unique strengths and her students' unique needs. The teacher then observes a model of the practice, perhaps by watching the coach teaching in the classroom, watching a video, or observing another teacher use the practice.

Using video recording is a way to see things clearer, but it also a tool that brought me closer to some of the teachers. It was something we could use together. It wasn't their view or my view; it was something we could share. It was a way to connect.

—**Tara Strahan**, Instructional Coach, Orange City, Florida

After the teacher has set a goal, identified a teaching strategy to try, and learned the strategy, she tries it out. The coach observes the teacher implementing the practice and gathers data on what the teacher does and whether or not that will lead to reaching the goal. Then, coach and teacher meet to discuss the data. If the goal has been met, teacher and coach can start another goal or take a break from coaching. If the goal has not been met, on the other hand, teacher and coach explore how to refine the practice so that it will better enable the teacher to hit the goal or choose another practice, repeating the whole process until the goal is reached.

Components of Instructional Coaching

- Enroll
- Identify
- Explain and Mediate
- Model
- Observe
- Explore

Video increases the effectiveness of each of the components of instructional coaching and turns the focus of the conversation away from the coach's opinion and toward what matters most, students' experiences in the classroom. In the rest of this chapter, I detail how video can be used at each step of the coaching process.[3]

ENROLL

During the enroll component of coaching, coaches use several strategies to enlist teachers for coaching. For example, they have

[3]For more information on the components of instructional coaching, see *Instructional Coaching* (Knight, 2007).

one-to-one conversations, give presentations to small groups of teachers or the entire school, hold informal conversations, write articles/announcements in school/district newsletters, or follow up on principal referrals. (More about this component of coaching, and all others, are found in Instructional Coaching [2007].)

Generally, people l embrace coaching when they are convinced that it will lead to changes that are rewarding and that they think they can easily implement (Knight, 2011; Patterson et al, 2007).

When coaches are enrolling teachers for coaching that involves video there are some additional issues to talk about. First, coaches should explain that the main purpose of the video is to ensure that coaching focuses on what is most helpful to the teacher and the students. "If we get a clear picture of what's happening in the class through the use of video," the coach can explain, "we'll have a better chance of doing what will have the biggest impact."

Coaches should also emphasize that the video will not be shared with anyone other than those whom the teacher chooses. Instructional coach Melissa Hickey told us that "there has to be trust between the coach and the teacher, and that means the teacher has to be able to say that I want the video or I don't want the video shown to anyone. Teachers also have to be able to say that today is just not a good day."

To build trust, coaches need to reinforce that the video is only being recorded to help the teacher accomplish her goals, the teacher chooses where to point the camera, who views the video (usually only the coach and teacher), and what happens to the video afterward its immediate use. Collaborating teachers are much more at ease when they know that video is only for their use.

The Components of Coaching

- Enroll teachers in coaching.
- Explain the purpose of the video.
- Clarify that the teachers chooses who will see the recording—usually only the teacher and coach.
- Let the teacher choose where to place the camera, what to do with the video, and which camera to use.

IDENTIFY

During this component of coaching, the teacher collaborates with the coach to set a goal and select a strategy to try out to meet that goal. This is the most important component of instructional coaching because if teacher and coach do not pick a goal that can make a difference for students, a lot time will be wasted. To be worth the effort, coaching must lead to real improvements in students' lives, and without an appropriate goal, significant changes may not come about.

To ensure that teachers identify a useful goal and appropriate strategies, coaches follow a series of simple steps during this component of coaching. First, the coach helps the teacher get a clear picture of reality, often by video recording the teacher's class. Then, together coach and teacher identify a change the teacher would like to see in student behavior, achievement, or attitude and set a measurable goal. Following this, they identify a teaching strategy the teacher will try out to hit the strategy.

1. Get a clear picture of reality. A shared, accurate view of reality is necessary to identify a meaningful goal. This is more difficult than it might seem because, as Bossidy and Charan (2004) have written, "avoiding reality is a basic and ubiquitous human tendency (p. 26)." When coaches use cameras, they video record a teacher's class to capture what is happening during a lesson. "The video," as coach Amanda Trimble told us, "helps the teacher reflect because it is real, authentic evidence. You can't disagree with a video of what happened in your class."

Most coaches we interviewed video recorded both the teacher and students, moving the camera back and forth—focusing on the teacher when he led discussion and on the students when they were doing most of the talking. Usually the coach asks the teacher to choose the class he wants recorded, encouraging the teacher to suggest the class that will yield the most useful information.

After the video is recorded, the coach and teacher watch the video. In our research, we have found that it is best that they watch the video separately because that way (a) the teacher watches the video without concern for what someone else thinks of the video; (b) the teacher can watch the video at his own pace, stopping and starting whenever he wishes; and (c) coach and teacher can engage in more meaningful conversations when they have both watched the video ahead of time and don't have to divide their attention between the video and their colleague.

We have created three documents that coaches can share with teachers to help them get the most out of their video. The first document, Figure 3.3, gives teachers some pointers on what to look for when they watch their video.

To help teachers get a clearer picture of how their students are learning coaches can share Figure 3.4, the Watch Your Students form.

Finally, to help teachers get a clearer picture of how they are teaching, coaches can share Figure 3.5, the Watch Yourself form.

Figure 3.3 How to Get the Most Out of Watching Your Video

Goal

- Identify two sections of the video that you like and one or two sections of video you'd like to further explore

Getting Ready

Watching yourself on video is one of the most powerful strategies professionals can use to improve their performance. However, it can be a challenge. It takes a little time to get used to seeing yourself on screen, so be prepared for a bit of a shock. After a while you will become more comfortable with the process.

- Find a place to watch where you won't be distracted.
- You may find it helpful to read through the teacher and student surveys and/or the big ticket items to remind yourself of things to keep in mind while watching
- Set aside a block of time so you can watch the video uninterrupted.
- Make sure you've got a pen and paper ready to take notes.

Watching the Video

- Plan to watch the entire video in one sitting.
- Take notes on anything that you find interesting.
- Remember to write the time from the video beside any note you make so that you can return to it if you wish.
- People tend to be hard on themselves, so be sure to watch for things you like in the video.
- After watching the video, review your notes and circle the items you will discuss with your coach (two you like, and one or two you would like to further explore).
- Sit back, relax, and enjoy the experience.

Figure 3.4 Watch Your Students Form

WATCH YOUR STUDENTS

Date:

After watching the video of today's class, please rate how close the behavior of your students is to your goal for an ideal class in the following areas:

	Not Close						*Right On*
Students were engaged in learning (90% engagement is recommended).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students interacted respectfully.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students clearly understand how they are supposed to behave.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students rarely interrupted each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students engaged in high-level conversation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students clearly understand how well they are progressing (or not).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Students are interested in learning activities in the class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Comments

This form is available for download at **www.corwin.com/focusonteaching.**

Figure 3.5 Watch Yourself Form

WATCH YOURSELF

Date:

After watching the video of today's class, please rate how close your instruction is to your ideal in the following areas:

	Not Close						*Right On*
My praise-to-correction ratio was at least a 3-to-1.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I clearly explained expectations prior to each activity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My corrections were calm, consistent, immediate, and planned in advance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My questions were at the appropriate level (know, understand, do).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My learning structures (stories, cooperative learning, thinking devices, experiential learning) were effective.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I used a variety of learning structures effectively.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I clearly understand what my students know and don't know.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Comments

This form is available for download at **www.corwin.com/focusonteaching.**

2. Identify a change the teacher wants to see and set a measurable goal. After the coach and teacher have watched the video separately, they meet to talk about what they noticed in the video. The goal of this conversation is to identify a goal (outcome) that the teacher would like to in the students. We recommend selecting as a goal a measureable change in student achievement, behavior, or attitude. To guide the teacher to identifying such a goal, the coach might the following questions:

1. On a scale of 1-10, how close what the lesson to your ideal?
2. What would have to change to make the class closer to a 10?
3. What would your students be doing?
4. What would that look like?
5. How would we measure that?
6. Do you want that to be your goal?
7. Would it really matter to you if you hit that goal?
8. What teaching strategy will you try to hit that goal?

3. Choose a teaching strategy to use to hit the goal. Once a measurable goal has been established, coach and teacher need to select a teaching strategy that the teacher will implement to achieve the goal. The strategy may be drawn from books such as Marzano's *Art and Science of Teaching*, Safir's *Skillful Teacher*, Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion*, or my *High-Impact Instruction*.

In High-Impact Instruction, 16 teaching strategies are organized around the Big Four Framework:

- Content Planning
  - Guiding Questions
  - Learning Maps
- Formative Assessment
  - Identifying Specific Proficiencies
  - Choose a Way to Assess the Proficiency
  - Modify Teaching
- Instruction
  - Thinking Prompts
  - Effective Questions
  - Cooperative Learning

  - Stories
  - Authentic Learning
- Community Building
  - Learner-Friendly Culture
  - Power With, Not Power Over
  - Freedom Within Form
  - Expectations
  - Witness to the Good
  - Fluent Corrections

EXPLAIN AND MEDIATE

The goal during this component of coaching is for the coach to explain the new teaching practice and then help the teacher plan how to implement it. Thus, if a coach was explaining learning maps (for more information, see Chapter 2 of High-Impact Instruction), the coach likely would need to explain the characteristics of a quality learning map, how to introduce the map at the start of a unit, how to use it to open and close daily lessons, and how to use it during an end-of-unit review.

Video helps us stay grounded and pay closer attention to what is going on. We think about what changes we can make rather than me just sharing my observations and suggestions for how to change things. Since we are both looking at the same thing, it's not just me talking about what I noticed, it's 'let's share what we both noticed."

—**Kirsten Shrout**, Instructional Coach, Central Fall, Rhode Island

During the explaining part, instructional coaches must make sure their explanations are precise and clear. If they cannot explain it clearly, the teacher they are coaching won't be able to implement it. Teachers can only implement what they hear and understand.

One way to increase the clarity of an explanation is to use checklists. A checklist is not a dummying down of the explanation; instead, it distils an explanation to its essence. Indeed, if a coach cannot describe a practice through the use of a checklist, chances are that the coach does not understand the practice clearly enough.

Using a checklist to explain a practice does not mean that a coach expects the teacher to do it exactly as explained. As Eric Liu (2004) wrote, "Teaching is not one-size-fits-all; it's one-size-fits-one (p. 47)." Expecting a practice to always work the same way in every class is unrealistic given the complexity of the classroom.

For that reason, we suggest that coaches are precise but provisional when explaining a practice. That is, they explain the elements of the checklist clearly but ask the teacher how she might want to modify it to best meet the needs of her students or to best exploit her students.

If the teacher wants to modify a practice, that is her decision. She knows her students best, and she is the one who will be using the teaching strategy. Further, if the teacher hits the goal, then whether or not she modifies the practice is irrelevant. Indeed, using her experience and understanding of students, she may have improved the practice.

However, if the goal is not met, coach and teacher can revisit the checklist to see if the implementation of the practice needs to be refined to better meet the goal. That way, the coach does not end up being in the one-up position of telling the teacher what to do.

In the mediation part of this component, the coach helps the teacher get ready to teach the chosen practice. In other words, the coach serves as a mediator between the practice as it is written down in a manual, book, or checklist and the teacher's classroom.

For a learning map, this might involve the following. First, a coach might use a checklist as a guideline to help the teacher create a learning map for a unit she is about to teach. Then the coach might use a checklist to help the teacher get ready to introduce the map at the start of the unit. Subsequently, the coach could use additional checklists to prepare the teacher to introduce and close lessons and to lead an end-of-unit review.

Throughout this component of coaching, the coach can also use video that has previously been recorded to show the teacher what a practice looks like. Some coaches, with the permission of their colleagues, gather a library of practices from recordings. Similarly, some districts are creating central libraries of video for all faculty to view. Online sites such as the Teaching Channel also provide video that can be used.

MODEL

In most cases, to learn a practice teachers need to see it. In Influencer (2008), Patterson and his colleagues summarize research that shows "how powerfully our behavior is shaped by observing others (p. 18). My research on coaching has led me to the same conclusion. During one study where I interviewed 13 first- and second-year teachers in a middle school, every teacher told me that modeling was an extremely helpful part of coaching. One teacher spoke for the group when she said, "When she [the coach] came into the classroom, that's what helped me most. I could see that my students could be managed, not controlled, but managed . . . It was just one hour, but since I've had that experience, I know what to look for."[4]

[4]You can read a download of these interviews at http://www.instructionalcoach.org/images/downloads/research-pubs/TeacherInterviews.pdf.

The coaches in our coaching cohort research study taught us that modeling can occur in at least five different ways.

In the Classroom. Most commonly, the coach demonstrates the chosen practice in the collaborating teacher's classroom. Teachers have told us that they prefer that coaches don't teach the whole lesson, but only the practice itself. Instructional coaches who model practices may want to video themselves teaching and then share the recording with their teacher. If time permits, they may even wish to watch the video with the collaborating teacher.

In the Classroom With No Students. Some teachers prefer that the coach models a practice in the classroom without students being present. In that case, the coaches share the practice in the way they would if they were teaching the lesson. For example, the coach might use the "I do it, we do it, you do it" approach and show the teacher exactly how she would teach it. Again, video may be used to make a record of the lesson that the teacher could review or that coach and teacher could discuss, perhaps right after the model lesson.

Co-Teaching. In some cases, such as when the lesson involves a content area that is unfamiliar to the coach, coach and teacher may co-teach. Again, video can be used to record the lesson so coach and teacher can explore how the teacher taught the practice and whether or not it worked. More information on how to discuss video is included in the Explore section below.

Visiting Another Teacher's Class. In some cases, especially if the goal is to learn a procedure (such as how to set students up for learning circles) or a management technique (such as how to correct or reinforce students), teachers may choose to see a practice by visiting another teacher's classroom. This is best when the teacher being observed has had a prior conversation with the visiting teacher and they have discussed a checklist that summarizes the practices.

Under such circumstances, the instructional coach may not be able to observe the class, and even if the coach observes the class with the teacher, the coach and teacher will only be able to have limited conversations while the class is being taught. For that reason, if the teacher being observed consents, the coach or teacher might video record the lesson so they can review it later and get a deeper understanding of how to teach the practice. Even if the coach is unable to visit the classroom with the teacher, they can still discuss the video after the class if the presenting teacher agrees and the visiting teacher records the class.

Watching Video. A final way to see a model of how to teach a practice is to watch a video. Sometimes the video is available online on a video sharing site like teachingchannel.org. At other times, the video is one the coach took of himself or of another teacher (with explicit approval of the teacher). What matters is that the teacher gets to see an example, or several examples, of how to teach the practice. After that, it is time for the teacher to try out the practice herself.

OBSERVE

Video makes it much easier for coaches to gather data on how a teacher implements data practice or strategy. Without video, a coach has to take copious notes or gather specific data such as those described in Chapter Four, such as time on task, ratio of interaction (praise versus correction), instructional and non-instructional time, and so forth. The biggest problem with this approach is that since many teachers don't know what it looks like when they teach, they may not see how data, notes, or comments relate to the way they teach. When the class is recorded, however, both teacher and coach have an accurate, shared understanding of what happened in the classroom.

There are many ways a coach can record a class. In most classrooms, as coach Courtney Horton told us, students quickly forget there is a camera in the room. Nevertheless, a coach must make every effort to avoid causing distractions by standing or sitting out of the students' sight lines. What the coach records is the teacher's decision, it's her data, but everybody is involved when the coach records the teacher while she is teaching and the students while they are interacting. Thus, the coach moves the camera back and forth between teacher and students.

We recommend that the coach records the class, since no matter how much information a camera gathers, the coach is bound to miss something if not present in the classroom. Watching a video of a class without having been there is like watching a sporting event on television vs. watching it live in the stadium. There is so much more to see and feel when your view extends beyond the scope of a lens.

Additionally, sometimes the coach must be in a teacher's class to gather data that show whether or not the teacher has met her goal. For example, if a teacher has set the goal of achieving 90% time on task, the coach has to be in class to gather the data.

Despite the advantages of observing a class, sometimes it impossible for a coach to record a class, perhaps because of a schedule conflict, lack of time, or because the teacher prefers otherwise. In such situations, the camera can either be held by a student or set up and

turned on to record a class before the students arrive. In this way, even if not optimal, cameras make it easier for coaches to meet the needs of larger numbers of teachers and students.

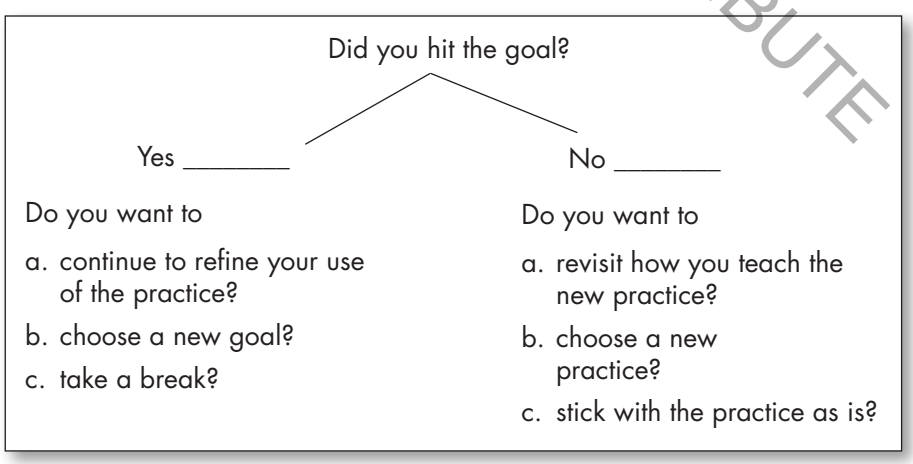
EXPLORE

During the explore phase of coaching, the coach and teacher talk about what happened when the new practice was implemented to determine what the teacher's next action should be. As depicted in Figure 3.6, action is predicated on whether or not the teacher has hit the identified goal.

As explained in the section on identifying a goal, it is most effective when the coach and teacher watch the video separately. Both should watch the video with the above questions in mind and come to the conversation prepared to discuss their answers. Additionally, if checklists exist for looking at the behavior, they should be completed by both coach and teacher. Additionally, the coach might also look for sections of the video that went very well as well as sections that she would like to explore separately. To make this process as simple and fast as possible, both coach and teacher need to keep track of the minute mark where each of the sections occur.

When teacher and coach meet, they should discuss each of the questions above. Many coaches like to begin by asking the teacher what he thinks went well. Following this, the coach and teacher often discuss whether or not the goal was met. Sometimes this means that the coach shares data that she gathered in the classroom, at other times this means that coach and teacher look over student work or

Figure 3.6 Explore Phase



students responses on formative assessments, or compare notes on what they saw in the video. (If they are looking at a goal related to student responses, it is important that the sound quality of the video allows coach and teacher to hear all the student responses.)

If the teacher has reached the goal, the coach and teacher discuss whether or not he wants to set and pursue another goal or take a break from coaching. For example, a teacher who is about to take on coaching the basketball team may want to hold off on another goal until after the goal has been set. Similarly, near the end of the year a teacher may want to wait until after the holidays to take on a new goal.

Explore Questions

1. What are you pleased about?
2. Did you hit the goal?
3. If the goal was hit, do you want to identify another goal, take a break, or keep refining the current new practice?
4. If the goal was not hit, do you want to should stick with the chosen practice or try a new one?
5. If you stick with the chosen practice, how will you modify it to increase its impact? (revisit the checklist)
6. If you choose another practice, what will it be?
7. What are your next actions?

If the teacher has not hit the goal, she has many options. For example, she can continue to modify her use of the original practice. This usually means revisiting the checklist with the coach to discuss how the practice might be adapted to better meet the needs of the students. If the teacher chooses to modify the teaching practice in significant ways, she and the coach can discuss teaching the practice with more fidelity. In some cases, the teacher may want to see a model or models of the practice being implemented.

Another option is to stop implementing the original practice and try another one. If this is the teacher's choice, usually the coach and teacher discuss options and then the coach repeats the explain, mediate, and model components of coaching to ensure the teacher is ready to implement the new practice.

Finally, the teacher may choose to continue with the practice as it is being implemented. In some cases, it may take time for the practice to have the desired impact. In other words, sometimes, changing nothing is the best practice.

Coaching is a very powerful way to support teachers as they strive to find ways to better meet the needs of their students. Integrating video into coaching increases the power of coaching in significant ways. Michelle Harris, who was one of the first coaches on our research cohort to use a camera, summed it up beautifully: "Coaching with video is like coaching on steroids."

I think using video made my coaching more strategic. It's one thing to set a goal, write it down on paper, and talk about it. But having evidence on the video to show that there is growth and we're on track is powerful. We stay on the track to hit the goal.

—**Christa Anderson,** Instructional Coach, Missoula, Montana

Turning Ideas Into Action

STUDENTS

1. Students can become a type of coaches and be extremely helpful to a teacher as he pursues a goal for instructional improvement. Teachers can share their goal with students, explain why it is important, and ask students for suggestions on how to reach it. A teacher who is trying to increase authentic engagement, for example, might talk with students about the difference between authentic engagement and strategic compliance and ask students to suggest how he can make learning more authentically engaging.

TEACHERS

1. Coaches need to keep in mind that the video recording belongs to the teacher and that, therefore, the teacher decides everything related to using the camera—where the camera is pointed, who sees the video (which may mean only the teacher views it), who does the recording, and what happens to the video after it has been reviewed.

COACHES

1. One way coaches can model the power of video is to use it to improve their own practices. Indeed, the coaches on our design study found that watching themselves on video was the most effective way for them to improve their practice. Coaches can ask their collaborating teachers for permission to video record coaching sessions, explaining that the sole purpose is for the coach to improve practice. Recording conversations and reviewing the video afterwards can be powerful learning. For example, I have recorded conversations with Jenny and learned a great deal about how I communicate when I went back and reviewed the recording.

PRINCIPALS

1. In our interviews, teachers and coaches told us that teachers want to be reassured that their video is theirs alone. Thus, principals need to agree that teacher video will not be shared without teacher agreement and repeat that message until teachers believe that they and they alone determine what gets recorded and what happens to the recording.

SYSTEM LEADERS AND POLICY MAKERS

1. When budgets are tight, the positions of instructional coaches are sometimes considered the easiest to cut. However, if schools want to improve, cutting coaches is short-sighted. System leaders need to look carefully at budgets to determine how funds can be found to ensure that coaches are not viewed as an add-on luxury but a permanent way for schools to establish cultures of continuous improvement.

TO SUM UP

- Coaching using video is like coaching on steroids.
- Video captures the rich complexity of the classroom.
- Instructional coaches can use video to adapt solutions to the unique challenges and opportunities each teacher experiences.
- Use of video increases trust.
- Video turns the focus of coaching away from the coach's opinions and toward what matters—students' learning and teachers' instruction
- Using video has implications for all components of coaching.
  - **Enroll.** Clarify that using video is a choice and that the teacher owns the recording and, therefore, decides how it is recorded, who sees it. and what happens to the recording.
  - **Identify.** Use video to get a clear picture of reality and use video as a point of departure for setting a goal for coaching.
  - **Explain and Model.** Consider sharing a video or videos of teachers implementing the practice to be learned.
  - **Observe.** Use the camera to record how a teacher implements a practice.
  - **Explore.** The coach and teacher should watch the video separately and then meet to determine if the goal has or has not been met and what the teacher's next action should be.

GOING DEEPER

In two previous books that discuss coaching, *Instructional Coaching* (2007) and *Unmistakable Impact* (2011), I have mentioned several books about coaching in schools, including Bloom, Castagna, Moir, and

Warren's *Blended coaching: Skills and Strategies to Support Principal Development* (2005), Costa and Garmston's *Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools* (2002), Jane Kise's *Differentiated Coaching: A Framework for Helping Teachers Change* (2006), Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison's *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-Based Coaches* (2006), Stephen G. Barkley's *Quality Teaching in a Culture of Coaching* (2010), Nancy Love's *Using Data to Improve Learning for All: A Collaborative Inquiry Approach* (2009), Lucy West and Fritz Staub's *Content-Focused Coaching* (2003), Jan Miller Burkins' *Practical Literacy Coaching* (2009), and Mare Catherine Moran's *Differentiated Literacy Coaching* (2007). Finally, *Coaching: Approaches and Perspectives* (2008), which I edited, contains chapters by several coaching authors discussing many of the coaching approaches listed here.

Additionally, three books are especially useful in explaining the practices we see instructional coaches using:

- Atul Gawande's *The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right* (2011) explains the importance of precise explanations of practices.
- Chip and Dan Heath's *Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard* (2010) provides, among other things, an excellent description of what is required to begin and change initiatives like coaching.
- Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, David Maxfield, and Ron McMillan's *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change, Second Edition* (2013) explains the importance of modeling as a part of change and learning.

REFERENCES

Barkley, S. G. (2010). *Quality teaching in a culture of coaching.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Bloom, G. S., Castagna, C. L., Moir, E., & Warren, B. (2005). *Blended coaching: Skills and strategies to support principal development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Bossidy, L., & Charan, R. (2004). *Confronting reality: Doing what matters to get things right.* New York: Random.

Burkin, J. M. (2009). *Pratical literacy coaching: A collection of tools to support your work.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Costa, A., & Garmston, R. (2002). *Cognitive coaching: A foundation for renaissance Schools* (2nd ed.). Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers

Gawande, A. (2010). *The checklist manifesto: How to get things right.* New York: Metropolitan.

Grenny, J., Patterson, K., Maxfield, D., & McMilian, R. (2013). *Influencer: The new science of leading change,* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2010). *Switch: How to change things when change is hard.* New York: Random House

Heifetz. R. A., & Linsky, M. (2002). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of leading.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press

Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. (2001). *How the way we talk can change the way we learn.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Killion, J., & Harrison, C. (2006). *Taking the lead: New roles for teachers and school-based coaches.* Oxford, OH: Learning Forward.

Kise, J. A. G. (2006). *Differentiated coaching: A framework for helping teachers change.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to improving instruction.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Knight, J. (Ed.) (2009a). *Coaching: Approaches and perspectives.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Knight, J. (20011). *Unmistakable impact: A partnership approach for dramatically improving instruction.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Knight, J. (2013). *High impact instruction: A framework for great teaching.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Lemov, D. (2010). *Teach like a champion: 49 techniques that put students on the path to college.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Liu, E. (2004). *Guiding lights: How to mentor—and find life's purpose.* New York: Ballantine Books.

Love, N. (2009). *Using data to improve learning for all: A collaborative inquiry approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Marzano, R. (2007). *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Moran, M. C. (2007). *Differentiated literacy coaching: Scaffolding for student and teacher success.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., Maxfield, D., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2008). *Influencer: The power to change anything.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

West, L., & Staub, F. (2003). *Content-focused coaching: A foundation for renaissance schools.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.