



Building Teachers' Capacity for Success: A Collaborative Approach for Coaches and School Leaders

Peter A. Hall , Alisa Simeral

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Educators know that teachers are a school's most essential strength. In *Building Teachers Capacity for Success*, authors Pete Hall (winner of the 2004 ASCD Outstanding Young Educator Award) and Alisa Simeral offer a straightforward plan to help site-based administrators and instructional coaches collaborate to bring out the best in every teacher, build a stronger and more cohesive staff, and achieve greater academic success. Their model of Strength-Based School Improvement is an alternative to a negative, deficit-approach focused on fixing what's wrong. Instead, they show school leaders how to achieve their goals by working together to maximize what's right.

Filled with clear, proven strategies and organized around two easy-to-use tools the innovative Continuum of Self-Reflection and a feedback-focused walk-through model this book offers a differentiated approach to coaching and supervision centered on identifying and nurturing teachers' individual strengths and helping them reach new levels of professional success and satisfaction. Here, you'll find front-line advice from the authors, one a principal and the other an instructional coach, on just what to look for, do, and say in order to start seeing positive results right now.

Building Teachers' Capacity for Success: A Collaborative Approach for Coaches and School Leaders Details

Date : Published December 1st 2008 by Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development

ISBN : 9781416607472

Author : Peter A. Hall , Alisa Simeral

Format : Paperback 196 pages

Genre : Leadership, Education, Nonfiction

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Jennifer says

Chapter three describes the coaches role. This is an interesting notion. The compare and contrast between coach and principal merits further investigation.

Julie Aquilina says

Nothing really groundbreaking here. It all makes sense, but is a little basic.

Spacek Kim says

The authors describe a manner in which the principal, instructional coach, and teacher can work together to improve instruction. The student benefits from teachers that are continually improving practice. In this model, the professional learning community is lead by the teacher instructional coach.

Mary Alise Herrera says

This book (and the book group I read it with) has provided a great deal of information for me to reflect on and better my practice. Written by both an instructional coach and principal, having both authors helps to understand the full picture of teacher growth and development. A great professional read!

Susan says

Pete Hall, school administrator, and Alisa Simeral, his instructional coach collaborate on this book to share how to work together to build teachers' capacity for success within the school. Hall and Simeral have developed the Continuum of Self Reflection that helps identify the "states of mind, levels of self-awareness, and phases in the self-reflective process" of teachers. The continuum is broken into four "stages". Hall is careful to note that teachers can be at more than one stage simultaneously and that the intent is to view the characteristics of the teacher and the classroom in each stage to determine what approaches will encourage deeper reflection on the part of the teacher (p. 40).

Having now worked both as a coach and an administrator, I found this book quite interesting. I found myself reflecting on my own coaching responses to teachers and wishing I had had a book like this earlier in that phase of my career upon which to reflect and act. And, now, as an administrator it allowed me to think about my role in the evaluation/professional development process.

Hall suggests that administrators should spend the bulk of their time in what Stephen Covey refers to as "Quadrant II" work--the activities that relate to the results that cultivate the school vision, building relationships with staff and engaging in professional development. These tasks are those that are ultimately most important with it comes to the development and growth within a school. Hall breaks this into four facets: individual relationships, daily/intentional supervision, reflective feedback and development/evaluation. Within the daily/intentional supervision, he suggests that we need to do "rounds" -- 30 - 45 second walk-throughs during the day to gather data and trends, uncover tendencies and reveal strengths and areas of concerns. Secondly he suggests that the administrator is also doing "Hall Walk-Throughs" which are 5 - 15 minutes with immediate written feedback.

I can see the value of this intentional leadership and managing by walking around. Hall suggests two sets of "rounds" daily for up to 30 minutes and three to five "Walk-Throughs" where you invest another 45 - 75 minutes. He then spends time talking about the kinds of feedback he is giving teachers based on their stage on the continuum.

As I consider the total picture, I was especially moved by Hall's story of Mrs. Walstad, a teacher he evaluated during his first year as an administrator. He notes that he had observed less than 1 percent of her teaching time and yet was evaluating her on it. Then he poses the following reflective questions: "Was Mrs. Walstad a better teacher for having gone through the process?" and "Was the written documentation really a reflection of the work she had done over the school year?" It does seem to me that we could raise the awareness of teachers by sending them the clear message that they are valued, they are professional and they matter just by tweaking the way we provide feedback.

Monique says

Interesting. Gave some concrete ideas for working with teachers at any stage. Very helpful.

Carrie Zimmer says

Good strategies for both coaches and administrators for working with teachers at all levels of practice.

Meagan says

This book provides a good overview of teachers' levels of growth within their profession and methods for instructional coaches and administrators to help teachers at each level of growth. I appreciated the clear writing and helpful examples, as well as the inclusion of practical forms and charts that coaches can use on a daily basis. I am looking forward to using the suggestions and tools in my coaching this school year.

This text should be read by all people who are in leadership in elementary and secondary schools.

Kristine says

This approach focuses on teacher self-reflection and changing teacher behavior in order to increase student achievement as opposed to other approaches that focus first on student achievement that then results in a change in teacher behavior due to strategies implemented.
