

Summer 1990

A Clinical Supervision and Peer Coaching Model to Improve Instructional Effectiveness

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**A CLINICAL SUPERVISION AND PEER COACHING MODEL
TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

by

Arthur Lee Galloway

July, 1990

The interrelationship of clinical supervision and peer coaching strategies to improve instructional effectiveness were studied. A peer coaching in-service program, detailing coaching procedures and activities, was developed and implemented in the social studies department at Mount Si High School. The results of the program showed that peer coaching can be utilized by teachers to assume greater leadership and responsibility in the area of instructional improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Jack McPherson for his leadership, knowledge, and thoroughness in the preparation of this paper. Special thanks go to Dr. Larry Wald and Dr. Tim Young for their help in being on my committee.

To Christine, my wife, thank goodness we were in this together.

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CHAPTER 1

Background of the Study

Introduction

An alternative strategy to clinical supervision is "peer coaching": teachers meet in small groups and observe each other's classrooms to get feedback about their own teaching behaviors, experiment with new improved techniques and get support they need . . . recent studies on the effectiveness of in-service education . . . have stressed the idea that people develop mastery and application best when they are placed in coaching situations. (7:13)

In the above statement, C.L. Hutchins of the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory has suggested that, a) the strategies of clinical supervision and peer coaching can be employed to improve instruction, and b) there is an important interrelationship between clinical supervision and peer coaching that could be utilized by teachers to assume greater leadership and responsibility in the area of instructional improvement.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to develop an in-service program to assist school administrators and designated faculty members in planning and implementing a clinical supervision and peer coaching model to improve instructional effectiveness.

The in-service program produced as a result of this project has detailed peer coaching procedures and activities utilized at Mount Si High School, Snoqualmie, Washington.

Significance of the Project

There is much in the current literature and research to support the assumption that improving instruction is paramount to developing excellence in the school system, and much attention has focused on the strategies of clinical supervision and peer coaching as an important means for assuring instructional improvement. Basic components of the clinical supervision instructional evaluation method including the pre-observation conference, observation, reflection, and post-observation conference, can be incorporated into

a peer coaching model used by teacher colleagues to improve the effectiveness of each other's teaching.

Limitations of the Project

For the purpose of conciseness and focus, it was necessary to set the following project limitations:

1. Scope: The project study is confined to Mount Si High School, a high school of 800 students and 50 certificated staff in the Snoqualmie Valley School District.

2. Participants: The project study is limited to six (6) social studies department faculty members at Mount Si High School.

3. Literature and Research: The preponderance of literature summarized in Chapter 2 is limited to research current within the past ten years.

4. Time: The project study focuses on the first year (i.e., 1989-90) of a proposed, ongoing plan to implement a peer coaching model in the Snoqualmie Valley School District.

Definition of Terms

Significant terms used in the context of this study have been defined as follows:

1. Clinical Supervision: An interactive, democratic teacher-centered supervisory style. It includes three phases: a) planning conference, b) classroom observation, and c) feedback conference.

2. Collegiality: An environment in which the norm or expectation is that the staff will work cooperatively to exchange information and support one another to improve instruction.

3. Empowerment: To give power or authority to authorize, (i.e., peer coaching gives teachers a larger role in assessing effective instruction).

4. Evaluation: A procedure by an administrator to evaluate a teacher's classroom performance. State law requires each teacher be evaluated within strict time limits and criteria.

5. Peer Coaching: A process that allows teachers to observe each other's instruction and to work together to improve their effectiveness.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

Introduction of Related Research

The review of literature summarized in Chapter 2 has been organized to address:

1. Current research related to the purpose and value of clinical supervision and peer coaching, and their relationship to instructional effectiveness.
2. The basic assumption that instructional improvement strategies inherent in peer coaching can be utilized by teachers to assume greater leadership and responsibilities.

The Purpose and Value of Clinical Supervision

According to Kimball, most teachers do not enjoy being evaluated, and many teachers have reacted negatively to supervision and do not improve their instruction. There have been some exceptions, but in

a study of 2,500 teachers, Kimball found that only 1.5 percent thought their supervisor provided helpful ideas for improving instruction (10:80).

Cogan, after having conducted several studies of teacher supervision, concluded that "psychologically, supervision is almost inevitably viewed as an active threat to the teacher, possibly endangering his professional standing and undermining his confidence" (4:84).

Other teachers may not dislike supervision per se, but they may dislike the style of supervision, not supervision itself. However, teachers may react positively to a supervisory style that more closely fits their needs and goals. Clinical supervision has been based on this premise.

The label "clinical supervision" was based on the methods developed by Morris Cogan and others at the Harvard School of Education in the 1960s. The term "clinical" was meant to suggest a face-to-face relationship between teacher and supervisor, with a focus on the teacher's actual behavior in the classroom (4:11).

Squires, Huitt, and Segars have found that "having an agreed-on format for individual supervision provides structure and safety for reducing conflicts in the supervisory relationship" (20:28). The traditional

clinical supervision style has consisted of three phases. The first phase has involved a planning conference which has provided the teacher a chance to give his/her own goals for improvement. The planning conference may also end with a cooperative decision made by both the teacher and supervisor. In phase two the supervisor has observed the teacher and recorded agreed upon data. The final phase has allowed for a feedback conference which gives the teacher and supervisor the chance to review observation data and has permitted the supervisor to help the teacher evaluate his/her own effectiveness (1:10-14).

The first phase of clinical supervision, the pre-observation conference, has allowed both observer, and observee to develop equal responsibility for the direction of the discussion and understanding of the agreement. Both parties must be comfortable with the pre-observation conference discussion. The pre-observation conference discussion has typically produced a definition of the objective for the observation and method to be used to collect the information. The observee has been primarily responsible for the direction and intensity of this discussion, but both parties share equal responsibility for having developed a clear understanding of the agreement. The observer must be cognizant of what and

how to deliver the observee's request for information and feedback so that if the request was not met, the observer will want to negotiate or limit the observation. Both observer and observee must be comfortable with the results of the pre-observation conference discussion.

The main goal of the classroom observation phase has been to observe and record behavior of the teacher and the students. It is important that the observer record only those behaviors that were agreed upon in the pre-observation conference. The observer must have a repertoire of observational techniques and recording strategies for the development of objective data that will be used in the feedback conference (20:29).

"Selective verbatim" (1:81), which is a word-for-word record of particular verbal statements and interactions is one method for recording objective data on teacher questioning skills, teacher feedback, teacher directions, and structuring statements. Seating charts can also be used to collect objective data on time on task, verbal flow and movement patterns. Use of the wide-focus strategy is yet another observational technique for collecting objective data. Anecdotal records can be used to focus on the big picture when the teacher is unable to decide on behaviors s/he wants observed. Videotaping the lesson

enables the observer and observee to view the lesson and evaluate its effectiveness at a later time (1:119-123).

The post-observation phase has provided an opportunity for the observer and observee to work together analyzing the data and coming to a consensus on what happened during the lesson. The observer needs to probe for the teacher's feelings about the lesson by asking which student behaviors support those feelings. The teacher should also be asked to recall the teacher behavior and strategies used during the lesson. A review of observational data forms the basis for a discussion of comparisons of teacher behavior performed and teacher behavior planned as well as an opportunity for the teacher to explain why student behaviors were not performed. Suggestions for alternative strategies to improve the lesson can be made by either the observer or observee. At the conclusion of the post-observation conference, the teacher should have the opportunity to evaluate the conference and the coach's conference skills (20:29).

Acheson and Gall have listed five goals for clinical supervision.

1. To provide teachers with objective feedback on the current state of their instruction.
2. To diagnose and solve instructional problems.

3. To help teachers develop skill in using instructional strategies.

4. To evaluate teachers for promotion, tenure, or other decisions.

5. To help teachers develop a positive attitude about continuous professional development. (1:17)

"Teachers welcome professional suggestions about improving their work, but rarely receive them" (10:42). Teachers typically have been evaluated once or twice a year with an administrator making general comments that have not improved a teacher's effectiveness. Effective supervision that improves instruction must focus on specific skills, followed by several observations and the opportunity to meet and discuss those observations and to collaboratively develop a goal for growth. Principals need to be available and approachable to help teachers without making them feel inadequate (10:42).

Research has provided indirect evidence of a link between clinical supervision and teacher effectiveness and clinical supervision and student performance (1:24).

Literature on the Purpose and Value of Peer Coaching

One of the most important aspects of the peer coaching process has allowed teachers to work together

collaboratively towards a goal of improving instruction. Many staff development activities that are aimed at improving instruction have often been one-shot, quick-fix solutions. After a short one-hour or one-day in-service on an important topic, teachers are expected to improve immediately. Initially, staff have been enthused, but commitment fades rapidly as the teachers move back to their classrooms, face the daily routine and have little time or support for thinking about or practicing new skills or techniques. Peer coaching has offered an alternative to this type of in-service. In models of peer coaching, teachers have met in small teams and observed each other's teaching strategies, practiced new methods of instruction and worked together to develop the means to improve and to lend support (7:13).

Peer coaching has consisted of a series of steps for making substantial change in teaching practice. According to Showers, "Coaching appears to be most appropriate when teachers . . . require new ways of thinking about learning objectives and the process by which students achieve them." Showers has further contended that peer coaching helps to achieve this, and is vital to in-service training of teachers (18:40-43). Recent research related to in-service has shown that

teachers have developed mastery and application of new skills best when they are placed in coaching situations; when the traditional lecture approach of in-service was used, application was minimal (15:59).

The process of organizing peer coaching teams should start during the in-service designed to improve the knowledge and mastery of new teaching or curriculum development skills. This process has allowed the teams to work collaboratively to learn and practice the new skills while preparing to provide feedback during the coaching process. This process has provided a continuous cycle of in-service, practice, observation, and feedback.

Peer coaching has utilized the clinical supervision cycle of pre-conference, observation, and post-conference. Appointments for the observation and post-conference should be set during the pre-observation conference. In addition, the team must develop a clear understanding of the specific teaching behaviors or actions that must take place to insure implementation (18:44). The teacher-coach team must be clear on the intended outcome or purpose of that lesson. An important element of the teacher-coach discussion is an understanding of the behaviors the observer will compile (6:31). Individual teams should have developed a checklist, depending on

the type of skills identified. The advantages of a checklist have provided the teacher learning the new skill a clear expectation of intended outcomes, while providing the coach or observer with a clear objective list of thing to record.

At the time the teams are prepared, the teacher that has been scheduled to observe does so. The student should also be prepared for the observation by being instructed that another teacher will be observing in order to help develop lessons that may improve the students' learning, and that the teacher and observer have worked on a new system of teachers teaming together to help them develop these new lessons to facilitate the students becoming quickly acclimated to observers in the classroom, the students should be told not to pay attention to the observer (2:41). During the observation phase, the observer can record only information that was agreed to in the pre-conference. A checklist, chart, videotape, or written summary have been used to document observations. Value judgments made by the observer must be avoided so that the feedback can be as objective as possible. This objectivity allows the observation to remain depersonalized so that the teacher does not become defensive during the post-conference. The more the team has agreed on the focus of observation,

the less intimidating it is for the coaching team (7:16).

— In the next phase, the teacher and the observer have reflected on the observation. Most teachers have been unable to make profound changes in their instruction because they have not been provided with the time and skills to become reflective on their teaching. When teachers have developed reflection skills, they can better understand the disparity between the teaching methods that were used and teaching methods that are most effective. Teachers need time to develop reflective skills, but most teacher schedules do not allow for time. This time needs to be scheduled into a successful peer coaching program (23:29).

The feedback or post-observation conference should be scheduled as quickly after the reflection time as possible. During this meeting, the feedback must be objective. The observee should lead the discussion so the coach does not project his/her ideas on the teacher (18:41). The coach may want to begin by asking the teacher, how the lesson went and then sharing recoded information (7:16-17). Following this opener the coach should discuss the checklist or other recording instrument and allow the teacher to ask questions regarding the documented information. As the checklist

was discussed, the teacher should ask informational, not judgmental questions. At the conclusion of the post-conference, the coach can be asked if there were any other observations that were relevant (18:41, 6:32).

It is critical that one person in each building has taken responsibility for implementing a coaching program. Monitoring and adjusting the process will insure continued success of this phase of a staff development program. The Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory has suggested four points to consider when setting up the coaching teams:

1. Coaching teams should form naturally from small groups of people who like and respect each other.

2. People who do not want to participate should not be forced to participate although they should be encouraged to sit in on a team if the team is comfortable having them do so.

3. Specific expectations about the number of observations and coaching follow-up sessions should be established at the beginning.

4. Specific times should be set aside for the observation and follow-up sessions.
(7:19)

During the in-service, coaching skills have been taught during the practice of new instructional skills identified for improvement. The teachers' in-service should concurrently have taught the new instructional skill and the correct method of collecting objective

feedback for that skill (2:41). Most teachers will need to model how to share objective, nonjudgmental feedback, and they should view and participate in examples of the steps of the feedback process (5:2). As the teachers practice the new instructional skills, they will be observed and later will meet in the coaching teams to provide feedback on each other's practice lessons. This procedure has helped to teach new teaching skills and concurrently train the coaches for the initial observations and post-conferences (6:33).

Teachers need to meet for a follow-up session several weeks after the initial in-service meeting. The meeting allows teachers to discuss progress in the first cycle of peer coaching, to share successes, to ask for suggestions and to seek assistance solving problems. The leader of this phase continued modeling a collegial dialogue aimed at clarifying and describing the new teaching skills and improving the skills of the coaches (2:42). The training of the coaching skills has followed the same continuous cycle as the coaching cycle between teachers. Recurrent sessions were scheduled to review coaching skills throughout the process (5:8-9).

Many teachers have indicated that they feel very isolated and do not have others to turn to for sharing of ideas (21:319). Most teachers lack the time to meet

with their colleagues to discuss new teaching strategies. When they do, it is a short, hurried meeting without structure or follow-up (11:78-79). This isolation may reduce teachers' abilities to adequately instruct students. Peer coaching has provided a natural sequence of teacher interaction that develops a sense of collegiality within a school. Within such a framework, teachers realize that they are not alone in their problems and needs. Learning new teaching strategies is difficult and demanding. Teachers need the support and knowledge that peer coaching provides (5:1). Effective staff interaction will continue to increase as teachers understand that they can accomplish more by working together in a peer coaching role (12:28; 8:27). Similarly, research has shown that students benefit academically when their teachers share ideas, cooperate in activities, and assist one another's intellectual growth (22:67).

The research concluded that the role of the principal was paramount in developing a working and continuing peer coaching program. The principal needs to take responsibility to build coalitions and to plant ideas with key staff and then slowly build support in order to create a sense of collegiality in the building (19:314). "Principals must work to establish new norms

that reward collegial planning, public teaching, constructive feedback and experimentation," (18:43) says Showers. The principal was most successful in this task when required to model those processes by working with staff, offering suggestions or working in a coaching situation with other administrators. Teachers need to be rewarded and recognized for their work, and others in the community should be informed of the peer coaching program. Those who have taken a risk need support from the principal. This support could take the form of communications to all involved that the program will necessitate continued monitoring and adjustments (18:48). In addition, administrators need to schedule time for teachers to work together, to develop the timelines for coaching and to see that classes are taught during the observations and conferences. It has been suggested that the principal refrain from making judgmental suggestions about teaching skills within the peer coaching procedure. The most successful peer coaching program will be one that the teachers have sustained themselves (17:70).

Peer Coaching Improves Instruction

Research gave supporting evidence that in-service training in peer coaching improved collegiality, and transferred readily to the classroom to improve teaching effectiveness. Teachers not only used these new strategies in their classrooms, but they used them more often and more appropriately than uncoached teachers who learned the same strategies (5:8). Teachers exhibited improved use of new teaching skills over time and used these skills more effectively (18:44). The teachers better met their professional needs, and coaching fostered greater professional growth than did other kinds of in-service training. The program motivated teachers to examine their teaching and to participate in observations that were valuable learning experiences (15:58-59).

A peer coaching trainer provided the following teacher observation about peer coaching.

As one of the "oldies but goodies," and soon to leave the classroom, how truly wondrous to have had the opportunity to end it all on such a high note. I have had to sharpen my skills, pay more attention to my techniques, check those lesson plans, and work harder to be a good educator. When a teacher has earned respect from his/her peers and can share concerns with fellow teachers; can sit

and listen/watch/record in another classroom for a specific reason; and can truly affect the teaching of others, then one can smile a lot. I think I have learned to eliminate the trivial and focus on, "Am I doing what I say I am doing, and could I do it better?" (17:70-71)

Implementation of Peer Coaching program has produced effects beyond merely improving teacher effectiveness. The development new school norms for a cycle of renewal allows for any kind of change, whether developing new curricula or buildingwide policy changes. When collegial bonds are developed, schools can progress toward change in any direction that is appropriate. Mary Paquette observed that "Nothing in a school is more powerful than teachers who have achieved agreement on what is truly important" (16:39).

Summary

The review of literature presented in Chapter 2 focused on clinical supervision and peer coaching and their relationship to instructional effectiveness. The research surveyed also served to support the basic assumption that instructional improvement strategies inherent in clinical supervision and peer coaching can be utilized by teachers to assume greater leadership to improve instructional improvement.

CHAPTER 3

Procedures of the Study

Need

As the Snoqualmie Valley School District has grown in recent years from a small, rural district to a dynamic suburban community, programs for teacher in-service, evaluation, supervision, and for the improvement of instruction which had in prior years evolved informally and piecemeal, now require focused comprehensive planning.

The writer, a teacher in the Snoqualmie Valley School District 11 years, agreed that the need existed for a comprehensive teacher in-service that would utilize the peer coaching process. Peer coaching in-service would insure that new instructional skills and knowledge could be used and refined in the district schools. These skills would become the norm for the delivered knowledge to students, and teachers would be empowered to develop ownership in improving their instructional skills.

Preparation of Staff

During 1989 the author elected to meet with the Mount Si High School administration to propose the implementation of a peer coaching program at the high school. The administration was provided with an overview of the essential aspects of peer coaching. All administrators concurred with the importance of experimentation and with the development of a plan to provide a program to improve instruction. During the departmental goal-setting workshop that was subsequently scheduled prior to the 1989-90 school year, the Mount Si High School social studies department was also provided an overview of peer coaching. The decision was then made by the department to make the implementation of a peer coaching program one of its top priorities.

Implementation

The Peer Coaching project implemented at Mount Si High School during the 1989-90 school year was planned in two phases. The first phase involved in-service that developed trust, knowledge of peer coaching, and teacher strategies. Trust and coaching skills further

developed trust, knowledge of peer coaching, and teaching strategies. Trust and coaching skills were further developed by means of several nonjudgmental observations with a simple worksheet to record information. The observers used a "wide lens" (1:119) technique to collect data. Subsequent in-service of the social studies faculty provided a solid understanding of peer coaching, including its guidelines, structure and how it differed from evaluation.

In phase two the participants completed the entire coaching cycle, which included a pre-observation meeting, observation, reflection, and post-conference. The teachers were further coached in the skills required in each of these four steps. After approximately two weeks, the department met again to share coaching experiences and reviewed its knowledge of the peer coaching procedures. Participants were also provided with increasingly sophisticated methods of collecting data in a colleague's classroom, and with necessary communication and feedback skills for conferencing. After this meeting the participants continued the ongoing peer coaching cycle by alternating roles as coach and teacher. In this manner, initial phases of a peer coaching project were implemented.

A multi-year, cyclical peer coaching program was now developed for participating staff. The program designed to implement the peer coaching program at Mount Si High School, and which is the subject of this study, is presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

The Project

This chapter includes the staff in-service workbook that was developed to implement a multi-year peer coaching program at Mount Si High School. The workbook includes an overview of the program and a compilation of activities designed to improve teacher instruction through the four-step, peer coaching cycle of pre-conference, observation, reflection, and post-conference.

Accordingly, the remainder of Chapter 4 has been organized to provide an overview of the essential elements of peer coaching and to reflect the four steps in the peer coaching cycle, including; a) pre-observation conference, b) observation, c) reflection, and d) post-conference.

PEER COACHING

MOUNT SI HIGH SCHOOL

SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON

BY

ART GALLOWAY

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1. Overview of the Essential Elements of Peer Coaching

In-Service Handout #1: Snoqualmie Valley Peer Coaching Program Overview

Peer Coaching Model: Peer Coaching is, Peer Coaching is Not

Peer Coaching Diagram: An Old Dance With New Steps (Steps 1-4)

Peer Coaching Cycle Diagram: The Coaching Process

In-Service Handout #3: Peer Coaching Process

In-Service Handout #4: Some Distinctions Between Coaching and Evaluation

Snoqualmie Valley Peer Coaching

Program Overview

The model is based on a blending of coaching models and strategies to best fit the needs of the Snoqualmie Valley School District's peer coaching program. The program is a multi-year program which is voluntary, involves extensive training, and should provide release time with substitutes so that participants can conference, observe in each other's classrooms, and offer other forms of collegial support.

Peer Coaching: Partners in Growth

Vision Statement

Snoqualmie Valley District's commitment to improving instruction frames the peer coaching program. Through collaboration and collegial support, teachers bring superior instruction to the classroom on a consistent basis. Peer coaching offers teachers an opportunity to explore, share, and enhance their professional skills.

An effective peer coaching program will result in:

1. Increased professional trust across the district.
2. The generation of new curriculum and instructional ideas.
3. The transfer of new skills and strategies from awareness to mastery.
4. Enhanced professional satisfaction.

Program Description

Essential aspects of the program include:

1. Building Peer Coaching Leaders: Each building has identified a staff member who is directly involved in peer coaching to act as their building peer coaching leader. The primary function is to facilitate peer

coaching in the building. Beyond this responsibility he may serve as a resource for planning and delivering building staff development. This group should meet with the Director of Staff Development regularly for additional training and to give input regarding peer coaching and/or the entire staff development program.

Training

Delivered over three years, the training is designed to meet four main goals:

1. To promote teaming between the participants at each site.
2. To provide a solid understanding of peer coaching--its guidelines.
3. To provide participants with increasingly sophisticated methods of collecting data in a colleague's classroom.
4. To provide the necessary communication and feedback skills for conferencing.

This training moves from simple strategies to instructional checklists to narrative data collection. Training is delivered over time, both at the district and building level, and may be available for college credit or clock hours.

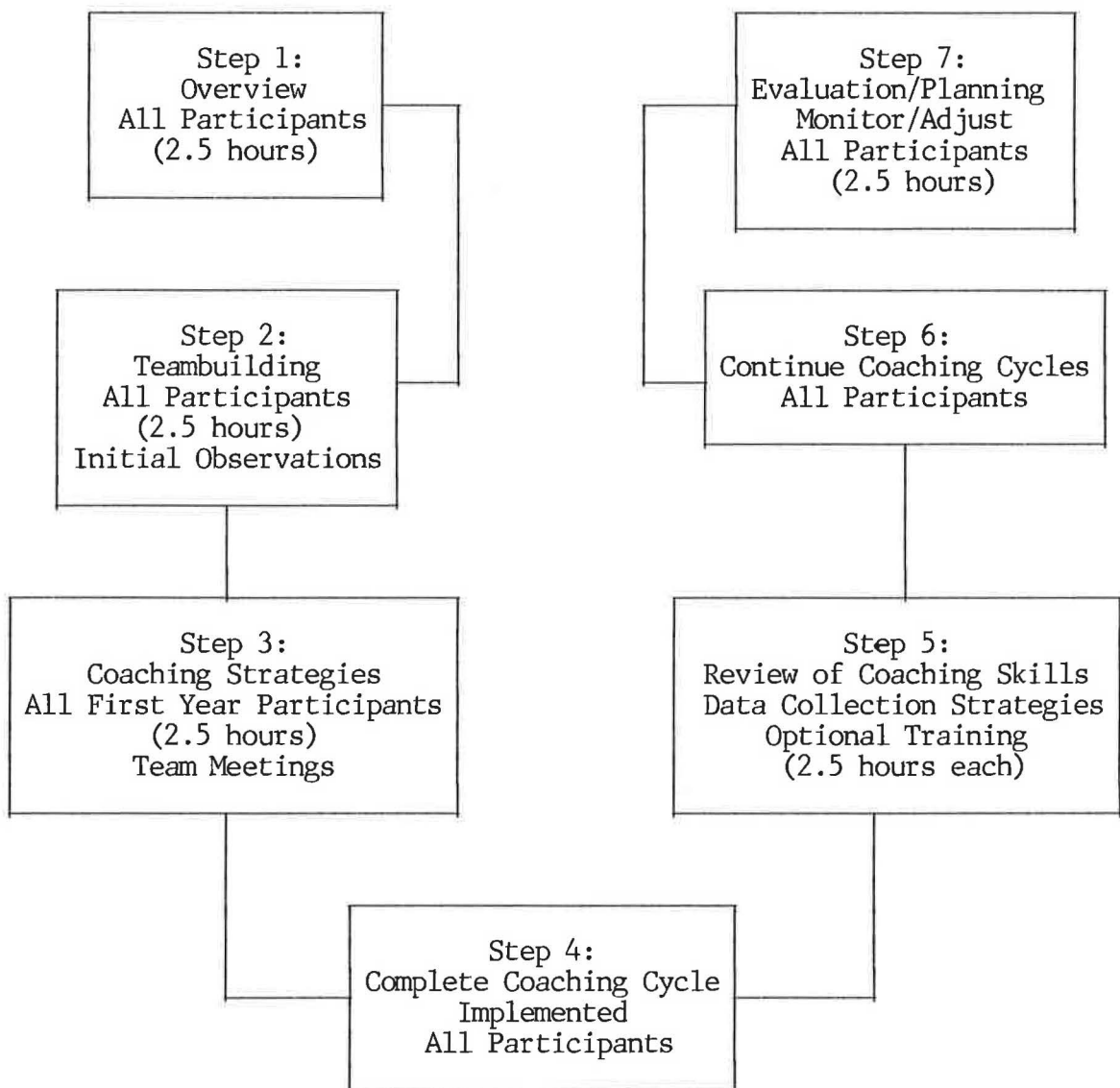
Release Time

Each participant is provided with a minimum of six opportunities to observe in a colleague's classroom, conference, and plan. Substitutes should be provided. We hope that many teachers go beyond this minimum and voluntarily use their own planning time for additional coaching opportunities.

Voluntary Program

Participation in this project is totally voluntary, both for buildings and individual staff. We recognize that collegial support is a significant cultural change and that such change must be allowed to take place over time, with an ongoing support, and full ownership of the participants. As the program continues and the number of staff involved increases, we are comfortable that collegial support and peer coaching will become the cultural norm in the Snoqualmie Valley School District.

**PEER COACHING:
TEACHERS COACHING TEACHERS**



PEER COACHING IS:

A positive, growth-evoking process between two peers in which:

1. Previously agreed upon criteria are observed.
2. Technical feedback is given by the observer.
3. Judgments are not passed by the observer.

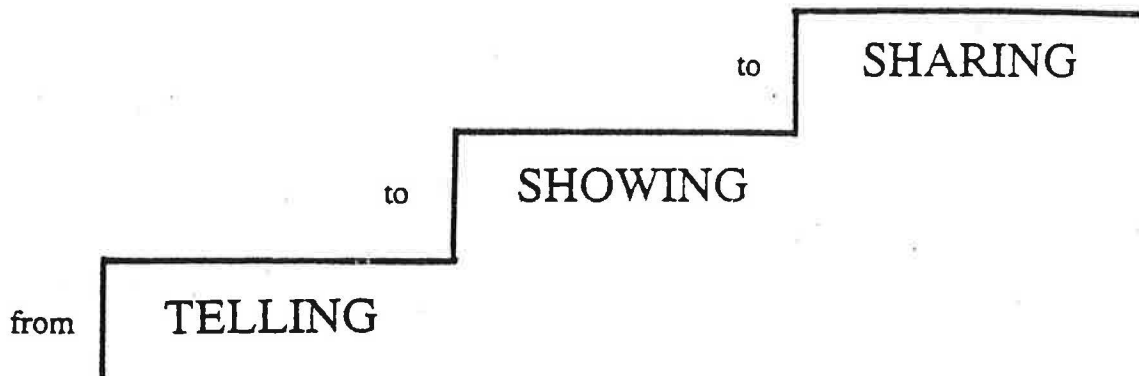
PEER COACHING IS NOT:**What It Is . . . What It Isn't**

1. Collegial Not Competitive
2. Professional Not Social
3. Specific Not General
4. Confidential Not Public
5. Helping Not Evaluating
6. Dynamic Not Static
7. Ambitious and Demanding Not Easy and Casual

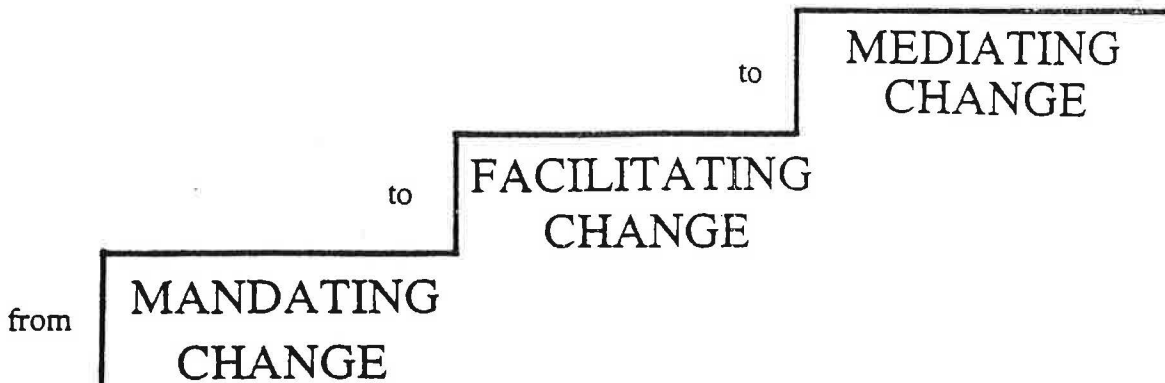
**PEER COACHING DEMANDS DISCIPLINE, COMMITMENT, AND
COURAGE FROM BOTH TEACHER AND COACH**

AN OLD DANCE WITH NEW STEPS

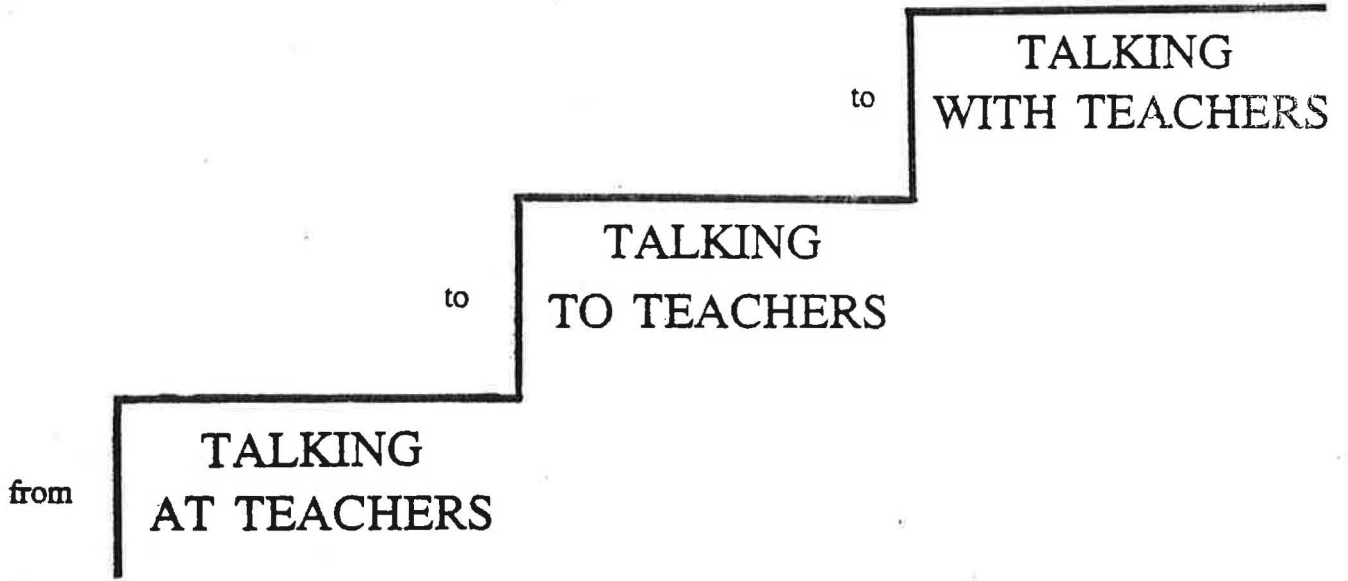
Step 1



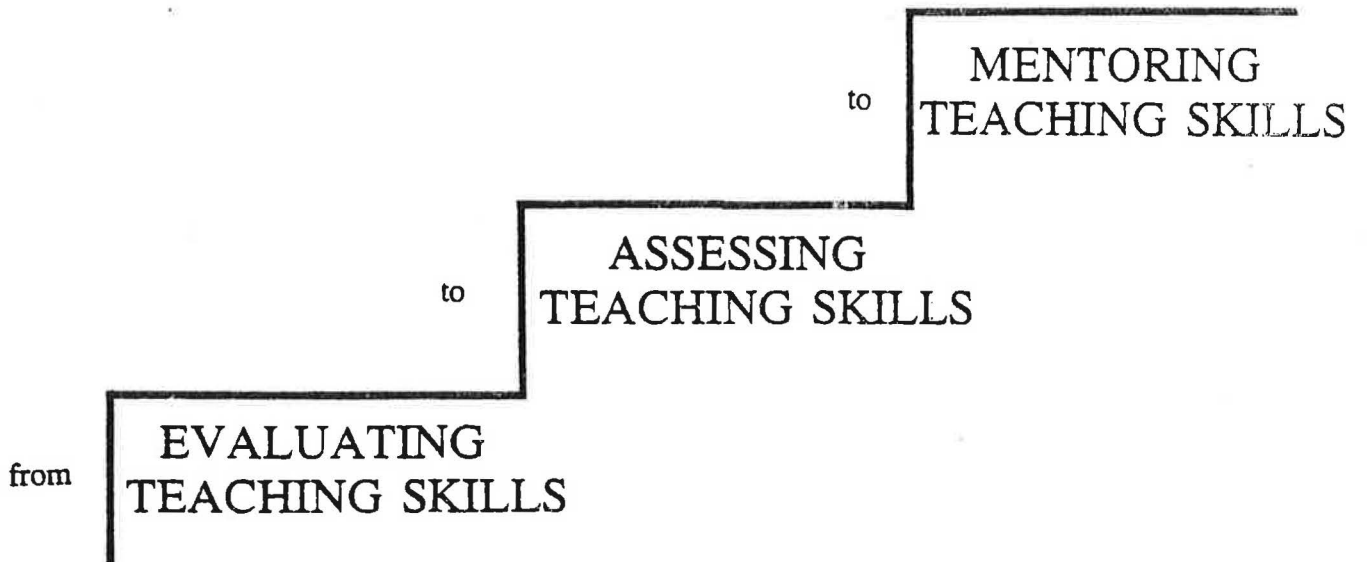
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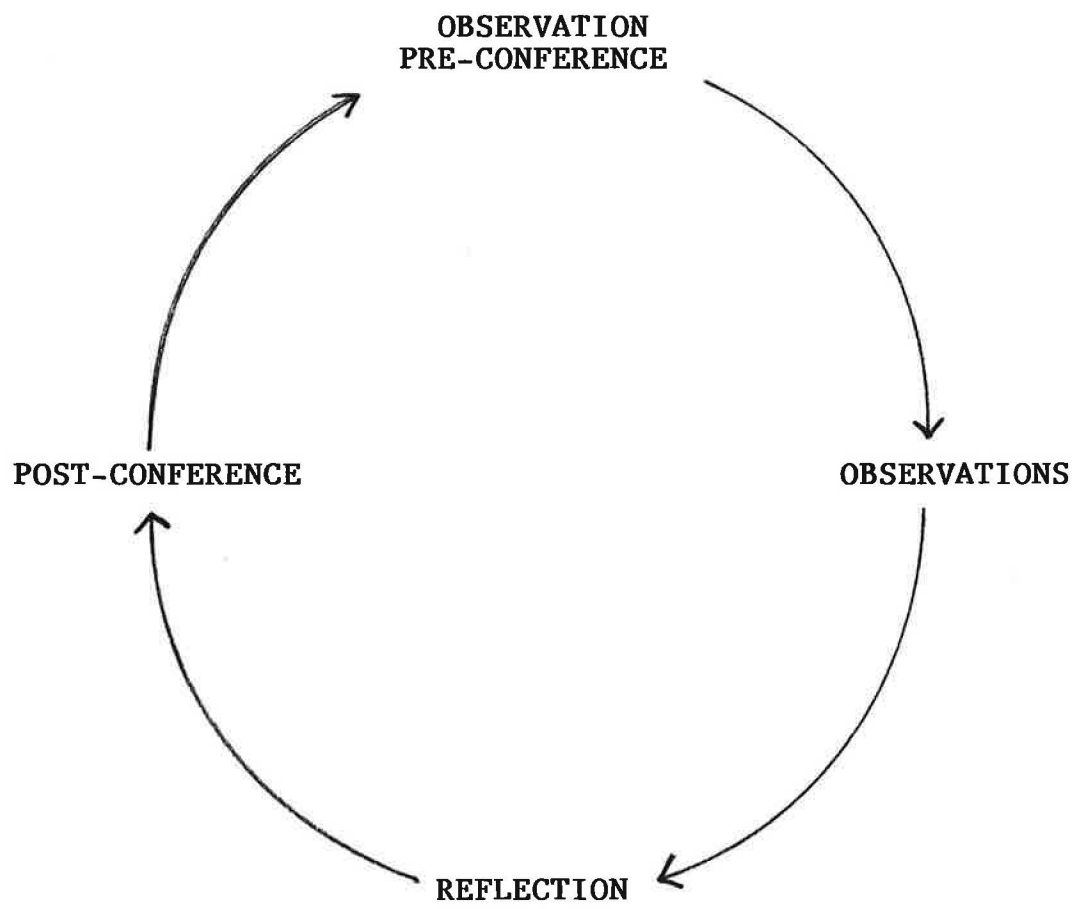
Step 3



Step 4



THE COACHING PROCESS



THE COACHING PROCESS

What is Coaching?

Coaching is a form of on-site faculty development. It is designed to improve the instructional skills of teachers through a process of sharing, observing, modeling, and conferencing.

Why?

Research on coaching and informal talks with teachers have indicated that coaching is an extremely successful technique in helping teachers acquire new teaching behaviors. Research by the developer of coaching (Showers) has found that not only are teachers able to acquire new teaching skills but that coached teachers use the new techniques more skillfully, appropriately, more frequently, and with greater retention than uncoached teachers. Teachers who have been involved with effective coaching projects have indicated that they prefer this method of staff development over other methods because it makes them feel good about themselves and other educators.

How Does It Work?

Coaching requires that educators work collaboratively. It is a one-on-one approach to improving instructional skills. The coach talks with the teacher in need of changing a teaching behavior, they decide together what they will focus upon, the coach observes the teacher, records what he/she observes, and meets with the teacher to discuss the observations and changes that need to be made. The coach may also model a teaching behavior or continue observing the teacher until the skill is mastered.

Why Does it Work?

Teachers are in control of what they do best--helping people to become more educated, more skillful, more able to function effectively in their work. Coaching allows teachers to be experts in their fields and have a voice in the instructional program. As teachers begin working with each other to improve instruction in their schools, they discover the power of ownership of the instructional program. This ownership of instruction is central to effective teaching and schools.

What are the Results?

Teachers feel empowered by their contributions to each other. Teachers attain skills they would never attain under other means of in-service. Teacher morale is heightened. Instructional programs improve.

Why?

Teachers have ownership of the instructional program. In talking about instruction and sharing experiences with each other, they build a spirit of cooperation and a heightened sense of how much impact they have on the learning of others as well as the school program. Because they are working together to improve instruction, they do not feel alone or overwhelmed by learning new teaching behaviors.

PEER COACHING PROCESS**Readiness****Receive Training****Be Clear on Process****Establish Trust****Pre-Conference****Agree on Roles****Agree on Specifics****Agree on Criteria****Agree on Format****Observation****Honor Agreement****Collect Objective Data****Reflect****Post-Conference****Give Feedback****Focus****Problem Solve (if invited)****Celebrate**

**Some Distinctions Between
Coaching and Evaluation**

	<u>Coaching</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
Responsibility	Colleague/Peer	Administrator/ Superior
Timing	Formative Throughout year	Summative Deadline set by district
Purposes	Cyclical Trust Building Learn more about teaching Develop teacher autonomy	Terminal Judgment of effective performance
Sources of Criteria	Teacher	Set by policy
Use of Data Collected	Returned to Teacher	Placed in personnel file
Topics Covered	Classroom interaction: instruction, student learning, individual student behaviors, teacher behaviors	Professional performance, participation on school committees and school events, attendance, grooming, punctuality, etc.
Value Judgments	Made by teacher	Made by administrator/supervisor
Role of Observer	Directed by teacher	Determined by supervisor

2. Phase 1, Peer Coaching Cycle: Essential Elements of the Pre-Observation Conference

In-Service Handout #5: Negotiating an Agreement for an Observation

In-Service Handout #6: Pre-Observation Conference Focus

In-Service Handout #7: What's Worth Coaching

Negotiating an Agreement for an Observation

Purpose of the Pre-Observation Conference

Both the observer and the person to be observed share equal responsibility for the direction of this discussion and understanding of agreement. Both observer and receiver must be comfortable with the results of the pre-conference discussion.

The pre-conference must define the objective, specify what to look for, focus on how to collect the information, clarify what is to be done, and limit the amount to be done.

Pre-Observation Discussion

Define the objective for the observation and the method to be used to collect the information.

Although the person to be observed is primarily responsible for the direction and intensity of this discussion, both parties share equal responsibility for developing a clear understanding of the agreement.

The observer must commit to knowing what and how to deliver the receiver's request for information and feedback. If the request cannot be met, the observer will want to renegotiate or limit the observation.

Both observer and receiver must be comfortable with the result of the pre-observation discussion.

Define: Define the objective for the observation and the method to be used to collect the information.

Specify: What do I want you to look for during this observation? This is what I am going to do, why it is important, and how it will look when it is happening.

Focus: How will this information be collected and what specific feedback is being requested? Is there an objective way we can collect this information?

Clarify: Active listening. Is this what you want me to look for during the observation? What are some examples of what you will be doing? Do you understand what I am asking you to look for and how you will collect the information?

Limit: Is this too much to look for during this observation? Do I understand what I will be "capturing" or recording?

PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE FOCUS

1. **Clarify Goals And Objectives Of The Lesson**
 - a. What is the intent of the lesson?
 - b. What problem(s) are you anticipating?
 - c. What will students learn from the activities?
 - d. What behaviors are you looking for in students if they are successful in achieving the goals or objectives of this lesson?

2. **Decide On The Teaching Behavior(s)**
 - a. What strategies will you be using?
 - b. In what order?
 - c. What are you expecting students to do in each of the activities?

3. **Determine Observation Instruments**
 - a. Instruments are based on focused teaching behaviors.
 - b. Keep them simple, specific, and focused on teaching behavior.

4. **Clarify What Is To Be Observed**
 - a. What exactly do you want me to look for?
 - b. Is there anything you want me to be doing while the lesson is in progress?

WHAT'S WORTH COACHING?

1. Appropriate use of media during class presentations.
2. Use of praise and criticism.
3. Use of higher-order teaching strategies.
4. On-task behavior of students (teachers).
5. Monitoring small groups.
6. Large group discussion techniques.
7. Increasing student participation.
8. Clear, precise direction giving.
9. Task-oriented, businesslike behavior of teachers.
10. Set induction and closure.
11. Transitions and transition activities.
12. Varying instructional technique and activities.
13. Motivational activities.
14. Techniques for accepting student ideas.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.

3. Phase 2, Peer Coaching Cycle: The Essential Elements of Observation

In-Service Handout #8: Peer Coaching Responsibilities

In-Service Handout #9: Initial Peer Coaching Observation Record Sheet

In-Service Handout #10: Observation of Teaching Performance Record Sheet

In-Service Handout #11: Summary of Observations Record Sheet

Peer Coaching Responsibilities

Coaching means that at least two people are practicing a difficult craft together . . . so as to enable both to increase their power and maintain an equal relationship in the bargain.

Responsibilities of the Observer:

1. To meet the agreement.
2. To "stick" to the agreement.
3. To participate fully in the post conference.
4. To be an active listener.
5. To support the receiver's recall and analysis with input.
6. To question with clarity.

Responsibilities of the Receiver:

1. To have conducted a practice of the skills indicated by the negotiated agreement during the observation.
2. To "stick" to the agreement.
3. To participate fully in the post conference.
4. To be willing to try alternatives.
5. To ask questions of the observer for clarity and understanding.
6. To accept feedback.

Initial Peer Coaching Observation

Information Form

Teacher's Name: _____

Observation Period: _____

Observation Date: _____

Observer's Name: _____

Post-Observation Meeting Date and Time: _____

You observed on the above date and time as part of the peer coaching project.

To help you share the most meaningful feedback possible, please fill out the following information. It is important during this observation that you remain objective and nonjudgmental. The wide-lens technique should be used.

Lesson objective(s) observed for this period:

What teaching strategies and student behaviors did you observe? Please list at least three each.

Please meet with the teacher you observed within one week of observation.

Observation of Teaching Performance

Record Sheet

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Lesson Focus: _____

Coach: _____

+ / 0 / -	Teacher Action	+ / 0 / -	Student Behavior	Comment

Summary of Observations

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Lesson Focus: _____ Coach: _____

Strengths:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Weaknesses:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Recommendations:

4. Phase 3, Peer Coaching Cycle: The Essential Elements of Reflection on the Observation.

In-Service Handout #12: Reflection Focus

In-Service Handout #13: Reflection Practice, Ability Inventory on Teachers' Behaviors

Reflection Focus

What teaching behaviors were desired in the lesson?

What actually happened?

FOCUS ON DISCREPANCY

What were the expected behaviors of learners?

What actually happened?

FOCUS ON DISCREPANCY

What was the expected results of the lesson?

What actually happened?

FOCUS ON DISCREPANCY

How do I communicate this to the (teacher/coach)?

**Ability Inventory on
Teaching Behaviors**

1. What are your strengths as a teacher? (What teaching behaviors are effective in your classrooms?)

2. What are your weaknesses in teaching? (What areas or techniques would you like to be more effective?)

3. What would you like to focus on this year?

4. How would you best learn it?

5. Based on what you know about teachers in this school, who has strengths in teaching areas in which you consider yourself weak?

6. Would you be willing to work with your colleagues to improve in your areas of weakness?

Yes _____ No _____

7. Would you be willing to assist your colleagues desiring your area of teaching expertise?

Yes _____ No _____

Name: _____

Subject Area: _____

5. Phase 4, Peer Coaching Cycle: The Essential Elements of the Post-Observation Conference

In-Service Handout #14: Post-Observation Conference

In-Service Handout #15: Objectives of the Coaching Conferences

In-Service Handout #16: Review of the Peer Coaching Process

Post-Observation Conference

Focus on Reflection of Observation:

1. What was expected?
2. What actually happened?

Point Out Weaknesses:

1. Ask teacher for observations.
2. Ask teacher for reason.
3. Indicate what coach observed.
4. Discuss reasons.

Recommendations:

1. Ask teacher what he/she would do differently next time.
2. Discuss options and reasons.
3. Ask teacher what he/she would do the same next time.
4. Discuss why it is important to keep it the same.
5. Establish focus of next coaching event.

Objectives of the Coaching Conferences

Objectives of the Coach

Pre-Observation Conference

The coach will:

1. Elicit and clarify statements of purpose of the lesson.
2. Probe for specific observable student behaviors.
3. Probe for the specific teaching strategies/ behaviors to be used.
4. Determine what led up to and what will follow this lesson.
5. Determine how the teacher will recognize desired student behavior.
6. Invite teacher concerns/hopes for the lesson.
7. Elicit a description of own role in the observation.

During the Lesson

The coach will:

1. Observe and record behaviors of the teacher (as requested).
2. Observe and record behaviors of students (as requested).

Post-Observation Conference

The coach will:

1. Probe for the teacher's intuition/feelings/ affect about the lesson.
2. Ask the teacher to recall the student behavior observed during the lesson to support those feelings.
3. Ask the teacher to recall the teacher behaviors/strategies used during the lesson.
4. Present teacher with data collected about teacher behaviors and seek comparison between the teacher behavior performed and teacher behavior planned.

5. Present the teacher with the data collected about teacher behaviors and seek comparison between teacher behavior performed and teacher behavior planned.

6. Probe for inferences about the achievement of the purpose of the lesson.

7. Probe for explanations as to why student behaviors were/were not performed.

8. Elicit thoughts for alternative teaching strategies/behaviors/conditions.

9. Elicit an evaluation of the interview process and coach's conferencing skills.

Objectives for the Teacher

Pre-Observation Conference

1. State the purpose of the lesson.

2. Translate the purposes into descriptions of observable student behaviors desired.

3. Describe the teaching behaviors/strategies to be employed to facilitate students' performance of desired behaviors.

4. Describe the sequence in which this lesson occurs.

5. Describe procedures for assessing results.

6. Anticipate any concerns. Articulate hopes.

7. Describe the role of the observer.

During the Lesson

The teacher will:

1. Utilize the anticipated teaching behaviors/strategies.

2. Structure instruction so that students will perform the desired behaviors.

Post-Observation Conference

The teacher will:

1. Express feelings about the lesson.

2. Recall student behaviors observed during the teaching to support feelings.

3. Recall own behavior during the lesson.

4. Compare student behavior performed with student behavior desired.
5. Compare teacher behavior performed with teacher behavior planned.
6. Make inferences as to the achievement of the purposes of the lesson.
7. Analyze why the behaviors were/were not performed.
8. Consider what will/might be done differently in the future.
9. Express feelings about the value of the conference.

**Review of the
Peer Coaching Process**

Readiness

Receive Training
Be Clear on Process
Establish Trust

Pre-Conference

Agree on Roles
Agree on Specifics
Agree on Criteria
Agree on Format

Observation

Honor Agreement
Collect Objective Data

Post-Conference

Give Feedback
Focus
Problem Solve (if invited)
Celebrate

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this project was to develop an in-service program to assist school administrators and designated faculty members in planning and implementing a clinical supervision and peer coaching model to improve instructional effectiveness.

The in-service program produced as a result of this project has detailed peer coaching procedures and activities utilized at Mount Si High School, Snoqualmie, Washington.

Conclusions

Conclusions reached as a result of this project are:

1. Improving teacher instruction is paramount to developing excellence in the school system.
2. The basic components of clinical supervision-- the pre-observation conference, observation, and

post-observation conference--improve instructional effectiveness when incorporated into a peer coaching model.

3. Peer coaching can be utilized by teachers to assume greater leadership and responsibility in the area of instructional improvement.

4. Students benefit academically when their teachers share ideas, cooperate in activities, and assist one another's intellectual growth.

Recommendations

As a result of this project, the following recommendations have been suggested:

1. A peer coaching program should be an essential component of a districtwide comprehensive in-service plan.

2. Teachers should be provided with release time to allow for more opportunities to observe, reflect, and conference with their colleagues.

3. A need exists to increase collegiality and improve instruction in the Snoqualmie Valley School District. To accomplish this goal, it is recommended that this peer coaching program be continued and expanded.

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