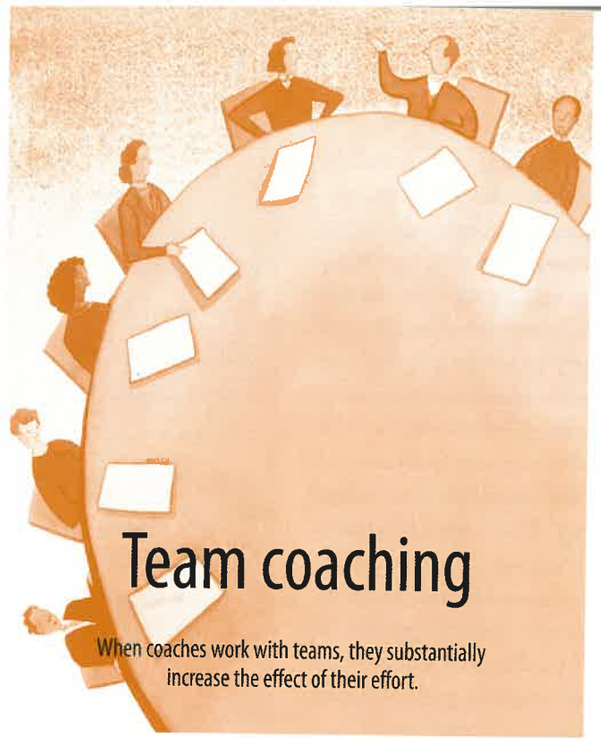
Tools index for Chapter 14		
Tool	**Title**	**Purpose**
14.1	**A coach is ...** **A coach is *not* ...**	Use this tool to help coaches, teachers, and principals gain clarity about what is part of a coach's job and what is not part of a coach's job.
14.2	**Coaching a resistant teacher: Reflection questions for the coach**	Use this tool to provide thought-provoking questions for coaches as they deal with teachers they perceive as resistant.
14.3	**Strategies for reframing requests**	Use this tool to provide coaches with strategies for reframing coaching requests and responses.
14.4	**Conversation template for discussing challenging issues**	Use this template to plan and conduct conversations about challenging issues.
14.5	**Coaching heavy — Coaching light**	Use this article to consider the assumptions and practices you use as a coach.



Chapter 15

Team coaching

When coaches work with teams, they substantially increase the effect of their effort.

Collaboration among teachers builds capacity and reduces variance in the quality of teaching across classrooms within a school. It also increases a culture of continuous improvement and collective responsibility for the success of every student and educator within a school. To this end schools are finding ways to increase time for collaboration among teachers and to build in structures that support continuous learning. More and more schools are integrating some form of learning communities into the daily work of teachers. Coaches increasingly are serving as facilitators of teams of teachers to increase the impact of their work. They may combine some or all 10 coaching roles within their role as team coach. Sometimes this means that coaches are facilitating collaborative learning teams or professional learning communities (PLCs), coaching teachers who serve as facilitators of PLCs, or facilitating team meetings focused on planning (curriculum and instructional specialist), data analysis (data coach), or problem solving (school leader or catalyst for change).

> **Learning Communities:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment (Learning Forward, 2011, p. 23).
>
> **Learning Designs:** Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes (Learning Forward, 2011, p. 23).

This work reflects the coach's application of the Learning Communities and Learning Designs standards.

The Learning Communities standard addresses the culture and systems for creating a community for learning. The Learning Designs standard addresses how learning occurs within teams. Both are integrally important to the collective success of teachers within a school and, when present, they contribute equally to the success of educators and their students.

This chapter examines the role of the coach primarily as a learning facilitator of teams rather than individuals. Team coaching, according to Joellen Killion, Cindy Harrison, Chris Bryan, and Heather Clifton (2012), "intends to move information into practice, just as one-to-one coaching does" (p. 159). It occurs in teams of teachers, they continue, "who share common learning goals, want to examine their own practice, and commit to developing transparency in their own and group members' practice" (p. 159). Chapter 8 Learning Facilitator introduced readers to the concept and opportunities for facilitating learning in teams. This chapter goes deeper and outlines the roles, responsibilities, and challenges that coaches of teams encounter.

> "The PLC structure in my building really supported change. It allowed for teachers and staff to observe and provide feedback. Teachers and staff left with a focus on the SEL and academic needs of their students and a plan from which to demonstrate success. Teacher-driven conversations were the driving force behind the PLCs and professional learning this year. We meet their needs by observing and listening deeply to the conversations."
>
> *Michael Buckley*
> *Instructional Coach*
> *Ranch View Elementary School*
> *Naperville School District 203*
> *Naperville, Illinois*

Why team coaching

"Changing teaching and student learning takes time," according to Killion, Harrison, Bryan, and Clifton (2012), "yet the speed of change can be accelerated when coaches work at least part of their day with teams of teachers" (p. 159) rather than with individual teachers. Both one-on-one and team coaching are important and necessary for individual and school growth. One approach addresses an individual teacher's needs that may be distinct from her teammates' needs. For instance, one teacher may want to focus on classroom management to increase efficiency in classroom routines and another teacher may want to refine an instructional routine such as increasing the level of rigor in his questioning.

The other approach supports the entire team in focusing on implementing student-centered learning practices. That combination of joint learning and personalized learning is what contributes to building the capacity of all teachers within a school and ensures that they share expertise. "Coaches who work with teams give teachers the opportunity to engage with multiple thinking partners rather than one," point out Killion, Harrison, Bryan, and Clifton (p. 160).

Interactions are likely to be richer and deeper. Team members learn about their colleagues' strengths and explore how others think about teaching. They become more interdependent. They build capacity to support one another over time when the coach is not available, and so long-term change becomes more sustainable.

> "At a learning session I attended recently, Michael Fullan announced that, after reviewing John Hattie's research on practices with the most significant impact in schools, collective efficacy is the new winner. Once again, we have evidence that harnessing the power of the group rather than relying solely on the individual is key to unlocking the full potential of educators and students in schools."
>
> *Stephanie Hirsh*
> *PD Watch, Edweek*
> *April 7, 2016*

This way of working is not new; it has been the subject of research in education and business for decades (see Tool 15.1) . The findings have been consistent. Fred Newmann and Gary Wehlage (1995) note,

> [C]learly shared purpose and collaboration contribute to collective responsibility. One's colleagues share responsibility for the quality of all students' achievements. This norm helps to sustain each teacher's commitment. A culture of collective responsibility puts more pressure and accountability on staff who may not have carried their fair share, but it can also ease the burden on teachers who have been working hard in isolation but who felt unable to help some students. In short, professional community within the teaching staff sharpens the educational focus and enhances the technical and social support that teachers need to be successful. (p. 31)

Working with both teams and individuals allows coaches to differentiate services to specific teachers and work with a whole team to refine their collaborative practice and reduce variation in the quality of teaching. It also helps teachers learn. Working with teams of teachers offers each teacher multiple options for additional instructional practices. When working with teams, coaches focus their work on student outcomes for the entire grade level or department rather than for an individual classroom. Working with teams enables coaches to assist in creating consistency across all classrooms of team members, thus creating a sense of *we* rather than *me*. Guiding teams in working with data, the coach creates an environment of transparency within which teachers strategize about next steps for instruction.

Collaboration in teams is advantageous to improving culture and success. It also has potential potholes. Richard Elmore (2000) notes that organizations that improve "create and nurture agreement on what is worthy of achieving, and they set in motion internal processes by which people progressively learn how to do what they need to do to achieve what is worthwhile" (p. 25). And, as Michael Fullan (2001) concludes, after describing the research of Milbrey McLaughlin and Joan Talbert, "Collaborative cultures, which by definition have close relationships, are indeed powerful, but unless they are focusing on the right things they may end up being powerfully wrong" (p. 67). Maintaining the positive benefits and circumventing the dangers are what a team coach does.

Coaching teams

Learning with one's teammates provides a context for the effective learning for teachers. By applying a cycle of continuous improvement

(Killion & Roy, 2009) that includes examining data to identify student learning goals and educator learning goals; deciding what and how members of the team will learn; learning together; applying their learning in classrooms; bringing samples of student work that provide evidence of their application of learning to examine, reflect, and assess the effects of their learning; and repeating the process in short, perhaps six- to eight-week cycles, teachers' collective learning has purpose, direction, and immediate value.

Coaches have three main roles while working with teams of teachers — facilitator, expert, or member of the team — and within each role, they have multiple options. Decisions about their actions depend on the team's readiness, goals, and team members' comfort and experience with collaborative work. A coach's goal with team coaching is to build over time team members' capacities to facilitate their own work. Specifically, they want teams to have the capacity to engage in data-focused conversations, set goals, design learning experiences, make decisions on next-step instructional strategies, and evaluate the work of the team and its impacts on student learning (see Tool 15.2).

Even teams that function successfully as collaborative communities may benefit from the coach serving as an expert to assist in refining their collaboration process or to introduce new processes or content to the group. If the work is intense or team members have a high emotional response to it, the coach may join a team as process expert to initiate a structure for a conversation that alleviates pressure team members may feel. In other cases, as team members gain some early competence in collaboration, coaches stand ready to gradually release teams to become more independent so they can learn to facilitate their own work. An occasional step backwards in their collaboration is a good opportunity for team members to reflect on their own skillfulness as an effective team. Coaches, though, often have a hard time letting go.

As experts, coaches may teach teams about and how to implement the cycle of continuous learning as a scaffold for their collaborative learning. They may also teach important communication skills to improve team honesty, inquiry, and productivity (see Tool 15.3). They may teach content or instructional knowledge and skills necessary to change practice. They may give the team resources that support their learning, such as finding a video of an evidence-based teaching practice related to one of the teachers' learning goals. They might select and facilitate the use of protocols for examining student work or responding to professional texts such as journal articles.

Coaches may decide to facilitate rather than serve as the expert or member of the group. They often do this early in the cycle to create smooth, productive, and effective team collaboration about important topics so the team meets with early successes. Coaches may offer support only when asked or necessary, such as assisting team members setting up agreements, goods, and procedures for smooth operation or with rigorous data analysis. They may facilitate to model processes or tactics for completing the cycle. They may step in to facilitate the learning process so that teachers gain the knowledge, skills, and practices they need to achieve their goals. Later, in the classroom supporter role, they may work only with individual teachers as they apply their learning in classrooms. Because teams of teachers work together frequently, they often confuse the purpose of professional learning communities with any meeting they hold. It is important for teams to clearly define their collaboration by

identifying both long- and short-term goals related to student learning and their own practice. A coach can help a team keep a focus on continuous professional learning so that the next-steps discussion avoids replication of current strategies that have not necessarily been successful with students.

In some cases, coaches work with team leaders who are responsible for facilitating learning teams. They may provide training, resources, guidance, or other supports to facilitators. They may coach learning facilitators to help them raise their skillfulness with facilitation, since working with adults is, for many, something they both fear and want to learn more about. Coaches may observe learning teams and meet with facilitators following the meeting to engage in a reflection conversation about the effectiveness of the facilitation.

Coaches need to be adept at working with all sorts of teams from groups of teachers who teach the same content to groups of elective teachers who may focus on common strategies for working with high-poverty students. Coaches need to be flexible in their approach to meet the needs of such diverse teams. Sometimes the work of the coach pinpoints building effective productive working relationships among team members while focusing them on making common decisions about which learning designs to use to increase their own learning and which strategies to apply to increase student learning. Some teams operate at a level where they just need "soft" facilitation to help them move forward efficiently as they push students to a higher level of thinking and learning, and others benefit from harder facilitation with more structure.

When coaches are not facilitating collaborative learning teams, they continue to meet with teams, at least periodically, to lend support and seek opportunities to support teams' independence to function without an external facilitator and team members' interdependence. Often opportunities for individual and team coaching arise during team discussions. When a team is designing common assessments, for example, the coach might bring ideas to the table about format, content, resource, or alternative ways for students to express their learning that the team might integrate into their work. During discussions coaches interject professional learning resources or even mini-lessons on instructional strategy to address identified needs. Coaches might recommend co-planning a lesson with a team and setting up co-teaching or observing opportunities. Coaches never fully divorce themselves from the work of teams, even while they gradually release responsibility for team success.

Facilitating learning teams

Facilitating teams is both an art and a science. Effective facilitation requires teams to understand structures, processes, actions, interventions, and team members to make on-the-spot decisions that will support the team in achieving its success. The quality of a team's work makes a difference in student learning and the strength of the coach's facilitation has an influence on the effectiveness of the team. A coach uses both skillfulness and flexibility that comes with being able to assess what the team needs at any given moment. Yet, the most significant responsibility of a coach when coaching a team is to practice invisibility. "Being a Midwife" from the *Tao of Leadership* (Heider, 2015) is an excellent example of what invisibility looks like and sounds like in team coaching.

> The wise leader does not intervene unnecessarily. The leader's presence is felt, but often the group runs itself. Lesser leaders do a lot, say a lot, have

followers, and form cults. Even worse ones use fear to energize the group and force to overcome resistance. Only the most dreadful leaders have bad reputations.

Remember that you are facilitating another person's process. It is not your process. Do not intrude. Do not control. Do not force your own needs and insights into the foreground. If you do not trust a person's process, that person will not trust you.

Imagine that you are a midwife; you are assisting at someone else's birth. Do good without show or fuss. Facilitate what is happening rather than what you think ought to be happening. If you must take the lead, lead so that the mother is helped, yet still free and in charge. When the baby is born, the mother will rightly say: "We did it ourselves!" (p. 33)

Coaches help teams achieve a level of competence by attending to a number of specific tasks that contribute to their effectiveness. These are described below.

Setting up effective learning teams

Differentiating the purposes for learning teams from the managerial work of a grade level or department is crucial to maintain the focus on teacher and student learning when coaching teams. Focusing on the right work contributes to the team's success. Lindsey Devers Basileo (2016) notes, "... a high-functioning PLC focused on the right work will act, in essence, as a kind of knowledge-generation system for teachers, where the effect of professional development is accelerated and refined through collective focus on learning within the team" (p. 3). While teachers will always have managerial work, it is more important and effective for teachers to spend their collaborative time in conversations that will make a difference in classroom practice and student learning. Table 15.1 compares two types of work that teams typically do, one related to teaching quality and student learning and the other related to management. Learning-focused work can be characterized by a focus on acquiring and implementing practices that advance student learning and use data to analyze and reflect on the effects of the implementation. Management-focused work, which also may include data usage, highlights noninstructional topics necessary for smooth operation of a classroom, department, or school, but not likely to have a significant impact on student learning. A recent study of PLCs finds that teamwork such as examining student work and engaging in data analysis had a much stronger correlation to teacher morale than discussing student behavior, building issues, or planning schoolwide events (Basileo, 2016). McLaughlin and Talbert (2001), in their study of professional learning communities in high schools, note that learning-focused communities are characterized by "collegial support and interactions [that] enable individual teachers to reconsider and revise their classroom practice confidently because department norms are mutually negotiated and understood" (p. 55).

Facilitating the work of the team

Elena Aguilar (2016) describes three dimensions of great teams: product, process, and learning. Coaches are responsible for all three, yet have their greatest influence on shaping the processes. For example, when coaches serve as facilitators, they focus on process: They do not tell the group what to do or decide on the goals for the group. The role of facilitator is to support the group in reaching its goals. Coaches do less talking than the members of

Table 15.1: Comparison Between the Work of Learning-Focused and Management-Focused Teams

Learning-focused teams:	Management-focused teams:
Analyze student assessment data to understand next-step instructional needs.	Enter the data on a data wall.
Look at student work and do error analysis.	Decide who will be responsible for locating, copying, and distributing materials.
Read professional texts to learn about instructional strategies to meet teacher and student learning goals and determine how to apply the strategies in practice.	Read books together.
Review individual student academic progress and examine instructional strategies to implement from best practices to meet student learning needs.	Discuss student behavior issues.
Use protocols for analyzing student results (e.g. Here's what, So what and Now what).	Create centers.

the team as their group's work is only as good as the collective thinking of the members. As coaches prepare to facilitate, they need to think about the following tasks:

- **Setting working agreements with the team.** Working agreements are commitments that team members make to one another about how they will work together. Examples include: Publicly support the decision of the team, follow up on assignments, bring up issues in the room not in the parking lot, etc. Sometimes coaches help teams establish their working agreements or share with team leaders a process for establishing agreements. An ongoing challenge in teamwork is identifying ways that members can hold one another accountable for adhering to agreements. Having a process is important, as it is inevitable that a team member intentionally or inadvertently breaks an agreement. Left unaddressed, a broken agreement erodes trust and safety in a team. The best process for addressing broken agreements is one that the team handles itself.
- **Defining the goal and parameters of the team's work, creating a work plan, and identifying data to examine to establish the goal, to assess progress, and measure effects.** Often teams don't know why they are meeting or what work to accomplish. The coach uses the cycle of continuous improvement to guide the team's work or other protocols that help the team have action-oriented steps to reach their goal (see Tool 15.4). The coach gives the team an action-plan format that outlines desired outcomes, measures of effectiveness, resources needed, knowledge and skills teachers need to be successful. Not only does the plan give the team a guide to follow, it allows them to reflect.

The facilitator is the person with responsibility to pay attention to the process of the team. This role varies depending on whether the facilitator is internal or external to the team. If the facilitator is also a member of the team, then she contributes content and process ideas. An outside facilitator does not contribute content ideas. He or she pays attention to processes that lead to effectiveness and productivity, such as ensuring the team is adhering to its norms; using strategies to move forward when it gets stuck; creating an agenda for the meeting; setting a structure for the discussions that engages all members; maintaining safety for team members; or recording salient information for future reference and documentation.

Coaches may serve either as an internal facilitator who is a team member or an external facilitator who attends to the process and eventually lets the team operate independently. Whether the coach is considered an internal or external facilitator depends on factors

SNAPSHOT

Coach facilitates team coaching

At Chavez High School,* staff members look forward with excitement to newly allocated time for working in professional learning communities to help them achieve the improvement goals they had set. Akram Khoury, the instructional coach, has been working with individual teams and the teacher leaders to prepare and support them in getting started by setting learning goals for the year. The school set non-negotiables that all teams integrate literacy and technology into their lessons to achieve the school's improvement goal and to engage students more actively in their learning. In addition, all teams are to set goals for student learning.

Khoury meets biweekly with learning team leaders. For the next meeting, he creates and shares a template to help the team leaders get organized. Khoury reminds them that he is providing one sample tool; he encourages team leaders to adapt it for their own use or use alternative processes to set their goals. He offers them sample goals and answers their questions about how to use or adapt the tool. He also offers to support teams with data analysis to identify areas for goals, the goal-setting process, or with selecting and implementing learning designs to achieve their goals. He recommends some learning designs such as lesson study that they might consider initially as they begin their learning process.

At the teacher leader meeting, leaders report that teachers are asking for a variety of professional learning to integrate literacy and technology within their classrooms. They decide to organize a catalog of teacher-led professional learning sessions from which teachers may select to learn what they want related to the school goals and non-negotiables. Sessions will be conducted during the workday, after school, and on the next professional learning day. As much as possible, they decide, they want teachers to share their best practices with one another and to model the instructional practices teachers are expected to implement in their own classrooms. Over 20 teachers agree to share their expertise with their colleagues.

In addition to the teacher-led workshops, Khoury locates additional resources for teachers, such as videos of best practices in literacy and technology integration, and shares those resources with all teachers. He meets with the science team at their request to figure out how to integrate literacy and technology into the newly implemented *Next Generation Science Standards*. Khoury agrees to facilitate a series of unit planning meetings for small groups of science content teachers to help them integrate literacy and technology into the unit. He also arranges for the district-level science specialist to model several practices in classrooms and to co-teach with the teachers who are ready for that. Khoury invites one of the teacher leaders, who has a great deal of credibility with other teachers in terms of his content knowledge in science and technology, to support his peers with integration ideas as well.

Khoury also knows that classroom-based implementation support is essential as a supplement to the many different learning experiences teachers can access. Without it, he knows that many teachers would be unlikely to change their practice. He offers teams opportunities to engage in looking at student work to assess how their newly implemented practices are influencing their students' learning.

From his individual discussions with team leaders, Khoury is aware that different teams are at different levels of comfort and success with their PLCs. One team is struggling with goal setting and wants to go back to occasional department meetings rather than talk about instruction or student work. He meets regularly with this team and co-facilitates their work with the team leader. They plan before each meeting and debrief each meeting to identify leverage points for achieving their goals.

With another team, Khoury engages members in recognizing the importance of writing and using common formative assessments to drive instruction. He helps them think about how literacy and technology can become more transparent within the assessment they are writing. He facilitates the team as it designs some common assessments and then in analyzing the results. He uses a protocol to help teachers look at common errors and find ways to differentiate instruction in the next unit to provide reinforcement, reteaching, and extensions for students.

One of the top-flying teams asks Khoury to help them set up a classroom observation rotation and a process for debriefing the visitations so that team members can observe one another. When the physical education team claims it has no idea about how to integrate literacy, they turn to him for ideas. When he sees success within teams, even small ones, he asks team members to share their successes at whole-school monthly faculty meetings to extend the expertise of the entire school.

His work as a team coach is diverse and flexible, yet through it all, Khoury is building the staff's capacity to learn with and from each other rather than depending only on him as the source of their learning.

**Fictitious name and school*

including the coach's job expectations and the team's capacity to function as a collaborative learning team. In some schools, coaches are expected to serve as the facilitator of all learning teams; in such a case, coaches are internal facilitators and meet with teams regularly. Yet even in these situations, coaches may take a less directive or dominant role and gradually transfer responsibilities for team facilitation to members to build their leadership capacity. In other situations, they are viewed as a support to learning teams, and therefore, function as an external facilitator when they temporarily join a team to provide support.

- **Establishing a decision-making process.** Effective teams decide how they will make decisions together. This allows them to have clarity about process and continue moving forward when they reach critical points where decisions are needed without getting bogged down in deciding how to make each decision as the need arises. Some teams commit to using 100% consensus or sufficient consensus (somewhere between 70–80% of the team membership) for most team decisions. Others opt for a majority decision. Consensus decision making (100% agreement) or sufficient consensus (significant majority such as 75% agreement) increases support for the decision.
- **Identifying structures for the work of the group.** There are various structures or tools coaches might use to assist the team in accomplishing its work. Skillful coaches are familiar with or know how to locate protocols, processes, or tools to help teams accomplish their plan. For example, they can access additional protocols for looking at student work, learning designs for team professional learning, and data analysis tools to engage in deep and rigorous analysis of multiple types of student data. They may also help the team to explore potential root causes so their efforts are likely to have the greatest effects. Coaches use these protocols, processes, and tools to make it safe for team members to examine the effects of their current instructional practices, refine them, and learn about and implement new ones (see Tool 15.5). They also use protocols, processes, and tools so they can be evidence- and data-based rather than perception-, hunch-, or opinion-based in their work.

> "We've become more aware of the power of team coaching. Teams can achieve results when coaches spend time with them to: (a) use data and student work to align instruction and assessments; (b) coordinate peer visits, organize and support grade-level and department teams, establish study teams; (c) facilitate professional learning; and (d) share research; and (e) build a more collaborative culture in every school. We have great success stories when coaches work with individuals, but we often go farther faster when we work with teams."
>
> *Ann Delehant*
> *President*
> *Delehant and Associates*
> *Webster, NY*

Challenges of team coaching

Teamwork has multiple benefits, yet it isn't without its challenges. Some of these challenges are generic to any group such as creating productive working relationships. Others are unique to teams of teachers when they are engaged in publicly and transparently analyzing the effects of their own practice on student learning. Teachers are particularly sensitive to talking about their work, first, because they have worked in isolation for so long and, second, because their expertise as professionals is measured by the effects of their work on student learning. In these team-based conversations, teachers may believe their expertise is being judged by peers, so they feel uncomfortable sharing their work.

As coaches work with teams, building a sense of community is key. Once members of a team trust one another, believe in one another's competence, and depend on one another to create the best thinking, other hurdles are easier to overcome. It is important for teachers to trust the coach and one another to continue to learn and grow together as professionals.

When a coach works with a team, one of his greatest fears is any behavior of individual team members that has a negative effect of the whole team. To address these situations, he has a toolkit of strategies to address individual or team behavior that interferes with the team's safety or effectiveness. The overall process for handling individual behavior that interrupts the team's effectiveness is to acknowledge it, seek to understand its cause, then identify and implement an appropriate response. Coaches will want to encourage team members to use this process themselves; coaches want to avoid being viewed as the only person responsible for managing team member behavior. The sooner team members take responsibility for their own and one another's actions in the team, the sooner they become a high-functioning team. Table 15.2 on pages 172–173 offers examples of issues that arise within a team that may interrupt the team's work. When setting agreements, teams may make one agreement a primary focus: establishing a process for addressing any behavior-related issues.

Conclusion

Recognized leaders in professional learning communities, Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Tom Many (2006) note,

> Despite the popularity of the term *professional learning community,* the *practices* of a PLC continue to represent "the road less traveled" in public schools. Many teachers and administrators prefer the familiarity of their current path, even when it becomes apparent that it will not take them to their desired destination. We recognize it is difficult to purse an uncharted path, particularly when it is certain to include inevitable bumps and potholes along the way. We do not argue that the PLC journey is an easy one, but we know with certainty that it is a journey worth taking. (p. 12)

The journey becomes easier for teams when the school's coach is skillful in facilitating and coaching teams toward successful implementation of an effective cycle of continuous learning. When coaches are prepared and proactive in coaching teams for success through community building and clarity about focusing on their learning rather than the distractions that interfere, teacher teamwork will make a direct impact the team's overall effectiveness, the motivation of individual members to reconsider their practice, their willingness to alter classroom practice, and student learning.

Table 15.2: Team Issues and Possible Strategies for Overcoming Them

Issue	Possible causes	Possible strategies
Lack of focus	• No goals have been set or agreed upon; • No structure for the work on goals; • No shared vision for the work or purpose for the meetings.	• Define purpose of teams in terms of work to be accomplished and role in student success. • Set goals for educator and student learning and create a work plan for the year. • Use roles such as facilitator to keep teams focused during meetings.
Lack of interdependence	• Pervasive culture of working alone; • Past negative experiences with collaborative work; • No enjoyment or sense of accomplishment in teamwork.	• Structure interdependence and engagement through the rotation of roles such as facilitator, recorder, etc. • Structure group work so team members require engagement of one another for success. • Embed independent tasks that contribute to team's success.
Lack of commitment to shared leadership	• Lack of experience in leadership roles; • Lack of leadership skills; • Fear of failure in leading peers; • Fear of stepping over the us/them or expert/colleague line.	• Create opportunities to take leadership. • Build leadership skills. • Share positive feedback with those who take leadership roles. • Incorporate expectations for teacher leadership in team agreements.
Culture of blaming	• Fear of accountability for outcomes; • Avoidance or resistance to change; • Lack of knowledge of actions to take; • Lack of agreements about blaming.	• Focus conversations on what we can control; circle of concern/circle of influence. • Use fishbone analysis to identify possible causes of problem. • Create agreements about no blaming and hold one another accountable.
Lack of impact on student learning	• Lack of a focus on student learning outcomes; • Lack of focus on work that relates to teaching and learning.	• Set student learning goals. • Focus on adult learning and implementation of and reflection on agreed-upon strategies.
Conflict among members	• History of past conflict; • Lack of skills in conflict resolution; • Philosophical differences; • Lack of working agreements.	• Write working agreements that include handling disagreements. • Use processes, protocols, and tools that structure teamwork. • Teach conflict resolution strategies.
Personal attacks/ bullying among team members	• Lack of clear working agreements; • Lack of skills in difficult conversations; • Competitive rather than collaborative culture.	• Build skills for and practice difficult conversations. • Set norms and assess use of norms at every meeting. • Talk privately with individuals as needed to understand and support change in behavior.

Issue	Possible causes	Possible strategies
Lack of participation	• No conversation protocols; • Insufficient or no facilitation; • No clear expectations for participation.	• Use conversation structures that ensure all participants contribute such as round robin. • Rotate roles including that of facilitator.
Lack of results focus	• No measurable student learning goals; • No structure to look at data; • Fear of accountability.	• Set measurable student learning goals with indicators of success that the team values. • Set expectations and structures for teams to report to whole staff about their results several times per year.
Focus on managerial issues	• Past practice with prioritizing management over learning; • Lack of prioritization of agenda items; • Ineffective facilitation of meetings.	• Put managerial issues at end of all agendas. • Hold separate management meetings to reduce confusion. • Assign managerial issues to individuals to make decisions rather than taking team time.
Lack of follow-through	• No clear plan for follow-through; • No accountability or sense of responsibility to team goal or members; • No consequences for lack of follow-through; • Lack of skill to accomplish task; • Fear of failure.	• Define the expectations, format, timeline, responsible person(s), etc. • Bring evidence of classroom implementation to meetings. • Hold difficult conversations about effects of repeated lack of follow-through. • Make and keep promises.
Dominant team member	• Fear of loss of control; • Fixed mindset; • Perceived self-importance; • Insufficient recognition for contributions; • Self-focus rather than team-focused.	• Build the knowledge of all team members. • Do a perspective-taking activity which includes members taking different perspectives to practice appreciating differences. • Use processes that bring differing perspectives to the table for consideration. • Set agreements about honoring all perspectives and engaging all voices. • Use dialogue and discussion strategies.
Time for collaboration	• Insufficient time to achieve the goals; • Prioritizing tasks with no or smaller effect over those with higher effect; • Spending time on wrong work.	• Advocate establishing time with school day schedule for teams to meet. • Use available time for high-impact tasks. • Define clear expectations and reasonable deliverables for each meeting. • Ensure team members come prepared to each meeting. • Distribute the workload among members.

Tools index for Chapter 15		
Tool	**Title**	**Purpose**
15.1	**Coaching teams or coaching individuals?**	Use these articles to spark a conversation among coaches to encourage spending more time coaching teams than individuals.
15.2	**Small group coaching**	Use this process to provide a scaffold for coaches to work with grade-level or department teams in planning for a coaching conversation.
15.3	**Grounding activity**	Use this activity to create a sense of team and bring people's voices into the room.
15.4	**Indicators of team functioning**	Use this tool for teams to self-assess the functioning of their team and their impact on student outcomes.
15.5	**PLC continuum of practice**	Use this tool to assess a PLC in relationship to established criteria and plan actions to improve.

References

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Chapter 16

Strengthening the quality of teaching for increased student learning shifts the focal point of improvement from district offices to schools and classrooms as the primary focus of change. To bring support closer to the classroom and student learning, coaching programs have moved coaches from the district office to the school site. Studies of coaching find that teachers have too little access to coaching support when coaches serve multiple schools (Bierly, Doyle, & Smith, 2016; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2014; The University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, Learning Forward, & Public Impact, 2016). In addition, when coaches work day to day with the teachers they support, they quickly build trusting, productive relationships with both teachers and school administrators.

The relationship between a coach and the teachers and administrators with whom he works is probably the most important factor contributing to the success of the coaching program. When a coach is a highly valued member of a school staff, coaches have greater influence in the culture of continuous improvement and in shifting teacher practice. In addition to a strong relationship, coaches, teachers, and principals must share common goals for a school or district initiative to succeed at the school site. Alignment between coaches and site administrators is essential to moving initiatives forward at the site level.

According to Neufeld and Roper (2003), coaches cannot do their work, regardless of how credible and masterful they are, unless teachers and principals support them and are willing learners. For coaches to succeed, they need job-specific support. Principals have a significant responsibility for providing coaches with necessary visible support. This support does not include principals abdicating responsibilities for instructional leadership to the school coach who has a great deal of