

Opening quote

# Stop Beating Around the Bush and Just Tell Me What I Really Should Be Doing:

A Performance Plan for Overwhelmed Reading  
Coaches Who Want to Make a Difference

Presenters

Mr. Donald May

Dr. Karen L. Beattie

Realistically  
speaking,  
what tasks  
have occupied  
most of your  
*Reading-  
Coach* time?



# Realistically speaking . . . Time?

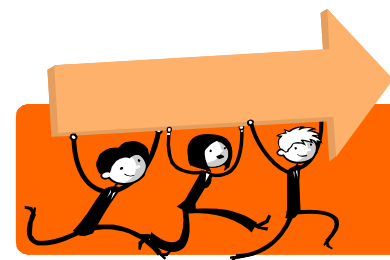


- **Student Assessments** – screening and class placement, administering / coordinating assessments, data reporting, data analysis, data interpretation.
- **Managing Reading Department and Curriculum** – managing materials, attending / directing school, district, and regional meetings.
- **Coaching?** – providing professional development, planning/conducting PLC, knowledge building, modeling lessons, *meaningful* coach-teacher conferences . . .

# So, what's really important?

- Brainstorm ideal situations
- Desired outcomes

# Infused Reading: VCS Initiative

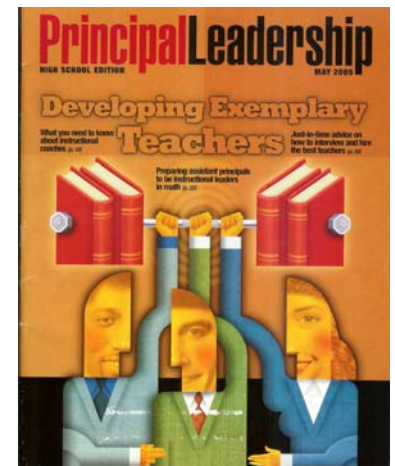


- ESE students are screened and placed into the appropriate tier of reading dependent upon the results of FCAT Reading and other screenings.
- ESE and general education students are in the same classes.
- Both Reading and Language Arts classes are offered grades 6-8.

# How Do Principals and Instructional Coaches Work Together?

Jim Knight's Study:

- Instructional Coaches have the greatest impact in schools where the principal and the IC work together in partnership.
- Principals and ICs should work together to identify the teachers who can most benefit from the ICs services (p. 19).



# The Partnership

Administrator and Reading Coach –

- Expertise
- Respect
- Trust
- Collegiality
- Shared Vision
- Listen to each other

# Responsibilities of Administration

- Set expectations of Reading Program
- Trust and support the Reading Coach
- Create appropriate infrastructure
  - Common planning times
  - Create Reading Center
  - Clerical support for Coach and Teachers
  - Professional development opportunities
- Provide needed resources



# What Is an Instructional Coach?



- An IC's main role is that of a **“professional developer”**
- Responsible for teaching other educators how to use proven teaching methods
- Collaborates with teachers to identify practices that will effectively address the teachers' needs, and help teachers implement those practices (Knight, p. 17).
- What's missing in Jim Knight's explanation?

# FL DOE Job Code Assignment

“Coaches: Reading / Math – Staff members responsible for providing professional development to teachers to generate improvement in instruction and achievement. These employees model effective instructional strategies; facilitate study groups; train teachers in data analysis; coach and mentor colleagues and, in general, provide daily support to classroom teachers . . . .”



# What Could Be

“When I was a principal, I wanted so much to have an impact on how my teachers taught. As I was talking with teachers or observing them, I’d think how much I wished I had the time to give these teachers the kind of support they need. If I had an instructional coach, I could have done that . . . . When I see a coach and a principal work well together, the coach is really an extension of the principal – the coach makes it possible for the principal to truly be an instructional leader.

- Doris Williams, A Hartford County (MD) Department of Education Hall of Fame Principal and director of the Passport to Success Program in Anne Arundel County, MD.

# Revolutionary Insight

*People don't change that much.*

*Don't waste time trying to put in what was left out.*

*Try to draw out what was left in.*

*That is hard enough.*

Great managers recognize that each person is motivated differently, that each person has his own way of thinking and his own style of relating to others. They know that there is a limit to how much remolding they can do to someone.

*(pp. 56-57)*

# *What Great Reading Coaches Do?*

## **The Catalyst Role:**

*“The **Reading Coach** role is to reach inside each teacher and release her unique talents into performance. This role is best played one teacher at a time: one Coach asking questions of, listening to, and working with one teacher. Multiplied throughout your school, this one-by-one role is the school’s power supply”*

*(pp. 58-59).*

# The 30% Rule

- **The Top 30%** consists of those who are always very enthusiastic, willing to grow and change.
- **The Middle 30%** consists of the people who can be swayed, but they just need to see somebody else do it with success. These people need reassurance and coaxing.
- **The Bottom 30%** This group of people you should concentrate on last because these are the pugnacious die-hards; the people who have laminated their lesson plans.
- Yes, there is still **10% left over**. This very last group is what Buckingham and Coffman called the ROAD warriors (Retired On Active Duty).
- Why waste time trying to “fix a person’s weakness” when instead you could produce more results by “drawing out what was left in,” the talents of those who are most willing.

# Sitting-n-Getting

- So how's it workin' for you?

# Meaningful Professional Development

Ways to make PD more meaningful and personable; how to create professional discourse to develop ongoing study(s) of best practices; and ways in which coaches can recognize the expertise already at their schools and learn how to make teachers the change agents.

Here I think we need the specific examples of what you have done –

Use of common planning times – collaborative analysis and planning

Proximity of teachers to each other – the informal PD

Use of clerical provides more time for analysis and reflection of best practices

Etc.....



# ROI: Meaningful Professional Development

- **Collegial planning time**
  - Front-end loaded
  - Monthly follow-up
  - Administration pays for substitutes
- **Peer observation of best practices**
  - Facilitated by Reading Coach based on needs assessment
  - Administration pays for substitutes
- **Demonstration of model lessons**
  - Facilitated by Reading Coach based on needs assessment

- Marzano, R. (2003). What Works in Schools

# Use of Department Meetings

- Time to Collaborate – Teachers should meet at least once every month to analyze scores and other data gathered, adjust instructional groupings, and decide what to do next to support individual children.
- Get teachers to come up with interventions during the meeting, because if you wait three weeks for a child, that's a lot of lost time.

-Olson, Lynn (2007) *Instant Read on Reading*

# Prioritize what's truly important in the grand scheme of student achievement

- Transition to performance plan

# Needs Assessment

- Performance plan – Admin and RC
- Communication
- Start with your best to gather resources

# Set some goals . . . NOW!

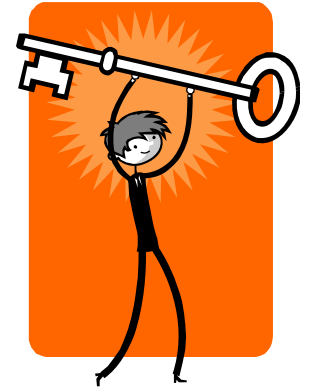
- Calendar time



# Actually Finding Time to Be An Instructional Coach!

The most important aspect of the  
job.

# Performance *Management* Routine



- The real challenge lay in disciplining ourselves to implement these ideas with each one of our people, despite the day-to-day pressures of getting actual work done (keeping all the balls in the air).
- By following a *Performance Management Routine*, we can meet this challenge and stay focused on the progress of each person's performance.

# Your Assignment: Establish Your Performance Management Routine

Make a commitment:

- Every **Tuesday** and **Thursday** – do classroom “walkthroughs” / visits by building. Every teacher at least once a month.
- Every **Wednesday** – meet with identified teachers for Performance Meetings. Follow-up within three weeks



# *Walk-Throughs* By Coaches

“Richardson suggests that coaches do a walk-through in every teacher’s classroom once a month. That may mean that the coach is doing several walk-throughs on some days . . . The walk-through tells the coach a great deal about how she can support the teacher”

(Richardson, 2006, p. 3)

# Setting-Up Effective *Walk-Throughs* By Coaches

- “Classroom walk-throughs were inspired by “management by walking around,” a concept that took hold in corporate offices in the early 1980’s as a way of putting managers in touch with employees.”
- “Much confusion can be avoided if they ensure in advance that teachers have a good understanding of the process . . .”  
(Richardson, 2006, pp. 1-2).

# The Power of *Walk-Throughs*

- “When teachers are involved in doing the walk-throughs, that’s when it really takes off in a school . . . .”
- “Perry calls the walk-through ‘one of the most powerful tools that educators can use to stimulate conversations around improving teaching and learning’  
(Richardson, 2006, pp. 2-3).

# What Does It Look Like?

Keep In Touch With the Classroom in 4 minutes or less:

- View the classroom from the student's perspective (recipients of instruction).
- Observe students and converse with them as appropriate about their classwork.
- Look at student assignments
- Listen to student talk

(Lunenburg & Irby, 2006, pp. 114-116)

# What Does It Provide?

Feedback to teachers:

- Should include strengths (“I was impressed by . . .”)
- Questions (“Can you teach me more about . . .”) and when appropriate, next steps
- Collegiality (“May I bring some teachers to see how you . . .”) or (“Would you present this to other teachers at your next department meeting?”)

(Richardson, 2006, pp. 2-3)

# Performance Management Routine

- **First**, **Keep it Simple** – don't waste time on bureaucratic forms. Focus on what to say and how to say it.
- **Second**, The Routine Forces **Frequent Interaction** – meet with each teacher at least once each quarter to discuss needs, goals, and support.
- **Third**, The Routine is **Focused on the Future** – Discuss what could be. “What is your most efficient route toward your goals. How can I help?”
- **Last**, the routine asks the employee to **keep track of his own performance and learnings**.

# *Performance Appraisal*

- In many schools “performance appraisal” is something that happens to a teacher. She is a passive observer, waiting to receive judgment from her administrator.
- Instead, ask each employee to keep track of her own performance and learnings, to write down her goals, her successes, and her discoveries.
- The point is self-discovery.
- Recent research into adult learning reveals that students stay in school longer and learn more if they are expected to direct and record their progress.

# Wednesdays' *Performance* Meetings

First – Learn about his strengths, his goals, his needs, *as he perceives them* (listen).

To help him prepare, ask him to write down answers to these three questions before each meeting:

- A. What actions have you taken?
- B. What discoveries have you made?
- C. What partnerships have you built?

# Wednesdays' *Performance* Meetings

After about ten minutes direct the conversation toward the future, drawing on the following questions:

- D. What is your main focus?
- E. What new discoveries are you planning?
- F. How can I help / support you?

After about another three weeks have elapsed, ask him to write down his answers to A, B, and C, and once again meet and re-evaluate.

# *Performance* Meetings

- As you talk through his successes, his struggles, and his goals, try to keep focusing on his strengths by setting expectations that are right for him, by helping him to perfect his style, and by discussing how you can support him.
- Whatever happens, you will be stronger partners. By meeting frequently, by listening, by paying attention, by advising, and by planning in detail, you will have developed a shared and realistic interest in his success. And, important, he will have a record of it all.

# Keys of Your Own

- Look in the mirror any chance you get – Reflecting increases your understanding of who you are and how others perceive you.
- **Muse** – take 20-30 minutes each month to think about what you have accomplished. What did you learn? What did you hate? What did you love? What does all of this say about you and your talents?

# Get Real – What I Really Did

- Driven by needs assessment
- Driven by administrator concerns and trends
- Driven by joy and tangible benefits of your work

# Keys of Your Own

- Build Your Constituency – Over time, identify which kinds of relationships tend to work well for you. Seek them out.
- Keep Track – Build your own record of your learnings and discoveries.
- Catch Your Peers Doing Something Right – When you enter your place of work, you never leave it at zero. You either make it a little better or a little worse. Make it a little better.

# Master Keys

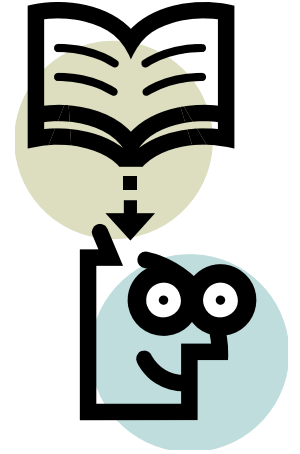
*“What can your school do to create a friendly climate for great coaches and teachers?”*



# Creating a Coach-Friendly Climate

- Keep the focus on outcomes – the role of the administration is to define the desired end (the school's vision).
- Celebrate “personal bests” – Every role, performed at excellence, is respected. Many people like to compete with themselves. With the Performance Routine each person can keep track of his or her performance and marks of personal best. Celebrate these!

# Creating a Positive Learning Culture



- Study your best: Internal best practice discovery is one of the most important rituals.
- Set up an internal “university.” The main function of this “university” is to provide a forum for showcasing how your best do what they do.
- The important thing is that your teachers learn from your best in a disciplined way.

# References

Buckingham, M & Coffman, C (1999). *First, Break All the Rules: What the world's greatest managers do differently*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

*Demotivators* retrieved from Despair.com website:

<http://www.despair.com/viewall.html>

Knight, J. (2005). A Primer on Instructional Coaches, *Principal Leadership*, May 2005, pp. 16-21.

Lunenburg, F. & Irby, B. (2006) *The Principalsip: Vision to Action*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Marzano, R. (2003) *What Works in Schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Olson, L. (2007) Instant Read On Reading, *Education Week (26)* 35, May 2, 2007.

Richardson, J. (2006) Snapshots of Learning: Classroom walk-throughs offer a picture of learning in schools. *Tools for Schools (10)*1. August/September, pp. 1-8.

# Contact us if needed



Silver Sands Middle School  
1300 Herbert Street  
Port Orange, FL 32129

Dr. Karen L. Beattie

[klbeatti@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:klbeatti@volusia.k12.fl.us)

386-322-6175 X36484

Mr. Donald May

[dsmay@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:dsmay@volusia.k12.fl.us)

386-322-6175 X36442

End