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Amplify Your Impact: Coaching Collaborative Teams in PLCs at Work™

By Thomas W. Many, Michael J. Maffoni, Susan K. Sparks, and Tesha Ferriby Thomas

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Study Guide

This study guide is a companion to the book *Amplify Your Impact: Coaching Collaborative Teams in PLCs at Work™* by Thomas W. Many, Michael J. Maffoni, Susan K. Sparks, and Tesha Ferriby Thomas. *Amplify Your Impact* presents a practical framework that K–12 coaches, administrators, and teacher leaders can use to enhance teaching and learning through professional learning community (PLC), collaboration, and coaching practices.

This guide is arranged by chapter, enabling readers to either work their way through the entire book or focus on the specific topics addressed in a particular chapter. It can be used by individuals, small groups, or an entire team to identify key points, raise questions for consideration, assess conditions in a particular school or district, and suggest steps that might be taken to promote a healthy school culture.

We thank you for your interest in this book, and we hope this guide is a useful tool in your efforts to create a healthy culture in your school or district.

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Chapter 1

Combining Collaboration and Coaching

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1. Briefly describe the benefits of collaboration that education researchers have identified.

2. What aspects of your school's structures and its master schedule promote isolation and prevent teachers from working together? Why do you think isolation still exists in these areas despite the established benefits of collaboration?

3. According to Bruce Joyce, Beverly Showers, Beth Boatright, and Chrysan Gallucci, what are the benefits of coaching teachers?

4. In what positive and negative ways do traditional coaching models that focus on supporting individual teachers differ from a coaching approach that focuses on supporting collaborative teams?

5. Why should content specialists and curriculum coordinators shift from coaching content to coaching collaborative teams?

Chapter 2

Coaching Collaborative Teams in a PLC

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1. Name the three big ideas that form the basis of a PLC.

2. According to Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, Thomas Many, and Mike Mattos, what four critical questions do collaborative teacher teams in a PLC need to respond to? Why do teacher teams, with the help of coaches, need to answer these questions?

3. Define *co-blab-oration*, and describe a situation in which co-blab-oration occurred during a teacher team meeting you observed. How did you provide assistance to get the meeting back on track? Looking back, what would you have done differently to be more helpful?

4. Consider the East Detroit Public Schools case study. What do you learn about the power of coaching collaborative teams in a PLC and how to best use pathways tools from this case study?

Chapter 3

Amplifying Your Impact With Clarity

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1. What does *SIG* stand for, and how does a SIG relate to a PLC? What forms can a SIG take?

2. How can a well-constructed SIG increase clarity in a PLC and encourage continuous improvement?

3. What knowledge can you take away from the practitioner perspectives in this chapter and apply to your work in making sense of a SIG?

4. What are anchor statements and indicators, and what roles do they play in forming a rigorous and attainable SIG?

5. Consider the examples of school systems that have successfully created and field-tested SIGs (pages 61–63). Which of these school systems most resembles your school system's size? What did that school system do to succeed with its SIG, and why did those actions prove advantageous in a school system of that size?

Chapter 4

Amplifying Your Impact With Feedback

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1. What are the characteristics and attributes of effective feedback?

2. In their work with collaborative teams in PLCs, what three themes have the authors seen come up when teams couple frequent feedback and effective coaching?

3. What three roles do coaches play in the coaching model for teams? What must coaches do in each of these roles?

4. Describe a situation in which an individual teacher or a teacher team was uncomfortable receiving feedback. How did you deal with that discomfort in the moment? How would you have dealt with this situation differently based on this chapter's guidance?

5. How did the schools in this chapter's case study ensure they obtained data, gave feedback, and established clear expectations? What takeaway lessons on the impact of feedback do you learn from this case study?

Chapter 5

Amplifying Your Impact With Support

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1. How did a conversation guide support collaborative teams in the East Detroit Public Schools to effectively use collaborative time?

2. What does a team's ability to accurately answer the second critical question of a PLC depend on? Through what methods can a team respond to this question?

3. What pathways does the pathways tool for answering critical question three include?

4. What does the final critical question of a PLC ask teams to consider, and what should they identify to make this consideration?

Chapter 6

Making It Real: Coaching Scenarios

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1. Why does Ms. Adler's first team meeting as a PLC coach at A. C. Doyle Elementary School represent inefficient, ineffective meeting time?

2. How does the second A. C. Doyle team meeting improve on the first team meeting Ms. Adler experienced?

3. Why does the first Pratt High School scenario qualify as inefficient, ineffective meeting time?

4. How does Mr. Plum intervene as the coach to improve the circumstances surrounding Pratt High School's end-of-year leadership meeting?