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DiPaola, M. F. & Hoy, W. K. (2014). *Improving instruction through supervision, evaluation, and professional development*. Information Age Publishing.

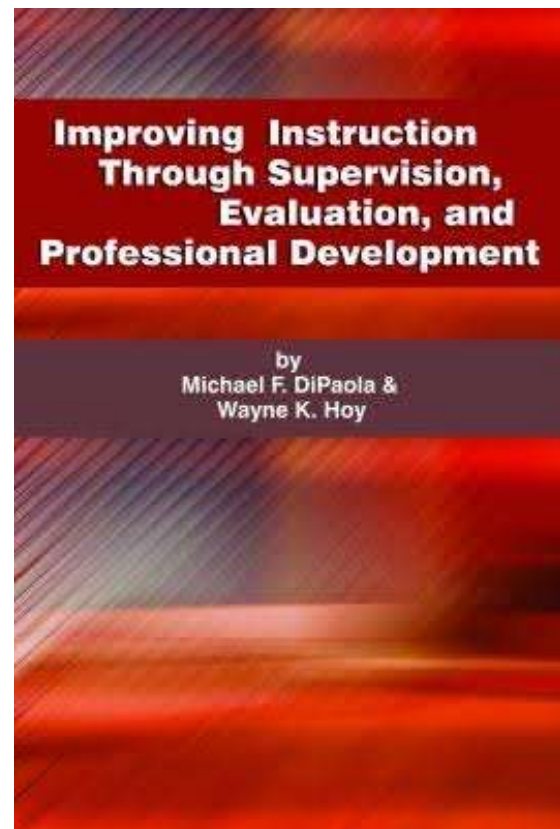
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This updated revision of DiPaola's *Principal's Improving Instruction* (2008) includes some timely improvements, such as references to Common Core Content Standards for educators in the United States. Although the framework for this revision is consistent with the previous edition, I found two areas of improvement of particular importance: links to websites with documents that the reader can use and download on each topic of discussion, as well as the incorporation of John Hattie's work on visible learning and the instructional strategies that help improve learning (Hattie, 2012).

DiPaola and Hoy structure the chapters using a standard framework, with each chapter divided into major themes and followed by a challenge or case analysis (which the authors refer to as the Principal's challenge) for the reader to work through. The main audience for this book is current or aspiring principals. The reader is then asked to reflect on the scenario and what they would have done in that particular situation. The reflection component is scaffolded through guided questions, as well as tips on how to develop a portfolio within that topic area. This component is followed by a



communication exercise where the reader is presented with a dilemma, and a useful and concise Further Readings reference list for each theme. Each chapter closes with some anonymous excerpts from superintendents who have experienced situations that were similar to those presented in the text.

The authors contend that the role of the principal has evolved over time and that their primary purpose now is to provide instructional leadership, a role described as providing supervision of instruction, evaluation of instruction, and professional development of teachers. The model was developed by looking at past research on four prominent models of instructional leadership: Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Murphy (1990), Patterson (1993) and Weber (1996). The three areas of focus in DiPaola and Hoy's model for instructional leadership, while acknowledging past models' focus on academics, integrates and expands on two other important areas that are intertwined between the contemporary models: faculty trust and collective efficacy.

Faculty trust is defined as "the teachers' willingness to be dependent on others based on the confidence that the other party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open; the trusted part can be relied upon to help and do no harm" (p. 8). The trust paradigm, they contend, is an important criterion in any relationship and in any area of work. The power dynamic that exists between an instructional leader and teacher must be acknowledged but it is important that it does not interrupt the ultimate goal of improving instruction and subsequently improving student learning.

Collective efficacy is "the shared perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole can have a positive effect on students" (p. 9). DiPaola and Hoy contend that the overall goal of instructional leaders is to develop school culture with these three aspects in mind: academic emphasis, faculty trust, and collective efficacy. School culture is a complex

and variable concept that is addressed further in Chapter 3. Whatever change or intervention is made to improve one area must be supportive of the other two elements in order to improve student performance. Relational teaching, a key component, refers to open communication between students, faculty and parents as a triangle working together to support one another. The authors use Schein's (2004) six primary mechanisms for embedding culture as an outline for matters within the principal's control. Using this framework allows principals to connect their leadership behavior to the existing culture. A question that arises is how did the current culture of the school and, in particular, the culture of teaching in the school come to be? This important question: Is this something that needs to be reflected on in order to implement new change?

Some of the overarching perspectives throughout the book included the importance of climate and/or culture of a school and its impact on the model's efficacy. The main goal of the framework presented by the authors is to improve teaching and learning and to integrate and plan professional development as an integral piece of the puzzle. Instructional leadership was found to be second only to classroom instruction among school-related factors that influence student outcomes (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). An important criteria surrounding the word 'evaluation' is that it can take many forms, but ultimately it has to be acknowledged that a formal, judgmental and hierarchical aspect remains, particularly when the principal is doing the evaluating.

The addition of Hattie's work in the chapter on high quality instruction is timely and much needed. Planning in order to create a culture of learning and understanding is an integral component, and the authors have included Hattie's three levels of understanding and how to plan accordingly. The teacher behaviors checklist (Figure 10.8) is a comprehensive list that ties in many of Hattie's recommendations in order for visible

learning to take place. I believe the next step would be to tie this together with Ritchhart, Church and Morrison's work (2011) on cultures of thinking and cultural forces within the classroom. Some of these forces are covered, but cultural forces such as language, environment, and time have little or no mention throughout this chapter nor do the appendices that guide the author look at these indicators or influencers of culture. Ritchhart's current work (2015) also looks more in depth at the eight cultures of thinking and how they can influence school culture and ultimately student performance. Assessment is the bridge between teaching and learning (Wiliam, 2010).

Assessment for learning and assessment as learning allow students and teachers to work along a common path towards improvement. The assessment practices covered in this book also allow the teacher to be guided through various observational techniques. Formal and non-formal observations as well as drop-in sessions allow there to be different insertion points into the teaching and learning of the classroom. As mentioned previously a power hierarchy still exists regardless of the type of assessment. One way to support the teacher in this area may be to include peer assessments from their colleagues so that they too inform the teacher's progress and learning.

The overall format of the book was organized and allowed for reflection as well as presentation of feedback from superintendents. The reflection guides, further resources and links to online forms that are found in the appendices add to the usefulness and practicality of the book. One area that varied across chapters was the superintendent feedback. Although real and honest, which is the nature of anecdotal research, some of anecdotes lacked depth and insight needed to be fully effective. A component of reflection involving principals who are recently started at this position and their thoughts on particular themes such as professional development, improving instruction and

school culture would have provided another useful lens to look through.

Trust is an important aspect of the instructional leadership model proposed, particularly with the supervision and evaluation that is developed through the book. Within this, a trust paradox could occur. As the model is formalized it is possible to create the opposite effect that was intended in regards to trust and the relationship between the teacher and instructional leader. If a disconnect is created, then the learning will not improve for the teacher or the student. The authors spend ample time discussing school culture and building trust, but I wonder if more is needed in the area of relational teaching and looking at this whole process from a relational point of view rather than from a leader at the top (Costa, 2015). Hope is another prerequisite for trust and something that is addressed during the theme of collective efficacy.

One perspective of this book I would expand on is the volume's primary audience and author's constrained idea of leadership. I believe the authors' are limiting the impact this book can have by recommending this book to only current and future principals, which could possibly exclude others who could benefit from the model. Heads of departments, curriculum or technology integrators, even professional learning teams or communities (in real-time or online) would find different aspects of this book useful. The idea that leadership and change can only occur from the top is something that is changing in education. Shared leadership exists within a school (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004) but can also exist within a division, department and/or classroom. With this, great change can occur and lead to improved student learning. Overall this book provides a thorough and helpful guide to the many responsibilities and expectations of an instructional leader, whether that person is the principal or another faculty leader.


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About the Reviewer

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