

Instructional leadership

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Background There has been much discussion regarding the relative effectiveness of different leadership styles in bringing about improved student performance. Instructional leadership is one of the most useful tools in creating a forward-looking, student-centered school environment. Instructional leadership can be defined as " those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning." In practice, this means that the principal encourages educational achievement by making instructional quality the top priority of the school and brings that vision to realization. The role of an instructional leader differs from that of traditional school administrator in a number of meaningful ways. Whereas a conventional principal spends the majority of his/her time dealing with strictly administrative duties, a principal who is an instructional leader is charged with redefining his/her role to become the primary learner in a community striving for excellence in education. As such, it becomes the principal's responsibility to work with teachers to define educational objectives and set school-wide or district wide goals, provide the necessary resources for learning, and create new learning opportunities for students and staff. Benefits The result of instructional leadership is a collaborative learning environment where learning is not confined to the classroom and is the objective of all educators. Instructional leadership is an important departure from the ancient model of administrator as authoritarian. Inherent in the concept is the idea that learning should be a top-down process. If those in charge of the school are excited about learning, then they will share their enthusiasm throughout the community. Those who learn to be instructional leaders acquire many characteristics that are beneficial to their

schools and communities. Instructional leaders exhibit a clear sense of direction for their schools and prioritize and focus attention on the things that really matter in terms of the work of students. Furthermore, instructional leaders know what is happening in their classrooms and develop the capacities of staff by building on their strengths and reducing their weaknesses. These leaders also attempt to sustain improvement and change in their schools by anticipating and overcoming the obstacles that inevitably will emerge along the way. Examples The National Association of Secondary School Principals is one type of association that offers workshops to help educators acquire the skills necessary to become an effective instructional leader. For example, Leader 1 2 3 - A Development Program for Instructional Leaders is a three-day program designed to help principals build instructional leadership skills. This unique experience focuses on planning, developing, implementing, and measuring skills required to support quality learning in the school and includes practice in team leadership and shared decision-making.