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## Key Points to Building a Coaching Program

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### DESCRIPTION

“Five Key Points to Building a Coaching Program,” by Jim Knight, describes instructional coaching as a successful model for providing on-site professional learning that meets the unique needs of the teachers and students in the schools where it is implemented. In fact, instructional coaching can lead to sustained implementation of effective teaching practices in schools.

In order to realize the potential of coaching to make a significant difference, educational leaders should recognize and respond to the complexity of change by paying attention to five key points in building a coaching program. These five key points are described below:

- 1. Top-Down and Bottom-Up:** Principals should support on-site coaches by focusing school change initiatives that have the highest possibility of impacting student achievement to make it easier for coaches to work as equal partners with teachers in collaborative partnerships.
- 2. Easy and Powerful:** Specialists in the role of coaching work to make the adoption of powerful strategies easy for teachers to implement.
- 3. Self-Organizing and Highly Organized:** Specialists begin with teacher leaders within the school.
- 4. Ambitious and Humble:** Outstanding specialists are ambitious for the institution and humbly work to build effective coaching.
- 5. Engaged and Detached:** Effective specialists build relationships with teachers while focusing on student achievement.

### STAGE 3 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

“Five Key Points to Building a Coaching Program,” by Jim Knight, supports stage 3 development of leaders working to ensure the implementation of a systemic plan for the continuous improvement of school and district student achievement across all populations. A leader might facilitate a group of specialists in reading and discussing the article in a professional learning community to support each other in developing the skills necessary for implementing the five key points. Leaders might encourage specialists to discuss the five key points with their principals and to enlist their support in building a coaching program. At the beginning of a new school year or the beginning of the establishment of a coaching program, this article provides a good framework for opening up important conversations on what effective specialists do and how principals can support their work. When leaders support specialists and recognize the complexity of change, in particular by discussing the five key points here, the chance of building a strong coaching program improves.