

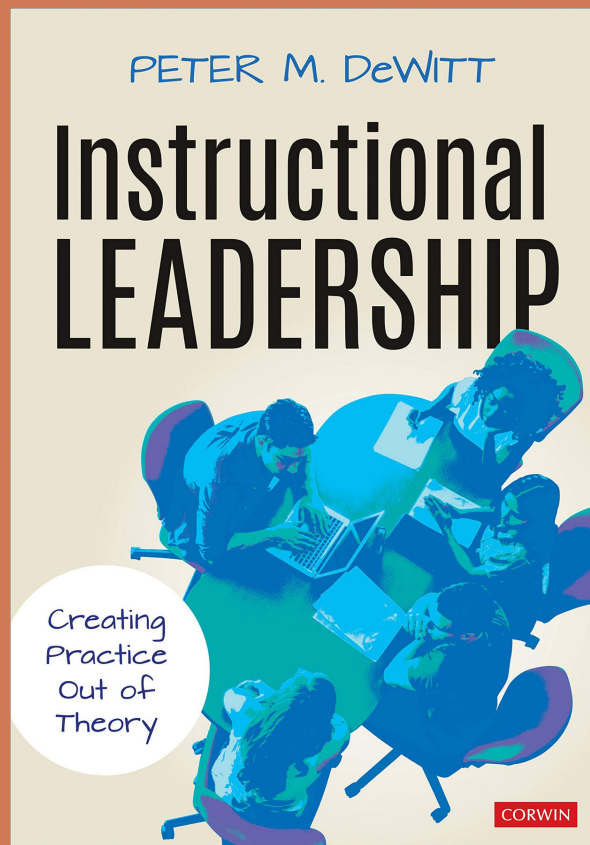
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

CREATING PRACTICE OUT OF THEORY

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EADM 829

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Rational for choice of book:

I have always been interested in instructional leadership, collaborative learning, teacher powered schools and the idea of how administration can best support positive movement towards this style of leadership. With my interest in mind I was led to the work of Peter DeWitt from a colleague of mind as his research and perspective would be highly engaging in my area of study

About Author:



Peter DeWitt is a former K-5 teacher and Principal. He runs workshops and provides keynotes nationally and internationally focusing on leadership, coaching, and fostering inclusive school climates. Within North America, his work has been adopted at the university and state levels, and he works with numerous districts, schools boards, and regional and state organizations to train leadership teams and coach building leaders.

DeWitt, P (2020). Instructional Leadership: Creating practice out of theory. Thousand Oaks, California. Corwin.

CHAPTER 1

Instruction Leadership: A Holistic Approach

Two main problems:

- 1 - New administrative leaders do not have a strong background in leadership
- 2 - Administrators believe they are "instructional leaders" but their staff often does not have the same view as the leader

Instructional Leadership in Short

6 INFLUENCES

Instructional leadership is built on 6 highly effective influences

1. Implementation
2. A Focus on Learning
3. Student Engagement
4. Instructional Strategies
5. Collective Efficacy
6. Evidence

WHERE TO START?

DeWitt saw tremendous value in the 6 influence as he shared his knowledge but often found a disconnect in how and when leaders were implementing these approaches so he used this book as a guide

FOCUS OF A LEADER

To be good instructional leader, leaders need to focus their leadership on students rather than the adults in the building. Often when leaders take on these new roles they lose touch with their focus of responsibilities

More



Getting into the classroom, supporting teachers, having meaningful conversations with teachers, which all add to credibility (Out of office)



Less

Union issues, prep time, student discipline, parent communications, critiquing teacher lessons (In office)

3 PILLARS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

1. Defining the school mission
2. Managing the instructional program
3. Creating a positive climate

HOLY GRAIL

Instructional leadership is a well researched and well supported leadership change in education but there is no "how to guide" to implement it.

ELM5 PRINCIPLES TO HELP LEADERS FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT

1. purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance regardless of role
2. It requires continuous learning as both an individual and social activity
3. Leaders must model the values and behaviors that represent the collective good
4. Roles of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution
5. The exercise of authority requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity

CHAPTER 2

IMPLEMENTATION

Often initiatives are viewed in the negative light of keeping us from accomplishing other things, an obstacle in the way of our regular task or check box item that central office wants us to do

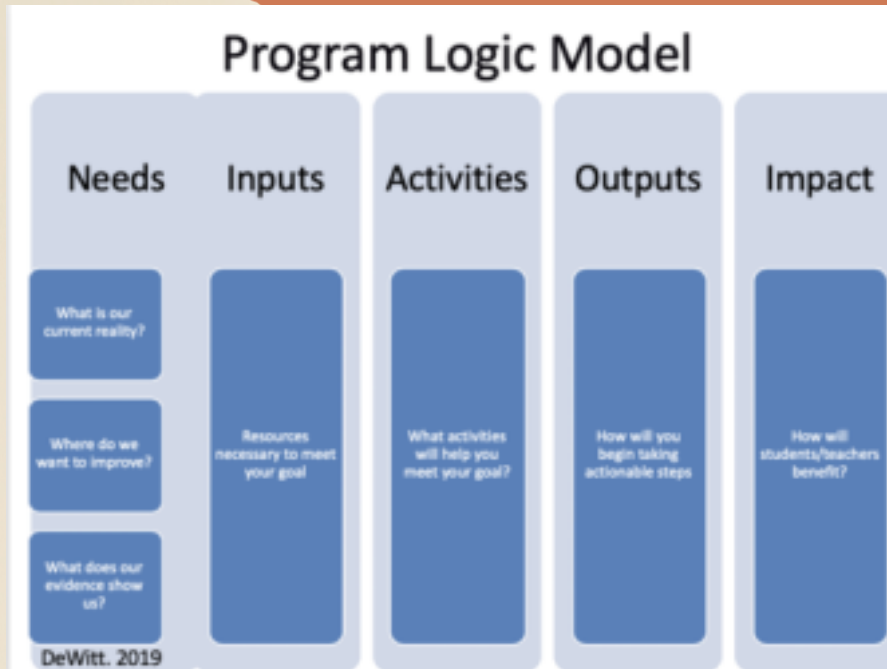
INITIATIVE FATIGUE

How many initiatives are being implemented right now?

Implementation fatigue is a common thing leaders deal with in school environments where too many initiatives, sometimes from the top down, are being pushed upon teachers. Administrators need to support in the idea of selecting one and focusing on it

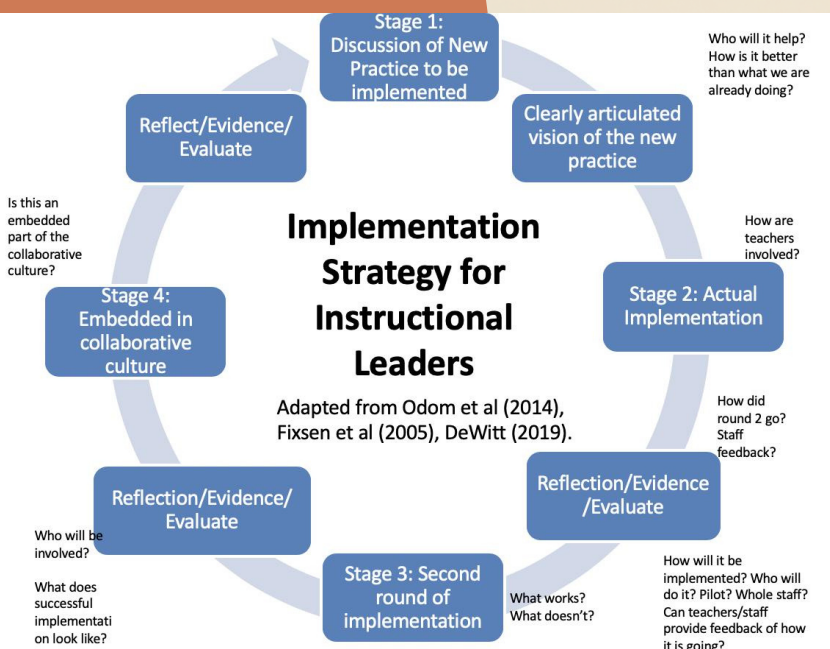
PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

program logic model is not a linear discussion. It is a conversation that needs to be revisited continually, which makes it a perfect topic for a monthly stakeholder meeting. It takes several planning meetings to go back and forth to make sure all the pieces agree upon in the program logic model fit and the created model is working. This is an evergreen document that is responsive to change in the environment



IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE

- Once finished a program logic you can then plan a implementation cycle strategy
- This needs to be done in small population stages first and then onboarding to happen after you have had some success and made necessary changes from feedback to program logic with the first go through of the implementation cycle.
- The implementation cycle grows past the first cycle to include the entire target area highlight with program logic



We need to step back, breath and plan out implementation with a purposeful approach for change supported with a strong rational

Implementation Dip

The conflict during the improvement process when people start to question the task, goal or change at hand. It happens for two reason:

- Social-psychological fear of change or
- The lack of technical knowhow to make change work

CHAPTER 3

A FOCUS ON LEARNING

THE VALUE OF UNDERSTANDING HOW LEARNING HAPPENS TO GUIDE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS



As instructional leaders, we need to know what to look for in classrooms and what to try to stimulate dialogue about in our PLC, grade-level, department, and faculty meetings.

Types of Learning:

Knowledge is about understanding facts and concepts taught.

Skills are the strategies and process students use to create understanding.

As instructional leaders focusing on students we must identify knowledge and skill with in a classroom to support the teacher in their craft.



Leaders are often expected to be the content experts in all areas. This is the view of leadership that is often shed on leaders when reality is that leaders have little time to get to know all the content taught by all the teachers at all grade levels. Leaders are already weighed down therefore it is more important to ask good questions rather than be a content leader.

Learning Levels:

Surface level comes when learning is brand-new for students

Deep level comes after students have some experience with content and ask "what if questions"

Transfer level is about understanding multiple directions at the same time making the learning more complicated

As a leader, knowing "focus on learning" gives the leader the background knowledge they need to give teachers feedback. The leaders questioning is reflective on the learning process whether that be the student learner or professional learner.

Knowledge Dimensions

Factual - vocabulary definitions and specific details

Conceptual - systems of information like classifications and categories

Procedural - knowledge of skills and how to carry out a task

Metacognitive - thinking process and information about how to manipulate these processes effectively

Identifying the type of learning that is occurring in each classroom allows leaders to have more of a keen eye in those informal and formal observations situations, and it also allows them to have more robust conversations with teachers, students and families

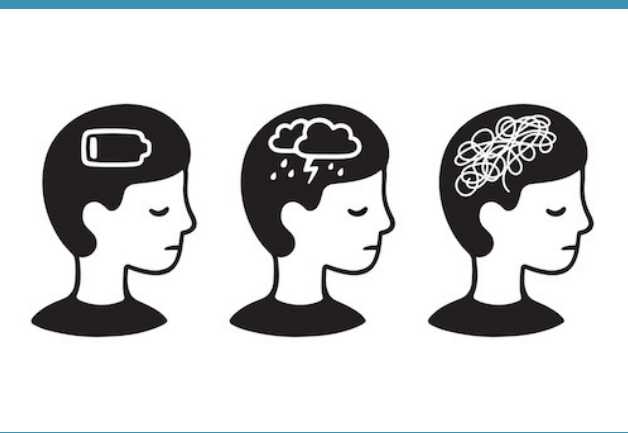
CHAPTER 4

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Overall student engagement is split into two parts social-emotional learning and academic learning

Student Engagement - Social-emotional learning

2018 study 80% of principals seeing a increase of mental illness



Alienation

The social-emotional feeling of exclusion broken into two categories that a student feels in school, Identification and powerlessness. Identification is based on social status, culture, gender identification and powerlessness is where students feel an incapacity to affect the direction of learning.

Enabling Conditions

The conditions with in an school environment that are stopping instructional leaders from gaining positive change. Instructional leaders have the power to change these conditions

- **school board policies and student codes of conduct** instructional leaders need to engage in conversations, one-on-one or as a group, with teachers and other leaders who do feel confident speaking about controversial issues.
- **Teacher-student relationships** - students need an emotional connection to their school community so instructional leaders encourage staff to build relationships and be a leader by doing this as a leader using the 5 steps above.
- **Mindfulness** is an equality that needs to be encouraged for teachers and students alike to learn and have a tool bag of mindfulness practices daily.
- **inclusive books, novels and curricula using books**, novels and curricula that are representative of the diversity within our schools or the diversity we want to prepare our students for in the outside world, and those representations need to be positive.
 - **images** selected to be posted around the school
 - **professional development for staff** - builds self-efficacy to teaching and leadership (self beliefs/confidence) instructional leaders need to be present and engaged in PD
- **common language and understanding** about all social emotional learning

5 steps instructional leaders can take to support social-emotional learning

1. Greet students at the entrance - every single day
2. Use a high-quality social-emotional-learning curriculum
3. Hire more counselors and nurses
4. Offer training for teachers
5. Improve the way you interact with students

CHAPTER 5 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The goal of an instructional leader is to lower our perceived status as a principal and raise the status of those around us. It involves creating spaces of dialogue around learning to respect the expertise of the teachers

3 strategies instructional leaders can focus on to help teachers with academic engagement

1. TEACHER CLARITY

clarity as which the teacher conducts classroom learning has 5 factors

- Explaining through written and verbal examples
 - Personalization using multiple strategies
- Task orientation, which will provide and assure student understanding
 - Verbal fluency
- Organizing student work

2. CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

creating a student voice using questioning and the leader being a listener or facilitator with various methods

- Gallery walk
- Socratic seminar
- Affinity mapping
- Backchannel discussion

3. METACOGNITION

Two processes:

Knowledge of cognition - involves awareness of factors that influence our individual learning, having strategies to support individual learning and choosing the proper strategy.

Regulation of cognition - setting goals and planning, monitoring our learning and evaluating our choices in learning to see if they work or need adjustments

Strategies

- Think alouds
- Concept mapping
- Self questioning
- Self monitoring

When speaking on student engagement "motivating students should be one of the most exciting parts of an educator's job... their preservice teaching programs had not prepared them to engage and motivate students

Too many times successful walkthroughs are a myth, because they focus on complaint behavior and making sure teachers are covering curriculum. Walkthroughs will be much more successful if they are bring about learning on the part of a students, teacher and the leaders who are doing them

CHAPTER 6

Collective Efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy definition : “collective self-perception that teachers in a given school make an educational difference to their students over and above the educational impact of their homes and communities

EFFICACY CONCERN

Collective teacher efficacy is the main concern around instructional leaders when it comes to leaders challenges that they worry most about

COLLECTIVE EFFICACY'S PURPOSE

Collective teacher efficacy is meant to motivate teachers to do their very best. If teachers feel motivated, they will deepen their practices, work in collaboration with one another, and provide feedback to each other. Motivation is meant to provide teachers with agency, where they feel like they have a valued voice in their profession. The catch is teachers also need to feel supported in doing motivating efficacy work as well.

WHEN DO WE BUILD COLLECTIVE EFFICACY?

Right away and often. Do not wait until a crisis situation because you are far less likely to get people to engage. Use the implementation cycle as a guide. It is cycle and evergreen between goals, small group task, whole school task etc. All the implementation goals and teams learn from one another

WHY IS COLLECTIVE EFFICACY HARD TO BUILD?

Getting adults to work together is always hard, especially ones that entered the profession because of their love and passion to help children more so then helping adults which takes a great deal of TRUST.

LEADERSHIP EFFICACY

Principals and assistant principals and other team members must work harder together to build collective leader efficacy, which can have a positive impact on student learning as well. Having the right people is important on your team to create a high impact and high collaboration team.

BANDURA'S 4 EXPERIENCES THAT SHAPE SELF-EFFICACY

- Mastery experiences** - successful experiences lead to equal and/or more effort
- Vicarious experience** - success of others leading to the willingness to try
- Social persuasion** - positive conversations or social displays leading to trying
- Affective states** - level of excitement or anxiety to the experience

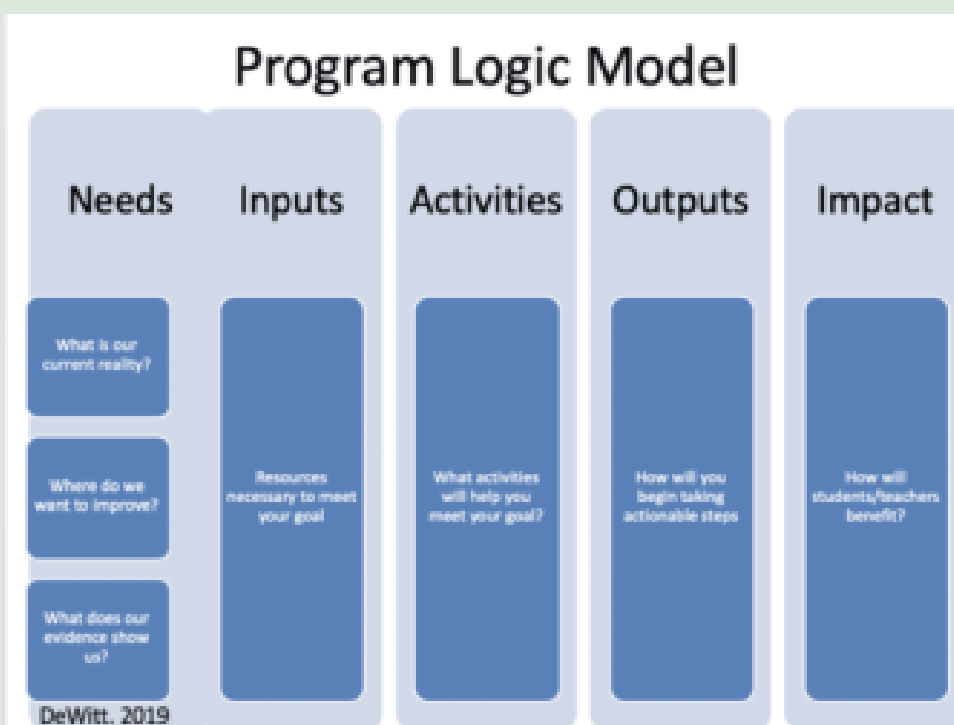
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS BUILDING COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP EFFICACY IS :

- Each member contributes thoughts when constructing common goals
- Decide what leaders in the group most need to know about students learning
- Principals lower status and raise the status of other members
- Use the implementation cycle to focus your chosen goal
- Collect evidence to understand impact

CHAPTER 7

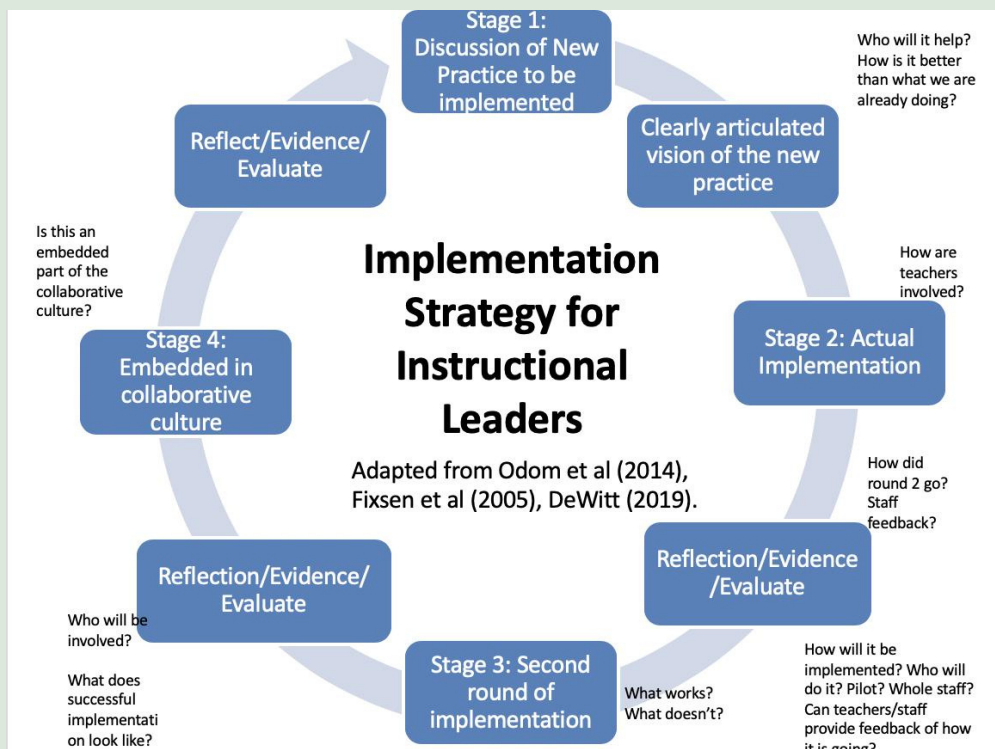
EVIDENCE

As leaders we often reflect on our days as being a leader but do we reflect just to reflect or do we have evidence to prove our growth?



Evidence of Impact

At the end of the implementation cycle when instructional leaders reflect on the program logic model. The instructional leader uses the evidence gathered and makes alterations, expansions and/or new plans in continuing the program logic model out. The overall length of the implementation cycle is based on the evidence of success seen in the program logic map. It could be weeks, to years. Other factors that affect the plan's length are things like how ingrained the current culture is of the goal looking to grow. It is important to focus just on one or two areas, not to change areas, and not to add to many changes otherwise you as an instructional leader will get lost and you will not see the growth or evidence your wish to because too many changes and not enough time and understanding was given to the goal.



"Instructional leadership is not only about our own ideas but the ability to inspire in others"

"Evidence collection should not be solo but a collaborative group task. Evidence should not be judged but more a starting point of change"