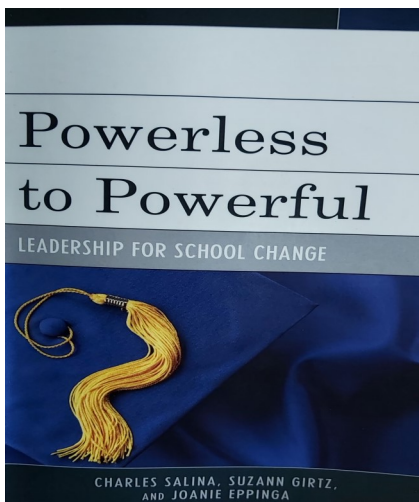


Powerless to Powerful

LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOL CHANGE

Charles Salina, Suzann Girtz and Joanie Eppinga

EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARY
By RICHARD NYARKO
For PROF. KEITH WALKER



Introduction

This book shares lessons learned from a story told by a professor – the story in which members of school and communities take on the challenge to improve school’s performance. It provides insights for initiative way of thinking and leading for schools that feel powerless.

The book is divided into two parts – Part I and Part II. Part I deals with the conceptual framework and related principles to implement a 100 percent graduation rate vision whist Part II discusses the basic leadership roles and strategies in transforming schools that feel powerless as per the respective lessons learned.

“A humanistic approach to implementing programs and systems that bring academic press, social support and relational trust together in a unique way...useful elements of success for every school” (Salina, Girtz, & Eppinga, 2016).

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Part I: Driving Principles and the Conceptual Framework

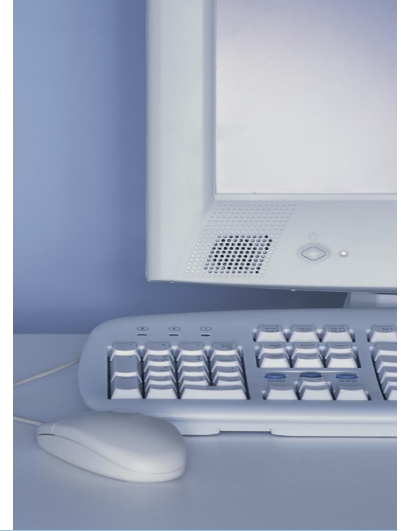
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Introduction

This part offers principles that guide decision making of leaders as opposed to random or situational based decision making. It also provides a conceptual framework that helps in describing plans for using international approach as a guide towards working in a specific direction.



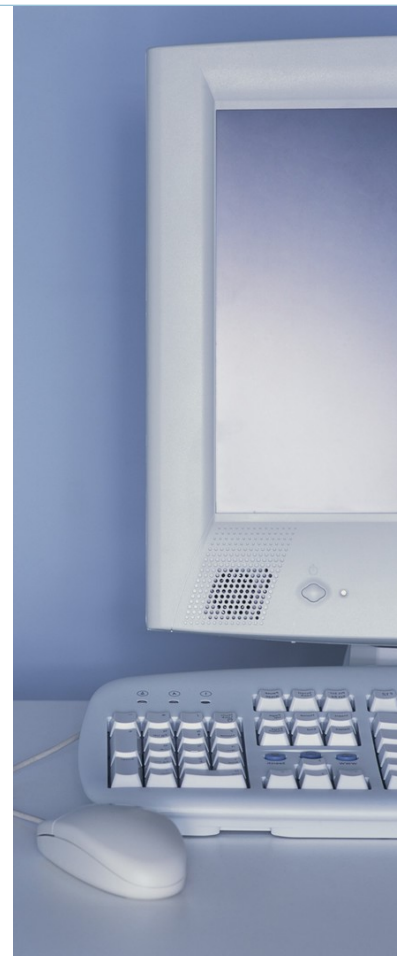
“The conceptual framework and guiding principles must allow the practitioner to be adaptive to address difficult problems, because in reality there is no final solution—only continuous improvement towards a continually redefined ideal” (Salina et al., 2016, p.3)

Supporting Principles

- The primary principle is that if we are to contribute to a greater good, it is necessary for us to be nurtured as well as nurturing all manner of going (p.2).
- The pursuit of greater good requires leaders to use their ethical discernment to putting core values into action (Covey, 1989, as cited in Salina et al., 2016, p.2).
- An ethical education is devoted to challenging each member’s societal contribution by tending to the common good and a sense of social justice geared towards those who are disadvantaged (p.2).
- Whereas educators must accept the view that each has the capacity to make it through, educators must equally believe in the capacities and capabilities of their staff in delivering their duties (p.3).

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework helps to describe plans so that an intentional approach is used as a guide to drive the change process at low achieving schools. The framework is anchored by the concepts of academic press, social support, and relational trust.



Academic Press

Academic press focuses on high expectations, academic rigors, and accountability for everyone in the school. It consists of pressures within the school environment (Shouse, 1995, as cited in p.4) and the extent to which students and staff feel being pressured to achieve academic success or meet academic standards.



Being pressured to achieve academic success

Contributors of Academic Press.

The pressure to meet academic standards comes at many levels.

Academic Rigor

Delivering a curriculum that gives rise to critical thinking (Quint, Thompson, & Bald, 2008, as cited in p.4)

Student-to-Teacher Pressure

The way students exert pressure on teachers to perform well (p.5).

Performance Mastery

Achieving significant goals (Bandura, 1977, as cited in p.6)

Believing in Each Other

Having strong belief in self, in students, in colleagues, and in the school, that standards will be attained (pp.7-9).

Specific Systems of Social Support

Schoolwide Social Support

Schoolwide system of support must be present for students to connect with in a broader way to support the academic achievement, behavior, and socio-emotional needs of the student (pp.11-12).

Teacher-to-Student Social Support Teachers caring for and supporting students to make them feel supported and motivated to learn by communicating with them about their personal and social lives (pp.12-14)

Student-to Student Social Support

Students caring for one another by leaders teaching or engaging in a frank discussion with them about the power of social support (pp.14-15).

Teacher-to-Teacher Social Support Teachers engaging with, believing in, and supporting each other through the venue of professional learning communities in which they reconnect with one another (p.16)

Social Support

Social support emphasizes on adults or other students helping the student get his or her academic learning within the school (Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999, as cited in p.9). It is based on the idea that students will perform well if they have more personal connection, and interactions in which they are recognize as individual.

They perform well academically when they feel known, cared for, and supported in their development.

At schools that feel powerless, the power of intentional social support which often translated as care is what is striking at all levels (p.11).

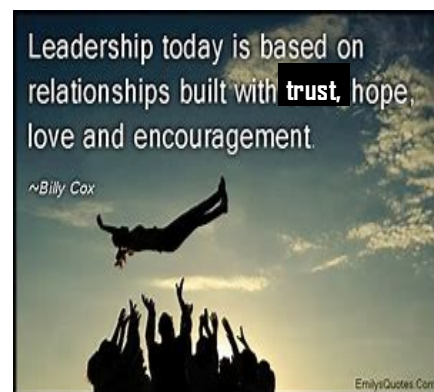


Support for Student

Relational Trust

Relational trust deals with trust among members to depend on each other to do what they are expected to do. It grows when each person is listened to and treated respectfully coupled with clear roles and responsibilities in the organization.

Three factors needed to merge for relational trust to be jump-started in school where people feel powerless include: Feel safe; Perceive that leaders have something to offer; and Believe that leaders will put in the time to help them be successful.



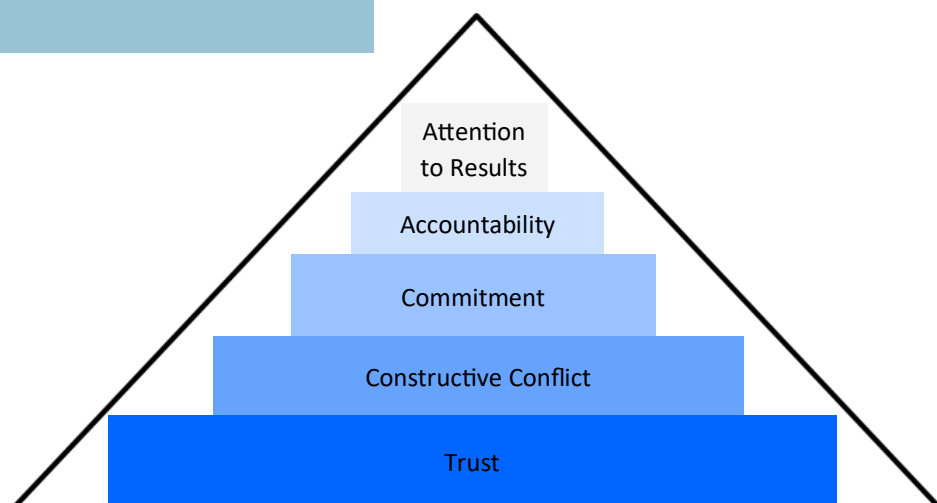
“The power of relational trust—whether between teachers and students, teachers and teachers, or administrators and teachers—is the foundation for transformational change” (p.17)

Forms of Relational Trust

- Teachers and Students Relational Trust
- Teachers and Teachers Relational Trust
- Administrators and Teachers Relational Trust

Building Relational Trust

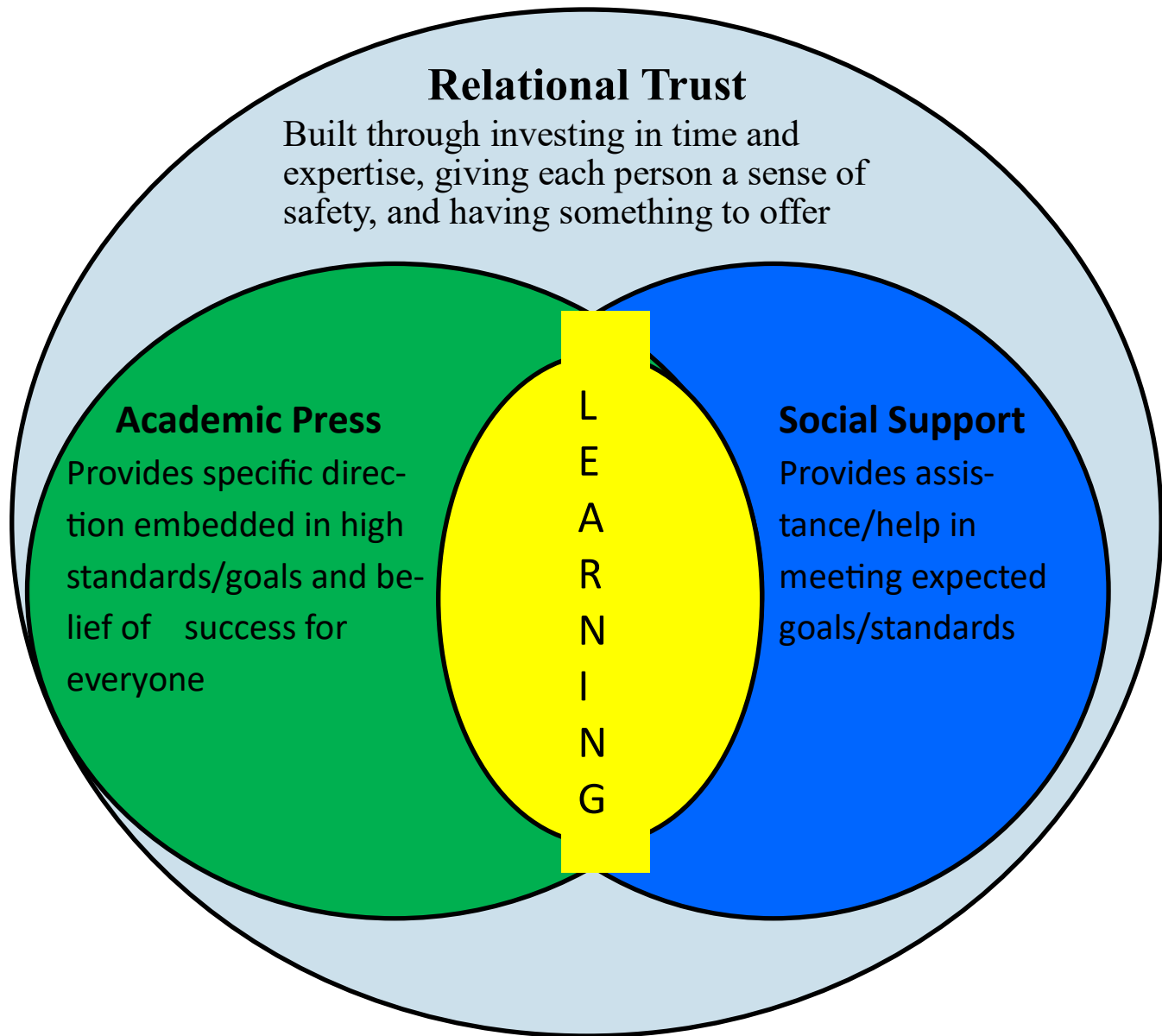
- Having role clarity
- People meeting one another’s expectation
- Investing in time and expertise to help
- Giving each person a sense of safety
- Having something to offer



Essential elements of a functional school. The absence of these components is what Lencioni (2002), as cited in p.18 called five dysfunctions of a team.

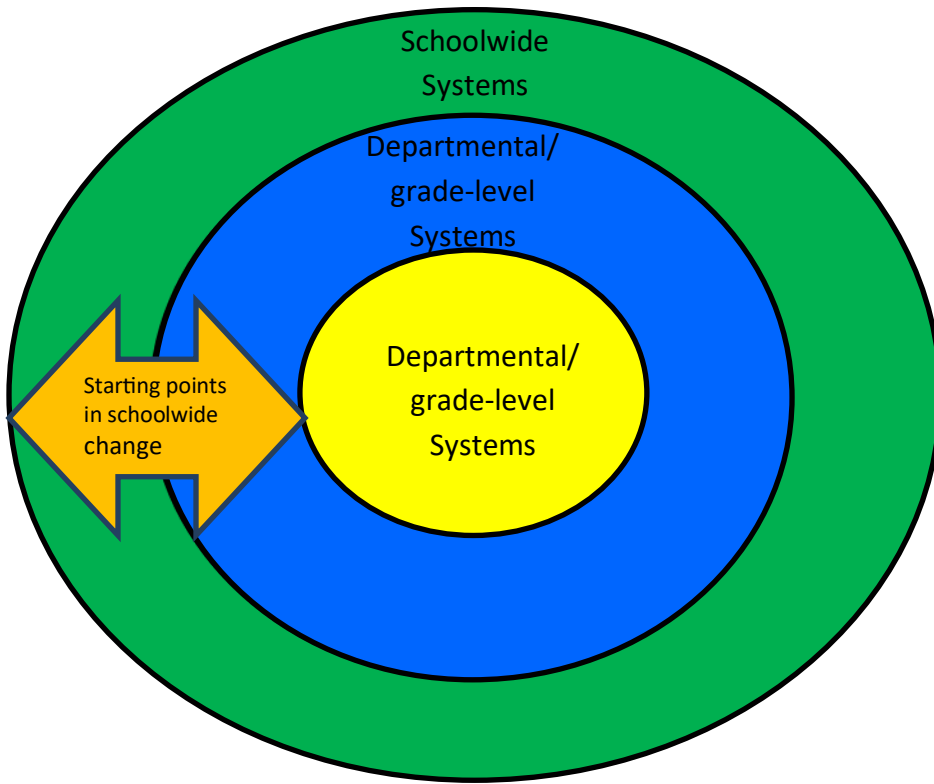


Academic Press, Social Support, and Relational Trust Working Together



Conceptual framework displaying all levels of interaction among academic press, social support, and relational trust (p.20).

There are no clear thin lines drawn among the three concepts; however, relational trust acts as a catalyst and an outcome of academic press and social support coming together. Relational trust is at its ascendancy when roles and responsibilities have been clarified and the people within this environment have high expectations and the belief that each other's performance will meet standards. At some point, academic press and social support begin to overlap to result in cultural shift that supports and challenges everyone to learn (p.19).

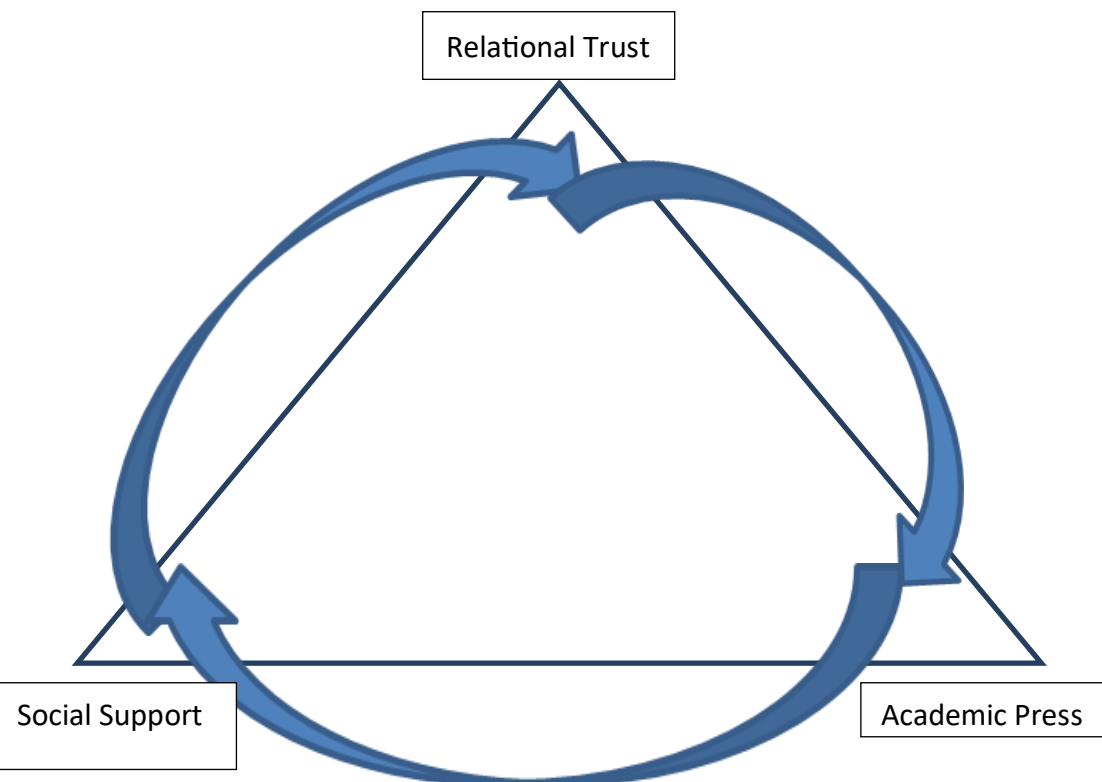


“Unfortunately, in a school that feels powerless, the classroom is not always the best place to start regaining confidence and self-control for the process of school improvement. The change must transpire from the outside in through the implementation of schoolwide systems” (p.21)

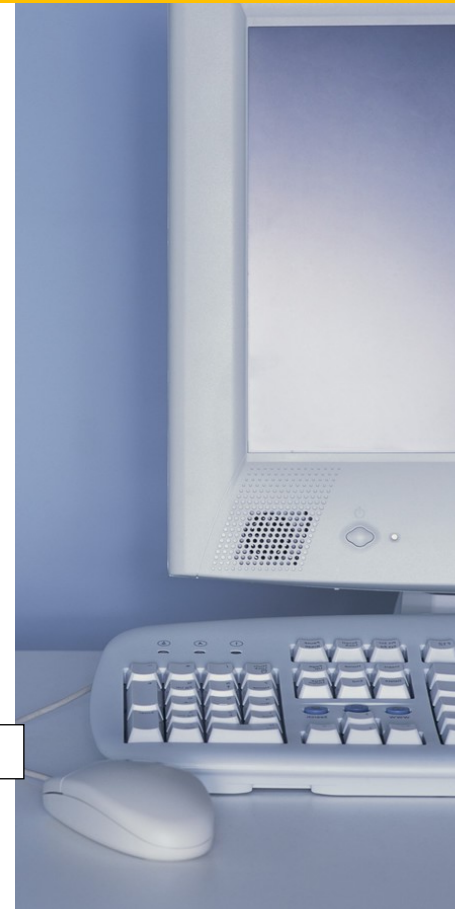
Development of Relational Trust: All educational systems must be involved to foster academic press and social support (p.23).

Change From the Outside In

Developing relational trust between staff and administration is the first step in fostering academic press and social support at all levels in a low achieving school.

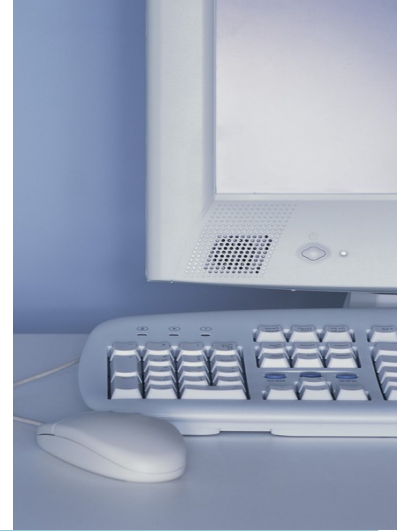


Alignment of systems with conceptual framework. Systems must be aligned with the framework to foster independence and mutual accountability (p.24).

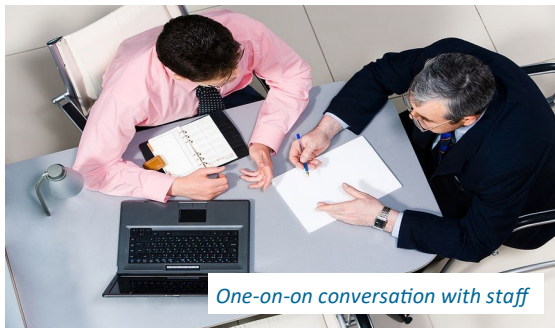


Introduction

This part includes hard-earned insights about fostering relational trust, developing high expectations, and creating support systems to achieve these expectations. It discusses the basic leadership roles and strategies in transforming schools that feel powerless as per the respective lessons learned.



“Reconnecting people to their mission and the work of helping students learn begins by having teachers define what they believe the work is and integrate their thinking into how the school operates” (p.27)



One-on-one conversation with staff

Leadership Lesson #1: One-on-One Is Powerful

In a two-way conversation with staff (one-on-one and small group) create a sustainable process that brings understanding of the existing situation and connects each person’s talents to problem solving geared towards achieving the goals of the school. Over time, this takes on a more sophisticated form that builds on the talents of the staff and the vision of the school (pp.27-28).

Basic Leadership Strategies A Successful One-on-One Process

- By dividing up staff members among leadership team, task each of them with developing a plan for success (p.29).
- Develop common set of questions for asking each staff person one-on-one and listen to how each perceives the current reality.
- Identify common patterns in teachers’ opinions and discuss with staff, both one-on-one and in small groups (p.30).
- Decide on the next action for moving towards achieving a collective vision.



Leadership team/Small group conversation

Leadership Lesson #2: Intentional Actions Inspire Hopefulness

The leadership team must create a planning process that clarifies responsibility and accountability within the school using a 45-day plan while integrating what has been learned from the two-way conversations with staff. This creates intentional actions and systems that support the functions of staff in achieving a collective goal (pp.32-34).



Basic Leadership Strategies to Support These Efforts

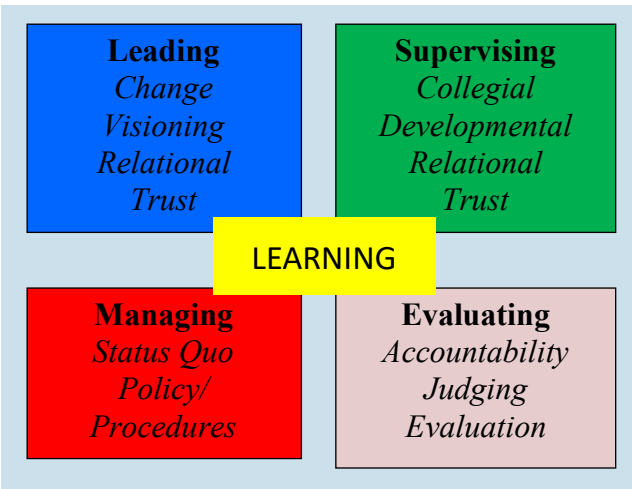
- Bring down your vision to its simplest terms and find themes in the information you accumulate (p.35).
- Use discussions to craft action steps for each formulated specific goal that support your theme.
- Make the leadership plan visible to everyone as you define who will be accountable for action steps
- Allow for transparency in the 45-day plan and spend time to envision your future in definite terms (p.36).

Leadership Lesson #3: Time Is Golden

Make good use of time to strategize schoolwide systems that are aligned with your 45-day plan. This is essential for improvising a relational trust within the school. The ‘Time Is Golden’



lesson is important in the sense that when staff see their leaders spending time in diagnosing, understanding, and implementing schoolwide support systems, it gives them a sense of belief and challenges them on their capabilities of getting the work done (pp.37-38). Leaders need to analyze their roles and the time they spend in each of these roles as shown in the models below.



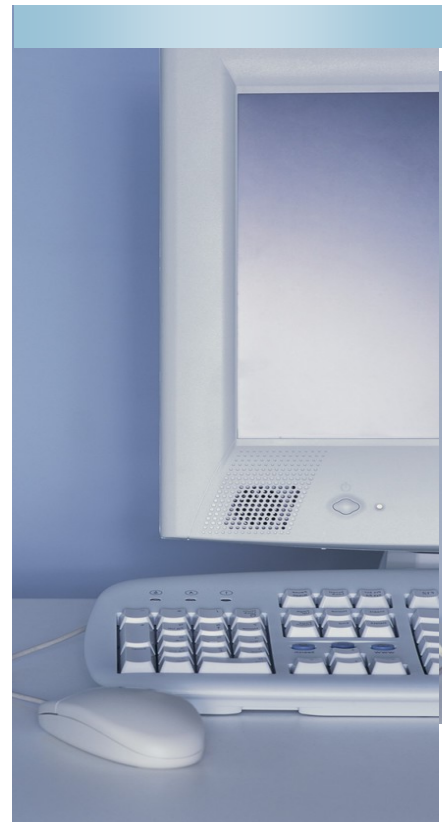
The four functions of administration. Model of how leaders spend their time (p.39)

Basic Leadership strategies

- Develop the working behavior you will demonstrate in your school for each of leading, supervising, managing, and evaluating when working in the quadrants of the time management grid (p.41).
- Create a four-functions-of-administration grid and identify in the time management grid, each type of behavior you engaged in, according to the working definitions of your team (p.42)
- Review your 45-day plan, practice these behaviors for a week and then discuss them in each of the time management grid quadrants with your leadership team (42-43).

I m p o r t a n t	Urgent	Not Urgent
	I Pressing Matters Crises/Panics Fire/Fighting Deadline-Driven Projects	II Prevention Relationship Building Planning/Preparation Implementation of Systems Professional Knowledge
N o t I m p o r t a n t	III Interruptions Some Call/Mail Unprepared meetings Popular Activities	IV Trivia Busy Work Time Wasters Unproductive Activities (TV) Everything Else

Time management grid (Covey, Merrill, & Merrill, 1996, as cited in p.41)



“Action teams are an important statement from administration in moving from me to we”

Leadership Lesson #4:

Positive Opposites – Action Teams

Engage teachers in the strategies for improving schoolwide and grade-level systems through action teams. Action teams are short-term teams made up of small groups of staff and/or students whose primary task is to design a course of action to dealing with specific problems or barriers to attaining the goals of the school (p.44). Action teams are useful for providing decision-making and problem-solving environment necessary to support long term educational change (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006, as cited in p.44).



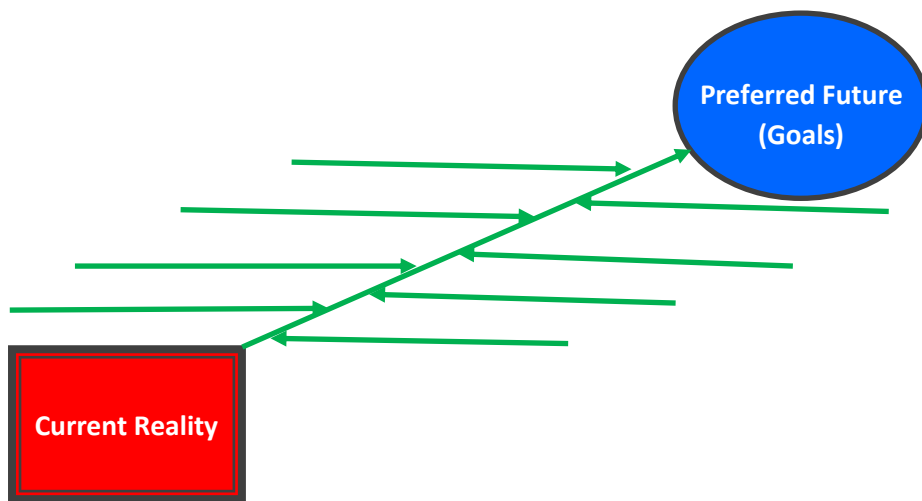
Teachers engaged in the strategies for improving schoolwide and grade-level systems



Action Teams

Basic Leadership Strategies

- As a leadership team, and without being defensive, listen and embrace staff opinion regarding the barriers to their success in their work (pp.46-47).
- Openly discuss with staff the information learned from one-on-ones and align them with a theme in your 45-day plan (p.47).
- Evaluate existing programs that may address the problem of practice.
- The problem of practice should be framed in a way that influences the team regarding the structures that need to be fixed for the school to succeed.
- Take the action team through the stated protocol and if necessary, come back as a team to make changes based on feedback in moving forward (pp.47-48).



How to get to the preferred future. Worksheet from the Washington State OSPI used by leadership and action teams (p.49)

How will you get to the 'preferred Future'?
Step-by-Step, list what it will take to get there.

Leadership Lesson #5: Evidence Is Everything but Not Anything

Evidence based decision making is ideal to drive improvement in the schoolwide system if accurate and appropriate data is deliberately gathered and effectively used. Data can give much-needed insight about how educators can change to create systems to support the work of the teacher and to meet students' needs and improve achievement (pp.50-51). Evidence is just the starting point to ensure that the spotlight is on the right problem but does not in itself solve the problem.

The Four types of Evidence

Achievement evidence

Readily available in the form of formative and summative assessments (p.51).

Contextual evidence

Background information about activities (e.g. programs) within the school and the community (pp.51-52)

Demographic evidence

Important details (e.g. enrollment trends, ethnicity, gender etc.) about the nature of those whom the staff serve.

Perceptual evidence

Includes formal (surveys) and informal evidence such as one-on-one discussions, discussion between staff and with students, parents, and community members. It also includes public opinion about whether a school is 'good' or 'bad' (pp.52-53).

Basic Leadership Strategies

- Divide up the four types of evidence among the leadership team and task each to create a document that provides the essence of what evidence implies pertaining to supporting teaching and learning (p.54).
- As a leader, analyze the evidence on how the school might operate differently to support teachers and students.
- Based on the sense of evidence from the leadership team, discuss the current reality and whether the evidence informs how the school should move forward (p.55).
- Bearing in mind evidence should result in a call for action, involve those who will be directly affected by your decision as you shape your plan of action (p.56).
- Evidence cannot describe the state of the school unless leaders are keeping score which is made from making sense of evidence to drive decision in implementing systems.

Leadership Lesson #6:

If Time Is Golden, Then Language is Platinum

Language is a powerful tool that can move an organization to a new idea, so use it to make your thinking visible for influencing others. Not just the importance of language being widely recognized as a factor in creating a culture for learning but must be also something that is developed and given consistent attention to (pp.57-58).



Basic Leadership Strategies

At Individual Level

- Have each on the leadership team put down the strengths and interests of his assigned people in contributing to well-being in the school and share the key words with the team.
- In one-on-ones, learn what assigned staff persons are proud of in their accomplishments and effort (p.59).
- Agree on new leadership team norms (p.60).
- Provide feedback daily on the actions each assigned staff person is taking to support the vision of the school and catch people doing things right (pp.60-61).

At Schoolwide Level

- In a discussion on the significance of each of the overarching goals of the 45-day plan, create a slogan that best describe the mission of the school.
- Describe the ideal in one-on-ones and small groups while inviting students and staff to invent phrases that describe collective efforts to improve teaching and learning.
- Invent language to openly describe the nature of the work with each other and in front of the staff (pp.61-62).

Leadership Lesson #7:

District Office: Friend or Foe?

Work with the district office within your span of control in a way that promotes support in for achieving the school's vision. Staying within your span of control (things you have direct control over) while working with the district office increases your effectiveness which intern diminishes your circle of concern (your worries you have no control over) (convey, 1989, as cited in pp.64 & 65).

Basic Leadership Strategies

- Overcommunicate with the district office regarding the goals of the plan and systems under construction.
- Challenge the system at all levels.
- Don't accept no for an answer – you need to do your homework when you hear “No!” from the district office.
- Encourage the person at the district office to join the problem-solving process.

“The change is based not on providing external supports, but rather on focusing the district office on their commitment to doing the work with building” (p.64)

“Stay away from the natural instinct of asking for more resources... Initially it is not about more resources; it is about ownership, capacity building, and rethinking how business is done. It is about developing the culture of learning” (p.65)

Leadership Lesson #8: Support the Ones Who Support the Work

Make sure the support staff are actively engaged in the planning process by listening to and acting on the words of wisdom of the support staff (pp. 67-68). Be intentional in communicating with the support staff (i.e. building secretaries, custodians, food service workers etc.) who are often not intentionally communicated with in a planning process.

Discussion Question

How can formal leaders empower support staff teams to make decisions and act on the information provided?

Basic Leadership Strategies

- Meet formally with each lead support staff.
- Share your 45-day plan with them and demonstrate that their work is valuable (p.69).
- Conduct one-on-ones with all secretaries and give them the opportunity to come up with a purpose plan which provides a culture of support and communicates accurate information to all stakeholders.
- Develop a system for lead custodians to work with the student leadership team. (p.71)
- Involve food service workers and students working together in establishing the purpose and goals of the lunchtime (p.72).

CONCLUSION

The book provides a framework grounded in work that has supported renewed efforts in others, it is not a recipe for success. Leadership strategies for the lessons learned are provided as if they are routines or principles to follow for making a poor school excels, but they are not. The 45-day plan proposed by the authors may not work well for a leader who intends to practice it if his or her followers (staff and students) are not activists or diehards type.

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